

top five

PUB TRIVIA NIGHTS

DIANA TJOENG

The truth is out there

BEING a know-it-all may not have gained you any points in high school, but now everyone wants you racking up the points on their pub trivia team. Here's how to bestow your skills in style.

1 THE FRINGE BAR

It's lively and packed with serious punters come trivia time and the dim lighting tends to give your opponents a conniving look. Or maybe that's just after a few of the Fringe's potent cocktails. The continuous loop of energetic music keeps your head bobbing even as your mind is bogging over a question. The \$10 pizzas are small but tasty. Bar-tab prizes are given for first to fourth places, then every third place after that. Bookings recommended. 106 Oxford Street, Paddington. Tuesday 7pm. (02) 9360 5443.

2 GREENGATE HOTEL

For a multimedia experience complete with film clips and PowerPoint presentations, the Greengate is hard to beat. The Tim Bailey look-alike quizmaster, Pete Chapman, is accustomed to cheeky team names that begin with "Hi, I'm Tim Bailey". Chapman has been hosting this packed-out trivia night for almost 10 years. "A crowd attracts a crowd," he says. "Some people just come to watch and soak up the atmosphere." Teams that answer correctly all three jackpot questions share the bonus \$500 cash pool. Corner Pacific Highway and Greengate Road, Killara. Wednesday 7.30pm. (02) 9498 3577.

3 FOREST LODGE HOTEL

It's revenge of the nerds, with tables of PhD students dominating this trivia night. Rounds are themed with names like "old school" or "things that could kill you". At the start of the night, each team selects two rounds where its points will be doubled. The \$6 pasta is a winner, as are the



Loaded questions ... (from top) trivia night at the Marlborough Hotel; Greengate Hotel; and Forresters Hotel. Photos: Sahlan Hayes, Quentin Jones, Helen Nezdropa

entertaining host and the cosy, no-fuss feel of this local watering hole. First prize is a \$100 bar voucher. 117 Arundel Street, Glebe. Tuesday 7.30pm. (02) 9660 1872.

4 MARLBOROUGH HOTEL

Stake out seats early, as this is a favourite with uni students. Questions tend to focus on entertainment but there are difficult word puzzles and brain teasers thrown in. This is perfect for competitors who like to take a gamble, as these contests can be won on the final question. You are given a topic and can choose to bet as few or as many of the points you already have on answering the question correctly. Suss out the mood of the host to determine whether the question leads to certain doom. 145 King Street, Newtown. Wednesday 7.30pm. (02) 9519 1222.



5 FORRESTERS HOTEL

At Forresters, there are always some golden oldies around who are just there for a drink and are happy to share their wisdom with struggling teams. Questions are broadcast over the speakers, so you can still soak up some sun in the internal courtyard. The \$5 steaks are a must-have (usually). First and second prize are a \$50 and \$30 bar voucher respectively. Corner Riley and Foveaux streets, Surry Hills. Wednesday 7.30pm. (02) 9211 2095.

BARFLY

THRU THE GRAPEVINE
CNR CURLEWIS STREET AND
CAMPBELL PARADE, BONDI
PHONE 0412 307 832
RATING 7/10

My sister and I arrive hungry, weary, and craving some sweet cocktail mix-mastery but to my surprise there's no mention of umbrella wearers on the drinks list.

My sister spots my furrowed brow and quickly sets me straight: "It's a wine bar - why d'you think it's called 'Thru the Grapevine?'" Well, duh.

That explains the list - a small, considered selection of wines, half of which are available by the glass. I order the Alkoomi riesling (\$10), while my sister opts for the Paxton shiraz rose (\$11) and though neither of us feels like it, we order a cheese plate (\$24) to share simply because there's no other food available.

Despite the balmy summer evening, the place is empty. We plunk our bags down on one of the rough-hewn timber tables and settle in, ready to shake off the residue of the work day. It's a small, dark space but strangely pretty: plastic grapevines snake across the ceiling, vinyl records feature on a far wall, other walls are mirrored up to a single row of bookshelves. It reminds me of a little girl's jewellery box.

It's the big window opposite, though, that's the key to this place - it runs wall to wall, from waist-height to ceiling and folds

Photo: Steve Lunam



all the way back, opening the bar directly to the street and the view to the beach beyond - perfect for watching the world pass by and being watched in return.

The drinks and food arrive quickly. We're both very pleased with our wines, less so with the cheese plate - the mixed olives aren't, the rocket is missing - but the serving is generous. The cheese slabs are hefty and when the lavosh runs out the friendly bar manager brings another dishful unbidden.

We pick at the cheese over a second glass of wine and it's only when we're contemplating a third that other customers finally appear.

Eventually we decide to leave in search of dinner, something a little more forgiving than cheese. We go to pay the bill only to be told, apologetically, that it's cash only - they're still waiting to be set up with card facilities. The dash to the ATM is annoying but we'll chalk it up to a new bar's teething problems, a minor quibble for a bar with charm. ALEXANDRA PAPPAS

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