

VISITGAINESVILLE
where nature and culture meet

GREATHOUSE BUTTERFLY FARM
The largest butterfly farm in N. America.
Hand feed native Florida butterflies!



See all this and more at VisitGainesvilleAndStay.com

Home | News | Politics | Opinion | Sports | Entertainment | Money | Go Momma | Blogs | Video | Weather | Traffic | Classifieds | Job

Search

Site Web Archives - back to 1987 Google Newspaper Archive - back to 1901 powered by G

ALLOYES This is your picture window on the world, with images



We've got the top Tampa bars, nightclubs for you -- all 100

Posted: Jun 25, 2009 07:45 PM

Most emailed

- TV pitchman Billy Mays found dead in Tampa home
- Hernando County is considering taking zero out of its grading policy
- Informercial king Billy Mays dies at 50 at Tampa home
- For his 70th birthday, surprise gift at Tropicana Field is a home run
- A proposed \$30-million project to slow Singer Island beach erosion could affect nesting by endangered sea turtles

Food: Bars

- We've got the top Tampa bars, nightclubs for you -- all 100
- Hyde Park Cafe: Tampa's top bar
- Whitey's Fox and Hounds Irish Pub in Brandon is the real deal

The folks at *tbt*/Tampa Bay Times* decided this year for their annual bar issue that they would make the ultimate sacrifice: Find and research the Top 100 bars in Tampa Bay, then name names and declare a top spot. We know some readers will disagree with this list, while others will think it's even insane to try. In other words, we expect you to hate it. But we also expect you'll find some new places to explore and come away with an appreciation for the diversity of our libation destinations.

Here, without further ado, is our Top 100 list:

tbt*s 2009 ULTIMATE DRINKING DESTINATION

1. Hyde Park Cafe

1806 W Platt St., Tampa. (813) 254-2233, thehydeparkcafe.com/.

In 14 years, the Hyde Park Café has transformed the South Tampa nightlife scene, turning what was once a gay strip club into the ultimate place to see and be seen in Hillsborough County. Derek Jeter and Michael Jordan have partied there. Ex-American Idol finalist Jessica Sierra was arrested there. And the club's Tuesday night parties are the stuff of legend, yielding more Wednesday-morning hangovers than anyone would care to count. With Hyde Park Cafe's success, owner Tommy Ortiz has been able to create more popular SoHo ventures, including Cheap and the Kennedy. Lush and exotic, with plenty of nooks for chilling, the HPC is perfect for celebrating your 21st (or 30th, or 40th...) or simply talking up a

Story Tools

- Email Article
- Contact the editor
- Print this story
- Comment on this story

Social Bookmarking

[ShareThis](#)

ADVERTISEMENT



Related Links

- Photo gallery: Tampa Bay's top bars
- The #1 bar in Tampa Bay: Hyde Park Cafe
- Meet the 2009 Ultimate Bartender: Hyde Park Cafe's Rafael Martinez
- Before you send us that angry e-mail . . . : How the top Tampa Bay bars, nightclubs were chosen

Related Multimedia

well-dressed member of the opposite sex.

ULTIMATE SCENE

2. [Czar](#)

1402 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City. (813) 247-6838, myspace.com/czarvodkabar.

Lookit: When you talk about Czar, the word "hipster" is going to get tossed around a lot. There's just no way to avoid it. Sideways haircuts, thrift-store sundresses, skinny jeans and huge sunglasses (yes, even at midnight) — all of these are de rigueur at Czar. On the other hand, the vodka drinks are out of

this world. The decor — unapologetic Soviet iconography, chandeliers, sofas, giant video screens and throwback white vinyl booths — is part Banksy, part bordello, even a tiny bit South Beach. They've hosted tremendous indie rock acts, including Ladytron, Les Savy Fav, Matt & Kim and The Hold Steady, who closed an epic 2008 gig by inviting fans up onstage for a 10-minute rendition of Killer Parties (which is set in Ybor City). And the DJs? Well, if you're not turned on by A-listers like Girl Talk, Diplo, Steve Aoki and A-Trak, we just don't know what to tell you. Czar's crazy-popular Pulp the Party electro night (recently moved from Friday to Wednesday; in its place the club launched Filthy Richard, another dance party that also seems to be doing just fine). "It's really hip, a little left of the center and definitely not for the mall-nightclub crowd," general manager Sandy Hein told *tbt** in February. "The more creative types of Tampa hang here." Czar is a bar that by all rights should be located in Hollywood, or at least Brooklyn — not Ybor City. And yet there it sits on Seventh. Enjoy it while you're still young enough to pull off a keffiyeh.

ULTIMATE BREWPUB

3. [Dunedin Brewery](#)

937 Douglas Ave., Dunedin; (727) 736-0606, dunedinbrewery.com.

The Scottish regalia is fitting, since the stone-walled Dunedin Brewery looks a bit like a highlander's castle. Equally breathtaking are the ginormous brewing vats inside, which are known for producing phenomenal, award-winning beers like the Redhed Red Ale, as well as a swimming selection of seasonal brews (watch out for the Old Mean Stout). An excellent live music setup is a huge plus — a recent Ramones tribute show with several local bands was a sellout — and dogs are welcome at Suds on Sunday, a dog-washing service that includes a pint with each purchase. Our only knock on the place: It's beer and wine only, no liquor. If we could just order a slug of Glenlivet with our Pipers Pale Ale ... we might be talking about Dunedin Brewery as our new No. 1.

ULTIMATE MEGABAR

4. [The Dallas Bull](#)

3322 U.S. 301 N, Tampa. (813) 987-2855, dallasbull.com.

A living, breathing, bucking machine on the skirts of East Tampa, the Bull is Florida's answer to Billy Bob's in Fort Worth: A veritable honky-tonk heaven, a place where the only thing sexier than a belle in boots is the intro to Copperhead Road. The numbers speak for themselves: 31,000 square feet (making it Tampa Bay's largest nightclub), 9 bars, 20,000 patrons a month, \$95,000 worth of liquor on hand at any given time. And then there's this one: \$9.95. That's the cost of a concert ticket to see Joe Nichols, Darius Rucker, Luke Bryan or Jamey Johnson, all of whom have played the Bull in the past year. John Rich and Brooks and Dunn occasionally come by, and have been known to hop up on the stage for surprise sets. The club is clean, secure and friendly — co-owner Lewis Surratt Sr. roams the pool area most nights, hobnobbing with customers — and Thursday college nights can draw upwards of 3,000 people. You'll still get your cowpokes in Dingoes and shooter shirts, sure, but after midnight, most of the crowd is college-aged and comfortable. Lest you think the Bull ain't nothin' but a country bar, know that there's an Ybor-esque Top 40 floor on the second level that attracts a fairly diverse crowd. Of course, when all the ladies are line-dancing in skintight Wranglers and tank tops, who cares what music they're playing?



[Photo gallery](#)

5-7. ULTIMATE IRISH BAR

The Dubliner and MacDinton's are a sloshed crawl away from each other in SoHo. Four Green Fields is a mere mile away on Platt. All three are killer Irish bars. But which one is the best? Read for yourself and decide.

[Four Green Fields](#)

205 W Platt St, Tampa; (813) 254-4444, fourgreenfields.com.

The oldest Irish pub of South Tampa's big three and the most prestigious in all of Tampa Bay, perhaps all of Florida, Four Green Fields proudly advertises itself as "America's only authentic thatched roof pub." There are also two wooden decks and a bar in the rear outside area. It's got no TVs, though for monster soccer matches, exceptions are occasionally made. Irish greats such as Tommy Makem, The Prodigals, The Corrs, and Sinead O'Connor have all played Four Green Fields, which has traditional Irish musicians perform every weekend. Perhaps the most Irish thing about Four Green Fields? Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams has frequented Four Green Fields, and almost every staff member is from Ireland.

[MacDinton's Irish Pub](#)

405 South Howard Ave, Tampa; (813) 251-8999, macdintons.com.

MacDinton's opened in 2002, same year as its chief competitor, The Dubliner. Unlike The Dubliner, MacDinton's has a liquor license, which it uses to make an assortment of mind-blowing "bombs" that are very popular with drinker sin their early 20s. An expansive booze emporium, MacDinton's has a large patio and tiki bar plus five more full bars inside. There also dining tables, stage and dance floor. They serve plenty of authentic Irish grub, and show soccer and rugby matches from around the world. Plenty of Irish soccer fanatics show up on game days.

[The Dubliner](#)

2307 W Azeele St, Tampa; (813) 258-2257, thedublineririshpub.com.

Laid-back and charming, the Dubliner has been a SoHo favorite since 2002. It's on Azeele, just off South Howard, around the corner from its sworn enemy, MacDinton's. The Dubliner brims with charm, and serves 14 beers on tap, but it has one serious drawback: no liquor license. (A Dubliner that opened not long ago in Citrus Park does serve liquor.) A converted house decorated with beautiful Emerald Isle bric-a-brac, The Dubliner has a handsome deck and a total of four full bars including a tiki.

