

*Mike Berman's*

# WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

No. 115

September 25, 2012

## RIGHT TRACK/WRONG TRACK & UNEMPLOYMENT

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### THE PRESIDENT

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### THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

- The Debates
  - Romney's 3<sup>rd</sup> Chance
- The Money
- Odds and Ends

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### THE SENATE/THE HOUSE

- The Money

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## RESTAURANTS OF SUN VALLEY/KETCHUM

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The Schedule  
41 Days to the Election

October 3, 2012  
October 11, 2012  
October 16, 2012

1<sup>st</sup> Presidential Debate – Denver, CO  
Vice Presidential Debate – Danville, KY  
2<sup>nd</sup> Presidential Debate – Hempstead, NY

October 22, 2012                      3<sup>rd</sup> Presidential Debate – Boca Raton, FL  
November 6, 2012                      Election Day

Post-Labor Day and the Party conventions, there has been an appreciable uptick in the number of Americans who think the country is going in the right direction as opposed to being on the wrong track.

Right direction scores through mid-September range from 38-41%. The high point of the year up until now was 34%.

<u>Last Date</u>		<u>Right Direction</u>	<u>Wrong Track</u>
9/17	AP/GfK	41	32
9/16	NBC/WSJ	39	55
9/12	CBS/NYT	38	57
8/25	WP/ABC	29	69
8/20	NBC/WSJ	32	61
8/9	Pol/GW/BG	32	61
7/22	NBC/WSJ	32	60
7/16	CBS/NYT	30	64
7/8	ABC/WP	33	63
6/24	NBC/WSJ	31	61

The unemployment rate seems to be slowly inching downward. As of mid-September the unadjusted rate of unemployment is 7.9%, which is the lowest it has been since Gallup began collecting unemployment data in January 2010. [Note: The adjusted rate produced by Gallup matches very closely that which is produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.]

	<u>BLS*</u> (Adjusted)	<u>Gallup **</u>
August	8.1%	16.6%
July	8.3%	17.1%
June	8.2%	17.3%
May	8.2%	18.0%
April	8.1%	18.2%
March	8.2%	18.0%
February	8.3%	19.1%
January	8.3%	18.7%
Average 2011	9.0%	18.7%
Average 2010	9.6%	18.8%

Average 2009      9.3%

\*Seasonally adjusted rate/Bureau of Labor Statistics

\*\*Gallup combines an unadjusted unemployed rate with those who are working part-time but want full-time employment.

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## PRESIDENT OBAMA

The President's job approval rating in Gallup on September 23 was 49% approval and 45% disapproval.

The public's grade for the job President Obama is doing (as found by Gallup) is lower than that of 5 of the previous Presidents at this point in their first term. The list of 8 follows.

	<u>App</u>	<u>Dis</u>
Eisenhower	68	19 (Aug)
Clinton	60	31 (Sept)
Reagan	57	36 (Sept)
Nixon	56	33 (Nov)
G Bush (II)	54	44 (Sept)
Obama	49	45 (9/23)
G Bush (I)	36	54 (Sept)
Carter	37	55 (Sept)

The following are several additional cuts at the President's job approval rating during 2012.

	<u>NBC/WSJ</u>	<u>NYT/CBS</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN/ORC</u>
Sept 2012	50/48%	49/46%	53/46 (WP)	51/46%
Aug 2012	48/49%	---	47/50%	49/48%
July 2012	49/48%	44/46%	47/49%	---
June 2012	47/48%	---	---	50/59%
May 2012	48/46%	50/48%	47/49%	49/50%
Apr 2012	49/46%	48/42%	50/45%	49/48%
Mar 2012	50/45%	41/47%	46/50%	51/45%
Feb 2012	---	50/43%	50/46%	50/48%
Jan 2012	48/46%	45/47%(CBS)	48/48%	47/51%

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By 51% to 47% Americans continue to rate Obama negatively on the economy. This is the lowest disapproval rating on the economy since March of this year. On foreign policy, 49% approve of the job Obama is doing; 46% disapprove of his performance. This is the lowest positive rating and highest negative rating he has received since April 2011. [NBC/WSJ 9/12]

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## 2012 PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL ELECTION

The following are survey results from media-related polling organizations. [WW tends to find them more consistently reliable. This is not to say that all non-media sources are not reliable. It is to say that the slant of some non-media sources – left and right – leave something to be desired.]

