

**CLUBBING
WITH
JAMES
TRAN**

Club reviews and adventures
taken from the online blog
jamestran.net





MY NAME IS JAMES TRAN

I am a regular clubber. I club once or twice a week. I enjoy dancing. I visit mostly R&B and Asian clubs with friends. On the occasional night when I am not busy, I will visit a club I haven't been to.

I visit different clubs to avoid getting 'sick' of one place. My plan is to visit as many clubs as possible before my body dies of overclubbing or something related.

This blog is a personal account of my experience of clubs and events. I try to be objective in reviews but if I had a shit night, then I had a shit night irrespective of what others experienced.

Earth House studio

STUDIO / BLACK & WHITE PARTY Saturday 11th September 2010

As a member of the SocialRice group, the group has decided to have their first clubbing night. Aww! Friends were all going. I guess I was going too so here we go!

ASSESSMENT TIME
11:45 pm – 2:45 am

OPENING HOURS
10:00 pm - 3:00 am

ADDRESS
275 Pitt St, Sydney

WEBSITE
www.theearthhousehotel.com.au

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Smart casual was recommended and it appeared pretty much everyone followed this. Collared shirts, nice shoes for the guys and dresses for the girls. The theme for tonight was black and white.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
Free before 10:30 pm on the guestlist and before midnight \$20. Outside of these parameters do expect to pay \$25.

DJ'S
Eko, Cass, D-Seev, Gizmo, Flipz and MC Elevate on mic duties.

MUSIC STYLES
Primarily contemporary R&B and Hip Hop. Occasional house mash ups as well. I did note the DJ near the end of the night had an amazingly bad mixing moment. He just cut off the song right into the next song without transition. It was the first time I noticed myself dancing for a bit and then suddenly stop and lose all rhythm. I thought to myself “wow that was a total mood killer”. Otherwise music was pretty danceable. I wasn't paying much attention as I caught up with friends.

CROWD
Pretty much entirely Asian. A handful of lost Caucasians in the mix. Mostly in their 20's.



ENTERTAINMENT
The primary addition for tonight's clubbing event was the Photography Studio. You were able to walk in, grab yourself some canapes if you chose to do so, and take a photograph under the two umbrella lights with some professional photographers, all for free. Pretty snazzy.

It really is a good feeling to walk into a nightclub knowing that you have lots of other people there that you know as well. I had to be more well behaved though, if you know what I mean.

So as part of my good behaviour plan, tonight I probably spent more time yakking away to friends and random people in the side room rather than dancing in the main room. I spent a good hour in the side room chit chatting and eating crackers and cheese surrounded by an artsy decor. I almost felt like an art critic, almost.

Friends all left around 2:00 am and so did the majority of the club. It's about 2:15 am now. It was pretty much only the dance-a-holics left and plenty of room to dance. Danced heaps, danced a crapload. I pretty much did a very epic solo house dance and M joined me.

CHOCOLATE CITY Friday 22 October 2010

A request from a reader to review this event since it has moved from the now closed Havana Nightclub and operating under a new promoter. It's been a few weeks since opening night so I suppose it was time to see what it was like.

ASSESSMENT TIME
11:15 pm – 3:00 am

OPENING HOURS
Around 9:45 pm – 3:00 am

ADDRESS
4 Oxford Square, (Oxford St, confusing I know) Darlinghurst Sydney. It's right next to The Gaff, opposite Stonewall.

WEBSITE
There is no official website at time of writing. Check out www.thegaff.com.au for a little bit of info

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Men need collared shirts and clean sneakers or shoes. Girls – anything goes. Everyone here pretty much stuck to this attire, except in the latter half of the night when patrons from The Gaff next door came in – the guys mostly wore T-shirts.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
\$15 on guestlist, \$20 otherwise

DJ'S
Unknown

MUSIC STYLE
Primarily R&B the entire night. There may have been one or two songs repeated. Some house mash up. Notably, there was no Hip Hop played.

CROWD
In the first half of the night it was pretty much an Asian crowd. Safe to assume it was all local Asians. Later, it appeared that patrons from The Gaff next door were kicked out and moved to The Mansion Nightclub. These patrons were all Caucasian, probably local as well. Age of the crowd was young ranging from teenagers to people in their low 20's.

ENTERTAINMENT
Free assorted 'fun sized' chocolates upon entry. Nom nom nom. There were also CD giveaways for one of the DJ's tonight.



Mansion Nightclub chocolate city

There aren't many things happening here tonight.