ULTIMATE PARTY

8. [Jackson's Bistro](#)

601 S Harbour Island Blvd., Tampa; (813) 277-0112, jacksonsbistro.com.

On any night of the week, Jackson's is a fine place to sip something top-shelf, immerse yourself in swank and possibly spot an athlete. The waterfront venue also has possibly the best vantage point of anywhere for the annual Gasparilla Pirate Invasion. And when celebs come to town, they're sure to drop by. Paris Hilton, Pete Wentz, Ashlee Simpson, Benji Madden and various Playmates have been spotted there. But on Friday nights, Tampa's sexiest bistro transforms into something more: a pulsating nightclub. Fantasy Fridays offer something for everyone: Top 40 music on the patio; '70s, '80s and '90s tunes in the lounge; and house music in the restaurant. Then there are the professional dancers, stilt walkers, flame throwers and magician. And yet it doesn't come off like a carny family reunion. The vibe is sleek, sexy — and packed. Mike Piper, president of Pied Piper Productions, which organizes the weekly bash, puts the Friday crowd at 1,600 to 1,800, depending on the weather. Jackson's is especially popular for birthdays and bachelor parties, with many folks opting for bottle service at a table or cabana. "We give the people the ability to have a party within a party," Piper says. On holidays, Jackson's pulls out even more stops. Check out Jackson's Third of July fireworks display, and don't miss the annual Hell-O-ween party on the last Friday in October. At least 2,000 guys and ghouls flock there for the \$2,000 costume contest.

ULTIMATE DESTINATION

9. [Floyd's](#)

Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, 5223 N Orient Road, Tampa. (866) 502-7529, seminolehardrocktampa.com.

A few cocktails at Floyd's and you'll think you're in Las Vegas. Maybe that's because you're drinking on Nevada time. When the Pinellas bars close at 2 a.m., drinkers head east to Hillsborough. Then, at 3 a.m., they head to Floyd's, which, due to the sovereign-nation status of the Seminole Tribe, doesn't have to stop serving alcohol until 6 a.m. Because Floyd's is so glitzy, high-rolling and decadent, it would be easy for haters to knock it. But you'll hear none of that from us. Floyd's dishes out a genuinely wild party; it's exactly the sort of place you want to end up when you're nowhere near ready to call it a night. Celebrities often stay at the Hard Rock (during the Super Bowl, Paris Hilton, Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore, and the entire Kardashian family stayed there), so you might spot someone famous. And DJs Santana, Kidd Leow and guest artists like DJ AM, Dirty Vegas and even will.i.am always keep the dance floor moving. Go, and you'll have a good time. Bet on it.

ULTIMATE SPRING BREAK HOTSPOT

10. [Shephard's](#)

601-619 S Gulfview Blvd., Clearwater Beach; (727) 442-5107, shephards.com.

What first opened in 1976 as the Lagoon has morphed from a rather pedestrian lodge to a full-fledged waterfront resort of the highest order. The entertainment complex known as Shephard's now features a hotel, restaurant, lounge, two killer tiki bars, private beach and a double-level nightclub called The Wave. During Spring Break season in mid-March, it might be the busiest club in Tampa Bay. The bikini contests alone are worth a trip; T-backs and tiny tops are allowed on the private beach where drinking is allowed. The bar brings in performers like Tone Loc, Darude and Blake Lewis for its busiest weekends (Spring Break, Memorial Day, Labor Day), but all year round a steady stream of beachgoers flock to the bar for lazy tunes, Rum Runners and margaritas.

ULTIMATE SPORTS BAR

11. [Ferg's](#)

1320 Central Ave., St. Petersburg. (727) 822-4562, fergsonline.com.

Say what you will about the Rayhawk hysteria that accompanied the Rays' run to the World Series last fall, but it did prove one thing: Ferg's is the best sports bar in Tampa Bay. Situated just a deep fly ball from the Trop, this bar was saluting the Rays long before the rest of us. Owner Mark Ferguson bought the joint in 1991, back when the Trop was the Florida Suncoast Dome and the building that would become Ferg's was just an abandoned Sunoco. He built a sports bar more or less on faith that a baseball team would someday show up. When the Devil Rays finally debuted in 1998, Ferguson was up at 7 a.m., serving breakfast on Opening Day. Over time, Ferg's has expanded, developed character, built a camaraderie with regulars and turned into the go-to watering hole before and after every Rays game. It's now a gathering spot for fans of all sports, and they even host cornhole tournaments and other games, but the baseball ties run deep. When the Rays clinched a playoff spot in September, the bartenders at Ferg's created a drink called Rays Victory Punch, consisting of vodka and blue Gatorade. Yeah, we know ... but at the time, even that tasted sweet.

ULTIMATE TAMPA JOINT

12. [Gaspar's Grotto](#)

1805 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; (813) 248-5900, gasparsgrotto.com.

Anyplace with "Gaspar" in its name must be a beloved place in Tampa. This one is no exception. Owners Eric and Shere Schiller are super-active in the community, often hosting fundraisers and other benefits at the longtime Ybor bar. Krewes love it, thanks to the pirate theme. But even if you're not into puffy shirts and beads, you'll still dig Gaspar's fun events (Beer Olympics), sporty, eclectic decor and embrace of the animal kingdom — regular Yappy Hours, fishtanks behind the bar, a resident bar cat named Tanker Ray. Schiller once said that if the calico feline dies, he'll have him stuffed and mounted in the bar. At Gaspar's, where Tampa's history is celebrated in every direction, that would feel just about right.

ULTIMATE corner bar

13. [The Hub](#)

719 N Franklin St., Tampa. (813) 229-1553, hubbartampa.com.

A Tampa icon, this downtown dive bar has a bad reputation for serving the strongest, most affordable cocktails in the city limits — maybe the entire state! And then there's the wildly eclectic crowd. Jobless vagrants, UT students, after-work professionals, well-dressed Tampa Theater concertgoers, skinny scenesters, off-the-clock servers and everything in between can be found inside the dark, dank, fabulously dirty setting sipping from fat glasses of whiskey or chugging cans of cheap beer. In recent months, Famed for its no-nonsense jukebox, the Hub has also started hosting live, original music, which makes sense, since it seems not a night goes by without at least a dozen local rockers coming through the door.

ULTIMATE LIVE MUSIC BAR

14. [Skipper's Smokehouse](#)

910 Skipper Road, Tampa, (813) 971-0666, skipperssmokehouse.com

Is it a stretch to call Skipper's a "drinking destination?" Not if you've ever sat beneath the Skipperdome listening to the Black Keys, or Sharon Jones and the Dap Kings, or Ralph Stanley, or Alejandro Escovedo, or the Red Elvises, or Damon Fowler, or ... look, we could obviously carry this on all day. Skipper's is one of the 5 to 10 things Tampa music fans love most about living here, a ramshackle roots-blues-hippie barbecue joint whose giant, sandy, picnic-tabled open-air arena incorporates a giant live oak tree. Raining? Head inside and grab a seat at the cozy Oyster Bar, where the walls are covered in band stickers and the conversation is free-flowing and friendly. Old Florida at its finest, it's like our own little corner of Austin's fabled Sixth Street.

ULTIMATE DIVE

15. [Dave's Aqua Lounge](#)

10820 Gandy Blvd. St. Petersburg; (727) 576-1091, davesongandy.com.

It's like a clone of the stevedores' bar in Season 2 of *The Wire*. Dirty little blues lounge, popular with the casual Pinellas boaters and fishermen, working-class and unfussy all the way. There's live music at Dave's six nights a week, including blues every Wednesday, and usually on weekends. And it's got the coolest backdrop of any stage in town — hundreds of gleaming silver CDs affixed to the wall. Not the most eye-popping menu in the world, but hell, it's got Knob Creek, Ms. Pac Man and Howlin' Wolf on the jukebox — what else does a man really need?

ULTIMATE MARTINI BAR

16. [The Chic-a-Boom Room](#)

319 Main St., Dunedin, (727) 736-5284, kellyschicaboom.com.

This fun, beloved Dunedin party joint sits at the center of the complex known as Kelly's For Just About Anything, which is a pretty accurate description. The Chic-a-Boom Room is eclectic drinking at its best, with a menu of two dozen colorful "Martoonis," from the Barry White (Stoli Razberi, Godiva white chocolate liqueur, chambord, \$8) to the Ginger Rogers (Yazi Ginger vodka, Stoli Vanil, Sour Apple Schnapps, \$8). After a couple of these, we're liable to wander next door to Blur (another Kelly's bar), where weekly Drag Queen Bingo nights are the norm.

ULTIMATE PUNK BAR

17. [The Emerald](#)

550 Central Ave., St. Petersburg; (727) 898-6054, myspace.com/emeraldbar.

It's probably the coolest place to go on a Wednesday night in St. Pete, thanks to Filth, a party with a good range of older and newer music that turns the place into basically a hipsters' lounge. The rest of the week, it's a top-notch destination for affordable rum-n-Cokes, vodka tonics and a whole mess (and we do mean mess) of punk bands. This is where you're likely to find unapologetic punks like Car Bomb Driver, the Pink Lincolns, Doll Parts or the Semis spitting fire on the tiny bandbox of a stage. When the music isn't live, the Emerald is still crusty but friendly, low-class but high-minded (see the cool art on the walls) and a must-stop for any local wannabe rocker.

