

LOS ANGELES

'Sex is part of nature, and I go along with nature,' said native Marilyn Monroe. By that measure, Los Angeles is North America's most unspoiled wilderness park.

Michael Darton

Los Angeles means Hollywood glamour, year-round sunshine, long stretches of beaches, movie stars and some of the most vibrant and varied gay clubs in the world. Visitors with a yen for the metropolis's gay life will home in on West Hollywood, Silver Lake and Long Beach. All offer distinct charms, and a choice of restaurants, bars and scenes.

West Hollywood is one of the world's most notable gay villages. The now-famous Sunset Strip once connected the early Spanish settlement of El Pueblo de Los Angeles to coastal ranches along the Pacific. A century later the area was settled by workers in the railroad yards here — a nonconformist and independent lot. By the 1920s night clubs and gambling joints sprang up in a town that was, and remains, outside Los Angeles city limits (and LA's historically more stringent regulations). Proximity to the movie industry brought an influx of creative types, and in the '60s — at safe distance from the LAPD — gay life emerged from the shadows, as part of West Hollywood's general countercultural ferment. The community coalesced around the Santa Monica Avenue strip, and the area remains central to this day. Gay people here comprise perhaps 40 percent of the population, and in 1985 voters here were the first in America to elect a gay-majority city council.

A highlight of WeHo's calendar is the night of October 31, when revelers don their most outrageous outfits for the annual Halloween and Costume Car-

nival. Over 400,000 participants throng Santa Monica Boulevard for food, merriment, contests, music and stage acts.

The Grammy Awards (February 8, 2009) and the Academy Awards (February 22) are cause for celebrations everywhere at this motion picture center-of-the-universe. Even those without invitations to the most exclusive parties can join in the fun at their local bars.

Tinseltown couldn't be complete without an LA gay film festival. **Outfest** (Outfest.org) sponsors film preservation and hosts special events. Twice monthly at the **Egyptian Theatre** (6712 Hollywood Boulevard) Outfest Wednesdays screens films of interest. Fusion (set for March 2009) will showcase works by and about gay people of color. The main festival is set for next July 9 to 20. See their website for upcoming line-ups and dates, plus archives reaching back to 1995.

Mark your calendar for the 2009 **LA Gay Pride** (Lapride.org) celebrations set for next June 12 to 14.

Founded in 1971, the **LA Gay & Lesbian Center** (1625 North Hudson Avenue; Laglc.org), in Hollywood, is the largest gay and lesbian organization in the world with several locations in the LA area. They host regular theater events and comedy nights.

Bars and clubs

It's not surprising there are so many nightspots in this town; here's a sampling of some of the main highlights.

Here Lounge (696 North Robertson Boulevard) continues as a phenome-

non, drawing a cute and happy crowd. Like its sister bar G in New York City, Here is an architectural delight, and the place is usually mobbed. Saturdays bring Destination, hosted and DJ-ed by the cute Perry twins, Doug and Derek. On Sundays it's Size, and the fun starts at 4 pm. Happy hour Fridays from 6 until 10 pm means half-price drinks, and later in the evening it's Truck Stop, with '80s rock, pop and dance. Enjoy the inside areas or outside patios.

About a block long, **The Abbey** (692 North Robertson) is the hugest, gayest "monastery" anywhere. On weekends, you're bound to encounter a long queue just to get into this coffeehouse, restaurant and full-service bar offering plenty of open-air seating. Their cozy, curtained cabins are great for making out.

One block down is **Trunks** (8809 Santa Monica Boulevard), a longstanding sports bar with the lowest drink prices in Boystown. It's home to several pool and softball teams, and the 12 satellite-dish sport TVs make for much entertainment. Up front is a smoking area with seating. There are also ample places to sit around the bar and a spacious area surrounding two pool tables towards the rear. There's a full range of beers and drink specials.

Eastern sophistication mingles with Western relaxation at **East West Lounge** (8851 Santa Monica). The "up above" lounge frequently smacks of celebrity, and there's plenty to celebrate as well along the 30-foot main bar and in the mezzanine lounge. This beautifully appointed place prides itself on its pre-



Corey Spears & Tenya at Mark's Restaurant



Chris of Mark's Restaurant



At Midtown Spa

mium drinks, such as margaritas made with Don Julio Tequila Silver or flavored martinis suffused with US State Grain Smirnoff, Marie Brizard liqueurs and the freshest fruit purees available. Drinks are two-for-one 4:30 to 7:30 pm.

