

the 2008

gauntlet

drinking supplement





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Farewell, sobriety!

Every year, the *Gauntlet* spends the better part of two weeks delving into the nooks and crannies of Calgary's bar scene to provide you, the dutiful reader, with the Drinking Supplement. Why do we do this? Do we hate our bodies so much that we'd ignore our jobs and loved ones in order to fill these pages with worldly wisdom? The answer is "sort of."

One of the goals of university is to provide opportunities to expand your horizons and better yourselves. Physics students learn from physicists. Athletes learn from coaches. Aspiring drinkers learn from the *Gauntlet*.

Enclosed are three pub crawls we did in the campus area and close to the C-Train, as well as the third annual C-Train Pub Crawl.

Remember, kids: we're trained professionals. Please do not put your body through what we did in the making of this issue. That is, unless you're editing this sucker next year.

See you at the Den!

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Ryan May/The Gauntlet

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BY THE NUMBERS

Days Spent Drinking: 8
Bars Visited: 47
Money Spent: around \$3,800
Money Won: around \$42
Average Tip: 11 per cent
Free Rounds: 6
Numbers Jordyn Got: 0

2008 Gauntlet Drinking Supplement

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KENSINGTON: Arguably the trendiest area in town, Calgary's Kensington district boasts a selection of the finest boutiques, shops and bars in Canada. The area's also a stone's throw from campus, readily accessible using the C-Train. The land was originally owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway and rancher Ezra Riley, who nearby Riley Park is named after, before eventually being sold off to developers. The historic Plaza Theatre dates back to the 1920s. Get off at the Sunnyside station and check out Kensington.

The Yardhouse measures up

Kensington staple boasts service, giant beers

THE YARDHOUSE

1136 Kensington Road NW

For Kensington pubs and bars, you can't do much better than the Yardhouse. Located right on Kensington Road, a three-minute or so walk from the Sunnyside C-Train station, the Yardhouse has affordable food prices for the student budget.

If you're looking for a unique experience, the bar offers their signature half-yard glasses of beer. Though more for novelty than practicality — when the glass is nearly empty, you have to tilt it at ridiculous angles in order to get the precious liquid — they come with their own wooden holsters and you can fill them with any of the beers they offer. The half-yards of beer are \$12–\$14. Overall, beer is pricey for a student budget at \$6 for domestics and \$7.75 for imports, but food is reasonably priced between \$8 and \$12 for most items on the menu and is enjoyable.



Daniel Pagan/the Gauntlet

Those in our group that ordered food were more than satisfied with both portions and quality, especially the tasty yam fries.

The décor is a bit upscale, and our review-crew felt a little out of place

with the clothes we chose to wear that night. For sports fans, there are plenty of HD flat-screens and the sightlines are good.

The Yardhouse has two locations, the other on 17th Ave., and is worth

checking out, if for nothing else but to experience how bloated you can feel after drinking two half-yards of Guinness.

..Jon Roe

Roughin' it at Molly Malone's

We hate to be petty, but check out the holes in the ceiling



Daniel Pagan/the Gauntlet

MOLLY MALONE'S

1153 Kensington Crescent NW

Molly Malone's is one of the many "authentic" Irish pubs around the city. Its one major advantage in authenticity is that it's definitely like entering into an old pub in Ireland. It has some of those nice qualities that people imagine are in those olde timey Irish neighbourhood watering holes: homey, quiet, low-key. If there's anything that Molly Malone's is, you can definitely say it's "homey." It's also a bit rundown.

It might seem like an unfair criticism to rag on the rustic look of the place, but definitely go into the back of the bar. The front part of the bar is a much more traditional bar-styled joint, but moving further back into the pub is like drinking in your grandmother's kitchen. Ugly wallpaper adorns the wall; there are these giant holes in the roof — some vainly covered by cardboard — and when you enter into the men's bathroom you're greeted with

another giant hole in the wall.

It didn't seem like anything special was going on — like all presumptuous Irish pubs, there's nothing really unique about it. On tap is the typical assortment of beers. Newcastle, Rickards, Keith's, Guinness. Prices for a pint of domestic were around \$6.50, so middle-of-the-road in cost as well. The service was adequate, but not anything to write home about. We got our beers in a timely manner, but again there was nothing extremely special about anything going on. It's just a thoroughly mediocre bar.

The one saving grace is the rooftop patio — it's a great place to drink with some friends and there will only be one hole in the ceiling. Otherwise, Molly Malone's is low key enough that you can talk to your friends and it's got some kind of atmosphere that people will like, but there's definitely better bars in town.

..Jordyn Marcellus

Kensington Pub is a paradise

THE KENSINGTON PUB

207 10A St. NW

The Kensington Pub, or “KP” to the hipsters who frequent it, was an ideal place to wrap up our Kensington pub crawl because the many nooks and crannies that make up the joint were a perfect hiding spot for a group of investigative journalists who take their job really seriously and were using their outside voices.

Settling in up the stairs to the loft, we tapped our fingers, whistled and whittled, while waiting for our waitress.

The *My Little Pony* belt buckle-clad Melanie took our abuse like a pro and realized the only way of surviving the night would be to keep us savages from going thirsty, so her prompt service and sincere smile — not that snotty smirk some waitresses have — are to be commended.