ULTIMATE ONE-STOP SHOPPING

18. [Push Ultra Lounge](#)

128 Third St. S, St. Petersburg; (727) 871-7874, myspace.com/pushultralounge.

First, take one of downtown St. Petersburg's most picturesque buildings, the gloriously reinvented McNulty Station. Add the district's hottest restaurant, the delectable Red Mesa Cantina. Open a nightclub, Push, that feels posh and utterly cool, but not intimidating, and has a lovely open-air rooftop bar. Throw in a more casual bar downstairs, the Mexican-wrestling-themed (!) Lucha Bar. Give it some owners looking to provide creative entertainment options (concerts by Julian Marley and the Airborne Toxic Event, rooftop movies like Breakfast at Tiffany's and The Birds). And top it all off with the club's "Recession Sundays," featuring half-price admission for everyone. Put it all together, you're guaranteed to find a date-night combo that works for you.

ULTIMATE GAY BAR

19. [G.Bar](#)

1401 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; (813) 247-1016, gbartampabay.com.

For the past couple of years, G.Bar has been an enormously welcome, and enormously entertaining, presence in Ybor City. The fun-loving club has been a major player in building up the GaYbor scene, which now boasts a slew of gay and gay-friendly nightclubs. Out of all of them, though, G.Bar is the one with a line out the door each weekend, thanks to celebrity guests — Lady Gaga played here right before Just Dance and Poker Face got huge — and strip parties and dance nights for both sexes. It's a fun place to get loose, even if you're straight.

ULTIMATE BEACH BAR

20. [The Undertow](#)

3850 Gulf Blvd., St Pete Beach; (727) 368-9000, undertowbeachbar.com.

On weekends, it seems all of Tampa descends on this St. Pete Beach favorite. With two buildings, a patio in the sand and a strange running-water moat inset in the long oval-shaped bar, it's a delightful place to grab a rum drink and some wings. Some nights there's live reggae, some nights it's canned. Parking is a real pain (don't even think about parking in the lot) but it's worth it when you get there. Beach volleyball and a respectable beer list (more than 150 bottles) add to the attraction.

ULTIMATE HOLE IN THE WALL

21. [Fuma Bella](#)

1318 E Eighth Ave., Ybor City; (813) 248-6130, myspace.com/fumabella.

We're serious. Fuma Bella is, quite literally, a hole in the wall, a room carved out of the side of a building. It's the size of one of those mock-up apartments inside IKEA. Two dozen people can drink there in comfort, if they're skinny. None of this matters to the proprietors, who cherish Fuma Bella's intimacy as much as nearby clubs cherish money. You can meet new friends at Fuma Bella, have a civilized conversation there, order a serious (and seriously strong) cocktail. Belly up to the bar and ask for Charlie, who makes some of the meanest drinks in town. Then do yourself a favor, and don't tell anyone how good it was. The last thing Fuma Bella needs is a crowd.

ULTIMATE SUBURBAN OASIS

22. [World of Beer](#)

9524 W Linebaugh Ave, Tampa; (813) 852-2337, worldofbeerusa.com.

Boasting 500 ales, lagers, lambics and stouts from just about every corner of the globe, this Westchase hotspot is a hophead's dream destination. World of Beer features a clean, snug indoor area, long bar, a VIP loft and an outdoor seating area, which is the only place smoking is permitted. In addition to beer and wine, both of which can be consumed on location or purchased to go, the bar sells pretty good stogies.

ULTIMATE BICURIOS HOTSPOT

23. [The Honey Pot](#)

1507 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; (813) 247-4663, myspace.com/tampahoneypot.

The Honey Pot has featured burlesque dancers, an Ashlee Simpson concert and the 2009 Madden Bowl, sure. But owners Stephen Moss and Steve Donahue (who also own G.Bar) have made sure the club embraces the GaYbor spirit, holding weekly Steam (for men) and Tease (for women) parties on Friday and Saturday night, respectively. And yet that hasn't stopped straight singles and couples from lining up to get in on weekends. A gorgeous club is a gorgeous club, no matter your sexual orientation.

ULTIMATE WINE BAR

24. [Bern's Steak House](#)

1208 S Howard Ave., Tampa; (813) 251-2421; bernssteakhouse.com.

Obviously, this is first and foremost a restaurant, arguably the best (and certainly the most famous) for miles around. But it's also a good place to drink. In fact, we'd go so far as to say it's the best place to get a glass of wine anywhere in ... well, America. Because of its reputation — and its ability to buy world-class wines — Bern's offers a wine list extensive enough to make even the most tried and true oenophile swoon. But even without that killer cellar, the Bern's bar is still a destination in and of itself. It's a dimly lit, low-ceiling, bordello-feeling room where you can get a pitch-perfect mojito and one of those absolutely delish off-the-menu steak sandwiches. And if you're not that hungry, you can always head upstairs to the Harry Waugh Dessert Room for cheese, brandy, a Cappuccino Ybor City or even a Chocolate Chocolate Chocolate. Order light, and you could get in and out for under \$20. (Okay, maybe \$50.)

ULTIMATE DAY AT THE BEACH

25. [Caddy's on the Beach](#)

900 W Gulf Blvd., Sunset Beach, Treasure Island. (727) 360-4993; caddysotb.com.

If you can find a parking spot, Caddy's has an awesomely spring-break-style carnival atmosphere — DJs, volleyball, cornhole, an upstairs deck — and yet, for some reason, it still feels a little hidden. Maybe that's because people spill out from the bar all over the beach, often with coolers of beer they brought from home. Truth is, Caddy's feels less like a bar and more like a beach that serves liquor — and you won't hear us complaining about that.

ULTIMATE HANGOUT

26. [The Rack](#)

1809 W Platt St., Tampa. (813) 250-1595, hittherack.com.

Why is the Rack such a favorite among the South Tampa crowd? Could be because of its prime location, sidewalk patio, bright decor, great sushi, purple pool tables, myriad gathering areas, lively conversation, nice tunes, crowded weekend parties, great dinner and drink specials and all-around positive vibe. Other than that ... who knows?

ULTIMATE NEW CLUB

27. [AJA Channelside](#)

290 S Meridian Ave., Tampa. (813) 373-2633, ajachannelside.com.

When it opened in January just before the Super Bowl — and the owners just barely made it, with construction and capacity problems just a few days before the game — it was clear that AJA Channelside, the ultra-chic nightclub in the Towers of Channelside, was swinging for the fences. So far, it's hitting them. During the Super Bowl, guests included Pamela Anderson, Kim Kardashian, Kendra Wilkinson and DJs AM and Jazzy Jeff, and one night, the club sold out of its \$850-per-bottle Ace of Spades champagne. Since then, the crowds haven't left. Playmates and nationally known DJs have popped in for guest appearances, and Kardashian returned to host a Memorial Day Weekend bash. On a Saturday earlier this month, there was a line around the building of affluent party people waiting to get inside. In this economy, that's what we'd call a home run.

ULTIMATE PUB GRUB

28. [Tampa Bay Brewing Company](#)

1600 E Eighth Ave., Tampa; (813) 247-1422, tampabaybrewingcompany.com.

They brew their own beer, and it's damn good. They make their own pizza dough with that beer, and it's damn good, too. Beer-infused menu items like the Iron Rat Stout crab cakes and jalapeno beer cheese soup — well, they're also pretty damn delightful. But if you've lived your entire life in Tampa Bay without tasting one of TBBC's hamburgers, stop what you're doing and go there right now. It's like steak on a bun. Steak. On. A. Bun.

ULTIMATE BEER PARADISE

29. [Mr. Dunderbak's](#)

14929 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., Tampa; (813) 977-4104, dunderbaks.com.

We won't go so far as to call Mr. Dunderbak's snobby. But trust us, if you try to order a Bud Light there, you'll definitely catch hell from the regulars. Dunderbak's — which recently moved from University Mall to an ornate biergarten/marketplatz-style outpost in a New Tampa shopping center — is the home to the award-winning Tampa Bay BEERS (Beer Enthusiasts Enjoying Real Suds) club, which prides itself on its love for rare, exotic brews, on tap and in bottles (maybe 350 total). Come to Dunderbak's, and the secrets of fine beer will reveal themselves to you — if you let them.

ULTIMATE DIRTY LITTLE SECRET

30. [Thee Dollhouse](#)

1010 N West Shore Blvd, Tampa. (813) 281-9389, thedollhouse.com.

Girls, watch your guy's eyes pop by suggesting a trip to Tampa's classiest jiggle joint, Thee Dollhouse. (And don't make the mistake of calling it The Dollhouse — it's Thee, which rhymes with wheel!) This topless club is a gentlemen's club suitable for — and often frequented by — wives and dates. And unlike fully nude joints like the Mons Venus, you can order a drink here.