Eleven Restaurant and Nightclub (8811 Santa Monica), located bang opposite East West, is quite gay friendly. Superbly designed (note their million-dollar water fountain), there are two grand levels at this continually-reinventing-itself establishment. Every Friday, club promoter Jeffrey Sanker currently hosts Fresh, a big gay party here.

Micky's (8857 Santa Monica), formerly one of WeHo's main gay spots is currently closed after last year's fire, but coming back, they say; an undated sign outside says 75 days to go....

Rage (8911 Santa Monica) is a bi-level restaurant, daytime bar and nightclub drawing a young crowd all through the week. Rage scorches as "Fuego," every Wednesday since forever! Food served here included Mexican, salads, and burgers; try their *carne asada* tacos for \$8.50.

Mother Lode (8944 Santa Monica) is chockablock on Sundays for their "mother of all beer bashes."

Factory (652 North La Peer Drive) hosts circuit-ish parties thanks to les-

bian promoters Sandy Sachs and Robin Gans. The dance club is large (15,000 square feet), slickly designed and contains several different areas with different moods.

Fubar (7994 Santa Monica) is a neighborhood place. But "Don't show up with attitude, don't show up with morals," they insist, especially on Friday nights at Fubar for "drunk and horny" night hosted by promoter Tom Whitman. New sister-bar **St. Felix** (8945 Santa Monica) is classy and vibrant, with happy hours from 4 to 9 pm daily featuring half-price drinks.

She-males, unusual men, women and their friends all party at **7969** (7969 Santa Monica), where it's fun figuring out who's who and into whom... or which... or what.

Numbers (8745 Santa Monica, 2nd floor) reverted to its old name recently (briefly it was called Digits) and adopted the motto "The hustle continues...." You'd probably get the picture, seeing guys from Rentboy.com party with the regulars here.

Don't forget the **Gold Coast** (8228 Santa Monica) for an old-time friendly neighborhood night out, with a wide cross-section of guys, strong drinks and bartenders you can still talk to.

The **Normandie Room** (8737 Santa Monica) is a mixer-for-all kind of place

that's more than just women-friendly, and the **Palms** (8572 Santa Monica) is a long-established local lesbian club.

Cafe Marco (1051 North Havenhurst Drive) is in a slightly new location but is busy as ever, with plenty of outdoor seating, coffee, snacks and free wi-fi.

Cafes and restaurants

Mark's (861 North La Cienega Boulevard) continues to shine with stellar California-continental cuisine and a truly fetching staff. The indoor and outdoor bars, patio, and a look that's as *au courant* as the food contribute to the atmosphere. I tucked joyously in to sweet pea / lemon tarragon ravioli with greens sautéed in lemon oil with a side of truffled parmesan fries. Thursdays bring Flow, with half-price bottles of wine and dinner specials for around \$20. At the Upright Cabaret (Uprightcabaret.com) here I saw a parade of hot divas in a night dedicated to Dolly Parton; Steve Ross is coming up on November 22.

Champagne French Bakery Cafe (8918 Santa Monica) excels in gourmet flat breads, soups, salads, and sandwiches. Their bacon harvest flatbread — with four cheeses, bacon, zucchini, peppers, eggplant and squash — is delicious and just \$8.79. Great cakes and sweets, include a delightful crème

2810 Hyperion Ave. Silver Lake. CA

MJ's

Calendar

Monday
Watch The Game on the Giant Screen
Monday Night Football 6pm-9pm
Trailer Trash Mondays
\$3 Drinks all Night: Well, Wine, Domestic Beer
DJ Rick Eich Spins
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Tuesday
4pm - 9pm **TACO TUESDAY**
\$3 Strawberry & Lemon Lime Margarita's
\$6 Cadillac Margarita's
RMUOB
9pm every Fucking Tuesday
Hot Body Contest, Shower Dancers, Fetish Freaks

Wednesday
MJ's MALE REVIEW SHOW
Hosted by Geovanny
Pre-Show 9pm / Show Time 10pm

Thursday
Porn Palace
Interviews with your favorite pornstars
Hosted by Jason Sechrest 10pm

