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Guide to Drag Shows & Drag Brunches in Philly

PHILADELPHIA, April 20, 2023 – The Philly drag scene is full of top-tier queens with original performances and personalities bigger than their hair. Comedy mavens like Bev, fashion entrepreneurs like Iris Spectre, multitalented entertainers like Eric Jaffe and changemakers like Brittany Lynn put their “charisma, uniqueness, nerve and talent” (as RuPaul would say) on display every day.

In Philly, drag comes in many flavors. Grab a mimosa and laugh until your sides hurt at Bok Bar and Tabu Lounge and Sports Bar; witness spectacles that’ll leave you gooped at Franky Bradley’s and Fabrika; or find your new best friends at Bob & Barbara’s and Tattooed Mom.

An important note: Details change all the time. Always check ahead on social media and/or official venue websites to confirm drag show dates and times.

Read below for the top drag venues, drag brunches and other can’t-miss performances in Philly.

Top Venues for Drag Shows:

Bob & Barbara’s

Home of the Citywide Special (a shot of Jim Beam and a frosty PBR for a jaw-dropping \$4), Bob & Barb’s is a true Philly institution. This bigger-on-the-inside bar offers cheap cash-only drinks, free live music — including jazz bands and karaoke on the weekends — and the longest-running drag show in the city. Every Thursday night, the fabulous Miss Lisa Lisa and her rotating crew of queens put on an award-winning show. Reserve a table online, or enjoy the show from the floor or bar for an \$8 cover.

Where: Bob and Barbara’s, 1509 South Street

Franky Bradley’s

This intimate bar is known for its four pillars of entertainment: drinking, dining, dancing and deviation. On any given night you’ll find DJs, burlesque and drag shows, including the annual(ish) Snatcherella 3000 performance competition and Maria TopCatt’s spicy TopCatt Cabaret. And don’t miss out on the cocktails and apps, including some of the tastiest smoked wings in the Gayborhood.

Where: Franky Bradley’s, 1320 Chancellor Street

Knock Restaurant & Bar

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Come for the calamari, stay for the karaoke. Knock prides itself on good food in a friendly environment while offering a variety of evening entertainment. Movies, trivia and show tunes are popular draws, along with late-night eats and drag karaoke hosted by Iris Spectre (every Wednesday).

Where: Knock Restaurant and Bar, 225 S. 12th Street

Level Up Bar & Lounge

Great drinks, killer bites and fierce queens make Level Up Bar & Lounge a must-visit for anyone looking to scratch that drag itch. Black-owned and -operated, this gay bar booms with hot tracks each night, but you can also catch happy hour drag bingo on Tuesdays and the Supreme Sundays drag show every weekend.

Where: Level Up Bar & Lounge, 1330 Walnut Street

R&D Cocktail Bar

This swanky cocktail bar offers outstanding mixes and even better vibes. The main event: the monthly R&Divas burlesque drag show, hosted by Iris Spectre and Bear Trap, which debuts a fresh cast of queens each show. All \$10 cover charges for the show go toward supporting The Attic, Philly's first and only LGBTQ+ youth center.

Where: R&D Cocktail Bar, 1206 Frankford Avenue

Tattooed Mom

Tattooed Mom is an experience. TMom immediately greets you with a hip atmosphere, eclectic decor (like the bumper car on the second floor) and wall-to-wall punk art. Vegan cheesesteaks and a generous happy hour get folks buzzing, while familiar bar features (like pool tables) feel right at home near occult wonders (like the Voltar fortune-telling machine). Keep an eye on the events calendar for performances throughout the year, including drag murder mystery parties and Balena Canto's themed drag and burlesque shows.

Where: Tattooed Mom, 530 South Street

Tavern on Camac

Tucked along tiny Camac Street resides a pub with a big personality. The subterranean-speakeasy-turned-Gayborhood-staple features virtuoso piano players, live shows, a full dance club and indoor and alfresco dining. Each Wednesday, the Gaybill Broadway Cabaret — hosted by none other than queen Cleo Phatra — features loud and proud performances from drag queens and LGBTQ+ members weekly.

