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#### **Tickling the Ivories: Harrisburg's Small Yet Vibrant Piano and Jazz Scene**

When your friends ask you out this Friday, fight the urge to go straight to the Harrisburg's "Party Block." Rather, venture for something a little different. How about one of Harrisburg's piano bars. Prepare for a relaxing, entertaining and social evening complete with a cocktail, dissenting friends, beautiful strangers and watching the piano man tickle the ivories.

The art of the piano bar has been lost on recent generations. The youth of today are more apt to go out and bang heads to metal music or shake themselves in deafening dance clubs. Lounging and relaxing – cocktail in hand, of course – has no place amongst today's MTV-pop brethren. Although, not all hope is lost. Call it a nostalgic revolution or leave it to pop culture's cyclical nature but the piano bar is once again gripping the crowds of Harrisburg's interest.

Harrisburg doesn't necessarily come off as the type of place which would harbor such cultural musical venues. However, nestled in the downtown district, both within walking distance, are two very distinct piano venues to take in the joy of a pianist.

#### **Carley's Ristorante & Piano Bar**

Carley's Ristorante and Piano Bar, the latest project of Harrisburg restaurateurs KJ and Stephen Weinstock, pays homage to the Italian piano bars of New York City. Opening in December 2007, Carley's enters its third year going strong.

As relaxation, conversation and cultural appreciation grow within Harrisburg so do the diversity and size of the crowd within Carley's. Manager Callie Alvanitakis recalls "we used to have music only three nights a week, now we have a performer in here all five nights." As cultural topics and conversation grow in importance to the youth, so do the crowds at Carley's: "The younger crowds are starting to realize they can come here and enjoy an evening talking about food, music and wine."

Along with fine Italian wine and food, Carley's offers piano music five nights a week. Not only do professionals grace the keys but Carley's also plays host to local and aspiring musicians with their open mic on Tuesdays, hosted by the talented piano professional *Tattoo* and *Fresh Keys* Wednesdays. "For local musicians," says Alvanitakis, "the dilemma is needing exposure to get gigs but needing gigs to get exposure." Carley's offers the outlet for these up and coming artists to hone their craft.

With no cover, ever, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at Carley's provides opportunity to catch a variety of talented pianists like Wade Preston, who plays Billy Joel in the Broadway musical *Movin' Out*. Wade makes monthly appearances at Carley's, typically on the first Friday of every month. His next appearance will be January 7th.

Thursdays' music lasts from 6:30pm to 9:30pm, Friday's from 7:30pm – midnight and Saturday's from 8:30pm to 1:00am.

For a full line up of shows visit [www.carleysristorante.com/entertainment](http://www.carleysristorante.com/entertainment)

#### **Harrisburg Hilton's The Bar**

For those preferring the soothing qualities of a dirty martini, leather couches and soft piano music, *MODE* recommends the Hilton's The Bar: cocktail and martini lounge.

For 20 years Steve Rudolph, the original piano man when The Bar originally opened, has graced the keys of The Bar's grand piano. As many may remember, this lounge was not always the high-class Hilton bar you see today. At one time, the state's largest XXX theatre stood where Mr. Rudolph's grand piano now stands.

During the week, The Bar occupies those seeking post-work relaxation or pre-evening aperitifs. Once the weekend rolls in, Steve brings in some of the areas top Jazz musicians to liven up the joint. Steve described the Hilton Lounge as the perfect venue for the "art music crowd; those who enjoy bluegrass, classical and jazz."

During the Fall and Winter months the Hilton Lounge has entertainment Tuesday thru Thursdays from 5:30pm to 9:30pm. Friday and Saturday evening the Lounge plays hosts to a variety of local jazz musicians from 8:00pm to 11:30pm. Sundays, enjoy your brunch to a solo pianist from 11:00am to 2:00pm. No cover charge for any of the Hilton's events; however, Sunday's Jazz Brunch may only be enjoyed by diners.

**Buddy Edgar** – Solo holiday Jazz piano.  
Tuesday, December 7th  
5:30 pm to 9:30pm in the Hilton's Lobby

**Jim Wood** - Solo holiday Jazz piano.  
Thursday, December 9th  
5:30-9:30PM in The Hilton's Lobby

**Hendrik Meurkens with Steve Rudolph** – Enjoy internationally acclaimed harmonica virtuoso, Hendrik Meurkens, as he and Steve Rudolph blend the sounds of harmonica and piano for a delightful evening.  
Friday and Saturday, December 10th & 11th  
8:00pm to 11:30pm in The Bar

**Dred "Perky" Scott with Steve Rudolph** – Dred "Perky" Scott combines jazz vocals with the exciting piano of Steve Rudolph for an uplifting night of jazz entertainment.  
Friday, December 17th  
8:00pm to 11:30pm in The Bar

**Chuck Redd with Steve Rudolph** – Vibraphonist Chuck Redd brings the happy, jingle of the vibraphone to fruition alongside Steve Rudolph's jazz expertise on the piano.  
Saturday, December 18th  
8:00pm to 11:30pm in The Bar

For a full listing of the The Bar's events visit: [www.steverudolph.com/hilton.php3](http://www.steverudolph.com/hilton.php3)