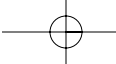




CHELSEA



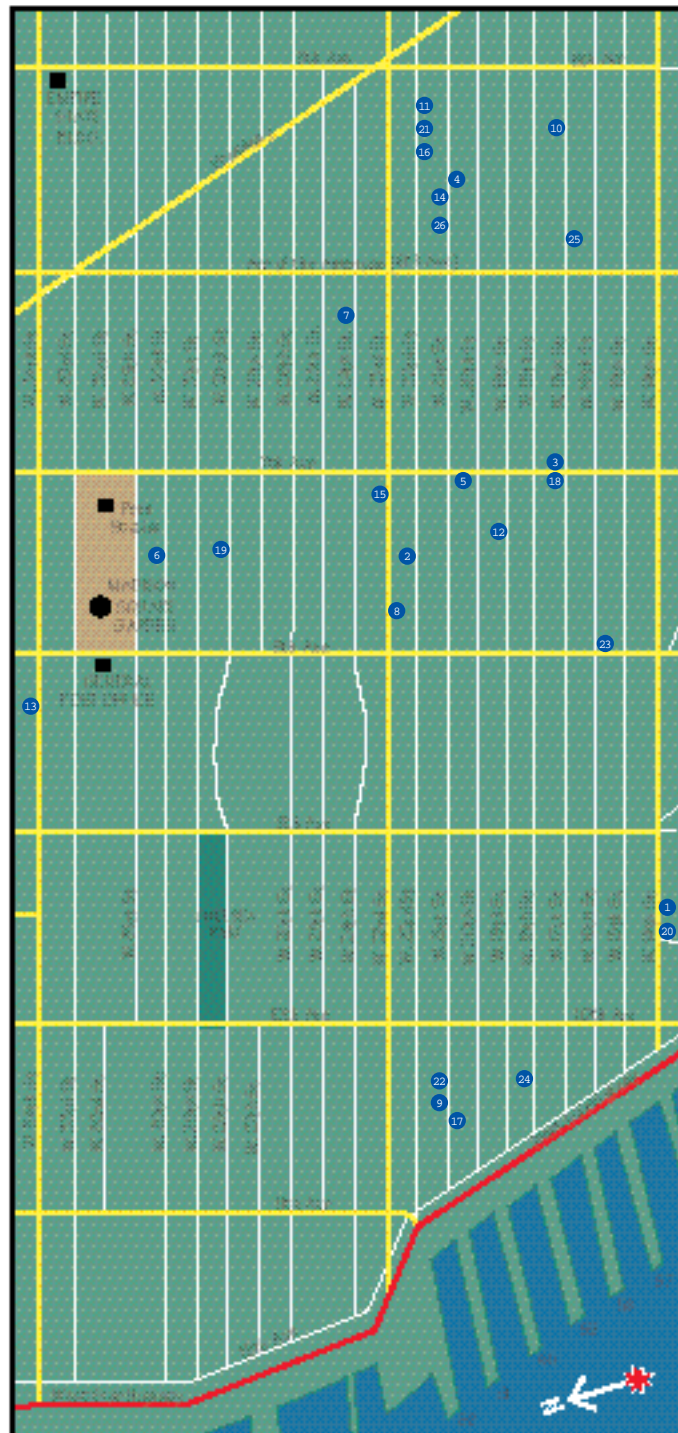


A steady stream of life over the past few years has poured over Chelsea's imposing industrial landscape and forced life into its lungs.

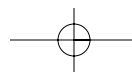
The massive warehouses near the piers of this former shipping district are still there, but many have been reincarnated as affordable housing. Wedged between the generic rows of factories and garages now stand trendy boutiques, galleries and sidewalk eateries. The ongoing settlement of Chelsea is the story of revitalization of a once dormant gray-scale corner of Manhattan.

Chelsea's newest residents are primarily gay. In fact, many of the popular night spots springing up in the Meat Packing District along the West Side Highway reflect this northward expansion of gay culture from the West Village. This dark, gritty area lends itself to the nightlife scene, as does the large number of vacant warehouses catering to dance halls, raves, cavernous galleries and sex clubs.

Residents used to look outside the neighborhood for entertainment, but now a home-grown scene thrives — and not just on weekends. Owners and operators of numerous Chelsea bars and eateries, recognizing the potential, are constantly improving on decor and ambiance to attract neighborhood regulars. The result — a prospering nightlife, with a growing population, offering numerous unique night-crawling opportunities.



