

## Despite smoking ban, some cigar bars puff on

By **DEIRDRE BANNON**  
Current Staff Writer

**W**hen the smoke-free workplace law was enacted in 2007, smoking became prohibited inside most D.C. bars and restaurants, along with other places of employment. Some advocates feared there would be a rush by bar and restaurant owners to file for special exemptions that would allow smoking inside.

Five years later, that hasn't proved to be the case. According to Angela Bradbery of the local organization Smokefree DC, most bars and restaurants quickly adapted, and the smoke-free environment became the norm.

But in Northwest, there are several establishments (with one more on the way) where one can purchase and smoke cigars onsite, each one quite different. Here are four:

### ■ Shelly's Back Room

1331 F St., 202-737-3003,  
shellysbackroom.com

"We're like a neighborhood bar," owner Bob Materazzi said of his Metro Center location. "We have a lot of regulars, and when they come in, they all kind of migrate to each other. Or you could walk in by yourself and not see anyone you know and within an hour you have friends and you're talking politics — it's a friendly and welcoming place."

Shelly's Back Room has been a longtime fixture among political operators in D.C. Shelly Jacobs opened the spot in the 1990s, and Materazzi purchased it in 2000, updating it with new décor so the interior now resembles that of a warm log cabin.

Large flat-screen televisions placed around the bar are just as likely to show a political news program as a sporting event. While soft jazz plays over the speakers, Materazzi says it's never so loud

that patrons can't hear their own conversations. The establishment can accommodate 150 people, and clientele include lobbyists and lawyers, Capitol Hill staffers and members of the military.

This year, Shelly's expanded to include a sidewalk cafe, dubbed "The Front Porch," where 12 dark-green Adirondack chairs are coupled with patio umbrellas and a white picket fence.

For the cigar aficionado, Shelly's carries more than 100 different cigars, which range in price from \$9 to \$60 each. Individual humidors can be rented onsite, and patrons can also purchase cigars elsewhere and smoke them at Shelly's. The establishment also offers a full bar and dinner menu.

Despite being a cigar bar, Shelly's is not a smoke-filled establishment, says Materazzi. He installed a ventilation system that refreshes the indoor air every 90 seconds, and filters are replaced every month.

### ■ Ozio

1813 M St., 202-822-6000,  
oziodc.com

If drinking a martini while puffing on a cigar is more your style, then Ozio, located just south of Dupont Circle, might be your place.

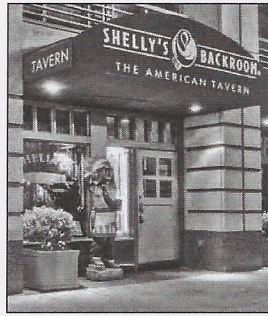
The establishment features four floors, each with a different vibe.

"It's a restaurant, a lounge, a bar, a cigar bar — any given evening, it's all of those things," said manager Jeri Lynn Metcalf.

Cigar and cigarette smoking are allowed on the first two floors, the third floor is for hookahs, and all three can be smoked on the fourth floor, the establishment's rooftop lounge. It has a retractable roof, and with both air conditioning and heat lamps, it's open year-round.

Ozio offers a full menu and serves dinner until 11:30 p.m. Weekday happy hour runs from 5 to 8 p.m.

DJs spin a variety of music,



Photos courtesy of Shelly's Back Room

**Shelly's Back Room has been a popular spot for smokers to relax and talk politics. The F Street establishment offers a full menu.**

ranging from Top 40 to hip-hop to international. Metcalf says the clientele tends to be in its 20s and 30s on weekends, while during the week professionals in their 30s and 40s frequent the establishment. Ozio can accommodate 800 people, and Metcalf says it's often at capacity on the weekends.

Ozio's cigar menu features about 50 varieties, ranging in price from \$10 to \$40 each. Individual humidor boxes can be rented, and patrons can bring their own cigars purchased elsewhere.

### ■ TG Cigars

1118 9th St., 202-289-8684,

tcgicigar.com

TG Cigar may have the most impressive selection of cigars in the city, with more than 3,000 varieties in stock from places like Honduras, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, according to owner Negest Dawit. Prices start around \$10.