Three or four birthday parties – that's as many as VIP areas allow. Half of the time I'm dancing on the floor near the entrance, the other half I am sitting down, the other half mingling with people, and the other half wondering why I am here.

The dude working at the door had an unfinished Long Island Tea in his hand and he couldn't drink anymore. Yet, through our conversation he recognises me from this website. Unbelievable. I might have to go back to my precious wig collection for the upcoming summer. I prefer anonymity sometimes.

I collect photos with people with braces. I took a photo of a girl and we have a little chat. Her friend interrupted us and told me to piss off. Sad. My date probably would have erred on her side anyway.

Everyone else was friendly though, to some degree.

Just as the club was beginning to die (at only 1:00 or 2:00 am), the door adjoining Mansions to The Gaff Bar opens. Everyone from The Gaff is moved to here. Maybe 20 to 30 people. In a small place like this, it makes a notable difference. Everyone appears to be dancing again.

Hooray. They seemed to have a good time.

It's cheap and a nice atmosphere. If you wanted a night out to meet random people I probably wouldn't go here. If you wanted a birthday with friends without much interruptions, sure come here. Overall an average night. I do like the venue – it just needs an injection of more people. We will see how it goes over the next few months.

HUGOS

Lounge
Pizza
Bar

SATURDAYS Saturday 2nd July 2010

Random birthday invite at Hugos for some drinks.
The first time I was here was with a friend who
happened to be a kleptomaniac that night and
eventually we were kicked out.

Tonight its a different set of friends, so hopefully
I will be able to stay here longer than 15 minutes.

ASSESSMENT TIME
9:00 pm – 11:00 pm

OPENING HOURS
Unknown– 3:00 am

ADDRESS
Level 1, 33 Bayswater Road,
Kings Cross, Sydney

WEBSITE
www.hugos.com.au

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Appears to be strictly smart casual. Collared shirts
and dress shoes for men. Women all are dressed
very well. Hats allowed. No mohawks.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
Free on birthday guestlist. \$20 after 10:00 pm
from what I heard

DJ
Dolso

MUSIC STYLE
House

CROWD
Mostly older Caucasian crowd. People mostly in
their 20's and older. Being more of a classy place
the people are more well behaved.

ENTERTAINMENT
Just the DJ

ATMOSPHERE
Definitely pretentious but the people on the
dance floor seemed pretty friendly which was
good. The whole place is very dark, so I guess
that's a good thing for everyone.



We danced for no more than 30 minutes because it was still
early. People started to get their boogie on at around 10:00
pm but it was on off until around 10:30 pm when there was
consistently people on there.

It kind of reminded me of the old Privilege Bar where it
was also dark and small, but here at Hugos it was way
classier. Probably a better comparison is that of Loft Bar
down at King Street Wharf.

As this place suggests, it is more of a bar than a place to
club but dancing is permitted here on the small dance
floor. I am more about dancing than lounging around so
I probably wouldn't come here for an awesome dance.
A very nice venue in general but not one for clubbing.

We left at 11:00 pm. Friends were going to leave and on
top of that I had planned to visit Coogee Bay Hotel.

ivybar

pure ivy

PURE IVY Saturday 4th September 2010

An unintentional visit, dropping by due to an urging friend.

ASSESSMENT TIME
11:00 am – 1:15 am

OPENING HOURS
6:00 pm - at least 3:00 am

ADDRESS
320 George St, Sydney

WEBSITE
www.merivale.com/ivy/ivybar

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Girls are very neat and beautiful. Guys are similarly dressed very well in here. Collared shirts are expected.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
\$20 flat entry charge. \$15 Guestlist before 11:00 pm

MUSIC STYLES
Popular songs mixed in an electro house and house manner. The tempo is not too fast and the DJ has a saxophone player and bongo drum player for support.

CROWD
Mostly Caucasian here. Mostly older crowd of 20's and above. Normal folk would call this crowd pretentious and I guess in some ways they are. I just see it as they don't want to get all dirty and sweaty as you would in a normal club. The crowd seemed friendly. Perhaps it was the dancers that are friendly and not the normal bar types who don't dance at all, who give the pretentious perception for the rest of these well dressed guys.

ENTERTAINMENT
The DJ has a live saxophone and bongo drum player. Occasionally 2 dancers dressed in white in the centre garden.

ATMOSPHERE
Pretty airy, pretty cool thanks to the open ceiling. Inside the dance floor, people are just bobbing about. It's too squishy in here to be able to properly dance without hitting other people. You could really only raise your hand in the air and wave it around when a favourable song begins to play. Seeing as the bar was of an open air design, people are free to smoke anywhere.



