

## A Dynamic Year for L.A. Night Life

2011 saw it all: extravagant club debuts, frenzied beer crawls, hot dog heaven, the dance revolution and the rise of female mixologists.



The Monty was one of several beautiful downtown-area bars that opened in the Year of the Metal Rabbit, which saw downtown continue its rise as a drinking mecca. (Barbara Davidson / The Los Angeles Times)

By Jessica Gelt, Los Angeles Times

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In 2011, if you lost yourself in drink and the dark corners of evening, you would have noticed above all else that Los Angeles was relishing extremes. New places popped up like crazy, reflecting appetites high and low. In a year when the rich got richer and everyone else hung on, madly expensive bottle-service clubs sprouted alongside humble drinking dens with recession-friendly prices.

If boozers were into protesting, the 99% hanging around at places such as mixology-master Aidan Demarest's new straight-up liquor bar, Neat, or the recently renovated rocker-dive Three Clubs on Santa Monica and Vine would have occupied the luxe, nouveau Roxbury in Hollywood (yes, that Roxbury), where high-rollers known as "whales" lay down thousands of dollars a night for the right to a private booth and a model-quality server.

But those weren't the only big changes in the dynamic Year of the Metal Rabbit:

### **Planet SBE**

In the spring, entrepreneur Sam Nazarian became the most powerful operator of clubs on the West Coast when his company SBE acquired its biggest rival, David Judaken's Syndicate Hospitality. With the purchase, Nazarian nearly doubled his nightlife holdings, topping out at 12 venues, adding MyStudio, MyHouse, Eden and Crimson/Opera, all based in Hollywood, in a portfolio that includes popular venues such as the Colony, Industry and the Abbey. Shortly after that, SBE went on to open one of the year's best private music venues, the Sayers Club, helmed by the ever-inventive nightlife director Jason Scoppa; and the Library lounge in Nazarian's already buzzing Redbury hotel.

<http://www.latimes.com/theguide/bars-and-clubs/la-et-best-of-nightlife30-20111230,0,5795795.story>