

MADRID

Gay people here know how to fiesta

Michael Darton

Accommodations

Heranfu (Caballero de Gracia 8; Heranfu.com) hosts luxurious self-contained apartments and suites right in the center of Gran Vía. Host Abraham Garcia's concept is to create a place for rest and entertainment. Each suite is themed: "Contact" is futuristic, and comes equipped with a jacuzzi and ozone-therapy, while "Bassora" is styled in Arabian decor with rich reds and natural wood finishes; the Turkish hamam ceramic bath area is huge, holding 1000 liters of water – you could fit four people in here! All apartments have kitchen areas and state-of-the-art entertainment systems. Heranfu can also supply food and drinks for special events and parties.

Hostal Puerta del Sol (Plaza Puerta del Sol 14; Hostalpuertadelsol.com) overlooks the huge and lively square of Puerta del Sol. They offer clean and comfortable rooms, some with private baths and televisions. Prices start at as little as 36 euros. They have free wi-fi, and there's a computer in the lobby for guests' use, too. They serve breakfast until midday and you can help yourself to tea and coffee throughout your stay here. The staff speak English and create a homey and relaxed ambiance.

At **Adriano Hostal** (Cruz 26; Hostaladriano.com) all the newly-decorated rooms have private bathrooms, telephones, digital safe, and internet access. The service here is highly professional and Alberto's perfect English (and Spanish!) will make everyone feel at home. The Adriano is connected to two other hostals: **Hostal Adria** and **Hostal Adria Santa Ana** (HostalAdriaSantaAna.com).

Hostal Hispano (Hortaleza 38) is



Fran of Copper



Outside Juan Por Dios



José from SR Leather



Arnaldo and Vicent – your hosts at Hostal La Zona

Madrid sits high on a baking plain in the center of Spain and is full of cultural and artistic highlights. Well-known art galleries worth a visit include the Prado, the Thyssen-Bornemisza, and the Reina Sofia. The city's royal heritage is evident in its palatial architecture and lovely monuments.

Spain is a country of fiestas, and the capital Madrid really knows how to throw a party. Throughout the year there are a host of festivals including . El dos de Mayo, celebrated on – not surprisingly – May 2, marking the anniversary of Madrid's uprising against Napoleonic forces.

The Gay Europride event last summer saw an estimated two million people on the streets of Madrid. This year's pride events run from June 28 to July 6, with street entertainment, stages, and DJs. The parade through the city is on Saturday July 5, when the streets will bubble-over with excitement and clubs will fill with revelers. See Cogam.org for more on these events and other gay activities in Madrid.

For those who like more kink, get along to the Madrid Sleazy Festival, which attracts an international gathering of fetish followers. This year's ran April 30 to May 4 – check out Sleazy madrid.com for future events.

Arriving in Madrid by plane is simple, and the airport terminals are connected to the metro by moving pathways. From the airport, the Metro takes about 20 to 30 minutes to the city center for only two euros. The majority of gay venues are situated near Plaza Chueca and Gran Vía.

right in the heart of the gay zone; for those who don't do stairs, there's an elevator here. The rooms are clean and comfortable, and well equipped with AC, television, and ceramic bathrooms.

Hostal Odesa (Hortaleza 38), on the next floor, is renovated to a great standard, and boasts bright decor, AC, and television.

Hostal La Zona (Valverde 7; Hostal lazona.com), in a newly renovated 19th-century building, is a neo-classical hostel that houses clean, bright, and modern rooms just steps away from Gran Vía. This is a gay hostel which is straight-friendly, and run by the cute Arnaldo and Vicent. The staff are gay and knowledgeable about the local area. They also rent apartments, which are fully equipped with washing machines, DVD players, fridges, and cooking facilities. Wi-fi is free.

Casa Chueca (San Bartolome 4) has six rooms with balconies that overlook the street, as well as rooms overlooking an interior courtyard. This hostel is right in the center of the gay district. Elizabeth makes all guests feel welcome and speaks fluent Spanish, English, and French. **Chueca Pension** (Gravina 4) offers clean and bright rooms, and is run by Elizabeth's mother, Beni. The nine rooms are equally inexpensive, with free internet and laundry service.

Dining

The choice in Madrid is vast for food styles and preference. The Spanish love small portions – known as tapas – of meats, fish, and vegetables. These are often served casually day and night with beer or coffee, and at reasonable prices. But there are many more luxurious ways to eat, too.

At **Vinoteka Barbechera** (Gravina 6) wine bottles line the walls, and the tapas will amaze you with unexpected taste combinations (salmon with honey, slices of rump roast in a fig sauce, hazelnut bisque).

Tepic Urban Mex Restaurant (Pelayo 4) sits in the gay street of Pelayo. Its modern and bright design is sparse and decorated in crisp pinks and

whites. They have an extensive Mexican menu and also cater to vegetarians.

El Rincon de Pelayo (Pelayo 19) is not a tapas bar but an excellent restaurant with a small terrace out front. The *menu del día* is a great way to have a three course meal with wine or coffee for around 10 euros.

Con Mucho Amor (San Marcos 1) is a small boutique of a Moroccan restaurant serving a selection of hot and cold food to eat in or take away. Homemade hummus with whole chick peas and warm bread are four Euros, and a range of tagines – couscous with natural herbs, flavoring, meats, and vegetables – can be had for around five.

Sama Sama (San Bartolome 23) has a simple yet gorgeous decor, done in the rich earth tones of the high plains. This describes their cuisine as well. Don't miss their wild boar entree, served by some of the friendliest, cutest waiters in town.

Mama Inez (Hortaleza 22) is busy all day with locals and tourists. They serve beers and snacks as well as teas and coffees. Salads have huge portions of veggies and start at six euros. This is more of a coffeeshop with food available.

El Estragón (Plaza de la Paja 10) is a vegetarian restaurant that aims to impress even non-vegetarians.

Bars and nightlife

LL Show Bar (Pelayo 11), open everyday from 5 p.m., hosts drag shows which include sing-a-longs; later in the evening they have strippers on stage. Downstairs is a small bar area. There is a cruising area which sits beside the toilet.

Bebop (Chueca 9) is a new bar with modern decor, a trendy vibe, and an international feel. Seating is inside at the bar or in a neat booth area – a calm escape from the bustle. Or for those who like to be in the heart of the action, Bebop has large seating areas outside, busy day and night, and perfect for enjoying a cold beer on warm days.

Truck (Libertad 28) is a small basement pub and dance bar in the Chueca Zone, with shows until dawn, and estu-

pendos sandwiches to keep you going through the night.

La Lupe (Hortaleza 51) is elegant and lavish; they have two-for-one happy hours during the week.