My friend knew one of the regular girls here. This girl was able to ask a promoter to get us to cut the line and free entry as well. There was about 100 or so people lining up.

Woo! Suckers.

But the promoter dude didn't give us free entry. We were unfortunately not hot enough. The full entry fee of \$20 was coughed up.

Threw myself in the middle of the dance floor and instantly realised I couldn't dance. People around me weren't dancing much at all. They were more like waving around and drinking.

Terrible. I didn't even last 5 minutes in here.



I danced a bit in the outside areas and got a free grind by passersby, but that was it. There was too much thoroughfare to consider continuous dancing. Too vigorous and you look out of place in here. It was lose-lose for the potential hardcore dancer in here.

I saw a dude jump up on the wall next to the DJ but he was quickly pulled down by security. DJ, meanwhile smokes away as he plays music.

If you want a bigger and better version of places like Bungalow 8 or Cargo, check this place out, but you do have to pay entry. If you want a place to dance your socks off or practise your dancing, this is not the place to go as it is too squashed and the music too slow paced.

However its a great atmosphere for everything else, like talking, drinking, sitting around... whatever you expect from a clean bar.

HEDKANDI FRIDAYS
Friday 18th December 2009

ASSESSMENT TIME
10:45 pm – 1:15 am

OPENING HOURS
Unknown – 3:00 am

ADDRESS
1 Bayswater Road, Kings Cross
(behind the Coca Cola sign)

WEBSITE
www.hedkandi.com.au

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Tight door policy for guys – no large groups. Ethnics need to be suited up and preferably with girls. Girls need to be attractive as well. Tonight it was me and five girls so we got in without question.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
\$20, \$10 on guestlist (apparently)



Trade hedkandi mark Hotel

MUSIC STYLE
R&B

CROWD:
Mostly Caucasians, classy crowd
in their 20's and possibly 30's

ENTERTAINMENT
An MC but that's about it.

ATMOSPHERE
Dance floor was ok but in general, the place wasn't so busy. There was nobody in the sectioned off lounge area except for this couple making out.

Podiums are for girls only. There was a large speaker so I thought it be great to get up and dance on it. Then of course, I get asked to come down with a warning.

Fair enough.

There was a mini platform podium – about ten centimetres off the ground in front of the DJ. I went up to take a photo. Then AGAIN, the bouncers come in and say if I go up on the podium again I will get kicked out!

Jesus Christ, talk about sexism on the dance floor!

Honestly we danced for a bit but most of the time was spent drinking. I think shortly after that we left, my friends weren't into the house music. The atmosphere wasn't so hot. The place wasn't packed – most of the people I suppose were in the Piano Room.

Oxford art Factory destination

DESTINATION Friday 10th September 2010

Miles Dyson, the German DJ I accidentally experienced in 2008 was in town again. By now I was a fan of his music, so I thought I would check it out.

ASSESSMENT TIME
12:30 am – 3:15 am

OPENING HOURS
8:00 pm – 5:00 am or 6:00 am

ADDRESS
46 Oxford St, Sydney

WEBSITE
www.oxfordartfactory.com

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Casual was the norm here. Anything goes.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
\$25 for the main room. The guy who was supposed to check for stamps was hanging out at the back door protecting the beer storage. Free in the smaller room. After 2:00 am, it was free for all.

MAIN ROOM DJ'S
9:00 pm - 11:00 pm Random Weapon
11:00 pm - 1:00 am Datadex
1:00 am - 3:00 am Miles Dyson
3:00 am - 4:30 am Karton
4:30 am - close Audiophilez

MUSIC STYLES
Electro House, Breaks

CROWD
For the Miles Dyson set, it was the initial core of Miles Dyson fans and friends they dragged along. Mostly a 20's crowd, Caucasian.

ENTERTAINMENT
No extra things here



So there is this Asian girl. We are chatting but she has to leave and ‘meet up with her friends’.

Oh, so where are her friends?

Over there she says, pointing to the other side of the room.

She walks away and stands in the corner on her own, approximately two metres away from me, drink in her hand. Oh, I see. That was cold girl, real cold.

Dancing to the music and a random girls joins us for dance. Cool. I try to talk to one. She doesn't hear me. I say something else. She still has no idea and then tells me very slowly:

“I don't speak English”

I can't believe this. I thought non-english speaking people existed only in Asian nightclubs. I guess she was just here for the music.