The KP caters to a variety of crowds. There’s a Sunday afternoon crowd that would undoubtedly include a 50-something guy in the corner with a half litre of merlot and a laptop, which he never



Daniel Pagan/the Gauntlet

seems to type on. Perhaps it’s a fashion accessory — computer chic. A couple tables over there’s someone reading James Joyce. There’s the Saturday dinner crowd, the busiest day of the week, proven by our getting turned away when we previously attempted to visit a few hours earlier. The link between each crowd is their age. The KP’s crowd is older than neighbouring pubs like the Yardhouse or Molly Malones. The feel of the pub, though, is the most authentic in Kensington. The laid-back, friendly regulars give the pub a sense of community that is hard to find

in a city seeing the last of its small town charm go up in smoke.

Once you enter the aura of KP you will be transformed into a hipster. Much like Laptop Guy or the Joyce reader, you too, will get the urge to talk about the latest article in *The Economist*, or go on a rant about how cool vinyl is, but that’s ok.

Our conversations turned to the subject of pretentiousness, which seemed fitting and ironic. During our second round of drinks, we made some real progress in what seemed like a group therapy session for *Gauntlet* writer Jordyn Marcellus, who is learning to deal, one day at a time, with an incident that left him phone-numberless at the Unicorn several days earlier.

The KP’s décor is minimal, there’s few tacky beer signs and more rustic look-

ing objects — an old typewriter beside the stairs on the way up to the loft is a personal favourite. Perhaps it was left by the father of Laptop Guy?

On your way to the bathroom there is a painting done by a local artist. It’s a rendering of the outside of the KP on acid. The skewering of the canvas, and picture frame itself, gives the painting a Tim Burton or David Lynch aesthetic and fits into the quirkiness of the neighbourhood.

The KP is the place to go if you want friendly service and don’t want to be judged for being a hipster, drug abuser, Joyce reader or for typing the next great Canadian novel.

..Brad Halasz

Sam’s cozy little bar

SAM’S BAR AND GRILL

1167 Kensington Crescent NW

It smelled of a freshly cleaned toilet. The six of us arrived at Sam’s on a Tuesday night and it was all we could think about. It could have, I suppose, smelled instead of an unclean toilet, which certainly would have been a lot worse, though it was rather concerning to consider that our tables were cleaned with the very same cleansers they might use to scrub the soiled bowl of fecal matter and urine.

The bar was rather deserted when we arrived late in the evening, and remained so for the duration. Though, it was a weeknight and this wasn’t unexpected and the place did after all, smell of toilet cleanser. Apparently accustomed to the smell, those who were there seemed to be largely regulars crowded around the bar chatting it up with the friendly bartender or engaging in a riveting game of pool.

There was a pleasant absence of popped collars that one might find in some of the trendier and chancier bars in the area that made Sam’s actu-

ally a pretty decent place to have a beer. Though the music was a bit loud, the amount of space available to move around and pick and choose when deciding where to sit makes the place ideal for getting together with a group of friends with the hope of finding a suitable table and holding a conversation.

The selection of beer was adequate. It consisted of more than the predictable Molson on tap and included some imports at a price not totally unreasonable, around \$5.50 for a pint. The perogies are also apparently quite delicious. It is worth mentioning, however, that Sam’s doesn’t seem to employ servers on slower nights, which isn’t usually much of a problem when you don’t need to squeeze through a sweaty crowd of people to get a new beer.

If you’re looking for a good place to grab a beer in Kensington with a few friends, Sam’s certainly isn’t a bad choice, but if you’re looking to find your future ex, it’s probably not the best place to be.

..Christian Loudon

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Kensington

STEPHEN AVENUE: Downtown Calgary boasts dozens and dozens of bars, but the pick of the litter are found on Stephen Avenue. The street was named after George Stephen, the first president of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and declared a Canadian historic site in 1992. Stephen Avenue officially encompasses 8th Avenue between 4th Street SW and 1st Street SE. We decided to restrict our exploration of downtown's bars to Stephen Avenue because it's easy to access via the C-Train and there's plenty of good bars. Get off at either the City Hall or Olympic Plaza train station and enjoy everything the area has to offer.



Jon Roe/the Gauntlet

Bear essentials

BEAR AND KILT FREEHOUSE 110 8th Ave. SW

Located on the east end of Stephen Ave., the Bear & Kilt Freehouse is a great place to duck away from the bustle of downtown. When the *Gauntlet* arrived on a Monday night to review the pub, it was early and there were few people inside. The Bear is made up in the style of a typical British pub and because of the large amount of booths, it makes for a great place for a drunken conversation about philosophy or politics.

The food is great and the pub is one of the few places in town with perogies on the menu. Despite the Bear's prime location, the prices are fairly reasonable — most menu items are between \$8 and \$12. Drinks are also affordable. A pint of Wild Rose is \$4.75 and a pint of an import beer costs \$6.75.

The Bear & Kilt often gets overlooked for Stephen Ave. staples like the Unicorn and Ceili's, but the combination of cozy atmosphere and affordable prices make it a great location for a few pints.

..Jon Roe

Bringing down the bar's net value

The Joyce is almost too classy for student drinkers

THE JAMES JOYCE 114 8 Avenue SW

The second stop on our Stephen Avenue sojourn was the James Joyce. The bar is located inside the old Molson Bank building downtown and as a result, it has a sense of grandeur that a hole-in-the-wall bar can't quite match.

Two things strike you upon entering the building: the establishment is both deceptively large and tremendously classy. The interiors of the bar accentuate the effect — high ceilings, tons of dark wood fixtures and an array of decorated glass — and makes visitors feel like they've been taken on a trip back to the 1890s. The minimalist décor contributes to a great feeling of spaciousness, even if you're crammed into a booth with a bunch of your buddies.

