

# PRAGUE

*Still among Europe's top tourist draws, the beauty of this city – and its inhabitants – make it a 'must see' for gay adventurers*

**Michael Thompson**

**C**apital of the Czech Republic, Prague is an architectural gem. With a millennium of history carved in stone, “the city of 100 spires” is a fairytale-like wonderland on the Vltava River.

Circumstances of history preserved Prague's buildings and forged unique intellectual and cultural perspectives during centuries at the crossroads of European civilization. Today's travelers venturing just a little off the beaten path can have some surprisingly exotic encounters. Excesses of the post-Soviet-era influx have damped initial Czech euphoria at rejoining the Western mainstream, and a long history of foreign dominations make people wary of losing their culture. So, outside the gay or tourist areas, you'll find fewer bi- or multi-lingual. But there's reason for the bon vivant connotations of “Bohemian”: find a common tongue, or improvise, and over a few beers you'll have some truly engaging experiences.

Other sorts of intercourse require fewer language skills. Sexual conformity of the Anglo-Saxon variety is far less common here, so with less individual angst and general fuss about sex or nudity, the cultural divide is often bridged with little more than a glance.

Straight and gay worlds are more integrated so gay infrastructures and political identities common elsewhere in the West aren't seen here so much. Bars, cafes, and relationships are far less likely to be labeled one way or another, and public spaces here remain much as they were once in America – still cruisy and not so rigorously controlled. With a modicum of courtesy you're unlikely to offend anyone by taking an interest in them, sexually or otherwise.

But wherever the line is drawn, Prague has by far the largest, most stylish, and most international nightlife for gay people in Eastern Europe, and Czechs do like to party. Often as strikingly handsome as guys in a Bel Ami video, they're an outgoing, uninhibited, and refreshingly forthright people.

With all this, plus lively arts offerings and beautiful countryside to explore outside the capital, a wonderfully rich European vacation/adventure awaits in the Czech Republic. Prague prices, while higher than in recent years, still compare favorably to those elsewhere in western Europe, particularly for food and beer.

## Going out

Most of the businesses we list can be walked to from four green line Metro stops: Mustek and Muzeum, and to the

east, the Namesti Miru and Jiriho z Podebrad stations. Tram cars go most everywhere in the city, and 20 or 75 minute single-trip or one- to five-day pass tickets can be purchased at Metro stations or convenience stores. Many of the tram lines have night service after midnight, and departure times are listed at the stops.

And speaking of tickets, at bars that hand you a drink ticket be sure not to lose it, or there's a penalty charge.

**Saints** (Polska 32; [Praguesaints.cz](http://Praguesaints.cz)) – a cozy bar with comfy lounge sitting areas, friendly staff, and no attitude – is at the heart of the gayest district close to the most popular dance clubs. It's a good place to begin your trip, and an easy place to meet people at the start or the finish of any night out. Saints is open daily 7 p.m. to 4 a.m. with free wi-fi, and all their staff is English-speaking and well-informed, so you'll quickly feel at home. Many in the large expatriate community call this their home pub, and Czechs looking to meet visitors and to practice their English also hang out here. Their website is a useful resource with gay guide and map.

**Friends** (Bartolomejska 11), amidst the maze of narrow car-free streets of Old Town, is a long-time Prague favorite that pulls both tourists and a young and energetic crowd of locals,

with periodic special parties that fill up their dance floor. A rotation of DJs plays a variety of music types. Opening time can be fluid, usually by 6 p.m., and on weekends they can go until 5 a.m.

Early-opening venues include: **Cafe Muzeum** (Mezibranska 19), just above Václavské Namesti (Wenceslas Square), a small casual, early place for conversation around cafe tables, with beer prices from 22 crowns; **U Rudolpho** (Mezibranska 3), another favorite locals pub from 4 p.m.; and **Strelec** (Zitna 51) from 5 p.m., a new Czech gay beer pub. **Kafirna U Ceskeho Pana** (Kozí 13) is one of Prague's oldest, most authentically Czech early-hours hangouts.

**Bar 21** (Rimska 21) is a stylish cafe cellar bar at the end of a gated alley. Laid back and cool, it's a place to relax with old friends or to meet new ones over inexpensive beers, daily 4 p.m. to 4am. Bar 21 also features art exhibitions.

