



# Battered, for life.

## COCKTAILS IN PRAGUE

-Alex Waddell

Cocktails must be Prague's unsung secret. Why a secret? Is it because Absinthe, Becherovka, Fernet and Czech beer get all the lime-light, along with the notorious Czech-per-capita annual beer consumption being so high - alleged to be among the world's top three. Or maybe its because the guidebooks are written for hard-up heller-pinching travellers, set to gain maximum enjoyment from the cheapness of a beer. Treat yourself to a 'velký pivo' in a cocktail bar and you'll generally be set back a whopping 50 crowns. There's a lesson here (I appeal to the more adventurous spirits amongst you). Cocktail bars don't tend to boast over 300 different cocktails just to fill out the menu pages. And the bar people didn't 'study' at Prague bar school for their own private amusement. Intriguingly, however, cocktail studies fell short of actually defining the cocktail. An answer to this philosophical poser eluded all but the very best of our cocktail graduates. 'Colourful like the tail of a peacock' was the declared winner of my investigations, while 'compulsory straws, umbrellas, fruit slices and leggy women in the wings' came a well-deserved runner up. Following is a critical analysis of Prague's best cocktail hotspots. Praise and abuse is representative of the respective numbers of samples donated in the research.

If you're after that exotic Caribbean holidays feel, then you need a drink or three at 'Zanzibar', an eclectic mixture of musicians, tourists and business types. Peruse the modern art (for sale) adorning the walls as you absorb the never-ending menu and chill out to the funky jazz sound. The bar staff is full of drink recommendations. They will also happily show off their bar skills (bottle twirling etc) when they feel the urge. Meanwhile, the waitresses will scuttle to and fro from bar to dining room doing their cocktail thing. Zanzibar boasts forty different whiskeys plus Mexico's most exclusive Tequila (Porfidio Barrique) at 1000Kč a

shot. You can just take an exclusive sniff free of charge. Find your way into the boss's good books through regular Zanzibar drinking and you will enjoy a 20% discount, not to mention the aforementioned's charismatic company. Get the 10% discount card and I'm sure you're on your way.

Just as chilled out is 'Železné dveře', and as refined as it is chilled. The secluded terrace, found in an ancient passageway, is perfect for cool (or frozen) cocktails during the heat of the day. Note the summery Cuban slant to the

**Alcohol's a way of life and good for the economy. It's keeps those certain people off the streets at night.**

menu. You won't find more mouth watering than the Mojito (Havana Club Rum, Fresh Mint, Limes, sugar and soda) once you see those Mint leaves dangle from

