

Sydney Road jewel



“It is the urban, gritty, bohemian edge”

Just a short distance north of the city centre, Sydney Road offer three kilometres of diverse strip shopping comprising the Jewel, Brunswick, Anstey and Moreland precincts.

The strip is accessible by any means of transport. Students without cars can take tram number 19, a train on the Upfield

line, several buses, or for more environmentally conscious, the Upfield bike path. The only difficulty is finding the time to discover all that Sydney Road has to offer.

A student's Sydney road rite of passage usually begins on the corner of Brunswick road. The Jewell area is considered the 'arts precinct' of Sydney Road with a number of galleries and arts suppliers. Counihan Gallery (233 Sydney Road, Brunswick) is Moreland City Council's contemporary arts gallery and entry is free.

But mostly, students flock to the Jewell area to find pubs and bars with live music, or cafes such as the Green Refectory (115 Sydney Road). This part of the strip is famous among students

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Street character is flowing

“There is one thing that Sydney Road bars have in common – character”

All venues strive for it, most venues fabricate it or force it down your throat. Sydney Road has earned it. It's understated, unpretentious and for the most part unassuming.

Mind you, there's nothing like a bar with carpet. It's a combination

of a man's two favourite places, the kitchen and the lounge room. Then throw in my grandpa's garage, in a good way. Except somehow he had raised the roof five feet, built a stage, hired a band, taken-up drinking and become popular with a crowd half his age. It was like coming home. I kept expecting my Mum to jump out from behind an ironing board and demand I clean something. They had the kind of chairs that you might expect to see on the nature-strip during hard rubbish collection. Not that there's anything wrong with that, some

of my best memories happened on chairs or nature-strips.

The Brunswick Green in particular rocked my socks off in a quietly subversive sort of sway. It looked how a granny flat would look like if you knocked out some walls, pulled up the carpet and turned the lounge-room into the world's largest domestic refrigerator. The wine list was extensive, the beer was cold, the sofas were abundant and they served this delicious little selection of tapas style dining. 

Tom Cummins