A Noite (Hortaleza 43) is an elegant bar in the style of a small European nightclub. There's a different performer on each night here. Be warned: they prize themselves on making everyone part of the act!

Liquid (Barquillo 8) is a chic music video bar with a handsome crowd of mostly men that's busy on weekends.

Black and White (Libertad 34) gets busy from about 1 a.m. and features lively dancing and shows at the weekend. They host the yearly "Hoscars" award ceremony: you'll see the Most Popular Bartender in Madrid, the Best Bar in Madrid, and the Best Drinks in Madrid. Black and White has a mixed crowd, old and young, with lots of cuties – some for hire.

Cruising (Perez Galdos 5) is an enormous, aptly-named space. Downstairs is a maze of dark areas and videos playing, with some private lock up areas. Lots of pleasurable noises can be heard in the dark, as people flick lighters to see what's going on! There is a small dance-floor playing happy house and pop, and they have weekend strippers here, too.

Delirio (Libertad 28) is an upscale disco with three bars and lots of clean white space

At **Eagle Madrid** (Pelayo 30) expect chaps, leather, and denim. The space is small but gets a good crowd and atmosphere.

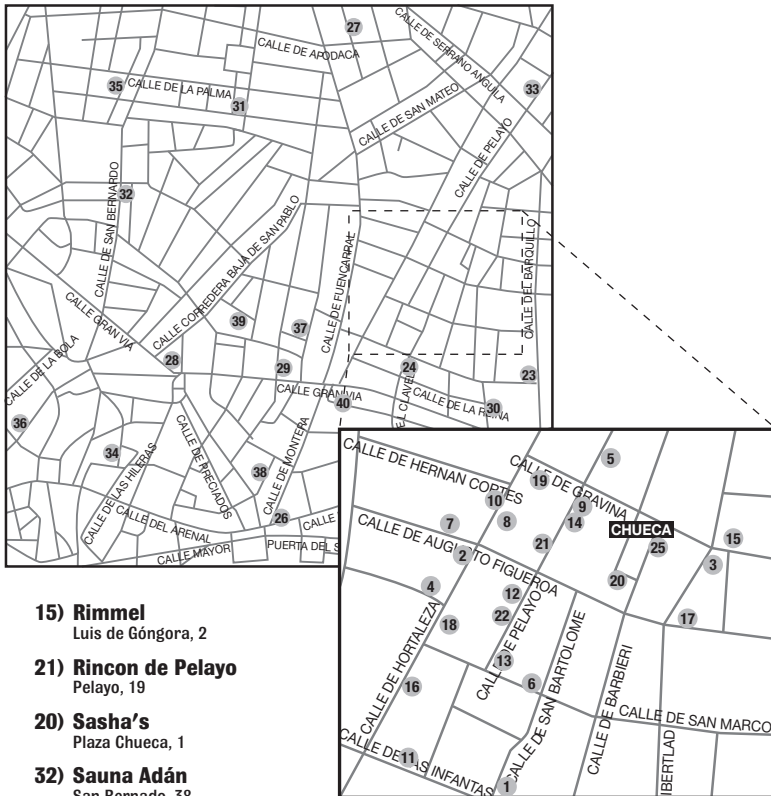
Mito (Augusto Figueroa 3) is a mixed place: ladies, men, and in-betweens all welcome – a party zone without a specific demographic.

O'Clock – A New Bears' Bar (San Marcos 11) is frequently busy with locals and tourists, music play from current to past decades – as people sit on stools and sing.

Hot (9 Infantas) is a small venue, but big on friendliness and fun. **Angel** (Campoamor 11), also part of the Hot group, is a dance club for a variety of

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- 33) Angel**
Campoamor 11
- 2) A Noite**
Hortaleza, 43
- 13) Bear's Bar**
Pelayo, 4
- 25) Bebop**
Plaza Chueca, 9
- 8) Berkana Book Shop**
Gravina, 11
- 3) Black & White**
Libertad, 34
- 38) Boite Calle**
Tetuan, 27
- 1) Casa Chueca**
San Bartolome 4
- 31) Copper**
Vincente Ferrer, 34
- 4) Cruising**
Perez Galdos, 5
- 17) Delirio**
Libertad 28
- 9) Different Life Books**
Pelayo, 30
- 14) Eagle**
Pelayo, 30
- 30) Griffin's**
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Caballero de Gracia, 8
- 18) Hostal Hispano**
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- 37) Hostal La Zona**
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- 18) Hostal Odesa**
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- 26) Hostal Puerta del Sol**
Puerta del Sol, 14
- 11) Hot Bar**
Infantas, 9
- 10) La Lupe Chueca**
Hortaleza, 51
- 5) Leather Club**
Pelayo, 42
- 23) Liquid**
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- 12) LL**
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- 16) Mama Ines Café**
Hortaleza, 22
- 7) Mito Disco**
Augusto Figueroa, 3
- 6) O'Clock Bears' Bar**
San Marcos, 11
- 39) Odarko**
Loreto y Chicote, 7
- 28) Ohm/Bass**
Plaza de Callao, 4
- 19) Pension Chueca**
Gravina, 4
- 24) Rick's**
Clavel, 8



- 15) Rimmel**
Luis de Góngora, 2

21) Rincon de Pelayo
Pelayo, 19


20) Sasha's
Plaza Chueca, 1

32) Sauna Adán
San Bernardo, 38

36) Sauna Center
Cuesta Santo Domingo, 1

29) Sauna Gran Via
Barco, 6

27) Sauna Octopus
Churruca, 10

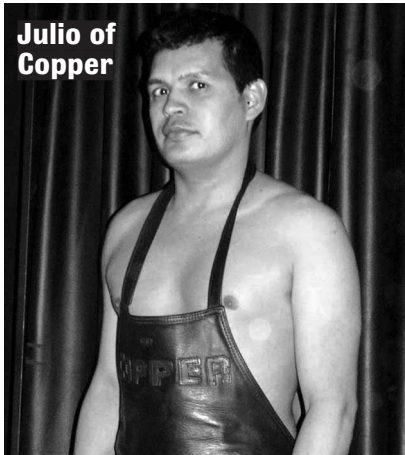


35) Sauna Paraiso
Norte, 15

22) SR Leather
Pelayo, 7

34) Strong Center
Trujillos, 7

17) Truck
Libertad, 28



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people, with live performances by comedians, musicians, and dancers, and also home to the annual Mr. Bear Spain contest.

Copper (San Vicente Ferrer 34; Cop perbar.net) is a great place to let go of everything. Check in all your clothes and sit and enjoy the atmosphere of this nude/fetish bar. It's just a five minute walk from Chueca, and is situated in a quiet area of town. On Sundays the place is packed with underwear lovers, and on Wednesdays it's X-Naked night. Take the Metro to Tribunal and walk down San Vicente.