Later in the night she came back to me and started conversing in PERFECT ENGLISH about how good the music was. Unbelievable, the audacity of some people in this club tonight.



It's only this year I've been introduced to the concept of girls only on the podium. I hopped up and not even one second into my dance routine, I was kicked off. Well, the security guard was actually already **STANDING ON THE PODIUM** and I snuck in behind him. The podium for about six people was occupied by one person for most of the night – that security guy.

A second dude braved it and danced up on the podium. He was ballsy enough to dance in front of Mr. Podium Security. Immediately he was escorted off the dance floor and kicked out of Docks Hotel! **WHOA**, he got kicked out for dancing on the podium? I saw him waving his passport madly at the security guy until one of the City Rangers took over and continued escorting him away from the place.

LOL

I shouldn't laugh – he was honestly just having a good time and wasn't causing trouble. Another two guys went up on the podium and they too were kicked out by security. Unbelievable, seriously... never in the history of clubbing have I seen guys, irrelevant of state of inebriation, kicked out for dancing on the podium.

It was an utter shamble.

People started filing out at around 1:30 am when the Hip Hop started to play. An early death. Was I the only one singing Snoop Dogg's 'Who Am I'? People these days need to get acquainted with Classic West Coast Rap.

Docks Hotel rendezvous

RENDEZVOUS Friday 27th August 2010

A birthday invite at Docks Hotel. It coincided with the grand opening of the new R&B event.

ASSESSMENT TIME
11:30 pm – 2:00 am

OPENING HOURS
Early in the night – 3:00 am

ADDRESS
Shop 255 Harbourside Shopping
Centre, Sydney. Near the big South
Steine Boat, Darling Harbour

WEBSITE
www.dockshotel.com.au

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Most guys wore smart casual. There was no actual strict dress code and people can go in with hats, T-shirts, clean sneakers, etc. Girls all looked pretty good – pretty dressy.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
\$15 guestlist, \$25 Full Entry

DJ'S
Moto, Edo, Biggie, Flipsta, Cbu, Mike Hyper

MUSIC STYLES
Contemporary R&B and classic Hip Hop

CROWD
Mixed crowd tonight of local Asians and Euros. Probably 70/30 was the ethnic ratio. Gender ratio was 50/50. Average age of the crowd was 20.

ENTERTAINMENT
The promotional poster stated 'Special Performances' and 'Free Shirt Giveaways'. Throughout the time I was there, I didn't see or hear any announcement of T-shirt giveaways. And what were the 'Special Performances'? It was as though they just threw some words together to make it sound good, hoping that people didn't really notice.

I've been to Docks Hotel for many clubbing events and tonight was probably the worst I've seen it. Half of the crowd was outside smoking away. At around midnight, I was expecting a late surge of people, but it never eventuated. Pretty sad.



Brooklyn

Hotel

shanghai nights

SHANGHAI NIGHTS Friday 26th March 2010

A friend has a birthday and has decided to hold it at Brooklyn Hotel for the Shanghai Nights event. I don't want to go, as last time was mediocre for me, but I must keep up appearances, plus it will give this place another chance for a review.

ASSESSMENT TIME
9:30 pm – 1:00 am (including lining up from 9:30 pm – 10:15 pm)

ADDRESS
Corner George and Grovenor Streets, Sydney

OPENING HOURS
10:15 pm – 4:00 am

WEBSITE
www.brooklynhotel.com.au

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Standard dress code applies. Jeans ok, normal shoes ok. Runners is risky, you may or may not get in.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
Free before 10:30 pm if you are on the guestlist. \$20 if on the guestlist before midnight. \$25 otherwise.

MUSIC STYLES
Modern R&B in the main room with house mash ups. Outside was pretty much commercial house all night but at a lower volume so people could chat. It wasn't as quiet as last time, thank goodness, but it wasn't loud enough to warrant the house music fans to dance vigorously.

CROWD
Dominantly Asian

ENTERTAINMENT
Podium dancers. Also the 'Luxy girls' (apparently four girls from Taiwan who are great with pole dancing) appeared for a photo shoot to promote their club appearances for the upcoming Easter Long weekend. They didn't perform tonight though.

FOOD
BBQ out back. Sausages, kebab sticks and Vietnamese 'nem' sticks for \$5 each. It's a monopoly here. The kebab sticks are burnt. It was his "first night" cooking, the chef explains to us.

ATMOSPHERE

Pretty busy inside. Outside was relaxed, and again a smokers paradise. It really wasn't happening outside. All the action was inside the main room.

