



# CHELSEA

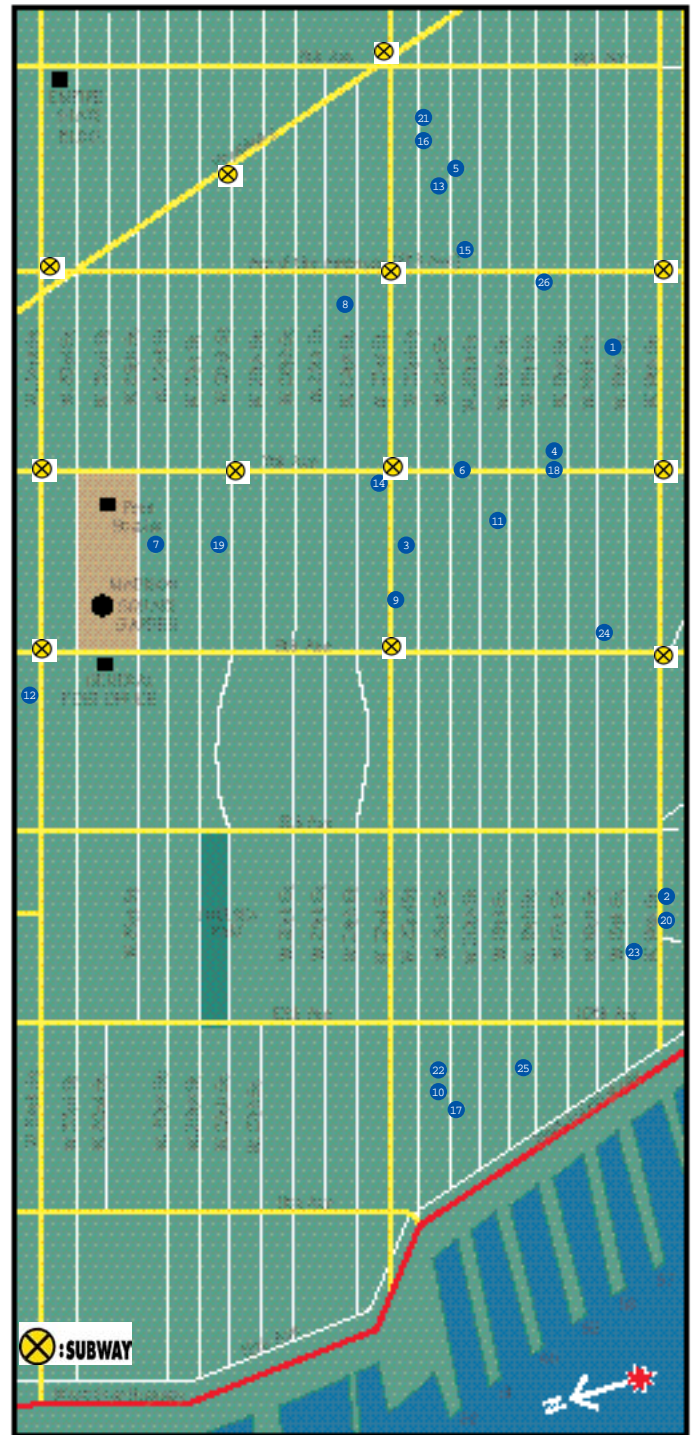


*The settlement of Chelsea is an ongoing urban success story of the revitalization of a long dormant gray-scale corner of Manhattan.*

Just north of Greenwich Village, Chelsea is bound by 14th Street, the Hudson River, 34th Street and 5th Avenue. Wedged between rows of imposing factories and garages now stand trendy boutiques, galleries and sidewalk eateries. 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.

The secret of Chelsea's success lies in the entrepreneurial spirit, collective identity and raw energy of this wave of settlers that has washed over the neighborhood over the last decade — most of them young gay professionals. In fact, many of the popular nightspots springing up in the Meat Packing District along the West Side Highway reflect this northward expansion of gay culture from the West Village.

