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BUENOS AIRES AFTER DARK:



THE NIGHT OWL'S GUIDE TO BA'S BARS & CLUBS



ARGENTINASTRAVEL.COM

INTRODUCTION

Steak, wine, and tango are the appetizers of Buenos Aires' nightlife. Consume them in moderation so they don't knock you out before you experience the city's main fare: beautiful people and the dance floors they shake it on.

Surprisingly, the most popular national pastime is neither *futbol* nor *asado*. It is *people watching*. And the best time and place for people watching is about 3 am, in one of the city's popular bars or *boliches* (nightclubs).

In BA you'll have to pace yourself, as a night out often lasts until sunrise. *Porteños* (the locals) have mastered the finer points of going strong, all night long. And the variety in nightlife rivals that of the world's top cities—from tango bars, to chic cafes in turn of the century mansions, to impossibly swanky nightclubs.

As we're all in favor of people watching and dancing til dawn, here is a whirlwind tour of some of the city's *most intriguing venues*.

	Drinks (in Pesos)	Cover (in Pesos)
\$	\$10 -	n/a
\$\$	\$15	Minimal
\$\$\$	\$15 +	\$20 - \$30
\$\$\$\$	\$15 ++	\$30 - \$50

NICETO

📍 Palermo Hollywood



The most consistently hip venue in Buenos Aires is surely Palermo Hollywood's Niceto. Boasting a number of successful weekly parties, a well-designed physical space, and an excellent sound system,

Niceto is the place the hippest bands play when their tour includes South America. From Brooklyn to Stockholm, Niceto brings in the cool kids for the next big thing—whether that means deejays, bands, or cutting edge performance art.



As with any popular spot, get on the list. Most Niceto parties have a pre-2am reduced list you can qualify for by contacting either the promoter or the venue directly. The website is a good place to start. Niceto is English-friendly and generally gets a late start coupled with long lines. Go early to beat the crowd, and don't worry if it seems like no one else is coming—they're sure to show up fashionably late and looking good.

★ Niceto Vega 5510 – Palermo ☎ 4779-9396
📍 www.nicetoclub.com \$\$, Cover varies

CIUDAD KONEX

📍 Abasto



When an industrial factory becomes a nightclub, anything can happen. Though the name sounds less than sexy and the entrance is marked by a giant Kmart-style “K,” Konex is one of Buenos Aires' most exciting places to spend an evening.

The cavernous space boasts nightly live theater—everything from a production of **Rent** to serious original theater and circus acrobats.

Weekly performances by *La Bomba del Tiempo* include scores of percussion of every variety and bring in popular music artists as guests. Its Mondays and Wednesdays are only surpassed by its weekend mega-parties. A Saturday night on the parking-lot-turned-dance-floor could be your best avenue into Buenos Aires' version of global get down. Konex is where djs and live bands play everything from Balkan ska to Brazilian *baile funk*.



Save your Jimmy Choos for Milion (see below). Wear comfortable flats or sneakers and be ready to handle the hard concrete. The Konex really was a factory and looks it, although it received a colorful makeover. The bathrooms are especially brilliant.

★ Sarmiento 3131 ☎ 4864-3200
📍 www.ciudadculturalakonex.org \$, Cover

MILION

🍷 Recoleta

If you enjoy lounging in turn-of-the-century mansions, sipping elegant cocktails, and looking out on a luxurious garden, then this bar could be your new best friend. Milion's crowd is composed of Europeans, North Americans, and Argentine celebrities. Polo players and models are known to make appearances, adding to the mesmerizing mix of beautiful people.



Oak floors, a genteel bar and warmly lit nooks create such a warm atmosphere it's possible to wile away hours in what truly feels like the lap of luxury. The spirits are divine and worth every peso, especially when you remember that your \$18 peso drink is only \$6 US, and that you are sipping it in what feels like your own mansion.



Dine in the garden if possible but remember to call ahead of time to reserve a table. When there's a crowd at the bar, try the second bar downstairs across the garden—making your way through the lovely crowd is a pleasure.

★ Parana 1048 – Recoleta 📞 4815-9925
🌐 www.milion.com.ar \$\$, No cover

BAR GUEVARA

🍷 San Telmo

Palermo is not the only neighborhood for nightlife in Buenos Aires, though you may be tempted to believe it is. San Telmo does a nice job of keeping you busy until the sun comes up as well.

A great “last stop on the party train” can be Guevara, where locals get serious at the bar, on a budget. With a well-stocked selection and a boisterous crowd, this bi-level tree house of a watering hole is the opposite of Palermo in its own bohemian way. It's old, full of character(s), and never disappoints.



