

★ BRISBANE ★ BY NIGHT



BRISBANE SHOULDN'T BE OVERLOOKED ON THE AUSSIE TRAVEL TRAIL, WRITES **EMILY MCAULIFFE**, AS ITS CONCEALED BARS ARE HOT TO TROT.

THERE WAS a time, not so long ago, when Sydney and Melbourne had a unanimous stronghold on Australia's night economy, and a city like Brisbane—sheepishly branded as Australia's big country town capital—posed little threat in the popularity stakes.

But then, something changed.

Holidaymakers became confused by the abundant cafés and bars that didn't feature in barely-out-of-date guidebooks, and jetsetters returning home after a year or two on the road were momentarily disoriented, as the city that once fell asleep at sundown started to pulse with energy into the night.

That's right, seemingly out of nowhere, Brisbane emerged from the shadows and confidently stepped onto Australia's social stage. And to really give its southern counterparts a run, Brisbane has maximised its rooftops and laneways to create a collection of funky bars that prove its hillbilly days are long gone.

So after surveying the city from Brisbane City YHA's own epic rooftop, check out these trendy haunts in and around Brisbane's CBD.



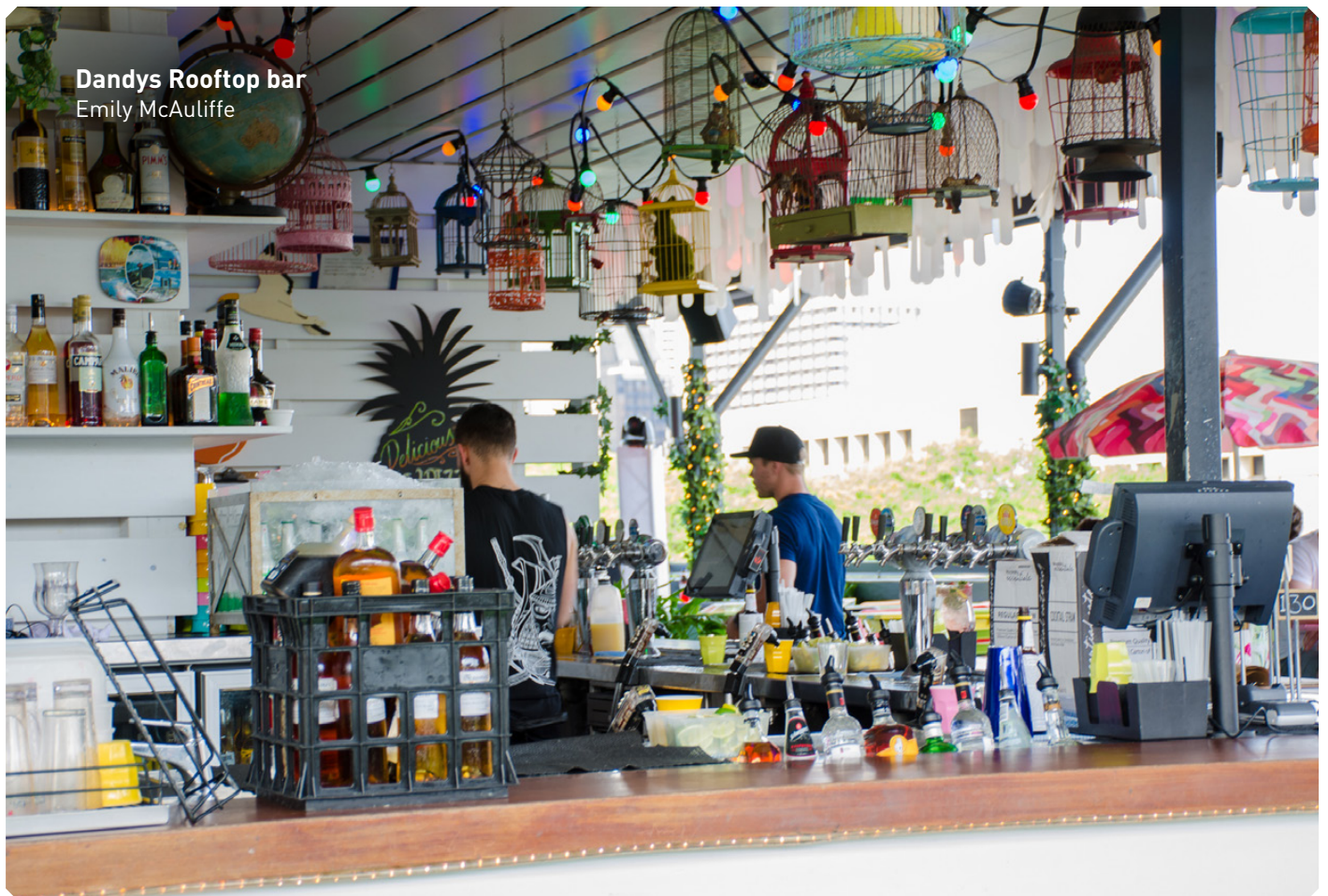
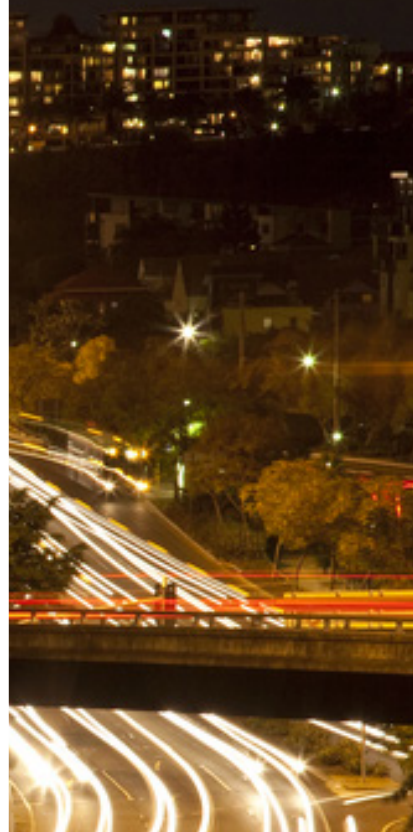
SHOUT IT FROM THE ROOFTOP

