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THE NIGHTLIFE ISSUE

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The Faces Behind the Places That Light Up San Diego Nights

They're the ones who make it the place to be. They're the ones who hold the keys to the V.I.P. Once again, 944 has cut through the hype to find the individuals who are driving the nightlife scene to new heights and shaking up the status quo. Meet the people who go bump in the night.

BY **Derek Shaw**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **Mike Brown**



MIKE GEORGOPOULOS

The Risk-Taking Reinventor

After closing for more than a year, downtown nightlife staple **Side Bar** was recently gutted, expanded and reopened with a revamped look and refreshing attitude. Nude paintings, distressed hardwood floors, dance platforms and hanging bird cages accent the multi-million dollar renovations. "The old design of the bar was dated, and it didn't flow well because it lacked bathrooms and dead-ended in both directions. But now it's expanded so you can walk in a circle," says Georgopoulos, who once managed Side Bar before buying the business.

Side Bar is sleeker and hipper than ever but not at the expense of hospitality. The doormen are friendly and accessible, and the staff does the promoting. "We wanted something elegant and sexy that still feels comfortable," says Georgopoulos. "A classic design that won't fade in five years."