

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Washington's Surprise Attraction: Urban Farmers' Markets

To see (and taste) the real D.C., skip the White House and follow the capital's top chefs to its vibrant craft and produce purveyors

By **DAVID HAGEDORN** | Nov. 19, 2015 5:38 p.m. ET

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/creating-oases-in-new-york-citys-food-deserts-1449108001>

THOUGH OFTEN OVERLOOKED for more august attractions such as the Capitol and the Smithsonian, [Washington, D.C.](#)'s farmers' markets are prime places to survey local color, nosh on soft-shell crab or an Asian-inspired taco and even pick up a bottle of olive oil or a watercolor as a souvenir. The markets—a handful of which are open all year—are a magnet for some of the city's leading restaurateurs, who pick through the produce, cheeses and meats looking for menu inspiration. Here, a few of these tough-to-impress foodies share their favorite markets and some dishes inspired by them. If you don't manage to make it to a market, you can sample the farm-fresh fare at their restaurants.

Nick Stefanelli, Masseria

Chef Nick Stefanelli makes almost daily visits to **Union Market**, in Northeast Washington, to pick up ingredients for Masseria, the industrial-chic eatery hidden behind a high wood-plank fence that he opened 2 miles north of the Capitol in July. He turns out winning Pugliese-inspired fare from an open kitchen using his market finds.

"I can get a small piece of pork belly from Harvey's to make a pancetta garnish for agnolotti, or 10 pounds of bones to make a braising stock for veal cheeks," Mr. Stefanelli said of the market's popular butcher shop. Housing 30 vendors, Union Market also features restaurants, clothing shops and galleries.

Mr. Stefanelli uses shrimp and scallops from Union Market's District Fishwife in his linguine with Masseria XO sauce, and recently created a cheese-course finale of Taleggio, Gorgonzola Cremificato and Castellosso from Righteous Cheese. *Masseria, 1340 4th Street, NE; masseria-dc.com. Union Market, 1309 5th Street NE; unionmarketdc.com*

David Guas, Bayou Bakery

Mr. Guas opened his second Bayou Bakery, Coffee Bar and Eatery on Capitol Hill in May (the first is in Arlington, Va.). He sources ingredients for his New Orleans-inspired fare at nearby **Eastern Market**. Bonus: Artists converge there to sell their work each weekend.

“My customers appreciate the market-driven specials, and I love making a connection with local purveyors,” Mr. Guas said of the highlighted dishes (crafted with foodstuffs from Agora Farms, Sunnyside Farm and other suppliers) he serves alongside standards such as chicken-and-andouille gumbo. Last week, Mr. Guas proffered chèvre from the market atop blackened Kabocha squash and kale, drizzled with Steen’s cane syrup. *Bayou Bakery, 901 Pennsylvania Ave. SE; bayoubakerydc.com. Eastern Market, 225 Seventh Street, SE; easternmarket-dc.org, open year-round. Closed Mondays.*

Robert Dallah, Bread Furst

In February 2014, Mark Furstenberg opened the sleek Bread Furst bakery 4 miles northwest of the White House. Chef Robert Dallah serves Mediterranean-style salads at this local favorite, which produces Paris-worthy baguettes throughout the day. On Saturdays from May until the end of November, Mr. Dallah heads to the nearby **farmers market at the University of the District of Columbia** for produce to turn into dishes such as pickled carrots and onions, grilled cauliflower with tahini and caramelized onions, and kohlrabi slaw with beets. His Thanksgiving menu includes winter-squash gratin, Brussels sprouts with farro, kale and apples, apple and pumpkin pies and sweet potato cheesecake. *Bread Furst, 4434 Connecticut Ave. NW; breadfurst.com. Farmers Market at the University of the District of Columbia, 3430 Connecticut Ave., NW, Saturdays 8 a.m.-2 p.m. through Nov. 22.*

Ris Lacoste, RIS

To help stock the larder at RIS, the upscale bistro she opened in the West End in December 2009, chef-owner Ris Lacoste regularly drives her 1984 Mercedes to the **Foggy Bottom** market on Wednesdays and to the **Penn Quarter** and the White House markets on Thursdays. Market-to-table items on Ms. Lacoste’s seasonal menu now include braised red cabbage and braised collards as sides; apple-cider-glazed sea scallops on celery root cream with apple rémoulade and pickled hen-of-the-woods mushrooms, and apple tart and white chocolate bread pudding with pears. Every fall,

she said, customers request an encore of her green-and-purple curly kale salad with shaved raw Brussels sprouts, roasted sweet potatoes and sherry maple vinaigrette. The dish conforms to her mantra: "If it's at the market, it's on my menu." *RIS, 2275 L St., NW; risdc.com. For addresses and times of Foggy Bottom, Penn Quarter and White House markets, go to freshfarmmarkets.org.*

Corrections & Amplifications

Masseria is nearly 2 miles from the U.S. Capitol. An earlier version of this article incorrectly gave the distance as two blocks. Bread Furst bakery is 4 miles northwest of the White House. An earlier version of this article gave the direction as northeast.