31. [Club Skye](#)

Always popular, still running strong. Ybor's best-connected hip-hop club gets a lot of top-notch visitors (Ludacris, Lil Jon, Tracy Morgan, Rick Ross, Jadakiss, Fat Joe) thanks to its ties to Wild 98.7 (Orlando and DJ Christian are regulars), but the omnipresent line out the door on Fridays is proof that the crowd isn't just there to mingle with the rich and famous. During a five-year anniversary party last August, 2 Pistols, Tay Dizm and Tom G. lit up the crowd with an electric set. And the club's annual Halloween Erotic Exotic Ball is one of Ybor's best. And if that's not enough, the club is open-minded enough to hand the reins to nearby Streetcar Charlie's on Sunday nights, for a gay-friendly party, Engine Sundays. 1509 E Eighth Ave., Ybor City; (813) 247-6606, skye1509.com.

32. [Prana](#)

Since adopting its current name in 2001, Prana has weathered Ybor City's ups and downs and remained one of its most popular clubs. With different music on each of its five floors — from hip-hop on the ground floor to house in the middle to reggae and live music on the roof — it offers something for everyone. Especially the high-heeled and well-heeled. 1619 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City. (813) 241-4139; clubprana.com.

33. [Oldsmar Tap House](#)

With some three dozen tap beers, countless bottles from around the world and even an old English hand pump for true draught, this warm pub is a magnet for beer geeks who love discussing rare finds and sharing new brews with newbies. So enamored are the proprietors with spreading the gospel of beer that, on the official Oldsmar Tap House MySpace page, they encourage members of ratebeer.com and beeradvocate.com to come in, sample the brews and write reviews using the bar's free Wi-Fi. 300 State St. E, Oldsmar; (813) 855-9181, oldsmartaphouse.com.

34. [The Zone Lounge](#)

Located in one of Tarpon Springs' oldest and most historic buildings, the Zone feels anything but dusty. With funky artwork covering exposed brick walls; antique copper ceilings; cabanas both indoors and out; a cool and relaxing patio; and plenty of bars and nooks in which to listen to live music or huddle for a cozy conversation, it looks like a perfectly welcoming nightspot. It's

worth stopping in on your way back from the Sponge Docks. 121 E Tarpon Ave., Tarpon Springs; (727) 934-5599, thezonelounge.com.

35. Ringside Cafe

A converted house on Fourth Street that now ranks as the top blues bar in the 'Burg, Ringside Cafe has a tiny stage that has been rocked by national rockers like Jimbo Mathus (Squirrel Nut Zippers) and local hero Damon Fowler, among others. On Friday and Saturday nights, the living-room sized dance floor teems with people getting down to greasy grooves. Speaking of greasy, Ringside Cafe serves food in addition to wonderfully strong liquor drinks, table wines and mostly domestic beer. 2742 Fourth St. N, St. Petersburg. (727) 894-8465, myspace.com/ringsidecafe.

36. Hammer Heads Billiard Lounge

Hands down, the best pool bar in Tampa Bay. With 24 tables (including specialty tables for snooker and cushion billiards) and a slew of additional games, it's hosted exhibitions by pros like Hall of Famer Nick Varner and Jeanette "The Black Widow" Lee. At the same time, it's clean, cozy, classy and happy to provide alternate entertainment options (many other other games, karaoke, open mike nights). On Tuesdays, you can play all night for \$7 per person. We'd break a rack there any day. 1916 U.S. 19 N, Holiday; (727) 939-9494, hammerheadsbilliards.net.

37. New World Brewery

Beloved by the Chucks-and-hornrims set for hosting early concerts by artists like My Morning Jacket, Animal Collective and Okkervil River, New World is a fixture for any local band that hopes to make a name for itself in Central Florida. The shedlike outdoor stage is still as intimate a setting for local music as you're going to find in Tampa Bay; artists stare you straight in the eye while they play. Even if you're not into music, the patio garden is a nice respite from the craziness of Ybor. They no longer brew beer here, but the drafts are still excellent (sorry, Simpsons fans, the Duff Beer signs are only decorations), and the no-frills pizza is filling. 1313 E Eighth Ave., Ybor City; (813) 248-4969, myspace.com/newworldbrewery.

38. Peg's Cantina

Combine one of Tampa Bay's smartest beer menus (a gorgeous array of Belgian ales and lambics, big-name microbrews like Bison and Boulder) with one of its most laid-back settings (a resorted bungalow that abuts a neighbor's back yard), and you have a winner in sleepy Gulfport. Owners' son Doug Dozark recently started brewing his own extract beers. During the week, the Mexican food is tasty and healthy; save room on the weekends for one of Peg's saucy, thin-crust pizzas. Peg's Cantina, 3038 Beach Blvd., Gulfport; (727) 328-2720; pegscantina.com.

39. Bourbon Street

Bourbon Street is truly an excellent balls-out hard rock club, spacious and comfortable and spacious and rocking and full of things that rock. Oh, and did we mention that this is a rock club? Everyone's in black. The stage is surrounded with chain-link railing. Every wall is slathered with rock posters and beer signage. The overhead plays Billy Idol, Judas Priest and Pearl Jam — raw rock, no hipsterism, just a lot of effing old-school metal. As an added bonus, at closing time, you can head next door to Insomniacs, an all-night lounge that serves an energy drink called Cocaine. Now that is hardcore. 4331 U.S. 19, New Port Richey, (727) 843-0686, clubbourbonstreet.com.

40. The Castle

It's a Tampa landmark for a reason. Dark, twisted and pierced, it opened in 1992, and it kept going even as shiny new Centro Ybor opened across the street. Today, with all its spiderwebs and candles and curtains, the Castle is Tampa Bay's most popular goth club, by a wide, wide margin. But it's not just about Skinny Puppy and Bauhaus; on Mondays, the Castle offers one of the best '80s nights around. Be on the lookout for costumed characters like Batman, Peter Pan and an older gentleman called the Senator, a Castle regular and Ybor veteran who hangs out in lingerie. 2004 N 16th St., Ybor City; (813) 247-7547, castlebor.com.

41. The Venue

Although Diddy pimped it out for his Super Bowl party, the place looks nice even without the extra decoration. At 27,000 square feet, it makes good use of its space: Swanky bathrooms, a

breezy rooftop bar, classy wood floors, VIP rooms and two gastronomically adventurous restaurant concepts, the beautiful Takara sushi lounge and suave Viaggio tapas bar. The location is perfect for those in the 'burbs of Feather Sound — it's close to I-275 and the Carillon office park — and has proven popular with 30- and 40-something moms and dads. 2675 Ulmerton Road, St. Petersburg; (727) 571-2222; thevenueclub.com.

42. [Yeoman's Road Pub](#)

Located on a stretch of Davis Boulevard that feels like it belongs in a smaller coastal town, Yeoman's Road is what you might call a "friendly dive," a neighborhood Britpub that often hosts reggae bands and singer-songwriter open mikes. With great pub grub, a menu of 120 beers, a red nonworking telephone booth outside and dollar bills stapled to the ceiling, it's neither big nor flashy (though a giant glowing digital TouchTunes jukebox near the door does look a tad out of place). But it's beloved by Davis Islanders, and it's a nice little outpost for people who just want to, you know, groove. 236 E Davis Blvd., Tampa; (813) 251-2748, myspace.com/yeomansdi.

43. [A Taste For Wine](#)

Bern's may have the better wine list, but many of us would rather hang out at A Taste for Wine. The wrought-iron balcony offers a great view of Central Avenue in St. Pete. Inside, there's art on the walls from JJ Watts gallery, and live music on weekends: jazz, folk, flamenco, pop, etc. (You can also eavesdrop on concerts at Jannus Landing.) They also serve beer, if wine's too fancy for you. 241 Central Ave., (727) 895-1623, tasteforwine.net.

44. [The Veranda at the Vinoy](#)

Walk up the stairs to the patio at the historic Vinoy Renaissance Resort and you might feel like you're walking into The Great Gatsby. Old-school wicker benches and lounge chairs, outdoor fans, a view of the Vinoy Marina and the water ... on a cool spring evening, it's bliss. The staff will bring your drinks out to you. 501 Fifth Ave. NE, St. Petersburg; (727) 894-1000, vinoyrenaissanceresort.com.

45a-45f. [The Green Iguana](#)

Green Iguanas have been synonymous with good times for two decades. Well, at least in these parts. There are six of the bars and grills spread across Tampa Bay. Each one famously serves tasty burgers and features live music. Unlike, say, Hooters, though, every Green Iguana has a characteristic that sets it apart from the others. Here's a rundown of what makes each lizard location an awesomely unique destination. — Wade Tatangelo, *tbt**

[Brandon](#)

6264 Winthrop Town Center, Riverview, (813) 643-7800

The newest and busiest of the Green Iguana group, this spot opened last December in the Winthrop Town Center, on the site that formerly housed MJ Barleyhoppers. There's a signature Green Iguana tiki bar, front and back patios and the interior has a roomy, clean feel. There are DJs late at night but mostly you'll find two-piece acoustic acts performing non-offensive ditties. Brandon proudly declares itself the most family-friendly of all the Green Iguanas.

