



LOCATION: HOXTON VENUE TYPE: BAR

T Bar

Hoxton hybrid is more than the sum of its parts

The chic, New York warehouse-inspired T Bar was one of the first tenants to make the Tea Building on Shoreditch High Street its permanent residence. The building has since grown into a centre for media and creative businesses - such as award winning ad agency Mother - of which the bar acts at the hub: catering breakfasts for on site staff, acting as an informal canteen through the day and welcoming drinkers after the offices close.

But there's much more to this ground floor bar than its daytime function. As well as dishing up decent bacon butties (and a range of other good food from its burgeoning deli counter), T Bar is also host to a roster of the most forward thinking dance

music parties in London. In a typical week, quality intimate soirees like Hector and Dave Congreve's Dig Your Own Rave, Touche and Boy 8 Bit's Bodyclap, Ivan Smaghe and Andrew Weatherall's Wrong Meeting and Bones & Ramsey/Bugged Out!'s collaboration Ditched Disco combine to keep Hoxton locals entertained.

T Bar's owner/manager Jaime Richie opened the venue two years ago. She had staged numerous events in the space, in conjunction with various partner organisations, and saw its potential to become a permanent fixture on the local scene.

The design concept that was developed for T enhances the venue's inherently industrial identity, juxtaposing raw brick and exposed air con ducts

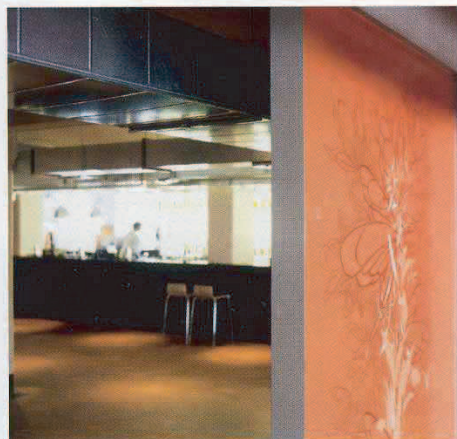
with comfortable seating areas and splashes of striking artwork.

And T's operational philosophy is appropriate to this aesthetic: unpretentious, democratic and offering great value for money in an area of London characterised by over-priced, over-hyped and too often disappointing operations.

For the first year, T Bar ran from 9am until 11pm, but after securing a late licence in 2005 - "which we needed, because this is off the usual circuit and needed to be developed into a destination venue," says Jaime - it opened a new chapter for the club.

To make the most of the opportunity, Jaime approached Derren Smart to programme

VENUE REVIEW



Above: well worn, comfortable seating provides a place to relax through the day, or to cool off and chat at night.
Above left: the newly appointed DJ booth featuring Formula Sound/Funktion One mixer the FF-6000.

some club nights, a move which she describes as "the best thing I could have done". He established a monthly roster of residencies involving respected DJs Andrew Weatherall, Damian Lazarus and Ivan Smagge - all of whom agreed to a reduction on their usual gig fees in recognition of the value of the bar's egalitarian, all access philosophy. "We've never charged entry fees - I've don't agree with them. We could do, and I'm sure the venue would still be rammed, but we made the conscious decision not to in order to make T accessible to more people."

It was at the request of one of these DJs that the venue first hired in a Funktion One system to boost the existing PA. Damian Lazarus's forward thinking Monday night session Stink, which made a short lived experimental excursion to DC10 in Ibiza this summer, has earned Lazarus and co-promoter Michael Mayer their status as darlings of the London club scene - thanks to its soundtrack of the best in European electronic music. T management happily complied with his request, and the difference it made to the acoustics was phenomenal, remembers Jaime.

"The clarity is exceptional," she says. "To be honest, we would have had a full Funktion One system when we opened, but the cost was an issue."

When the decision was made, however, it was Jason Bacon of Project Audio who was commissioned to create the system design. He turned to established Funktion One dealers Kelco

for assistance, who were able to advise on the scheme to meet the client's exacting demands.

T Bar's system needed to be zoned to feed the venue's four distinct areas, creating a full on club experience on the dancefloor whilst allowing for easy conversation for those chilling out on the comfy seating in the peripheral space.

The main dancefloor requirements were met by a combination of Resolution 4 boxes coupled with F-218 subs. Resolution 1s were specified for the restaurant area and some seating areas, all driven by Full Fat Audio amplifiers, in the first major installation to use FFA equipment.

This installation was an also opportunity to debut another range of loudspeakers - G9 from Global 9 Ltd, which launched at Prolight and Sound in Frankfurt in April. Much of the sound off the dancefloor was provided by G12 boxes, also driven by Full Fat Audio amps.

The arrival of the new sound system enhances T's chameleonic canteen-come-bar-come-club identity: making its late night alter ego all the more convincing. And from a roster already including some of the most innovating and exciting nights in London, Jaime believes that the installation of the new system will only consolidate T Bar's appeal. "The line up will continue to go from strength to strength," she confirms. "We won't be making any immediate changes, but we will now able to attract the attention of even more DJs of a similar calibre to those already involved." ■

VITAL STATS

T Bar
56 Shoreditch High Street
London
E1 6JJ
Tel: 020 7729 2973

Hours

Mon-Wed 9am-12am // Thu 9am-1am // Fri 9am-2am // Sat
8pm-2am // Sun 6pm-12am

Key Contractors

Audio Installation: Project Audio, Kelco UK Ltd

Drinks

Pouring brands: Kettle One vodka, Matusalem Classico rum, Buffalo Trace bourbon, Beefeater gin // Premium draught lager: £3.00 (Kronenbourg) // Standard draught lager: N/A // Lead PPL: £3.00 (Peroni) // Lead RTD: N/A // Cocktail list: Yes

Technology

Sound: 2 x Technics SL1200 turntables c/w Ortofon carts, 2 x Pioneer CDJ-1000 CD players, 1 x Formula Sound ZMR 243 zoner mixer, 1 x Funktion One FF-6000 DJ Mixer, 6 x Full Fat Audio FF3600 amplifiers, 4 x Full Fat Audio FF6000 amplifiers, 2 x Funktion One Res 2 DJ monitors, 4 x Funktion One Res 4 loudspeakers, 4 x Funktion One F-218 Bass enclosures, 6 x Funktion One Res 1 loudspeakers, 2 x Funktion One Res 1 passive mods, 2 x Funktion One F-215 bass enclosures, 8 x G9 G12 loudspeakers.