

BY KIM-MARIE EVANS

Beyond CITY LIMITS

UNDER-THE-RADAR finds in NEARBY CITIES you think you know

This month, instead of tempting you with overwater bungalows in far-off locales, we're taking you to neighboring cities you thought you knew. You won't find a trip to the Liberty Bell in Philly or the No. 1-rated Freedom Trail tour from Trip Advisor; you're better than that. A hot new crop of hotels are popping up in neighborhoods you may never have heard of. Fishtown anyone? We've done the research so you'll know where to stay and what to eat, and we provide a completely out-of-the-box idea for a fun night on the town. If you're not up for a trendy stay, each destination includes a luxury option we like to call "hip adjacent." »

New York • Boston • Philadelphia • Washington, D.C.



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New York



NEIGHBORHOOD SoHo

SoHo is like good fashion, it's always in style. Escape the sidewalk-hoarding tourists and creepy Elmos of Midtown and head south for a taste of the New York we all fell in love with. The former manufacturing district of SoHo (South of Houston Street) is synonymous with trendy and cool; but if you're a frequent visitor, you might feel like you've been there, done that. Here are a few suggestions to inspire even the most jaded among us.

LUXE STAY

THE DOMINICK

This chic high-rise feels like a boutique hotel. Each floor houses only twelve guest rooms. So even the smallest rooms have more space than you'd expect to find in SoHo. Bringing the family? There are more two-bedroom suites here than in any other hotel in the city. Just recently *Forbes* gave it a five-star rating to go with its AAA five-diamond award. It is the only SoHo hotel with both.

The rooms aren't the only upside surprise; the bi-level spa is quite luxurious. It features the city's only real Turkish hammam (an ancient bathing ritual that's a combination full-body scrub and a

steam). The Dominick is also home to the only outdoor pool in SoHo, as well as deep soaking tubs and floor-to-ceiling city views from most guest rooms. Winter rates start at \$375 per night.



HIP STAY

THE JAMES

The James sources pet amenities from hipster fave Shinola Detroit. It's *that* cool. And if knowing that your four-legged friend will be greeted with pet bowls, organic treats (and you'll get maps of nearby dog parks) isn't enough of an incentive to book, know that for every doggy stay the hotel makes a donation to Animal Haven in New York. With its super-sleek interiors, statement artwork and jaw-dropping city views, it also caters to humans. All guests are invited to The James Club, a glass lounge overlooking a sculpture



garden that serves complimentary snacks. And there is a complimentary wine happy hour in the lobby each night. With rooms starting at \$274 a night, the deal seems like it's almost too good to be true.

DO THIS

Anyone can see a comedy show, but only one lucky guest can catch a ride home with the star after the show. It's a schtick, and it seems to work. Emmy-winning former *Late Show* writer Ted Greenberg delivers a fun night of interactive

stand-up at the **SoHo Playhouse Theater** on the first Saturday of every month. At the end of the show, he picks a member of the audience to chauffeur home in his taxi. Proving true the theory that all comedians have a side hustle (Greenberg is a licensed NYC cabdriver).

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EAT HERE

CHEFS CLUB COUNTER

Only New Yorkers expect the world to come to them, and at Chefs Club Counter, it has. It's a fine-fast restaurant (that's a thing) where chefs from around the world take turns heading up the kitchen. It chooses one rising star chef to curate the menu, design the space and offer their unique dining experience for a period of time that depends on the chef's availability, typically one to three months. The Counter has only been open for a year as an offshoot of the hugely popular Chefs Club restaurant with the same rotating-chef concept. Reservations are not accepted, but you can grab a table if there's space or take the food to go. The team from Los Angeles hot spot Ramen Hood is in residence, contracted through January 19. Their residency has been so popular they will likely stay through February. Go online to find current chefs at chefclubcounter.com. »

