

throw of Dupont Circle, all of which will almost certainly be gay-tolerant, if not overtly friendly. Beer connoisseurs should not miss the Brickskeller's, just around the corner from The Fireplace. Nothing on the food menu is any good except for the fries and buffalo burgers, but the beer menu is 10 pages long, and they do serve Magic Hat. If you want a wider array of ethnic food, try roaming around Adams Morgan, a trendy and somewhat gritty neighborhood located just north of Dupont.

The gay bar scene in Washington is so extensive that a single article couldn't hope to do it justice. (See sidebar for a brief listing.) Most addresses can be obtained either from the *Blade* or that free FunMap available at the Lambda Rising Bookstore.

Men's and women's bars tend to be either clustered around the Dupont Circle/17th Street area, or located deep in the heart of Southeast Washington. Southeast is not necessarily the safest neighborhood for drunk and disoriented tourists to wander late at night; if you go, take a cab there and back. Cab fares can be somewhat unpredictable in DC due to the fact that their pricing scheme is based on how many "zones" you cross during your journey, so be sure you have enough cash on hand to get home.

One thing noticeably absent from the Washington night scene is a decent mixed bar. If you are travelling in a group of both men and women, your best option is probably Chaos on 17th Street. This is the sort of dance bar where you are sure to hear "Dancing Queen" at least once during the evening. Wednesday is Women's Night; other nights, expect the crowd to be predominantly male.

Larry's Lounge, also a more or less mixed bar, is a more relaxed dive where gay and lesbian friends can go out for a drink and actually hear each other talk. If you're feeling really ambitious and have a set of wheels, consider a trip to the Hippo in nearby Baltimore, a dance bar with an enormous dance floor and a truly mixed crowd.

Of course, there are also many alternatives to the bar scene. Local theater featuring openly gay actors or gay-themed material is regularly publicized in the *Blade*, as are gallery showings, new films, and other social events.

In short, Washington has something for almost everyone; your greatest challenge will be deciding what to do first. ▼

the bar scene...

FOR THE MEN:

J.R.'s: Mostly a preppy, non-smoking crowd.

Badlands: J.R.'s goes out dancing. Techno and Top 40 mixes. Jeans and T-shirts.

Windows: Bar with a "living room" feel; older clientele (known among the younger whippersnappers as "God's waiting room").

Omega: Piano bar, a bit like Windows but more fun.

Fireplace: A little sleazy. Known as a place for white men seeking black men, or vice versa.

Mr. P's: Chicken coop. Next door to the Fireplace.

Velvet Nation, The Pump: Club kids, house music.

The Eagle: Leather.

Ziegfeld's: Strippers, drag show.

The Bachelor Mill, DC Elite: Predominantly African-American.

Remington's: Country & Western.

Wet: Puts on some sort of show involving showers and full frontal nudity. Described as "very sexual," "scary," and "probably illegal."

FOR WOMEN:

The Hung Jury: Dance bar. Entrance is through an unmarked door in a narrow alley, creating a sort of "speakeasy" ambiance. This may be understandable, given the fact that most of the clientele are probably using fake IDs to get in. The party doesn't usually start until at least 11:00 or 12:00.

Elan: Nice bar, \$6 cover, upscale but a bit hard to find.

The Phase: Good old-fashioned dyke bar with pool table.

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