Several mixed-crowd cafes figure in the local gay universe: **Café Café** (Rytířská 10), with sidewalk tables along a pedestrian street of the old city, and attracting gay couples with tasty pastries and coffee amidst walls of celebrity photos; **Cafe Nordica** (Zlatnicka 10), offering a bit of Scandinavia, with sandwiches and great breakfasts daily from 9 a.m. (9:30 Sundays); and **Erra** (Konviktska 11), a popular and inexpensive cafe-bar and restaurant on two levels, open 10 a.m. to midnight.

**Lehka Hlava** (Borsov 280/2; Lehkahlava.cz), or "Clear Head," is a recommended veggie/vegan restaurant in Old Town, with menu online.

Women gather at many of the above mixed cafes, but **Jumpa Dampa** (V Tunich 10) is more favored than most.

Other bars include: **Latimerie** (Slezská 74), with a cafe; **Ku Bar** (Rytířská 13), a trendy mixed bar in Old Town with eye-candy staff; **Piano Bar** (Milesevska 10), with an older Czech crowd; **Tingl Tangl** (Karoliny Svétle 12), an Old Town pub/restaurant with drag shows; and **Stella** (Luzická 10), a long-time Prague cruising bar where Czechs, expats, and tourists mingle till 5 a.m. most nights, and where it's said you can

At Escape



At Valentino



Bastian &amp; Hubert at Saints

At Saints



At Temple



At Valentino



At Saints

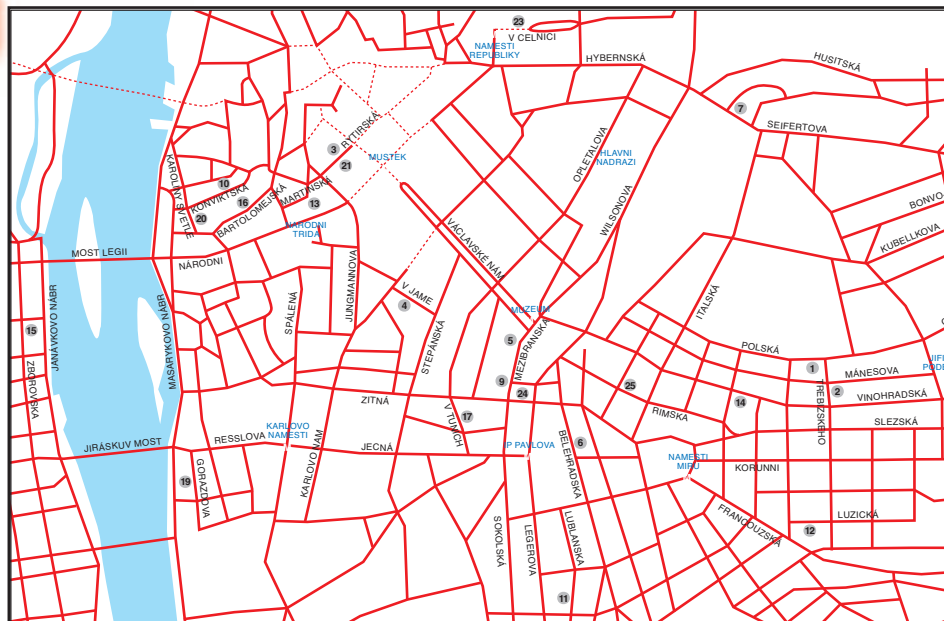
At Temple





# PRAQUE

- 8) **Alcatraz**  
Borivojova 58  
222 711 458  
[www.alcatraz.wbs.cz](http://www.alcatraz.wbs.cz)
- 13) **Babylonia Sauna**  
Martinska 6 224 232 304
- 25) **Bar 21**  
Rimska 21
- 21) **Café Café**  
Rytirska 10  
224 210 597
- 5) **Café Museum**  
Mezibranska 19  
222 221 312
- 23) **Club Celnic**  
V Celnici 4  
+420 224 212 240  
[www.clubcelnice.com](http://www.clubcelnice.com)
- 15) **Drake's**  
Zborovska 50  
[www.drakes.cz](http://www.drakes.cz)
- 10) **Erra**  
Konviktska 11  
222 220 568
- 4) **Escape to Paradise**  
V Jame 8  
+420 6611 1177  
[www.escapeprague.eu](http://www.escapeprague.eu)
- 16) **Friends**  
Bartolomejska 11  
224 236 772  
[www.friends-prague.cz](http://www.friends-prague.cz)
- 19) **Heaven**  
Gorazdova 11
- 17) **Jampa Dampa**  
V Tunich 10



