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Epiqueerian
BY JENNY NGUYEN

Not Just a Man's World Anymore

So, my editor has been pestering me (OK, asking me kindly) to do a column on some new gay bars in town. Of course, since my not-so-glamorous run-in with a few haters at Scandals, I wasn't jumping at the chance to be thug-mugged by a bunch of bears. Lo and behold, I got nothin' but love from my brothas at these most recent man-ditions to Portland's queer scene.

Bent Liquid Lounge • 633 S.E. Powell Blvd.

Transitioning from a strip club to a gay bar might not sound like a far-fetched idea. But when it takes three lefts and a right at the north side of the Ross Island Bridge, you're betting against the odds. Good thing the fellas at Bent went all-in for this queer-centric karaoke bar. Folks from all persuasions meet here to mingle. Curvaceous stemware, a secluded patio, Black Eyed Peas on the flatscreens and a lone strip pole in a tiny dance floor all seem out of place alone, but together somehow they feel right. Tiny tummies beware: The nosh here will set you back a couple thousand calories, but it's well worth it. The quesadillas are ginormous and cheesy. The burgers are hand-formed, heaping and cooked to order. The fish 'n' chips are tender, perfectly seasoned and crisp. Although I am no queen, I was treated like royalty, and that, honey, is worth the trip.

Casey's Nightclub & Lounge • 610 N.W. Couch St.

This split-level lounge is the Eagle's chic older sister. From the maker of P-town's "masculine men's bar" comes this slimmer, well-groomed club 'tween the Pearl and Old Town. Gorgeous pool tables and retro seating provide a decent backdrop to the eye candy you can gorge on come Friday and Saturday nights. Starting Aug. 17, a weekly Friday event called Ruckus will provide a mean DJ-dancin' throwdown geared toward the gaydies. (Stole that term, thank you!) As for food and bevies, the drink here is on, but the ho-hum food is more or less pub grub. I predict once MAX renovations clear up, Casey's is gonna be bangin'. Watch for up-and-coming nightlife here, folks.

Jog's • 2512 N.E. Broadway

This not-so-new gay-owned club deserves a re-awakening. A neighborhood dive on the east side that features nine-ball tourneys and insane drink specials, Jog's is packin' one helluva package. Upon hearing mixed reviews about "friendliness," I was prepared for a brawl. Of course, they are as sweet as all get-out in this joint. A few buck-50 pints and the burger tastes out of this world. So does the iceberg lettuce salad that I would under "normal" circumstances denounce, but that ranch dressing is magically delicious. Not just for jock-cocks and boozers anymore, Jog's is definitely worth checking out. **10**

JENNY NGUYEN is willing to try almost anything once, but reserves the right to write about it later. Double-dog dare her by writing to epiqueerian@comcast.net.

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