



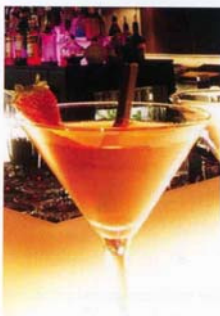
ALUMBRA

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Melbourne's Bars for stars



Melbourne really comes alive when the sun goes down. Its liberal licensing laws have created a 'round the clock' bar culture which Melburnians take full advantage of. After work you'll find clubs and bars filled with city workers. A little later the party goes or those looking for a quiet drink take over. Naturally this great demand has resulted in numerous offerings. Indeed it seems that every day a new club, hotel or nightclub appears on the scene. Some disappear quickly; others have become Melbourne icons, having survived the fickle pressure of being the 'in place to go'.

Naturally drinks of every style, flavour and colour can be found, from European beers to the latest cocktails and everything in between.

The types of places on offer are just as varied. You can dance the night away in the trendiest surroundings, recline on antique furniture or just have a beer in a hotel.

Melbourne also boasts one of Australia's largest concentrations of live music venues, where local and international bands cover everything from grunge rock and techno to jazz, blues and the avant-garde.

Many of the bars are located in the heart of Melbourne's hidden laneways, while the suburbs of Prahran, South Yarra, Brunswick and St Kilda are also renowned for their many offerings.

So where do you start? Like everything else in Melbourne, ask locals for their opinion and you'll get 20 suggestions. In many respects much depends on what you're looking for.

For some live music is a major feature, others prefer more intimate background music, or perhaps it's the liquid refreshment on offer which is the most important criteria!

One of the new additions is **Chill On** (296 Russell Street) where clear blue 'glacial' ice gives the venue an aura of coolness. It's like an Antarctic adventure every time you walk in, with the funky décor made of ice including the bar, seats, tables, decorations such as ice sculptures and even the 'glasses'. In addition,

the **Bling Bling**, a variation of the Long Island iced tea blending five top shelf spirits with Billecarte Champagne.

Also offering great views is the **Watermark Bar** (800 Bourke Street The Promenade Docklands). It's perched



Two permanent state-of-the-art projection screens dictate the two key exhibition spaces. The bar is perfect for a quiet beer with friends or an evening full of cocktail indulgence and eclectic tunes.

The Gin Palace (190 Little Collins Street) is regarded as one of the places to go for that perfect martini. Decorated with soft couches, floor-to-ceiling velvet drapes and secluded alcoves, it's also known for its many cocktails. This subtly decorated trendy bar is a favourite hangout for the slightly older more sophisticated party-goer.

Also known for its cocktails is **Tony Starr's Kitten Club Bar** (Level 1, 267 Little Collins Street).

The city bar is described as a throwback to the 50s and 60s clubs of Melbourne complete with a plush red and pink quilted love lounge! It's also renowned for its cocktails - there are more than 100 on the menu.

If you're interested in wine then the **Melbourne Supper Club** (Level 1, 161 Spring Street) could be the place. The bar, which attracts an eclectic clientele, has won awards for its wine list. Also worth a visit is **Jimmy Watson's Wine Bar** (333 Lygon Street, Carlton). This Melbourne bar started in 1935 and is still family run.

Jazz lovers flock to **Bennetts Lane Jazz Club** (25 Bennetts Lane). There are live performances every night. One of the challenges is finding the place, it's down a dead-end alley! But the end result is worth the search.

The same can be said about all of Melbourne's clubs and bars. And of course that the joy of having so many to pick from, you're sure to find one which suits your needs perfectly.



there's the sophisticated Funk Bar where you can get a great range of boutique beers.

Another new offering is **Alumbra** (Shed 9 Central Pier). Housed in a 1914 heritage-listed cargo shed, Alumbra is an authentic warehouse conversion with an opulent penthouse feel. Features include an illuminated bar, glass chandeliers and candy-striped carpet in pink and purple. It's surrounded on three sides by water and offers 360-degree views of the Docklands precinct, while a glass dance floor provides views down into the illuminated waters of Victoria Harbour. The extensive cocktail list features all the classics as well as exotic creations such as

right by the water and offers picturesque city views. Three bars ensure there are plenty of options.

Decor is a talking point at a number of bars including **The Croft Institute** (21-25 Croft Alley). Its said to boast Melbourne's largest private collection of laboratory apparatus. It's also renowned for its vodka and cocktails and is particularly popular with the late 20s urban chic.

Loop (23 Meyers Place) is a contemporary art-space/program set up within the social ambience of a bar backdrop. The backbone of Loop is the presentation of screen-based art: film, fine art video and new digital media.