And, since this is the season when the focus should be on “likely voters,” registered voter numbers are listed separately. Certain surveys are testing both registered and likely voters in the same survey, and they will be listed in the separate sections.

<u>Survey</u>	<u>Last</u> <u>Date</u>	<u>Obama</u>	<u>Romney</u>
		<u>Likely voters</u>	
PEW	9/16	51	43
NBC/WSJ	9/16	50	45
CBS/NYT	9/12	49	46
FOX News	9/11	48	43
ABC/WP	9/9	49	48
CNN/ORC	9/9	52	46
CNN/ORC	9/3	48	48
CBS	8/26	46	45
ABC/WP	8/25	46	47
CNN/ORC	8/23	49	47
FOX News	8/21	44	45

		<u>Registered voters</u>	
Gallup	9/17	47	46
PEW	9/16	51	42
NBC/WSJ	9/16	50	44
Gallup	9/11	50	43
Gallup	8/27	46	47
CBS	8/26	46	45
NBC/WSJ	8/20	48	44

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Below is a chart of the 8 States which are described as the battleground States. Obama won them all in 2008. Bush won 6 of them in 2004 and 6 of them in 2000.

Obama leads marginally or better in each of these States at the present time, and in 5 of them he has hit 50% or more.

	Current Obama/ Romney Polling	Obama Approval/ Disapproval Rating	Un- Employ ment	New Voting Law	2008	2004	2000	State- wide Races	Competitive Congressional Races
Colorado	50/45	43/50	8.3		Obama	Bush	Bush	None	2 of 7
Florida	49/44	46/47	8.8	X	Obama	Bush	Bush	Sen.	8 of 27
Iowa	50/42	46/47	5.3		Obama	Bush	Gore	None	3 of 4
Nevada	50/47	45/48	12.0		Obama	Bush	Bush	Sen.	2 of 4
New Hampshire	48/47	43/50	5.4	X	Obama	Kerry	Bush	Gov.	2 of 2
Ohio	49/42	44/48	7.2	X	Obama	Bush	Bush	Sen.	3 of 16
Virginia	50/43	46/48	5.9	X	Obama	Bush	Bush	Sen.	1 of 11
Wisconsin	50/45	49/45	7.3		Obama	Kerry	Gore	Sen.	2 of 8

Approval/Disapproval Ratings are from Gallup Daily Tracking, January-June, 2012

All match race poll numbers were the most recent ones available on Real Clear Politics as of September 21, 2012, excluding polls conducted by Rasmussen. Many polls were done during and directly after the two Party conventions, making the poll data less reliable than usual.

Unemployment Rates via BLS for July 2012

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### The Electoral College

Here are cuts at the Electoral College that WW will regularly reprint as we head toward the Presidential election. 270 Electoral votes are needed to win.

	<u>Cook</u> <u>4/24</u>	<u>Cook</u> <u>7/2</u>	<u>Cook</u> <u>9/2</u>	<u>Rothenberg</u> <u>9/2</u>	<u>Wash Post</u> <u>9/2</u>
Solid/Likely Dem	182	201	201	196	196
Lean Dem	45	45	36	41	41
Total	227	247	237	237	237
Toss Up	101	85	95	95	95
Lean GOP	19	15	15	15	36
Solid/Likely GOP	191	191	191	191	170
Total	210	206	206	206	206

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### InTrade Prediction Market

As of 9/20/12, the price per share being bid for Obama shares is \$6.96, while the bid price for Romney shares is \$3.03. The following are the percentage chances that Obama or Romney will win the election.

	<u>1/12</u>	<u>2/16</u>	<u>3/20</u>	<u>4/26</u>	<u>8/15</u>	<u>9/20</u>
Barack Obama	50.6	60.3	59.9	60.2	56.7	69.4
Romney	--	--	--	38.2	42.3	30.5

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**THE MONEY**  
(through August 31, 2012)

## Spending limits

If you are at all interested in why Presidential candidates no longer participate in the Federal primary matching funds program, here is one reason: the spending limits that come with the matching funds.

Through August 31, 2012, essentially the end of the primary campaign for both candidates, President Obama had spent \$345.7 million and Governor Romney spent \$228.9 million.

If they had participated in the Federal primary matching funds program for the 2012 election, they would have been limited to spending \$45.6 million plus 35% for the cost of fundraising and compliance, a total of \$61.7 million.