The Joyce's classiness notwithstanding, it can have two effects on those entering: either you feel a sense of pride in your heart that you're classy enough to drink in there or you feel tremendously out of place. The servers being dressed nicely is meant to accentuate the bar's time-warp gimmick and it works, but it feels a bit strange being waited on by somebody in a bow-tie when you're wearing a hoodie and a Super Mario Brothers T-shirt.

If you're dressed nicely enough to feel comfortable or can get over the fish-



Jon Roe/the Gauntlet

out-of-water feeling, the James Joyce is a pretty good bar. A banner over the bar boasts the Joyce as having "the best pint in Canada," referring to the manner in which they serve Guinness. A round of them later, none of us were openly contesting that claim. The service is efficient and attentive — the night we visited they had to set up for a private function in the back, but still managed to make sure we

had what we wanted — and the menu and prices are virtually indistinguishable from most of the city's pubs.

The Joyce received positive reviews from everyone in our group. However, it was decided that the establishment is almost too impressive to be anything but a special occasion bar for students, as it lacks the certain something that makes a place cozy enough to call "your bar."

If you score that big internship, want to impress your boss or co-workers, or if you finally get that date with the cute girl in your sociology class, take them for a drink and a meal at the James Joyce. Once you're over trying to be impressive, try finding a cozier place to hang out all the time.

..Ryan Pike

The Unicorn: a rare breed of pub

THE UNICORN
304 8th Ave. SW

Calling itself Calgary's original pub, the Unicorn has been a favourite of students and drinkers alike since 1979. It's a standard-issue downtown basement bar, but the standard-issue decorations are fairly muted and presence of games and televisions make it feel like your friend opened a bar in their basement and invited you over to hang out.

Arguably the single biggest asset at the Unicorn's disposal is their staff. Just as the physical layout of the bar is your friend's basement, the Unicorn's staff are your friends. On most of the *Gauntlet's* many visits to the bar, both on official business and just for fun, the servers have been friendly, university-aged people. The place was pretty quiet on our latest visit, but the service is generally quite good even when the place is packed.



Jon Roe/the Gauntlet

The Unicorn boasts over 16 beers on tap with reasonable pint prices (\$6.50), although you can save a bit of money by perusing their

specials — we got a pitcher of WRaspberry Snakebite for \$17.30, or roughly \$4.35 per beer. The bar also has a expansive liquor menu, the highlight of

which is their extensive whiskey selection. Combined with their impressive line-up of beers, the Unicorn won't overtake places like Bottlescrew Bill's for the biggest selection in town, but it can definitely hold its own. The food menu isn't as immense as the liquor and the quality varies depending on the night, but they offer the usual pub staples for good prices.

For a bar to find its way into the hearts of journalists is a tall order, particularly because they tend to hate everything. Nevertheless, the Unicorn has managed to become a *Gauntlet* favourite because its strengths outweigh its flaws, such as the strange sightlines on some of the TVs. "Party where your parents did" isn't exactly the best slogan, but when the waitresses are able to chat about a psychology class that you both took while serving you drinks, it's hard not to love the place.

..Ryan Pike

Stephen Ave.

Ceili's attempts to stand out in crowd

CEILI'S
803 8th Ave. SW

It was a Monday night when we staggered into Ceili's. We were the ugliest three dudes in the bar. It was Industry Night and some of the most beautiful bartenders and servers in Calgary were dancing and drinking away their nights.

Ceili's used to be one of the typical, run-of-the-mill Irish pubs for the downtown lunch crew set — the typical beers and the typical service. That is, nothing new or exciting. General Manager Aaron Novlan, a seven-year vet from Pennylane Entertainment, has some big plans for the bar. He remarked to our soused group that he realized that Ceili's needs to be something more than just a watering hole for oilmen and women — he's trying to go after the 18–34 market with some of Ceili's new weekly events.

Monday night features Monday Night Football on the projector, with a DJ spinning after the game. The night we went, the DJ was playing typical Top-40 music and the dance floor consisted of any space that could be gained from pushing the tables away.

Wednesday night features 30 cent wings as well as duelling pianos. Since only one other place in Calgary has duelling pianos — check out Aussie Rules if you can get a reservation — he expects it to be a big hit. On Friday and Saturday the DJ comes back — so if you want a quiet night to spend with a significant other, bugger off somewhere. If you want to dance with them, you've got the right place.

At first blush some of these ideas seem completely outside the realm of the typical Irish pub, but Novlan admits there's enough competition in Calgary that he had to find some way to make the place stand out in the capital of Irish pubs.

The downside is going to Ceili's is a bit pricey. Hi-ball prices range from \$5.75–\$6.75, a pint of domestic will set you back \$6.75 and a pint of import is between \$7.75–\$8.50. The girls are winsome, though, and if you are much more attractive than our sad little crew of hoodie and cargo shorts drunkards then you too can partake in the very bonnie lasses at Ceili's.

..Jordyn Marcellus

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THE C-TRAIN PUB CRAWL: In the fall of 2006, two men had a vision: to take drinking to the next level by drinking their way through the entire Calgary C-Train line. While that vision ultimately proved both faulty and impossible to complete without dying, it gave birth to the *Gauntlet's* annual C-Train Pub Crawl. Two teams head to the far reaches of the C-Train line, then try to hit as many bars as they can on their way to a mid-way point downtown. Even though only one team can technically "win," the day is more about exploring the various places to drink throughout the city than getting completely hammered. That's just a nice side-effect.