I was pretty determined to not pay entry for tonight as I do believe this event is overpriced. The two options to get in for free were to either enter Brooklyn Hotel before 9:00 pm or line up on guestlist and hope to get in before 10:30 pm. We lined up at 9:30 and were lucky to be the first in line. We scored our free entry.

Out back there are two tables reserved for 'James'. Isn't that selfish! So after about 15 minutes of waiting for this 'James' to arrive, I pretended to be 'James' and sit down on the table with my friends.

As part of the Shanghai Night experience, you get a waiter girl to order drinks on your behalf, priority service style. So the girl came up and we ordered, she returns with our drinks – awesome! Next thing you know, 'James' turns up and demands his table!

Too soon, too soon.



My friends defend me, saying this table belongs to me, James Tran. Oh man, so ok, I go along with it. Of course, he insists it is his table and we insist that the table is ours. Oh the poor guy, he almost gave up, but we give up our temporary awesome seats.

Jason the Korean bum dancer has arrived tonight – he has just entered the building and was warming up his dance moves. It was game over for me.

All my friends have left and I am at this point looking for my laptop, which I have just given up looking for. I am now bored. You would only enjoy this place if you were drunk.

Kamaki bar india

Friday 28 November 2008

Last night in Goa! I dressed up in the traditional Indian attire and walked the thirty minutes to the club from my hotel. When I got to the counter, I realised I was 100 rupees short for entry and had to walk back to the hotel to get more money. Ninety minutes gone.

LOCATION
Calangute Road, Goa, India

MUSIC
House

CROWD
We got there at 3:00 am. The crowd were hardcore dancers and people still trying to pick up or make the most of the night.

DRESS CODE
Casual

COVER CHARGE / ENTRY FEE
300 rupees for the enclosed dance floor area

I head in with Morten the Danish dude and the high American guy. We just dance, and drink.. and drink some more.

Girls. Inside, there were rapidly less girls, about 5 or 6 left. In India, any Caucasian female is hot, considering the lack of Indian girls. There was one nice Indian girl who could really shake her body. She walks up and places an ice cube down my back. Never had that done before at a club! Never got her back... she had an army of guys hounding her anyway.



Either there was a lack of air conditioning or it was piss weak. It was a sauna in there and we were regularly stepping outside every few songs for a breather. We went outside and one of the Indian taxi drivers managed to get a hold of my yellow sunnies. He refused to give them back to me as he said someone else gave it to him! So dodgy. Eventually I got them back.

Sunrise came and so did the closing of Kamaki Bar. Next destination was Simba Dayclub. As Morten said:

“Lets party in the JUNGLE!”

drinks

menu

MIXED SHOTS

PINK RANGER

10 ml Vodka
10 ml Coconut Rum
10 ml Peach Schnapps
Splash of Apple and Cranberry juice