[North West Shore](#)

1200 N West Shore Blvd., Tampa, (813) 868-7600

This Green Iguana debuted in January of 2008 with a grand opening that found the place packed to capacity with fun (and booze) loving professionals. Situated on the first floor of the Westshore Hotel in Tampa, it's darker, more loungey and ritzier than the rest. There are three bars including the main one that caters to the inside and front patio crowd. There are live cover bands and DJs. Patrons will also find 15 plasma TVs. The swanky VIP Buddha Lounge, which has its own bar, is next door.

[South West Shore](#)

4029 S West Shore Blvd., Tampa, (813) 837-1234

The first Green Iguana emerged in a quiet neighborhood off South West Shore Boulevard. It's the smallest, funkier and for the majority of South Tampa residents, the most beloved. The air-conditioned tiki bar out front is where rock bands and solo acoustic play every night. It's also where one of the most famous and longest running local blues jams has been taking place

each Monday since the place opened 20 years ago. In addition to Tampa's finest musicians, big names — like Buddy Guy! — have dropped by.

St. Petersburg

8790 Bay Pines Blvd., St Pete, (727) 209-1234

The sprawling St. Petersburg location has several distinctions that make the place a special drinking destination. It's the only two-level Green Iguana, the only one in Pinellas and the only one with a beachy, waterfront view. From the second floor, you can sip a drink and dine while gazing at the Gulf Intracoastal. It's also the only Green Iguana where you can dock your boat and bring your dog!

Veterans

9202 Anderson Road, Tampa, (813) 288-9076

The biggest of the bunch, the Veterans location on Anderson Road flaunts the "largest climate controlled Tiki Hut in Florida." We weren't able to verify that claim, but are in agreement that it's huge. The fun-plex also features ample indoor and outdoor seating, three full bars, as well as pool tables and darts. But the Veterans is about more than just size. It's the only Green Iguana that transforms into a true nightclub. Twenty-somethings (and slightly older) arrive dressed to impress and dance to the throbbing sonic stylings of world class DJs like Ferry Corsten, Benny Bennassi, Bad Boy Bill and Armin Van Burin. Internationally acclaimed electronic duo The Crystal Method played the Green Iguana Veterans last year as well.

Ybor City

1708 E Seventh Ave., Tampa, (813) 248-9555

The most visible of the Green Iguana gang thanks to its digs smack-dab on Seventh Avenue, this location has been a destination for locals and tourists since 1994. A fixture of the Ybor nightlife scene, it has five full bars, two large dance floors, stage and second level DJ booth. The music runs the gamut from techno to bluesy rock. There's also sidewalk seating that provides the ideal spot for highly entertaining people watching.

46. Mahuffer's

Don't miss this South Pacific-styled gem of a beach bar on your way up Gulf Boulevard. Four decades old, low-ceilinged and slathered in graffiti and beachabilia — fish nets, crab trap markers, boat parts, bras, dollar bills and more photos than you can imagine — the outrageously quirky Mahuffer's is unlike any other beach bar in town. Or the world, for that matter. 19201 Gulf Blvd., Indian Shores; (727) 596-0226 mahuffer.com.

47. Limey's Pub

Close to downtown St. Petersburg but far enough away to have a neighborhood pub feel, Limey's offers an expansive yet cozy indoor-outdoor setting via the wrap-around wooden deck. It's a full-liquor bar with a decent wine list and solid beer assortment that ranges from domestic standards to about a dozen imports served in proper, 20-ounce imperial glasses. Limey's also offers a full menu (until 1:30 a.m.!) that includes such faves as the traditional fish & chips (\$8.95). Expect a fairly eclectic lineup of live music acts, typically starting around 10 p.m. nightly. 1492 Fourth St N, St. Petersburg; (727) 895-2049, limeyspubonline.com.

48. Georgie's Alibi

Relaxed and sporty (but always up for a party on weekends), it's the grand dude/dame of Pinellas gay bars, even if it's not that old (it opened in 2000, the cousin of another Alibi in Broward County). Thursday's Long Island Iced Tea party is not to be missed — it's crowded, but \$3 mason jars filled with liquor make it worth it. 3100 Third Ave. N, St. Petersburg. (727) 321-2112, georgiesalibi.com.

49. Whiskey North

Carrollwood's only real nightclub, Whiskey North transports Floridians to the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York with its classy hunting lodge décor. For the past decade, it's where the young people of North Tampa go to imbibe vodka cocktails and dance the night away to throbbing beats. Just make sure you dress to impress at all times and be careful of that footwear — even a \$100 pair of sneakers, worn for a happy hour visit, will likely result in you being denied entry. 11921 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa; (813) 968-1515, whiskeynorth.com.

50. [Molly Goodhead's Raw Bar](#)

Established in sleepy Ozona in 1985, the hilariously named Molly Goodhead's ranks as one of Tampa Bay's best-kept secrets. Dig the Key West-style setting, marvelous margaritas and tasty dishes like the signature grouper sandwich and fresh oysters. It'll feel so right, it'll almost seem like the mounted animal heads on the wall aren't looking at you. Almost. 400 Orange St., Palm Harbor; (727) 786-6255, mollygoodheads.com.

51. [The Press Box](#)

We've been in a lot of press boxes over the years, and trust us — we've never seen one containing a stuffed bobcat. Plastered with sports memorabilia, jerseys and autographs — and yes, a stuffed bobcat — this dugout-like South Tampa mainstay is where you want to go for any pay-per-view boxing, MMA or wrestling event, hands down. It's a haven for the sports uber-fan. 222 S Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa. (813) 876-3528, pressboxsports.com.

52. [Stroker's](#)

Either Stroker's bar is a more than worthy destination to rack 'em up. Leagues meet here. Pros play here. With some 40 tables between the Tampa and Palm Harbor locations, this is no place to try to hustle the regulars, if you know what we mean. Not into pool? Try darts, shuffleboard, foosball and tons of other games. The Tampa location can get pretty wild, with lingerie bull riding on Monday nights. You heard us. 11236 W Hillsborough Ave., Tampa, (813) 814-2277, myspace.com/strokerstampa; 30901 U.S. 19 N, Palm Harbor, (727) 786-6683, mystrokers.com.

53. [The IndependentM](#)

It's become trendy for haters to knock this slick little bierhaus, one of the hotspots that helped lead to downtown St. Pete's revival in the mid-'00s. But there's a reason it drew praise during a 2008 New York Times travel story on St. Pete; people are always sipping from its impressive, rotating beer menu at the sidewalk tables. It's been such a hit that owners John and Veronica Vellines will soon expand into another outpost of below-the-radar yuppiedom: Tampa's Seminole Heights. 29 Third St. N, St. Petersburg; (727) 820-9514, independentbeer.com.

54. [O'Maddy's Bar and Grille](#)

Full-liquor bar with tasty sandwiches has a kitschy, nautical interior and large wooden deck that overlooks the water. Karaoke starts at 9:30 every night and that's where you'll find Eckerd, Stetson and USF St. Pete students belting out tunes. During the afternoon, don't be surprised to find old men sipping Myer's rum on the rocks and debating the merits of the American Dream. 5405 Shore Blvd, Gulfport, (727) 323-8643, omaddys.com.

55. [Market on 7th](#)

Located across the street from Gaspar's Grotto, Market on 7th is an understated haunt for night owls on the Ybor strip. It's got brick walls, a pool table, a few chairs on the sidewalk and a great stage for live music (stop by on Thursdays for a sample). You can get cheap pizzas that are greasy and tomatoey, with a very crisp crust, until the wee hours of the morning. 1816 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; (813) 248-2356, myspace.com/marketon7th.

56. [Peabody's Billiards](#)

A sports bar for those who like to get active, Peabody's features about a dozen pool tables, more than 15 electronic dart boards, a couple of Dragon Punch games and dozens of TVs. With countless high-tops and more than 30 beers on tap, it also might be New Tampa's best spot to watch a game. The Palms, Peabody's clubby neighbor next door, is where to go for an after-midnight party. 15333 Amberly Drive, Tampa; (813) 972-1725, peabodysbilliards.com.

57. [Fly Bar](#)

Kudos to Fly for being one of the first places to spark interest in the north end of downtown Tampa. Minimalist-chic decor, live music, suave cocktails — workers finally had a reason to venture up Franklin Street. The rooftop bar is one of the few in the city, and the food is second to none. 1202 N Franklin St., Tampa. (813) 275-5000. flybarandrestaurant.com.

58. [Ceviche](#)

Tampa Bay has many fine purveyors of sangria, but Ceviche serves the absolute finest. Both

Ceviche locations — one in South Tampa, one in downtown St. Pete — make for great first dates. They're intimate, Old World-ish and they feel exactly how Tampa tapas bars ought to. Check out the Flamingo Bar, located in the basement (a rarity in Florida) of the St. Pete location for a late-night drink and live Latin music fix. 1502 S Howard Ave., Tampa, (813) 250-0203; 10 Beach Drive, St. Petersburg, (727) 209-2302, ceviche.com.