Friday
HOMO HAPPY HOUR 4pm - 8pm
9pm Skin - Resident DJ Alexander and AJ

Saturday
XXX
Saturday Anthem
DJ Rafael M / Peter Barona
4th Sat. Jeffrey Sanker
presents **RAW**

Sunday
Last Ever Sunday
Last Ever Sunday 4pm-6pm
9pm - Club Debut
The Best of The
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DJ RICK DOMINGUEZ

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LOS ANGELES

BARS & CLUBS

- 6) The Eagle, LA**
4219 Santa Monica Blvd,
Silverlake
(323) 669-9472
- 23) East West Lounge**
8851 Santa Monica Blvd
(310) 360-6186
- 3) The Factory**
652 N. La Peer,
W. Hollywood
(310) 659-4551
- 34) Faultline**
4216 Melrose Ave
Silverlake
(323) 660-0889
- 39) Here**
696 N Robertson
W. Hollywood
(310) 360-8455
- 15) Micky's**
(temporarily closed)
8857 Santa Monica Blvd
W. Hollywood
(310) 657-1176
- 2) MJ's**
2810 Hyperion Ave
(323) 660-1503
- 17) Mother Lode**
8944 Santa Monica Blvd
W. Hollywood
(310) 659-9700
- 21) Rage**
8911 Santa Monica Blvd
W. Hollywood
(310) 652-7055
- 28) Silver Fox**
411 Redondo Avenue
Long Beach
(562) 439-6343

- 32) Trunks**
8809 Santa Monica Blvd
W. Hollywood
(310) 652-1015

RESTAURANTS & CAFES

- 30) The Abbey**
692 N. Robertson Blvd
W. Hollywood
(310) 289-8410
- 5) Café D'Etoile**
8941 1/2 Santa Monica
W. Hollywood
(310) 278-1011
- 13) Mark's**
861 N. La Cienega
W. Hollywood
(310) 652-5252

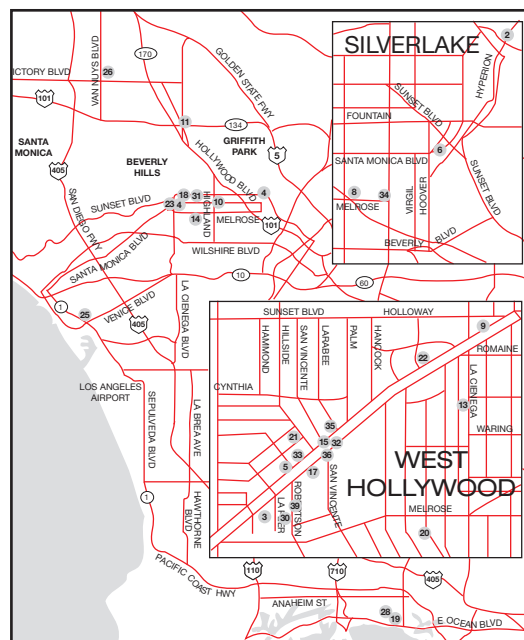
PRIVATE CLUBS

- 20) Slammers**
3688 Beverly Blvd
(213) 388-8040
- 8) Flex**
4424 Melrose, Silverlake
(323) 663-7786
- 10) Hollywood Spa**
1650 N. Ivar Ave, Holly-
wood
(323) 463-5169
- 11) Hollywood Spa**
(North)
5636 Vineland, N. Holly-
wood
(818) 760-6969

- 14) Melrose Spa**
7269 Melrose Ave,
W. Hollywood
(323) 937-2122
- 16) Midtowne Spa**
615 S. Kohler St, LA
(213) 680-1838
- 25) Roman Holiday Club**
12814 Venice Blvd,
Mar Vista
(310) 391-0200
- 26) Roman Holiday Club II**
14435 Victory Blvd,
Van Nuys
(818) 780-1320
(310) 830-4784
- 1) 1350**
510 W. Anaheim,
Wilmington
(310) 830-4784
- 31) Jack**
1037 N. Sycamore Ave
W. Hollywood
(323) 472-6495

RETAIL & OTHER

- 35) Different Light Books**
8853 Santa Monica Blvd
W. Hollywood
- 18) Pleasure Chest**
7733 Santa Monica Blvd
W. Hollywood
- 33) Unicorn Books**
8940 Santa Monica Blvd
W. Hollywood