Whereas Chelsea's residents once turned to districts outside the neighborhood for entertainment, there now thrives a vibrant home-grown nightlife scene — 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. These efforts are now paying off as nightlife in Chelsea continues to flourish, offering numerous unique night-crawling opportunities.



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Type of Establishment Bar/Restaurant  
 Hours F-Sa 1pm-11pm Su-Th 6pm-11pm  
 Drink Prices Expensive  
 Food Continental  
 Nearest Subway A,C,E,F to 14th Street  
 Credit Cards AmEx, V, MC

**147**  
 147 West 15th Street  
 Between 6th & 7th Avenues  
 212.929.5000

Though Cliff Williams may claim his expertise lies in business, with one look at the interior of this uptown-meets-downtown restaurant it's clear the dapper owner has an equal flare for interior design. Located in an old firehouse, the space includes a downstairs lounge and a sunken private dining room — making the best use of the split-level architecture. A gorgeous, mahogany bar beckons the young professionals who stop here to unwind after-work and diners are treated to the sounds of live jazz and R&B.

Type of Establishment Bar/Lounge  
 Hours Th-Sa 10pm-4am T- W 9pm-3am  
 Drink Prices Moderate  
 Food N/A  
 Nearest Subway A,C,E to 14th Street  
 Credit Cards AmEx, V, MC  
 www.baktun.com

**Baktun**  
 418 West 14th Street  
 Between 9th Avenue & Washington  
 212.206.1590

Baktun is more than just a lounge, it's an experience! The club is separated by a giant, two-sided screen where live projectionists and multimedia artists cut and mix images similar to the way a DJ manipulates sound. On one side of the screen, hip twentysomethings mingle in a lounge atmosphere, while on the other side dancers move to the beat-heavy sounds of jungle and house amid a backdrop of stainless-steel walls that create an industrial feel. Feel like staying home, Baktun's web page often broadcasts live performances online.

**Barracuda**  
 275 West 22nd Street  
 Between 7th & 8th Avenues  
 212.645.8613

With an interior that's as eye-catching as its patrons, it's easy to tell why this gay bar tucked away on a residential street is a neighborhood favorite. Barracuda's distractions are numerous: neon-lit tables, a fish tank behind the bar, pin-ball and a room full of well-groomed twentysomethings mingling into the night. The back lounge — decorated in a 60s mod theme complete with a cheeky neon sign that flashes "Peep Show Private Booths Live Shows" — also offers a drag show two nights a week (Mon/Thur) hosted by the divine Hedda Lettuce.

**Cafeteria**  
 119 7th Avenue @ 17th Street  
 212.414.1717

If you think the name of this trendy eatery sounds like an invitation to wax nostalgic about the days of cold beans served by overweight lunch ladies, forget about it! Walking into this 'in' spot where buff Chelsea boys and refugees from the downtown party circuit crowd the tables is like discovering an impromptu fashion show. Calling ahead for dinner reservations is a good bet, but if you get 'weight-listed' you can always sashay your way to the basement, affectionately referred to by staff as the 'love lounge,' and sip drinks alongside trendites in a setting straight out of 2001.

**Cheetah**  
 12 West 21st Street  
 Between 5th & 6th Avenues  
 212.206.7770

If you're looking for the big city club experience, this two-tiered dance hall is definitely it. If you can make it past the cranky doormen, you'll find yourself in club heaven. Leopard-skin booths overlook the crowded dancefloor where beautiful young bodies twist and turn to the mechanized beats emanating from the ample sound system. The downstairs lounge plays sleek R&B beneath a swirling mirrorball. They say jewels shine brightest when placed in front of velvet, and with numerous red velvet couches and booths, the beautiful club-goers sparkle like diamonds.