59. [The Kennedy](#)

With world-class DJs (Benny Banassi, Mix Master Mike) and some inventive events (last fall's Reborn Couture fashion show), the Kennedy has managed to become another magnet for the trendy SoHo crowd — and all on one of Tampa's most blah boulevards, Kennedy. Dark, wine-colored walls with gold-leaf trim and handsomely designed posters add to the exotic feel of the giant, ornate center bar. Booming beats and pristine acoustics come courtesy of the excellent Funktion-One hybrid sound system. "The only other place in the state you'll find one is Miami," says owner Tommy Ortiz. 2408 W Kennedy Blvd., Tampa; (813) 259-9669, thekennedysoho.com.

60. [Whitey's Fox & Hounds Irish Pub](#)

If you're into awesomely authentic-looking, smelling, tasting and feeling Irish pubs, Whitey's Fox & Hounds is a must visit. The setting is a 1930 cottage that feels lifted from owner Tom White's motherland of Mayo County, Ireland. It's also the only place in Brandon that carries all six major Irish beers on tap — and serves 'em in true (20-ounce!) pint glasses. But the best part: The Fox and Hound offers a whopping 19 Irish whiskeys! Don't worry, there's cottage pie and other assorted Emerald Isle grub to go with all the libations. 229 E Brandon Blvd.; (813) 685-8151, whiteyfoxandhounds.com.

61. [The Reservoir](#)

Quick, dirty and no-nonsense, the Reservoir is the best place to get a drink early in Ybor. Jager (\$4 a shot) is the specialty, and you can easily walk in and stumble out 30 minutes later. Tip o' the cap to everyone's favorite barkeep, Mama, a finalist in tbt*'s 2009 Ultimate Bartender Contest. 1518 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; (813) 248-1442, resbar.com.

62. [The Lodge](#)

A ton of failed restaurants have called this address home in the past. But at the Lodge, the fun doesn't seem to be stopping — especially on the menu. Tater tots! Beans 'n' franks! A Twinkie-tiramisu hybrid called the Twinkimisu! A Key Lime Pie martini that smokes like a volcano! The thing is, all this cheeky, kitschy humor stuff really works, giving the Lodge a vibe that hits somewhere between The Big Lebowski and A Christmas Story. With live music and an outdoor patio, it's affordable, loosey-goosey and packed on weekends. Kudos to the crew behind Ciccio & Tony's, who conceived the Lodge. This is a concept we hope will stick. 516 S Howard Ave., Tampa; (813) 251-5634, lodgetampa.com.

63. [Rick's on the River](#)

Pull up a dinghy to one of the friendliest working-class bars in Tampa. Overlooking the mighty Hillsborough, the "Marina-Bar-Grille" draws a varied crowd for Budweiser, burgers and oysters. The patio is perfect for sunsets, and Rick's offers overnight docking if you end up too tipsy to boat home. The super-strong mixed drinks are served in plastic cups, adding to the backyard-barbecue atmosphere. 2305 N Willow Ave., Tampa; (813) 251-0369, ricksontheriver.com.

64. [Splitsville](#)

Think bowling chic, if there is such a thing. Lots of bowling alleys have cute, snazzy vibes, but Channelside's Splitsville is all upscale razzle-dazzle, with great food and drinks to go with your strikes and spares. It has several lanes of bowling, two bars, pool tables and a dining lounge. Hey, it breaks up the monotony of just sitting around and drinking. Channelside Bay Plaza, 615 Channelside Drive, Tampa; (813) 514-2695, splitsvillelanes.com.

65. [Swigwam Beach Bar](#)

When the Swigwam, which has been around since the late 1980s, closed a year or so ago the regulars went into an uproar. The tiny tiki bar reopened Dec. 17, 2008, and all became right in the world — or at least on St. Pete Beach. Besides being known for attracting all varieties of beach bums, the Swigwam is also famous for its signature drink, The Bushwacker. It's a deliciously potent mix of vodka, rum Kahlua and other assorted goodness. 6300 Gulf Blvd, St. Pete Beach; (727) 360-0889, swigwam.com.

66. [The Brass Tap](#)

Like everything else at the Shops at Wiregrass, the Brass Tap has become a magnet for Wesley Chapel commuters looking for something fun to do at night besides Applebee's. Not a lot of wine, but with more than 40 beers on tap and another 300 domestics, imports and crafts in a bottle, there's so much else to choose from that even Tampa beer lovers sometimes make the trip. You can also sample from a cigar menu (though you must do so outside). 2000 Piazza Ave., Wesley Chapel; (813) 991-4343, brasstapbeerbar.com.

67. [Friendly Tavern](#)

And we do mean friendly. Darts and one of the beach's best karaoke nights on Tuesday (this was supposedly the first bar in Pinellas County to get a karaoke machine) are reason enough to hit this longtime local favorite. But Friendly is a place where summer and winter beachgoers alike go for cold ones and killer conversation. You're more than welcome to join in. 18121 Gulf Blvd., Redington Shores; (727) 393-4470, myspace.com/friendlytavern.

68. [O'Brien's Irish Pub](#)

(Carrollwood and Brandon)

It also has locations in Riverview and Plant City, but our favorite O'Brien's pubs are the ones in Carrollwood and Brandon. Since 1991, the Carrollwood O'Brien's has been the pub of choice for nearby residents ranging in age from barely 21 to retirees. Fair prices, great Irish whiskey and beer selections, live music, a tiki bar, Emerald Isle food and one of Tampa Bay's biggest and best St. Patrick's Day parties make O'Brien's Tampa's top Irish bar north of I-275. Farther east, tucked into the dark streets of suburban Brandon, the neon green shamrock that tops O'Brien's is a beacon of night life. The atmosphere is casual — Irish pub meets Applebee's — and it's perfectly acceptable to start up a game of darts or shoot the breeze on the patio with a stranger. Indoor and outdoor bars, plenty of flat screens and live music make this O'Brien's an ideal place to pass the evening when you're not yet ready to turn in for the night. 11744 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa, (813) 961-4092; 701 W Lumsden Road, Brandon; (813) 661-9688, obrienspubs.com.

69. [Mangroves Seafood Grille and Bar](#)

Established in 1996, Mangroves has been a key player in making SoHo one of the region's top dining and drinking districts. The two-story restaurant and bar, which also features a deck with private cabanas, doubles as a nightclub on the weekends. Superior service makes this an excellent place to enjoy a cocktail, glass of wine or some scrumptious sangria. 208 S Howard Ave., Tampa; (813) 258-3302 or mangroves-restaurants.com.

70. [Mirage](#)

A lot of places offer salsa lessons, but this swanky spot is where people who already know how dance come to get their groove on. Wednesdays and Fridays are officially Latin nights, with DJ Speedy Jr. spinning the hottest salsa, bachata, reggaeton and more from his sky box while couples dance effortlessly below. There are also strong drinks and ample seating for folks who don't feel like being shown up. On Fridays, the dress code goes up a notch as DJ Carlos Jose from Maxima 92.5-FM hosts the party. Security guards meticulously pat down the guys and check ladies' purses, so arrive early to avoid long lines. (On a recent Wednesday, which is also when ladies drink free, we waited 40 minutes to get in.) 3605 W Hillsborough Ave., Tampa; (813) 673-8835, miragetampa.com.

71. [Tank's Tap Room](#)

It looks like any other Carrollwood strip-mall bar ... until you lay eyes on the bar. With an astounding 51 beers on tap, including a tower of six Belgian ales, Tank's is a hops-lover's paradise. A Steelers hangout, this place was hopping during the recent Super Bowl. And if you're hungry, we dare you to order the Tankinator, a mountain of shredded beef, cheese, cole slaw and a fried egg on a garlic cibatta roll. The 1-pound version is \$9.99; the "ginormous" version is \$31.99. We'll let you use your imagination. 13150 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa; (813) 961-2337, tankstaproom.com.

72. [The Columbia](#)

Skip the 1905 Salad. Head straight to the glorious bar inside Tampa's most historic restaurant, and order yourself a mojito. If it's not the best you've ever had, it'll be damn close. Stirred with sugar cane and bursting with lime and mint, it'll make you feel like Hemingway in Havana.

2117 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; (813) 248-4961, columbiarestaurant.com.

73. [Blue Martini](#)

Blue Martini is definitely one of the slicker martini chains out there; so much so that it even has an outpost in Vegas. Ick. (At least it's based in West Palm Beach.) But there's no denying this lounge at International Plaza is one of Tampa's most popular meat markets, both at Happy Hour and late on weekends. You might bump into some pretty big-name athletes there. (In the mood for something a little less pressured? Try the very nice Bar Louie next door, which has some 50 beers on tap ... although it, too, is a chain. Don't tell anyone!) International Plaza, 2223 N West Shore Blvd.; (813) 873-2583, bluemartinilounge.com.