ACCOMMODATIONS

- 12) Le Montrose**
900 Hammond Street
W. Hollywood
- 22) Ramada Inn**
8585 Santa Monica Blvd
W. Hollywood
- 19) Turret House**
(888) 488-7738,
(562) 624-199
1556 Chestnut Ave, Long
Beach
- 4) Coral Sands**
1730 N Western Ave, L.A.
- 9) Holloway Motel**
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W. Hollywood
- 36) San Vicente Inn**
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Boulevard West
Hollywood, CA 90069

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Hollywood, CA
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Wilmington, CA
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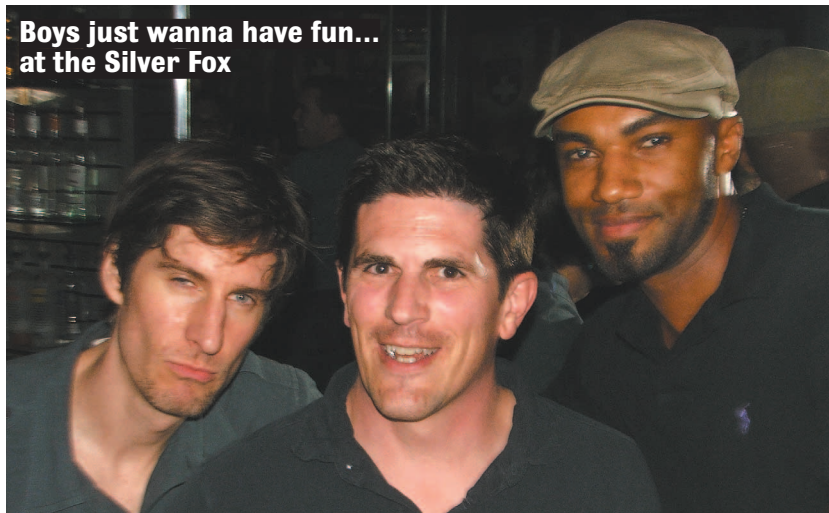


PLAY SAFE
CONDOMS
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Matt, Aaron & Narcisso of Jack

Boys just wanna have fun...
at the Silver Fox

Brian in the San Vicente pool

Chris and Josef in the
San Vicente jacuzzi

brûlée for just \$1.50.

There's a kicked-back, relaxed atmosphere at the **Fiesta Cantina** (8865 Santa Monica), a beach bar and grill that is WeHo's version of Hard Rock Cafe. This kitschy Mexican restaurant with a facade of a thatched hut attracts gay boys draped by girlfriends.

Other notable eateries nearby include **Cafe D'Etoile** (8941-1/2 Santa Monica) serving good ol' American food; **Tango Grill** (8807 Santa Monica), with its Argentine beef creations; **Bossa Nova** (685 North Robertson), specializing in meaty Brazilian treats and international cuisine; **Hamburger Mary's** (8288 Santa Monica), part of the national franchise of gay diner-bars, is popular for their all-you-can-eat Taco Tuesdays, proudly accompanied by Texas-size margaritas, while Thursdays bring karaoke hosted by the acerbic Jackie Beat; **Marix** (1108 North Flores Street), a bar and gay-favorite Tex-Mex restaurant, also known for their all-you-can-eat Taco Tuesdays; and **O-Bar** (8944 Santa Monica) with upscale design but reasonable prices for their innovative cuisine.

Yukon Mining Company (7328 Santa Monica), a veritable kaleidoscope of a diner, is known for attractions ranging from fierce drag queens to bold-faced strumpets.

French Quarter Restaurant (7985 Santa Monica) shines as a shrine to cruising, an attribute that's as much of a draw, perhaps, as the cuisine. Dining inside or out on their patio you'll be treated to warm and efficient service.

Lodgings

Chris is your new host at **San Vicente Inn & Resort** (845 North San Vicente Boulevard; 310-854-6915; Thesanvicenteinn.com). This gay oasis refreshes with the right mix of tropical calm and pulsating, clothing-optional hedonism — all right in the heart of WeHo off bustling Santa Monica Boulevard. Inside, you feel like you've left the busy city behind. It's easy to chat and meet other men — who show up from the world over. There are rooms and bungalows, a heated pool (with naked

swimming day and night), jacuzzi, steam room, wi-fi, breakfast buffet, vending machines for late-night cravings. Budget rooms start at \$99, and some apartments are available, too.