Bears Bar (Pelayo 4) is another friendly place where you'll get to know everyone in no time. The second room features bear porn, and offers private space where bears can frolic.

Strong Center (Trujillos 7) hosts nightly parties and hard-core fun, lots of cruising and drinking, and man-on-man action.

Leather Club (Pelayo 42) is another men's club to find sex, with darkrooms, cabins, porn videos, slings, glory holes, and no dress code.

Hell (Buenavista 14; Hellsex club.com), open daily except Mondays, is (and I quote) "a new space where real men can fuck... for friends, travelers, and guests." It's membership-only, so see their website and get your invitation by email before going.

Rimmel Pub (Luis de Gongora 2) is a local bar where owner Pedro still holds court and has stories to tell of the past and current news of Madrid.

Boite Calle (Tetuan 27) is the new place in town and is proving popular. Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays are full and are hosted by club promoters Victor Pallas and Jose Lupe. This duo also host the popular **Prive** (21 Calle Aduana; Myspace.privemadrid.com).

Griffins (Mqués de Valdeiglesias 6) is a longtime favorite with shows Sundays through Wednesdays and disco party ambiance Thursdays through Saturdays.

Other bars include **Sasha's** (Plaza Chueca 1) small mixed crowd dancespot; **Ricks** (Clavel 8) a well-

established nightclub; and **Odarko** (Loreto y Chicote 7), a gay fetish club near Plaza Callao.

Two big parties from the **Trip Family Group** (Tripfamily.es) have kept Madrid dancing for years: **Ohm** (Plaza del Callao 4) takes place on Fridays and Saturdays from midnight, and "Goa" at **Fabrik** (Avda. de la Industria 82, Humanes de Madrid) has electronic sessions every Sunday from noon to midnight. There are shuttle buses from Plaza de España – see their website for schedules.

Into the Tank at de Nombre Público (García Molinas 11) is a pervy dance bash scheduled for Madrid's pride weekend July 6, with a strict dress code of leather, rubber, military, uniform, jockstraps, or naked with boots.

"Circuit Party" powered by Matinee held at **Cool** (Isobel la Católica 6) is a pre-event for the circuit festival taking place in Barcelona August 4 to 11. The venue is glamorous, with a huge main dance floor and smaller rooms, too. Upstairs it's pop music and trashy sounds; downstairs the glamorous go-go's strut their bodies to hard house.

Saunas

Madrid has a dozen or so saunas to chose from. Here are a few to get you started, with others are listed on our website at Guidemag.com

Paraiso (Calle Norte 15) is a large space with two hot tubs and a sauna and steam room. There is a small bar with drinks and a television. And of course, all necessary private areas, too.

Sauna Gran Via (6 Barco 6) is right off Gran Via and is a small place which gets going after midnight. There is a masseur on hand who charges for a thirty minute rub-down.

Sauna Adan (San Bernardo 38) is a busy place from late afternoon; it's full of gorgeous South Americans wearing mini- white towels and showing off their manhood. Most ask if you want a massage, so if you like to buy, this place is a paradise.

Octopus Sauna (Churruca 10) is only a short walk from Chueca, or the nearest metro is Tribunal. A glass roof

separate the bar area and the small pool, so you can watch naked men swimming and relaxing as you sip a cocktail. The showers have a glass divider, so this place boosts an open-for-all decor. There are private rooms upstairs for those who wish for privacy or the company of just one (or two...) others.

Sauna Center (Cuesta de Santo Domingo 1) and Sauna Paraiso (Norte 15) are two more local tubs.

Shopping and such

SR Leather Shop (Pelayo 7) vends leather, rubber, SM gear, and army and industrial clothes, as well as toys and art. Jose hosts a chamber of art along a long corridor with local artists including Neo displaying nude and semi-nude drawings. There is a small room at the back of the shop with crafted SM furniture for sale. Leather goods and clothes are made in-house.

A Different Life (Pelayo 30) offers a full range of play toys along with gifts, DVDs, music, and books – open till 8:30 p.m. every day.

Sex Store Play (Pelayo 31) sells toys, gifts, music, art, and porn, and offers double or single cabins where you can view the DVDs on sale or just have a quickie.

There is a great coffee shop at the back of **Berkana** (Hortaleza 64), Madrid's longest running gay-shop/bookstore, serving teas and coffee, beers, and cake. Downstairs there is more to explore.

Ovlas (Augusto Figueroa 1) is not to be missed. Leave all your sexy-wear at home and buy what you need here. You'll find the hottest, gayest fashion in the world here. Ovlas has three stores: in Madrid, Barcelona, and Sitges.

Juan, Por Dios! (Perez Galdos 3; Juanpordios.com) is a hair and beauty world and is the creation of Guille. You can book an appointment anytime Monday to Saturday between 10 a.m. and 9 p.m. There is always a lively atmosphere here. Guille also owns their twin shop at Manuela Malasana 26. ▼

BARCELONA

Capital of Catalonia, Spain's second-largest city draws commerce and tourism from not only the continent but the entire world

**Leonardo Alfano &
Michael Thompson**

be aware when you arrive in Barcelona, that you're not just in Spain, but also the distinct region of Catalonia. Catalonia's centuries of history, with connections to many different parts of the Mediterranean, have bestowed a unique culture. Though now part of Spain, the Catalan people retain their distinct language and sense of their own nationality. Catalan and Castilian Spanish are both used here so you're as welcome with *bienvenidos* as with *benvinguts*. French, English and other European languages are commonly understood as well, particularly in the gay community.

Remains of the old city walls date back to Roman times, and Barcelona has one of the largest extant medieval sections in Europe. El Gòtica (or the Gothic Quarter) is just to the east of the throngs congregating in Plaça Catalunya day and night, or roaming the length of La Rambla. This whole area is full of restaurants, ranging from chain sandwich shop fare to haute cuisine, bars and clubs, plus an abundance of shops and vendors' stands.

To the west of here, the El Raval district was a neighborhood of varied immigrants. Though gentrified, it remains culturally mixed, with interesting restaurants and stores.

Newer areas of Barcelona, dating from the 19th century, feature broad tree-lined boulevards and architecture

that astounds in detailed exuberance and sophistication, equal to any great capital of the world.

Lodging

Barcelona has many gay or gay-friendly hotels. **Axel Hotel Barcelona** (Aribau 33; +34-93-323-2570) is a premium gay hotel that's "hetero friendly." With beautiful rooms, an in-house gym, a rooftop pool and bar, a restaurant and lounge, and a perfect location between La Rambla and the gay district, Axel has many advantages for travelers. Not the least expensive option in town, they sometimes have special online rates.