Ryan May/the Gauntlet

South team: *The Magnificent Seven*

Ryan Pike

For the second straight year, the south team of the C-Train pub crawl was plagued by planning. Fortunately, it didn't really matter. Despite having three team members cancel at the last minute due to having to work and having to endure transit problems downtown, our team gathered at the Somerset BP's Lounge. After a meal and two drinks for most of us, the entire team was there. We settled on a strategy suggested by a team member who had been on the original crawl two years ago: instead of trying to get off at every stop for a drink, we'd hit bars in clusters and skip several stops.

With the strategy in mind, we traversed up to Mr. Schnapps in the neighbouring mall for a quick shot apiece — the delicious "Burt Reynolds," which we spent the rest of the day attempting to replicate — before quickly running over to a nearby Tony Roma's Lounge for more shots.

From there we ran to the train at Shawnessey, skipping the Fish Creek

station entirely and getting off at Canyon Meadows. We headed over to oc's Billiards, a cozy little place that was in the middle of a day-long tournament. The bartender had no idea how to make the shot we suggested, so one of our team members gave him the recipe.

After downing the concoction, we quickly skedaddled and sat down for awhile in Halo's, a nearby wine bar and restaurant. The place was insanely classy, but also empty, so we didn't feel bad for bringing the building's value down by merely being there. The team enjoyed a round of drinks, including wine and port, and a quick meal before heading back to the train.

We got off at Anderson and were informed by our experienced chum that there were a bunch of bars all within quick walking distance. We enjoyed shots at Moxie's Lounge, a round of mojitos at an Earl's Lounge, a round of prairie fires at the White Spot and white Russians at the Black Swan. Before heading to the train, we stopped

by Jack Astor's, where it turns out our server grew up on the same street as somebody on our team. This led to us talking them into slapping many of us, under the pretence that slaps were worth points. [Editor's note: They're not.] With full stomachs and sore faces, we headed back to the train.

Chinook was our next location, where the team decided to ignore a suggestion to drink at the movie theatre — you need to buy a ticket to get the opportunity to drink their overpriced beers — and headed north on Macleod. We ended up at O'Sullivan's, a divey little bar just north of the mall. Most of us ended up having two drinks apiece and the liquid courage got one of our team members to ask our server for a kiss, under the pretence that kisses were worth points. [Editor's note: They're not.]

Once we got out, we faced a dilemma: head south back to the Chinook station or continue north to the 39th St. stop. We decided to brave forward, trudging many blocks until we found a Hooters

and decided to grab Jägerbombs. Once inside, we all remembered why none of us like the place and headed for the train.

The day we did our crawl, the C-Train was down for maintenance downtown. So we headed as far north as we could on the south line, getting off at the Victoria Park station and immediately heading to the Stampede Casino. Half our team got lost in Stampede Park, so those that arrived at the casino first headed to the slots. For the second year in a row, the South team ended up ahead and used the proceeds to buy the next round of shots at the casino's bar.

The last stop for our team as we ran through downtown was Bottlescrew Bill's. We lost a team member and gained one, then sat down for as many drinks and snacks as we had time to enjoy before trekking off for the meeting with the other team at the Marquee Room. We arrived older, wiser and drunker than we did the year before, full of the knowledge that even though Calgary Transit can throw delays in our way, their treachery can be overcome with effective planning.

102 points



Geoff MacIntosh/the Gauntlet

C-Train pub crawl

North team: *The dirty dozen...or so*

Jon Roe

After a week of reviewing bars around Calgary, my liver was hurting in anticipation of the Gauntlet's third annual C-Train pub crawl. As much as I thought drinking plenty while reviewing bars was a good way to train for the event, it actually sapped my body of fluids and nutrients. Realizing this, my goal was to assemble a team so large that even if the other team out drank us on average per person, we would still absolutely dominate them.

It started at 10 a.m. I was doing my morning routine of sit-ups, jumping jacks and push-ups when a phone call awoke me from that obvious illusion. It was from fellow Drinking Supplement veteran Chris Beauchamp informing me that he, his fiancée Laura Gerhardt and Gauntleteer Kate Foote would be joining our team.

Success. We would eventually catch up with them at the second stop. After a few more hours of physical activity lies, I finally rolled out of bed to meet our team at the first stop. By 1 p.m., our team was assembled in the BP's Lounge at Dalhousie, a massive 10 people large, already three more than the south line would have all day. Unfortunately our giant squad presented some problems.

Firstly, when you walk into a bar and order 20 drinks, bartenders can never work fast enough. Secondly, co-ordinating a bill with a great number of drinks is difficult. Thirdly, getting over 10 people to move in a quick and orderly fashion is much like herding cats — impossible. Finally, it makes it hard to do quick hit shots at small bars because you tend to take up the entire place.

These problems culminated in us spending almost three hours in our first three bars, BP's, Jamesons and Smitty's Lounge. Most people don't realize that Smitty's has a lounge with ridiculously cheap drinks. Vodka hi-balls were \$2.75. The prices encouraged our team to drink extra, despite it not counting towards our score.

Our extra alcohol fueled a whirlwind walking tour south through Charleswood to the Alcove. Along the way we met up and recruited Gauntlet writer Todd Andre, who happened to be cycling past and didn't have anything better to do on an August Saturday than spend hours on a ridiculous drinking quest. At the Alcove we performed a sneak attack round of shots and moved on to the Q in the Quality Inn, where we did another round of shots.