Brisbane has a cracking track record when it comes to weather (unlike some Australian cities, *cough* Melbourne), so the city's rooftops are the perfect place to catch the afternoon sun or a warm evening breeze.

And in the case of **Limes Hotel** in Fortitude Valley, you can also catch a movie, drink in hand, from the vantage point of their rooftop plunge pools on Wednesday and Thursday nights. When your only work task for Monday is emailing your mum, you can also throw yourself headlong into the bar's "Sunday Funday" celebrations - code for grab a cocktail jug, hit the pool and cheer on the DJ. Fun indeed.

Also harnessing the fun factor is **Dandys Rooftop Bar** in South Brisbane, a short walk over the river from the CBD. With technicoloured tables, strings of rainbow lights and the odd stuffed toy, you might think you've accidentally walked into a kids' party when you exit the lifts on the Fox Hotel's top level. But once you round the corner to see beers sloshing as waiters pouring at breakneck speed slam them onto the bar, you'll realise this is all grown-up fun. Renovated in 2013, Dandys is now Brisbane's go-to bar for a Sunday session, with a DJ spinning beats from 3pm until 2am.

If you want something more subdued however, nestle yourself amongst the tumbling vines and potted plants at **Elixir**, a groovy rooftop bar in Fortitude Valley that offers reprieve from the valley's otherwise hectic club scene.