A comfortable hostel with two locations, one on each side of the gay district, **Absolut Centro** (Casanova 72; +34-64-955-0238) offers both convenience and affordability in "El Quadrat d'Or" surrounded by bars, shopping, restaurants and the sights. Rates for their one-, two-, three-, or four-person bedrooms (with bathrooms), range between 35 and 85 euros. Free wi-fi internet is available here for those with laptops, and Jorge and staff are charmingly helpful with tips about the city.

In the Gothic Quarter ("El Barrio Gòtica") **Hotel California** (Rauric 14; +34-93-308-1164), near La Rambla, has single rooms starting at 49 euros, breakfast included. Their 31 rooms all have satellite TV, phone, full bath, and air conditioning. In the same district, **Hotel Regencia Colon** (Sagrasta 13-17; +34-93-318-98-58) is right off Cathedral

Square, with 50 non-smoking rooms, doubles and triples, wide flat-screen TVs, marble baths, and breakfast buffet.

All rooms at the well-situated **Barcelona City Centre Hostel** (Balmes 60; +34-65-390-0039) have private bathrooms, free satellite TV, and are soundproofed. They also have rooms in a fourth-floor walk up at **Barcelona City Ramblas** (La Rambla 133; +34-65-390-0039) that are even less expensive. **Hostal Baires** (Avinyo 37; +34-93-319-7774), also in Barrio Gòtica, is between La Rambla and the wharf, and just a 15 minute walk to the beach.

Eos Guest House (Gran Via 575; +34-93-451-8772) is a gay and lesbian guesthouse at gay central, with 10 rooms, internet connection, and a buffet breakfast until 1 p.m. Their inexpensive prices cause them to fill quickly, so book well ahead.

Other hotels include: **Fashion House** (Bruc 13; +34-637-90-4044), with 12 rooms – five with bath, wi-fi, and terrace; **Barcelona Rooms** (Comte D'Urgell 63; +34-629-159-759), featuring 12 brightly colored rooms in midtown, on two floors with four shared bathrooms, and fully equipped kitchen; **Agua Alegre Hostel** (Roger De Lluria 47; +34-93-487-8032), with a solarium and garden terrace, internet connection, and simple but comfortable rooms at moderate prices; **Central Town Rooms** (Ronda Sant Pau 51; +34-93-442-7057), offering exclusively gay rooms with balconies and apartments.

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To check availability or book online, our profiles for Barcelona at *Guidemag.com* have links to all the websites of these hotels.

Bars and clubs

The gay district, or Gayxample, has many bars and restaurants within short distances of one another. The streets here are filled with men and their friends, late into the night.

Punto (Muntaner 63) is one of Barcelona's most established fixtures in gay social life. Open earlier than most at 6 p.m., they mix a broad cross-section of men from among the many subsets of the community, along with tourists who put it first on their list of places to check out. Next door, **La Chapelle** (Muntaner 67) has a long and narrow bar that's abuzz with conversations from early evenings. Quieter tables and chairs can be found both in the back and on the front sidewalk. A wall here might captivate you with its antique church icons and relics.

Dietrich Bar (Consell de Cent 255) is a large two-level bar, going strong for nine years. Hang out, make new friends, or check out the nightly drag shows. A sense of humor is demonstrated by their portrait of "la Dietrich." Its sibling bar **Atame** (Calle Consell de Cent 257) is right next door, and sometimes the shows move over here from Dietrich's.

At **Dacksy** (Consell de Cent 247) you'll hear many languages mixing and switching comfortably back and forth, reflecting gay Barcelona's international flavor. Twenty- and thirty-something guys who know one another set the tone here, but they're quick to include newcomers as well. Two doors down, **Strass** (Consell de Cent 245) attracts an exuberant crowd that welcomes visitors, and they have drag spectaculars every night of the week except Fridays (when

they have strippers), and Saturdays.

Plata (Consell de Cent 233), at the next corner, is thrown open to the night air, exuding stylish comfort with table and couch seating, a warm decor, soft lighting, and giant video displays overlooking all. An urbane clientele here can see and be seen by all who walk by.

El Cangrejo (Villarroel 86) is the club with the magic of the moment, overflowing with the freshest energy of gay Barcelona; men and women, old and young – everyone seems linked and in constant motion. The crowd is predominantly Iberian, but also includes a zesty dash of Latin American flavors.

People Lounge (Villarroel 71) is gentlemen-only, for drinks while Broadway show tunes play in the background. Gracious hosts Jose and Martin, cute bartenders, overstuffed sofas, and attractive surroundings make this a pleasant and relaxing place to visit. Directly opposite, **Mandarin** (Diputació 157) is small, open to the street, and draws a young and offbeat crowd. Two others on this street include **Zancanalla** (Diputació 206), a small mixed wine and cocktail lounge, and **El Berro** (Diputació 180).

Castro (Casanova 85) is a restaurant in the heart of the gay district that will more than satisfy the most demanding gourmet with fine Mediterranean cuisine; it's very gay sociable too.

Sweet (Casanova 75) is another longtime favorite lounge, with a loyal following of regulars and more open interior space than many other area bars. In the same building, **Zelta's** (Casanova 75) has muted lighting and understated panache that attracts an explosion of beautiful people at midnight. Some of the hottest locals in town come to mingle and dance on their small dance floor, but the DJ manages not to overwhelm conversations.

Am Bar (Casanova 71), another nearby lounge, isn't on maps but gay and straight groups, along with young alternative types, mix easily here.

Bacon Bear Bar (Casanova 64), as with bear bars most everywhere, is one of the friendliest in town. The no-atti-

tude pub ambience includes music that won't drown out your conversation. Join them for snacks on Thursdays, and don't forget to check out their back room, if you're craving some of those special (bear) hugs.

Other strictly men's bars are a bit apart from the Gayxample. **La Base** (Casanova 201), a men's sex bar eight blocks to the north, began Barcelona's first naked nights. Their website announces each night's events, and they have darkroom, leather, and underwear parties. **Berlin Dark** (Passatge Prunera 18) is a new sex club where most people are naked, and some are in military briefs or leather thongs. It's friendly and conversational around the bar, from which you can move into their play areas. Here they feature wrestling nights, fetish events, piss parties, slave/master sessions... you get the idea.

New **Chaps** (Diagonal 365) is a leather bar that's open daily, from 9 p.m., with a good range of ages, a downstairs darkroom, and hot porno. Owner Jordi takes a special interest in making all feel welcome.

Bear Factory (Passatge Domingo 3) is a leather and bear dance bar with porn videos, special parties and a toilet darkroom.