**Bugsy's, Pařížská 10, 232 99 43**

**Casablanca, Nám. Bratři Synků 15, 43 61 97**

**Deluxe, Václavské náměstí 4, Bus tel - 962 494 40**

**Hapu, Orlická 8, 227 201 58**

**Ostroff American Bar, Sřelecký ostrov**

**Red Room, Křemencova 17, 24 91 60 47**

**TGI Friday's American Bar, Malé náměstí 2, 24 22 12 30**

**Zanzibar, Lázeňská 6, Malá strana 0602 384328**

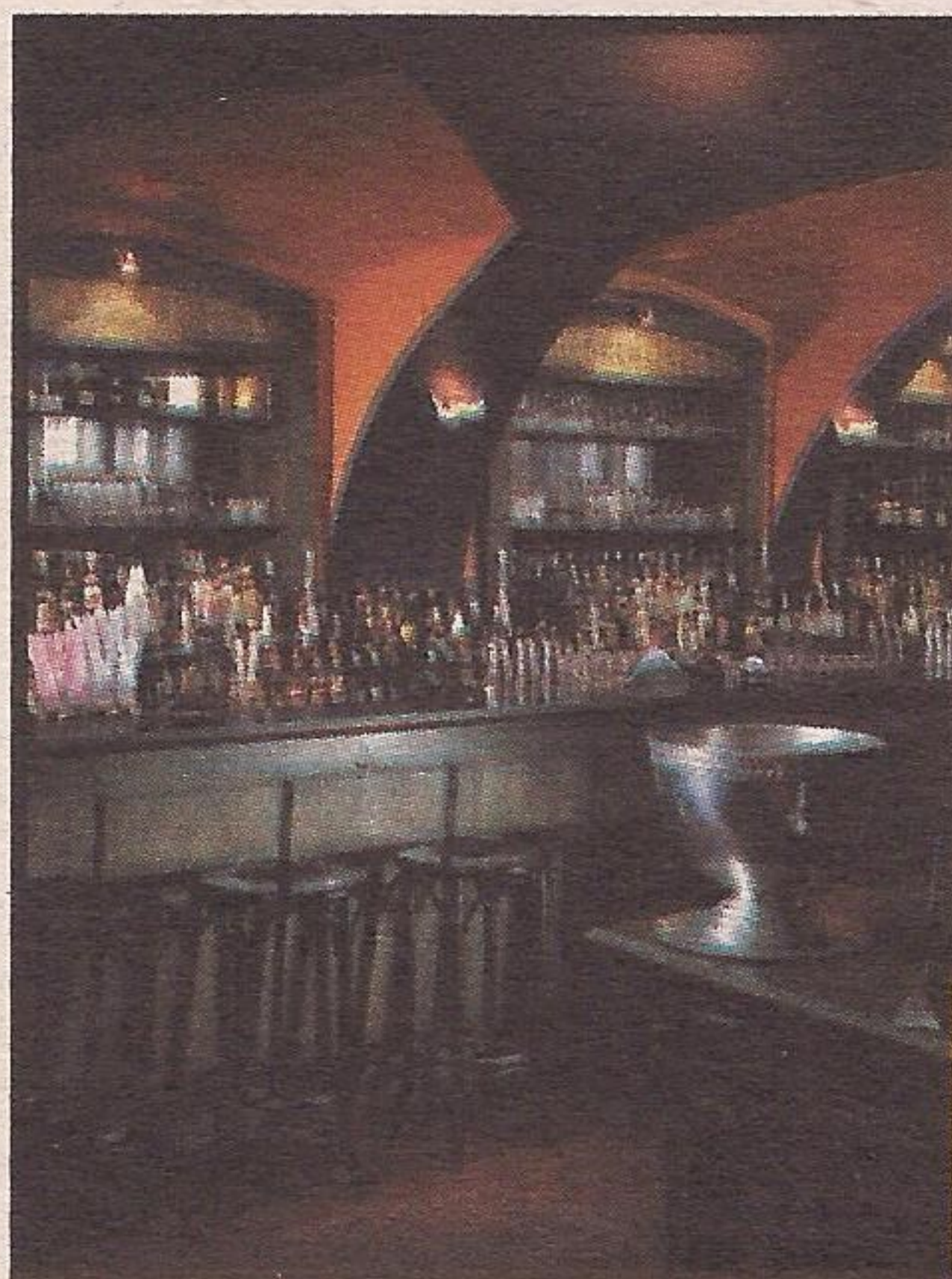
**Železné dveře, Michalská 19, Jilská 18 (in the passage) 0603 717842**

the glass- summarily no-less. Got that down-to-nature feeling about you? Take a Bloody Mary - uniquely (for Prague) complete with Horseradish and celery stock. Fear not - the Meat Lovers' Bloody Mary is coming soon. Live-bands entertain several times a week. If Stan the Man's Blues fail to rivet, love him as we do, venture down below into the 'serious' bar. The informative barmen are nothing less than cocktail enthusiasts, confidently equipped with 25 different Martinis to hand (from dirty to perfect to James Bond-style „shaken not stirred”) and an intriguing anti-Absinthe philosophy. The crowd spans Czech drink connoisseurs to expatriate rabble. Easy-listening lounge music beautifully maintains the harmony. What are you waiting for?

For that all-American sense of cool and faultless service, then (no surprises) it's gotta be TGI Friday's American Bar. Along with a full range of bar food (burgers etc), a nightly show-time (usually after 10) and a wholly professional service, you get a respectable clientele (18-65) of tourists and well-to-do natives, and a bang-central location. On the other hand, if you're looking for something of Prague, you won't find it in TGI's. (Try Terminal Bar or Chapeau Rouge). But then who needs debauchery all year round in any case? Respect for service with a smile; it doesn't come easily in today's Prague.

