

WASHINGTONIAN

100 Very Best Restaurants

81 Hook ★★

3241 M St., NW; 202-625-4488

Cuisine: Chef Jonathan Seningen turns out an ever-changing, all-over-the-map roster of seafood that encompasses the au courant (a *crudo* of mahi mahi with pickled jalapeño) and the enduring (fish and chips). Meat lovers might want to look elsewhere—there's only one non-fish entrée on the menu—but seafood fanciers will smile. Every fish is sustainably caught; think Arctic char, not Atlantic salmon.

Mood: The softly lit, minimalist dining room has turned into something of a weeknight clubhouse for Georgetown couples and families. On weekends, tables are filled by a snappily dressed crowd of thirtysomethings and internationals.

Best for: A quiet date or dinner; brunch.

Best dishes: The menu changes daily, but look for a trio of smoked fishes—salmon, mackerel, and bluefish; oysters three ways; beet salad with pistachios and goat cheese; gingery tuna tartare; tempura-fried pufferfish with piquant cilantro sauce for dipping; whole grilled Greek *dorade* with olives and *chimichurri*; lingonberry linzer-torte with Taleggio ice cream; butterscotch tart.

Insider tips: Pastry chef Heather Chittum is a top talent; even if you're not having a meal, you can graze on her sweets at the bar.

Service: ☹️☹️

Open Monday for dinner, Tuesday through Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday and Sunday for brunch and dinner. Expensive.