

## RESTAURANT GUIDE (prepared by Tyler Cowen)

Area restaurants for Ballston, Clarendon, etc.

### Right nearby:

Hunan Gate Restaurant, 4233 N. Fairfax Drive, Arlington, 703-243-5678.

On the surface a mediocre Hunan place, but underneath there is a Manchurian menu, originally in Chinese only but now parts are in English. Order from that! No other place around tastes like this one. I recommend the tofu scallion salad, the julienne potato salad, the NE style pancake, the chive potstickers, and the pork riblets with Italian flat bean stew, plus the amazing chicken dish with the large, flat wheat noodles, a real winner. I am not sure how you can get any of these but try your best. Nor should you forget the pork belly stew with wide glass noodles or the pots and dishes with fermented cabbage. This place is still getting better. Definitely recommended.

Rus-Uz Restaurant, 1000 N Randolph St, Arlington, VA, 202-468-8472.

Worth a visit, though it could be better. The appetizers are only so-so and rely too much on the qualities of “fried” and “breadly.” The manti and the fried pasta with lamb (your best choice) were both quite good. This is the unusual restaurant where the main courses are better than the small dishes. The salads have that Russian mayonnaise thing going, ugh. I liked what I had, they don’t have enough variety here, but still at the very least you should go. It also draws an interesting crowd of Uzbekis and Russians.

Tutto Bene, Ballston, 501 N. Randolph St., just off Glebe Rd., across from the Harris Teeter, 522-1005.

Bolivian food on weekends, soups and silpancho, certainly good but I also like the Italian dishes here, it is an Italian restaurant most of the time, very tasty. Tastes like the Italian food you get in South America, which means it is especially rich. The ravioli are my favorite.

### Somewhat of a walk:

**MaLa Tang**, [web site](#), [3434 Washington Boulevard, Arlington, VA](#), 703-243-2381, adjoining the George Mason University School of Law buildings (with Mercatus and School of Public Policy and ICAR). ([Metro Trip Planner](#) – opens in new window) [[Google](#) | [WaPo](#) | [Don Rockwell](#) | [Yelp](#)]

It is real Sichuan hot pot, excellent flavors all around, reminiscent of [Uncle Liu's Hot Pot](#) (same owner), superb cold dishes and appetizers, and the best [MaPo Tofu](#) in the entire area. They've made the decor chic, the wait staff "normal," and you can just walk up to a counter and get ready-to-eat Sichuan street food to your heart's content on a moment's notice. I predict this will serve as a major breakthrough for real Sichuan food in northern Virginia and also in the United States.

Liberty Tavern, 3195 Wilson Blvd Arlington, 703-465-9360, right near Clarendon Metro.

Surprisingly good, consistent, good pizza and mostly American food. Gets very crowded, go early. President Obama has eaten here, very trendy, most of all for brunch.

Pupatella, 5104 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, 571-312-7230, funny hours, closed Sunday and Monday, and also closed 3:30 to 5.

Excellent all around, first-rate Neapolitan pizza. Everything is fresh. Service is good. Execution is strong. Cheese and crusts are consistent. The seating quarters are modest but they are comfortable enough. I have yet to try their gelato, but this place should be in everyone's repertoire. I don't even have to crave pizza (rare for me) to want to go here.

Delhi Club, 1135 N. Highland St., Arlington, 703-243-6522, right at Clarendon Metro.

Perhaps you thought we had so many good new Indian places that we don't need another one? You were wrong. The food here is excellent, quality ingredients, and somehow the feel and cooking differ from the other places on this list. It reminds me of how Indian food often tastes in the UK. I like the cardamom dishes best, and yes it is from the same people who do Bombay Curry Company in Alexandria.

Kabob Bazaar, 3133 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, 703-522-8999, just across from Clarendon Metro.

The best ground beef kabob around, period. The daily stews are great, too. Doesn't look like much, but this place is excellent. Addictive. And don't be afraid to get the ground beef kabob, which in most other places is just boring. Here it could be the best dish. With the barberry rice, if they have it that day, they usually do on Thursdays or Fridays.

NOTE! You also can take cab rides to Eden Center, in Falls Church, Wilson Boulevard, a collection of about forty Vietnamese restaurants in one shopping center, almost all of them are quite good.