74. [Studio Inc.](#)

Ample, free parking makes this spot a viable alternative to the Ybor scene. The popular club mixes it up with the Best of Both Worlds Thursdays (that's hip-hop and reggaeton), hip-hop Fridays, Latin Saturdays and Sunday teen nights through the summer. Latin artists occasionally drop by for a live set: Merengue group La Makina hit the stage last weekend, and Xtreme is scheduled to perform July 2. On the urban front, Ne-Yo and Ray J have performed there. And let's not forget rapper Plies, who sparked a fan-frenzy when he held his album release party at Studio Inc. in December. But with three indoor cabanas and a plush VIP area, you may have to pull some strings to get close to a celeb. 3603 W Waters Ave., Tampa; (813) 598-3946, myspace.com/studioincnightclub.

75. [Dunedin House of Beer](#)

While everyone else is fawning over the homebrews at Dunedin Brewery, serious hopheads are sampling the 40 or so draft beers a couple of blocks away, at the more laid back (but equally inviting) Dunedin House of Beer. Small and friendly, with a patio in the parking lot out back, it's got enough beers on tap and in bottles to keep you sampling new flavors for weeks to come. 927 A Broadway, Dunedin; (727)-216-6318, dunedinhob.com.

76. [Azalea Lounge](#)

Gaybor might be the best known local district for LGBT drinking destinations, but if you're looking for something a little quieter and laid back, duck into the gay bar (but definitely straight friendly) Azalea Lounge. It's a beautiful old building with a comfy, closed-in back patio. Just pace yourself on the mixed drink intake. Azalea serves some of the strongest beverages our Barfly columnist has ever tasted. Seriously, their rum-n-cokes might literally be flammable. 1502 N Florida Ave., Tampa; (813) 228-0139, myspace.com/azalealounge.

77. [Kahuna's Bar and Grill](#)

It may not be the only place where Parrotheads and bikers can mingle in peace, but it's certainly the only place that also has a Lord of the Rings pinball machine. Even as a housing development is being built all around it, Kahuna's is still kicking in its spot across from Derby Lane, with games, live music out back and sweet Happy Hour specials (like \$1.39 burgers from 7 to 10 p.m. Wednesdays!). 10515 Gandy Blvd., St. Petersburg; (727) 576-7800, kahunasbarandgrill.com.

78. [Crowbar](#)

The soundstage at Crowbar just shreds, making it one of the top live music destinations in Ybor City. From Top 40 (Josh Kelley and Ryan Cabrera) to Latin funk (Spam Allstars) to metal (Obituary) to indie (Margot and the Nuclear So and So's) to hip-hop (the weekly Da Cypher party on Wednesdays), Crowbar's got it all — plus a killer patio bar that's smooth and relaxing even when there's no live band. 1812 N 17th St., Ybor City; (813) 241-8600, crowbarlive.com.

79. [Mastry's](#)

They call it St. Pete's truest dive bar. It's dank, smoky and cavellike, all right, but that isn't why we love it. We love it because Babe Ruth used to drink there, and Billy Martin, and (legend has it) Jack Kerouac. We love it because Minnesota Fats played piano there years ago. True, those were the old days, when the pub was still in its original location, just down the street. But the place still smells of whiskey and cigarettes, and it's still run by the Mastry family, just like it was in 1935. You won't find that on the menu anywhere else. 233 Central Ave., St. Petersburg. (727) 822-3070.

80. [Jack Willie's Tiki Bar](#)

A tiki bar that's not on the beach? Perfect if you live in Oldsmar and feel like seeking out the saltwater-weathered wood bars. Slathered in baseball memorabilia (particularly from the Yankees), Jack Willie's serves a mean rum drink, the Big Bamboo, that's best enjoyed on its outdoor patio, maybe even at the boat-shaped bar beneath the thatched tiki roof, while a blues guitarist wails in the background. Just watch that an egret doesn't make off with your grub. 1011 St. Petersburg Drive, Oldsmar; (813) 854-1972, jackwilliestikibar.com.

81. [L'Olivier Restaurant and Cabaret](#)

Tampa Bay's only authentic cabaret, L'Olivier offers an awesome wine selection, delicious crepes and quiches as well as traditional cancan and burlesque performances inspired by those made famous at the Bal du Moulin Rouge. L'Olivier doesn't date back to 1889 like its Parisian mentor, but its large, handsome, high-ceiling Ybor City room is nearly that old and features not one but two Eiffel Tower replicas that remind customers that the chic restaurant/nightspot doesn't take itself too seriously. 1600, E Eighth Ave., C102, Ybor City; (813) 247-5307, loliviercabaret.com.

82. [Hatrick's](#)

It's not the closest hockey bar to the St. Pete Times Forum, but it's the best. The staff knows everything about the game, and TV analyst Bobby "The Chief" Taylor has been known to stop by. With a nice menu, tons of Lightning memorabilia on the walls, tasteful brick decor and a shuffleboard table (!), it's an amazing spot to celebrate after a win (or, in recent years, mourn a loss). 107 S Franklin St., Tampa; (813) 225-4288, hatrickstavern.com.

83. [The Dirty Martini](#)

The Dirty Martini definitely lives up to its name. With gimmicks like nearly naked sushi, nude body painting and "skin parties," this upscale club is all about being naughty while serving up an array of fine martinis in a posh South Beach-style atmosphere — and does it all right off U.S. 19, which is an accomplishment in and of itself. 25032 U.S. 19 N, Clearwater; (727) 796-2442, dirnymartinibar.com.

84. [Ka'Tiki](#)

When Jimmy Buffett sang of lost salt shakers and days lost to tequila, he was probably thinking of the Ka'Tiki, where being a beach bum is still considered a respectable profession. Strong, \$3 cocktails, awesome tiki setting, great live music (provided you have a strong tolerance for Margaritaville). Wait your turn at the pool table while noshing on chicken wings, and you'll fit right in. 8803 W Gulf Blvd., Treasure Island; (727) 360-2272; katikisunsetbeach.com.

85. [Wine Exchange Bistro and Wine Bar](#)

For nearly two decades, The Wine Exchange has been a defining part of swanky Old Hyde Park Village. Last March, the bistro and wine bar relocated to its big, gorgeous digs from a smaller spot around the corner. Order grape by the glass or bottle while scanning the room for Tampa big shots like super attorney Barry Cohen. 1609 Snow Ave, Tampa; (813) 254-9463, wineexchangetampa.com.

86. [Taps Wine & Beer Merchants](#)

It's posh. It's urban. It's got pleasant food. It's got a massive wall of beers, at least a hundred bottles and dozens of drafts arranged by categories like lambics, India pale ales and pilsners. In short, it's everything the owners of SkyPoint want from a bar at its base. The wine selection's not quite as drop-dead amazing as you might hope, but Taps makes up for it with an electronic pay-by-the-glass Enomatic wine system (the first of its kind in Tampa), which dispenses some 30 wines by the ounce. You get on a real experimental roll here in a hurry. 777 N Ashley Drive, Tampa; (813) 463-1968, tapswineandbeer.com.

87. [Tiny Tap Tavern](#)

A dive in tony SoHo? You bet, and it's one of the best in Tampa Bay. It's certainly Tampa's oldest, having opened in the 1930s. Low-key, lo-fi and low-cost (cheap PBRs keep the Urban Outfitters crowd coming back for more), Tiny Tap's an unfussy oasis in a desert of chic. 2105 W Morrison Ave. Tampa; (813) 254-4895.

88. [The Brass Mug](#)

If you go to USF in Tampa and you haven't hit up the Mug, you're shaming your school. The

dominant outpost for live punk and metal in Hillsborough County, the Mug offers cool local shows, cheap drinks and bartenders who are easy on the eyes but heavy on the liquor. 1441 E Fletcher Ave., Suite 101, Tampa; (813) 972-8152, myspace.com/brassmug.

89. [Empire](#)

During Super Bowl weekend, the billed headliners at a postgame party at Empire were Dennis Rodman and Lawrence Taylor. And you had any doubt that Empire was a no-nonsense joint. True, Empire has had its share of highly publicized troubles over the years, but one only need look at the line around the block on weekends for proof of the club's enduring popularity. It's certainly outlasted other hip-hop clubs (Fuel, Full Moon Saloon) in Ybor City. 1902 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; (813) 247-2582, empirelive.com.

90. [Neptune Lounge](#)

Beloved by young Pinellas punks for its all-ages shows, Neptune combines live music with bicycling, thanks to its bike shop next door. But after hours, it's the top place for the youths of Tarpon to chill out, shoot pool, crash in the lounge and thrash in the pit. Beer only, but considering how many teens show up for concerts, that's probably a good thing. 13 S Safford Ave., Tarpon Springs; (727) 943-5713, theneptunelounge.com.

91. [The Retreat](#)

How can you not love a bar that, when faced with losing its liquor license, produced a photo from 1946 that showed the bar serving the hard stuff, proving its right to sell hooch should be grandfathered in? A favorite among University of Tampa seniors and downtown drones, the 61-year-old bar (which has gone by many different names) offers cornhole, darts and generous specials, and it claims to hold the Guinness record for most draft beers ever sold. 123 S Hyde Park Ave., Tampa; (813) 254-2014; retreattampa.com.

