

Reviews in Citysearch.com

Starlight

<http://newyork.citysearch.com/profile/11350611>

The Verdict:

This hip yet low-key East Village Gay bar hosts an intimate and flirtatious scene, which is almost exclusively gay (85% men, 15% women). Upper West Side suits mingle with neighborhood loungers and most of the smart-looking guests say their hellos to at least 3 familiar faces at the bar.

The Scene:

With very few flamboyant Chelsea boys and butch dike chicks, no drag queens and no sex in the bathrooms, at first glance, the Starlight Bar and Lounge looks like a straight bar. But although subtle, the pick up scene is definitely alive: This is the place to find a boyfriend/girlfriend, rather than a one-night stand.

The Space:

The front bar room has high ceilings, postmodern chandeliers that look like a knot of plastic tubes, and golf-grass texture canvases on the wall. Passed the velvet curtains reigns the dim-lit, cozy lounge with corduroy sofas, DJ turntables spinning funky music, and a small stage for Wednesday and Thursday night performances.

Tip Sheet:

One of New York's Best Gay Bars:

With no vulgar flesh market behavior, Starlight Bar and Lounge has a swanky, elegant feel.

Timing is Everything:

The scene picks up fairly late: on weeknights it warms up around 11:00pm, and weekends even later.

Special Nights:

On Wednesdays and Thursdays there is a performance in the lounge (Stand Up comedy, singers, dancers, etc.). Sundays is Lesbian night.

Sway

<http://newyork.citysearch.com/profile/11350046>

The Verdict:

This small trendy west SoHo lounge only admits the most beautiful ,well-dressed, self-aware downtown fashionistas. With red walls, red lighting, Aladdin-style chandeliers and oriental arches, Sway has the cozy cave feel.

The Scene:

Everyone is scanned at the velvet ropes by eyes dripping with attitude, and unless you know someone or look like a 16-year-old Prada model, your chances of getting in are slim. There is no cover charge, and most of the hip crowd arrives at around 1:00 PM, after having visited a few other nightspots. Although there is a “no dancing” sign on the wall (Sway lacks a cabaret license), beginning at 2:00, most loungers stand on their drunken feet, and begin to dance to the funk music, infused with 1980s hits. By 3:30, there are few left seated, and the dance party vibe continues until closing.

Pick Up Factor:

Even though Sway is small, it is a huge meat market. The number of digit exchanges on lounge sofas and in the bar area exceed the hefty bank accounts of most of its male patrons.

Tip Sheet:

One of New York’s Best Small Clubs:

Sway has a super fashion conscious crowd with an exclusive private party vibe.

Matters of Gender:

Due to the door policy, there are three women to every man. The Sway scene is extremely straight, and has the highest concentration of beautiful, coke-skinny women in New York.

The Tea Lounge

250 7th Ave.

(@ corner of 10th Street)

<http://newyork.citysearch.com/profile/11403555>

Hours:

Sunday-Thursday 7am – 12am

Friday, Saturday 7am-2am or till people leave

The Verdict:

A California-style coffee shop by day (think Eurika Joes); a cozy wine lounge by night.

The setting:

This brand new Park Slope neighborhood lounge, far enough from the bar madness of 5th Avenue, is casual and comfy around the clock. Place your order at the bar, but hangout for as long as you want on one of the funky mismatched sofas. Warm lighting originates

from low hanging chandelier and several Moroccan candle lamps and occasionally blends with a woof of toaster-heated quiche .

The Drinks:

Aside from 57 exotic tea blends ranging from Tibetan Tiger to Chelsea Morning, the Tea Lounge also offers six beers on draft, 15 bottled imported bears and Belgian ales, and 15 wine options, which rest in bottles on the counter for customers to sample before they make up their mind.

The Scene:

The pyramid of 26 huge black tea jars on shelves behind the bar dictates that some caffeine-hating, yoga-loving vegans will make Tea Lounge their second home, but most of the evening crowd is a pleasant breed of Park Slope urban intellectuals that enjoy a good wine and beer selection accompanied by complementary nuts.

Tip Sheet:

In the neighborhood:

If you want to remain in the mellower vibe, but your stomach is growling for some serious chow, head over to the nearby Blah Blah Lounge.

Tea Paraphernalia: you can buy incense, candles, soaps and lipstick – all made from tea, as well as NiNi Universal hand-painted tea pots (\$20).

Strictly for players: some tables are full size chess and backgammon boards and the staff will provide you with giant pieces to play with.

Local sweet tooth: Tea Lounge gets its baked goods from the best of the neighborhood, offering cakes from Tow Little Red Hands and croissants from the French bakery Chez Isabella.

The Land of Milk and Honey

<http://www.google.com/search?q=cache:S4OQTnC3z2EJ:newyork.citysearch.com/profile/11>

Enter through the pitch-black double velvet curtain corridor of this unassuming Lower East Side “tailor shop” and you will find yourself in the land of Milk and Honey – a Prohibition era speakeasy style bar with a candle lit interior of 500 square feet including a lounge area in front, a classic short wooden bar, and five booths further down the narrow space on the way to the bathrooms. All drinks are hand-made (some include fresh mint leaves and freshly squeezed juices), and served on silver platters. Every so often, complimentary fresh strawberries are served with cream fresh and honey. But wait, it’s not that easy. Visitors to this hyped-up downtown social club must call in advance (assuming they are connected enough to get the secret number and address). They must

announce the size of their party, their expected time of arrival, and their “connection” – the source that referred them. And since the publication of a feature New York Times article about Milk and Honey on May 7th, entrance requirements have gotten even tougher. A video surveillance system has been installed on the front door to further screen guests, and assure that only announced familiar invitees are buzzed in.

So what’s all the hype about this place? The idea is no hype. Milk and Honey is a backlash to the vanity celebrity-worshiping club scene and the rowdy frat-like meat market bars of New York. In contrast, the atmosphere at Milk and Honey is polite, classic and mellow – a collective of “good people” with an average of one degree of separation. The 1930s social club feel is the creation of one man, Sasha, who takes his self-declared social role as a “tradition upholder” very seriously. Sasha, a younger and prettier version of Robert Downy Junior who covers his classic white button-down shirt with suspenders attached to his high-wasted pleated trousers, mixes and measures his liquids with the precision of a Chemist six nights a week. He has mandated eight “Rules of the Bar” that are posted in the bathroom, dispersed at the bar and strictly enforced at all times. “No name-dropping, no star-fucking”, and “Gentlemen will remove their hats” are two such rules. Sasha gets annoyed when people get up to schmooze unless they are standing in the designated bar area. After a connected friend came in with Quentin Tarantino, Sasha didn’t speak with him for a week.

But as Milk and Honey claims to be clear of New York City glamorama, its secret system of people-screening translates into yet-another city gimmick. Groucho Marx’s famous quote applies: “I don’t care to belong to a club that accepts people like me as members.” Since Milk and Honey’s rolodex of “good people” includes a minimal 300 names, the 5 million New Yorkers in their 20s and 30s that are not on Sasha’s list will do anything to be invited to join. Ironically, Milk and Honey with its discreet “no pose” attitude has made itself into the hippest spot of them all.