Looking ahead to the general election, a candidate accepting the Federal general election grant in 2012 would be limited to spending \$91.2 million dollars. Future editions of the WW will report general election spending as compared to this amount.

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The following compares the two Presidential campaigns and each of their national Party committees through August 31<sup>st</sup> of this 2011-12 election cycle. Effectively, Obama has controlled the DNC throughout this period, and Romney has taken control of his national Party mechanism since he became the putative nominee. It also compares the two Super PACs specifically organized to support each of the two candidates. (Other Super PACs, as well as non-disclosing 501(c)(4)s, are playing in this space as well.)

Notable is the cash advantage of Obama over Romney and the national Party advantage of the Republican National Committee over the Democratic National Committee. Obama started September with an \$85 million to \$35 million advantage over Romney. The RNC began September with a \$77 million to \$7 million advantage over the DNC. On balance, Romney + RNC had a \$20 million advantage over Obama + DNC.

	<u>Obama</u>	<u>Romney</u>
Raised	\$432,197,459	\$279,343,000
Spent	345,723,446	228,921,635
Cash net of debt	85,855,201	35,434,404

	<u>DNC</u>	<u>RNC</u>
Total raised	\$256,945,979	\$301,054,269
Total Spent	245,459,497	214,311,711
Cash net of debt	7,284,744	77,628,822

	<u>Obama+DNC</u>	<u>Romney+RNC</u>
Raised	\$689,143,438	\$580,397,269
Spent	591,182,943	443,233,346
Cash net of debt	93,139,945	113,063,226

Also in play for the Presidential candidates are the two Super PACs which were organized to support them in particular.

	<u>Priorities USA Action</u> (Supports Obama)	<u>Restore our Future</u> (Supports Romney)
Raised	\$ 35,636,122	\$ 96,667,002
Independent Expenditures	30,098,157	82,491,407
Cash net of debt	4,832,993	6,297,200

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### The First Debate

The coming debate is Mitt Romney's third chance to change the dynamic of the Presidential contest.

The first two opportunities did not provide that change. Paul Ryan has faded into the background, as is usually the case with V.P. candidates of non-incumbents (Sarah Palin an exception). The Party conventions did not only not change the dynamic in Romney's favor, they moved it in Obama's favor.

The coming debates, particularly the first debate on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, is Romney's third chance. Can he stand toe-to-toe with Obama on that stage for 90 minutes? From Obama's point of view, the question is whether he can avoid lecturing and showing his irritation, a kind of cockiness that the public would be pleased to see lessened.

Do the Presidential debates have an effect on the race? Looking at the first Presidential debate in the last five Presidential elections, the answer is yes and no.



The chart below is based on Gallup data. (Keep in mind that the Gallup number is based on a rolling average.)

In one election, 2004, there was a substantial change from before and after the first debate. Among likely voters, the race went from an 8-point Bush lead to a dead-even race. In 2008, Obama went from a 3-point lead before the debate among registered voters to a 7-point lead after the debate.

There was not an appreciable change in the races before and after the first debate in the remaining elections.

<u>Pre-Debate</u>		<u>1st Debate</u>	<u>Post-Debate</u>	
9/25/08	Obama 48 RV McCain 45 RV	9/26/08	10/2/08	Obama 49 RV McCain 42 RV
9/26/04	Bush 53 RV Kerry 42 RV	9/30/04	10/3/04	Bush 49 RV Kerry 47 RV
	Bush 52 LV Kerry 44 LV			Bush 49 LV Kerry 49 LV
10/2/00	Gore 47 RV Bush 39 RV	10/3/00	10/10/00	Gore 45 RV Bush 40 RV
	Gore 46 LV Bush 44 LV			Gore 45 LV Bush 45 LV
10/5/96	Clinton 54 RV Dole 35 RV Perot 5 RV	10/6/06	10/12/96	Clinton 55 RV Dole 34 RV Perot 5 RV
	Clinton 54 LV Dole 36 LV Perot 5 LV			Clinton 53 LV Dole 35 LV Perot 4 LV
10/9/92	Clinton 50 RV Bush 34 RV Perot 9 RV	10/11/12	10/14/92	Clinton 47 RV Bush 32 RV Perot 15 RV

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### Odds and Ends on the Campaign Trail

There are signs that voters who earlier in the year were not prepared to vote to re-elect Obama have looked at Romney and decided it is not worth taking a chance on him. As one astute observer said, “They are now working to find a way to be comfortable with voting for Obama.”