Bartenders take orders from the balcony upstairs. If you're not up for dealing with the stairs and pushing through the crowd, just lean over the railing and make your request.

★ Humberto Primo 463 at Defensa, off Plaza Dorrego –
San Telmo 📞 4361-2020 \$, No cover

KIM Y NOVAK

Palermo Soho



Kim y Novak is most often described as fabulous and trashy. Like the clientele it serves, the place manages to look surprisingly none the

worse for wear. It's a good looking, hip space for rebel socialites and retired art and rock groupies alike.

Upstairs, the main room sports a "Barbie's First Diner" kind of interior. A 60's mod décor adorns the downstairs bar, where all the dancing, sexual favors, and dealing happen. In nice weather, the crowd spills out onto the sidewalk.

The inside is a bit grimier and wilder on late nights, when the tranny & trustafarian crews show up for their party favors. If you're looking for instant gratification, action of any flavor, or excellent people watching, most late nights at Kim y Novak are better than a Saturday night at the most elusive, exclusive affair.

💡 Don't even think about using the bathroom to relieve yourself – it's not that kind of bathroom.

★ Guemes 4900 at Godoy Cruz – Palermo
☎ 4773-7521 🌐 kimynovak.blogspot.com
| \$, No monetary cover

OCHO7OCHO

Palermo

Secret bars are always a good time, on any continent.

Thames 878 is the address for this particular hidden bar, where you can dine on delicious tapas and imbibe gorgeous cocktails from one of the most extensive drink menus in the city.



Once you ring the buzzer on the street and are admitted, the doors to the former home open into a spacious room with large black leather sofas grouped around low tables, a bar and cocktail tables and chairs. The high, beamed ceilings add to the elegance of your find. The epitome of good taste, Ocho7Ocho is one of those rare hip spots that shows stamina and is likely to be around after its opulent neighbors have faded away.

💡 Blended drinks in Buenos Aires tend to go overboard on sugar. You can order your "daiquiri" with half the regular amount of the sweet stuff.

★ Thames 878 – Palermo
☎ 4773-1098 \$\$, No cover

RUMI

Y Belgrano



Rumi is a great place to make an acquaintance in Recoleta who might invite you to his or her family's "country." A "country" refers to a vacation house in a gated community outside of Buenos Aires.

Rumi's deejays cater to an international crowd, where

the dance floor is always well attended and the bottle service is in demand. Think, "New York City velvet rope" and dress to impress.

The difference between Rumi and any other big city nightclub is the blend of friendly Argentines and Brazilians who strike a pose but are happy to chat. There's also the fact that the fancy cocktails in this posh setting won't leave you broke and cab-less.



Keep the phone number of a cab or car service on you in the event that you can't find a Radio taxi at 5 a.m. in front of Rumi. It isn't likely, but it's a nice precaution.

★ Av. Figueroa Alcorta 6442 – Belgrano
☎ 4782-1307 🌐 rumiba.com.ar
\$\$\$\$, Cover varies

COCOLICHE

Y Downtown



Before the tragedy of Cromagnon, a nightclub fire which claimed nearly 200 lives in 2004, Buenos Aires was littered with underground clubs and

bars, many of which were not up to code. The lack of code enforcement has changed since the tragedy thankfully, and Cocoliche now safely upholds that underground tradition as a former townhouse turned nightclub.

It's a charming space where locals mingle at the bar or head downstairs to dance away what's left of the night. More makeshift than elegant, Cocoliche manages to be in-between dive and velvet rope, and is always a fresh experience.



Bring the street address with you, as this spot (like many) is unmarked. You'll feel like you're crashing a house party until you make your way up the stairs to the bar and realize you are, in fact, in a public place.

★ Rivadavia 878 – Downtown ☎ 4331-6413
🌐 www.cocoliche.net \$\$, No cover

ROXY CLUB V. CROBAR

Y Palermo & Colegiales

If you want what's known in Argentina as *punchi punchi*—trance or hard house—check out **Crobar**, under the bridge in Palermo Park. Crobar, like its sister clubs around the world, is a serious party destination. A large disco with a mostly professional crowd of 20 and 30-somethings, committing to Crobar is tantamount to saying, “I came to dance with lots of people, and choose to leave any sort of sobriety behind me.” There are multiple rooms including a chill out space, but the attraction is the main dance floor and the *punchi punchi*.

If you're looking for go-go dancers, multiple rooms, and familiar dance hits, head to **Roxy Club** in Palermo Hollywood. Roxy pulls out all the stops for big club nights, including costumed hosts, fog machines, and projections. The main room and lounge/balcony play a mix of Latin, hip hop, 80's, and electronica/dance.