**Ciel Rouge**  
 176 7th Avenue  
 Between 20th & 21st Streets  
 212.929.5542

Toutes les rouges would be a more appropriate name for this cozy, unpretentious lounge where everything from the tableclothes to the walls are, well, red. Communist red? Devilish red? "Flattering red," says Fernando, the manager, who is taken by the soothing effect the color has on people. Live music is offered during the week, including an accordion player on Wednesdays who accentuates the Eastern European feel, and the drink menu is one of the best in the neighborhood. In addition to mint juleps and Pisco Sours, the caipirinha, a Brazilian sugarcane rum, is a must try.

Type of Establishment Bar/Restaurant  
 Hours Daily 24hrs  
 Drink Prices Moderate  
 Food American  
 Nearest Subway 1,2,3,9 to 14th Street  
 Credit Cards AmEx, V, MC, Disc

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

Type of Establishment Lounge  
 Hours F-Sa 7pm-4am Su-Th 7pm-2am  
 Drink Prices Moderate  
 Food N/A  
 Nearest

Type of Establishment  
Bar/Live Music  
Hours  
F-Sa 5pm-4am  
T-Th 5pm-1am  
Drink Prices  
Expensive  
Food  
N/A  
Nearest Subway  
1,2,3,9 to Penn Station  
Credit Cards  
AmEx, V, MC

**Downtime**

251 West 30th Street  
Between 7th & 8th Avenues  
212.695.2747

The motto for this live music venue seems to be 'diversify and conquer.' Downtime plays host to a rotating lineup of blues, roots rock and reggae bands. The talent showcase features everything from hip-hop to gospel. There's also a second floor game room/ lounge where DJs spin while the crowd chooses between the adrenaline rush of dancing or playing a video game. The decor, large music-themed murals adorning the walls and a small stage, also plays a key role in the club's appeal by setting the perfect vibe for live music.

**Dusk**

147 West 24th Street  
Between 6th & 7th Avenues  
212.924.4490

This neighborhood lounge takes an interesting approach to the nightlife scene. Publicity shy, Dusk doesn't advertise, run promotions or even hang a sign outside to attract potential customers. "It's a hidden gem," the bartender proudly announces. As a result, the crowd is mostly local, including professionals and music industry people who work in nearby offices. A newly signed act can often be heard reverberating off the pastel blue, cut-glass walls that create an art deco feel. Providing you can find it, Dusk is a good place to unwind with a stiff martini after work.

**East of Eighth**

254 West 23rd Street  
Between 7th & 8th Avenues  
212.352.0075

Like a beacon in the night, East of Eighth is a welcome respite from the overwhelming hipness of Chelsea. Open for nearly three years, the restaurant has built up a loyal following through the artistry of chef Marty Markovitz — not to mention its upscale, but friendly environment. The second-floor dining room, filled with opulent red mahogany, overlooks the busy street outside. The best view in this gay-friendly restaurant, though, is within the outdoor garden. Diners nibble on dishes from the largely American menu while a mini-fountain bubbles up from the ground, making the numerous trees and plants shimmer under the lights.

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

Type of Establishment  
Bar/Restaurant  
Hours  
Sa-Su 11am-4am  
M-F 12pm-4am  
Drink Prices  
Moderate  
Food  
Eclectic American  
Nearest

**El Flamingo**

547 West 21st Street  
Between 10th & 11th Avenues  
212.243.2121

If this two-floored, old-school club looks like it could've been the setting of a movie, that's because it was. The club, featured prominently in *Celebrity* and *Dance With Me*, remains one of the most popular spots in a neighborhood already overflowing with danceclubs. Friday nights are home to a long running hip-hop party with DJ Stretch Armstrong and Saturday is salsa night, with El Flamingo often hosting off-Broadway plays and musicals. All are advised to dress sharply, lest they look less-fabulous than the stars who have graced the red-carpeted floor.

**G Lounge**

223 West 19th Street  
Between 7th & 8th Avenues  
212.929.1085

"It's all about the people here," says the buff young server at the juice bar — and, indeed it is. No drag queens spouting double entendres, no TVs showing Streisand movies. Just the brightest, wealthiest and most attractive professionals in the gay community chatting away and drinking a rainbow-colored assortment of mixed drinks. The bar's design is unique and nearly indescribable, though classic and certainly understated. The emphasis here is on conversation, making it a great place to wind down after work. As one patron said, "G Lounge is the 'in' bar right now."

