

Scope out singles at these bars



LEAH SHAFER | GIRL TALK

If there were a top 10 list of questions that people ask a dating columnist, No. 1 would be, "Where can I meet someone?"

Lately, readers have been asking it more frequently after referencing holidaying doldrums and high hopes for 2009.

So I'm starting a new occasional series for Girl Talk looking at places around town where you can get your date on.

These are practical, cut-it-out-and-tape-it-on-the-fridge

columns as you look to increase your date night frequency. Meet markets are demoralizing, in my opinion, so this series will steer clear and opt for friendlier places.

If you're only looking for a lay, you can find those places with little help from me. In the coming months, look for profiles of the best church singles group, ways for foodies to find love, public spaces with date potential, and, this week, a look at three bar hook-up hang-outs, where single people swarm.

Mercury Wine Bar

5100 Belt Line Road, 972-702-9463, mercurywinebar.com.

Lush drapery, swanky seating with velvet couches, wrought-iron accents and curving staircase glow under low lights and candles. A Friday happy hour proved that this is indeed an upscale place that attracts droves of singles, particularly at the long bar. It's the sexy surroundings and slightly luxe look of the patrons that sets Mercury apart and makes it feel like someplace you want to meet a date.

Dating tip: Employ the services of the observant staff. One friendly waiter pointed out two single gentlemen across the room who had been checking out my group. Nice.

Round-Up Saloon

3912 Cedar Springs Road, 214-522-9611, roundupsaloon.com.

Yes, this is Gay Cowboy Central for Oak Lawn, but it also happens to be a place where quality hook-ups of the long-term variety happen regularly. One big reason: the layout. The multiple bars and dance floor make for varied atmospheres. Flirt, karaoke, play pool or just watch the hotties boot-scoot. The front bar in

particular has singles crowding the barstools and shooting libidinous looks across the bar.

Dating tip: Show up for free line-dancing lessons from 8:30 to 10:15 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Beginner's night on Tuesday in particular gives you lots of excuses to chat with fellow cowboys (and girls!).

The Loon

3531 McKinney Ave., 214-559-3059, theloon.com.

Wait, don't laugh. Something has changed at the Loon. I'll be the first to admit that a few years ago it was a crowded, sweaty spot to find your next sex partner. But the crowd has gotten more diverse, and the last three times I've visited, I got a distinctly classy vibe. Trust me on this — skip the weekends and arrive during happy hour on a Tuesday or Wednesday. Smile big and order up one of their freakishly strong drinks. In no time, you'll be feeling like getting chatty.

Dating tip: Bring a tag-team partner of the same sex and sit around the large square bar. It's easy to exchange casual conversation.

E-mail Leah at lashafer@gmail.com and tell her your favorite place to find a date.

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