



Must-Have CULINARY EXPERIENCES

Savouring fresh-out-of-the-water oysters off the half shell, digging into an impeccable three-course meal at a Michelin-starred restaurant, sampling local and ethnic specialties on an enlightening food tour — there are so many ways to treat your taste buds in the Capital Region.

SENSATIONAL SEAFOOD

The **Virginia Oyster Trail** and **Maryland Crab & Oyster Trail** are terrific ways to taste the region's freshest coastal delights at multiple locations, whilst events like the **J. Millard Tawes Crab & Clam Bake** (July) in **Crisfield, Maryland**, and **Urbanna Oyster Festival** (November) in **Urbanna, Virginia**, offer great opportunities to feast with the locals.

You can also learn how oysters are harvested at multiple farms along the Chesapeake Bay, including **Pleasure House Oysters** farm tour on the Lynnhaven River. And no trip is complete without a waterfront meal (or two). Nibble on freshly caught crab, oysters, shrimp and more amid peaceful views of Chesapeake Bay at **Waterman's Crab House** in **Rock Hall, Maryland**; or discover Italian-style seafood dishes at **Fiola Mare** in **Washington, DC**, an upscale restaurant overlooking the Potomac River.

FOLLOW THE STARS

The area's growing collection of celebrated Michelin-starred eateries is a testament to its impressive population of talented chefs. In fact, Virginia's **The Inn at Little Washington** became the first in the Capital Region to earn a coveted three-star rating with the guide's 2019 edition. Washington, DC's **Pineapple and Pearls** and **minibar** — each bestowed with two stars — and **Komi** or **Métier**, two of the 13 DC restaurants awarded one star, are other excellent places to splurge on a fine-dining experience.

SIGNATURE FARE

Find out why travellers journey from near and far to devour the delicious lump crab cakes and other coastal cuisine staples at **Old Salty's Seafood Restaurant** in **Fishing Creek, Maryland**; or try locally sourced Appalachian and Southern dishes with modern flare at **The Shack** in **Staunton, Virginia**.

Don't miss a half-smoke (a local sausage delicacy) smothered in zesty chili at **Ben's Chili Bowl** in **DC**, chocolate-fudge-covered confections from **Baltimore's Berger**

Cookies and delicious Virginia ham at **Taste of Smithfield**.

Book a food tour to take in an array of experiences with the help of a knowledgeable guide. **Charm City Food Tours** walks visitors through **Baltimore's** most famous neighbourhoods to try everything from the city's best meatballs to award-winning crab cakes, whilst **Coastal Food Tours of Virginia** in **Virginia Beach** and **Norfolk** offers satisfying samplings of traditional coastal dishes and modern, ethnic and sustainable cuisine. Meanwhile, **DC Metro Food Tours** offers 20 culinary tours in **Washington, DC**, **Maryland** and **Virginia** with themes like "Gastronomic Georgetown" and "Eastern Market Food Tour."

Try classic American staples like the peanut and chestnut soup at the **Mount Vernon Inn** in **Virginia**, where the flavours of early America shine, or Smith Island Cake — Maryland's official dessert — at **Two if By Sea Restaurant** in **Tilghman Island**, where Chef Henry Miller makes an 11-layer version in nearly 20 flavours. Quench your thirst with a mint julep at **DC's Round Robin**, a historic bar established in 1847.

Opposite page, from top: Masseria Restaurant, Scott Suchman; Pleasure House Oyster Farm, Virginia Tourism Corporation; Chocolate Smith Island Cake, Clark Vandergrift.