Quizás (Diputació 161) is a cafe and bar for fetish men, with underwear parties and leather/rubber/uniform nights on the schedule.

Other more mixed places include: **Burdel 74** (Carme 74), a small gem at the edge of El Raval district that's popular with tourists and expats; and **Aire** (Valencia 236) with a throng of energetic young folk, mostly women, who come in groups and bring their guy friends. They play retro music favorites, recorded before most people here were born.

Chiringo Gay Beach Bar (Ronda del Litoral Salida 23) is the gay bar and cafe at Playa de la Mar Bella, open daily from 10 a.m. to midnight. Get an all-over tan here if you like; there are no restrictions on nudity at this beach, and they attract a wide range of all kinds of

BARCELONA

- 1) **Bear Factory**
Passatge Domingo 3
- 2) **Berlin Dark**
Passatge Prunera 18
- 3) **La Base**
Casanova 201
- 4) **Boyberry**
Calàbria 96
- 5) **Martin's**
Passeig de Gràcia 130
- 6) **New Chaps**
Diagonal 135
- 7) **Burdel**
Carme 74
- 8) **Aire Diana**
València 236
- 9) **DBoy**
Ronda Sant Pere 19-21
- 10) **Metro**
Sépúlveda 185
- 11) **Arena Madre**
Balmes 32
- 12) **Arena Classic**
Diputació 233
- 13) **Dietrich**
Consell de Cent 255
- 14) **Atame**
Consell de Cent 257
- 15) **La Chapelle**
Muntaner 67
- 16) **Punto**
Muntaner 63
- 17) **Dacksy**
Consell de Cent 247
- 18) **Strass**
Consell de Cent 245
- 19) **Plata**
Consell de Cent 233
- 20) **Castro**
Casanova 85
- 21) **Zeltas**
Casanova 75
- 22) **Sweet**
Casanova 75
- 23) **Absolut Centro**
Casanova 72
- 24) **Bacon Bear Bar**
Casanova 64
- 25) **El Cangrejo**
Villarroel 86
- 26) **Mandarina**
Diputació 157
- 27) **Quizás**
Diputació 161
- 28) **People**
Villarroel 71
- 29) **Axel Hotel**
Aribau 33
- 30) **Arena Dandy/VIP**
Gran Via, 593
- 31) **El Berro**
Diputació 180



people. Go to stop Poble Nou on the L4 metro and hike to the water, or take bus number 41.

Big dance clubs in Barcelona do very elaborate weekend “sessions” with constantly changing concepts, technologies old and new, top DJs, talented performers, erotic displays, and extravagant costumes – all vying with one another to provide some of the most exiting and transcendent nights-out, anywhere in the world, all night and then well into the daylight hours.

Metro Disco (Sepulveda 185) is open every night, with drag and cabaret shows (Sundays and Mondays) and strippers on Tuesdays. House, Spanish, and 80s music plays on two floors with different atmospheres in each of their four bars on weekends.

DBoY (Ronda Sant Pere 19-21) offers two distinct dance halls, three bars, and a party that goes all night long. Deep House gives way to livelier music as the evening progresses, and every night's

session is different, from the DJs to the performances. On Sunday nights, Café Olé is the tea dance here, and after midnight “La Madame” is another dance event at this same address. For those who want to continue dancing after 6:30 a.m. Fridays or Saturdays, **Souvenir** (Noi del Sucre 75) is an after-hours club to party well into the new day, also with lots of shows, performances, and top DJs.

Space (Tarragona 141-7) is a big weekend dance event which proclaimed in recent ads that “everyone deserves to be fucked.” Maybe it’s the Ibiza connection: this straight and gay mixed high-energy party began there over 20 years ago.

Arena is a complex of late night dance venues, one of Barcelona's most venerable institutions. **Arena Madre** (Balmes 32) draws a huge crowd of young gay, alternative, and mixed genders to their weekend dances. Open nightly they bring people in on week-

days with the likes of Mondays strip-pers and Wednesdays comedy shows. Around the corner **Arena Classic** (Diputació 233), **Arena VIP**, and in the same building, **Arena Dandy** (Gran Via 593) are other weekend dance events from the same folks.

Martins (Paseig de Gracia 130) is a popular men-only dance party that takes place each first Saturday.

Shops and saunas

Boyberry (Calle Calabria 96) is so much more than your typical sex shop. They carry all the usual X-rated videos, but they also boast the largest gay-themed library of films to rent or purchase in all of Spain. In the back, 14 cabins are set up in a darkroom maze area ideal for cruising. While their LCD flat-screen TVs play the hottest movies available, get to know your neighbor through one of several glory holes in the walls. An all-day admission pass is six euros, half that if you're under 27,

The Gaudi House



and it allows for in/out privileges. Your ticket price includes full and unlimited access to their internet room, where you can cruise the web either from their machines or your own. They also have a lounge where you can buy inexpensive beers and other refreshments from their vending machines. They also give out free passes to local bars, and have all local guides, maps, and magazines. Staff here is really friendly and helpful, and they provide bike racks and lockers, too.

Nostromo (Diputació 208), is another local gay sex shop with cabins, and a dark room.

D'Arness (Casanova 63) is a sex and leather store with internet, toys, clothing, and lubricants.

For the company of escorts there are two services, each with websites to help you make a selection: **American Boys** (Ronda Universidad 23; Chicosbcn.com) is near Plaça Catalunya and offers massages, too; and **Neron** (Consejo de Ciento 185; Nerondalila.com). Both have rooms, and Neron, a jacuzzi onsite.

Ovias (Via Layetana 33) has sexy clothing of many kinds: beach wear,

At Chiringo Beach Bar



underwear, and cutting-edge dance wear to keep you fashionable during all these opportunities in Barcelona to doff outer garments.

ES4U (Casanova 56) is another gay fashion boutique.

Matinee Corner at Punto (Muntaner 63) has souvenir tees, caps, posters, CDs and other odds and ends illustrated with logos from their clubs around town.

Grupo Pases (Grupopases.com) has five saunas in Barcelona and three more in Valencia and Seville. Check out their website for exact locations and directions (see *Guidemag.com* for more links). These places are well maintained with amenities such as swimming pools, dry saunas, steambaths, and jacuzzis, as well as darkrooms, labyrinths, cruising areas, and private rooms. All locations offer snacks; some, bars and cafes.

The preeminent location, if you had to choose among them, is **Sauna Barcelona** (Tuset 1). This is “el bombón del Grupo Pases,” the best and most modern of their facilities, and also offers massage, aromatherapy, chocolate bath, light treatment, and follicle massage. A huge 12 by 36 foot jacuzzi, private cabins (some with hot tubs), along with amenities common to all their bathhouses, make this a place to vacation from your vacation!