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Type of Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
W -Sa 9pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
A,C,E to 14th Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx
baktun.com

Baktun

418 West 14th Street
Between 9th & Washington
(212) 206-1590

Located in the heart of the Meat Packing District down on 14th Street, Baktun is much more than the swanky Chelsea lounge it appears to be. Most nights the computer generated collaboration between the audio and video engineers is too enticing not to draw you in — techno-courtship between sight and sound, broadcast live over the Internet. The main lounge is the focus of the audio/visual assault, as the management has placed reduced speakers in the rear lounge making it more conducive for conversation.



Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
Daily 4pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Barracuda

275 West 22nd Street
Between 7th & 8th Avenue
(212) 645-8613

Sink into this dark, loud, plastique East Village-like gay dive lost on a residential Chelsea street and be ready for anything past midnight. Backpackers of all ages in polyester shirts order a beer from the bar with the aquarium, adjust the contents of their biker shorts, cruise around neon-lit tables and hit the pinball machine before gliding past the suggestively red pool table to the back lounge. Stay for a drag show, from Monday through Thursday, and watch the comical antics of Hedda Lettuce as 'she' quarrels with a love-sick groupie.

Type of Establishment
Restaurant/Lounge
Hours
Daily 24 hrs
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
American
Nearest Subway
1,2,3,9 to 14th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Cafeteria

119 7th Avenue @ 17th Street
(212) 414-1717

We don't remember cafeteria food ever looking or tasting this good. This old-school diner with a pre-millennium make over and moderately priced menu is chic Americana. The patrons in the Zen-like lounge downstairs should clue you in to the type of scene this place serves up. It's open 24 hours and it's the 'in' crowd's new hangout. Instead of milk this place serves up a mean martini. Don't forget your lunch money and don't forget to make reservations, dinner is a mad house.

Cheetah

12 West 21st Street
Between 5th & 6th Avenue
(212) 206-7770



"The cheetah is the fastest animal in the world and we wanted this place to represent a club in motion," said General Manager Mitchell Stephens of this Chelsea nightclub. Let's just hope this place never loses its spots because it's definitely one of the hottest in New York. As predicted, everything upstairs is covered in the leopard's signature pattern. The dance floor is a little on the tight side, but you can deal. Mariah Carey swears by the place and a number of other celebrities have been spotted (pardon the pun) in the elevated booths or downstairs chillin' in the lounge.

Ciel Rouge

176 7th Avenue
Between 20th & 21st Street
(212) 929-5542

Pre-Perestroika Moscow or Old Havana? The compañeros running this cocktail lounge seem to keep a secret under the red sky, where everything, from the velvet curtain to the tablecloth (with cigarette burns) and the waiter's jacket, is red. Enigmatic wall and ceiling paintings, ancient versions of La Bamba and R&B imply nostalgia from another era. An eclectic, unpretentious crowd of insiders and passers-by enjoy real, long and smoky conversations. Listen to piano on Tuesdays and accordion on Thursdays while slurping the famous Caipirinhas, and if you're lucky, they'll open the cozy garden.

Downtime

251 West 30th Street
Between 7th & 8th Avenue
(212) 695-2747

If you ask a manager what type of music is played at Downtime he will answer simply and accurately "everything." The festive murals that depict a variety of musical scenes are as eclectic as the mix of up-and-coming bands that play everything from rock to reggae. Everyone's ensured a great view of the band even if you're sitting at the bar. The live music venue has transformed its mezzanine into a lounge and the upstairs has a game room (check out the X-Files pinball machine) and a dance floor filled with

Type of Establishment
Club
Hours
Daily 10pm-4am
Closed Wed.
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
N,R to 23rd St
Credit Cards
All Major
\$20 Cover

Type of Establishment
Lounge
Hours
Su-Th 7pm-2am
F-Sa 7pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Type of Establishment
Bar/Live Music
Hours
M-Th 5pm-2am
F-Sa 5pm-4am
Su 7pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 28th Street

Type of Establishment
Lounge
Hours
M-W 6pm-2am
Th-Sa 6pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Dusk
147 West 24th Street
Between 6th & 7th Avenue
(212) 924-4490