Ramada Plaza West Hollywood (8585 Santa Monica) has Art Deco-style rooms and deluxe suites, mostly two-story lofts. In-room DSL, movies, and refrigerators are standard. It's strategically located on Santa Monica Boulevard across from 24-Hour Fitness. Fine restaurants and an outdoor heated pool are part of the offering.

Next to the International House of Pancakes, **Holloway Motel** (8465 Santa Monica Boulevard) is "good bang for your buck." Free cable TV, voicemail, continental breakfast and parking are part of the deal. Wireless access is available for a modest fee.

Shopping

A Different Light (8853 Santa Monica) is a gay reader's heaven. Open since 1979, A Different Light has served the community as a bookstore, social hall, sanctuary and lifeline. Their selection of books and magazines is tops.

The friendly, no-attitude staff at **Uncorn Books** (8904 Santa Monica) makes buying mags, videos, erotica and accessories a breeze. They're now boasting some 300 DVDs for under \$20.

Circus of Books (8230 Santa Monica) offers videos and literature tending toward the erotic. The "Vaseline alley" in the back does get its share of action but police patrolling the area are never too far away.

665 Leather (8722 Santa Monica) is an adult leather retailer with ready-made and bespoke creations. A range of accessories — from anal toys to whips, paddles and wrist-pads — complement the shopping experience.

"Not your daddy's leather" is their tagline at **Steel Blue** (8350 Santa Monica), a West Hollywood favorite leather-and-clothing boutique.

For an assorted selection of magazines, specialty items, gifts, leather goods, condoms, love toys and the like, there's the renowned **Pleasure Chest** (7733

Santa Monica). This giant adult store has everything to tickle one's erotic interests.

Bathhouses and sex clubs

In addition to Slammer (see the Silver Lake section following), the LA area boasts many facilities dedicated to carnal pleasures.

If you're a fan of stand-up sex clubs and backrooms, a night at **Jack** (1037 North Sycamore Avenue), formerly The Zone, could be the best time you'll have in LA, "You don't know Jack... until you've been here" they say. Creative, steamy, ever-changing, hot and safe, this place is busy every night of the week. Jack is open Monday through Saturday 8 pm to dawn, and on Sundays from 2 pm until dawn.

Offering three floors of sight and sound, **Hollywood Spa** (1650 North Ivar Avenue) is a glamorous sauna often remembered for "that large great staircase." Their loyal clientele is an international blend. This large pleasure palace also boasts a nightly DJ and a new assortment of special rooms with two-way mirrors. Sister club is the all air-conditioned **North Hollywood Spa** (5636 Vineland Avenue) in, yes, North Hollywood. Both clubs contain fitness centers, pleasant cafes and erotic-TV lounges. North Hollywood Spa has had a major overhaul and offers brand new rooms, a newly refurbished cafe, plus a new sun deck. Both spas offer the services of a free health clinic (tucked within) for counseling and testing.

1350 Club (510 West Anaheim Street, Wilmington) — the only men's "health club" in the South Bay — draws a randy crowd all the time. Rooms go for half price on Wednesdays. The outdoor garden and multi-channel videos (with both gay and popular straight ones) add to the zip. Free sexual counseling as well as therapy for coming-out and self-esteem issues is proffered here and at sister facility, Melrose Spa.

Its stellar video lounge, exhibitionist room, showroom for performers and deluxe room-with-sling have rendered **Midtowne Spa** (615 South Kohler) even better. In the heart of downtown LA, it has plenty of action and a full pool. The

parking garage exclusively for patrons is handy. On Tuesdays rooms are half-priced. Some of the specials include Monday strip shows at 8 pm, Sunday strip shows at 3 pm, and a JO show on Thursdays at 8 pm

Melrose Baths (7269 Melrose Avenue) is conveniently located between Hollywood and West Hollywood. Crowd-pullers include half-price rooms on Mondays, \$11 lockers from 9 am to 9 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and \$8 lockers from 5 pm to 11 pm on Wednesdays. Confidential HIV and STD testing is available in all three facilities under the Midtowne umbrella (1350 Club, Midtowne Spa and Melrose Baths).