**Hammerstein Ballroom**

311 West 34th Street  
Between 8th & 9th Avenues  
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 with a focus on acoustics, offering exceptional sound quality. The Ballroom includes over 20,000 square feet of space with two balconies and a stage. The Hammerstein is 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  
Club  
Hours  
Th-F 6pm-4am  
Sa 10pm-5am  
Su 6pm-2am  
Drink Prices  
Expensive  
Food  
N/A  
Nearest Subway  
C,E to 23rd Street  
Credit Cards  
MC, V

Type of Establishment  
Bar  
Hours  
Daily 4pm-4am  
Drink Prices  
Moderate  
Food  
N/A  
Nearest Subway  
1,9 to 18th Street  
Credit Cards  
Cash Only  
ATM Available

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

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar/Restaurant

Hours  
Daily 5:30pm-  
2am

Drink Prices  
Expensive

Food  
Southern

Nearest  
Subway  
1,9 to  
23rd Street

Credit Cards  
AmEx, V, MC

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar/Restaurant

Hours  
Daily 4pm-  
4am

Drink Prices  
Moderate

Food  
French

Nearest  
Subway  
C,E,1,9 to  
23rd Street

Credit Cards  
All Major  
Th-Sa \$5  
Cover

Type of  
Establishment  
Club

Hours  
F-Sa 10pm-  
6am Su  
9:30pm-4am  
W-Th 10pm-  
5am

Drink Prices  
Expensive

**Justin's**

31 West 21st Street  
212.352.0599

The Mogul Handbook — Rule No.1: No mogul is complete without his own restaurant. And so it came to pass that impresario Puff Daddy, following in the footsteps of such showbiz heavies as DeNiro, Willis and Schwarzenegger, created Justin's, an eatery named after his son and specializing in Caribbean and Southern dishes. The chances of the Family doing a pre-dinner rap are slim, but live entertainment is offered in the form of Monday night jazz. And Tuesdays, which feature an industry night, allow up-and-comers to mingle at the snake-shaped bar with already-made-its. Reservations are recommended.

**La Maison de Sade**

206 West 23rd Street  
Between 7th & 8th Avenues  
212.727.8642

Where else but this S&M-themed restaurant can you order grilled atlantic salmon and a spanking. Guiliani's laws have tamed the Chelsea eatery somewhat, but the iron bars and giant metal rack in the entrance should tip you off that you're going to get more than a meal here. The staff puts on two shows nightly (8 p.m. and 10 p.m.) and the second Sunday of every month offers alternating performances by the Baroness and Boy David — the latter promising bondage and erotic torture, among other things. The vibe is more high camp than anything sinister, but frightened Midwesterners have been known to run for the exits.

**Limelight**

47 West 20th Street @ 6th Avenue  
212.807.7780

New York's saints o'de scene, marching within this born-again sanctuary, get cleansed by waterfalls precipitating down a TV tower, as a dildo-waving nun blesses the crowd before leaping into the smoky parish. The scene is lit by dancing strobe lights flickering through wafer screens hovering above blue baby-doll dancers as drummers preach funk, Latin, house, drum 'n' bass. Climb up the stairs, cross yourself in front of Saint Cecilia, whisper the password to the VIP lounge, and move about Alien-designer Gyger's realm, from Sphinxes to neo-hippies' psychedelic tunes.

**Lola**

30 West 22nd Street  
Between 5th & 6th Avenues  
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 @ 11th Avenue  
212.243.6555

This Page Six favorite encapsulates everything a culturally starved Midwesterner dreams Manhattan to be. Reflecting Chelsea's burgeoning art scene, celebrities and media types sip \$12 martinis and flaunt their social status in a beautiful, warehouse space designed and decorated by a leading team of artists, including artist Damien Hirst. Because of its remote location (only a stones throw from the Hudson), Lot 61 is more of a destination than a pit-stop, but if you're not sure you can keep pace with the glitterati until dawn, the Monday night parties are a good chance to preview the scene.