92. [Gators on the Pass](#)

Depending on when you visit Gators, it's either (A) one of the best sports bars in Tampa Bay (on Florida Gators game days), (B) one of the randier college-party scenes on the beach (on summer bikini-contest days), or (C) one of the bigger and better beachy-touristy bars on the beach (most of the rest of the time). Parking is free and plentiful, and there's a covered outdoor area with a DJ, so if it rains, the party doesn't stop. There's also plenty of seating for food and live music, but if you don't want to be bothered with all that, you can sit upstairs in the air conditioning and just watch football. 12754 Kingfish Drive, Treasure Island. (727) 367-8951, myspace.com/gatorsonthepass.

93. [Copper Top Pub](#)

Keeping of-age USF students quenched for three decades, the Copper Top is a pitchers-and-plastic cups place, with pool tables, NASCAR on the tube and Cream on the jukebox. It's best known for two things: (1) an actual, shiny copper-topped bar, and (2) spicy air-smoked chicken wings, arguably the best you'll find. 5112 E Fowler Ave., Tampa; (813) 988-8656, myspace.com/coppertoppub.

94. [O'Keefe's Tavern](#)

The best Irish bars have a legend. Here's O'Keefe's: In 1972 or 1973, a car crashed through the bar, destroying much of an addition known as the Cedar Room. Among the casualties was a painting of a naked lady, which (as the story goes) is rumored to be the wife of late founder Bill O'Keefe. The painting still hangs in the bar, only with a patch covering a scar on her belly. Whether or not you believe the tale, there's no denying O'Keefe's is maybe the top spot in Pinellas to celebrate St. Patty's Day, with tons — literal tons — of corned beef and green beer for all. Slainte! 1219 S Fort Harrison Ave., Clearwater; (727) 442-9034, okeefestavernonline.com.

95. [Pegasus Lounge](#)

Grimy, gritty and an unapologetically fun place to hang out and drink Jager, the Pegasus is famed for three things: Zombie luaus, live punk and rock almost every night, and Pornaoke. Yep, that would be karaoke with hardcore porn playing on the screen behind you. It's every bit as disturbing as you might think. And by disturbing, we mean awesome. 10008 N 30th St., Tampa. (813) 971-1679, pegasusniteclub.com.

96. [Howl at the Moon](#)

It's a cheesy dueling piano bars franchise that makes you feel silly — but in a good, fun way. A hallmark of the terrifically tacky Channelside entertainment district, Howl at the Moon is the place to get sloshed with a group of friends and sing along to barroom anthems like Sweet Caroline and, yes, Piano Man. 615 Channelside Drive, Tampa; (813) 226-2261, stumpssupperclub.com.

97. [The Dirty Shame](#)

Dark. Brick. Wood. Pool. Darts. The place feels like an Old West saloon, complete with no-nonsense bartenders. Beloved redheaded bartender Karen Durrett, or maybe affable, mustached owner Richard Boom, will gladly greet you with the finest Irish Car Bombs (Guinness, Jameson and Bailey's, \$8) this side of Belfast. 1929 E Seventh Ave., Ybor City; (813) 247-7930, myspace.com/thedirtysametampa.

98. [The Garage](#)

The Garage is a punk club with a distinctly rockabilly flair, from the artwork — tattoo-style murals and glamour-shot photos of pinups — to the polished aluminum diamond plate trim around the walls. On concert nights (the place has a great stage), it's a bona fide magnet for young retrophiles, comely rockabilly chicks with flowers in their Bettie Page hair and greaser lads wearing pomade and Buddy Hollys. Everyone else might be drinking PBR, but you should order the signature drink, the Sake Bomb, which is original and tasty. 662 Central Ave., St. Petersburg; (727) 553-9212, myspace.com/stpetegaragebar.

99. [Osceola Tavern](#)

The Osceola Tavern has only been around since 1999, but the building it's in has been a Dade City fixture since the 1890s, and was a saloon at least as far back as 1910. Classic rock jukeboxes, live music on weekends and a whole mess of folks who don't feel like heading to Hillsborough for a good time — that, as they say, is real. 13941 Seventh St., Dade City; (352) 523-2714, osceolatavern.com.

100. [Eddie's Bar and Grill](#)

This is going to sound weird, but just hear us out: Eddie's is the best bar for kids in Tampa Bay. What we mean is, it's got an incredible assortment of games, from Skee-Ball to race-car games to toy pickups to pool and darts. The menu and outdoor patio are quite pleasant, too, and there's usually live music. Which means you're likely to see plenty of families with young kids running around. And while all that's taking place, you can just belly up to the expansive bar, which has 40 beers on tap, and watch the game. 1283 Bayshore Blvd., Dunedin; (727) 734-2300, eddiesbarandgrill.com.

[Last modified: Jun 29, 2009 03:31 PM]

Share your thoughts on this story

[Read our guidelines for comments](#)

First Name (only)

Location

Comment (May be published online and/or in print)

You have 250 characters left to comment.

15 comments [Newest First](#)



Follow comments with RSS

Scott from Tampa

Jun 28th, 2009 6:23 pm

While Taps may be have the Enomatic Wine System, they were not the first in Tampa, they were introduced into Tampa by Wine Design, the wine shop in Channelside.

Chill from Wesley Chapel

Jun 28th, 2009 8:13 am

If you live in the "WC" (wesley chapel, everyone knows Skinny's Sport's Bar & Grill on SR54 is the

spot. No mixed drinks (yet), but the place rocks and has a burgeoning local music scene. So happening is the place, the owner's are expanding.

Ralph from South Tampa

Jun 28th, 2009 8:12 am

Love the STD (South Tampa Dubliner)! The people you meet are terrific! The staff is friendly! It's great to know the regulars & the staff, it makes it such a great place to go over & over again. Love being on the deck listening to live music!

Becky from Clearwater

Jun 28th, 2009 5:46 am

where does the "top" bartender come in to play, just because someone thinks they rock because they were voted the best bar?! Home much does this person ring, on an average night? I know plenty of people where I work that will kill anyone, flare exc

Becky from Clearwater

Jun 28th, 2009 5:37 am

After reading the first 20, I'm surprised! Is there any research on the amount of liquor sales or top entertainment appearances? I'm just wondering where you get your research from, I've been to almost all of your results, I beg to differ.

Mike from Tampa

Jun 27th, 2009 6:22 pm

Czar at number 2? Seriously?

Meagan from Tampa

Jun 26th, 2009 7:47 pm

The Dubliner is the best place to sit back and enjoy a beer with friends. Great staff and great patio.

TR from Clearwater

Jun 26th, 2009 7:14 pm

The Dubliner is by far the best Irish Pub in the Tampa area. It's a great place to have a beer and listen to great music.

Jason from Sarasota

Jun 26th, 2009 7:04 pm

Me and buddies went to Floyds club at the Hard Rock and thought we were in Miami or LA. Its very rare, so many hot chicks in one place. I met Playboy model and we've hung out since. We're planning our next trip for the weekend in couple weeks.

Joe from Indian Rocks Beach

Jun 26th, 2009 5:11 pm

I just found this article and wanted to tell you that the Dubliner has the best casual friendly atmosphere in the Bay!!!!

Jackie from Holiday

Jun 26th, 2009 5:10 pm

I am a Masters Student at UT and one of my favorite places to go to listen to music and have a blueberry beer is the Dubliner Irish Pub in Hyde Park

Jeff from Tampa

Jun 26th, 2009 5:07 pm

The Dubliner Irish Pub, is the best place for an afternoon beer!

JM from Clearwater

Jun 26th, 2009 5:06 pm

I can't believe the Dubliner Irish Pub, isn't higher on the list-that is hands down the best bar in town-great atmosphere, live music, friendly bar tenders-it is the best

Suzanna from Tampa

Jun 26th, 2009 4:40 pm

Dubliner Irish Pub is my favorite out of the 3. They have the friendliest staff and a great laid back feel.

Kentaria from Atlanta, GA

Jun 26th, 2009 1:13 pm

THIS IS A GREAT SIGHT I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN TAMPA, FLORIDA. MY FAMILY IS STILL THERE. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

[Tampa Florida Restaurant](#)

Free Guide to Tampa Restaurants
Browse by Cuisine or Location
www.WhereTraveler.com/Tampa

[Tiki Bar Only \\$899.99](#)

Free Shipping! Authentic New Style
Quality Tiki Bar with Three Stools.
www.GardenWinds.com

[Bar](#)

Find Local Bars - Dives, Pubs,
Halls & Wine Bars Near You.
Nightlife.YellowPages.com

Ads



© 2009 · All Rights Reserved · St. Petersburg Times
490 First Avenue South · St. Petersburg, FL 33701 · 727-89
[Contact Us](#) | [Join Us](#) | [Advertise with Us](#) | [Subscribe to the S](#)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Standard of Accuracy](#) | [Terms, Conditions &](#)