

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

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State of the Nation

28% of Americans say the country is headed in the right direction while 66% say it is on the wrong track. (Bloomberg, 9/24)

[Keep mind Amy Walter's point in her September 1st column that there are variety of reason why folks may think the country is on the wrong track when it comes to the direction of the country.]

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Let's take a look at the "official" unemployment numbers.

The official BLS seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for September 2016 is 5.0%.

If one takes into account the total number of unemployed + those marginally attached to the labor force + those working part-time who want full-time work, the current rate is 9.7%. [BLS data is based on those 16 years of age and older.]

In the first week of October, Gallup found an unadjusted unemployment rate of 5.4%. It also found an under-employment rate of 13.0% (unemployed + those working part-time but wanting full-time). [This is based on those 18 years of age and older.]

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Real median household income increased by 5.2% between 2014 and 2015. However, real median household income is still 1.6% lower than it was in 2007, the year before the most recent recession.

The official poverty rate in 2015 was 13.5%, down from 14.7% in 2014.

However, there is a significant gender difference when it comes to the poverty rates. The poverty rate for women age 18-64 is 14.2% while for men it is 10.5%. [U.S. Census]

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Will wonders never cease? A number of major brands have informed their advertising agencies that failure to diversity their employee bases may cause the

companies to take their business elsewhere. Most recently this group includes, Verizon, General Mills and HP, Inc. [NYT, 10/1]

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3% of American adults own 133 million of the estimated 265 million guns in the country. [FiveThirtyEight]

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54% of Americans say that immigration helps the United States more than it hurts. 35% believe immigration hurts more than it helps.[NBC/WSJ, 9/16]

64% say that immigrants from other countries strengthen American society. 24% say they weaken society. [ABC/WP, 9/16]

62% believe that illegal immigrants who are living in the U.S. should be allowed to stay and eventually apply for citizenship. An additional 12% think they should be allowed to stay in the U.S. legally but not be able to apply for citizenship. [NYT/CBS, 9/16]

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On three issues in which religious liberty comes into conflict with the principle of non-discrimination, on only one does a majority of the public come down on the side of non-discrimination.

67% believe that if an employer provides health insurance plans for its employees the coverage must include birth control. 30% should be able to include it on religious grounds.

51% believe that transgender people should be able to use the restrooms with which they currently identify. 46% believe that transgender people should be required to use the public restrooms of the gender into which they were born.

On the question of whether a business that provides wedding services such as catering and flowers must provide those services to same-sex couples, 48% believe that businesses should be able to refuse those services to same-sex couples while 49% say businesses should be required to provide such services to same-sex couples.[Pew Research Center, 9/28/16]

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45% of us think the country is less great than in the past with 37% expressing a contrary view. 80% of registered voters who support Trump say the country is less great. This view is shared by only 20% of Clinton supporters.

64% believe that people like themselves get fair treatment in this country while 34% say they do not get fair treatment.

68% say that people like themselves have little or no influence over what the federal government does. 34% take the opposite view. [ABC/WP, 9/16]

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In September 2016, Gallup found that 32% of Americans have a “great deal” or “fair amount” of trust in the mass media. This is the lowest trust factor that Gallup has found since it started asking the question in 1997 and represents a drop of 8% points since last year.

There is a clear partisan distinction on how folks assess the mass media. 51% of Democrats have a great deal or fair amount of trust in the media but only 14% of Republicans share that view. Only 30% of independents are found to be trusting of the media.

26% of people who are 18-49 years of age have a great deal/fair amount of trust in the media, a drop of 10% points in the last year.

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Some communities have lost confidence in the performance of their police departments.

77% have at least some confidence in the police department in their community. (36% have a lot of confidence.)

42% of whites have a lot of confidence in the police.

14% of blacks have a lot of confidence in the police.

The number of people who say that police in their community do an excellent job when it comes to:

Protecting people from crime

Whites 78%

Blacks 48%

Using the right amount of force in each situation

Whites 75%

Blacks 33%

Treating racial and ethnic groups equally

Whites 75%

Blacks 35%

Holding officers accountable when misconduct occurs

Whites 70%

Blacks 31%

The number of people saying that protests of fatal police-black encounters are motivated by:

- Long-standing bias against the police 79%
(41% a great deal, 38% some)
- A genuine desire to hold officers accountable for their actions 65%
(33% a great deal, 33% some)

[Pew Research, 9/29/16]

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This and That

Three reasons to smile:

It's easy,

It feels good,

It can change someone's day.