Our squad jumped on the C-Train for

the first time since Brentwood at Banff Trail station, got off at Lion's Park and continued our quick assault to make up time spent in our first few bars. We hit up a liquor store in North Hill Mall and consumed mini bottles in the privacy of our own homes before nailing a little hole-in-the-wall bar on 16th Ave.

The bar featured a punching machine, the first such apparatus I had seen since doing last year's C-Train run in the northeast, and the barkeep kindly and quickly plugged in the machine after seeing our squad eyeing it. Apparently, a group of nearly 15 drunk people get the kind of quick service usually reserved for people with bandanas hanging out of their back pockets. We quickly cleared up our tab after spending too many loonies in the machine and motored on foot to Kensington.

By the time we reached F.A.T.S., the effects of alcohol began to wear on me. The number of people on our team for our short trip through Kensington is completely unclear to me. Regardless, our merry band hit a second Kensington bar and stole from their rich bottles of alcohol to give to our poor livers. Since the C-Train was not running downtown that weekend, we ended up walking down-

town. In total, our team only stepped on and off the C-Train twice once the competition started.

Between Kensington and downtown, our team learned an important lesson: though some people will like surfing the web twice as fast, some people will like downloading stuff twice as fast, some people will like finding their way twice as fast, pretty much everybody will like doing it with their phone — none of this should be attempted after you have been drinking. Katy's cry of "No!" was heard at the south line as her iPhone's screen cracked on the cement of the pedestrian bridge. [Editor's note: He's not kidding.]

Stopping at Rushhour near the Nexen building downtown, we had iDrinks in iHonour of the iScreen, including more iPitches than counted towards our iScore, and realized we had ran out of iTime. We arrived at the spacious Marquee Room, confident in our iVictory in iHonour of the iPhone. [Editor's note: You're an iDiot.]

The large team made the crawl kinder on my liver than in years past — evidenced by my coherence as late as 10 p.m. Most days, that fact isn't to be celebrated. For a C-Train pub crawl, and possibly for Christmas or birthdays, I call it a job well done.

iDonations for Katy's iPhone can be sent to room 319 in MacHall.

157 points

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CAMPUS: In addition to being a mid-ranked institution of higher learning, the University of Calgary and surrounding area are also home to several extremely good options for you, the discerning drinker. Ranging from kitschy chain bars to student pubs and everything in between, there are plenty of ways for you to get a beer and a meal in between classes without breaking the bank or mooching off your friends in Rez.

This Empty Space is full of drinks

THAT EMPTY SPACE

MacEwan Hall Food Court

Trying to get your buddies to go to That Empty Space for the first time is a bit of an Abbott and Costello routine. Typical conversations look like:

“You wanna go to That Empty Space?”

“What empty space?”

“That Empty Space.”

“Excuse me?”

That Empty Space can be one of the most confusing places to talk about on campus, but come Friday at 3 p.m., it's one of the best. The venue isn't anything to write home about. It's just a little space with some shitty couches and some really tacky frosted windows. There isn't much in the way of décor, just some ugly walls and a really badass graffiti mural on the wall.

But That Empty Space is one of the best places to drink on campus. It's so simple but so absurdly genius: get some of the best indie rock acts from throughout Canada to play a free show for university kids, throw in some \$3 drinks and the

music fans come out in droves. Sure it only happens once a week, but it's the premier destination for the cheap and discerning music geek.

Drinking at That Empty Space is also a great way to start out a session of crunking. You can get your cheap beers, sit down and just listen to some rock to get you pumped up for the rest of the weekend. Band selection can be a bit scattershot at times. Cadence Weapon has played in the space — in fact, three days before he went to Toronto for the Polaris Music Prize ceremony — and then a few weeks later you'll see a bunch of scrubs who only know three chords on their acoustic guitars take the stage. But it's free, so you can come and go as you please.

Drink selection is pretty minimal. \$3 cans of Canadian, \$5 cans of Strongbow and Guinness. All hi-balls cost \$3 as well, so the best bet is to get a double if you want to get drunk or a can of beer if you just want to enjoy the music.

One thing for first timers: don't be an asshole. There are people who actually want to see the bands playing, even if



Geoff MacIntosh/the Gauntlet

they are bad or unknown, and being a jackass throughout the performance will piss everyone off. Talking during those quiet acoustic sets is an especially big no-no. You may get called out by the artist

on stage and be horribly embarrassed in front of your much more pretentious peers.

..Jordyn Marcellus

The best bar in MacEwan Student Centre



Geoff MacIntosh/the Gauntlet

THE DEN/BLACK LOUNGE

MacEwan Student Centre

Since 1969, the Den has been a place for students to go to relieve stress.

Located in MacEwan Student Centre, the Den's downstairs and the Black Lounge is upstairs, but they're really one bar. The Den is likely the place where unadventurous students will spend the

majority of their drinking money.

That's not necessarily a bad thing. The Den's actually a pretty fine bar. The Black Lounge is a low-key place to grab a bite to eat in a restaurant-style setting, while the Den has more tables, but decidedly more chatter and noise. The décor in the place isn't the most spectacular, an unassuming blend of sports bar and pub, but nobody really comes into the Den for the décor. Just remember that a decade ago, the place was a smoke-filled, shag-carpeted mess and be thankful you're going to the school when you are.

