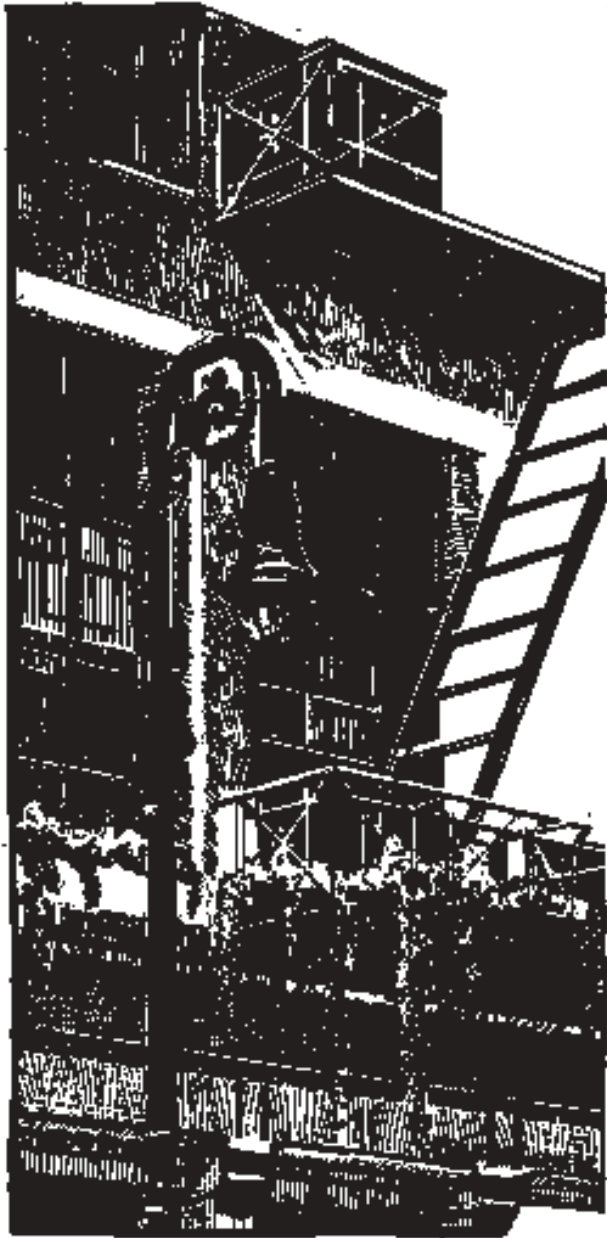




SoHo

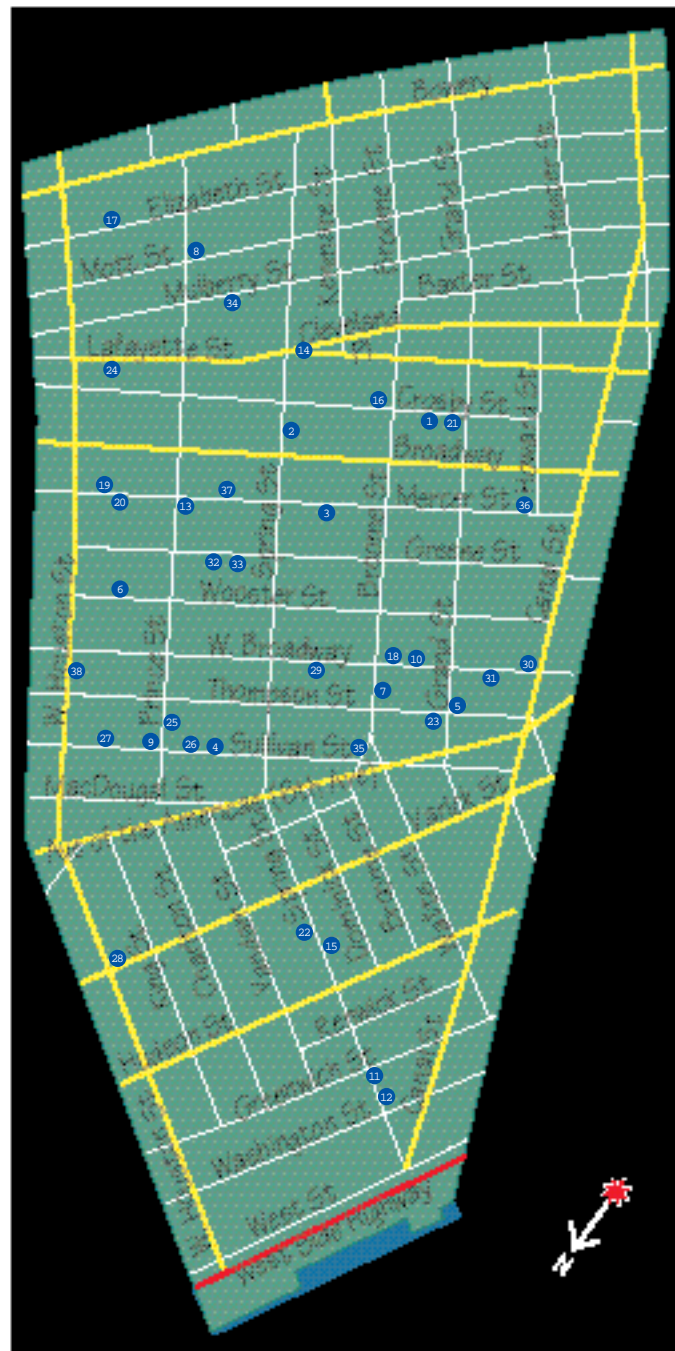


Originally a commercial district not designated for residential housing, the name SoHo was coined by developers to refer to the neighborhood South of Houston Street.

However, SoHo is not just a geographical location, it is a statement, in which residents and visitors alike proudly stake a claim to being a part of this international hotbed of fashion and art. Known for the small art galleries, sidewalk trendy cafes, and boutiques that line its streets, SoHo is an experience to be slowly sipped, absorbed block by block and savored over an intimate dinner.

Having outgrown its early radical persona, SoHo has carved out a popular niche for itself — culturally and economically. The same lofts once prized for their location, are no longer inexpensive. The escalated cost of living is now forcing up-and-coming artists to flee to Neo-Bohemian enclaves like Williamsburg in Brooklyn, eroding SoHo's cutting-edge reputation. The area's established chic character, however, is firmly embedded.

Bordering SoHo and the Lower East Side, Little Italy remains the heart of New York's Old World Italian culture — a character slowly being whittled away by time. This is where it all started. The turn-of-the-century flood of Italian immigrants into the area's cramped tenements that were the launching pad from which they have achieved great heights. For the most part, though, their aura has moved onward and upward, leaving behind faint wisps of what had been. Still, stroll along the area's storied streets and sample from the specialty shops, restaurants and delightful outdoor cafes carrying on the tradition along Mulberry and Mott Streets.



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Type of Establishment
Lounge

Hours
T-Th 6pm-2am
F 6pm-4am
Sa 8pm-4am

Drink Prices
\$\$\$

Food
N/A

Nearest Subway
J,M,N,R,6 to Canal Street

Credit Cards
Cash Only

Dressing Room

Androgyny

35 Crosby Street
Between Grand & Broome
(212) 613-0977

Whether you're a professional drag queen, a recreational cross-dresser, a shy New Jersey father of three with secret desires or a boringly straight mortal tired of New York's new impersonal and selective nightspots, this alternative lounge will refresh your senses. Trying to create an all-welcoming community hangout — partners David and Marquesa offer dressing rooms for those not ready to walk around in drag. A pool table helps break the ice between shy patrons, like the stocky guy in a red dress playing against an oversized school girl in a jean skirt, who end up sipping wine together on the couch.



Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant

Hours
M-Th 12pm-2am
F-Sa 12pm-3am
Su 11:30am-2am

Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$

Food
French

Nearest Subway
6 to Spring Street

Credit Cards
All Major

Balthazar

80 Spring Street
Between Crosby & Broadway
(212) 965-1414

The hippest, chicest spot in town, you'd have to wait a month for a dinner reservation, unless you're Brad Pitt, or you just walk in with a lot of New York attitude, pretend to have a reservation, flash your card and get really upset if they can't find it — you'll get a table in no time. This warm bistro with meticulously researched French gadgets, such as old mirrors, clocks, and two sirens sensually watching over the bar crowd, offers excellent French food in a fizzing, hip ambiance. The crowd, from fashion to Wall Street, is totally in love with itself and life at Balthazar.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant

Hours
Daily 12pm-2am

Drink Prices
\$\$\$

Food
Eclectic
American

Nearest

Bar 89

89 Mercer Street
Between Broome & Spring
(212) 274-0989

Simple and clean like an Ikea catalogue, Bar 89 is proof that minimalism works. Located in the heart of SoHo, this sleek bar/restaurant is the neo-neighborhood diner. The portions are huge and beautifully presented. Bar goodies like burgers, buffalo wings and nachos look like exotic cuisine. Ever-changing art installations ensure that the space never looks the same. But believe it or not, a trip to the bathroom might be the best part of the evening. So drink up.

Blue Ribbon

97 Sullivan Street
Between Spring & Prince
(212) 274-0404

Blue Ribbon doesn't win the grand prize for congeniality at our fair, but the neighborhood regulars who frequent the place seem to like it. This compact SoHo restaurant features seafood, but you will also find items like pigeon, fried chicken (and their specialty, attitude du jour) on the menu. In his signature Fila headband, Alonso, the raw oyster bar chef, brings some very needed warmth and personality to this place. Management claims Blue Ribbon has a familial atmosphere, unfortunately we were treated like Stepford children.

Cafe Noir

32 Grand Street @ Thompson
(212) 431-7910

Some place in Morocco there is a Cafe Noir, but if you don't have the time or resources to go all the way to Africa may we suggest a more suitable option in SoHo. The French Moroccan menu is filled with an array of seafood dishes (entrees \$13-\$22), colors, and textures. Hand-woven tapestries made of yarn lie on stucco walls. Lanterns covered in faux gems illuminate corners of the room. Gigantic potted palm trees double as incense holders and archway upon archway takes you to an exotic place where knights wrapped in white cloths look stately to the horizon on two-humped camels.

Casa La Femme

150 Wooster Street
Between Prince & West Houston
(212) 505-0005

Casa La Femme captures your imagination with its gorgeous Eastern/Maghreb decor. Enter and find your eyes falling to the floor, where people sit on plush cushions around tables and where you can smoke Egyptian tobacco (with apple-cinnamon flavoring) from big hookas. Further inside are tables and chairs, and Bedouin-inspired 'tents,' tables with curtains falling to the ground for privacy. Can you think of a better place for a date? It's low-key and very tasteful. Call in advance for any type of seating. Whether you start or end the evening here, this is a must see for the decor alone.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant

Hours
Daily 4pm-4am

Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$

Food
Eclectic

Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring

Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant

Hours
Daily 11am-4am

Drink Prices
\$\$\$

Food
French
Moroccan

Nearest Subway
A,C,E,1,9 to Canal Street

Credit Cards
AmEx

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant

Hours
Su-T 5pm-12am
W-Sa 5pm-3am

Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$

Food
Egyptian

Nearest Subway
N,R to Prince Street

Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Type of Establishment
Lounge
Hours
Daily 10pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Chaos
23 Watts Street
Between West Broadway & Thompson
(212) 925-8966



Although its name alludes to a place where wild nights are the norm, walk through the 25' tall wrought iron gates and you'll soon realize that Chaos' clientele doesn't rage, they play. With more nooks and crannies than an English muffin, the swanky, palatial, three-level lounge is prime for intimate conversation and romantic interludes. Crystal chandeliers, winding staircases, and ever-flowing bottles of champagne lend a 20s feel to the place. Picture Hugh Hefner, in a silk smoking jacket puffing on a Monica that he purchased from the cigar girl, looking down on you happily drowning in the plush red velvet pillows that abound.

