

Belfast

Posted on Fri, 5 September 2025 by Christian and Nick

In our Belfast podcast, we charter a ferry across the Irish Sea to explore the bars and clubs of the Belfast gay scene and soak up the atmosphere in Kremlin, The Maverick, Boombox and Union Street Bar. Along the way we bump into Novak Djokovic, a magical house-elf and thirty rugby lads…

Fun Facts about Belfast

Belfast, the capital city of Northern Ireland, is steeped in a rich tapestry of history, culture, and political transformation.

The name Belfast derives from the Irish Béal Feirste – Mouth of the Farset river. Just outside Belfast there is a neolithic henge monument which predates the Egyptian pyramids and is known as the Giant's Ring.

Known for its pivotal role in the industrial revolution, Belfast was once a global powerhouse in shipbuilding, most famously constructing the RMS Titanic and the home of the iconic Harland & Wolff cranes, Samson and Goliath. On a different note, James Murray invented Milk of Magnesia in Belfast in 1829 to treat the stomach pain of the Marquess of Anglesey. It worked – and got him a knighthood in the process.

The city's historical significance is of course also marked by its experiences during the Northern Ireland conflict, known as "The Troubles," which impacted the city and its communities deeply.

The Belfast Gay Scene

In recent years, a lively if compact gay scene has evolved in Belfast with bars to be found around Union Street on the edge of the Cathedral Quarter. There are also pop-up nights in a variety of locations including those organised by Harland & Poof.

Starting back in 1991, Belfast hosts a big Pride Festival every July with 150 events spreading over 10 days and which bills itself as a protest and a celebration, a call for equality and a stand for solidarity for the LGBTQ community in Belfast and beyond.

Kremlin

Kremlin is located on Upper Donegall Street, Kremlin opened in 1999 and was Northern Ireland's first ever gay-owned and managed nightclub. Famously, on its opening night, the venue was evacuated due to a bomb scare and drag queen Titty Von Tramp made headlines posing on the bonnet of a bomb patrol unit. Its extravagant décor, described as "Soviet-style industrial opulence" was inspired by the uprising of the Russian workers' revolution, mixed with the lavishness of Tsar Nicholas' Palaces. It has three distinct areas; Tsar (a stylish cocktail lounge), the Long Bar (a two-level disco bar) and Red Square (a two-level club arena) which plays host to resident DJs and live acts.

Website: https://www.kremlin-belfast.com/

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Kremlin.Belfast

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

Address: 96 Donegall St, Belfast BT1 2GW

The Maverick

The Maverick describes itself as “a radical alternative at the heart of Belfast’s queer quarter”. On the corner of Union Street and Donegall Street, a pub has existed on the site since 1872, but it was relaunched as The Maverick and went gay in 2013, offering regular drag entertainment, DJs sets and cabaret nights. It’s open until 1am seven days a week and shares a building with Boombox, the upstairs nightclub

Website: https://www.themaverickbelfast.com/

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

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

Address: 1 Union Street, Belfast BT1 2JK

Boombox

Boombox is upstairs from Maverick and is open 7 nights a week from 10pm till late. It is known for its themed nights and live music events featuring local and international performers

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

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

Address: 108 Donegall St, Belfast BT1 2GX

Union Street Bar

Situated in a 19th century shoe factory, Union Street Bar spans three floors, with four different areas, and offers entertainment seven nights a week.

The Main Bar is home to entertainment of all sorts throughout the week from cabaret and karaoke to smart phone table quizzes, while the Green Room is a more

intimate space for cocktails and conversation. There’s also the Roof – which as its name suggests is a rooftop bar – and The Shoe Factory Room for more cabaret and dancing.

Website: https://www.unionstreetbar.com/

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

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

Address: 8-14 Union St, Belfast BT1 2JF

Visit www.theonetofiveguide.com for our Gay Scene Guides to: Newcastle, Brighton, Leeds, Soho, Cardiff, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Blackpool, Glasgow, Belfast, London and Liverpool. 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!