The service at the Den varies depending on the day and how busy it is, but if you go during anytime but Thursday nights, you're virtually guaranteed solid service. The drink selection in the place isn't amazing due to the Students' Union's deal with Molson — you better love Pilsner and Canadian — but the prices for pints and jugs are roughly in line with other places, even cheaper on Thursday nights when the place

turns into a *de facto* nightclub.

One thing that's been markedly improved of late is the Den's food. Word is that they've hired a new head chef recently, but the food in the place has gone from consistently good to occasionally very good. Some pub standards are hard to screw up, but the Den has managed to spice things up with a few interesting variations.

Drinking at the Den is a lot like dating the girl next door. There's prettier bars out there, but there's something very convenient about having a bar right where you live. The Den isn't the best bar in the city, but it's a student bar and drinking there keeps fees down. Other bars may have trendier crowds, better food or a bigger drink selection, but they're also far away.

As for us, you can keep your fancy off-campus bars. We like the one that's just downstairs.

..Ryan Pike

Editor's Note: At press time, we were regrettably unable to review either the Last Defence (3rd floor Mac Hall) or POETS (Friday afternoons in the ENGG Lounge). Without being overly descriptive, the Last Defence is good for a meal and a pint while POETS is a fine place to enjoy the drunken hospitality of our friends, the engineers. Check 'em out.

Close but no cigar, Kilkenny

So-so service leaves a sour taste



Jon Roe/the Gauntlet

THE KILKENNY

500-3630 Brentwood Road NW

Perhaps it was the luck of the draw, maybe we sat down in the wrong section at the wrong time, but after being approached by a gum-snapping woman in a kilt

who slopped her arms onto our table and claimed to be our waitress, we raised an eyebrow or two. Going along with it, we proceeded to get carded — it still stings every time, doesn't it? Our waitress' story checked out when she returned with our order of three CBPs, their house beer. It was

decent, and cheap. Our sprits were high despite our waitress's lack of hospitality, vitality or personality, but once making our meal decisions we waited and waited. Every 10 minutes we would get progressively sour towards the Kilkenny. Almost 40 minutes into not being talked to, we decided to flag down the waitress, pay our bill, leave a modest tip and go to a place that serves their patrons.

I'm sure the fish and chips one of our team members was going to order were delicious. Just as I'm sure four beers later our waitress would have been a delight to talk to and seem personable and prompt. Actually, make it five beers.

The Kilkenny is not all bad vibes though; outside our little bubble of desolation the rest of the patrons seemed well taken care of and happy. The Irish-style pub has several sections and an array of booths and tables and stools at the bar. The décor is as authentic as you're going to get in a city that seems to be overrun with the Irish pub plague. With a picture

of an Irish linen shop — boring, yes, but authentic — and various Guinness artifacts spread throughout the ledges, shelves and casings, the Kilkenny calls itself an Irish pub without trying too hard. There are no shamrocks or leprechauns to be found. The intricate chandeliers and stained glass panels reinforce the bar as concept of what an Irish pub would be like at the turn of the 1800s.

Directly across from campus, the Kilkenny is a big draw to students who are too close to paying rent at the Den and need a change. It doubles as a sports bar with a flurry of flat screen TVs strategically placed in places where you wouldn't notice them unless they are on. Hockey games and football are the dominant sports at the pub.

The Kilkenny has become a Brentwood staple and has the loyalty of a diverse crowd of locals. I just don't know why our waitress picked that night to phone it in.

..Brad Halasz

McGuire's inspires good times

Wings, mugs minutes from campus

MOOSE MCGUIRE'S

25-1941 Uxbridge Drive NW

Our final stop around campus was Moose McGuire's. Located in the Stadium Centre mall across from Foothills Hospital, the bar is a surprisingly quick walk from campus. The bar itself is well designed, a blend of the classic Irish pub with elements of a sports bar. There's an array of televisions scattered throughout the place, but the sightlines are consistently good — a sign that the place was designed with them in mind instead of being thrown where they had room. The crux of the bar's design is the bar itself, accompanied by a giant wall of liquor shelves complete with a massive ladder, which calls attention to itself but doesn't dominate the room.

The night we stopped by was their 25 cent wings night and the place was jam-packed, but we were still able to find a table with ease. Despite how busy it was, we were all

impressed with the quality of service. We were also surprised at the physical layout of the tables; we had a full table at a full bar, but it never felt crowded. In fact, the only complaint we had about the experience was the volume of the dance music playing that night, something our server apologized for noting that the person in charge of the music "thinks we're a nightclub or something." While the wings were six cents more than at nearby Jamesons, some in our party thought they were better. The beer selection was pretty good, nothing obscure, but something for everyone, and the prices for pints were roughly the same as other bars with domestic beer at \$4.75 a pint and imports at \$6.25. Moose McGuire's also serves their beer in mugs, setting them apart from every other bar we reviewed for this publication, which all used pint glasses.

It seems a bit strange that Moose McGuire's is closer to campus than most other bars, particularly the



Jon Roe/the Gauntlet

Kilkenny, but seemingly lives in their shadow. For roughly the same price as most other places we visited, we got superior service, superior wings and beer in mugs. If you don't mind a seven

minute walk, Moose McGuire's could easily become your watering hole for the next four years.

..Ryan Pike

The new king of Brentwood

JAMESONS

17 - 3802 Brentwood Road NW

Jamesons is officially the best bar in Brentwood. Food and drinks are slightly cheaper than the Kilkenny on average and the service is much better.