Type of Establishment
Sake Bar
Hours
T-Th 6pm-1am
F-Sa 6pm-2am
Su 6pm-12am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
Appetizers
Nearest Subway
6 to Spring Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Chibi's Sake Bar
238 Mott Street @ Prince
(212) 274-0025

Chibi, the canine namesake of this charming sake bar, proudly towers in a gold-framed photograph above the lovingly arranged glass shelves holding the trinkets necessary for authentic sake drinking. Mellow, young and old, hip downtowners enjoy, among others, 7-year-old Koshiyu-Yoshiorino sake in minuscule, hand-painted French glasses, and Japanese appetizers at the curved, marble corner bar. Romantic couples disappear behind the blue-velvet curtain to smooch at one of the little tables in the darker, unadorned but cozy side of the room.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Su-Th 12pm-1am
F-Sa 12pm-3am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
New American
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Cub Room
131 Sullivan Street @ Prince
(212) 677-4100

A staple of the SoHo bar and restaurant scene, the regulars at Cub Room call it a SoHo icon. A yuppy, somewhat older crowd tends to dominate the scene. The wine list is exceptional, and they serve a delicious watermelon martini. Weekdays, everyone comes suited and booted, lending the place a definite after-work vibe. But weekends are more relaxed, although it does feel like an 'Upper East Side comes downtown' place. We prefer the early evening scene, when you can actually get a place to sit and peo

Diva
341 West Broadway
Between Grand & Broome
(212) 941-9024

Walk down West Broadway and you can't miss Diva. Its doors, a bright fire-engine red, capture the eye and definitely draw attention away from the other more understated places that surround this Italian restaurant. But come to think of it, isn't a diva always supposed to be the center of attention? Its loud exterior is beguiling; however, the candle-lit room is rather sedate. Patrons are too busy enjoying the Ravioli d'Aragosta and indulging in a taste of La Dolce Vita.

Don Hill's
511 Greenwich Street @ Spring
(212) 334-1390

This place, particularly on Friday nights, is not for the conventional. The party, called Squeeze Box, features scantily clad go-go dancers, drag queens, trannies, homosexuals, and everything in between, all brought together by their love of hardcore rock 'n' roll. The soft porn slide show and movies played throughout the night help set the pace of the evening. "I want people to know that this is a gay nightclub," said promoter Michael Schmidt, "but we have a great mix of all types here."

Ear Inn
326 Spring Street
Between Greenwich & Washington
(212) 266-9060

As you've probably already surmised, this place has ears galore. If painter Vincent Van Gogh (the destitute who cut off his ear and sent it to his girl from around the way) were alive he'd love this bar/restaurant. Opened in 1817, this rickety dive was once home to James Brown a reputed black man — go figure — and aide to George Washington during the Revolution. Over the years, this historical landmark has been a boarding house, smuggler's den and brothel. Today, it's a watering hole that has the charm, bric-a-brac and some say ghosts of a cobweb filled attic.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 11am-3am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Italian
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Club
Hours
Daily 10pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
N,R to Prince Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 12pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$
Food
Bar Menu
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
Daily 10pm-2am
Drink Prices
\$
Food
Bar Menu
Nearest Subway
N,R to Prince Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Fanelli's Cafe
94 Prince Street @ Mercer
(212) 966-3518

Fanelli's is old. Really old. The cafe has been around since 1847 and has earned the distinction of being the second oldest continuous food and drink establishment on the same site in New York City. While the rest of SoHo continues to change the 151-year-old corner joint is like an old faithful dog steadfast, reliable and always there.

Type of Establishment
Lounge
Hours
T-Sa 9pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
Japanese
Nearest Subway
6 to Spring Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Jet 19
19 Cleveland Place @ Spring
(212) 675-2277

The Balinese wooden masks and delicately woven tapestries that accent the walls give this two-level lounge a South Asian charm. Jet 19 attracts a trendy downtown crowd that likes to snack on bento boxes and groove to classic funk, R&B, and hip-hop. Who wants to sit upright in a boring banquette when huge Balinese daybeds, covered in sparkling afghans, can comfortably hold up to six people laying down? Get there early because the beds fill up fast.