Happy looks good on you.

Your smile brightens my day.

Hello Sunshine.

“Wrinkles merely indicate where smiles have been.”

(Mark Twain)

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President Obama

The public's grading of President Obama's job approval, as found by Gallup on 10/4/16, is 54% approval/43% disapproval. A year ago it was 45% approval/51% disapproval. Six months ago it was 48% approval /48% disapproval. [Gallup]

The following are other approval/disapproval scores going back 3+ years.

<u>Date</u>	<u>NBC/WSJ</u>	<u>WP/ABC</u>	<u>CNN/ORC</u>	<u>NYT/CBS</u>	<u>FOX</u>
Sept. 2016	52/45%	51/45%	51/48%	xxx	50/48%
Aug. 2016	52/44%	53/45%	xxx	xxx	52/45%
July 2016	51/46%	52/46%	55/45%	53/41%	xxx
June 2016	51/45%	54/43%	52/45%	43/37%(CBS)	42/39%
May 2016	51/46%	47/51%	51/46%	50/43%	48/49%
Apr. 2016	49%/48%	xxx	xxx	46/45%(CBS)	49/47%
Mar. 2016	49/46%	51/43%	51/46%	48/44%	48/46%
Jan. 2016	47/49%	50/46%	47/49%	46/47%	42/53%
Jan. 2015	46/48%	47/48%	xxx	xxx	45/51%
Jan. 2014	43/51%	45/52%	45/51%	46/47(CBS)	42/53%
Jan. 2013	52/44%	55/41%	55/43%	51/41%	

	<u>Approval</u>	<u>Disapproval</u>	(in final year in office)
Eisenhower	65	26	(10/2/60)
Clinton	58	37	(10/9/00)
Reagan	54	37	(10/1/88)
<u>Obama</u>	52	44	(10/1/16)
G W Bush	25	70	(10/5/08)

Obama has an approval/disapproval rating on the economy of 49% to 46% and an approval/disapproval rating on foreign policy of 42% to 46%. [Economist/YouGov, 9/24]

During Obama's two terms in office, the percentage of folks who described their lives as "thriving" increased from 51.6% to 55.4%. [Gallup]

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2016 Election

70% of Americans believe that this election has brought out the worst in people. [Monmouth University]

48% of eligible voters in 2016 are unmarried, up from 30% in 1974. And for the first time the percentage of unmarried women who are eligible to vote exceeds that of married women 26% to 25.9%. The percentage of married men who are eligible continues to exceed the number of unmarried men 26.3% to 21.6%. [WSJ, 10/1-2]

75% of Americans disapprove of the way in which Congress is handling its job. [Fox News, 9/16]

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The states of Delaware, Mississippi and Vermont have never sent a woman to Congress.

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48% of registered voters prefer a Congress that is controlled by the Democrats while 45% would like to see the Republicans in charge. [NBC/WSJ, 9/16]

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The House

Currently, the Democrats are likely to increase their numbers in the House. However, that increase will not be enough to approach retaking control of that body. [The WW relies on the Cook Political Report for the House data below.]

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Democrats	186
Republicans	247
Vacancies	2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Safe in 2016	177	202
Likely	5	14
Lean	8	13
	<u>Tossup</u>	
	3	13

The Senate

Recent polling has the Republican ahead in Nevada, the Democrat ahead in Pennsylvania and the Democrat and Republican are even in New Hampshire. If New Hampshire breaks for the Republican and there are no surprises and races go as they are labeled below, the Republicans will control the Senate 51-49. The data below is based on a combination of the current projections of Cook, Rothenberg/Gonzales and Sabato, with a little bit of liberty on the part of WW.