The *Gauntlet* visited Jamesons on a Wednesday after a disappointing experience at the Kilkenny across the parking lot and were greeted with prompt service, delicious food and comfortable surroundings. The bar was previously Madison's before being renovated into Jamesons just over a year ago and now has a great environment on the inside to watch sports, with plenty of TVs, and a comfortable one on the outside with a large patio warmed by heat lamps.

Wednesday is wing night at Jamesons, and they have a good selec-

tion of flavours all for 19 cents a wing. Most bars now charge 25 cents, so the reduced price is welcome, though it's two cents more than the Kilkenny. They also host an East Coast night on Thursdays where you can get a bucket of Alexander Keith's for \$16.95 and all-you-can-eat fish and chips for \$11.95, should you want to skip a ThursDen. Appetizers are \$9-\$11, except the nachos, which are a little pricey at \$18, and meals will cost you from \$11-\$13 for wraps and sandwiches and between \$13 and \$20 for entrees. Beer is a bit expensive — Keith's and Grasshopper are \$6.25 per 20 oz. pint and Stella and Guinness cost \$7.75.

Though the Kilkenny has been the traditional second Den for rez dwellers, Jamesons has stepped

up in the last year and is a better destination.

..Jon Roe



Daniel Pagan/The Gauntlet

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"I'll never drink again."

Avoiding hangovers, nature's harsh revenge



Daniel Pagan/the Gauntlet

And God said: Let there be vodka! And He saw that it was good. Then God said: Let there be light! And then He said: Whoa, too much light!

Do you feel sick to your stomach? Are there thunderstorms rattling your head? Is there too much light? Is

there a dead hooker in your car trunk? If the answer is yes to any of these, congratulations, you have a hangover! A pounding headache, nausea, bloodshot eyes and diarrhea are the classic symptoms of a typical hangover students will

suffer through their academic and drinking career at least once. Let's not forget the shame and regret over that last shot of Jägermeister you shouldn't have had last night. The excitement and endorphins you had from your buzz go out the window when you find out you had sex with an ugly Students' Union vice president or *Gauntlet* editor. Fortunately, the *Gauntlet* Drinking Supplement is here to help you cure your hangover. Actions required to foil evil hangovers are as follows:

1. Drink a lot of water throughout the evening. Alcohol is a diuretic, resulting in extra trips to the toilet. Being dehydrated is one of the big causes of a hangover.
2. It pays to have a dinner or even a snack before getting drunk. Food in the stomach soaks up a great deal of the alcohol before it enters the bloodstream. High-fat foods are better since the grease and fat line the intestines and slow down the absorption of alcohol. That is why God created the Bacon and Egg McMuffin. Foods high in protein, like fish, nuts and beans are useful too.
3. Don't be a chemist in the bar by mixing various types of drinks. Sticking to one drink can limit the amount of toxins your liver has to process. Clear alcohols like gin and vodka have less tannin, a toxin that requires greater effort by the liver and kidneys to purge compared to red wine or scotch. Trust me, red wine is especially evil.

But what if you forgot about all of these and you still end up with a hangover in the morning? Try sport drinks like Gatorade before bed, you get water along

with the salt, minerals and vitamins to replace the ones lost while drinking.

Fruits and vegetables are also awesome for adding minerals and vitamins and to keep the stomach happy with alcoholic tortures. After a long night, you should rest, take it easy and avoid any complex work. Tea and hot baths are useful for that. This writer once had to suffer the indignities of taking Latin 201 on Friday morning after a long *ThursDen* night, struggling with the complications of a dead language and a hangover at the same time — don't do that, kids.

However, there are questionable methods that should be ignored. One is "biting the dog's hair." No, the *Gauntlet* does not condone biting your pet dog. Instead, it's drinking more beer to deal with the hangover. Fighting fire with fire sounds good until you realize how absurd it is to add more toxins to your body while it is still struggling. Another questionable piece of advice is exercising away your pains and the alcohol. Sounds good, right? However, you only sweat out a minimal amount of alcohol, at the same time becoming more dehydrated, worsening the situation. You can find special hangover pills such as RU-21 or Chaser, but they haven't been proven to work.

Of course, you can try drinking less on the previous night or drink nothing at all, but that's not fun, right? As long as you act responsible and keep track of how much alcohol you drink, you should be safe.

..Daniel Pagan

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Sobriety is win!

A non-drinker's guide to not drinking

For many, university is a time to experiment. The stereotypical college student can hope to be liquored up for a large part of their post-secondary career and the hangover-riddled morning exam is often a rite of passage. Others avoid binge-drinking evenings, ordering ginger ale over a gin and tonic, much to the chagrin of their alcohol-consuming friends. In order to avoid social alienation — the most extreme of consequences — or some awkward moments, the *Gauntlet* is here to provide you with our tried-and-true survival tips for the sober partier.

Be the photographer

Being the one to catch everyone's embarrassing moments is sometimes the most fun to be had at a party or the bar. Many drunk people seem to love the camera and will even ham up their performance if they see a lens pointed in their direction. The lack of inhibition also lends itself to some perfect candid shots. If trying this strategy, always keep track of your camera, so you don't find later in the night that it was commandeered for some lovely, unhampered x-rated shots.

Always have a drink in your hand

The best way to avoid getting harassed by that jackass friend about why you aren't imbibing is to at least appear you are. Order a fruity virgin drink, grab an iced tea or even a glass of water. If your non-

drinking is out of sight, it's out of the alcohol-driven observer's mind.

