

SHOCK ME

DIABLO'S DOWNTOWN LOUNGE: DEVIANT & DELICIOUS Story by Amanda Burhop • Photo by Todd Cooper

Although located in a somewhat dismal spot next to the Greyhound station, Diablo's Downtown Lounge certainly calls attention to itself. The glowing signs with commanding flames beg the attention of onlookers. If life were in black and white, the bar would look like a seedy nightspot straight out a film noir with glossy, wet streets, scantily clad women and tough guys with shifty eyes.

The come-hither vibe also recalls something out of a Pépé Le Peu cartoon: A strand of light-pink smoke floats out the front door, forming a hand with one long, slender finger that playfully invites you in.

These qualities are just some of the reasons Diablo's was voted one of the top 100 nightclubs and bars of 2007. The top 100 in the nation as selected by the editors of *Nightclub and Bar* magazine is not just a list of high-end watering holes. According to their website, the editors were striving to show a dynamic mixture of bars by basing their picks on the following criteria: annual revenues, marketing and advertising effectiveness, promotional expertise, uniqueness to market and food and beverage programs.

Diablo's, which is described on its website as a "relaxed atmosphere with a touch of big-city refinement," opened on Fat Tuesday of 1999. Owner Troy Slavkovsky moved from Portland to Eugene after managing bars and a skateboard/snowboard shop in Portland. "Eugene didn't have a theme bar," says a groggy Slavkovsky while in Las Vegas to receive his Top 100 honor — the only bar in Oregon to place. At the time of the bar's opening, Eugene was home to mostly college bars. Slavkovsky used his experience in Portland and other travels to breathe new life into Eugene's downtown.



Troy Slavkovsky

The bar is broken up in to two levels: Upstairs, at street level, is the lounge where people drink, play pool, get a bite to eat and on some nights listen to live music. Downstairs is the Diablo's portion of the bar. Although the name says it all, flaming walls, ubiquitous mirrors and black décor reinforce the bar's deviant side.

Diablo's packs its calendar with loads of live music (upcoming shows include The Trucks and The Dead Americans), but even the in-between days provide entertainment with an '80s night, hip hop night and karaoke, to name just a few. While Diablo's has proven itself one of the most active bars in Eugene, it's best known for special events like Fetish Night, Pajama Jam and the Trailer Trash Ball. "Diablo's Fetish Night is a wonderful mixture of fetish and BDSM," the event's MySpace page proudly states. For the event, Diablo's equips itself with a special dungeon area, spanking bench, bondage table and (gulp) overhead suspension points. Oh, and before I forget, you can also eat sushi off people — just look for Naked Sushi night.

So maybe it's not rowdy behavior you're after but just a good meal. The kitchen is open for lunch and stays open until 2:30 am (bless you, kitchen staff). In addition to being open late, Diablo's provides one of the most well-rounded bar food menus in town: salads, BLTs, French dips, fries, mozzarella sticks, fried wontons, crab and artichoke dip and soup. And if you ever overlooked Diablo's as a dinner hot spot, just consider this: veggie pasta in a roasted red pepper vodka sauce. Enough said.

At Diablo's the focus is always on nightlife. But Slavkovsky doesn't forget those who make the bar unique: the customers. So stop in, say hi and get naughty, drunk or just plain silly. ■

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