THE U.S. SENATE

Republicans	54
Democrats	44
Independents	2

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>
Seats not up in 2016	36	30
Safe in 2016	9	15
Leaning in 2016	3	4
	Kirk	Blunt
	Indiana	Rubio
	Johnson	Burr
Total:	48	49

Toss Up

Nevada	Ayotte
	Toomey

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The Contest for President

50% of Clinton supporters say that men have too much influence in the country these days. This compares to 20% of Trump voters who share that point of view. (ABC News)

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The level of unfavorability of both candidates for president can't help but draw attention.

Hillary Clinton is viewed unfavorably by 55% of Americans while 43% view her favorably. Trump is viewed unfavorably by 59% of Americans and 39% view him favorably.

In January 2009, Clinton was viewed favorably by 66% of Americans while only 33% viewed her unfavorably. Her favorability eventually diminished until the spring of 2015. In March her favorability number went from positive to negative several times. By mid-May it had turned negative for good.

Two things happened around that time. Clinton announced her candidacy for President and her use of a personal computer server for official business became known. 69% say Clinton did something wrong by using this server for her work as Secretary of State. [CBS/NYT, 9/16]

The Real Clear Politics chart on the favorable/unfavorable ratings of Donald Trump start May 19-26, 2015. At that time, his unfavorable rating was 69% and his favorable rating was 20%. Between then and now, Trump's unfavorable rating has ranged between 50% to 70%.

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60% of registered voters think Clinton is qualified to be president. Only 36% say that about Trump. When it comes to whether these two candidates are trustworthy, neither does very well. 35% say that Clinton is trustworthy and 31% have that view about Trump. [ABC/WP, 9/16]

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The belief by women that Hillary Clinton is "judged more harshly because she is a woman", varies by age. 60% of women age 18-29, 46% of women age 30-34, 38% of women age 45-64 and 31% of women 65+ hold this belief. [NYT/CBS, 9/16]

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The NBC/WSJ survey (9/16-19) asked respondents to rate the two candidates as to who is better suited to handle certain matters. On six of these matters, Clinton comes out ahead. On two of these matters, Trump comes out ahead and one quality they are tied.

Dealing with the economy - Trump leads 46/41%
Being honest and trustworthy- Trump leads 41/31%

Terrorism and homeland security – Trump 43% , Clinton 42%

Dealing with immigration – Clinton leads 50/39%
Changing the country for the better – Clinton leads 44/38%
Being a good commander-in-chief – Clinton leads 48/33%
Being in charge of our nuclear weapons – Clinton leads 51/25%
Having the right temperament to be president – Clinton leads 56/23%
Being knowledgeable and experienced enough to handle
the presidency – Clinton leads 60/23%

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The following are excerpts from Chris Cillizza’s October 3, 2016 column in
the Washington Post entitled,

Trump supporters have fallen heart over head in love

“On MSNBC’s “Morning Joe” on Friday, September 30th, Chris Matthews gave the best explanation of what’s behind Trump’s appeal that I have heard during the entire election cycle. Here’s the key segment:

“A lot of this support for Trump, with all his flaws, which he displays regularly, is about the country — patriotic feelings people have. They feel like the country has been let down. Our elite leaders on issues like immigration, they don’t regulate any immigration, it seems. They don’t regulate trade to our advantage, to the working man or working woman’s advantage. They take us into stupid wars. Their kids don’t fight, but our kids do.

“It’s patriotic. They believe in their country. . . . [There is a] deep sense that the country is being taken away and betrayed. I think that is so deep with people that they’re looking at a guy who’s flawed as hell like Trump and at least it’s a way of saying, ‘I am really angry about the way the elite has treated my country.’ And it’s so deep that it overwhelms all the bad stuff from Trump. It’s that strong. It’s a strong force wind.”

Chris continues, “So every time a newspaper advises against Trump, a celebrity says how dumb the candidate is or a member of the Republican foreign-policy establishment condemns him, it cements many people’s belief that what

Trump has been saying all along is right. If the elites think that Trump is stupid or out of touch (or both), then those same elites think the same things about the average Joe. About you.

“The resentment and anger those feelings fuel is why, at some level, it does not matter what Trump says or does. It is beside the point for many of these people. The point is that he is channeling all of their distaste for the state of the country — and the elites they think created it.

“Those emotions are why Trump is still within shouting distance of Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton, despite his running one of the least-strategic campaigns in modern memory. And it is why he still has a shot at winning the election despite everything that he has done wrong over the past many months.