Be the designated driver

It's a great reason to not drink during the night — drunk driving is wrong on so many levels — and no one will give you flack for it as you're their ride home at the end of the night. Asking for a few dollars for gas is reasonable, especially with gas prices being as they are these days.

Find a booze-free buddy

The best way to cope with a night out on the town with boozehounds is to have a wingman in your mission to avoid alcohol. You can make fun of stupid drunk people together, not to mention share the responsibility of making sure your near-black out friends make it home without choking to death on their own vomit.

Arrange the event

Planning an event not centred around booze-ohol gives you the freedom to create an inviting environment for non-drinkers. Board game and movie nights are making a resurgence and aren't just for family bonding anymore. Formal tapas parties create a good scene as most people are focused on the food and excited about getting to dress up — not to mention, people tend to not get too smashed with the possibility of ruining their Sunday best in the process.

..Amanda Hu

Sober Seltzers

Here are a couple quick recipes for drinks to serve if you'd like to have some sober fun!

Shirley Temple

1 can of ginger ale
1 shot of grenadine
1 shot of orange juice
Pour grenadine and orange juice into glass. Fill with ginger ale and enjoy.

Virgin Mojito

2 limes
1 handful of fresh mint
1 can of soda water
ice
sugar to taste
Juice limes into a tall glass. Wash mint and place in the glass. Mash mint and pour in sugar as needed. Add ice and soda water. Stir and enjoy.

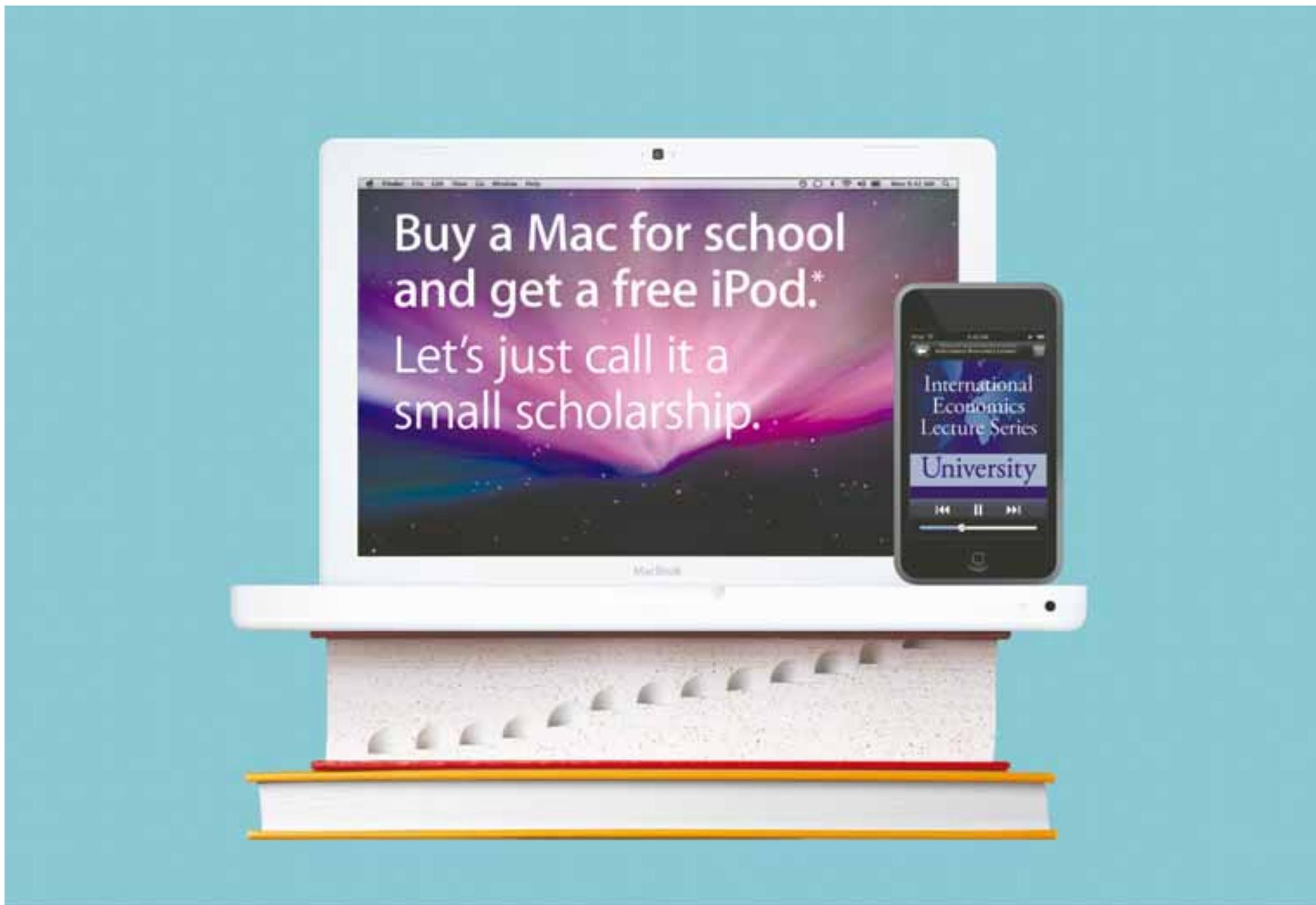


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