- +420 739 592 099  
[www.jampadampa.cz](http://www.jampadampa.cz)
- 3) **Ku Bar**  
Rytirska 13  
221 181 081
- 22) **Latimerie**  
Slezska 74  
224 252 049
- 18) **Piano Bar**  
Milešovska 10  
222 727 496
- 6) **Radost**
- Belehradská 120  
224 254 776  
[www.radostfx.cz](http://www.radostfx.cz)
- 1) **Saints**  
Polska 32  
222 250 326  
[www.saintsbar.cz](http://www.saintsbar.cz)
- 11) **Sauna Marco**  
Lublanska 17  
224 262 833
- 12) **Stella**  
Luzicka 10
- 224 257 869
- 24) **Strelec**  
Zitna 51  
224 941 446
- 2) **Termix**  
Třebízského 4  
222 710 462  
[www.club-termix.cz](http://www.club-termix.cz)
- 7) **Temple**  
Seifertova 32/3  
222 710 773  
[www.clubtemple.net](http://www.clubtemple.net)
- 20) **Tingl tangl**  
Karolíny Světle 12  
224 238 278
- 9) **U Rudolpha**  
Mezibranska 3  
605 872 492
- 14) **Valentino/ Celebrity Café**  
Vinohradská 40  
222 513 491  
[www.club-valentino.cz](http://www.club-valentino.cz)

## At Termix



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roll one up and smoke it without creating a fuss.

**Alcatraz** (Borivojova 58) has a gay pub (open 7 p.m. to 2am) above a leather/uniform/rubber sex club that's open daily from 10 p.m., and features dark rooms, video cabins, fetish areas, a sling, cage, and showers. They have Thursday night naked parties from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m.

**Radost** (Belehradská 120) is a mostly-straight basement dance club, but their first-Friday party Lollipop is a well-attended gay disco. Their vegetarian and vegan restaurant at street level is probably the best of its kind in Prague, with a wide variety of cuisines served in three comfortable and stylish rooms. Their American-style, heaping plates weekend brunches (served from 10:30 a.m.) are popular. English is spoken here, and they have wi-fi, too.

**Valentino** (Vinohradská 40) is Prague's current gay mega-club, the largest in the Czech Republic. With bars and cafes on three levels and a summertime terrace, Valentino boasts two discos: a small, more Czech-favored one at mid-level, and a larger downstairs dance floor with a long and spacious lounge. There's dancing until 5 a.m., and they can get packed to the walls on the weekends. There are dark-rooms here too, and a subterranean cruising labyrinth that snakes through old stone walled caverns below. Warnings to avoid entering with valuables should be heeded or a moment of ecstatic distraction might cost you plenty. Also, some younger guys offering sexual favors are here to make a little money, too. Their street-level **Celebrity Cafe** (Vinohradská 40) is a full-menu restaurant and bar, open from 8 a.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. on weekends, providing one of the few afternoon meeting places of its type on this side of town.

**Termix** (Třebízského 4), the other popular gay dance venue, has lounges, a small disco, and a darkroom with access right through the men's toilet! Again, some of the younger guys here are casually commercial, too. Open Wednesday to Sunday until 5 a.m. they're busiest on



Escape's  
Steven



At Villa Mansland



Craig of  
Saints



Abundant energy  
at Termix



At Escape



Dan of  
Escape



With DJ Slavo of Valentino



A view from  
"the Bridge"



Rob of Saints



A few of the guys at Escape to Paradise



A building facade on Narodni



weekends and on Wednesday nights when they pack in the young local guys for their Czech music night.

**Pink Stars** is a now-and-then gay dance event to look out for at Celnice Club (V Celnici 4), which is otherwise straight.

## Getting off

Sex-work and its promotion is legal for those over 18 in the Czech Republic, and Prague has two comfortable night-clubs in which to meet hustlers, often students or young laborers looking for extra cash, or new arrivals from parts further east. The clubs try to filter out the troublesome guys, but even angels can be tempted, so agree on prices upfront and keep your valuables and your wits about you so everyone stays happy. The Czech HIV-infection rate is low, but always play safe, and help keep it so.

**Escape to Paradise** (V Jame 8) is a popular place for international visitors. Their non-stop shows begin at 10 p.m., with young men dancing on stage,

scantly clad or naked, performing with erotic exuberance. Solo or double, and sometimes oiled, they provide much more than just bump, grind, and pose. All the many dancers here (around 20 or so a night) can be approached for some private entertainment back at your hotel or simply for a snuggle (with drinks on you), on the comfy couches as you watch the show.