The establishment, which opened in 2006, offers a small lounge where customers can smoke. Since TG's is really a cigar shop, they don't serve food or drink, but rather provide a comfortable space for customers to sample their purchase.

TG's sells smoking accessories

and offers cigar-rolling and tasting events throughout the year. Dawit says her knowledgeable staff can help customers with their cigar purchases.

### ■ Civil

5335 Wisconsin Ave., 202-638-2555, wcurtisdraper.com

Before the year is out, a new upscale cigar bar called Civil is expected to open at the Chevy Chase Pavilion. John Anderson and Matthew Krimm, two of the establishment's partners, own W. Curtis Draper Tobacconist, located downtown at 699 15th St., near the Old

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## ENTERTAINMENT: Set in D.C.

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of more than two decades.

■ **"Broadcast News"** (1987): William Hurt, Holly Hunter and Albert Brooks received Academy Award nominations for their performances in this film, though none won. The story, about what it takes to succeed in a D.C. television news bureau — style or substance — still feels relevant today.

■ **"Burn After Reading"** (2008): This Coen brothers film removes the seriousness that attends most political thrillers, and the result is a black comedy that has a cast of stars scrambling after the memoirs of disgruntled CIA employee Osborne Cox. Though filmed mainly in New York, locals will easily pick out the scenes shot in the city, particularly in Georgetown.

■ **"Dave"** (1993): Dave, played by Kevin Kline, is a presidential lookalike who gets drafted for the top job after the president has a stroke while canoeing with a young staffer. Soon even first lady Sigourney Weaver is taking a second look at the charming optimist in the Oval Office.

■ **"The Exorcist"** (1973): The film adaptation of the novel of the same name, this horror classic follows two priests as they attempt to exorcise a young Linda Blair. If you haven't watched it in the decade

since more footage was added, now's your chance. And to burn off calories from the popcorn, there's always the Georgetown steps immortalized in the film's ending.

■ **"Mr. Smith Goes to Washington"** (1939): This Frank Capra film was reviled by Washington insiders for its portrayal of a corrupt Congress when it was released. But it was a huge hit everywhere else and remains possibly the best dramatic rendition of a parliamentary procedure — the filibuster — in film.

■ **"St. Elmo's Fire"** (1985): This Brat Pack classic features a group of self-absorbed Georgetown University graduates who are finding it hard to let go of their college days. The characters, who find themselves time and again at hang-out St. Elmo's Bar and Restaurant, may be hard to love, but at least the theme song isn't.

■ **"State of Play"** (2009): A remake of a British miniseries, this American version follows journalists played by Russell Crowe and Rachel McAdams as they try to unravel the murder of a congressman's mistress. This retelling, which features scenes in Adams Morgan and Mount Pleasant, includes a few American twists other than to the accents, including a storyline about the privatization of American military operations in the Middle East.

## DINING: New spots open in NW

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rights hotspot Billy Simpson's as a French bistro.

*Serves dinner and brunch. Dishes include roasted bone marrow with green tomato chow-chow; rabbit liver mousse with pickled peach; braised pork cheek with picholine olives and carrots; and Amish chicken breast served with roasted summer vegetables and pommes Anna. Dinner entrees cost \$18 to \$23.*

### VAN NESS

■ **876 Café**, 4221-B Connecticut Ave. NW, 876cafe.com

Brother-sister pair Moreen and Michael Wallace opened this upscale Jamaican restaurant in April to increase the options for their native food in Washington. She has a background in business, while he comes to the operation from cooking at Café Deluxe in Bethesda.

*Serves lunch, dinner and brunch. Dishes include ackee and saltfish spring rolls; peppered peel-and-eat shrimp with spiced tomato chutney; and grilled hanger steak rubbed with Blue Mountain coffee and served with mashed sweet potatoes, spinach and mushrooms. Dinner entrees cost \$16 to \$18.*

### WESLEY HEIGHTS

■ **La Forchetta** (soon to be renamed **Al Dente**), 3201 New

Mexico Ave. NW, laforchettadec.com

Originally planned as a casual pizza joint, La Forchetta morphed before opening in April into a rustic Italian eatery starring a familiar local chef: Roberto Donna, who had lost his Galileo empire amid legal issues. The chef is front and center at the new spot.