“Matthews understands that in a way that few other people--and especially pundits--do.”

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James Fallows posted the following on his daily blog on October 2nd. It hits the spot.

A Simple Way to Think About the Election

I think this is simple, rather than simplistic:

1. The people *who are for Donald Trump, are for him*. And almost nothing he can say or do, or that can be said or revealed about him, will undercut that support. The things that ordinarily would be considered “shocking” or “disqualifying” haven’t eroded belief among his base, and probably won’t.
2. But there are *not enough of these people* to get 270 electoral votes for Trump. There were enough to give him an initial plurality in a huge GOP field, and to keep him coming out ahead as his GOP rivals foolishly attacked one another rather than concentrating on him. But in the general election his core support has remained below winning levels in virtually all honest polls. He has so far seemed to hit a ceiling at around 40% support—sobering in itself, but not enough.

3. Therefore he *needs new supporters*—more women, more blacks and Latinos and Asians, more Muslims, more educated people, more of the young.
4. Therefore, the test of everything Trump does now—the debates, the “Miss Piggy” controversy, the taxes, everything—is whether it *brings him anyone new*. The question is not the one we mainly hear after debates or Trump flaps: how this affects his supporters. They already support him. The question is whether what he does and says brings in anyone undecided, or new.

My guess is that it has not.

The main point is: since Trump starts with *not enough votes to win*, the logical test to apply, in the 36 days that remain, is whether what he does with each speech, each answer in a debate, each tweet, each flux of the news cycle, expands his base. If it doesn't, he has lost.

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Real Clear Politics

10/3	Clinton 205	Trump 165	Toss Ups	168
9/1	Clinton 262	Trump 154	Toss Ups	122

Sabato's Crystal Ball

10/4	Safe Clinton 183	Likely Clinton 37	Lean Clinton 96	Total 316
9/26	Safe Clinton 188	Likely Clinton 12	Lean Clinton 72	Total 272
9/1	Safe Clinton 190	Likely Clinton 83	Lean Clinton 75	Total 348

10/4	Safe Trump 163	Likely Trump 27	Lean Trump 25	Total 215
9/26	Safe Trump 163	Likely Trump 27	Lean Trump 25	Total 215
9/1	Safe Trump 121	Likely Trump 42	Lean Trump 27	Total 190

10/4	Toss Ups	7
9/26	Toss Ups	51

FiveThirtyEight Election Forecast – Electoral Votes

10/4	Clinton 309	Trump 228
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NBC Battleground Map

10/6	Clinton 268	Trump 190	Toss Ups 80
9/6	Clinton 272	Trump 174	Toss Ups 92

Washington Post/Survey Monkey

9/7	Solid Clinton 187	Lean Clinton 57	Total 244
9/7	Solid Trump 108	Lean Trump 18	Total 190

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Selected polls, September - October 2016

The list below includes a series of surveys in the presidential race. It includes both Clinton vs Trump and Clinton vs Trump vs the Libertarian and Green Party candidates. The numbers for the latter two are treated as one for the purposes of this chart.

		Clinton	Trump	3 rd Party	Clinton/ Trump
10/2	CBS News	49	43	--	C+6
	CBS News	45	41	11	C+4
10/2	CNN/ORC	51	45	--	C+6
	CNN/ORC	47	42	9	C+5
9/29	Fox News	49	44	--	C+5
	Fox News	43	40	12	C+3
9/25	NBC/SurMon	51	44	--	C+7
	NBC/SurMon	45	40	13	C+5
9/22	ABC/WP	49	47	--	C+2
	ABC/WP	46	44	6	C+2
9/19	NBC/WSJ	48	41	--	C+7
	NBC/WSJ	43	37	11	C+6
9/14	Fox News	45	46	--	T+1
	Fox News	41	40	11	C+1

9/13	CBS/NYT	46	44	--	C+2
	CBS/NYT	42	42	12	Even
9/4	CNN/ORC	48	49	--	T+1
	CNN/ORC	43	45	9	T+2
9/4	NBC News/SurMon	48	42	--	C+6
	NBC News/SurMon	41	37	16	C+4

The Money Game – How much was raised?

