

Cardiff

Posted on Fri, 13 September 2024 by Christian and Nick

In our Cardiff podcast we vada the reviews for the gay bars and clubs of Cardiff's gay scene! We raise a glass in The Golden Cross, Mary's, The Eagle, Main Stage, The Kings and Pulse. Along the way we also find time to discuss non-slip shoes, 'Hen Dues' and Shirley Bassey's boa.

Fun Facts about Cardiff

Cardiff, the capital of Wales, is a city with a rich history, which was built by the Romans and was originally called Caer-Taff, a castle (caer) by the river Taff. Talking of the Taff, in the 18th century the authorities fixed a chair to the end of a long

piece of timber and suspended it over the river, and forced people to sit on it as a punishment. For example, in 1739 a woman called Elizabeth Jones was “chaired” for being “a common narrator or scandalmonger, eavesdropper who hearkened after news”. Seems like a hefty punishment for a bit of gossiping! Whilst this particular chair no longer exists, you can today visit an award-winning toilet in Cardiff. The Wales Millenium Centre has won “Loo of the Year” awards – twice! Cardiff is also home to the oldest record store in the world, Spillers Records which opened its doors in 1894. And talking of music, Ivor Novello the composer was born in Cardiff as were singers, Shakin Stevens, Charlotte Church and of course Shirley Bassey.

The Cardiff Gay Scene

Cardiff has a vibrant gay scene, with all the main venues being within walking distance of each other with some long-established venues like The Golden Cross, Mary’s and Eagle who are joined some new kids on the block such as the Queer Emporium, a collective of over 15 local LGBT+ businesses operating in the same premises.

Mary’s

Mary’s is a gay cabaret bar offering (according to their Instagram) “local, UK and worldwide cabaret” as well as playing host to Drag Idol Wales. Open seven days a week on St Mary’s Street, the bar boasts “fabulous cocktails and an extensive range of premium gins”. Regular theme nights include Miss Kitty’s Ditty on a Monday, which promises “songs and games”, as well as Aunty Aida and Betty’s Bingo on a Sunday

Website: https://www.maryscardiff.co.uk/cardiff

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/MarysCardiff

Address: 89 St Mary St, Cardiff CF10 1DW

King’s

King’s is to be found on Churchill Way. It has a fairly modern interior, a lot of neon strip lighting and a decent sized smoking terrace. They’re quite keen on the karaoke, which takes place on Sundays and Thursdays, and drag queen Jolene Dover is a regular fixture, hosting several nights throughout the week.

Website: https://www.canalquarter.uk/thekings

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/kingscardiff/

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/kingscardiff/

Address: 10 Churchill Way, Cardiff CF10 2DX

Pulse

Across the street from King's, Pulse is a nightclub, only open Fridays and Saturdays from 10pm until 5am. The venue consists of a ground floor bar and a basement dancefloor.

Website: https://www.canalquarter.uk/pulse

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pulsecardiff/

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/pulsecardiff

Address: 3 Churchill Way, Cardiff CF10 2HD

Main Stage (reported as permanently closed)

Main Stage is a gay cafe-bar by day with cabaret at night, plus DJs, dancing and cocktails.

Website: http://main-stage.co.uk/

The Golden Cross

The Golden Cross is a Grade II listed public house, with the current building dating from 1903 and is noted for its distinctive ceramic tiling, but a pub has existed on the site since 1849 when it "developed a reputation as the smartest brothel in town". More recently The Golden Cross has become a popular gay venue, with regular drag acts and entertainment. CAMRA describes the Golden Cross as "the most spectacularly decorated of any in Wales". The bar tiles feature distinctive corner grotesques and the pub has one of only fourteen remaining ceramic bar counters in the United Kingdom.

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/goldencrosscardiff/

Address: 283 Hayes Bridge Road, Cardiff, CF10 1GH

The Eagle (permanently closed)

The Eagle is a basement bar whose mission is to celebrate diversity and provide a space where everyone can be their authentic selves, with karaoke events, bingo and quiz nights. Friday and Saturday after midnight, it becomes a men's only club and reverts to its Eagle roots.

Eclipse Bar

Eclipse Bar is now to be found where The Eagle used to be.

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Eclipsebarcardiff/

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/eclipsecardiff

Address: 39 Charles St, Cardiff CF10 2GB

Visit www.theonetofiveguide.com for our Gay Scene Guides to: Newcastle, Brighton, Leeds, Soho, Cardiff, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Blackpool, Glasgow, Belfast, London, Liverpool and the Regions. And finally, please remember that even if we are a little tongue in cheek in our podcast, we do love each and every venue on the scene, and we urge you all to get out there and support your local gay bars!