Yet beware the cheap 'American-style' imitations. Ostroff American Bar (high up on Sřelecký Island) may have an 'excitingly' long 'American-style' bar, but they forgot to export the fun. There might as well be a sign on the door saying 'Bring your own atmosphere. We ain't got none spare'. Granted, of course, you get a quality view over the Vltava, and of all the people having fun across the river. Thank goodness the bar staff are big on experimentation and pain relief. Headache sufferers are advised to order a "Chili" (Vodka, pepper, ketchup, chili and sauce'). They also have an ardent anti-freestyle philosophy regarding cocktail preparation. Killjoys.

Fair's fair if you're after a real-live Bohemian vibe. Quit Prague-centre



# ZANZI BAR

**Koktejl bar v americkém stylu**

201 druhů koktejlů

68 TOP nealkoholických koktejlů

Nejlepší Caipirinha ve městě

40 druhů single-malt whisky

**Každý čtvrtek Super Party!**

**Otevřeno po-ne**

**05:00-3:00**

Mosteká st. Karlův most (Charles Bridge)

Lázeňská

6

Praha 1

Lázeňská

✗

Saská Alley





*The Martinelli International Bartenders' Show in Mecca left all hot & bothered, not to mention drunk on all the free booze!*



and venture down to Hapu in Žižkov (nearest Metro Flora). This is (until now) a well-guarded secret among expats in the know (as opposed to a dodgy one best left alone). You see, get lucky with the company and you'll be finding it hard to say 'Ne' to one more cocktail. Bar staff are friendly folk and spare no effort in your cocktail preparation / creating works of cocktail art / attending to your each and every need etc. Pina Coladas go down a treat, but the huge 'home-made' selection is definitely worth a try. Freshly squeezed juices and succulent fruit slices will refresh mind and soul, while the infamous ChocoMint will just leave you drooling. Management takes no responsibility for your finishing a whole one. Wacky names include Flying Kangaroo, Between the Sheets and Alien Secretion. I'm hoping to see Alien-menage-a-trois before the year's up.

Now, if you're gonna do the Prague cocktail scene properly, there's no excuse for not calling in on 'Casablanca', Prague's first free-style cocktail joint and hang-out for the Czech rich and famous. Like Hapu, it may be out in the sticks, but credits due for providing the life and soul of Vyšehrad. (There's nothing else to do in Vyšehrad.)

Even if its Czech pop sensation Lucie's night off, there's no (serious) harm in popping in for a 'Crush and Burn'. See the lights go down and the crash helmet come out (purely for your protection). Swiftly down the secret formula and enjoy three swift whacks over the head from your barman with his baseball bat. So the bar guys have a sense of humour, but their service is also invariably sharp. You can't order a Rum and Coke without getting an obligatory 360 of the Rum bottle. Which just leaves me to mention the near-claustrophobic, seedy, exhilarating sexually charged atmosphere, and the regular parties. The decor's pretty cool too.

Truly old-fashioned romantic ambience comes courtesy of the newly opened 'Deluxe' restaurant-cum-club. Rousing jazz bands will do the business even if your choice of date doesn't - note that cozy couples abound. Elegantly arranged tables seem to invite informal gatherings to draw around and sip cocktails. Unfortunately the cocktail selection is restrained and the service lacks the flair of a Casablanca or a TGI's, if excused by its refinement. So, basically, if you want a drink you won't get a song and a dance about it. (Take your shameful tourist mentality elsewhere.) Yet if the bar isn't centre-stage as at Ostroff, it's so that the uniquely vintage style can. And that's the immaculate decor, the secluded corners and the gentle hubbub of voices for starters. Singles can get in on the act when the DJ gets started and the dance floor fills up to R&B, Soul and Acid Jazz sounds.