**Merchants NY**

112 7th Avenue @ 17th Street  
212.366.7267

The role this famous establishment plays within the neighborhood is as diverse as the crowd that hangs out here. Just as the outdoor patio or downstairs lounge, complete with a fireplace and sofas, can take the edge off of a long day, this stylish bar is a perfect place to order nachos and scream at the TV during a Knicks game. You can mingle with the Wall Street types, locals and displaced artists from Abraham Merchant's other establishment like the Art Bar, try the famous martinis and the eight variations of tequila offered or order dinner and casually watch the scene from the mezzanine.

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar/Restaurant

Hours  
Th-Su 6pm-  
12am M-W  
6pm-11pm

Drink Prices  
Moderate

Food  
Eclectic  
American

Nearest  
Subway  
N,R to  
23rd Street

Credit Cards  
AmEx, V, MC  
Diners

www.lolary.com

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar/Lounge

Hours  
M-Th 6pm-2am  
F-Sa 6pm-3am

Drink Prices  
Expensive

Food  
International

Nearest  
Subway  
C,E to  
23rd Street

Credit Cards  
All Major

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar/Restaurant  
/ Lounge

Hours  
Daily 11:30am-  
4am

Drink Prices  
Moderate

Food  
American

Nearest  
Subway  
1,9 to 18th  
Street

Credit Cards  
AmEx, V, MC,  
Diners

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar

Hours  
Th-Sa 10pm-  
4am W 5pm-  
11pm

Drink Prices  
Moderate

Food  
N/A

Nearest  
Subway  
1,9 to  
28th Street

Credit Cards  
Cash Only

**Mimosa**  
215 West 28th Street  
212.643.1199

Walking into Mimosa (which serves as a restaurant by day) on a Saturday night is like being an unwitting contestant in a nightlife version of *Let's Make a Deal*. Basically a club for hire, depending on the promoter's skills the dancefloor may be filled with Manhattan's finest or nearly vacant. Just like the old game show, the risk is all yours. When it backfires it can make for a long evening, but with two large dancefloors, a hi-tech sound system and a light show, when the risk pays off, Mimosa is the perfect backdrop for a night of high-energy dancing.

**Mother**  
432 West 14th Street @ Washington  
212.366.5680

Is Mother decadent? "Not decadent," says the manager. "Extravagant." He's right, the folks who come to this gay club, located in the heart of the Meat Packing District, take nightlife seriously. Popular weekly parties such as Friday's girl-themed Clit Club, Saturday's cyberfetish event (Click 'n' Drag) and the long running Jackie 60 on Tuesday nights, draw an eclectic mix of social over-achievers and flamboyant nightlifers. Like a good mother should, the club embraces its patrons with open arms, loving them unconditionally and providing a haven for their over-the-top fabulousity.

**Ohm**  
16 West 22nd Street  
Between 5th & 6th Avenues  
212.229.2000

As Ohm's media kit suggests — 70 foot serpentine bar, 30,000 watt sound system, laser and track lights for dancing, world-class chefs... This Chelsea nightclub is quite possibly the ultimate in New York nightlife. Attracting a mixture of black clad glitterati, party circuit veterans and visiting celebrities, this two-floored, velvet-drenched 'Parthenon-meets-2001' danceclub exemplifies the vanguard of Manhattan scene and style. Throw on your best black ensemble, give a final look in the mirror and smile pretty for the doorman because a night at Ohm could just change your life — well, not really, but you'll have one hell of a time anyway.

**Opera**  
539 West 21st Street  
Between 10th & 11th Avenues  
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 upscale crowd, the type that can afford \$10-\$15 for a drink.