Type of Establishment
Lounge
Hours
T-Sa 10pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
1,9 to Houston Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Jet Lounge
286 Spring Street
Between Varick & Hudson
(212) 675-2277

If the old adage about 7 years of bad luck for breaking a mirror is true, the owners of the Jet Lounge definitely won't be getting any good news for a while. Shards of mirrored glass cover every square inch of this place. The glass, coupled with the silver and white color scheme, give an icy, almost igloo-like look to the lounge. You won't find Santa or his elves in this winter wonderland, only fashionable downtowners looking for a cool place to chill (pardon the pun). Watch out, Leonardo DiCaprio, the banquettes resemble icebergs.

L'Orange Bleue
430 Broome Street @ Crosby
(212) 226-4999

La vie est belle at this Mediterranean night spot where the North African music makes even 75-year-old local artists dance on the bar. "Vat can I say!" exclaims Vincent, one of the French owners, as he unbuttons his purple shirt lower and swirls around with a steaming plate of paella. Everything, from the exuberant staff to the warm orange walls and the delicious food, will serve you justice in this world of blue and orange. Monday features Moroccan night with belly dancing and couscous. An eclectic crowd of understated European chic also enjoys the large outdoor cafe in the summer.

M&R
264 Elizabeth Street
Between Prince & West Houston
(212) 226-0559

This neighborhood gem, on suddenly sexy Elizabeth Street, is just too cozy. We love the intimate feel, casual atmosphere, great scotch selection and the good music in this bar/restaurant. A DJ spins Thursdays through Saturdays. With about fifty varieties per liquor category, ranging from scotch, rum, whiskey, gin, cordials, wine, champagne and brandy, you can easily lose track. A back garden and a back room that doubles as the restaurant offer some seating, but the best place to sit is in the front, right by the bar. They also make excellent margaritas and Campartinis — a Campari martini.

Magnum
357 West Broadway
Between Grand & Broome
(212) 965-1491

No crazy art deco, no ornate furniture — just cool and simple sophistication with a funky downtown edge. The booths, soft as a suede glove, create the perfect space for a group of SoHo socialites to congregate. The crowd loves to kick back and drink — what else would you expect from a lounge named Magnum? Champagne and great service are not the only things served here: wine, aperitifs, French and Belgian ales, and different treats flow on and on throughout the night.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 12pm-2am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
Mediterranean
Nearest Subway
6 to Spring Street
Credit Cards
AmEx

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
M-F 5pm-3am
Sa-Su 11:30am-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Italian/American
Nearest Subway
6 to Spring Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Type of Establishment
Lounge
Hours
Daily 9pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment Bar/Restaurant
 Hours Su-M 11:30am-2am
 T-Sa 11:30am-4am
 Drink Prices \$\$\$\$
 Food Eclectic International
 Nearest Subway N,R to Prince Street
 Credit Cards All Major

Match
 160 Mercer Street
 Between Prince & West Houston
 (212) 343-0020

Downstairs at Match is loud, fun and crowded on any weekend night. A real pick-up scene but also a place for a large group of friends. It's great if you have seating, and the food offering is delectable, making for a fine accompaniment to your drinks. The crowd looks like 'Upper East or West comes downtown,' but we don't mind. It's fun here and while not very exciting or innovative for most jaded New Yorkers, Match makes for a good stop on the SoHo tour. Your out-of-town friends will love it too.

Type of Establishment Bar
 Hours M-W 5pm-2am
 Th-Sa 5pm-3:30am
 Drink Prices \$\$\$
 Food N/A
 Nearest Subway N,R to Prince Street
 Credit Cards All Major

Merc Bar
 151 Mercer Street
 Between Prince & West Houston
 (212) 966-2727

With its colorful oil paintings of American Indians, a canoe hanging from the ceiling, and gigantic black-and-white photographs of a bubbling waterfall, Merc Bar looks more like an exhibit at the Museum of Natural History than one of the hottest night spots in New York. But judging from the crowd, the log cabin motif is working. This bar is perfect for the urban outdoorsy type and even better for those who love good funk, soul and R&B classics.

