

V Bar at The Venetian.



V AND BE SEEN

With a bold new aesthetic, hot crowd, and relaxed atmosphere, **V Bar at The Venetian** appeals to the Vegas voyeur in all of us. *By August Leigh*

After a multi-stage remodel completed just before revelers donned their “New Year’s 2009” party hats, V Bar is once again making an impressive impact on the Vegas nightlife scene. Created by the masterminds behind the stylish Sunset Room in Los Angeles and Lotus in New York City, V Bar is known for its sophisticated ambience as well as for serving some of the best cocktails in town.

Tucked quietly away near the *Blue Man Group* Theatre inside The Venetian, V Bar’s creators refined the establishment’s versatile interior to appeal to a multitude of senses. In contrast to mega-clubs such as TAO at The Venetian, this hideaway provides the intimacy of a smaller bar, but with an urban, trendy kick. It’s no surprise that the resort’s performers and celebrities, including Wayne Brady and the *Blue Man Group* cast, have been known to stop by on occasion.

Here, sophistication is combined with striking aesthetics—frosted-glass walls separate the bar’s interior from the hustle and bustle of the casino and double

as projection screens. Deep ebony hardwood floors guide patrons beyond the ropes into the club, where there’s never a cover charge.

Upon entering the intimate space, the bar lies directly ahead, framed by Mondrian-esque dividers. In the early evening, backless stools line the length of the bar, but as the energy of a night out in Vegas elevates, they’re removed to allow for mingling and dancing. For those looking for a quieter, more secluded spot to enjoy a tasty cucumber martini, a smaller, more private area with a zone-controlled audio system is neatly tucked to the left. VIP booths

are available for nightclub patrons in search of exclusive treatment without the complication of long lines and guest lists.

Inside V Bar, the walls’ crisp vertical lines balance the sleek curves of double-sided banquettes upholstered in rich chocolate fabric and faux crème-colored reptile skin. For a high-tech twist, Sensitile decorative tabletops with LED lighting respond to movement, shadows, and color, creating an ever-changing array of lights and moods during the evening.

Also part of V Bar’s recent remodel: a new DJ

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Style After Dark



ABOVE: Bar manager Justin Alferez mixes up one of V Bar's signature Strawberry Basilinis;
RIGHT: The lounge's VIP area.



booth, where resident turntablists spin the latest in hip-hop, house, mash-ups, and dance on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. In addition, VJs hype the crowd with live video-mixing on 50-inch plasma-screen televisions. Dancing on the settees is not just allowed, but encouraged.

Just as V Bar's décor received an update, so did its cocktail menu. Bar manager Justin Alferez recommends the Green Tea-*ni*, a delectable combination of Zen green tea liqueur, Absolut Mandrin vodka, fresh-squeezed lime juice, and an edible orchid garnish. Also on the list of must-try cocktails is the Strawberry Basilini, which includes Bombay Sapphire gin and fresh strawberries.

Opening daily at 5 P.M., V Bar's proximity to the Sands Expo Center makes it an ideal first stop for those in need of relaxation after a long day of networking and presentations, and half-priced cocktails until 8 P.M. help take the edge off a stressful day. V Bar's nearness to The Venetian's Restaurant Row also makes it a prime destination for after-dinner drinks. For those gearing up for a night on the town, an Espresso Martini, made

with Espresso vodka, Frangelico hazelnut liqueur, and Godiva chocolate liqueur, is just the thing to kick-start an evening.

V Bar can also be the last stop before retiring for the evening. Open until 2 A.M. Sunday through Wednesday, and 3 A.M. Thursday through Saturday, guests can stop in for a nightcap (without paying a cover charge) amid subdued lighting and a laid-back atmosphere. Try the Lotus Blossom (Kai lychee-flavored vodka and lychee purée), Pear Martini (with fresh pear-slice garnish), or Raspberry Bliss. Cool, sweet endings to a hot desert night.

Want to really create a special night at V Bar? Events ranging from fashion shows to private parties can be catered with exotic pan-Asian or continental cuisine and hors d'oeuvres for up to 300 guests.

With no dress code, a diverse demographic of patrons, and a friendly, knowledgeable staff, it's no wonder V Bar has earned the honor of "Best Hotel Bar" from readers of City Search on more than one occasion. When in town, be sure to stop by Vegas' first and foremost "ultra-lounge." *V Bar at The Venetian*, 702-414-3200. ■