

Best bar

Loft Lounge

They've got loft-y ambitions have these guys...

You have to be made of strong stuff to survive as a bar in the gay village. Take the bar on the corner of Bromsgrove Street for example - it's changed hands more often than an old lady carrying a bag of heavy shopping. Anyone remember Bunny'z? Shooters perhaps? The Loft Lounge on the other hand looks like a keeper. For starters they're already planning an extension for later in the year.

The Loft Lounge stepped into the limelight with a grand opening during Gay Pride 2006. While it was mightily annoying that this year turned out to be the first time entrance fees were charged for Birmingham Pride, having a brand spanking new bar to whinge over a few drinks in softened the blow a little. Mental note to drink here pre-parade next year - the procession goes right past the front windows.

Inspired by characteristics of New York loft living, comfort and style are key when it comes to the décor, complete with plasma TVs playing music videos non-stop (cue Madonna, Erasure and the Pussycat Dolls). The front of the bar opens out onto the street, giving an ideal opportunity to people-watch and pick out (or pick on) badly dressed passers-by who have clearly chosen comfort over style.

There are definitely more guys than gals in here, but it's not a bar that's too fussed about its male to female ratio so girls shouldn't be put off in the slightest.

The menu anticipates how busy the venue gets, discouraging fatties from taking up too much space by putting light sandwiches at the front of the stage. A moment on the lips, a lifetime on the hips, darling. There are a few burger-esque meals for those less concerned with the counting of calories. Or else fill up on Doritos and Mars Bars afterwards at the Tesco Extra across the road.

While this place is great for lounging your ass off in the daytime hours, it really excels as a pre-club venue, with many choosing to knock back a few here before heading off to The Nightingale or DV8. By far the most popular drink on the menu is the Beverly Hills Iced Tea, which is basically a Long Island Iced Tea but with the coke replaced by champagne. Here's to making everything Beverly Hills style we say. Those who went for the sandwich option earlier might want to take it easy though.

Well, that's what we think. The Loft Lounge is top of the gay pops in the Hurst Street area right about now. So let's all raise our glasses of Beverly Hills Champagne to an excellent newcomer to the scene... Beverly Hills Champagne? No, that's not quite right...

LOFT LOUNGE

143 Bromsgrove Street
(0121) 622 2444

www.theloftlounge.co.uk

☉ Sun-Thu, 11am-12am; Fri-Sat, 11am-2am

① Loft Lounge salad, £5.95

☉ £12.50

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