Satisfaction with how things are going in the U.S. is at 30%, the highest it has been since August 2009, when it was 36%. Since then it has been as low as 11% in September 2011. [Gallup]

In the most recent NBC/WSJ survey (9/12-16):

\* 38% say the country is better off today than when Obama became President. This is up from 31% in August.

\* 42% think the economy will get better in the next 12 months, up from 27% who had that view in July, and 36% who had that view in August.

\* 47% think Obama will do better than Romney on Medicare, up from 42% in July.

\* 45% think Obama will do better deal with taxes than Romney, up from 40% in July.

\* 43% think Obama will do a better job in dealing with the economy, up from 37% in July.

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### The Tea Party

\* Only 22% of respondents consider themselves supporters of the Tea Party Movement. This is the lowest support number recorded since the survey started asking this question in September 2010. The high point was 30% in October and November of that year.

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## Eating Their Young

The Romney campaign has reached what might be called “the eating their young” phase of the campaign. A variety of Conservative/Republican pundits, media commentators, and conservative organization leaders have taken to pummeling the Romney campaign. Little do they realize, or perhaps they don’t care, but they are doing Obama’s work for him. At any rate, when you see or hear their comments, ask one question – has the person doing the talking been willing to expose him or herself to the public report card of running for office. With the exception of Joe Scarborough, if they have run for office, it does not show up in a casual search.

Ann Romney recently said it best, during an Iowa radio interview, in regards to Republicans who have criticized Mitt Romney and his campaign. “Stop it. This is hard. You want to try it? Get in the ring.”

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## Early Voting & Limiting Voting

Early voting has started in half the country. As many as 40% of the total votes cast in the election may be cast before election day, November 6. 34 States and the District of Columbia allow early voting of one kind or another without providing a reason. 33% of votes cast in 2008 were from early voters. This is up from 15% of votes being cast early in 2000. In two states, Oregon and Washington, all voting is done by mail.

The effectiveness of the Obama campaign’s early voting efforts in 2008 resulted in a number of States, led by Republican governors and legislatures, to pass measures which Democrats say are designed to limit early voting. Several Republican legislatures passed voting limit legislation to see it vetoed by Democratic governors.

In addition, in many of the same States, legislation was passed requiring a photo I.D. in order to vote. For a variety of reasons, some people do not have photo I.D.s. For example, senior citizens who do not drive have no particular reason to have a photo I.D. The process of obtaining these photo I.D.s can be time consuming and difficult, and there is usually a fee involved. Some have argued that the fee is equivalent to a poll tax.

The various efforts to limit voting or make it more difficult arguably have a disproportionate impact on blacks and Hispanics. Those who follow this issue in most detail have suggested that these efforts are designed to change the outcome of the election in a number of battleground States.

A number of these laws were and are being challenged in court, and some have been judicially constrained, but others remain in place.

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As with all potentially close elections, it comes down to voter turnout. So far, the public interest is lagging the level of interest at this same time in 2008 and 2004.

On a “10” point scale on which ten means you are very interested in the election and “1” means you are not at all interested, here is a September to September comparison:

	<u>Sept 2012</u>	<u>Sept 2008</u>	<u>Sept 2004</u>
10 & 9 combined	72%	78%	78%
10, 9 & 8 combined	84%	87%	87% [NBC/WSJ 9/12]

However, Gallup reports that enthusiasm for voting in the election is growing.

	<u>June</u>	<u>September</u>
All Registered voters	43%	55%
Swing State registered voters	46%	59%
Democrats	53%	73%
Independents	25%	43%
Republicans	55%	64%

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## THE CONGRESS

13% approve of the job that Congress is doing at this time. This is the lowest number recorded at this point in an election year going back to 1974.

Since January 2011, approval of Congress has ranged from 24% in May 2011 to 10% in August 2012. [Gallup]

#### THE U.S. SENATE

Democrats      51  
 Republicans    47  
 Independents    2 (caucus Dem)

At this point, control of the Senate appears to depend on the races in Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Assuming that Safe and Leaning Democratic seats end up that way after election day, the Democrats need to win 4 of the TossUp States to have an actual majority, or 3 to gain a majority with the vote of the Vice President.

The number of Safe & Leaning Democratic seats has moved from 15 to 17. The number of TossUps has moved from 10 to 8, and the number of Safe & Leaning GOP seats has remained consistent at 8.