Type of Establishment Bar/Restaurant
 Hours M-Th 5pm-2am
 F-Sa 5pm-4am
 Drink Prices \$\$\$
 Food Tapas
 Nearest Subway 6 to Spring Street
 Credit Cards Cash Only

ñ
 33 Crosby Street
 Between Grand & Broome
 (212) 219-8856

ñ (pronounced enya), a dark and sexy Spanish wine and tapas bar, is only inches wide, but endlessly long and barely lit by candles. Squeeze yourself between the exposed-brick wall and the two slim bars in a row, and try to catch a stool to order a glass of Rioja and some tapas (a smart Spanish form of hors d'oeuvres) to keep your alcohol level under control. It gets packed with a rather homogenous Gap and Banana Republic crowd that engages in animated conversations, stays for hours, and seems to love coming back. Cash only.

NV
 289 Spring Street
 Between Hudson & Varick
 (212) 929-nvrv

Walk through the dimly lit corridors and enter a trendy downtown lounge with touches of an old world salon. The glam gods and goddesses who profile on the vintage chic couches have their fair share of attitude, but once the voguing ends, which is usually around 1 a.m., this crowd heads upstairs and gets down to business: Dancing. After a few good hours of dirty dancing, head back downstairs and get to know your inevitably attractive partner a little better in one of the sexy curtain-flanked enclaves.



Naked Lunch
 17 Thompson Street @ Grand
 (212) 941-0479

The bar gets its name from a novel by beatnik-era writer William Burroughs. The story is about a struggling writer who works as an exterminator to pay the bills. When times get too tough for the writer and his wife, they snort roach powder as their sole means of sustenance. Read the book to find out the rest, but now you know why the bar's signature is a masterfully designed cockroach. Bug haters, relax; this Moroccan-inspired place, is only infested with great drinks, Wall Streeters, and SoHo Bohemians.

Type of Establishment Lounge/Club
 Hours W-Su 10pm-4am
 Drink Prices \$\$\$\$
 Food N/A
 Nearest Subway C,E to Spring Street
 Credit Cards All Major

Pravda
 281 Lafayette Street
 Between Prince & West Houston
 (212) 226-4944



Step down to Moscow's chic underground, drink exotic vodka with the terminally fashionable comrades, and act suave. Something utterly taboo not too long ago seems to attract hip New Yorkers, who relax against a backdrop of Russian street signs and communist industrial paintings. They are as unpretentiously sophisticated as the scrambled eggs with caviar served by emaciated Russian models in black dresses. A friendly, semicircular bar opens toward a warm, cellar-like lounge/bistro with atmosphere — well-lit with candles, well-ventilated, and featuring jazz as background music.

Type of Establishment Bar
 Hours Daily 6pm-4am
 Drink Prices \$\$\$
 Food N/A
 Nearest Subway A,C,E to Canal Street
 Credit Cards All Major

Type of Establishment Restaurant/Lounge
 Hours M-Th 5pm-3am
 F-Sa 5pm-4am
 Su 6pm-1:30am
 Drink Prices \$\$\$\$
 Food Russian
 Nearest Subway N,R to Prince Street
 Credit Cards All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
Daily 5pm-2am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
French Bistro
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Raoul's
180 Prince Street
Between Thompson & Sullivan
(212) 966-3518

On most nights the line to get into this place spills out onto Prince Street. Though it's been around for 23 years, this French bistro is still as popular as it was when it first opened.

The front room's familial aura — walls comfortably cluttered with old oil paintings, Victorian era mirrors, and black and white photos — is warm and welcoming. Gentlemen, the ultra-romantic garden dining room is the perfect place to pop the question.

Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
Daily 5pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Red Bench Bar
107 Sullivan Street
Between Spring & Prince
(212) 274-9120

The magnetic bundle of energy behind the bar is Algerian owner, Mustafa. Everyone calls him Mus (Moose) and he sets the pace of this gregarious and fun-loving environment. Patrons of this small neighborhood place are all Mus' honorary relatives or spouses and by the time you leave, you too will feel like a family member. "This is a very non-threatening place, especially for women," said Lovey, a Bench Bar regular. "You can come in here alone and not feel uncomfortable and you'll be talking to the entire bar in twenty minutes."

Type of Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
Daily 5pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

The Room
144 Sullivan Street
Between Prince & West Houston
(212) 477-2102

Though the bartender believes this fact is trite, The Room is actually two dark narrow rooms, bar on the right, lounge on the left. The industrial concrete and steel setting is quite austere, but neighbors find the place surprisingly comfortable and love the bar. "We don't even consider ourselves customers," said Jane, a Room regular who lives next door, "we're family." You'll find camaraderie, but no Cosmopolitans. There's no room for liquor, only wine and beer.

