

The Weekly Dinner Group – Frequently Asked Questions

You've got questions... we've got answers.

Group Dynamics

What is The Weekly Dinner?

We're a social dining group that explores restaurants in the DC area, usually on Friday nights and sometimes on other days. Think of it as a mix of food adventure and community.

Is this a good way to meet people and get to know DC's restaurant scene?

Yes. Members join to make connections and try different restaurants around the city.

What type of restaurants do you go to?

All kinds—casual, fine dining, neighborhood gems, and seasonal spots like Restaurant Week. We aim for variety.

How many people usually attend?

Most dinners draw 6–24 members, depending on the restaurant's capacity and our reservation size. Since COVID, we're closer to 6 to 12 on average.

Will I be the only newcomer?

Not at all. About one-quarter of attendees each week are first-timers.

Is this a singles group?

No. Absolutely not. The group is about food, friends, and community. While several marriages and long-term relationships have started here, that's not our purpose. People attend solo, with friends, or as couples. We aim for a safe, comfortable space for everyone. If attraction happens, keep it mutual and respectful—swap numbers after the event, and please skip PDA during dinner.

What's the membership demographic?

Mostly professionals in their 20s to 40s, with a good balance of men and women. The common threads are being social and loving food.

Do you have any requirements for members?

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

- Keep your RSVPs up to date. If you're on the "Yes" list and your plans change, update to "No" right away so someone else can join. Please don't late cancel (every event is note the final 'change your mind' RSVP cutoff).

- 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 instead of a name may limit your ability to attend events..

Event Sign-Up

Is it important that I RSVP?

Yes, it's required. Restaurants set tables for the exact headcount we provide. No-shows leave empty seats, prevent waitlisted members from attending, and can even lead to charges if the restaurant bills per seat.

How do I sign up for an event?

Go to the event page and RSVP “Yes.” You may include one guest unless noted otherwise.

How far in advance should I RSVP?

Events often fill quickly, sometimes within a day. RSVPs usually open one week before the dinner.

What if an event is full?

Join the waitlist. If someone cancels, Meetup automatically moves waitlisted members up. If we expand the reservation, organizers will release new spots.

What’s the No-Show policy?

- 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.

Event Logistics

How long is an average event?

Plan for about 2.5 to 3 hours for dinners. Larger or more upscale gatherings may run longer.

What types of events do you hold?

Most events are dinners, but we also host brunches, happy hours, and fun extras like an afternoon tour of DC’s best boozy milkshakes.

How big are the dinners?

Before the pandemic, many of our dinners had 20+ attendees and required multiple tables. Since then, we’ve adjusted group sizes downward based on restaurant capacity, staffing, and logistics. Expect smaller, more manageable gatherings unless otherwise noted.

How is the bill handled?

Most of the time, each person pays for their own tab. At some shared-plate dinners, the bill may be divided evenly.

Do restaurants ever charge for no-shows?

Yes. Some charge per reserved seat, which may leave the group covering the cost. This is why updating RSVPs is so important.

How is gratuity handled?

Many restaurants, especially during Restaurant Week, require a fixed standard gratuity for larger reservations, typically 20% pre-tax. All attendees are obligated to this fixed gratuity in order to attend. Personal tipping preferences do not apply at these events. You can think of it as the only 'membership fee' the group has—except it goes directly to the restaurant staff.

Do members go out after dinner?

Sometimes. A portion of the group may head to a bar or lounge afterward, but it's optional.

General Administration**Does the group charge membership fees?**

No. Membership is free. Meetup fees are covered by voluntary member donations.

How many active members are there?

Hundreds are on the roster, but weekly dinners typically draw 6–20 attendees.

How are restaurants selected?

Organizers rotate cuisines, neighborhoods, and price points based on member suggestions, reviews, and availability for larger reservations.

What about posting solicitations or other events?

Solicitations, ads, or promoting outside events on the message board or event comments are not allowed without organizer approval.