The Weekly Dinner Group – Frequently Asked Questions

Group Basics

What is The Weekly Dinner?

We are a social dining group that explores restaurants in the DC area. Most of our events are on weekends, as we find more members are available at that time, but we also host occasional non-weekend events. Think of it as a mix of food adventure and community.

What type of restaurants do you go to?

We go to a wide variety of places, from casual gems to fine dining. Organizers actively seek new spots to test out, while focusing on well-reviewed places. We're open to member suggestions, but restaurant selection is primarily handled by the organizers based on our own experiences and member feedback.

What's the membership demographic?

The group consists mostly of professionals from their 20s to 60s, with a good balance of men and women. The key commonality among members is a love for socializing and food.

Is this a singles group?

No. The group is about food, friends, and community. While a few long-term relationships have started here, our focus is on enjoying great food and conversation. Members attend solo, with friends, or as couples. We aim for a respectful and inclusive environment for all. Any attraction should be mutual and respectful. Please refrain from PDA during group events.

Do you have any requirements for members?

Yes, but they're simple and help the group run smoothly:

- **Keep your RSVPs up to date**. Each event will have a defined final RSVP 'change your mind' time and cutoff. If you RSVP 'Yes' and your plans change after that time, update to 'No' immediately so someone else can join. If you're unsure, wait until you're fully committed to RSVP.
- **If you RSVP 'Yes,' show up**. Empty chairs hurt the group and may cost money if the restaurant charges per seat.
- **Be responsive** if an organizer reaches out directly. We only message when needed—please reply

- **Honor the group's required fixed gratuity** when the restaurant applies it (usually 20% pre-tax for large groups). This is non-negotiable.
- **Use at least your real first name**, or a close variation. Using nicknames, personas, or IDs may limit your ability to attend events.

Event Sign-Up

How do I RSVP?

To RSVP for an event, visit the event page and select 'Yes.' You may only RSVP for yourself. Due to fixed seating and a large number of members, we typically cannot accommodate guests unless explicitly stated by the organizer.

Why does RSVP matter?

RSVPs are critical because restaurants set tables based on the exact number we provide. No-shows leave empty seats, prevent waitlisted members from attending, and may incur charges if the restaurant bills per seat.

When do RSVPs open and how fast do events fill?

RSVPs typically open 1–2 weeks before an event. Popular events often fill quickly, sometimes within a day.

What if an event is full?

Join the waitlist. If a spot becomes available, Meetup automatically moves you up. If the reservation is expanded, the organizer will release new spots. It's important to track your RSVP, especially if you're on the waitlist or the 'Yes' list, to avoid being automatically pulled in last minute.

Event Logistics

How long does an event usually last?

Plan for 2.5 to 3 hours for most dinners. Larger or more upscale gatherings may take longer.

What types of events do you hold?

The majority of our events are dinners, but we also host brunches, happy hours, and unique experiences like boozy milkshake tours.

How big are the dinners?

Before the pandemic, many dinners had 20+ attendees across multiple tables. Post-pandemic, we've adjusted the group size based on restaurant capacity, staffing, and logistics. Expect smaller, more manageable gatherings unless otherwise noted.

How is the bill handled?

Many restaurants now require a single check for the table. The organizer will ensure that everyone pays their representative share, including what you ate, drank, plus gratuity. For shared-plate dinners, the bill may be divided evenly.

How is gratuity handled?

Many restaurants, especially during Restaurant Week, require a fixed standard gratuity for large reservations, usually 20% pre-tax. This gratuity is non-negotiable and all attendees must contribute. Think of it as the only 'membership fee' we have, which goes directly to the restaurant staff.

Do restaurants charge for no-shows?

Yes. Some charge per reserved seat, and this may leave the group covering the cost. This is why updating RSVPs is essential.

Do members go out after dinner?

Some members head to a bar or lounge afterward, but it's optional.

No-Show Policy Highlights

- If you RSVP 'Yes' and miss the event without timely cancellation, Meetup tags your profile as No-Show.
- First No-Show: You'll be asked for a brief explanation. No response may impact membership.
- Second No-Show within three months: Removal from the group.

Community Standards

- Treat staff and members with respect.
- Keep conversation friendly.
- No solicitation or advertising in posts or comments without organizer approval.
- Do not promote alternate events in comments on scheduled dinners.
- Seat-switching sometimes occurs during dinner to help people meet more members. Join in when asked.
- Keep PDA outside group time.

Fees and Donations

Membership is free. Optional donations help cover Meetup costs when needed.

Restaurant Selection

- Organizers aim for variety across cuisine, neighborhood, and price. Member suggestions feed the list. Member-hosted one-offs appear when a restaurant suits a specific theme or size.
- Organizers also consider that dining for two or four can be very different from dining for six to fourteen, and this factor plays a role when evaluating restaurants for potential events.

Contact

Questions or special requests? Message the organizers through Meetup.