*Serves lunch, dinner and brunch. Dishes include cavatelli with pork sausage, asparagus and cherry tomatoes; risotto with shrimp, cuttlefish, zucchini and sun-dried tomatoes; and Cornish hens cooked "Al Mattone," or with a brick. Entrees cost \$16.95 to \$19.95.*

### WOODLEY PARK

■ **District Kitchen**, 2606 Connecticut Ave. NW, districtkitchen.com

Chef Drew Trautmann got his D.C. start as a Restaurant Nora chef, but his most recent — and lengthy — gig was with the restaurant group that owns Mendocino Grille, Sonoma and Redwood. He teamed with Jawad Saadaoui from that group to open District Kitchen in January in a neighborhood that was otherwise lacking in interesting community-oriented options.

*Serves dinner. Dishes include a selection of homemade pickles, smoked Maryland bluefish dip with grilled bread, and a roasted whole fish. Entrees cost \$17 to \$27.*

## CIGAR BARS: Smokers have options despite ban

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Ebbitt Grill. The shop, known as Draper's, is the third-oldest tobacco store in the country, and this year it's celebrating 125 years in business. (The team also owns a location in Bethesda.) While Draper's has a lounge that seats 10 and accommodates up to 40 for store events, it doesn't serve food or

drinks. Enter Civil, which Anderson says will be a high-end cigar bar serving small plates created by celebrity chef Bryan Voltaggio, a runner-up on the sixth season of Bravo's "Top Chef." Voltaggio is opening his own restaurant, Range, in the pavilion, and will create the menu for Civil.

Civil will seat 105, and the 5,500-square-foot space will offer

private dining rooms with room for parties ranging from four to 40. Special dinner menus can be created for such events. There will be a strong emphasis on fine wine and high-end scotch, bourbon and vodka selections, Anderson said.

The retail portion of Civil could be open by Nov. 23, with the lounge and restaurant component expected to open a month later.

## BIKES: How to follow the rules of the road

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ever method is safest: staying in the same lane as the vehicle, changing lanes or riding off the road.

■ **Can you ride side by side with other bikes?** Two bikes are allowed to ride abreast when it doesn't impede traffic.

### EQUIPMENT

*Required by law:*

■ A bell or other device that can give audible signals up to at least 100 feet.

■ For biking at night, you must have a device on the front of your bike that emits a white light (steady or flashing) that's visible from 500 feet. On the back, you need a red reflector or red light (steady or flashing).

*Not required by law:*

■ A helmet, unless you're under age 16. (But it's obviously recommended.)

### PARKING AND TRANSPORTING YOUR BIKE

*When parking your bike, you're not allowed to:*

■ Lock it to any of the following: fire hydrants, police/fire call boxes, electric traffic signal poles, poles within bus zones, poles within 25 feet of an intersection, or trees under 10 inches in diameter.

■ Secure your bike at any one location for more than 12 hours.

*Bringing your bike on public transit:*

■ Bikes are allowed on Metrobuses at any time of the day, and all city buses are equipped with racks to

carry up to two bikes. (Visit WABA's site for loading instructions.)

■ For Metrorail trains, bikes are allowed at all times except for weekday rush hours: 7 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. (Meaning, yes, they're allowed on weekends and federal holidays — except July 4.)

During the week, there's a limit of two bikes per Metrorail car; on weekends, the limit is four. Cyclists should board through the first or last entrances on a Metro car, rather than a center door. Don't bring bikes on escalators.

### SHARING THE ROAD: HOW DRIVERS SHOULD DEAL WITH CYCLISTS

■ In general, treat cyclists the same way you would other drivers. So if you're trying to take a left and a cyclist is coming in your direction, wait for the bike to get past you.

■ How to turn right if there's a bike lane to your right: Correct procedure is for drivers to merge into the bike lane before the intersection, after yielding to bikes, then turn from that lane. Experts recommend signaling, making sure the bike lane is clear, then moving into the lane and signaling once more before turning. WABA offers a video on safe procedures at tinyurl.com/turndc.

■ Maintain a distance of at least 3 feet when passing a cyclist.

■ Avoid "dooring." The law requires that you open your vehicle door without interfering with moving traffic (including bikes). If an accident happens, the driver is to blame.

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