If you meet someone you'd like to have an actual conversation with, head upstairs to the third level where it's usually more relaxed. You'll have a better chance of hearing the person, even if neither of you can understand a word the other is saying.

★ **Roxy:** Alvarez Thomas 3455 at Federico Lacroze – Colegiales ☎ 4899-0313 \$\$\$, Cover

★ **Crobar:** Avenida Libertador 3881 arco 17 – Alto Palermo ☎ 4778-1500 \$\$\$\$, Cover

LOST CULTURE CLUB

Y Palermo

There are a number of big discotheques in Buenos Aires but this one is less cheesy than some and more accessible than others. On Thursdays, it also boasts the only “radio,” hip hop party in Buenos Aires. You'll hear all the hits and meet fun-loving Argentines and foreigners alike on the dance floor.

With a large main room boasting high ceilings and a balcony/lounge, it's easy to stay in the middle of the action without feeling claustrophobic. There are dancers on raised boxes and a projection screen. You may even catch some break dancing and local rappers if you arrive early.

★ Araoz 2424 – Palermo
☎ No phone listed \$\$\$, Cover

BONUS—TELO HOPPING!

If you can participate in a telo hop, you are one sexy traveler. It's hard to believe, but checking into a pay-by-the-hour hotel is both common and respectable in Buenos Aires.

Everybody's doing it—literally. *Telos* range from simple, to campy, to high-class, and all are extremely discreet. You drive in, pay at the drive through window, and continue straight to your room. A door from the parking lot opens to your room, which can include a Jacuzzi, mirrors, and themed props.

A dumbwaiter serves breakfast in bed or buckets of champagne so that there is zero contact with the outside world. Argentines treat a *telo* like a romantic mini-getaway. If a semblance of local status is your goal, you cannot avoid a visit to a *telo*.

JUST MISSED THE LIST!

We tried to avoid going *too* mainstream, but just in case, below is a list of notable venues that would've made the list if this weren't a short whirlwind tour of BA nightlife.

Name	☎	★	📍
Asia de Cuba	4894 1328 4894 1329	P. Dealessi 750 – Puerto Madero	asiadecuba.com.ar
Mint	(15) 5461 3665	Far end of Punta Carrasco– Downtown	
Pacha	4788 4280	Costanera Norte y Pampa – Downtown	pachabuenosaires.com
Club Museum	4654 1774	Peru 535 – Downtown	clubmuseum.com.ar
Le Cigale	4312 8275	25 de Mayo 722 - Downtown	
Bahrein	4315 2403	Lavalle 345 – Downtown	bahreinba.com
Le Bar	5219 0858	Tucumán 422 – Downtown	
Amerika		Gascon 1040	ameri-k.com.ar
Congo	4833 5857	Honduras 5329 – Palermo	

All these are on the to-do list, if time and stamina allows!

LISTINGS

More Parties and Events:

Try your neighborhood *Centro Cultural* for artsy happenings and bohemian crowds or check the flyers posted in popular areas like Plaza Serrano and around Plaza Dorrego for single night events and parties. Take it from ATG, Buenos Aires can be the perfect city to lose sleep over!

Helpful Events Websites:

www.Wipe.com.ar — lists weekly events.

WhatsupBuenosAires.com — lists parties in English.

HipHopBaires.com — features weekly parties in Spanish.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Eve Hyman is a writer and musician living in historic San Telmo, Buenos Aires. Originally from California, she has called Paris and Florence home and has spent the past five years getting in touch with her inner New Yorker. She writes for publications based in New York, DC, LA, and San Francisco. Thanks to the mobility of new media, this past year found her trading the Lower East Side for the cobblestone streets of BA.

STAYING SAFE

- Do not walk alone on the street at night, or after too many drinks, whether at 3 a.m. or 7 a.m. The sun may be up but the streets are empty. Not a good time to be cruising the streets, even if your hostel is only 10 blocks away.
- Call taxis or ask the barman to call one for you. If you catch a cab on the street, go with a friend.
- Carry a small purse or bag. Big bags draw attention and are easier to get into.
- If you are taking a bus, wait at a stop with others or in front of a café, bar or restaurant. Don't wait alone.
- It's always a good idea to hide taxi money on your body in the event that you lose your wallet or you spend everything in it.



*Having fun doesn't mean being dumb.
Why let something avoidable spoil the fun?*



Argentina's Travel Guide

Your Online Guidebook to Argentina