

“Lots of awesome and affordable night spots”

Sure we all love hanging around our uni campus when we don't have to, and of course the uni bar is the most elite of drinking holes, but sometimes all we want to do is get away, for a drink, possibly a meal and maybe catch some sweet tunes with friends out on the town.

There's lots of awesome and affordable night spots to choose from in Melbourne and below are just a few of my personal favourites.



Esplanade Hotel

The 'Espy' is one of those places you hear everyone rant and rave about, and it took me a fair while to get down there, but right in the heart of St Kilda, it is very deserving of its many accolades. Around for over 100 years, it boasts itself to be Australia's Premier live music venue, though it is much more than that. Perfect for a bite to eat or a drink with friends, it's open every day of the week, with bands of every calibre found playing any night in any of three band rooms, the Front Bar, the Basement or the Gershwin Room (the home of RockWiz!) The Kitchen has a great menu for any budget (even the poor and deprived uni student) with a mezzanine allowing a great view of both the front bar stage and spectacular bay.

Well with formalities out of the way, in my own opinion, the thing about the Espy that makes it such a great place is the relaxed environment and casual atmosphere. Everyone there is up for a good time, a drink, a bite to eat and a chance to catch a few bands. When standing with a beer in hand, watching a band in the Front bar, as the sunset shines in, it easy to see why so many people praise this somewhat historical landmark as the ultimate pub.

www.espy.com.au



Lentil As Anything

Lentil As Anything is a series of vegetarian restaurants that run on donations and the help of the community so they can run as a not-for-profit organisation. This means that you, the customer decides what you are willing to pay for your meal.

There are four restaurants open for the public, in St Kilda there is the original Lentil As Anything restaurant, in Abbotsford you can find it at the Abbotsford Convent, in East Brunswick it is located right on Lygon Street, and one right in

between Birrarung Marr and Fed Square in the city, there is always somewhere for you to get a substantial and worthwhile meal! Just because it is pay-as-you-feel, does not mean you should all be stingy! If it weren't for the generosity of people, these restaurants wouldn't be able to continue giving the community affordable meals. Plus the laid back atmosphere and air of community each restaurant prides themselves on makes Lentil As Anything great places to hang out and grab a bite to eat.

www.lentilasanything.com



The Tote

It's the outer Fitzroy and Collingwood areas that have a plethora of affordable pubs and bars, And positioned at the corner of Johnston and Wellington streets is the Tote! Open every day of the week, 2pm till late. The Tote has played host to many famous (and infamous) bands such as Fugazi, Mudhoney and even the Spazzys (I know!) and continue to do so today.

Though if you want something a bit more 'high-brow' than a beer, upstairs the Cobra can be found, priding itself on one simple ethos – “embrace that favourite ethnocentric euphemism – *exotic*”. I'm pretty sure that means they serve some pretty fancy cocktails



The Birmingham

Has just undergone a change of management, who claim the pub to be “Not Shit Anymore!” Once upon a time, the Birmingham was not the nicest establishment, but since its comeback in 2006, bands can be found playing five nights a week, and \$2 pots between 8 and 10pm.

333 Smith Street, Fitzroy.



The Evelyn

Nominated for best Victorian live venue in the 2007 Jack Awards, the Evelyn prides itself on their cheap drinks and good music, hosting bands 7 nights a week, this is the ideal venue for those on a budget (Monday and Tuesday you can

grab yourself a \$10 jug of beer, and Thursdays has \$6.50 jagerbombs, \$3.50 for a glass of champagne, and \$2.50 pots) You can chill in the outdoor beer garden or try your hand at some pool in the side bar.

Yah Yah's

Situated at 99 Smith Street, Fitzroy, Yah Yah's is a newly opened watering hole and live music venue. Catch some of the best local bands Melbourne has to offer – for free. And every Thursday at 7pm, for \$10 you can join in Yah Yah's Rock Aerobic class and learn to “pogo, skank, do the Mick Jagger walk, air guitar and just jump around to songs from folk like AC/DC and Iggy Pop.

www.yahyahs.com.au



Corner Hotel Rooftop Bar

To me, the Corner hotel has always been a music venue, with bands of every calibre found playing in the band room, though recently I experienced what they have to offer upstairs. Open Tuesdays and Wednesday from 4pm till late, and Fridays to Sunday from 12, take in the views of Swan st, Richmond! On Wednesday nights you can grab a \$14 pot 'n' “parma” and join in the Corner Hotel Trivia! With an impressive menu (Baby Octopus, oregano, carrot, capsicum and spring onion with a marsala salad and balsamic vinegar reduction, anyone?) an assortment of beers on tap and a wine list featuring local vineyards, the Corner is the ideal bar for catching up, and found no more than a three minute walk from Richmond station. It's easy and accessible for everyone with a train ticket, with a casual environment everyone can enjoy.

www.cornerhotel.com



Ding Dong Lounge

I feel I have left the best to last! Ding Dong lounge is my personal favourite. Sister to the bar of the same name in New York, Ding Dong found in the heart of China Town and presents some of the world's best local, national and international acts to Old Melbourne Town as well as young djs spreading their wings, spinning a mix of vintage and contemporary rock, new wave, electro, punk and garage. Open seven nights a week till late, Ding Dong is one of Melbourne's finest Rock and Roll clubs, with cheap drinks and free entry after 12am! The most appealing element to Ding Dong lounge is the fun attitude it has, the mix of dark lighting and the walls laced with band poster of past tours and the djs doing what they do best (most of the time), you can't help but join in with the drinking and dancing.

www.dingdonglounge.com.au

Please guys, drink responsibly! ☹️

Alexandra Duguid