The only numbers available are through August 31 so they seem a bit irrelevant at this time.

2016 General Election Debates

Most commentators say that Hillary Clinton won the first debate. And by just about any standard she did. However, Donald Trump did speak to his followers who were watching.

First Presidential Debate:

Monday, September 26, 2016

Hofstra University

Long Island, Hempstead, NY

84,000,000 viewers – a record – previous record 80,600,000 Carter/Reagan 1980

These numbers do not include people who watched live streaming of the event on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other sites. [WP]

Vice Presidential Debate:

Tuesday, October 4, 2016

Longwood University, Farmville, VA

Moderator: Elaine Quijano – CBS

Second Presidential Debate:

Sunday, October 9, 2016

Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

Moderator: Anderson Cooper – CNN & Martha Raddatz – ABC

Third Presidential Debate:

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

Moderator: Chris Wallace – Fox News

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The Washington Watch relies on the following sources of political data: Cook Political Report, Rothenberg & Gonzales Political Report, Sabato's Crystal Ball, Ballotpedia, Real Clear Politics.com, The Green Papers.com, Huffpost – Pollster.com and Polling Report.com.

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Women Will Get It Done

Going forward, the Washington Watch will be including short sections from a project that I have been working on called, “Women Will Get it Done.”

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Women in Business

Women make up 47% of the total U.S. labor force. They own nearly 9.1 million businesses which generate over \$1.4 trillion in sales and employ nearly 7.9 million people. Globally, women control close to \$28 trillion in spending and generally control their home's purse strings. So why aren't more women at the top of U.S. businesses?

Women make up only 4.8% of CEOs of S&P 500 companies, only 4.6% of Fortune 1000 CEOs and only 20% of board members for companies in the S&P 500. While these numbers are an improvement over years past, they are not growing at a rate equal to the rate of women working in business, many of whom are capable of being industry leaders.

The reasons for this lack of female leadership in business are multifaceted, but the research seems to bring two to the top: first, the idea that there aren't enough

women in the “pipeline” being trained and groomed for leadership positions and second, that gender bias continues to be pervasive in American business. Women exit the pipeline for a myriad of reasons, but a common reason is work-family balance struggles.

There is little incentive for businesses to offer greater flexibility for women with families so, more often than not, women are forced to decide between the two. One of the unintended consequences of women exiting the pipeline is that there are then fewer women to act as mentors to and advocates for up-and-coming female employees. Valuable guidance on how to best navigate the politics and competition of promotions disappears. It then becomes a bit of a chicken and egg situation; if women need greater female mentorship to get to higher positions but there aren’t any women to mentor them, how can they rise through the ranks to then become mentors themselves?

Another reason we see fewer women at the top, and one that seems to be a root problem, is gender biases. Bias continues to permeate the business world and act as stumbling block for women pursuing business leadership. A 2012 study found that “despite identical personal qualifications and firm financials, female CEOs were perceived as less capable than their male counterparts.”

Another recent study found that, “a female CEO who talked disproportionately longer than others in an organization setting was rated as significantly less competent and less suitable for leadership than a male CEO who talked for an equivalent amount of time.” Expectations for men and women in the workplace are different when they shouldn’t be.

Women have to prove themselves in ways that their male counterparts do not and this puts women at a disadvantage when it comes to moving up the ladder towards those leadership positions that so many of both strive and deserve to attain. If business and society overcome gender bias and promote women who are qualified and capable to perform in top positions, the “pipeline” problem will disappear and women will be found in high numbers at every level of business, providing their talents and expertise to an essential American industry. It is not a competency issue, it is an opportunity issue.

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Men are 30% more likely than women to see a promotion from entry-level ranks to manager. [WP, 10/2/16]

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About Books

Another book has drawn my attention.

The Gift of Anger:
“use passion to build not destroy”
By Joe Solmonese

The opening chapter is entitled, “Channeling Anger into Action.” Below are the opening lines of this chapter.