Sauna Galilea (Calabria 59) is another local tubs on four levels, with Happy Sex Hours before 4 p.m., or after 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Events and resources

EuroGames Barcelona 2008 (Panteresgrogues.cat/cms) will feature 28 sporting events with an expected 5,000 participants from all corners of Europe, July 24 to 27, along with simultaneous cultural and leisure activities. One such event is **Gay Circus** (Gaycircus.net), a two-hour spectacular of acrobats, trapeze artists and other circus acts.

Circuit Festival Barcelona (Matineegroup.com), billed as Europe's biggest-ever gay event, will take place August 4 to 11 with water park activities, dance parties with renowned DJs, singers, performance artists, and more. Loveball (Loveball.info) is another big circuit party expected to return August 1 to 7 this year.

The **Barcelona Gay & Lesbian Film Festival** is one of the highlights of the Catalan queer calendar in October and November with everything from gay feature films to shorts and also porn screenings. See the local press for schedules.

Other annual events include: **Car-nival**, with celebrations just before Lent; **Bearcelona** (Bearcelona.org), a big event in March for bears and their admirers, and this summer with cruises to London and Rome as well; and **La Merce**, the occasion for a week of festivities in September to honor Barcelona's patron saint.

For local news and updates on local gay social life, *Nois Magazine* (Revis-tanois.com) is a great resource and they have the best, most up to date map too. *Gaybarcelona.net* has online information for the area. ▼



At La Base



At El Cangrejo



At Atame



Out in Barcelona



At Zelda's



At Dietrich



At El Cangrejo



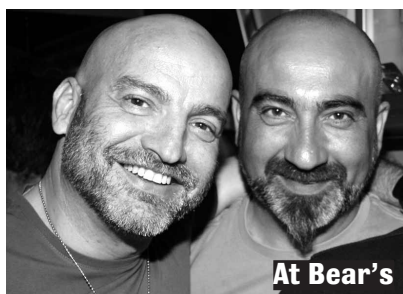
Sitges landmark



At Bear's



At El Candil



At Bear's



Manolo & Filipe, Bourbon's

SITGES

This seaside resort draws sun-craving tourists from around the world

Michael Thompson

about 35 kilometers south of Barcelona, the coastal village of Sitges, with narrow cobblestone streets, is a beach getaway for locals and a favorite summer resort for gay people from across Europe. If you don't need a car – and you won't if you're staying in town (many streets are pedestrian-only) – hop on the train. There is frequent and rapid service from Barcelona for a few euros.

Carnival is the biggest street party of the year here and one of Europe's gayest weekends, and hundreds of thousands of people converge to celebrate with fantastic parades and costumes. At the end of August, Fiesta Mayor honors Sant Bartolomeu with locals climbing to form human towers along with dragons, parades, dances and fireworks exploding everywhere.

The tourist season begins with the May Day long weekend and picks up through May and June, but high season is from July through October. That's when the really big crowds arrive, and events go full swing. During these peak months, Sitges becomes a linguistic melting pot of every European language, and local people welcome the influx of gay people. Most gay establishments are clustered in the center of town within easy walking distance of one another, and a free gay map, widely available, makes it easy to navigate.

Many places are open year-round, particularly on weekends, and with fewer people and lower rates, off-season Sitges is the perfect get-away for those who like a more tranquil scene.

The website Gaysitgesguide.com has updated gay listings and local events, while Sitgesvida.com has more general info.

Accommodations and beach

From the train station it's a short walk to **Hotel Liberty** (Isla de Cuba 45; +34-93-811-0872), not far from all points gay. The rooms have satellite TV and CD/DVD player (DVD rentals are available), an in-room shower bathroom, mini-bar fridge, direct-dial phone, and terrace or balcony. They serve a generous complimentary breakfast and have a bar and a pleasantly shady tropical garden. Owners John and Eddy bring together a friendly and sociable international mix here; they and the staff are exceptionally helpful and informative. The Liberty is now a part of the Attitude Group of hotels, and they remain open all year-round.

Parrots Hotel and Spa (Joan Tarida 16; +34-93-894-1350) is a gay hotel two minutes' walk from the beach. A basement sauna/spa is scheduled to open in July.

The Hotel R  mantic (Isidre 33; +34-93-894-8375), open for the summer season, has old-world atmosphere in three 19th-century villas, and many of their rooms have terraces overlooking their garden. Wall murals here depict religious and folk lore of Spain. The nearby **Hotel Renaixenca** (Isla de Cuba 7; +34-93-894-8375), like the R  mantic, is gay-friendly, slightly more luxurious, and open all year.

Los Globos Hotel (Sra. de Montserrat; +34-93-894-9374) is another gay-friendly option overlooking the water.

Sitges's popularity makes reservations a must in the summertime, as far in advance as you can. To make it easy, **RAS** (Room Advice Service; +34-60-714-9451; Raservice.com) provides multi-lingual assistance for finding hotel rooms and apartments at the best rates, in Sitges and elsewhere in Spain, anytime throughout the year. You can find availability and reserve rooms on their website.

There are two beautiful gay guesthouses in the countryside outside the bustle of downtown. **La Masia Casanova** (Masiacasanova.com; +34-93-818-8058) is luxurious with superb hillside views; the place is a former wine farm dating from 1842, just seven miles from Sitges, and open year-round. They have seven suites with private baths, television and DVDs, wi-fi, plus a large clothing-optional swimming pool, sauna, Turkish bath, and jacuzzi.

Hotel Masia Sumidors (Sumidors.com; +34-93-896-2061), near Sant Pere de Ribes, is a 400 year-old old Catalan masia in the Garraf National Park, with nine rustic rooms, a swimming pool, solarium, and aromatic sauna. This tranquil retreat offers escape from the stresses of modern life, yet it's close to all the Sitges nightlife and a local 18-hole golf course. They're open all year, except for the Christmas and New Year holidays.

In Sitges, the first gay beach is a five-minute walk south from town, going southwest from the center, in front of Picnic Restaurant. The more exclusively gay nudist beach, **Playa del Muerto**, is a 45-minute hike further down, past the last hotel and the new golf course. Follow the path over the hill beyond the L'Atlantida parking lot to the pebble beach on the other side. There's an active cruising area among the rocks behind the beach by the train tracks.

Another nude but mixed beach lies to the northeast at **Playa dels Balmins**. Follow the coastal path, past a long strip of sand, up the hill and beyond the cemetery and you'll soon know when you've arrived.

Nightlife

Most of the action here is late. Dining hours are typically late evening, and then at 10 or 10:30 most bars open their doors. Many have happy hours drink prices to coax folks before midnight when most people step out to party. After 3 a.m. bars close and the disco clubs fill up.

