

# BAR HOPPING

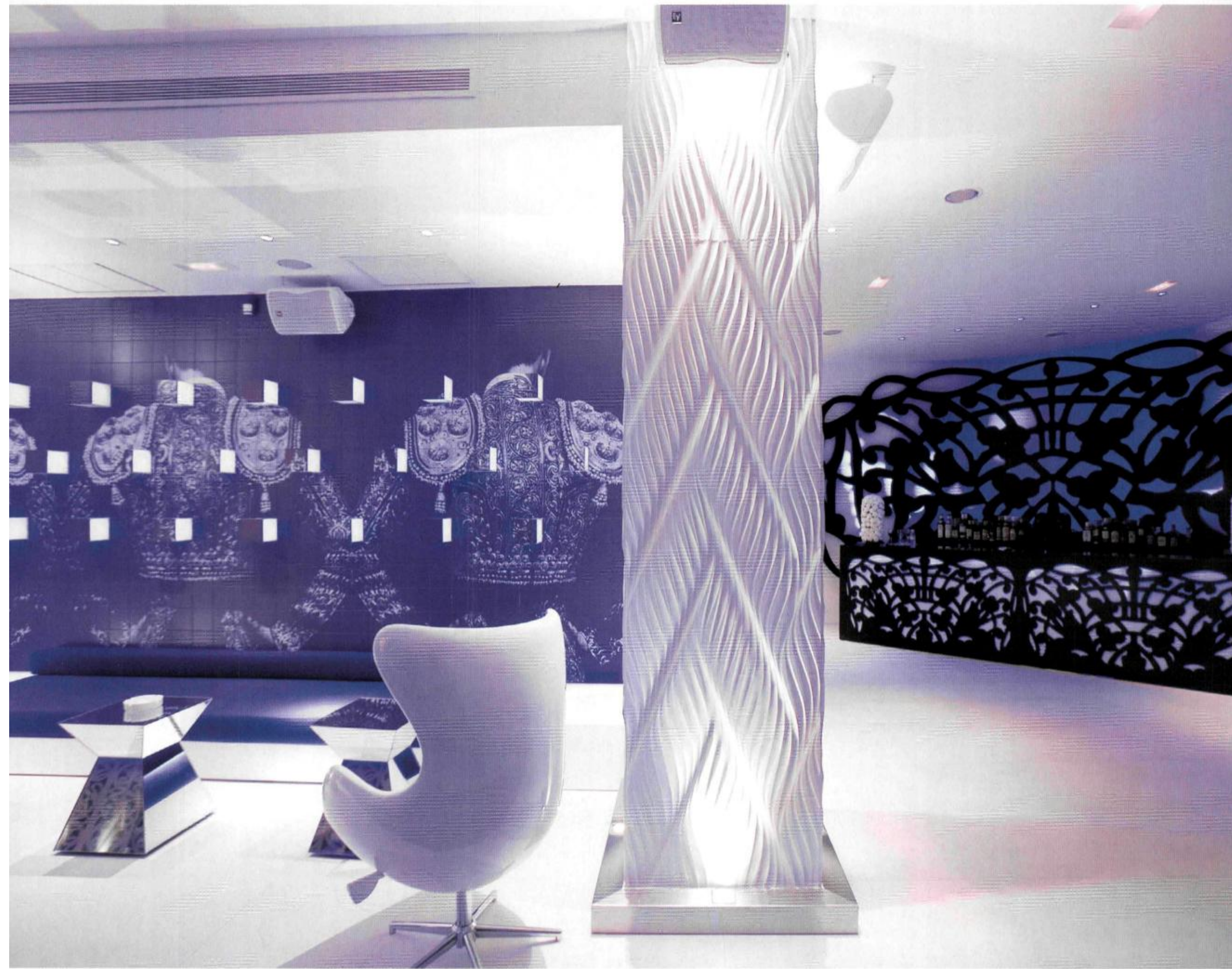
From rooftop wonders to middle-of-the-desert delights, trendy bars across the world are welcoming thirsty travellers

WORDS TRACY LYNN CHEMALY PHOTOGRAPHS SUPPLIED

## MIX IT UP DER RAUM, AUSTRALIA

Pronounced 'dare realm', Der Raum is one of Australia's most premium bar venues. Veering away from pre-mixed and artificial drinks, this Melbourne bar in the suburb of Richmond pays tribute to the ideals of the sophisticated drinking establishments of the 1920s and 1930s. By adopting the latest culinary techniques to reinterpret the classics and invent new signature cocktails, Der Raum is constantly at the forefront of mixology. Don't presume that the bar is out of stock of your favourite beverage when you don't see it on a shelf – Der Raum's bottles are all suspended from the ceiling, hovering over the bar in an unusual yet oh-so-trendy style. Visit on Experimental Thursday if you want a chance to preview a new offering before it reaches the cocktail menu – a menu that was voted Cocktail List of the Year 2009 in the *Australian Bartender Magazine* awards. Other accolades include being one of the World's Top 10 Bars of 2009, so says *The Bartender's Bible*.

