



The weird and wonderful surrounds of Lounge Lover

RETURN to the ROARING 20s

There's something about the heady days of prohibition and the thrill of sneaking into bars through hidden doorways that holds timeless appeal – which goes some way to explain why today's best cocktail parlours, in the fashion capitals of London-Paris-New York, are looking to the 20s and stealing a touch of the era's decadence

LOUNGE LOVER Clinging to the edge of achingly-hip Redchurch Street, Lounge Lover is a trove of taxidermy, gilt-edge mirrors and velvet upholstery. This kitsch yet sumptuous affair was originally born out of an old meat packing factory, transformed into a decadently swish cocktail lounge. Perfect for postprandial posturing. 1 Whitby Street, E1; lounge lover.uk.com

DRINK, SHOP & DANCE A place of two halves, the upstairs coffee house is all sweetness and light – think crockery and cake with a side of 50s-quirkiness. Descending to the basement will take you into a reformed sex shop now enjoying low lighting, cocktails and infused gin. 9 Caledonian Road, N1; drinkshopdance.com

LA BODEGA NEGRA You might call the UK sister of New York's La Esquina two-faced. A sunny taqueria at street level serves up spicy Mexican street food to a backdrop of soft jazz, while round the corner a flickering neon sex shop sign marks the spot of its restaurant. Built into the old arches of Soho's underbelly, food here is washed down with hand-crafted mezcal and tequila cocktails. 16 Moor Street / 9 Old Compton Street, W1; labodeganegra.com

PROUD By day, this 200-year-old Grade II-listed horse hospital is a gallery, then by night, drapes are teased down, a stage goes up and burlesque dancers writhe and feather themselves as part of a dramatic, late-night lair/supper club experience. *The Horse Hospital, NW1; proud Camden.com*

PURL Occupying the vaults of a Georgian townhouse, Purl is a reservations-only den with a focus on strong liquor and cocktail wizardry. Expect expertly mixed drinks served with smoke and low-level pyrotechnics.

Music plays at barely a whisper. 50/54 Blandford Street, W1; purl-london.com

MAYOR OF SCAREDY CAT TOWN Pluck up the courage to climb through the pale-blue Smeg fridge and descend into a playful drinking space filled with stripped wood, moose heads and twirling mirror balls. Expect serious cocktails and bluesy tunes too. *The Breakfast Club, 12-16 Artillery Lane, E1; themayorofscaredycattown.com*

THE CANDELIGHT CLUB Dust off that flapper dress and find your dancing feet at the pop-up Candlelight Club. With live jazz, glowing candles and a bespoke cocktail menu on hand, all that's left to do is shake off inhibitions and do the Charleston. candlelightclub.com

GILBERT SCOTT Harking back to the golden age of rail travel, the Gilbert Scott bar at St Pancras is the very example of opulence. Bathed in golden light from giant bell chandeliers, the space feels expensive and the ambience is spectacularly elegant; plus the drinks menu changes seasonally. *St Pancras Renaissance Hotel, NW1; thegilbertscott.com*



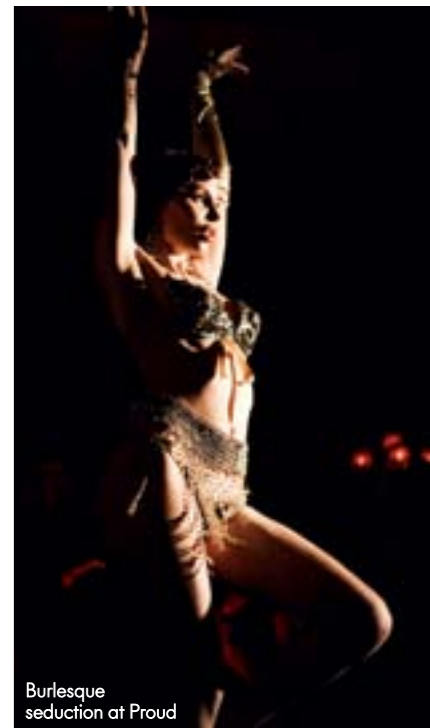
Chill out in the intimate surrounds of Purl FAR LEFT Homemade infusion at Drink, Shop & Dance



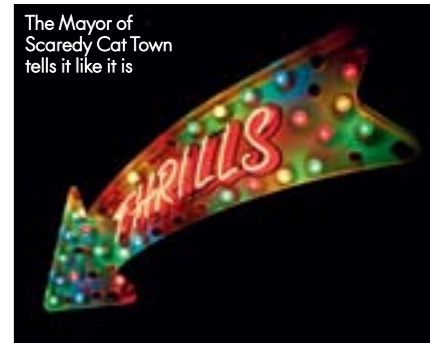
One half of La Bodega Negra's seductively spicy offering



