

Boston Bar Crawls

Beantown's drinking dens have taken to the ethos of providing goers with a choice in liquid refreshment, be it spirit, beer, wine or cocktail.

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Choosing the locale for a drink with the gang is usually a pretty straight-forward proposition. Oenophile congregate at the wine bar, like-minded beer aficionados head for the multitap, spirits enthusiasts gather at the place with the biggest back bar in town and new breed cocktail mavens slip into the local speakeasy.

But what happens when worlds collide and wine and beer drinkers meet with cocktail and single-malt enthusiasts? Beer bars seldom boast lengthy drinks lists and wine bars rarely bother with an array of craft and imported brews, and both cocktail and spirits specialists can be hit-or-miss with respect to grape and grain. Unless, of course, you're in Boston.

Seemingly more so than in any comparable city, Boston's bars have taken to the ethos of providing bar-goers a choice in liquid refreshment, whether it's spirit, beer, wine or cocktail. And the place where this happens best is **Eastern Standard**.

Open since the summer of 2005, this American-style brasserie has quickly become a Kenmore Square institution, due in no small part to the drinks program of bar manager Jackson Cannon. Featuring 15 wines by the glass, a carafe of the day special, a selection of local craft and artisanal international beers, an innovative cocktail list and an assortment of spirits broad enough to satisfy even the fussiest of imbibers, ES offers the right drink for virtually any mood or occasion.

No less varied than its drinks list is Eastern Standard's clientele, which can range from the ubiquitous coterie of Boston students to well-heeled guests of the adjoining Hotel Commonwealth. Combined with a kitchen open almost non-stop from 7 am to midnight, Eastern Standard's eclecticism and commitment to service ensure that the place is always buzzing.

For those seeking a more traditional Boston bar feel without a sacrifice of selection, a short cab ride from ES to Allston will bring you to Deep Ellum, an idiosyncratic bar named after an area of Dallas known for its vibrant nightlife. Although the wine list is slight, it is well selected, and the remainder of the beverage list more than makes up for any vinous deficiencies, with a cheeky, arm's length cocktail selection featuring eight different riffs on the Manhattan, a spirituous devotion to American whiskeys and a total of more than 100 draft and bottled beers.

It could be argued that **Deep Ellum** caters more visibly to the beer crowd than any other segment of modern tippler society, particularly since two of the three partners in the place cut their teeth at the Boston beer institution, Bukowski's. Those making that claim would never have sipped from the bar's fiercely traditionalist Aviation cocktail, or let their gaze fall upon the bottle of Pappy Van Winkle's 20 Year Old Family Reserve Bourbon gracing the back bar.

Last and most casual and student oriented of all is Cambridge's **Lord Hobo**—a bar so low key that it can appear closed even when doing a thriving business. Pass through its corner doorway, however, and you will enter a temple of all things good liquid and alcoholic. With an admitted emphasis on beer (there are 40 taps in the center of the bar), none of the spirits selection, 20 cocktails or 25 wines by the glass could be found lacking. And for that splurge, there's even a choice of 2007 vintage Cantillon Lou Pepe Framboise Lambic or 2000 vintage Dom Perignon, proving that even in a university bar in Boston, there really is something for everyone.