My adventures bring me to the delicate task of describing Buggy's. From the outside it is easy to miss (Pařížská 10, though submerged on a corner), and reminiscent of an American Prohibition den. On the inside... find a 'brute-in-a-suit'

**MECCA**  
U Průhonu 3, Praha 7  
Holešovice  
Rezervace na tel:  
83 87 05 22

# Styl

**DJs:**  
**BAZIL**  
(london/fun bunch)  
**KARIM**  
(france)

**friday**  
**24/9**  
**10p.m.**

*J.R. Promotions*

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sexy Cocktail  
party, full of  
entertainment  
and fun, with  
a special drink  
Happy Hour*

LUMENE

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## HAVEN'T YOU HEARD YET?

Jo's Bar  
&  
garáž

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**(AND IT'S BETTER THAN EVER!)**

**malostranské nám. 7, praha 1**  
**open 11 'til 5am - 7 nites a week • otevřeno**  
**denně 11-05 Vstup zdarma! • Free Entry!**





**Jirka mixes buck-wild at the Železné dveře.**

on hand to help with the door and oversee the proceedings from his six-stair-height. If that does it for you, then feel free to join the merry throng - there is a definite buzz. Caviar (1790 - 2790Kč) and canapés are available to buy should you get hungry. Enjoy pretension all round and a flexible intellectual vacuum should you feel the need to socialize - not traditional Globe-type expats in sight I'm afraid. And don't forget to buy the perfectly bound menu booklet (350Kč) as a souvenir. Bugsy's may be respected as the height of sophistication to some, but I might just leave them to it.



## DIY Cocktails in the Comfort of your own Home.

Why swig cool cocktails in a posh bar when you can do the same thing back home, throw an invitation-only cocktail bash, and

save money? Of course, keep right on drowning your sorrows at cocktail bars. (THINK and Prague's public-spirited bar owners want nothing less.) We, at THINK, want the coming (THINK inspired) cocktail renaissance to bring pleasure to all. Get on to BARCON (no. 1 bar supplier in the Czech Republic) and get in the latest mixing kit. Acquire a healthy assortment of mixables while you're at it (strong booze normally works a treat) and you're away.

Contact: Vlastimil Rut, BARCON, Smiřických 2, 250 83 Škvorec  
tel: - 02 / 997 25 25, mobile: 0602 311 639

So maybe you want something cozier and more suited to the philosophic temperament (those with time on their hands). In which case the 'Red Room' is the perfect find. There are two things you need to know about the 'Red Room'. Its Red and... its got two rooms, an enticing bar and an outdoor patio. The cocktail selection is small but perfectly formed. (Although by virtue of managerial good will, or hard-nosed commercialism, an expanded selection is forth coming.) Who could argue with a 'Passion Potion' or a 'Happy Hour Mix', I ask you? Quiet and reserved in the morning, when you can chat to the lovely bar girls and enjoy an appetising filler - buzzing in the evening, the Red Room is the perfect antidote to one too many nights on the piss.

Cocktails are cool. They also eat up your money and smack of high-society. Tourists love them, goddammit. Lets break that monopoly and get merry while we're at it. Just go easy on the Pina Colada's and the Long Island's. They slip down rather too easily. And don't get too drunk. Not to sound priestly, it's just not the name of the game. (Absinthe and cheap beer are not without their uses.) Personally, I'm converted. Can you have too much of a good thing? Myself, not if its a Pina with a straw. Happy Drinking!