**Temple** (Seifertova 32/3) replaced the old Pinocchio this year. This long stone-walled basement bar has been refurbished and has lots of comfortable seating around booth tables or on plush couches. A separate candle-lit lounge is a quiet retreat off to the side of the main bar. The young guys here take their cues from you with eye contact or greetings, and the atmosphere is relaxed and without pressure. Naked dancer shows start at 11 p.m. and continue at 45 minute intervals throughout the evening on weekends. Above, with entrance on the main street, their Temple Hotel offers rooms and a suite

for rent. As many of the guys working at Temple stay here, you might bump into some of them in the communal shower area (private shower rooms are optional).

**Monty's** (Seifertova) is a small bar and lounge with umbrella-shaded sidewalk tables just by Temple Hotel. Many of the same guys hang out here casually in the early evening before things get going at Temple, and the beer is inexpensive, too.

**Babylonia** (Martinska 6), open daily from 2 p.m. to 3 a.m., is Prague's largest gay sauna with steam, whirlpool, gay cinema, cubicles for private dalliances, fitness room, and bar. Massage is available, too.

Two other tubs with bars and steamy amenities are **Sauna David** (Sokolovska 44), with a somewhat older crowd, and **Sauna Marco** (Lublanska 17), with a mainly Czech clientele and a wider age range.

Across the river, **Drakes** (Zborovska 50) is a large cellar bar and sex club with video booths, play rooms, stripper

At Celebrity Cafe



At Valentino



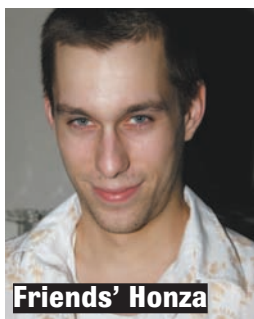
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**At Saints**

**At Temple**


shows, and porn videos everywhere. The 190 crown cover (waived for 18- to 25-year-olds) is good for 24 hours of sexual opportunities, and they never close.

Area porn shops include: **City Fox** (Pribenicka 12) which sells and rents videos they produce with Czech locals, along with a large range of other DVDs, toys, magazines and lubes; and **Heaven** (Gorazdova 11) with 3,000 DVDs for sale and rent, along with other sex shop stuff, plus darkrooms, video cabins, and a bar.

## Accommodations and tours

**Mysteria Apartments** (+420-777-944-781; Apartment.mysteria.cz) has a selection of private apartments in sizes from studios to four bedroom penthouses, all located in the center of Prague, with prices to suit all budgets. Some accommodations offer spectacular views, and most come equipped with computers and broadband internet access. Ask about their expanded service packages. Andy, the British owner, is a trove of information about the scene in Prague, from the sights to the restaurant options – and, of course, all about the gay scene, too. Mysteria offers chauffer-driven airport transfers, and they do guided gay tours throughout the Czech Republic.

The English-speaking guys who own

the bar **Prague Saints** (Polska 32; +420-775-152-041/2/3; Praguesaints.cz) are a great resource when planning your Prague vacation. Their website has one of the most comprehensive guides to the local gay scene, and their staff is happy to answer any questions you might have about Prague. For accommodations in the city they offer a selection of private apartments in and around the gay districts of Vinohrady and Zizkov as well as airport transfers. A range of private gay tours around Prague by day or night, as well as to destinations outside the capital city, is another of their services. Open year-round, **Prague Center Guest Residences** (Zahoranskeho 5; +420-723-011-588; Gaystay.net/praguecenter) has five private gay apartments and a shared gay guest residence. Stylishly furnished, and all located in the city center, the apartments range in size from studios to three-bedrooms. Bob, the American owner, has been providing guests with area information for over nine years, and he also offers airport transfers and Czech tour guides.

**Villa Mansland** (Stepnicna 9-11; 420-777-839-733; Villa-mansland.eu) is a gay hotel just outside the town center, and easily accessible by metro (Ladvi station) or tram (#10 or 16 to Stepnicna

stop). Mansland has a restaurant, bar, summer terrace, sauna, and whirlpool, with a verdant and peaceful garden in the back. Massage is available, and young local guys are usually hanging around, easily met. Harry, the German owner, is almost always on site to see to your every need.

**Nouvum Garden** (Zernovska 1195/2; +420-274-773-464; Nouvum.com), just to the east of downtown, is a new 11-room gay guesthouse with satellite TV and broadband internet, a steamroom, jacuzzi, massage services, sun bed, and also a bar.