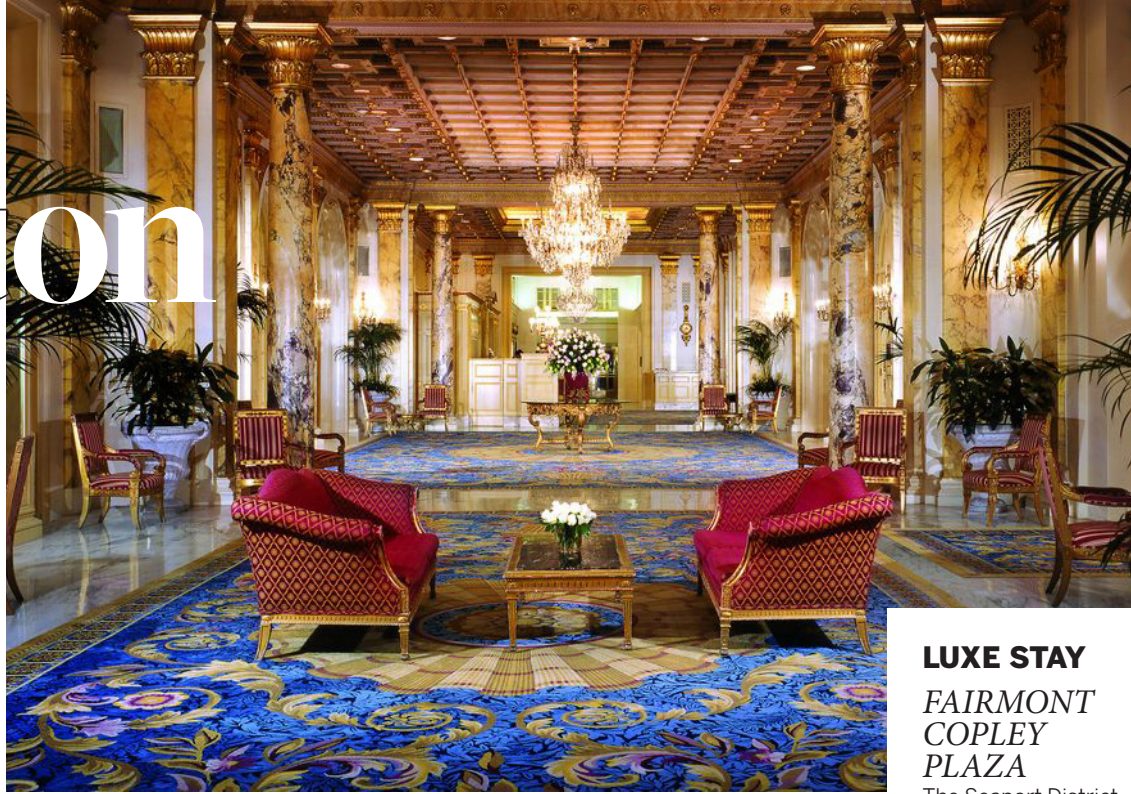
Boston



NEIGHBORHOOD

Seaport

If you haven't been to Boston in a while, you might be confused when you see terms like "Innovation District" or "The Wunderkind Neighborhood." These monikers are tossed around in magazines and newspapers when referring to the Seaport area because it has drawn the young, cool tech crowd. The muddy and underwhelming waterfront has come a long way since 2010, when then-mayor Thomas Menino announced that the city would embark on a grand effort to turn the neighborhood into the hot spot that it is today. It is now growing so quickly, real estate development can't keep up.



LUXE STAY

FAIRMONT COPLEY PLAZA

The Seaport District is growing fast, but no true luxury property is calling it home—yet. The Fairmont Copley Plaza is a short ride from all the action but comes with five-star amenities. The hotel was built by the same architect behind the Plaza Hotel in New York, and it shows. Though the Fairmont is a historic landmark, touches like the hotel's canine ambassador, Carly Copley, give it a welcoming vibe. If you happen to be leaving a mansion and butler behind, book a Fairmont Gold room to really feel at home. The fourth floor is a hotel within a hotel for those in the know. Gold guests are ushered to a private reception area for check-in and can enjoy complimentary breakfast and evening hors d'oeuvres in the private club lounge reserved for Fairmont Gold guests.

Winter rates start at \$239 for a regular room or \$325 for a Gold room.

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HIP STAY

ENVOY HOTEL

The all-glass Envoy Hotel sits across the water from Boston's most famous historic sites. The etching on the sidewalk at the entrance sums up the hotel, and the area; it says "This Way Forward." The room interiors are as sleek as the hotel's exterior; all of the furnishings are custom-made. However, not everything is brand new. The designers used plenty of reclaimed wood and even fashioned the TV stands from repurposed

bicycle frames. The televisions double as digital concierges, which means guests can enjoy music through Pandora, login to Hulu or Netflix, or view one of over 1,000 movies on Crackle.

The real star of the property, though, is the rooftop bar. Yes, a rooftop bar is de rigueur in many cities, but how about one with heated igloos? That's serious innovation. Each igloo holds ten guests and the bar serves up locally distilled spirits and specialty coffee drinks to keep everyone toasty.

Rates start at \$284 per night.