Here is how the 33 Senate elections, made up of 23 Democratic incumbents (including 2 Independents) and 10 Republican incumbents, look to me at this time. (D=Dem incumbent in office, R=GOP incumbent in office, I=Ind. incumbent in office). *Italic* reflects retirement.

Safe Democrat(12)	Leaning Democrat(5)	TossUp(8)	Leaning Republican(3)	Safe Republican(5)
California	Florida	<i>Connecticut</i>	<i>Arizona</i>	Mississippi
Delaware	Maine	Hawaii	Indiana	Tennessee
Maryland	<i>New Mexico</i>	Massachusetts	Nebraska	<i>Texas</i>
Michigan	Ohio	Missouri		Utah
Minnesota	<i>Virginia</i>	Montana		Wyoming
New Jersey		Nevada		
New York		<i>No. Dakota</i>		
Pennsylvania		Wisconsin		
Rhode Island				
Vermont				
Washington				
West Virginia				

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Seats not up in 2012	30	37
Safe in 2012	12	5
Leaning in 2012	5	3
Total	47	45

Toss-ups 8 (2R/6D)

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### THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

There are no non-partisan commentators who are predicting that Republican control of the House is in anyway in doubt. Predictions, to the extent they are specific, seem to range from a Democratic loss of a seat or two to a Democratic pick up of 5 or 6 seats.

The chart below reflects the Cook Political Report's current Competitive House Race Chart through September 20, 2012. [Thanks to "The Cook Political Report."]

### THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

	Republicans	242		
	Democrats	193		
	<u>1/20/11</u>	<u>6/14/12</u>	<u>8/2/12</u>	<u>9/13/12</u>
TOTAL Dem	193	182	181	178
Solid Dem	150	157	156	157
Likely/Lean Dem	39	25	25	21
Toss-up	10	24	25	37
D	4	9	9	15
R	6	15	16	22
Likely/Lean GOP	53	42	41	30
Solid GOP	183	187	188	190
TOTAL GOP	242	229	229	220

“The Rothenberg Political Report” has also posted a report that deals with the entire House. [Thanks to the Rothenberg Report.]

	<u>1/12</u>	<u>6/12</u>	<u>8/2/12</u>	<u>9/14/12</u>
Safe Democrat	166	162	159	165
Competitive	78	75	75	68
D Favored		9	9	8
Lean D		10	12	4
Toss Up/Tilt D		4	5	6
Toss Up		11	10	15
Toss Up/Tilt R		15	14	11
Lean R		13	13	10
R Favored		13	12	14
Safe Republican	191	198	201	199

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### The Money

The following represents the financial activity of the Democratic and Republican House and Senate campaign committees.

	<u>DCCC</u>	<u>NRCC</u>
Total raised	\$127,140,861	\$115,905,827
Total spent	87,971,644	68,613,198
Cash net of debt	39,974,841	49,830,930

	<u>DSCC</u>	<u>NRSC</u>
Total raised	\$ 91,246,116	\$ 80,984,543
Total spent	61,157,779	52,170,122
Cash net of debt	30,841,930	28,932,736

DNC – Democratic National Committee  
RNC – Republican National Committee  
DCCC – Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee  
NRCC – National Republican Congressional Committee  
DSCC – Democratic Senate Campaign Committee  
NRSC – National Republican Senatorial Committee

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There are more than 800 Super PACs registered with the Federal Election Commission. Ostensibly, they operate independently of specific candidates. The majority of the Super PACs, have not so far raised or spent appreciable amounts of money in 2012. Here are five conservative and five liberal Super PACs that have raised more than \$5 million. Much of their spending will be directed to Congressional campaigns.

	<u>Liberal</u>	<u>Conservative</u>
	<u>Majority PAC</u>	<u>American Crossroads</u>
Total raised	\$ 14,621,312	\$47,340,973
Independent Expenditures	12,020,599	28,361,763
	<u>House Majority</u>	<u>Club for Growth Action</u>
Total raised	\$ 9,593,780	\$13,841,447
Independent Expenditures	7,001,972	12,229,995
	<u>AB21C</u>	<u>CLF</u>
Total raised	\$ 8,633,257	\$6,511,401
Independent Expenditures	0	557,507
	<u>AFL-CIO</u>	<u>Freedomworks</u>
Total raised	\$ 7,751,128	\$6,418,185
Independent Expenditures	577,501	5,724,424
	<u>NEA Advocacy</u>	<u>YGA</u>
Total raised	\$ 5,010,951	\$5,649,150
Independent Expenditures	0	2,509,220

AB21C – American Bridge 21<sup>st</sup> Century  
 CLF – Congressional Leadership Fund  
 YGA – Young Guns Action Fund

None of the above relates to the substantial spending being done by a variety of so-called 501(c)(4) social welfare organizations.