S.O.B.'s (Sounds of Brazil)
204 Varick Street @ West Houston
(212) 243-4940

The intimate and colorful tropical ClubMed setting in cool New York envelops a multi-culti crowd of curious Americans, dressed-up Africans, adventurous Europeans, homesick Caribbeans and Brazilians. Get acquainted over a Caipirinha (trademark Brazilian drink) that inspires vigorous and tight dancing to live Brazilian, Caribbean or African music on the well-observed dance floor. After an exhausting lesson on how to shake bundas (behinds) by a snakeskin-clad Brazilian singer, the exhausted crowd relaxes with tropical food at the tables, or back to where it all started — at the elevated bar with a Caipirinha.

Scharmann's
386 West Broadway
Between Broome & Spring
(212) 219-2561

Tired of all those cramped, hustling and bustling SoHo bars, and want to relax with a cup of coffee and a piece of cake, without renouncing people watching to over-decibed club music? This beige, ballroom-sized Kaffeehaus with exposed fixtures, SoHo artwork, plants and crystal chandeliers is the right place. The hip, beautiful crowd checks each other out across the antique and pseudo-antique furniture, of which each piece is truly unique, including writing desks, lamps and couches. Or, you can lounge around the terrace and watch West Broadway before jumping back into its stream.

Shine
285 West Broadway @ Canal
(212) 941-0900

Shine is a cross between a SoHo chic lounge and a traveling carnival show. New York Magazine voted it Best New Club of 1998, but Best Freak Show would have been a more appropriate title. The live entertainment includes everything from contortionists to fire-swallowers, but nothing on stage rivals the giant 6'6" bunny in combat boots that hops (or gallops) around throughout the night.

Type of Establishment
Bar/Live Music
Hours
Daily 6:30pm-3:30am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
Tropical
Nearest Subway
1,9 to Houston Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar/Cafe
Hours
M-Th 9am-12am
F-Su 9am-3am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Light American
Nearest Subway
C,E to Spring Street
Credit Cards
MC, V

Type of Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
M-Sa 9:30pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
A,C,E to Canal Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Type of Establishment
Bar
Hours
Daily 12pm-2am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
Appetizers
Nearest Subway
A,C,E,N,R to Canal Street
Credit Cards
All Major

SoHo Grand Bar
310 West Broadway
Between Canal & Broome
(212) 965-3000

The SoHo Grand Bar shirks the cast iron and glass that typifies the much-reviewed SoHo Grand lobby, and instead embraces wood, warm earth tones, and neutral colors. With the exception of the tables with beautiful elephant tusk-shaped legs, there's nothing too grand about this place. Nevertheless, it's a popular night spot frequented by the likes of Naomi Campbell and Al Pacino. What the bar's decor lacks in personality, it more than makes up for in drinks like the Grand Margarita (\$11) and its signature Tartini (Stoli raspberry, chambord, cranberry juice, and a splash of sour mix, \$9).

Type of Establishment
Bar/Restaurant
Hours
M-Th 11:30am-11:30pm
F-Sa 11:30am-1:30am
Su 12pm-10pm
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
American
Nearest Subway
N,R to Prince Street
Credit Cards
All Major

SoHo Kitchen & Bar
103 Greene Street
Between Spring & Prince
(212) 925-1866

With over 100 different wines, three 32-spigot cruvinets, and 24 different 'flights' (1 1/2 oz. samples from a group of different wines) SoHo Kitchen & Bar is much more bar than it is kitchen. One of only a few wine bars left in the city, its owner, real estate developer Tony Goldman, likes to think of his downtown diner as the "public library of wine." Check out Flight #9 — destination Southern Hemisphere (\$14.75) and try wines from South Africa, Southern Australia and New Zealand. Flight #17 World Class Reds (\$42.50) features wines from France and California.