An early exception to the rule is **Parrot's Pub** (Plaça Industria), with terrace tables and chairs on a well-traveled pedestrian street of cafes. Cocktails, appetizer snacks, and people watching are the main attractions here.

At the video music bar **B Side** (Gaudenci 7) an international mix of guys hang out with Fabio and Neil and chat in all the many languages over aperitifs, from 10 p.m. until 3:30 a.m. every night, all year-long. The TV monitors show music videos and sensual imagery. Their darkroom downstairs plays more hard-core videos, and they hold underwear and naked parties on Mondays and Wednesdays. Totally nude strippers perform five times each week in the summertime.

In the next street, **Bourbon's** (Bonaventura 13), a Sitges favorite for 27 years, began a new chapter when Edinson and Manolo took over this year. Carrying on the old traditions, the spirits flow here with the best prices in town all night – not just during happy hours. They really pull a crowd, seven nights a week in-season, and during Carnival and other holidays. Lots of cruising takes place amidst the bright glass/metal industrial decor, and their darkroom has an intriguing view. In summer they're open daily, from 10 p.m. to 3:30 a.m. Off-season they're open weekends and holidays.

El Piano (Bonaventura, 37) is a charming and engaging cabaret and piano bar where Stephen and Wayne can be found behind the bar, or behind a microphone – along with a variety of other talented performers from all around Europe. This comfortable and relaxing entertainment venue has a welcoming ambience that encourages

easy conversation and pleasant encounters. Pass through to find more room at the rear. Later this year the front area will be expanded.

Mediterraneo (Bonaventura 6) opens for Carnival, and then again for the summer season. A late crowd fills the dance floor and their two chill-out lounges on two levels. The spacious back area, with vaulted glass ceiling and walls of climbing bougainvillea and ivy, is the perfect spot for happy hour cocktails from 10 p.m.

Also on this street are **Azul** (Bonaventura 10), an intimate pub, and **Man Bar** (Bonaventura 19) with industrial decor, dark room action, and summer theme events.

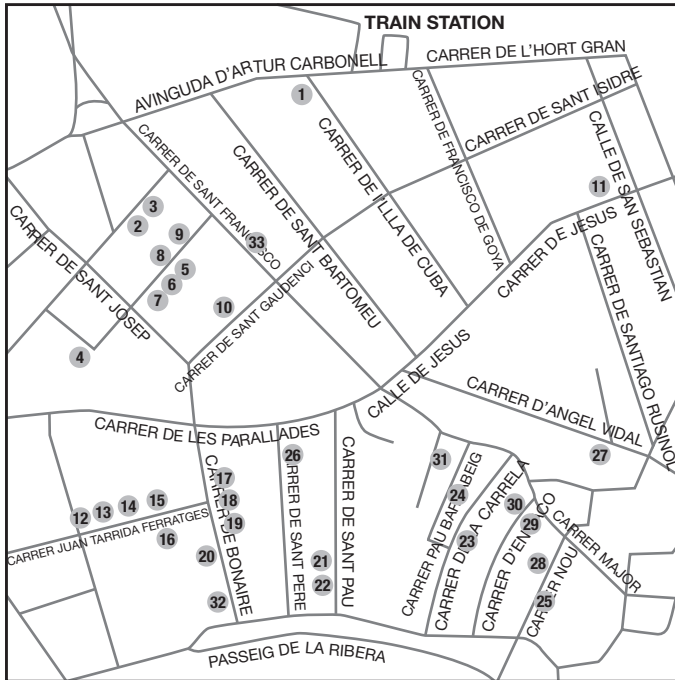
On the other side of Cap de la Vila (the main square), one of the town's most venerable institutions is the sparkling **El Candil** (Carreta 9). Join hosts Sebastian and José at what may become one of your favorite haunts after the welcome you'll receive here. With dancing every night, VJ Andrea pumping out the music videos, and lots of young, cute guys, El Candil is definitely on Sitges's must-visit circuit. The cruisy bathroom shows videos, and their darkroom is well-attended and immaculately maintained. A bedroom has been added to this dark area in case you want to sweep someone literally off his feet. A very efficient air filter/conditioning system keeps the air (and your clothes) smelling sweet, too.

Opposite is **Prinz** (Nou 4), a big favorite with locals that has both drag and strip shows.

At town center, **Bear's Bar** (Bonair 17) says it all with their name. This is a congenial and cruisy men-only video bar with two darkrooms, a sling, and St. Andrew's cross. Male videos play throughout, and guys are encouraged to go shirtless. There are alternate Sundays afternoon fisting events, and naked and underwear parties too, Wednesdays from 6 p.m. A varied and international mix of guys comes here nightly in season, weekends in the winter, and throughout the Carnival and Easter events. Bear's has another bar in

SITGES

- 8) **Azul**
Sant Bonaventura 10
- 21) **Beach House**
Sant Pau 34
- 19) **Bear's Bar**
Bonaire 17
- 5) **Bourbons**
Sant Bonaventura 13
- 10) **B Side**
Sant Gaudenci 7
- 24) **Casa Blanca Bears**
Pau Barabeitg 5
- 11) **Cine Café**
Jesús 55
- 30) **Comodín**
Tacó 4
- 23) **El Candil**
Carreta 9
- 15) **El Horno**
Joan Tarrida 6
- 4) **El Piano**
Sant Bonaventura 37
- 31) **El Trull**
Mossen Fèlix Clarà 3
- 1) **Hotel Liberty**
Illa de Cuba 45
www.libertyhotel.sitges.com
- 32) **Ma Maison**
Bonaire 28
- 7) **Man**
Sant Bonaventura 19
- 14) **Maripili**
Joan Tarrida 14
- 9) **Mediterraneo**
Sant Bonaventura 6
- 22) **Monroes**
Sant Pau 36
- 29) **New Port**
Tacó 1-3
- 6) **Ogmios Restaurant**
Sant Bonaventura 17
- 17) **Oreks**
Bonaire 13
- 18) **Organic Disco**
Bonaire 15
- 26) **Origen**
Sant Pere 1
- 33) **Ovlas**
Francesc 22
- 13) **Parrots Hotel**
Joan Tarrida 16
- 12) **Parrots Pub**
Plaça Industrial 3
- 13) **Parrots Restaurant**
Joan Tarrida 18
- 3) **Perfil**
Espalter 7
- 28) **Prinz**
Nou 4
- 20) **Privilege**
Bonaire 24
- 2) **Sauna Sitges**
Espalter 11
- 25) **Seven**
Nou 7
- 27) **Trailer Disco**
Angel Vidal 36
- 16) **XXL**
Joan Tarrida 7



Benidorm as well.

