

Glasgow

Posted on Fri, 8 August 2025 by Christian and Nick

In our Glasgow podcast, we raise a wee dram north of the border as we vada the gay bars and clubs of Glasgow's pink triangle! We experience the delights of Delmonicas, Speakeasy, The Polo Lounge, and The Waterloo. Along the way we sample sleazy disco, knickerbockers and shortbread fingers.

Fun Facts about Glasgow

Glasgow is Scotland's largest city where you can expect to be called "hen," "pal," or "ya wee rocket" – often all in the same sentence. Its patron saint is Saint Mungo

who is also the patron saint of salmon!

Now there's a reason some people still call their raincoat a "Mackintosh" – and it's thanks to a Glaswegian. In the early 19th century, Glaswegian chemist Charles Macintosh was experimenting with chemical dyes and stumbled across something extraordinary: a way of waterproofing cotton. By glueing together two layers of cotton between a rubber liquid, Macintosh (finally!) found a way to create waterproof clothing.

It's the city which gave the world Lulu, Gerry Rafferty, and Wet Wet Wet … and also the lovely Lorraine Kelly!

Since the 1980s at least The Duke of Wellington statue outside Glasgow's Gallery of Modern Art has always had a traffic cone on his head. The council once tried to stop it but Glaswegians objected, and the cone stayed

The Glasgow Gay Scene

Homosexuality was only decriminalised in Scotland in 1980 with quite a lot of hostility evident at the time. Bronski Beat's song Smalltown Boy in many ways captures a snapshot of the era perfectly, with Glaswegian singer Jimmy Somerville speaking openly about the abuse he received in the city which ultimately forced him to move down to London.

From the early to mid-1970s, there were really only three places for the LGBT+ community to go in Glasgow: The Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington just next door and the famous Vintners on Clyde Street, with the latter two so busy on a Saturday night you could hardly get in the door. Recalled fondly for its endless staircase to enter and its Carlsberg and Blackcurrant, The Vintners was considered the place to be and was run by a woman with a massive beehive.

Today, as you'd expect, has plenty of LGBT venues, the majority of these clubs being found in the Merchant City (or the "Pink Triangle", as it's known) and they all have their own unique selling point.

Delmonicas

Located in Virginia Street, in the fashionable Merchant City district, Delmonicas is a bar that's been at the heart of the Glasgow queer community since 1991 providing,

according to their website, “more glitter and campness than Judy Garland walking down the yellow brick road”. A packed roster of weekly entertainment includes Drag-aoke on a Monday, Suck Wednesdays, a long-running weekly drag show, and Let’s Get Quizzical Thursdays. Open every day until 1am, they offer a pool table, free wi-fi and newspapers, and a food menu – indeed they are well known for their fabulous Pizza and Prosecco deals!

Website: https://delmonicas.co.uk/

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

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

Address: 68 Virginia St, Glasgow G1 1TX

Speakeasy

Situated on John Street, Speakeasy is a self-styled ‘drinking den’, open Thursday to Sunday until 3am, where, according to the website, “anything goes and everyone is welcome…as long as you play by our rules!” They offer private booths, which are available for hire, as is the ‘Trophy Room’, which can accommodate up to ninety people for a sit-down dinner: ideal for weddings, hen dos and the like. When not being used for such purposes, the Trophy Room is, apparently, a Saturday night institution, “bringing you a full fat dollop of unapologetic pop, eighties bangers, sleazy disco and high-power ballads”.

Website: https://speakeasyglasgow.co.uk/

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

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

Address: 10 John St, Glasgow G1 1JQ

The Polo Lounge

The Polo Lounge is a Glasgow institution situated on Wilson Street right in the heart of the city offering as much pop, sleaze, cheese and disco as you can handle.

Set over two floors, it has four rooms made up of the Polo Lounge, Riding Room,

Polo Club and Club X

Website: https://www.pologlasgow.co.uk/

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

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

Address: 84 Wilson St, Glasgow G1 1UZ

The Waterloo

The Waterloo is a gay pub with a loyal clientele, and according to its Google profile it draws in drinkers of all ages “with stained glass and a muted red and gold façade”.

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/waterloobar1

Address: 306 Argyle St, Glasgow G2 8LY

Also check out:

AXM

Website: https://axmclubglasgow.com/

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

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

Address: 90 Glassford St, Glasgow G1 1UR

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!