Where: Tavern on Camac, 243 S. Camac Street

Top Spots for Drag Brunch:

Bok Bar

When the days get warm, this rooftop bar returns with creative cocktails, ever-changing food partners and some of the best restaurant views in the city. From April through October, Brittany Lynn and the Philly Drag Mafia put in the werk with brunchtime shows and, new this year, golden hour Sunset Drag on select summer evenings. Hey, girl, hey!

Where: Bok Bar, 800 Mifflin Street

Cockatoo

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This Miami-styled cocktail bar may be the new kid on the block, but the food satisfies and the queens slay. This BIPOC-owned gem offers Latin-inspired fare (think shrimp tacos, empanadas and chimichurri sandwiches), and the weekend drag brunches feature new performers each month.

Where: Cockatoo, 208 S. 13th Street

Evil Genius Beer Company

This spacious, pop culture paradise is known for its craft beer, board games and pub grub, but there's something else notable on the menu: a smörgåsbord of themed drag brunches, ranging from Spice Girls to Star Wars. New shows are added to the calendar throughout the year and advance tickets are required.

Where: Evil Genius Beer Company, 1727 N. Front Street

Fabrika

Part bar and restaurant, part cabaret club, Fabrika is a fully interactive dinner theater featuring some of the city's top LGBTQ+ performers. Expect burlesque on Thursdays and variety cabaret shows throughout the week, with the inimitable Eric Jaffe bringing the house down boots each Sunday for drag brunch. For seats closest to the stage, make early evening reservations.

Where: Fabrika, 1108 Frankford Avenue

Punch Line Philly

Punch Line Philly serves up more than laughs. On Saturdays, the comedy club hosts Big Wig Brunch, a drag extravaganza with Bev and other queens featuring new themes each weekend. Bonus: All drag brunch tickets include one drink.

Where: Punch Line Philly, 33 E. Laurel Street

Tabu Lounge and Sports Bar

Offering LGBTQ+ events daily, Tabu's packed calendar includes drag shows, burlesque, trivia, pageants, comedy, artist showcases, karaoke and much more. Enjoy a pinkmosa on the rooftop lounge and, every Saturday, stop by for drag brunch with a rotating cast of performers.

Where: Tabu Lounge and Sports Bar, 254 S. 12th Street

XFINITY Live!

At the intersection of Lincoln Financial Field and Citizens Bank Park, this massive sports bar houses several bars and eateries under its roof (along with a theater, a full beer hall and an artificial turf field). Between tailgating parties, live music and bull riding, the venue hosts drag brunch on select dates throughout the year, with performances by the Philly Drag Mafia, a special brunch menu and curated cocktails.

Where: XFINITY Live! Philadelphia, 1100 Pattison Avenue

Traveling Troupes & Other Shows:

The Bearded Ladies Cabaret

The Bearded Ladies Cabaret serves up original performances at venues throughout the city. The Philly-based queer arts organization puts on Late Night Snacks, the cabaret's annual month-long series featuring everything from opera singers to professional clowns, and the Beardmobile, a mobile pop-up stage and cabaret on wheels showcasing performances by Philly-based artists.

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GayBINGO!

Enjoy a night of campy entertainment, win fabulous prizes and make a difference at this monthly drag event. Featuring energetic performances and new themes for each event, GayBINGO! has been entertaining Philadelphians and their friends for over 20 years. Even better, the event raises money to support people living with HIV.

Where: Congregation Rodeph Shalom, 615 N. Broad Street

Philly Drag Mafia

Voted Best Drag Show of 2022, the Philly Drag Mafia, at it for more than two decades now, sashays its way through drag brunches, casinos, singing cabarets and concert venues all around the tri-state area. The bombastic Brittany Lynn, don of the Drag Mafia, also created the Drag Queen Story Time literacy program at Philly libraries and museums, and Miss Fancy Brigade, the only all-LGBTQ+ Mummers brigade.

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