**Ron's Rainbow Guesthouse** (Bulharska 4; +420-271-725-664; Gayprague.com) is a six-room guest house close to the center, with comfortable, clean, moderately priced rooms. Long-time American expat Ron provides a welcoming introduction to all of his guests.

Also see websites **Come2prague.com** for apartment information and **Honilek.cz** and **Praguegaycity.com** for more apartment information and a gay guides to Prague.

**Thomas Tours** (+420-775-347-770; thomastours.cz@yahoo.com) provides tours of Prague and the Czech countryside individually tailored to your tastes. Thomas, the young Czech who runs these tours, is charming, and informative. ▼



# TRAVEL LISTINGS

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### BYRON BAY

Visiting Australia's number one gay travel destination? Check out [www.byronbaypinkguide.blogspot.com](http://www.byronbaypinkguide.blogspot.com) for what's happening and where to stay. Contact webmaster Michael on [info@byronbaypinkguide.com](mailto:info@byronbaypinkguide.com) for further information.

### SYDNEY

**Sax Fetish**, 110a Oxford Street, Darlinghurst, NSW 2010; telephone +61 2 9331 6105; fax +61 2 9360 3864. [www.saxfetish.com](http://www.saxfetish.com), [shop@saxfetish.com](mailto:shop@saxfetish.com). Sax Fetish is Australia's longest running boutique fetish store presenting the finest products from Australia and around the world. A huge array of leather, latex, PVC, steel is available off the shelf or custom-made.

[Guidemag.com](http://Guidemag.com)

## CANADA

### QUEBEC

### MONTREAL

**Abri du Voyageur Hotel**, 9 rue Ste-Catherine West, H2X 1Z5; (514) 849-2922, US Toll Free: 866-302-2922; fax (514) 499-0151; [www.abri-voyageur.ca](http://www.abri-voyageur.ca), email: [info@abri-voyageur.ca](mailto:info@abri-voyageur.ca). Charming hotel for budget-conscious travelers, in the heart of downtown Montreal. Fifteen minute walk to the Village. Rooms with shared bathrooms and studios with kitchenettes and private bathrooms. Exceptional value.

**Club Unity Montreal**, 1171 Ste-Catherine East. (514) 523-2777. On three levels, Club Unity Montreal is the biggest gay club in Montreal. Club Unity Montreal has two rooms with two different kinds of music, a huge terrace on the roof, a VIP room and a lounge area. The club is open from 10pm to 3am from Thursday to Saturday. For more info [www.clubunitymontreal.com](http://www.clubunitymontreal.com) / [info@clubunitymontreal.com](mailto:info@clubunitymontreal.com)

**Hotel Le Saint André**, 1285 rue St-André, (800) 265-7071, (514) 849-7070; [www.hotelsaintandre.ca](http://www.hotelsaintandre.ca) "The hotel with the European touch." Continental breakfast served in the room. Private bath in each of our 60 rooms. Color TV, radio, telephone, air conditioning. Mixed clientele. Located in the middle of the Gay Village. Major cards, including Discover card. Reservations, please.

**Hotel Manoir des Alpes** (3 stars), 1245 rue St-André, (800) 465-2929, (514) 845-9803, fax (514) 845-9886, [www.hotelmanoirdesalpes.qc.ca](http://www.hotelmanoirdesalpes.qc.ca); email: [admin@hotelmanoirdesalpes.qc.ca](mailto:admin@hotelmanoirdesalpes.qc.ca) 30 rooms in a completely renovated Victorian-era building located in Montreal's gay village. Large gay clientele. European style, continental breakfast, all private bath, color cable TV, A/C, ample free parking, all at very reasonable rates. Visa/MC/AmEx.

## CZECH REPUBLIC

### PRAGUE

**Mysteria Apartments Prague** (420) 777-944-781; [www.apartment.mysteria.cz](http://www.apartment.mysteria.cz). A varied selection of private apartments, from studios to four bedroom penthouses, at the center of Prague, at prices for all budgets, most with computers and broadband internet access, and cable TV. Expanded service packages, chauffeur-driven airport transfers and exclusive guided gay tours throughout the Czech Republic also available. British owner Andy is a trove of helpful information about Prague, and the local gay scene.

