

GOING OUT

Bars, Pubs & Clubs

THIS MONTH:

✦ 3 updates

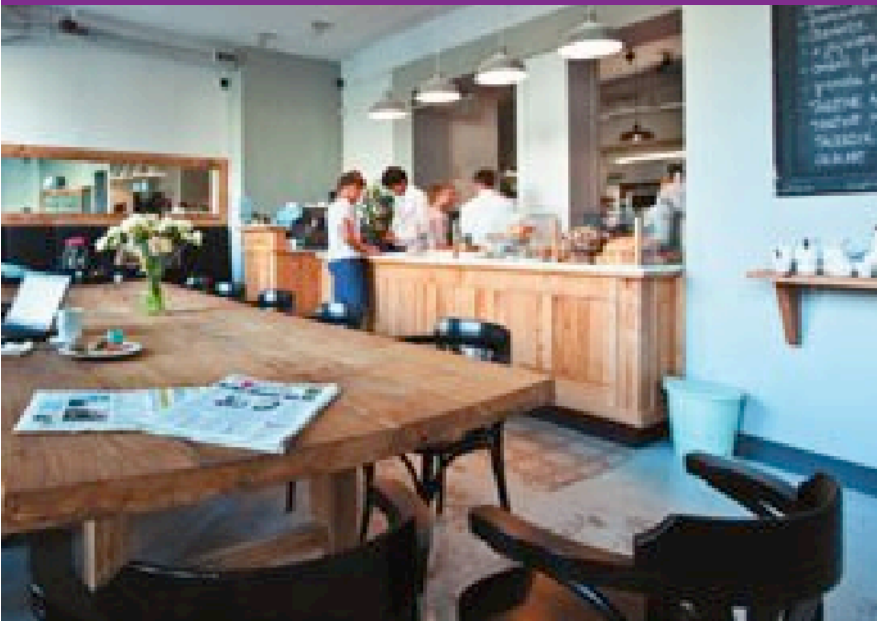
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Insider's Pick

HOT FIND



“Disregarding the whole exhibitionist, scene factor, Charlotte does what it does exceedingly well”

PHOTOGRAPH BY BARTOSZ BAJERSKI

Charlotte

Pl. Zbawiciela (Al. Wyzwolenia 18), tel. 22 628 4459.
Open Mon-Fri 7:00-24:00; Sat 9:00-24:00; Sun 9:00-24:00.

Plac Zbawiciela at the start of the millennium looked like The Land of the Living Dead, an abandoned zone fit for pox-ridden zombies. Standing on one side was a half-collapsed ruin, a rotting relic that had been left forgotten. And the rest wasn't better, with blackened buildings that rattled with death. So what the hell happened? Flash forward ten years and P. Zee. looks like the experimental fusion of Hoxton and SoHo. For me Year Zero came with the opening of Plan B, Warsaw's premier dumping ground for hipsters and hedonists. The area hasn't looked back. Today it's prime real estate, and evidence of this is provided by Charlotte.

Make no mistake, it's a cert as the hit of the summer, yet it's clearly a haunt you'll love or you'll loathe. That's down to the people, a captivating collection of the fittest and hippest. If you look like you've stepped from a Ralph Lauren casting then this is your place, and you'll fit all the better with those keys to your Merc. Jangle them flamboyantly, before placing them prominently on the heavy wood table that

stands center stage. It's on this clunky, communal fixture that the best of Warsaw gather to break bread – literally.

The on-site bakery is fantastic, and knocks out baguettes and croissants of a quality that's unknown on this side of Europe. Homemade chocolate spread and lavender honey compliment the snacks, and taste all the better come evening when the gathering crowds trade their coffee for wine. And it's at this point, when Pl. Zbawiciela glimmers gold in the dusk, that Charlotte looks her best. People watching just doesn't get better: fauxmossexuals mince around in theatrical fashion, while willow-waisted waifs pose fox-like on chairs. Like I said, you'll either love it or not...

Disregarding the whole exhibitionist, scene factor, Charlotte does what it does exceedingly well. It looks and feels continental, even more so when soaking in the sun by the colonnades outside. Indoors, find a whitewashed room with a concrete floor and an unfinished look. Coffee machines hiss and spit in the background, while beleaguered staff throw their hands in the air – it's that sort of place, a chaotic piece of Paris plumped bang right in Poland. It's cool, maybe too cool, but you've got to give them credit: Warsaw's not seen the like of it before. (AW)