**Passerby**  
436 West 15th Street  
Between 9th & 10th Avenues  
212.206.7321

Co-owned and designed by well known Manhattan gallerist Gavin Brown, this tiny bar serves as a clubhouse for the Chelsea gallery scene and various clued-in downtowners. Though questions about the bar's seemingly half-finished interior would insult some, Brown and company take it as a sign of success as their goal was to create a mixture of highs and lows. A meticulously designed dancefloor lies underneath a \$6 chair and a hand-sculpted bar overlooks an exposed air-conditioner. The crowd is protective of their little hideaway, treating Passerby with the care of a loving relationship, and not just some meaningless fling.

**Rebar**  
127 8th Avenue @ 16th Street  
212.627.1680

You won't find European leggy models in slinky dresses at this danceclub, nor will you find power brokers who have made it big. Instead, you'll find everyday folks (as everyday as this city gets) sprung from the working week and losing themselves as they groove on the mosaic-tiled dancefloor. But what's wrong with that? Celebrity attitudes dispelled, you may actually meet someone here instead of just oggling from afar. Check out Wild Child Saturdays when the club hosts one of New York's longest hip-hop parties and crowd favorite DJ Arson spins a solid mix of old school and current tracks.

Type of  
Establishment  
Club

Hours  
W-Sa 11pm-  
4am

Drink Prices  
Expensive

Food  
N/A

Nearest  
Subway  
C,E to  
23rd Street

Credit Cards  
AmEx, V, MC

Type of  
Establishment  
Club

Hours  
Daily 10pm-  
4am

Drink Prices  
Expensive

Food  
N/A

Nearest  
Subway  
A,C,E to  
14th Street

Credit Cards  
MC, V, AmEx

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar

Hours  
Daily 6pm-  
2am

Drink Prices  
Expensive

Food  
N/A

Nearest  
Subway  
A,C,E to  
14th Street

Credit Cards  
V, MC

Type of  
Establishment  
Club

Hours  
Th-Sa 8pm-  
4am

Drink Prices  
Expensive

Food  
Creole

Nearest  
Subway  
N,R, to 23rd  
Street

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar/Lounge

Hours  
Daily 10pm-  
4am

Drink Prices  
Moderate

Food  
N/A

Type of  
Establishment  
Club

Hours  
F-Sa 11pm-  
7am

Drink Prices  
Moderate

Food  
N/A

Nearest  
Subway  
A,C,E to  
14th Street

Credit Cards  
Cash Only  
\$20 Cover

**Roxy**

515 West 18th Street  
Between 10th & 11th Streets  
212.645.5156

One of the few large-scale danceclubs still left standing from the 80s. Its name alone evokes visions of a pre-fame Madonna and several hundred Reagan-era club-goers just like her, dancing the night away under a glaring strobe and twirling mirrorball in a drug-fueled frenzy — a Studio 54 for the everyman, if you will. These days the Roxy has fallen slightly behind the pack in the hip quotient, but with the city's largest dance-floor and a loyal following that numbers in the thousands, a Saturday night spent here is still a good time guaranteed.

**The Tonic**

108 West 18th Street  
Between 6th & 7th Avenues  
212.929.9755

The awning may scream superdive, but The Tonic is not a place where patrons yell, "Yo, give me another." Fine dining is the operative phrase here where entrees run in the double digits and dishes like Five Spice Muscovy duck are popular. It's only been open a year in its current incarnation, but a glance at the stately grandfather clock, and one realizes that this establishment has been ticking for some time — 110 years to be exact. While a sampling from the extensive wine list, over 400 bottles, may be the perfect pick-me-up, may we suggest The Chronic, it's a lot stronger than what Dr. Dre was talking about.

Type of  
Establishment  
Bar/Restaurant

Hours  
Daily 12pm-  
11:30pm

Drink Prices  
Expensive

Food  
Nouveau  
American

Nearest  
Subway  
1,9 to  
18th Street

Credit Cards  
AmEx, V, MC,  
Diners