**Prague Center Guest Residences**. Tel: +420-723-011-588; [bobwitt@gayemail.net](mailto:bobwitt@gayemail.net); [www.gaystay.net/praguecenter](http://www.gaystay.net/praguecenter). Comfort and style in the heart of Prague. Four loft apartments, three studio lofts and a one bedroom loft at center of Vinohrady gay district. Also two lofts, and one and three bedroom riverside apartments. Bob will arrange transportation and offers great local advice.

## DENMARK

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**Carstens Guesthouse** (Christians Bygde 28, Copenhagen; +45 3314 9107; [Carstensguesthouse.dk](http://Carstensguesthouse.dk)) Rooms from singles or dorms, to suites at reasonable rates. Kitchen, breakfast option, free wifi internet, roof-deck garden, cable TV, plus use of phones, computer, bicycles, dvd movies and laundry facilities. Near Tivoli Gardens and all the gay nightlife.

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**The Chariots Sauna Group** - [www.gaysauna.co.uk](http://www.gaysauna.co.uk). The most exclusive, notorious and extensive male sauna complexes in the world! Shoreditch - Vauxhall - Waterloo Limehouse - Stretham - Farringdon. On every corner of London you'll find a luxurious, well-equipped and throbbing bath-house - full of facilities, fun and fabulous men. Most clubs open 24-7 times and locations and information call 020(7) 247 5333.

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## FRANCE

### PARIS

**Hotel Louvre Richelieu** (51, rue de Richelieu; phone: 01. 42. 97. 46. 20; [www.louvre-richelieu.com](http://www.louvre-richelieu.com)). Fourteen rooms, most with bathrooms. Ideal location by the Louvre, near the Opera House and Galeries Lafayette shopping. Multi-lingual staff can recommend restaurants, tours, and night life. Internet access and WiFi throughout hotel. Breakfast available.

**Projection Video**, 21 rue des Lombards, 75004 Paris; (0)1 40 27 98 09; [www.bmc-video.com](http://www.bmc-video.com). Metro Hotel de Ville or Chatelet. Top selection on DVDs for sale, for rent, or for on-site viewing (nine booths downstairs). Plus gels, aromas, dildos, and other accessories. Gay owned/operated. Courteous, intelligent service. A Paris landmark.

## GERMANY

### BERLIN

**Arco Hotel**, Geisbergstr 30, 10777 Berlin; telephone +49-30-2351480, fax +49-30 21 47 51 78; e-mail [info@arco-hotel.de](mailto:info@arco-hotel.de); [www.arco-hotel.de](http://www.arco-hotel.de). Right in the gay area, minutes by foot from city-center, on a quiet side street, the Arco offers rooms fully loaded with all amenities plus safes. Rates from 50 euros- includes tax and breakfast buffet (indoors or in the outdoor garden patio). Bike rentals available. W-lan internet access. Elevator. Laundry services.

**Arthotel-Connection**, Fuggerstr. 33, 10777 Berlin, Germany. Ph/fax: +49 (30) 210 21 88 00/30; [info@arthotel-connection.de](mailto:info@arthotel-connection.de); [www.arthotel-connection.de](http://www.arthotel-connection.de) Gay-Only Hotel above gay bars. 15 enchanting, comfortable, individually designed rooms, near city-center and Wittenbergplatz subway station. Playrooms equipped to reach the highest pleasures. Five star breakfast buffet, hair dryer, HiFi/DVD, tele-phone, free wireless internet, laundry. From 48 euros (single); 68 euros (double).

**Kinky Tulip** (Welsersstrasse 24, at Fuggerstrasse; phone, +49(0)30-219-64-240; [www.kinkytulip.de](http://www.kinkytulip.de); email, [info@kinkytulip.de](mailto:info@kinkytulip.de)). Gay leather and fetish guesthouse for men only. Live your fantasies! Eight rooms, clinic-room, living room, kitchen, free internet access. **Connection Club** (Fuggerstrasse 33; [www.connection-berlin.de](http://www.connection-berlin.de)) Berlin's Gay Dance Club. Together with Garage leather and accessories shop, plus movie arcade with three levels of dark-room play space.

**Tom's Hotel** (Motzstrasse 19, Berlin-Shoeneberg; +49 (0)30-2196-6604). A new hotel at the heart of the scene in Europe's most exciting gay city. Single and double rooms from 79-99 euros, all with TV, DVD player, free WLAN, en suite bathroom, fresh fruit, and local discounts. For more see [www.toms-hotel.de](http://www.toms-hotel.de); email [info@toms-hotel.de](mailto:info@toms-hotel.de).

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