DO THIS

While we can't get you into one of Harvard's famed super-secret social clubs, we may have

the next best thing—the once-a-month, invitation-only chef's dinner called **140 Supper Club**. Think speakeasy meets four-star restaurant. The

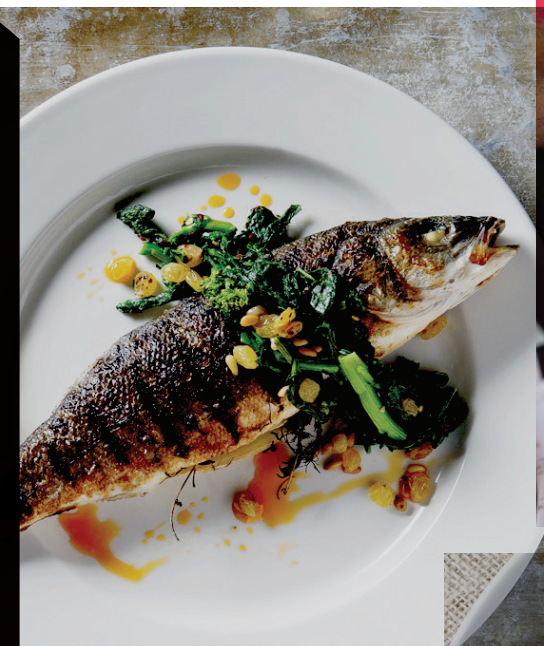
entrance is down a century-old staircase at the Fairmont. There's no signage and even if you stumble on it, you won't be admitted without knowing the

password. There is only enough room for thirty guests, and the food and themes change. The dinners are always hosted by Fairmont's executive chef, Laurent Poulain,

who explains every course to diners and then takes a seat and joins the party. Tickets generally run around \$140 per person but can vary based on the menu

and wine pairings. Want to get on the list? Email BostonEvents@Fairmont.com. Tell them you want an invite to the 140 Supper Club. »

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EAT HERE

ROW 34

Seafood and craft beer are staples of the Boston diet. The upscale version of both is Row 34, located in a neighborhood that's part of the Seaport District. This new venture by Chef Jeremy Seawall (of Island Creek Oyster Bar fame) pairs fresh-off-the-boat oysters with small-batch craft beers from around the world. He's bringing new seafood trends to Boston with dishes like seafood charcuterie, a dish somewhere between sushi and antipasti. As for the lobsters, of course he's "got a guy," his cousin, who fishes for them off the coast of Maine.

Washington, D.C.



NEIGHBORHOOD

Shaw and Adams Morgan

It's hard to pinpoint the coolest area of D.C.; it depends on who you ask. Middle-aged hipsters (if they can be called that) point to Adams Morgan. But the younger set may consider it the Facebook of neighborhoods—somewhat passé. Even the *Washington Post* recently asked: “Is Adams Morgan past its prime?” The opening of the new LINE DC would argue that it's not. Another area gunning for hippest hood is Shaw, which sits north of the White House and south of Adams Morgan. The neighborhood is home to the 1910 Howard Theatre, where jazz greats like Ella Fitzgerald and Duke Ellington once played. In recent years, commercial spaces, which stood empty for years, have been converted and offered at affordable rents, drawing new residents and young chefs, making Shaw a go-to dining destination.



LUXE STAY

THE HAY-ADAMS

Let's face it—the cool kids don't care about a good turn-down service, but we do. The Hay-Adams is decidedly not hip, but it is iconic and has the best views of any hotel in the city. The hotel is less than two miles from Shaw (so you can still get your hip fix). The restaurant, the Lafayette, offers complimentary reading glasses to guests who may have forgotten theirs. And should you borrow one of the hotel's loaner bicycles to tool around town, you'll also get helmets and maps. So sensible.

And here you're in good company: The Obamas were guests until they moved into the White House. All 145 guest rooms have been updated with stately décor, the bathrooms are marble and the elegant service makes every guest feel like a president. Rates start at \$339 per night.

DO THIS

It's not a secret, but it's the hottest ticket in town. When the **National Museum of African American History and Culture** opened in September 2016, the website selling tickets crashed. Demand for tickets is still so high that as of this writing, advance tickets had been sold out for the next four months. Go to nmaahc.si.edu/visit/passes to learn about same-day ticket releases and walk-up options. This is the only national museum dedicated to telling the story of African Americans. There are eight levels to the museum; a visit below ground is brutally raw, with displays of the simple items like glass beads and metal bands that colonizers would use to trade for slaves. The above-ground floors are filled with exhibits documenting black contributions to all aspects of American culture, including education, business, sports and the arts (Chuck Berry's cherry red convertible has a place of honor). In each corner there are reminders of the resistance and activism that have been, and continue to be a part of the African American experience.