Spy Bar
101 Greene Street
Between Spring & Prince
(212) 343-9000



Spy Bar is notorious for its unwritten, but strictly enforced door policy: if you don't look good and dress even better, you're not getting in here. The new management insists however, that the glam guards and \$20 sandwiches are a thing of the past. The huge bar still has traces of its old cabaret days — even the stage is intact. Despite the changing attitude, the crowd remains extremely attractive, and the binocular-like machines positioned in the balcony still make for great people watching.

Establishment
Bar
Hours
Daily 7pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$

Velvet Restaurant & Lounge
223 Mulberry Street
Between Spring & Prince
(212) 965-0439

This former garage-turned-groovy bar and restaurant, with high ceilings, dramatic red walls and black velvet curtains attracts a high-energy crowd, young professionals from the neighborhood and older folks who enjoy the good continental food. The sumptuous upstairs lounge accommodates large groups on its reupholstered, nouveau-aristocratic couches, and features live jazz on Wednesdays, French chansons on Thursdays and Latin/Cuban tunes on Fridays. All this for no cover charge — check it out!

Type of Establishment
Restaurant/Lounge
Hours
T-Su 5:30pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
Continental
Nearest Subway
6 to Spring Street
Credit Cards
MC, V, AmEx

Veruka
525 Broome Street
Between Thompson & 6th Avenue
(212) 625-1717

Veruka is the new kid on the 'place to be seen' block. This cavernous industrial-styled restaurant/lounge has a definite 'don't hate me because I'm beautiful and dress better than thou' vibe. Consider yourself lucky — or gorgeous and female — if you get past the doorman. They call it discretion, we call it plain old snobbery; but you can't be 'the place to be' without having a high set of standards: long legs, chiseled chins, designer clothes ... you know, all the important things that fashion magazines are made of. Okay, so we're being a bit catty, but let's hope this place is still in by uhhh ... next week.

Type of Establishment
Restaurant/Lounge
Hours
Daily 6pm-4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
Nouveau Elite
Nearest Subway
A,C,E to Canal Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Void
16 Mercer Street @ Howard
(212) 941-6492

Surf the net while sipping on Cosmopolitans and check your e-mail while chugging down beers. Void, a multimedia video lounge, has everything from television screens embedded in the banquettes to a computer that features power pellet-gobbling Pac Man. Independent film and video producers, artists and Web designers are welcome to use the giant movie screen to display their work. Check out 'oldie but goodie' movies from the 60s and 70s shown every Wednesday night. "This is not for the mainstream. This place attracts people really interested in creativity," said Taro, a 30-year-old paralegal. Bill Gates would definitely be proud.

Type of Establishment
Lounge
Hours
T-Th 8pm-2am
F-Sa 8pm-3am
Drink Prices
\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest Subway
N,R to Canal Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Type of
Establishment
Bar/Lounge
Hours
Daily 5pm-
4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest
Subway
N,R to Prince
Street
Credit Cards
All Major

Wax Bar

113 Mercer Street
Between Spring & Prince
(212) 226-6082



Wax Bar is suffused with a sexy, sinister energy that is absolutely infectious. Could it be the wall-length mural that depicts a virile, dark-haired Fabio-type laying on a king-size bed awaiting the pleasure of one of his many concubines? Or could it be the gargoyles hovering over the bar, candelabras illuminating the back area, and blood-purple drapes that all come together to create an ominous lounge that invites you to do and think bad things? Well, let's not get carried away. Anyway, the plush burgundy banquettes in the back are prime for some private 'conversation'.

Type of
Establishment
Bar/Live Music
Hours
Daily 6pm-
4am
Drink Prices
\$\$\$
Food
N/A
Nearest
Subway
1,9 to Houston
Street
Credit Cards
Cash Only

Zinc Bar

90 West Houston Street
Between West Broadway & Thompson
(212) 477-8337

In this live music venue you have no choice but to be at one with the music; the nook in the corner where the bands perform is within arm's length of the audience, but the tight quarters don't stop the jazz bands from jamming every night. Zinc features American and African bands, but the clear favorite among the Mojito drinking patrons are the Latin nights on Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday — \$5 cover and a one drink minimum if you opt for a table. If the music's too in your face, follow frisky felines Ella and Holiday (they're cats) into the back room and stretch out.