Also open around-the-clock, **Flex Complex** (4424 Melrose) features a garden oasis with an outdoor jacuzzi, sundeck and pool. The many booths indoors also smolder with passion. Flex Complex offers a super gym with free weights and machines in addition to steam, sauna, and video.

Body beautiful

Gold's Gym (1020 North Cole Avenue) offers a vast array of machines and free-weights for working out, toning and chiseling — plus amazing sights of LA's most dedicated body-builders.

Loft Hair Lounge and Green Spa (110 North Doheny Drive, Beverly Hills; 310-275-9002) offers cuts, colors, and facials using all-organic products. They have therapists to give Swedish, hot stone, deep tissue or lomi lomi massages — from 90 dollars up.

And what shows off bodies better than the beach? Take a bike tour of the Santa Monica beaches — including Venice and Huntington Beach with **Legends** (Legendsbeachbiketours.com). The guided tours are one-and-a-half to two hours for individuals or groups. Guides communicate by headset to highlight historic places and points of interest. **Will Rogers Beach**, a few miles from Santa Monica pier, is busy with gay life, especially at the weekend.

Hollywood and Downtown

Several Hollywood clubs radiate a

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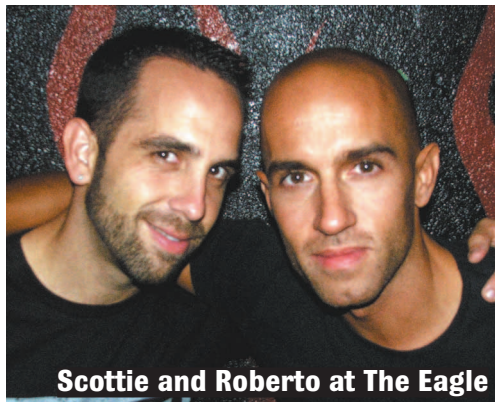
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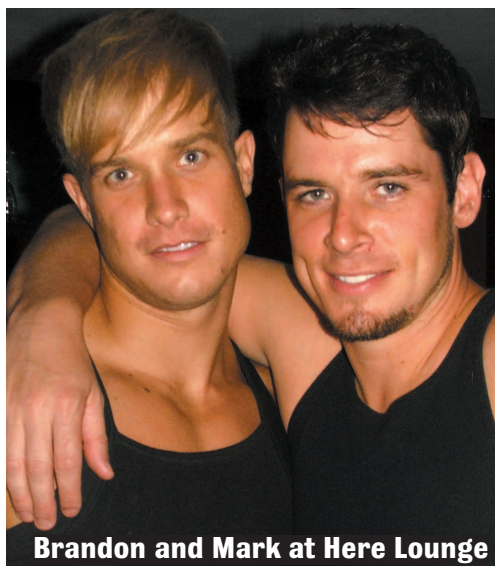
At San Vicente Inn



Scottie and Roberto at The Eagle



At Hollywood Spa



Brandon and Mark at Here Lounge



Sabra of MJ's



Marcus of The Eagle



Waldo of Trunks

decidedly Latin glow.

One is **Arena** (6655 Santa Monica), where **Circus Disco**, in the back, does parties with Mexican exuberance on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Other hot area gay Latino party spots are **Club Tempo** (5520 Santa Monica) with events Wednesdays though Sundays; and **Le Barcito** (3903 Sunset Boulevard), open nightly from 6 pm (Sundays from 5 pm).

For those craving formal elegance, Beige is a Tuesday supper club at **The Falcon** (7213 Sunset Boulevard) a chic Hollywood restaurant, and the Art Deco-period swanky and dress-code enforced **Edison** (108 West Second) offers a smorgasbord of events and cuisine for a mixed crowd, in a restored former power station in downtown.

South of Hollywood, **Jewel's Catch One** (4067 West Pico Boulevard) is a haven for diversity, both for the crowd and the events which include Sunday shows of female illusion, Alternative Beats karaoke and Das Bunker "power noise" dance-your-ass-off Fridays. There's even a vegetarian internet cafe.

