

## Bars and Clubs

### Academia

Don't let its size fool you, this bar manages to pack in 5 billiard tables (comfortably, that is) into its relatively small space. The breakdown, by the way, is 2 Russian and 3 "Western" style tables. Comfortable and reasonably priced, this is a great choice if you have the urge to shoot pool, have a beer, and a few laughs. In evenings, especially weekends, it's a good idea to get there early to secure a table as the place is easily filled. A small Ukrainian woman also prepares meals from an equally small menu, however, unless your physician instructs you to raise your cholesterol level significantly, we suggest you eat elsewhere. Centrally located on Bulvar Radishcheva, near Ulitsa Trekhsvyatskaya.

### Cafe Sport

The largest pool hall in the city center, Cafe Sport has somewhere in the neighborhood of a dozen or so Russian and 'Western' style tables. Often busy and buzzing with noise, it is likely you will get a table in a relatively short period of time even if it is full. Located on Ulitsa Volnogo Novgoroda at Tverskoy Prospekt, next to the Tverskoy Bridge.

### City Club

The "elder statesman" of the downtown clubs, City occupies part of a baroque structure located across from the Drama Theater and City Park . Although its general decor may lack the "modern-ness" of Kultura and Zerkalo, its brilliance comes from its diversity of atmospheres in the many nooks and crannies of this relatively spacious club. You may choose to park yourself at one of the wooden tables on the perimeter of the small, yet lively dance floor, or perhaps a comfortable couch in their central bar lounge where good conversations and laughter are always in abundance. Maybe a table in the jazz lounge would better suit your mood, where you can witness a native Russian attempt to sing Sinatra standards with his jazz quintet (he's actually quite good). If you feel inspired (or appropriately inebriated), you can take yourself and your lot upstairs for a good, cathartic karaoke session. Want to shoot some stick? There is a billiard table in the bar lounge, and two upstairs (one of them Russian style). In the warm months of summer, the outdoor garden is also open complete with a full bar and occasional live music. All in all, it's hard to go wrong at City, especially with their excellent food served throughout the club. (see more about City in "Cafes and Restaurants"). As there are a large number of seats, reserving a table is not compulsory, but it is advised on weekends (especially if you plan to arrive after 10:30 ). Located on Sovetskaya, near the Drama Theater.

### Kalinin

Known for its dimly lit atmosphere, pool table, big screen television, full bar, and relatively expensive beer prices (a whopping \$2!), Kalinin takes its name from the old official Soviet-era name for the city of Tver (which was named for one of Stalin's best buddies). They also serve a small selection of food, in small but tasty portions, for relatively expensive prices as well. Soups and salads are highly recommended. Attracting all types, though mostly the well to do, Kalinin is also known for its poor ventilation, so avoid it if you have a tendency to choke on smoke. Other than that, the service is great and the crowd is cheerful.

### Kultura

The first modern Euro-style club in Tver, Kultura recently reopened after adding a much needed second level dance floor. Tables are arranged on tiers wrapping around the dance space in a semi-circular fashion similar to a Greek amphitheater. Comfortable booth seating makes for a nice place take a break from dancing, sip on a cocktail, and scream short sentences to your neighbor. While we don't recommend that you attempt an engaging conversation here, it is the place to be if you are serious about dancing. Music is mostly Euro/Russian Techno/House (in other words, don't expect many lyrics to sing along to), although there is the obligatory slow dance now and again enabling you to catch your breath. Reservations for a table are highly advised, especially on weekends. Kultura also has one of the best restaurants in the city (see more about this in "Cafes and Restaurants"). Located on Trekhsvyatskaya, one block from Ploshchad Lenina (Lenin square) and the Volga River .

### Shar-pei

Although you may never spot anyone like the Big Lebowski nor any of his cohorts roaming these lanes, you will see something you are likely to have never seen before: Russians bowling. A relatively new phenomena here in Russia , bowling has instantly become beloved by many despite (or perhaps because of) its lack of history in this country and general awareness that it even existed -until now. Further preserving the "newness" of bowling in Tver is the fact that the prices are equivalent, if not slightly higher than in the US , which makes it inaccessible to the average Russian. Therefore, strangely enough, it is typically a rare, even an "exotic" treat for most people here to bowl a few games. The lanes of Shar-pei are doused in black light so that the fluorescent balls and white pins glow like neon powered by a nuclear reactor. Automatic scoring for the novice, forgetful, or lazy players (not to mention the "number fudgers"), the obligatory shoe rentals (in US sizes), and the full bar service help make it all come together nicely, regardless of how many pins you leave standing in the end. They also serve food, which is decent, although it is unlikely that it will do much to improve your game. Nonetheless, you are sure to have fun at Shar-pei.

### Zebra Club

The "crown jewel" of Tver's downtown club scene, Zebra brings 'em in and turns 'em out on a nightly basis. Though one of the smaller clubs in terms of overall size, its energetic dance floor surrounded by spacious, comfortable booths is regularly packed with happy and high spirited dancers by 11:30 pm each night (almost like clockwork). Sit back with a cocktail and some sushi (see more on Zebra in "Cafes and Restaurants"), dance until your legs give out, or chill on one of the handful of soft couches in the back room and puff on flavorful herbs in a hookah pipe. Small tiki-esque tables also available near the main bar, slightly sheltered from the dancing action. While it can be difficult to find a place to hold any form of worthwhile conversation after the DJ starts throwing down beats at 11 pm (again, like clockwork), Zebra is an excellent place to party. Unless you arrive early to mark yourself a spot (around 10 pm ), reserving a table is highly recommended, and on weekends, it's practically mandatory. Located on Sovetskaya, one block from Ploshchad Lenina ( Lenin Square ).

### Zerkalo

The newest of the major clubs in the city center, Zerkalo has stood out from the rest since the day they first opened their doors. Fabulously decorated in modern "Euro-chic-trendy-whatever," this elegant club also boasts one of the best restaurants in the city (see more on Zerkalo in "Cafes and Restaurants"). A large main dance floor provides house/techno beats for the masses to move to, while a small lounge downstairs provides a place to cool off to more ambient tunes or even blues. Comfortable couches (that verge on being too hip to sit on) with cocktail tables are scattered throughout the club to set up your home base or take a temporary reprieve from dancing. As the main floor is usually quite loud, the "blues room" is a good choice to chat up your friends, neighbors, and whomever else. One tip: dress to impress at Zerkalo, because it is not only someplace to see, it is a place to be seen. Reserving a table is always a good idea as they are relatively limited in number. Located on Prospekt Pobedy, near Ploshchad Kaposkhvara and Victory Park .