Slightly off the beaten path, Dusk is a laid-back neighborhood Chelsea lounge more than anything else. You'll find a mixed crowd, though leaning towards more gay than straight on some nights. Remodeled annually, this year's version is a Miami art deco approach done in a deep shade of blue complemented by an entire wall of cut glass. The layout at Dusk is long and sleek and with plenty of lounge sofas to fall into. DJs most nights spin the right songs to complete that essential laid-back lounge atmosphere. Note: Check out the red-light bathrooms with one-way glass looking out into the bar area.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 12pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
Eclectic
American
Nearest Subway
C,E,1,9 to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

East of 8th
254 West 23rd Street
Between 7th & 8th Avenue
(212) 352-0075

When the trendier places have overstayed their welcome and people tire of battling bitchy doormen, East of 8th will be here waiting for all of you prodigal children to come home. The menu for this gay friendly bar/restaurant is largely American fare, but the chef has been known to throw in an occasional twist. It's a shame that the only view the bay windows offer are of a Krispy Kreme doughnut shop, but the stunning open-air garden downstairs, complete with palm trees, a mini-fountain and a pond filled with goldfish, is perfect for a midsummer night's dream.

Type of Establishment
Club
Hours
Th-F 6pm-4am
Sa 10pm-5am
Su 6pm-2am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
C,E to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
MC, V

El Flamingo
547 West 21st Street
Between 10th & 11th Avenue
(212) 243-2121

Saturday nights at El Flamingo are muy, muy caliente. Leave the Macarena at home with your grandmother. Here, suave hombres and sexy mujeres get down and dirty to the infectious music played by live salsa, meringue and Latin jazz bands. After a night full of spins and dips you will leave here drenched and screaming, "Olé!" If you have two left feet or are unfamiliar with the patented roll of the hips and the quick shuffle steps don't fret, dance lessons are offered from 4-6 p.m. for \$10 and you get free admission for the night.

Flowers
21 West 17th Street
Between 5th & 6th Avenue
(212) 691-8888

Roses, tulips, lilies you name it — flowers are in full bloom at this Chelsea restaurant. Some of the floral arrangements are a little gauche, but this split-level still has a nice French provincial feel to it, particularly the dining room modeled after a barn with beautiful stained glass fixtures. The food is American with Mediterranean influences. If you grow weary of the women in cardigans dutifully wrapped around their shoulders and men in perfectly ironed J. Crew khakis, head upstairs to the garden and catch your breath.

Fred's Beauty Bar
4 West 22nd Street
Between 5th & 6th Avenue
(212) 463-0888

The beauty in this bar, named after a discontinued Cuban cigar from the 20s, is found in the glass blown chandeliers resembling a festive bouquet of colorful balloons. Manager/ Chef Sui Lon Chon and her amicable staff are an absolute delight. They fill this gigantic loft space with a whole lot of warmth and great energy. The mezzanine overlooking the main floor seats 50 comfortably and houses an antique shoe shine stand that is open for business. Coming from its newly renovated kitchen is an eclectic menu with Persian, African and Asian influences.

G Lounge
223 West 19th Street
Between 7th & 8th Avenue
(212) 929-1085

"G" as in ... Gorgeous ... Gregarious ... Gay? A hundred pairs of eyes belonging to savagely tanned, gym-chiseled, protein-shake physiques scrutinize every body that enters this coolly designed after-work locale of gay professionals in designer t-shirts. You can mingle and check out the scene around the bustling circular bar, relax in the lounge area with a frozen Cosmopolitan, or sip an espresso in the back. Tolerable disco decibels, dim lights and a solid happy hour make this a popular meeting spot before hitting the clubs. "In gay bars, the attention is usually on a TV, here it's on people," said a 23-year-old playwright who had just been s

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 12pm-1am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
American/
Mediterranean
Nearest Subway
F L to 14th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
M-F 5pm-4am
Sa-Su 7pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Persian/Asian
Nearest Subway
N,R to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
Daily 4pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 18th Street
Credit Cards
MC, V

Type of Establishment
Live Music
Hours
Varies Daily
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
A,C,E to 34th Street
Credit Cards
All Major
Tickets only

Hammerstein Ballroom
311 West 34th Street
Between 8th & 9th Avenue
(212) 564-4882

