

Hollywood's Hottest Spots

Lauren Sherman and Lacey Rose 02.19.07

Krista, a 27-year-old sales manager for an Italian wine company and a staple of the Los Angeles club scene, is gearing up for Oscar week, which promises to be party-heavy.

She spends most evenings working the dance floor at local hot spots [Hyde](#) or [Area](#) or people watching at newly trendy [Winston's](#). But this week Krista is adding a post-screening Oscar party to her schedule (in an effort to keep the event exclusive, she's kept the film and locale to herself).

Though the LA social scene grows ever more insider-driven the week before the Academy Awards (studios, agencies and other entertainment outlets host parties all about town), it, much like the city itself, is dominated by the entertainment crowd year-round.

"The entertainment business has always been the heart and soul of this town, which sets us apart [from Miami and New York]," says Brent Bolthouse, a veteran promoter-turned-night club owner. And today's tastemakers in particular are Young Hollywood types (think the Lindsay Lohan, Nicole Ritchie, Paris Hilton set) who bring the shutterbugs and the buzz.

But whether you're there to hobnob with Hollywood's it-girls and -boys or simply there to rock out with some friends, the LA social scene has something to offer everyone.

See And Be In The Scene

Like many major markets, the turnover for LA nightclubs is brisk. With competition high and popularity a seemingly short-lived notion, posts will often opt to close their doors for a makeover, be it in décor or ownership, as soon as their reputation begins to wane.

Lately, insiders have been favoring laid-back, old school lounges such as [Les Deux](#), though the hotel bar seems to be a perennial favorite as well--particularly hotelier Andre Balzacs' newly remodeled [Bar Marmont](#). "A few years ago people wanted big, crazy nightclubs, and then it moved into hanging out at hotel bars," says Crystal Meers, LA editor of DailyCandy.com, an online newsletter that lets readers in on what's hot, new and undiscovered in their city. "Now people want a more intimate setting and more old-fashioned drinks."

One club that seems to have staying power in this increasingly crowded climate is hot spot Hyde, the brainchild of Bolthouse and SBE Entertainment Group Chief Executive Sam Nazarian. The 100-person West Hollywood space leaves little room for grandiose behavior. Bolthouse, who is also behind West Hollywood's Area, says that Hyde's continued popularity reflects Young Hollywood's desire for a smaller, more intimate setting.

His well-oiled operations certainly attract young and restless stars, but what advice is there to give to your average Angeleno looking to cross the velvet rope?

Top Tips

Bolthouse recommends arriving early (before 11 p.m.) or making table reservations in advance, while Meers suggests pulling out all the stops when it comes to your appearance (stay on top of trends and no tennis shoes, please)--particularly during Oscar week.

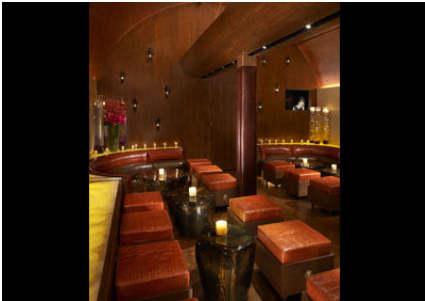
But Krista, our girl about town, says it all comes down to attitude.

"I find that when you have a friendly demeanor and simply ask, 'Can we come in and have a couple of drinks?' the doormen are much more responsive than if you *expect* to be let in," she says.

THE HOT SPOTS:



Area 643 643 N. La Cienega Blvd. West Hollywood **Cover:** Varies (up to \$20) **Cost of a Grey Goose Martini:** \$14
Among the newest spots to rub elbows with the La-Lohan set, this 4-month-old venture from nightlife mogul Sam Nazarian and promoter-turned-club owner Brent Bolthouse offers midcentury modern décor, top-shelf liquor and ultramod servers (think white Go-Go boots). Patrons seek refuge in the pop-art inspired patio area.



Hyde 8029 W. Sunset Blvd. West Hollywood **Cover:** None **Cost of a Grey Goose Martini:** \$16
Since its doors opened last spring, Hyde Lounge has proved the go-to spot for Hollywood's A list. This intimate hideaway, garnished with flickering candle light, offers crocodile-embossed leather banquettes, ottomans and vaulted copper ceilings. Step to the back to enjoy the posh locale's boudoir lounge featuring smoked mirrors and paisley décor



Privilege 8117 W. Sunset Blvd. West Hollywood **Cover:** Varies (up to \$20) **Cost of a Grey Goose Martini:** \$11
Having dropped its boudoir décor, the new Privilege now offers a chic Saint Tropez motif with rich white and blue accents. This Sunset Boulevard hot spot is also dressed up with beach towels, seashells and flickering votives everywhere. Patrons drink fresh juice cocktails while seated in all-white cabana booths throughout the club, and waitresses walk about in themed sarongs.



The Abbey Food & Bar 692 N Robertson Blvd West Hollywood **Cover:** None **Cost of a Grey Goose Martini:** \$12
Hardly new to the scene, this 15-year-old former coffeehouse offers 16,000-square-feet of indoor and outdoor space as well as relaxed ambiance, great food and signature martinis. Typically teeming with males, the perennial hot spot is open from 8 a.m. until 2 a.m.