

dining | **Weekend Pass**

# Your Just Desserts

The Sweet Lobby bakes up treats your taste buds deserve

**New Spot**

Just blocks from the Capitol, a new kind of lobbying is taking place. The Sweet Lobby wants to persuade patrons to put aside partisan differences and simply enjoy a little dessert. After all, even politicians have a hard time arguing when their mouths are full. Not that they could stop themselves from nosing on these boutique baked goods long enough to offer a sound bite longer than “Mmm.”



PHOTOS BY NEVIN MARTELL

Employee Samantha McMahon works the counter at Eastern Market's Sweet Lobby.

**Vision:** Owner Winnette McIntosh Ambrose and her younger brother, store manager Timothy McIntosh, grew up in Trinidad before attending MIT 10 years apart to earn mechanical engineering degrees. Now they specialize in the science of sweets inspired by Parisian patisseries.

**Eats:** The stars of this tiny treat shop are the French macarons, which are offered in 10 rotating flavors (\$1.75 each). Standouts include the sweet-meets-savory hazelnut praline salted caramel, the aromatic chocolate-cassis and the zingy lemon. The creamy sweet coconut was inspired by the siblings' childhood. “Our mom made ice cream from scratch with coconuts grown in our backyard,” McIntosh Ambrose says. “That was the taste we were going for, but packed into a macaron.” The Barracks Row bakery also offers a dozen types of cupcakes daily (\$2.75 each), which might include



Top to bottom: Sweet Lobby's coconut, mango and salted caramel macarons.

the Elvis-friendly banana-peanut, the intense midnight dark chocolate or the classic red velvet. If none of the available flavors hit your sweet spot, you can design the palm-sized pastry of your dreams and order a batch for consumption in the not-so-distant future (\$2.75 each with a two-dozen minimum and a \$10 design fee).

**Drinks:** Beverage choices are limited to bottled water (\$2), Perrier (\$2.50) and Izze sodas (\$2.50). McIntosh Ambrose helped develop three caffeine-free loose-leaf teas, but they're available only as a take-home product. Choose between a soothing green with lemongrass and mango; a perky orange-ginger rooibos; and a flower-powered Ceylon with hibiscus petals (\$14 per tin). NEVIN MARTELL

● 404 8th St. SE; 202-544-2404, [Sweetlobby.com](http://Sweetlobby.com). (Eastern Market)

**Atmosphere**

Chocolate brown and regal gold dominate the color scheme of this slender space, but no one's really looking at the décor. The display cases filled with a multihued multitude of tasty treats are what pack the place with dessert lovers of all ages.



**Dine & Dash:** On Saturday from 4 to 6 p.m., white linen attire and \$25 will get you into Cajun Experience's (1825 18th St. NW; 202-670-4416, [Cajunexperiencedc.com](http://Cajunexperiencedc.com)) “White Linen Night,” during which executive chef Thomas Schoborg will demonstrate how to make some of the eatery's signature dishes — including the seafood gumbo, shown. More knowledge will be dropped Sunday at the eatery's “Dirty Linen Sunday” (3 p.m., \$25), where patrons will learn how to make Cajun cocktails. DARONA WILLIAMS (EXPRESS)



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