**BEYOND THE BAR** Catch the Richmond Football Club – the Tigers – in an Australian Rules football game and witness one of the most successful Ozzie teams in action. [derraum.com.au](http://derraum.com.au)



◀ CURE YOUR DRINKING HABIT

Der Raum has created waves with its out-of-the-box cocktail called Pharmacy. A medicine jar contains pear-and-capsicum-infused gin, fresh lemon and sugar syrup. A syringe is filled with a bitter Italian aperitif, and a pill-like capsule houses a homemade sherbet. The guest injects the syringe into the medicine jar, adds the pill, places the lid back on the jar and shakes it briefly before drinking. This softens the sherbet pill so that it can be eaten at the end, acting as a palette cleanser for the next drink.

ORDER SOMETHING LIGHT

SOL Y SOMBRA, SPAIN

The work of trend-setting interior-design genius Tomás Alía, Sol y Sombra is a whirlwind of dramatic colour in the heart of fashionable Madrid. Traditional Spanish elements relating to flamenco dancing and bullfighting are dotted around the space that is constantly changing with the dramatic lighting effects. Dance to live jazz and flamenco-chill music after ordering your tippie from one of the supermodel-like barmen.

**BEYOND THE BAR** Stepping out the door of Sol y Sombra, you'll find yourself in the Las Letras suburb of Madrid, the neighbourhood where the city's great 16th-century writers lived – wordsmiths like Cervantes, Lope de Vega and Quevedo. Follow their golden quotes etched in the pavements.

*[solsombra.name](http://solsombra.name)*

### SIP ON AN OASIS

AL SARAB ROOFTOP LOUNGE, UAE

Al Sarab Rooftop Lounge at Jumeirah Bab Al Shams Desert Resort & Spa in the middle of Dubai's Arabian Desert is a welcoming two-storey oasis that quenches the driest of thirsts. Like a scene from *1001 Arabian Nights*, you'll find yourself seated on colourful scatter cushions on the floor, surrounded by Persian carpets and lanterns that twinkle underneath the clear night sky. Sip on a Desert Classic cocktail as the big ball of fiery sun sets in striking hues of oranges and pinks on the sand-filled horizon. The soothing sounds of an *oud* player will fill the atmosphere as you smoke a strawberry-flavoured shisha. If you can't stand the heat, dip into the swimming pool opposite the lounge and dry off alongside the bar's cosy fireplace.

**Beyond the bar** After having your hands tattooed with henna, hop on a camel and explore the desert in true Arabian style. The more adventurous can hop over the dunes on a four-wheel drive.

[jumeirah.com](http://jumeirah.com)





**CASUALLY SAY CHEERS**

**ENDHERI POOL BAR, THE MALDIVES**

The relaxed dress code at Endheri Pool Bar at the Shangri-La Villingili Resort and Spa is proof that no pretentious sipping takes place here. Set in one of the most pristine locations in the Maldives, this bar – surrounded by the ocean and swimming pools – is so laid-back that you may just forget you've ordered a drink. Allow yourself to be swept away by the acoustic music during the day and rock to the upbeat sounds of the electronic DJ in the evening. Sway to the rhythm of the coconut palms, with a pina colada in your hands. If you'd like to take your drink on a journey, take it with you on board one of the resort's luxury yachts for a seafood lunch on the equator. Five-star service has never been this chilled out.

**BEYOND THE BAR** Scuba dive down to the British Loyalty shipwreck, or make use of the swanky yoga pavilion facing the Indian Ocean.

[shangri-la.com](http://shangri-la.com)



**DRINK WITH THE GODS**

**VERTIGO GRILL & MOON BAR, THAILAND**

For breathtaking alfresco rooftop dining 61 floors above the streets of Thailand's capital, book a table at Vertigo Grill & Moon Bar on top of the Banyan Tree Hotel. Here the true meaning of the word 'vertigo' is understood by means of views that will take your breath away. Stylishly reaching for the clouds,

this sophisticated hotspot offers the tranquillity of the skies above and the hustle and bustle of Bangkok's city streets below. If you'd like a snack, try the Kobi beef carpaccio with the signature cocktail Sex on the Moon – it's an earth-shattering blend of vodka, Parfait Amour, cranberry, pineapple and lime juices. For an elegant wine-and-dine experience, order the six-course degustation menu, paired with award-winning wines from around the world.

**BEYOND THE BAR** Bangkok is known for its shopping, but why not skip the tussle for a pair of shorts and head for a ride down the winding Chao Praya river.

[banyantree.com/bangkok](http://banyantree.com/bangkok)

**HEAD TO YOUR LOCAL**



**Bean Bag Bahia** is KZN's answer to breezy beachfront cocktail-drinking. Its contemporary interior includes a trendy botanical-print wallpaper that complements the exterior – Umdloti's sandy beach and tidal pool. When not ordering fresh pastries from the deli, try a gourmet pizza or burger with your strawberry margarita, or pair a delicious rack of lamb with the wide selection of local wines.

Call 031-568-2229



**Oolong Lounge** has been a much-sought-after spot for enjoying colourful drinks in central South Africa, so its new rooftop bar has come as a welcome addition to the popular Bloemfontein hangout. Sip a cooling cosmo while feasting on a generous sushi platter.

Call 051-448-7244



**The Pepper Club** is Camps Bay's most recent addition of swanky wining and dining quarters. Located on a prime top-storey part of 'the strip', it's the ideal location for people-watching while enjoying a selection of fine Cape wines and guilt-free (sugar-free!) cheesecake.

Call 021-438-0000 ■