## NEW MUSIC & SPORTS CAFÉ behind the TÝN Church!

# Legends

**Týn 1, Praha 1  
2489 5404**

## Programme for September

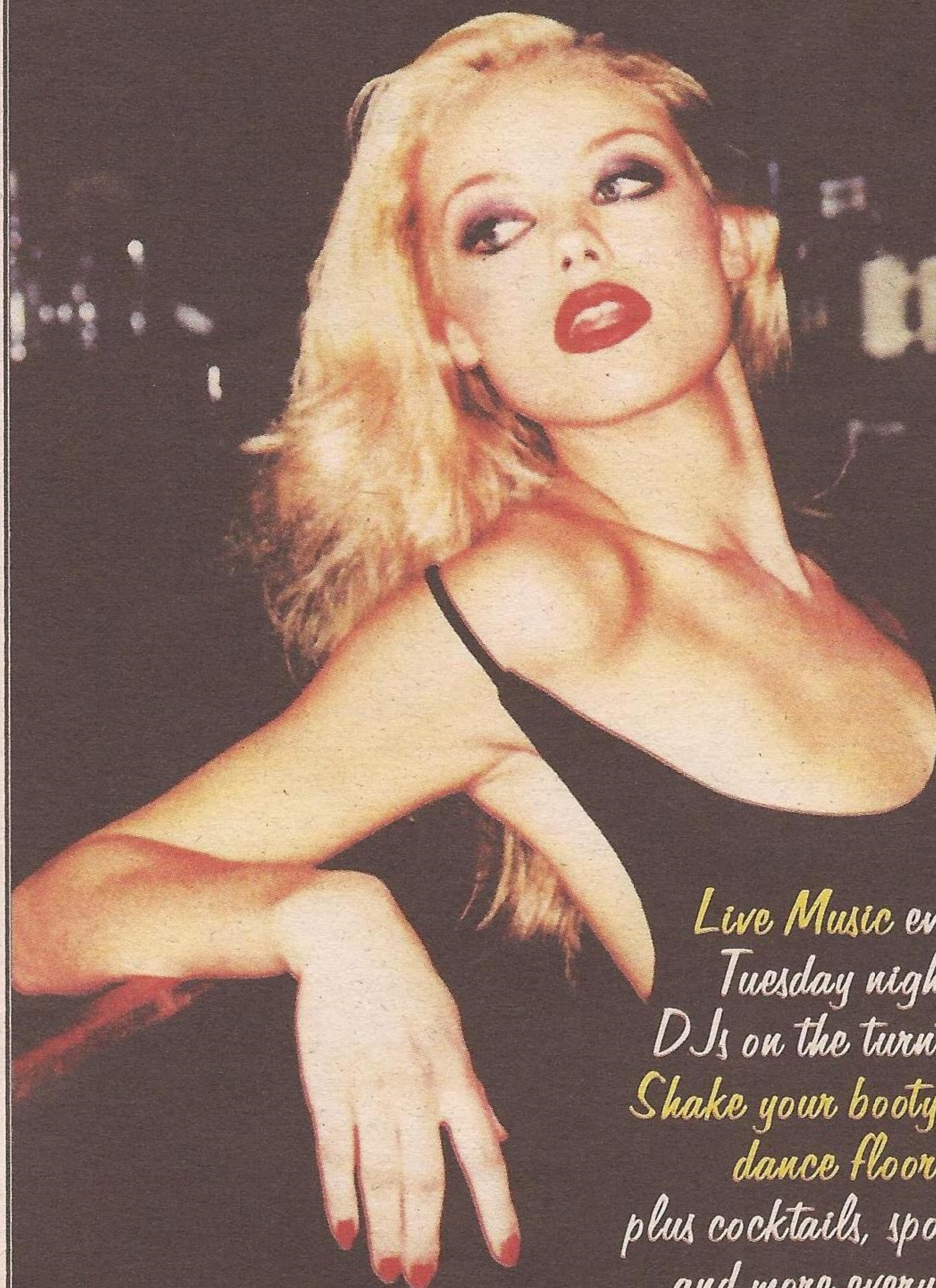
**E sun: LEGENDARY SOUNDS w/ DJ Rossi**  
**V mon: DJ Rossi**  
**E tue: LIVE MUSIC! 9-11:30 +DJ Rossi**  
**R wed: DJ Lucifer**  
**Y thu: Tequila NITE with DJ ICEMAN**  
**fri: DANCE PARTY! DJ Rossi**  
**sat: CLUB MIX with DJ Rossi**

**7 tue: LIVE MUSIC! Lemon Nashville**  
(Chuck Berry revival)

**14 tue: LIVE MUSIC! Fast Bird Band**  
(Jimi hendrix revival)

**21 tue: LIVE MUSIC! Rolling Stones**  
(revival band)

**28 tue: LIVE MUSIC! Proffesor Band**  
(Beatle's revival)



*Live Music every  
Tuesday night!  
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dance floor!  
plus cocktails, sports TV  
and more everyday!*