Silverlake

In Silverlake, **The Eagle LA** (4219 Santa Monica) is the premier leather, uniform and fetish bar. A live DJ seven nights a week keeps the party at full swing, drawing leathermen, rubber aficionados, bears and everything in between. There are pool tables and an outdoor patio at this pretension-free bar. Thursday's are the long-running wet underwear competition — with cash prizes (c'mon — be brave!) and \$3 beer. Friday night is full-on fetish with a focus on leather and rubber. Saturdays are always crammed (arrive early to avoid the line outside) and whet your appetite for cute bear podium dancers and a sexually charged vibe. **Faultline** (4216 Melrose Avenue) also caters to the leather, fetish and uniform crowd and is busy, especially on Sundays.

For fresh all-natural American food at reasonable prices, the **Flying Leap Cafe** (2538 Hyperion) is conveniently next door to the **Other Side**, a casual piano bar. The nearby **Mary's Metro**

If you are a fan of sex clubs and back rooms, you will LOVE...



Hours:

Mon thru Sat 8pm - Dawn, Sunday 2pm - Dawn

Admission Prices:

Mon thru Weds \$7 all night

Thurs \$9 all night

Fri & Sat \$12 all night

Sun \$2 at 2pm, increasing \$1 every hour until 10pm, then \$10 the rest of the night

Membership Prices:

1 month \$15

5 month \$25

1 day \$10 + admission

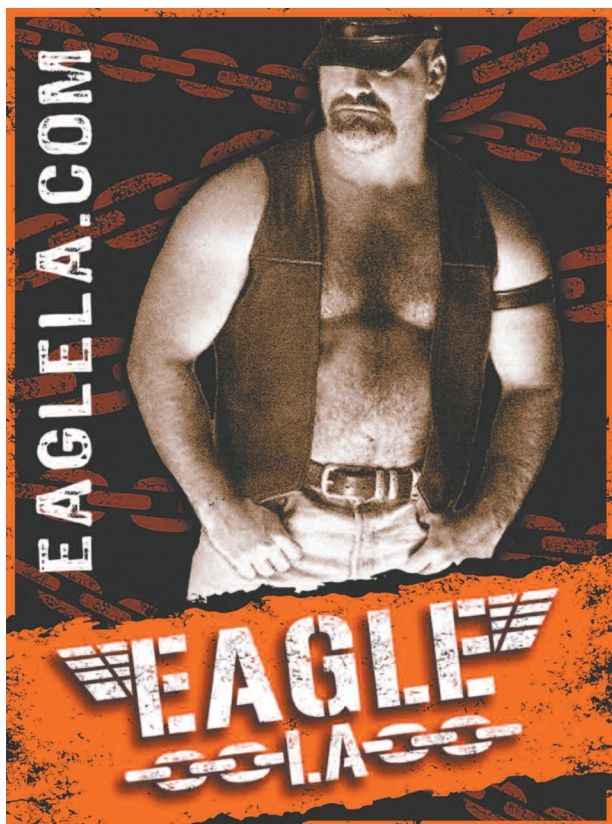
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(one block east of La Brea and 1/2 block south of Santa Monica)

Hollywood, California 90038

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Station offers *al fresco* dining, prepared in the kitchens of the Flying Leap.

From their Slutty Sunday beer busts and hot-tub boys to gay porn specials, **MJ's** (2810 Hyperion Avenue) is a busy place, with "industrial strength" dancing and cruising every night from 4 pm (2 pm Friday to Sunday) to 2 am. It's an attitude-free zone where people are actually friendly. Rim Job Tuesday is a big draw here and lines to get in wend far from the doors for a night with the hottest dancing in town and "tons of slutty go-go boys" on stage and in the showers. Truly energetic and approachable dancers add to the attraction. Thursdays see new porn stars every week, followed by Club Nur, a gay Middle Eastern night with international beats, dancers and an exotic eastern vibe.

Slammer (3688 Beverly, near Vermont) now with sister club in Fort Lauderdale, is a premier sex club in the area. Slammer Gym nights are well-trod every Tuesday. Those into watersports will find succor every first and third Wednesday of the month. Check out their earlybird specials on weekends.

Retail bliss may be sought right next door to Faultline bar at **Mr S Leather** (4232 Melrose), a boutique that turns leather fantasy into reality. **Greasy Co.** (4228 Melrose Avenue) vends uniform and fetish-inspired attire. There's also **Rough Trade** (3915 Sunset), a quality vendor of leather wares specializing in hard-to-find items.