DARK AND VEINY

10 ml Vodka
10 ml Baileys
10 ml Butterscotch Schnapps
Splash of Herbal Liqueur

SPEEDBALL

10 ml Vodka
10 ml Gin
10 ml Tequila
Splash of Lime Juice

CONCORDE

15 ml Coffee Liqueur
15 ml Baileys
Splash of Barcardi 151

CANDY CORN

10 ml Orange Curacao Liqueur
10 ml Exotic Fruit Liqueur
10 ml Cream

BLUE FREEZIE

10 ml Blue Curacao
10 ml Melon Liqueur
10 ml Lime juice

DOUBLE TEAM

15 ml Almond Liqueur
15 ml Rum

APEACHY PROCACCINI

15 ml Peach Vodka
15 ml Peach Juice

CHERRY BON BON

15 ml White Chocolate Liqueur
15 ml Almond Liqueur

JIMMY CONWAY

10 ml Bourbon Whisky
10 ml Canadian Whisky
10 ml Galliano Black Sambruca

LOVE POTION

10 ml Orange Vodka
10 ml Raspberry Liqueur
10 ml Cranberry Juice

CHICKEN DROP

10 ml Peach Liqueur
10 ml Herbal Liqueur
10 ml Orange juice

SPICE CAKE

10 ml Baileys
10 ml Almond Liqueur
10 ml Cinnamon Schnapps

MEXICAN RED HOT

15 ml Cinnamon Schnapps
15 ml Silver Tequila
Splash of Lime Juice

IRONLUNG

10 ml Canadian Whisky
10 ml Rum
10 ml Cream

COCKTAILS

FRUIT TINGLE

30 ml Blue Curacao
30 ml Raspberry Cordial
Top with Soda Water

MANHATTAN

60 ml Bourbon
30 ml Sweet Vermouth
2 Splashes of Bitters

B52

10 ml Coffee Liqueur
10 ml Baileys
10 ml Cointreau

CHAMPAGNE COBBLER

1 Orange Wedge
1 Lemon Wedge
30 ml Cointreau
60 ml Champagne

HORSES NECK

Lemon peel
60 ml Whisky
Top with Ginger Ale
2 Splashes of Bitters

MINT JULEP

4 Mint Leaves
60 ml Bourbon
Top up with Soda Water
Splash of Sugar Syrup

HOT TODDY

1 Orange Wedge
30 ml Lemon Juice
15 ml Runny Honey
60 ml Whiskey
Top with Hot Water and Nutmeg

PINA COLADA

30 ml Cream
30 ml Coconut Cream
60 ml Cruzan Dark Rum
6 Chunks of Pineapple
2 Splashes of Bitters

MAI TAI

30 ml Lime Juice
15 ml Vanilla Syrup
15 ml Orgeat
30 ml Cointreau
60 ml Cruzan Single Barrel

ZOMBIE

30 ml Lime Juice
15 ml Falernum Syrup
15 ml Grenadine Syrup
45 ml Cruzan Dark Rum
15 ml Cruzan Single Barrel
15 ml Maraschino Liqueur
15 ml Apricot Liqueur
30 ml Orange Juice
30 ml Pineapple Juice
2 Splashes of Bitters

SINGAPORE SLING

30 ml Lime Juice
30 ml Pineapple Juice
15 ml Grenadine Syrup
60 ml Gin
15 ml Cherry Brandy
15 ml Cointreau
15 ml Benedictine
Top with Ginger Ale
2 Splashes of Bitters

SANGRIA

1 Orange Wedge
1 Lemon Wedge
30 ml Sugar Syrup
90 ml Cointreau
180 ml Courvoisier Cognac
60 ml Orange Juice
750 ml Red Wine
Top with Lemonade

SATURDAYS
Saturday 17th April 2010

In Wollongong, an hour from Sydney. Tonight – to check out the clubs. We have just left The Ivory, I am fuming and swearing to god about their bullshit no camera policy. Across the road is The Glasshouse, the next place on our list of clubs to visit.

ASSESSMENT TIME
12:30 pm – 1:30 am

OPENING HOURS
Unknown – 3:00 am

ADDRESS
90 Crown St, Wollongong

WEBSITE
No website available at time of writing

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Casual ok. No hats allowed inside. It was 50/50 casual, collared shirts for guys. Most girls had dresses. Dress up costumes were ok in here as well, as there were a group of people dressed up as the members of KISS.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
\$10. We bargained with the door girl so \$5 for the four of us each.

MUSIC STYLES
R&B, House, Pop, Top 40

CROWD
Mostly local Aussies and Caucasians. Young.

ENTERTAINMENT
No MC. Just podiums.

ATMOSPHERE
In the dance floor it was constantly packed and people were dancing about, but not much signing along. The vibe didn't seem to be there – I think the venue itself just was a bit too airy for intimacy. Outside the dance floor in the bar areas, it was not that busy. You could easily get a stool if you waited around for a minute or two.



A local had advised us the Glasshouse was pretty filthy. So much so that they even sprayed vomit over the cash registers to keep patrons away from the money, ha! Well that was a few years ago. I am pleased to report that tonight seemed clean.

No vomit or slime to be found.

Being the Glasshouse, the walls are of glass. You can see inside and vice versa. Exploiting this fact, M and I started dancing outside one of the glass walls. After a minute or two about 30 people inside the club closest to the glass window are staring and cheering us on. We have, again, taken over the club but this time, without being inside the club! Brilliant stuff!

Someone walked by and yelled out “GROW UP!”

I will take that as a compliment thank you very much.

Glass
house

Etihad

sensations melbourne

SENSATIONS MELBOURNE 31st December 2009

An amazing shower of fireworks falls down upon the setup. Much akin to the waterfall at the Sydney Harbour Bridge – but this is way cooler because I'm right in the middle of it!



ASSESSMENT TIME
10:00 pm – 5:00 am

OPENING HOURS
Early in the night – 3:00 am

LOCATION
Etihad Stadium, Melbourne

WEBSITE
www.sensation.com

DRESS CODE
Wear white, pants, top, skirt, everything.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE:
\$149 from memory

DJ'S
Moto, Edo, Biggie, Flipsta, Cbu, Mike Hyper

MUSIC STYLES
House in the main arena. Trance and funky house in the other rooms. Compared to last year, the music was much better and 'tolerable' I suppose.

