

# Washington Post...

## Editorial Profile

At first glance, Cafe Ole seems like another fast-food, snacks-and-wraps place. But something far more interesting is happening here. Cafe Ole is creating its own environment. The bar has that convivial feel of an authentic wine bar: People seem to be there for tasting and conversing rather than hard drinking. The food also plays a significant part. Bright colors, hard edges, intrusive music and self-service aren't usually accompanied by such luscious little salads. The soujouk salad, crunchy and

spicy, is like none I've tasted. Shankleesh is a dice of ripe tomatoes made wildly delicious with creamy sheep's cheese, red onions and a tingle of seasonings. These are small dishes, but they have such flavorful impact that they leave you satisfied well before you're stuffed. Of the mezze I've tried from the long list, I like the cold ones best. The hummus has guts. The panzanella is that irresistible mix of good tomatoes with basil, garlic and cubes of toasted bread infused with olive oil. Toscana salata has bits of mortadella, artichoke and olives tossed with silky orzo in a lemon aioli. French, Italian, Greek-a little of everything is in this one little dish. Others are more North African, or French, or Israeli or even Spanish. These foods have big flavors, well suited to small portions and to slow nibbling. They far outshine the complicated and sometimes mushy sandwiches and wraps. Desserts are showy sweets, rich and stolid. Giant brownies are achingly sweet and sometimes stale. This is a kitchen that accomplishes more with subtlety than with extravagance. [Make reservations for a party of eight or more.]

-- Phyllis C. Richman

### TIP SHEET

**PRICE**

\$ \$\$

Inexpensive  
entrees \$10-under

**DRESS CODE**

Casual

**PAYMENT**

American Express  
Diners Club  
Discover  
Mastercard  
Money Orders  
Visa

**Hours**

Fri-Sat 11:00am-12:00am  
Sun-Thu 11:00am-10:00pm