HIP STAY

LINE DC

The new hotel opened in a 110-year-old neoclassical church in Adams Morgan. In the lobby church organ pipes are part of a grand chandelier and guests can peek in on a radio station that broadcasts from the hotel. There are three eateries, two bars and a coffee shop.

Spoken English is the name of one of the restaurants. It serves street-style food in a standing-room-only environment (note that “game-focused restaurant” means it serves tiny birds, not



that it shows football on television). If you're looking for an eating adventure, this could be your place.

The 220 guest

rooms, however, are all straightforward, homey comfort. All the beds have brass frames, the walls feature local artwork,

and in-room reading material is sourced from the nearby Idle Time Books.

Winter rates start at \$211 per night.

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EAT HERE

The Dabney Cellar

One of the hottest new wine bars in Shaw is in one of the best restaurants in the area, so it's a natural choice. The Dabney Cellar is a thirty-seat drinking den in the basement of Chef Jeremiah Langhorne's restaurant of the same name. The entrance is hidden and you won't find a sign—if you don't know, you don't know. The chef most recently helmed the kitchen at McCrady's in Charleston, so you can already guess how good the food is. The Cellar is all about keeping the food simple and the wine glasses full. Order the buttermilk bacon biscuits or toast topped with buttered lobster. »

Philadelphia



NEIGHBORHOOD

Fishtown

Perhaps no other city suffers from such tired stereotypes as Philly; just like their beloved Eagles, the city has been sorely underestimated. It's the only city in the country that is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is the second largest city on the East Coast, but somehow it's never gotten the respect it deserves (except when it was our capital in the 1790s). Until now. The tiny neighborhood of Fishtown is as trendy as it gets. Just four miles up the river from City Center, it's been called the Hottest Zip Code in the Country by *Forbes* magazine. It's the lightning-in-a-bottle alchemy that makes a gritty neighborhood like Fishtown the coolest place to be.



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS CONTRIBUTED

HIP STAY

WM. MULHERIN'S SONS

A repurposed whiskey factory with only four guest rooms and no front desk, Wm. Mulherin's Sons walked off with the Hottest New Hotel award from *USA Today* last year. How did it beat out the fancy big boys? It's not the view; it is jarringly close to the El train—an elevated train that runs all night during the weekend. It's also not the butler service; there isn't any.

Guests check in downstairs at the restaurant of the same name. You'll arrive to a clean room but won't see a hotel maid unless you stay for longer than a week; then a complimentary cleaning is included. No standing in line to check out, just leave the key on your kitchen island. The rooms are each uniquely decorated with amenities like vintage Persian rugs, rainfall showers and Sferra linens. The designers incorporated some of the existing industrial pieces into the rooms; in one an elevator shaft is a skylight and in another there's an original Fairbanks No. 5 Platform Scale. A rarity in boutique hotels, each of the four rooms also has a washer and dryer.

Book Room One for the custom-made sonophonic console (basically a 1970s-style stereo cabinet) and vintage vinyl collection (also known as records), Rooms Two or Three for the full-sized kitchens (the others are kitchenettes) or Room Four for the antique clawfoot tub.

Rates start at \$294 per night, if you prepay and forgo the chance to cancel; otherwise rates start at \$335 per night.

LUXE STAY

KIMPTON HOTEL MONACO

The closest hotel you can get to Fishtown with a concierge is the Kimpton Hotel Monaco. It's still very trendy, just not "custom-made sonophonic console" trendy. The Monaco is a boutique hotel with big hotel amenities like valet laundry and 24-hour in-room dining. Guests can hop on a loaner bike to explore the city and return each night to a hosted wine hour in the lobby.

The Monaco is just two miles south of Fishtown and a block away from the Liberty Bell, just in case you've never seen it. Rates start at \$224 per night.



EAT HERE

Suraya

Drop a pin anywhere on a map of Fishtown and you'll find experimental cuisine. To cover both the "hip" and "we promise it's good" marks we recommend Suraya, specializing in Middle Eastern cuisine. It's a market, it's a café; it's an outdoor garden. Though it's new, it has the pedigree of having been created by Nathalie Richan and Roland Kassis of *Café La Maude*, and Greg Root and Nick Kennedy of *Root* restaurant. *Philadelphia* magazine calls it the Best New Restaurant of 2018, and it's the blend of Fishtown, Americana and Beirut that makes it a perfect fit in this electrically charged food scene.

DO THIS

You can't spend time in Fishtown without spending time at **Johnny Brenda's**. Though it serves food, JB's is really

known for its selection of craft beer and live music. It prides itself on serving all draft beer from local brewers and sourcing ingredients for the

menu from area farmers. Check the calendar; the entertainment veers from Gospel Brunch with a DJ to live Indie Rock and no two days are the same. **G**