ENTERTAINMENT
The whole setup was a show – dancers on the water, fireworks, laser lights, bouncing balls. It was pretty decent

ATMOSPHERE
Very white. We had room to dance. The event didn't sell out but it didn't get squashy packed, regardless it was still a crapload of people here tonight. The atmosphere is buzzing before and during the opening, then we dance. Buzz goes up again around new years midnight, then slowly dissipates as people head home, leaving the hardcores behind until the end.

I am dressed up as Gandalf the White, from the Lord of the Rings. Everybody thought I was dressed as:

Jesus,
Moses,
God,
Santa Claus,
Merlin or
The Kung Fu master from Kill Bill who strokes his beard and laughs really hard.

Primarily, 'Jesus' that was being yelled around. It was "Jesus!" this or "God!" that, which is something I got used to as time went on and eventually I took on as my new persona. Every second people look at me with curiosity. At an average of about once per minute, someone has asked to take a photo with me. I loved it.

I run into a woman who appeared chemically imbalanced. Jesus immediately took hold of the situation and we are pretty much kissing. Then she asks me a strange question.

Woman: Where is my daughter? Have you seen her?
James: no... (more kissing)
Woman: But I want to introduce you to my daughter to hook up with!
James: (OMG this awesome, keep calm James) Yeah... alright... Let's look for her. What does she look like?
Woman: Blonde... Big boobs... Sort of looks like me

How is that description of your daughter going to help? It will help in absolutely no way whatsoever. We never did find her daughter. Her daughter was probably kissing a guy, then asking him if he's seen her mum!



It's near closing time, and people are pointing and looking up. Three people have breached security, jumped up into the water fountains and are dancing along various spots. They are surrounded by security and they dance in defiance. The whole crowd is taking photos and cheering on.

Two of the three are tackled to the ground/water and there remains one sole man. Hopelessly outnumbered, he does only what a dancer can do – he gets down into the shallow water and starts doing the worm! WHOA. This was such a hilarious sight – a guy doing the worm up on stage to the cheers and laughter of the crowd. Loving it. Security for a brief moment looked a bit puzzled but ended up dragging him out of the water to a place unknown.

This Sensations was not as crowded as last year but the solid entertainment kept everybody going. I probably won't come back next year – two new years eves in a row is hectic enough for me, and this year, even though still very epic on its own... Probably didn't have the same amount of buzz as 2008. The DJ lineup wasn't very strong and the event didn't sell out.

Everyone should though, definitely check it out.

Stadium

new years eve

chasers nightclub

FRIDAYS Friday 18th September 2009

In Melbourne for the weekend. A good impression even before I got there. I sent in a guestlist and two minutes later I get a phone call. It was Chasers, asking me to confirm my guestlist and what time I would be arriving – how nice!

ASSESSMENT TIME
11:45 pm - 2:45 am

OPENING HOURS
Unknown

ADDRESS
386 Chapel St, South Yarra, Melbourne

WEBSITE
www.chasersnightclub.com.au

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Casual. I was wearing a fedora hat, blazer, jeans and leather shoes.

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGES
Free before 11:00 pm if on guestlist. \$20 if on guestlist after 11:00 pm. If none of the above, it is \$25.

MUSIC STYLE
R&B. Typical R&B beats mixed well.

CROWD
Dominantly Asian, young.

ATMOSPHERE
Not too many people, but not dead, just in the middle to keep the club going.

As we walked in I saw the most magnificent sight – a larger than life podium in the middle of the floor and it had nobody dancing on it! The thing was elevated probably one metre high, so it was no easy step up.

The place wasn't packed, but it wasn't dead – it was sort of in the middle of verging to collapse in a spiral of death, but it was still pretty good. I would say similar to Verandah Bar, where its crowded on the floor but deadish in other places. I prefer less crowded bars.

One of the bouncers kindly informed me that last week, this place was quite packed and busy, and tonight it wasn't so popular. They were hoping for it to pick up later. It didn't.

We still enjoyed it!

By the end of the night we had been on the podium and had done laps around the dance floor. We were definitely the crazy group everyone was looking at.

We had to leave as two of us got kicked out for being drunk. Oh well, fun times had!

Based on tonight, if I were invited to go to another club, I would go there, simply because of the high entry fee, you would expect a better place. If there were more people tonight this place would definitely be awesome. The venue itself is pretty good. The music was typical R&B but it got us going.