Ultimately, there will be some reporting of what these groups spend to the extent they engage in commercial advertising. However, their expenditures on



voter turnout activity will not be disclosed, unless they choose to volunteer that information which is not likely. Furthermore, the names of their donors will not be disclosed.

## RESTAURANTS

### Seven restaurants in Sun Valley/Ketchum, Idaho

#### **boca**

131 Washington Street  
Ketchum, Idaho  
208-928-7773

We ate at boca twice, once early in the first week by ourselves, and then early the second week with Jim and Jamie.

Last year, the restaurant at this location was called Sego. Other than some change in art work, upholstery, and new lighting, the restaurant physically looks the same.

There are a variety of seating areas for dinner. As you enter the restaurant, to the left is a lounge/bar area where dinner is also served. It is separated from the main dining area by a floor-to-ceiling wall that is open at both ends. There are 2 four-person booths and 6 deuces in a row that can be made into any combination. The bar is at the back of the lounge area, with 8 high chairs.

The main dining room seats 66 in various configurations. There are 5 four-person booths. There is also an outdoor, main floor seating area adjacent to the front sidewalk, with 3 four-top tables. It is a generally comfortable place to have dinner.

The rooftop, which I did not see, seats 50 people, but is totally dependent on the weather.

On both nights we were there we sat in the same back booth, which provides a full view of the rest of the main floor of the restaurant.

On both nights we shared everything, so here is the list of items that we devoured in various quantities.

- \* Spanish style flatbreads, covered with light tomato sauce, corn and mushrooms. There are a variety of choices.
- \* Aberquina, Nicoise and Picholine Olives with Citrus and Paprika. Wood picks are provided with which to eat the olives, but we used our fingers.
- \* Cebriche with “Leche de Tigre”
- \* Wild Jumbo Shrimp with Garlic and Tomato, Chili and Dry Sherry
- \* House Smoked Baby Back Pork Ribs with Candied Chilies Serrano
- \* Grilled Brochette with Chimmichurri and Chicken
- \* Penn Cove Mussels and Manila Clams with Tecate, Chorizo, Lime, Tomato Garlic and Butter
- \* Boca Paella Reconstructed

Showing considerable resolve, we did avoid a dessert which all but demanded that we try it: Broiled Banana Split with Vanilla Ice Cream, Fudge and Glazed Pecans.

We did, however, have an excellent Sangria and Pineapple Sorbet.

Jackie, our serving person, was particularly helpful and friendly. Reservations are necessary in season, although if you eat on the early side, you should not have too much trouble getting in. The place did not start to fill up until around 7 p.m. on both nights.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dashi  
220 East Avenue North  
Ketchum, Idaho  
208-928-7703

From year to year, there is a lot of restaurant turnover in Ketchum, as some that were there the previous year go out of business and new ones open their doors.

We heard about this particular restaurant from the clerk at the Hertz counter when we arrived at the airport in Haley. When we told the manager of the restaurant the reason we were there, he laughed and said the clerk’s boyfriend was a busboy at the restaurant.

The main entryway is on the side of the restaurant, and you first encounter a group of picnic tables in the side yard. The evening we were there these tables were being used by families with young children.

Immediately to the left, as you enter, is a bar that has seating for several people on high stools. There are a couple of high tops across from the bar with another 4 seats each.

Dashi has a substantial outdoor porch that appears to have as much, if not more, seating than the indoor dining area, which seats about 34 people at 2s, 4s, and 6s. We sat indoors.

The serving people all wear black T shirts with “dashi” written on the back in bright green letters. Green is also the color of the sneakers they all wear.

Rather than serve bread after you are seated, you are presented with a bowl of freshly popped popcorn.

Debbie and I shared everything that we ordered. Here are the items in the order they were presented.