The historic Manhattan Opera House, first built by Oscar Hammerstein at the turn of the century, has been turned into the multi-functional Hammerstein Ballroom featuring everything from concerts to fashion shows and industry parties. Hammerstein designed all of his theaters himself with a focus on acoustics, offering sound quality rare among halls this size. The Ballroom includes over 20,000 square feet of space with two balconies and a stage. A recent face lift puts the Hammerstein at the head of the pack at a time when many large-scale NYC venues are in desperate need of a make over.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 5:30pm-2am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
Southern
Nearest Subway
1,9,F to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Justin's
31 West 21st Street
Between 5th & 6th Avenue
(212) 352-0599

Rap mogul Sean "Puff Daddy" Combs already has the record industry on lock down. So what does he decide to do next? Open a soul food restaurant in Chelsea. The bistro hosts New York's finest bes and wannabes. Puffy's labelmates, athletes, models and movie stars can all be found in the high-backed booths feasting on smothered chicken, collard greens and macaroni. If you're not in the mood for dinner, hang out up front at the bar. It can be a bit of a meat market, but a relatively harmless one.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 4pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
French
Nearest Subway
C,E,1,9 to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

La Maison de Sade
206 West 23rd Street
Between 7th & 8th Avenue
(212) 727-8642

The podium, shaped like a red leather rib-crushing corset, is only a hint of what you'll find in this painfully pleasurable S&M restaurant. La Maison de Sade serves up French cuisine, but who can concentrate on food when a vampish dominatrix in knee-high boots, fishnet stockings and a leather teddy screams, "harder, harder, hurt me baby..." Don't bring your Bible study group here and don't leave without purchasing a souvenir leather paddle. What's that old saying? No pain, no gain.

Lola
30 West 22nd Street
Between 5th & 6th Avenue
(212) 675-6700

Lying on a plush bed of black beans, wearing a headdress made of crisp plantains, Lola invites you to dive in and devour. But like a fine wine that's been sitting for decades, you must savor her slowly. Take your time, soak up the jovial energy of the dining room, and tap your feet to the infectious beats cranking from the R&B funk band in the front room. The psychic, reading palms and tarot cards (\$25), predicted your future as soon as you walked in. "You will fall in love with Lola and her famous fried chicken."

Lot 61
550 West 21st Street
Between 10th & 11th Avenue
(212) 243-6555

Though Lot 61 came from humble beginnings (it used to be a truck stop), like most of its patrons it has moved up in the world. Dressed in everything Vogue said was worth buying this season, old Upper East Side money and downtown nouveau riche mingle over smoked salmon wraps and tuna summer rolls. The usual suspects have dubbed this one of 'the' places to be ... at least for the time being. But if you're not a part of the glitterati or can't do a good impersonation, don't bother coming — you might feel like a fat girl at home on prom night.

Merchants NY
112 7th Avenue @ 17th Street
(212) 366-7267

Residents and corporate-types come for the famous martinis (try the dirty martini with pepper and olive juice), eclectic wines after work, and dinner at the outdoor cafe on busy Seventh Avenue or the mezzanine overlooking the bar, while others get a little closer downstairs on hand-made sofas near the fireplace. Ibrahim Merchant, who also owns two Merchants uptown, has the Eastern sense for making stressed-out Westerners (especially women) relax. Warm colors, soothing mandala pictures, attentive service all in a sophisticated, stylish yet romantic and unpretentious setting. It gets packed after 5:30 p.m. and there are lines on the weekend.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
T-Sa 6pm-11:30pm
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Eclectic American
Nearest Subway
N,R to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
M-Th 6pm-2am
F-Sa 6pm-3am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
American Tapas
Nearest Subway
C,E to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant/Lounge
Hours
Daily 11:30am-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
American
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 18th Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
Th-Sa 10pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to 28th Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Mimosa
215 West 28th Street
Between 7th & 8th Avenue
(212) 643-1199

DJs spin and live entertainers perform salsa, meringue, house and R&B for a packed crowd most Friday and Saturday nights, bringing a Latin flavor to Chelsea on the weekends. This spot features two floors with music and lights, a fully stocked bar, two hi-tech DJ booths, four TV monitors and a professional light show. A restaurant by day, the tables are taken out and the entire first floor becomes a dance floor.

Type of Establishment
Club
Hours
T-Su 10pm-5am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
A,C,E to 14th Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Mother
432 West 14th Street @ Washington
(212) 366-5680

There's no better place to have a coming out party than here at Mother ... and we're not talking about an old-fashioned cotillion. Most of the regular soirées held here are very gay friendly, particularly Clit Club, the Friday night lesbian party that's been around for eight years. The Click-n-Drag party (how clever) on Saturday nights mixes a spoonful of technology, with a smidgen of rubber and a cup of leather. You know, all those fetishes that make the world go 'round.