Jade Buddha

SATURDAYS Saturday 19th April 2008

My first time in Brisbane. I was dying to see what Brisbane clubs had to offer.

Jade Buddha is two level restaurant and bar. Outside in the smoking area there's a nice view of the Brisbane river, whatever it's called. I was with my boss for a working weekend. I put on my wig and we set forth.

OPENING HOURS
11:30 am - 3:00 am

ADDRESS
1 Eagle Street, Eagle Street Pier, Brisbane.

WEBSITE
www.jadebuddha.com.au

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Casual. Smart-casual

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE
This place isn't a club. This was more a Brisbane version of Bar 333 on George St. with water views and expensive dinners.

MUSIC STYLE
House

CROWD
Mature

ENTERTAINMENT
The DJ has a live saxophone and bongo drum player. Occasionally 2 dancers dressed in white in the centre garden.

ATMOSPHERE
Relaxed

My boss is in his late 30's, early 40's so I kept the dance moves simple for him to follow. People were looking at us, well, the funky hair I was wearing, but said nothing. Two girls approached us. The girls then started talking... to my boss! I just stood there, my dance moves going limp, watching as the attractive women talk to him instead of me.

What did they ask my boss?

They asked him if he was a teacher! He was wearing his shirt around his neck like a cardigan. Now, looking like that in a nightclub isn't too fashionable but it did get us into their little hen's night circle. I forgot all their names. They were pretty friendly and complimenting my hair.

What did they ask me?

They asked me if I was... gay! I was a young, attractive, sexy, punky Asian guy dancing with an older white guy. It was obvious he was my sugar daddy, wasn't it? I flatly denied it but they refused to accept this truth throughout the night.

Then the hen's night girls took out their penis straws. That's right. Straws with penises with testicles on the end to suck your liquids out of. They then placed them all over our bodies. It was a shocking look.

My wig gets exposed. A random woman walks up to me and takes it off. OMG. How did she know? She told me she had the same wig at home! Damnit! She was hot but her boyfriend was there, laughing away. Oh well. The hen's night girls noticed and approached again. Each and everyone of them tried on the wig and took photos of themselves.

Favela

Friday RnB Nightclub

FRIDAY R&B
Friday 7th May 2010

It's a new promoter, same music and same venue.
Been nagged to go as I was originally going to go
to The Tunnel so here we go!

ASSESSMENT TIME
12:00 am – 3:00 am

OPENING HOURS
Unknown – 3:00 am

LOCATION
Kings Cross, Sydney

WEBSITE
www.favela.com.au

DRESS CODE / DOOR POLICY
Casual ok

ENTRY FEE / COVER CHARGE:
\$25. \$20 on guestlist

MUSIC STYLE
R&B

CROWD
Asians and Euros

ENTERTAINMENT
An MC but that's about it

ATMOSPHERE
Initially pretty shit an later picked up for a short
bit in the main room. Downstairs was a private
function but it was pretty dead.



We ran down to dance in the private function pit but
were kicked out. So sad. Instead we danced near the
bar to our heart's content.

Most of the time in the main R&B dance floor, only
us Asians are dancing. Occasionally some of the other
natio's would dance but its not a very big dance floor.

As I leave, I realise I lost my cloak room ticket. The
guys taunt me and tell me they are going to keep my
stuff. I impressed them with a blood type analysis of
their personality, and they let me have my bag back.

I did not expect much to happen here and I was
right. Don't come here on Friday. It is not worth
the high entry fee.

Prior to clubbing, I had skinny legs.

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

JENNIFER SATO
swinburne.edu.au/design/portfolios/users/1440

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

Black and white photographs taken by James Tran.
Other photos are taken from the following websites:

ARTHOUSE HOTEL
yourbars.com.au

BROOKLYN HOTEL
eyefetch.com

CHASERS NIGHTCLUB
appadvice.com

DOCKS HOTEL
commons.wikimedia.org

DRINKS MENU
channel4.com

ETIHAD STADIUM
stoic.dk

FAVELA NIGHTCLUB
benjaminwerner.com

GLASSHOUSE
examiner.com

HUGOS LOUNGE PIZZA BAR
shangri-la.com

IVY BAR
eatshowandtell.com

JADE BUDDAH
smh.com.au

KAMAKI
rajivawijesinha.wordpress.com

MANSION HOTEL
lastheplace.com

OXFORD ART FACTORY
hmsbacchante.co.uk

TRADEMARK HOTEL
tfigblog.com

For more stories
club reviews
snapshots
and even
videos
visit

JAMESTRAN.NET