- \* tempura green beans/Hoisin-mustard sauce with toasted sesame
- \* local sugar snap peas/horseradish, radish and Thai basil
- \* ginger-scallion noodles/pickled cucumber – shitake, spinach and sesame  
    (“all ramen noodles are fresh and garnished with toasted nori, menma and scallion)
- \* fried chicken/all natural chicken – ginger, garlic, soy glaze, mixed greens and rice

The dishes that are used are particularly pretty, and the food is artfully presented.

The service was friendly, attentive and not rushed.

\* \* \* \* \*

Galena Lodge  
Ketchum, Idaho  
23 North of Ketchum/Sun Valley on Highway 75  
208-726-4010  
[www.galenalodge.com](http://www.galenalodge.com)

The Galena Lodge is located about 20 miles north of Sun Valley/Ketchum on U.S. 75. We drove out one sunny day.

This old rustic lodge was destined for demolition until a bunch of local folks, including the late John Heinz, contributed the funds to buy the property and turned it over to the public. Lunch and Sunday brunch are served on a regular basis. At certain times of the year special dinners are served. The Lodge can be reserved for special events.

In the summer months, it is a jumping off point for mountain biking and day hiking. In the winter, it is a center for snowshoeing, cross country skiing, sledding, and overnight yurt stays.

In addition to indoor seating, during the summer months there is a porch with tables, chairs and umbrellas which are often organized family style to accommodate more folks.

On the parking lot side of the building there are a number of traditional style picnic tables. It also has a special dog patio with appropriate signage.

All of the food offerings are made to order.

Debbie and I shared a veggie wrap. This is a tortilla with cucumbers and spinach, which is served cold, except for the fact that it includes warmed onions and quinoa. We also had a citrus chicken salad with ample amounts of sliced chicken, and a couple of kinds of lettuce and beans.

Accompanying the salad was a portion of French fries that was so large it would easily satisfy a half dozen people eating ample amounts.

Galena Lodge is a perfect lunch spot on the way to Galena Pass, which is about 30 miles further up the highway, and worth the trip for the view.

The men's room was also quite rustic.

\* \* \* \* \*

Globus  
Corner of 6<sup>th</sup> and Warm Springs Road  
Ketchum, Idaho  
208-726-1301  
<http://globus-restaurant.com>

I previously reviewed Globus in September 2002.

On this visit we ate outdoors. We ordered and shared:

- \* Organic Chicken Lettuce Wraps/Nam Prik/Toasted Rice Power/Avocado Aioli/Roasted Peanuts
- \* Globus Caesar/Baby Romaine/Sambal Croutons/Reggiano/Spanish White Anchovy
- \* Crispy Fish/Garlic Broccoli/Scallion/Egg Noodles/Sweet and Sour Sauce
- \* Elk/Pureed Potatoes/Huckleberry Sauce

\* \* \* \* \*

Grill @ Knob Hill  
960 North Main St.  
Ketchum, Idaho  
208-726-8004

We went to the Grill with Laura and Mike, friends of Debbie who have a home just outside of Ketchum.

The restaurant seats about 200 people in two dining rooms and one outdoor area. The tables are of a variety of sizes and shapes.

For our first courses, Laura and I had the Caesar Salad with homemade croutons & shaved parmesan. Debbie opted for the Summer salad of butter leaf lettuce with red peppers, red onions, candied walnuts, goat cheese, and lemon with Thyme vinaigrette. Mike selected the corn chowder special.

For main courses, Laura picked Idaho Ruby Red Rainbow Trout, grilled with lemon, capers, brown butter & toasted pine nuts. Debbie, who often opts for

good beef, chose the Prime Rib (slow roasted, certified Angus beef with pan au jus & horseradish sauce). Mike and I both ordered the Nantucket scallop special.

The service was quite good, except for the beginning of the evening when it was overly attentive. The serving person kept coming by our table to ask if we were ready to order, when we, in fact, were having a get acquainted conversation.

The restrooms were part of the hotel in which the grill is located and quite a distance from the dining rooms.

\* \* \* \* \*

Michel's Christiania  
Restaurant and Bar  
303 Walnut Avenue  
Ketchum, Idaho 83340  
208-726-3388  
[www.christianarestaurant.com](http://www.christianarestaurant.com)

This restaurant has three distinct areas. As you enter, the first area is a lounge and bar area where food is also served. You then walk down 3 steps to an indoor eating area, and then on through to a delightful patio. The night we there we were too late in making our reservation to be able to eat on the patio.