“These days the world seems to be an angrier place than it used to be. Let’s face it: we’re stretched in a million different directions, yet the world is getting smaller, more interconnected, and our relationships are rapidly changing. We used to compete against the business across the hall or across the country; now we must think about a global economy. Social media has provided a platform for anyone to express anything and everything they want and, democratically speaking, that’s a good thing. Yet the sheer volume of it, the unfiltered nature of the content, and the anonymity available on these platforms created echo chambers for anger and hurtfulness to be exacerbated. “

The book is available on Amazon.

RESTAURANTS

Nougatine at Jean-Georges
1 Central Park West
New York, New York 10023
212-299-3900

Jean-Georges is a more formal dining room than Nougatine which is its more casual companion. Debbie and I had lunch there with Bill and Robie.

When we arrived at noon guests were not being allowed in the dining room even though we could see through the glass doors that folks were at tables. Bill

asked about it and was told they were there having had breakfast. After about a ten minute wait the receptionists began letting folks into the dining room but we simply stood there. Then it became clear that as folks had arrived, many before us, they were placed on a list in order of their arrival and were being escorted into the dining room in the order in which they had arrived. Finally, it was our turn.

As you enter through the doors there is a path to the more formal dining room.

The interior of the restaurant is quite modern. As you enter, there is an L shaped bar immediately to your right which seats twelve people on high chairs. I suspect that on busy lunch days they also serve food. The rest of the room is filled with tables of various sizes, 2s and 4s. If there is a larger party, the various tables could easily be combined. There is a long padded bench just past the bar with a number of two person tables.

Nougatine offers a pre-fix lunch menu Monday thru Saturday from noon to 3 p.m.

Robie and Bill started with Kale Salad, Parmesan and Lemon. Debbie opted for the Beet and Strawberries Salad with Shallots, Chili, Sherry Vinegar, Pistachio and Mint. I went with Fried Calamari, Basil Salt and Citrus-chili Dip.

None of us were particularly adventurous for our main courses. We all had the Cheeseburger with Russian Dressing and Crispy Onion. Robbie ordered it without the bun, Debbie and Bill ate the bun and I ate the bottom half of the bun, I had ordered my burger cooked medium well and Debbie requested medium rare. She got the medium well and I got the medium rare so we just switched.

Bill and Robie passed on dessert but Debbie and I couldn't resist. Debbie ordered the Mixed Berry Pavlova, Whipped Fromage Blanc, Strawberry Sorbet. I selected the Jean-Georges Warm Chocolate Cake with Vanilla Bean Ice Cream.

While we did not try them the restaurant offers some interesting organic juices. Green Juice includes Apple, Kale, Cucumber, Spinach, Lemon and Ginger. Ruby Red Juice includes Carrot, Beet, Orange, Lemon and Young ginger.

While Nougatine is quite casual, those in the more formal dining room seem to be less casually dressed. Even at lunchtime the Nougatine enforces a business casual dress code which includes no sneakers, no shorts, no t-shirts and no flip

flops. I was wearing a pair of Nike running shoes but no one commented or kept me out of the room.

The restaurant has four restrooms, two for women (unusual but smart), one for men and one joint for special needs.

The individual restrooms are quite small. I only checked the men's room but I suspect the two women's restrooms are similar. There is a white ceramic commode and a white ceramic washbasin which is set in a square light swirled marble counter. The walls are covered with a speckled light tan design.

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My Choices

WW was recently asked where I go in Washington when I am just going to a favorite restaurant for a good meal and not checking out a new restaurant. So here goes.

Breakfast Seasons Restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel

Lunch Equinox Restaurant – 818 Connecticut Ave, NW 202-331-8118
(Regional and Seasonal Cuisine)
I Ricchi Restaurant – 1220 19th Street, NW 202-835-0459
(Italian Cuisine)
Bourbon Steak Restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel

Dinner Equinox and I Ricchi

In addition to consistently good food and service, these restaurants have one other thing in common. They each will modify anything on the menu as long as they have the ingredients.

Parking The Four Seasons has parking at all times.
Equinox and I Ricchi have convenient parking at dinner.

Takeout Pitmasters Back Alley BBQ (part of Wagshals)
4818 (alley) Yuma St., NW 202-350-9791
Delivery or Carry-out

Shanghai Lounge (Chinese)

1734 Wisconsin Ave, NW 202-338-1588
Delivery or Carry-out

Mike

2100 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
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