Dandys Rooftop bar
Emily McAuliffe

GET LOST IN THE LANEWAYS

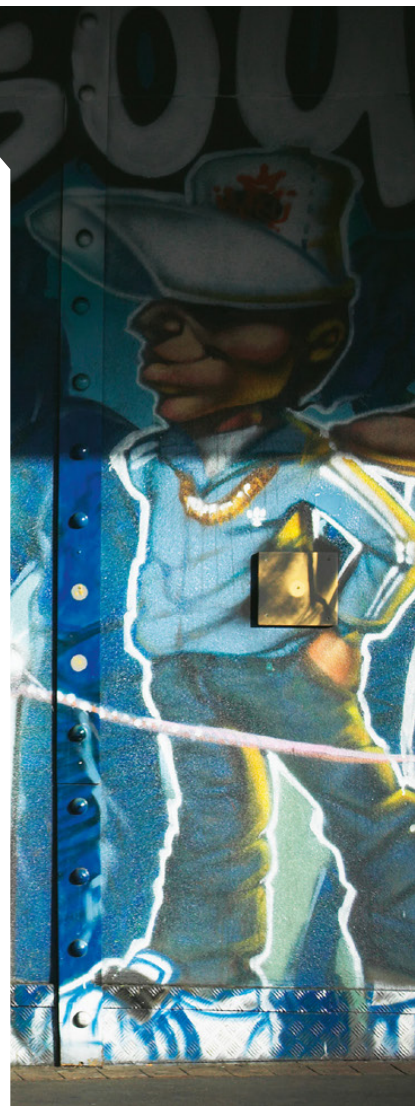
The best bar action isn't reserved for the rooftops though, as Brisbanites are becoming adept at navigating the rabbit hole to enjoy a tipples in the city's covert bars.

Burnett Lane in the CBD houses a couple of hidden gems, with Super Whatnot to your left as you exit the mall down Albert Street, and Brew to your right.

Despite being split over two above-ground levels, **Super Whatnot** feels like a cosy cellar with its dim yellow lighting and ragged brick walls. After following a trail of suspended neon lights down Burnett Lane, head up SW's wooden steps to find bartenders spearing mint sprigs into icy cocktails while a DJ backs patron chatter with a throbbing beat.

For a quirkier laneway locale, head down the graffitied Lower Burnett Lane towards the stack of milk crates that identify **Brew**. A mish-mash of floral armchairs, beer kegs, bench seats and red velvet curtains characterise the length of this underground bar, where you can wash down hot wings and meatballs with a craft beer. It's noisy and it's grungy, but that's half the fun.

If a boisterous crowd lacks appeal though, you can comfortably bunker down on a Friday night at **Bean** on George Street. A narrow strip of astro-turf beside a line of wheelie bins leads to this unsuspecting coffee shop, bar and art gallery, where you can indulge in cheap-as-chips espresso martinis for \$8 a pop over a game of Scrabble. Then, who knows, after a few hits of caffeine, you might be up for a groove on the d-floor after all.



Bean
Emily McAuliffe

BEST CHEAP EATS

If you've got the next-day munchies, here are the city's best budget spots to grab a bite.

Little Singapore It's not often you find cheap eats right on the river, but Little Singapore on Eagle Street dishes up tasty bowls of noodles and curries for under \$15.

Miss Kay's This burger joint started as a pop-up café and got run off its feet, so became a permanent fixture. Grab something classic like a cheese or pulled pork burger, or opt for an artery-clogging 'Mac Daddy' complete with mac 'n' cheese, before finishing off with an ice-cream sandwich.

Café 63 Opened in late 2015, this bright West End café offers cheap coffee, cheap lunches, and the ultimate bargain - a \$3 takeaway bacon and egg roll.

BEST PUBS

Trendy laneways and rooftops not your thing? Never fear, Brissie also has plenty of rollicking pubs to pull up a stool and down a coldie.

Mick O'Malley's Smack bang in the middle of Queen Street Mall, this Irish pub is everything you want and expect to it be - a long wooden bar, booth seats, pub tunes and free-flowing Guinness. 'Nuff said.

Victory Hotel After an unfortunate arson incident in 2008, Brisbane's iconic Victory Hotel was rebuilt to its former glory and has since carried on like nothing happened. Chill in the beer garden with a quiet ale early in the evening before letting loose with anything-goes moves as the night wears on.

The Plough Inn South Bank is a must for any visitor to Brisbane, with its manmade inner-city beach the perfect place to bask in Queensland's sun. Conveniently, there's also a pub nearby where you can people watch from the benches facing the pedestrian street or head upstairs to sink a few pool balls.

WHERE TO STAY

Brisbane City YHA is the perfect place to explore the city, and these spots, from - without a hefty taxi bill home late in the evening. And between nights out, the rooftop terrace offers terrific city views, a swimming pool under the stars, and open air dining room off the self-catering kitchen.

BOOK
NOW

◆ **Brisbane City YHA**

◆ (617) 3236 1004

◆ yha.com.au

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Bridge at Night
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