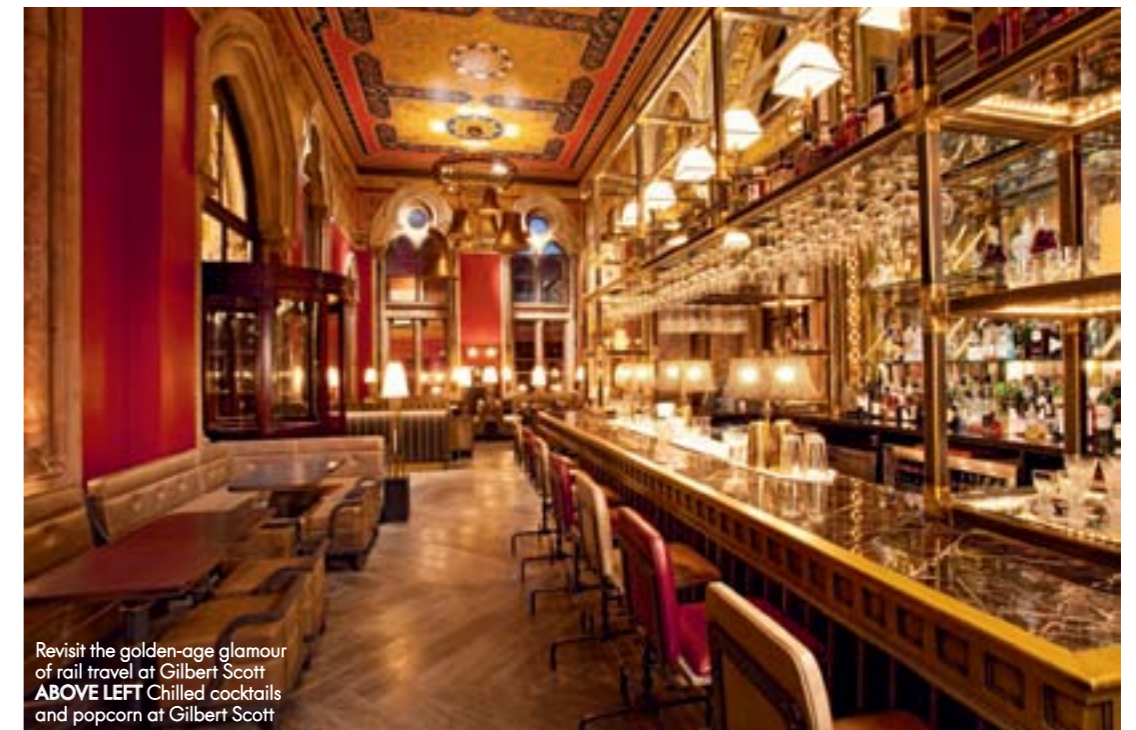
Prop up the bar and kick back some serious cocktails at Drink, Shop & Dance



Burlesque seduction at Proud



The Mayor of Scaredy Cat Town tells it like it is



Revisit the golden-age glamour of rail travel at Gilbert Scott ABOVE LEFT Chilled cocktails and popcorn at Gilbert Scott



Norwood Club's mostly elegant lounge leads to a secret garden and, **ABOVE RIGHT**, one of its sumptuous restaurants



Get a short and a shave at the Blind Barber



Lounge on a Chesterfield at Raines Law Room



Step into the bizarre subterranean world of David Lynch's Silencio



Drink with the old boys at the revived Rum House

Squeeze up close to the bartender at Le Crocodile

NORWOOD CLUB This members-only club is arranged over the five floors of a Georgian townhouse. Strict entry requirements ensure you'll be supping New York's finest gin slings with models, artists and creative luminaries. A leafy, walled garden has been the scene of many a sun-filled brunch and unashamedly-debauched late-night party. 241 West, 14th Street, New York; norwoodclub.com

THE BLIND BARBER We wouldn't usually advocate the combined use of strong liquor and scissors, but in the case of Blind Barber, we'll make an exception. Just sit yourself in an antique chair in this narrow old-school grooming shop and let the bartender bring you a playfully named Sweeny Todd short to accompany your wet shave. An atmospheric cocktail saloon is concealed to the rear, complete with

worn-chequered floors, heavy brass taps and faded black-and-white snaps. 339 E 10th Street, New York; blindbarber.com

RAINES LAW ROOM Head down a set of stairs to an unmarked door, ring the bell and let the doorman welcome you into plush surrounds. Raines' operate a 'no reservations' policy, and innovatively, there is no bar. Punters are seated in velvet-covered booths and each table is fitted with a discreet buzzer so you can ring for service. 48 West, 17th Street, New York; raineslawroom.com

THE RUM HOUSE Darkwood panelling and candlelight provide an ideal environ for a night of rum drinking. Located off the lobby of the Edison Hotel, Time Square's newest old watering hole is glorious. Drop in for a nightcap with the old boys at the piano. Edison Hotel, 228 West 47th Street, New York; edisonrumhouse.com

LE CROCODILE Masked by heavy wooden doors and a strict bouncer who will invariably try to convince you this slip of a drinking den is closed, Le Crocodile is in fact most likely open and raucous. If you manage to sneak in, reward yourself with a stiff cocktail – the bar has been here since 1966, so it has its mixology skills finely tuned. 6 rue Royer-Collard, Paris

SILENCIO David Lynch's noirish bar, named after his iconic film, *Mulholland Drive*, is hidden a steep six flights underground. All low lights and gold-leaf finishing, its decor, along with cabaret soirées and smoking forest are a draw with members. It also plays host to live gigs, food and film screenings. Built within tottering distance of Molière's alleged burial place – the same postcode where Zola printed *Jaccuse*, local heritage will inspire you to behave like a game changer. 142 rue de Montmartre, Paris ●