Akbar (4356 Sunset) is an alternative bar in the area with a blend of curious straights and gays. An unassuming motel exterior belies a kitschy yet hip bar inside.

Venice Beach, East LA, and The Valley

The Santa Monica Freeway westward takes you to Venice Beach, where **Roost-erfish** (1302 Abbot Kinney Boulevard) is the only gay bar around. They're very neighborly for both locals and beach day-trippers, with stiff drinks, games, pool tables and no attitude.

Eastward out the Pomona Freeway, in Montebello, **Chico** (2915 West Beverly Boulevard, at Garfield) is the sexy

Latino bar/club in East Los Angeles. Wednesday Cockfights are a wild item here, with hot strippers battling it out and Tecate beers to cool things down.

The San Fernando Valley / North Hollywood has a cluster of bars worth venturing north for, beyond the Hollywood Hills. Among others you'll find **Bullet** (10522 Burbank Boulevard) the serious leather men's bar in the Valley, and **C Frenz** (7026 Reseda Boulevard), with a little of everything, including Sunday barbecues, drags show Wednesdays and Friday go-go boys.

Cobra (10937 Burbank) is the big, hot Latin club in North Hollywood, with nights that include Friday Latin, hip-hop and dance music and Hot Papi go-go dancers, Thursday and Saturday drag shows to the sound of La Musica Latina, and Rawhide Sunday country-music dancing.

Long Beach

A drive of about one hour (non-rush hour, that is) from downtown LA lies the coastal community of Long Beach. Many gay venues are at hand.

"If only these walls could talk!" muses owner John Schinnerer in his celebration of more than a quarter century running **Silver Fox** (411 Redondo Avenue). This contemporary gentleman's video bar throngs with locals thanks to its easygoing atmosphere. Wednesday and Sunday karaoke nights are well received, as is the cocktail hour hors d'oeuvres and piano entertainment 6 to 8 pm every Friday. On their outdoor patio, smokers can light up! The management's investment in the community continues to generate invaluable goodwill. Check their website for special themed parties. I attended a hot Sunday underwear fashion show where 16 models strut their booties. Afterwards everyone mingled, and enjoyed vodka jellies and free homemade pizza.

Mick and Mack's (740 East Broadway) is a full-service restaurant, bar and nightclub proudly steered by young owners (Mike and Kris) dedicated to making their establishment the Cheers of Long Beach.

Gay owned and operated, **Turret House** (556 Chestnut Avenue) is gay-friendly and pet-friendly. This restored Victorian features five themed homey rooms with bath, fireplaces, DirecTV and DSL access. An expanded continental-breakfast buffet in the dining room is part of the service. A brief walk to the convention center and many restaurants along nearby Pine Avenue count among its attributes — as do the free passes to Gold's gym nearby!

Club Ripples (5101 East Ocean Boulevard) is promoted as "the bar with the motion that rocks the ocean." And it very well rocks all of Long Beach between two floors that include a dance floor and an outdoor patio.

Pistons (2020 East Artesia Boulevard) is leather/bear/cruise heaven, a self-proclaimed "wild"-life refuge. Their underwear/boxer night every Friday is best described as incendiary.

Executive Suite (3428 East Pacific Coast Highway) continues to serve a phalanx of dykes from South Bay to Orange County, as it has for over 20 years, but every Friday, it goes gay and knights itself as "Boy's Room."

The "Broadway Corridor," as the locals of Long Beach call it, is home to a glut of gay-owned businesses on (of course) Broadway, just three blocks north of Ocean Boulevard. Here there are retail outlets, coffeehouses, restaurants and bars. There's **Mick and Mack's** (740 East Broadway — see more above); **Paradise Bar and Restaurant** (1800 East Broadway), super-busy for their Taco Wednesdays; **Falcon** (1435 East Broadway); **Club Broadway** (3348 East Broadway); **Sweetwater Saloon** (1201 East Broadway); **Mineshaft** (1720 East Broadway); a slick outfit called **Lubery** (3316 East Broadway), vending condoms, lubrication and toys; a retail store called **The Crypt** (1712 East Broadway); **Hilo Clothing** (2752 Broadway), specializing in gay apparel; as well as gift shops, insurance agencies, pet stores and gay-owned postal services. ▼