Oreks (Bonaire 13), two doors down, is a popular, centrally-located, and energetic music bar with an international mix of people and stripper shows three times weekly during the summer. On Wednesday's disco night they play '70s and '80s music. Open all year from 10:30 p.m. until 3:30 a.m. daily, Oreks has happy hour until midnight and a cruisy backroom that's a must stop in your Sitges rounds of the town.

Privilege (Bonaire 24) attracts a crowd of the young and beautiful, and they have table dancers on Tuesdays and Sundays, and Wednesday striptease dancers.

Nearby **El Horno** (Joan Tarrida 6) is favored by locals and tourists alike, with a denim-leather accent and a popular dark room, open daily.

XXL (Joan Tarrida 7), across the street, has dancing downstairs, and serious upstairs darkroom cruising.

Seven (Nou 7), at the edge of the

downtown scene, is one of Sitges's most popular gay hangouts, with a crowd that includes expats and tourists, especially English ones.

Other local bars include: **Casa Blanca Bears** (Pau Barrabeitg 5), a bear bar with darkroom; **Comodin** (Tacó 4), with a mature crowd and drag shows every summer night, and on winter weekends; **Newport** (Tacó 1-3), a new dance and show bar; **La Locacola** (Bonaire 35) a tiny year-round meeting place for tranquil music, aperitifs, and conversation; **Le Male** (Centro Comercial, Oasis 28) offering dancing, darkroom frolic, and summer sex parties; **Marypili** (Joan Tarrida 14) a cafe/bar by and for women; **Perfil** (Espalter 7), a small, intimate locals' favorite; and **Blondies** (Port Alegre 10), near Platya de Sant Sebastiá (the beach), a small cafe and bar that's pleasantly off the beaten track.

When the bars close, everyone heads for the late-night discos. At **Organic**

Club (Bonaire 15) they play a mix of Europop, techno, house, and Spanish music for shirtless and rapturously unbridled guys working the dance floor.

Trailer (Angel Vidal 36), the other gay disco, is known for loud, harder, cutting-edge sound and has picked up again in popularity. **Ricky's** (Pau 25) has gay Friday-night dancing, and in wintertime they mix everyone up together nicely.

The Gay Beach Party on Tuesday nights at disco **L'Atlantida** (Passeig Marítim) is open air, with its own beachfront. A free bus takes you from in front of the Calipolis Hotel and the party goes from midnight until dawn.

Sauna Sitges (Espalter 11) is an any day (from 4 p.m.) place for hot, steamy fun and frequent special parties such as their Spuma, or “foam,” affairs.

Dining and shopping

Cine Café (Jesus 55) is a new Anglo-American bar and grill with the “best English breakfast in Sitges” from 10



El Piano
San Bonaventura, 37
Sitges

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san bonaventura 13 **SITGES**

a.m. until 2 p.m. Specialties here include great homemade burgers and ribs, crisp salads, and juicy grills. The decor includes genuine props and memorabilia from some of the biggest movies of all time, and affable hosts John and David show English-language movies here twice daily. The kitchen serves until 11 p.m. but they're open until midnight, daily except Tuesdays.

Ogmios (Boneventura 17) features Spanish Market cuisine, using only fresh food that's purchased each day, prepared with unique elaboration, and presented in a prix fixe menu of three courses. Open daily from 8 p.m. for dinner (also open for weekend lunch during the winter), you may be greeted and have your order taken in Catalan, Spanish, English, French, Greek, or Italian – and might recognize the affable Fabio of B Side bar as one of your hosts here, too.

El Trull (Mossèn Fèlix Clarà 3) is one of the restaurants you travel for: enjoy impeccably prepared, imaginative food with a friendly welcome from Carlos and Angelo. Their picture-book, step-lane, old-world setting is just off the

Carrer Major.

Monroes (Pau 36) is open all year, with varied international choices of quality food and good value for your money in a fun environment.

Parrots Restaurant (Joan Tarrida 18) has street terrace seating, and their cuisine combines that of Switzerland and the Mediterranean.

Alma (Tacó 16) and **Les Enfants Terribles** (Sant Bartomeu 40) serve French cuisine. **Ma Maison** (Bonaire 28) and **El Jardi** (Bonaire 26) feature French and international dishes in a garden setting.

Pizza del Pecado (Parellades 76) has good, quick and inexpensive slices of many varieties (25 by a recent count), for tasty snacks on the run.

Other local favorites include: **Café Sitges** (Pau 32) for breakfast, then pizza, coffees, and cocktails; **La Borda** (Bonaventura 5), with traditional Catalan cuisine; **La Torka** (Pere 26), with Spanish market fare; **Beach House** (Pau 34), with an eclectic menu from a pair of far-traveled Australians; **Margarita** (Paseo de la Ribera 8), a terrace bar and restaurant at

the beach with English breakfasts, lunch, and dinner; and **o'Vesuvio** (Carreta 10) for Italian specialties.

Two young Californians opened a new shop this year, **Origen** (Pere 1), specializing in authentic traditional Spanish ceramics, with beautiful tiles, plates, and other pottery items from this region.

Many local galleries offer paintings, mostly of local scenery that hark back to Sitges's fishing village past. For studies of the male human form there are drawings, paintings, and photographs of classically posed nudes at the small gallery of **Blanca De Nicolas** (Paseo de Vilanova 43). For a different kind of Sitges souvenir, check out **Tattoo Sacred** (Parellades 39) for body enhancements with ink or piercings.

Clothing boutiques with the latest in fashion abound in Sitges. The clothes at **Ovlas** (Francesc 22) are designed to bring sexy back into fashion.

Other stylish shops include **Boyzone** (Bonaventura 18), **Les Garçons** (Gaudenci 12), **Franc** (Parellades 26), and **Jazz** (Bonaire 20). ▼



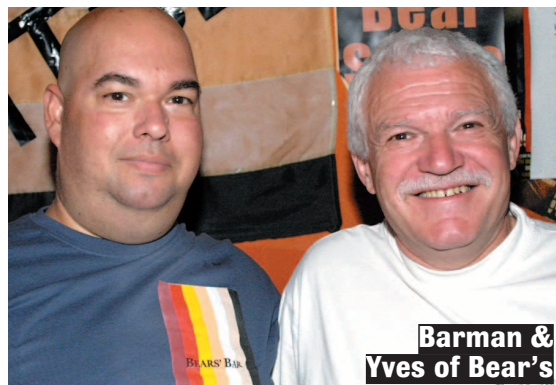
Welsh lads
at Orek's



John & David
of Cine Cafe



Wayne, José,
& Stephen
of El Piano



Barman &
Yves of Bear's