There is a full menu, plus nightly specials which the serving person was able to fully describe.

We both had gazpacho, which was the soup of the day, followed by sharing an endive and radicchio salad with blue cheese, walnuts, and small roasted pears with Balsamic vinaigrette.

Debbie had the Idaho ruby roast filet with parsley, finished with a touch of butter. I selected halibut in a sage sauce with broiled tomatoes. Both fishes were accompanied by couscous and fine green beans. For dessert, we savored profiteroles rolls, with vanilla ice cream and chocolate sauce, and an excellent mango sorbet.

Service was up to par. Reservations are a necessity in season.

The men's room is down a steep flight of stairs in the basement. The door to the men's room is adorned with a brightly painted picture of a country Frenchman.

To the left as you enter are two wall hung urinals separated by a partial wall. Next to them is a commode stall with a wall and door that do not hit floor or ceiling. I could see the shoes of the person using the commode at the time I entered.

Across from the commode and urinals are two white, ceramic, square washbasins with a tall thick wall between them that comes out about a foot from the wall. The floor is covered with mid-sized whitish tiles and the walls are painted a light color. There is a large mirror above the washbasins. There are a number of poster like pictures hanging on the side wall of the room.

\* \* \* \* \*

Vintage Restaurant  
231 1/2 Leadville Avenue  
Ketchum, Idaho  
208-726-9595

This restaurant is described as the best restaurant in Ketchum, according to those who spend a great deal of time there.

It required four attempts before we could get a reservation at Vintage, but it was worth the wait.

The indoor part of the restaurant is located in a cabin owned by one Bert Cross, circa 1927. The outdoor part of the restaurant is located in what was the cabin's yard, walled off by an old wooden stake fence. Even though it was mid-July, there were various Christmas wreaths and other related decorations hanging from the fence.

There are old leafy trees that reach out above the outdoor area, as well as large umbrellas over some of the tables.

The restaurant seats 30-35 inside and another 26 at various tables, ranging from 2 -6, outdoors. In truly inclement weather the outdoor area is not usable, so the restaurant's owner has to make a judgment each evening as to whether he can use both dining areas.

We sat outdoors on a raised platform with another table of four people. They were sufficiently close that we could easily “share” in each other’s conversations. About two-thirds of the way through dinner the wind came up, rustling the trees, and a few raindrops worked their way through the overhanging trees.

The menu is limited, but provides sufficient options. This evening there were five appetizers, five entrees, and seven dessert options. As at a number of other restaurants, we shared all of the items.

Our first course was a fruit soup, which included mango, melon, kiwi, peach, mint, pineapple, and jalapenos. The second course was a beet salad with endive, toasted walnuts, goat cheese, grapefruit, and honey citrus vinaigrette. Both of these items were quite tasty, and the salad was notable for the fact that the endive was presented as slices not more than a quarter inch wide.

Our two entrees were Grilled Rack of Lamb, served with spinach, mushroom, feta cheese strudel, tomato ginger jam, fresh heirloom tomato, avocado, basil stack, and cabernet rosemary jus, and Jeff’s Old Fashioned Crispy Skin Duck. The latter is served as a half duck, slow-oven roasted, with wild rice, bean sprout Egg Foo Young, honey roasted grapes and a Kung Pao drizzle.

For dessert we selected an Apple Tart, served with caramel sauce and New Orleans coffee ice cream, and a home-made mango sorbet.

The food was excellent, but the thing that made the evening particularly enjoyable was our server, Marissa. She was quite delightful and got excited in a nice way when describing some of the dishes in response to our questions about favorite choices. All of the service was excellent, including from the young man who greeted us, showed us to our table, and helped the server in a variety of ways.

There were two interesting items that were part of the service. First, a long spoon in the ice tea, the handle of which was curved in such a way as to allow it to be hung on the side of the ice tea glass. The second item was coffee cups with open handles making it easier to get two fingers in the cup handle.

There are two unisex restrooms. They are not outdoors. They are quite small, and rather old, like the rest of the restaurant. Yet, the white ceramic commode and the white ceramic wash basin, that is sunken in a green wooden



counter, are sufficiently modern. There is a small framed mirror above the washbasin and several pieces of art hanging on the other walls. There are green wood slats around the room to waist height and the walls above are an off-green tan color. It was perfectly clean.

Reservations are a must and the restaurant has its own parking lot.

Debbie and I both look forward to eating there again.

*Mike*

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