Type of Establishment
Club
Hours
W 5pm-3am
Th-Sa 5pm-4am
Su 9pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Creole
Nearest Subway
N,R,F to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Ohm
16 West 22nd Street
Between 5th & 6th Avenue
(212) 229-2000

Is this amalgam of high-tech spaceship, Roman coliseum and shopping mall the ultimate club experience? Droning house and techno music resounds in the sleek, unadorned galaxy divided by oversized curtains, where a relentless party crowd of twenty-something professionals in black mingles with drinks in their hands at the front bar and the elevated lounge area, dines in endlessly long, fabric-upholstered couches at the gallery restaurant, and dances itself into illumination on the expansive dance floor in front of a coolly lit, glass-tiled heaven's gate that must lead to Ohm (or was it Nirvana?)

Opera
539 West 21st Street
Between 10th & 11th Avenue
(212) 229-1618

Did they have basketball players, leggy supermodels or jolly green giants in mind when they furnished this place? The custom-made couches are not only exquisite one-of-a-kinds, but they're colossal and comfortable. Reminiscent of furniture from Alice in Wonderland you can't help but feel like a Lilliputian when you sit in the cheetah-skin covered throne. The only things small here are the gym bunnies in tight black minis and even tighter black blouses that serve up rather expensive cocktails. But Opera attracts an older more upscale crowd, the type of crowd that can afford to pay \$10-\$15 for a drink.

Rebar
127 8th Avenue @ 16th Street
(212) 627-1680

If you're looking for the hippest spot in town, Rebar is not it. The crowd doesn't sparkle, there's no real scene, just a roomful of everyday people dancing to good music. But what's wrong with that, does every place in New York have to be stellar? No. The only cool thing in Rebar is the floor made out of beautiful mosaic tiles, but again, who needs cool when they're groovin'. No attitude, no delusions of grandeur, just a fun-loving and unpretentious good time.

Roxy
515 West 18th Street
Between 10th & 11th Street
(212) 645-5156

When you grow tired of New York's ubiquitous lounge scene, head over to the legendary Roxy — it's one of the few clubs left standing from the 80s. With a huge dance floor (the largest in the city), strobe lights and disco balls, Saturday night is gay, gay, gay. "Actually it's about the largest gay nightclub in the city and probably the largest in the country," said owner Gene Dinineo. Voguing to the house beats of DJ Victor Calderone (he does Madonna's mixes), drag queens abound (approximately 2,000 strong) but everyone's welcome and everyone comes. So just shut up and dance.

Type of Establishment
Club
Hours
W-Sa 11pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
C,E to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Type of Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
T-Sa 8pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
A,C,E to 14th Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Type of Establishment
Club
Hours
F-Sa 11pm-7am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
A,C,E to 14th Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only
\$20 Cover

Type of Establishment
Club/Lounge
Hours
Daily 4pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,2,3,9 to 14th Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Splash
50 West 17th Street
Between 5th & 6th Avenue
(212) 691-0073

For anybody sick of Chelsea's attitude, head down to Splash, a more friendly, relaxed and not-as-dressed-up gay club. Refreshingly, they are female friendly too, and plenty of women appear to favor it as a result. The dance floor is packed on Saturday night, so you can flee to the pool room or to the bar downstairs. More international and touristy than some of the gay bars in Chelsea. The drinks are cheap, the music good (anything from disco to 80s to current dance), and the almost-naked male go-go dancers provide live entertainment.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Live Music
Hours
Daily 12pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
Cajun
Nearest Subway
N,R,F to 23rd Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Tramps
51 West 21st Street
Between 5th & 6th Avenue
(212) 727-7788

One of the few music dives in New York that remains as unassuming and genuine as a small town music festival. Enjoy yourself just the way you are, in 80s jeans and sneakers, cowboy hat or hippie garb, to live Cajun, country, funk, jazz and swing bands. Single women will politely be asked to dance, and a generous, undivided space allows those who found each other to do so from the stage all the way to the beautiful, classy wood bar whose cast iron railing reminisces of old Western movies, swirling past loosely set tables where some may stop for fine Cajun food and a beer.