

Tropical Club

Contributed by TenFree
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1721 So. Flower Street, Downtown Los Angeles
 Exit 110 S. Fwy at Adams, left on 23rd, left on Figueroa, right on Venice, right on Flower
 (213) 744-0477
 Sun - Sat: 4pm - 2am
 Cover: Free (VISA, MC)
 Dance fee: \$30/hr. 1 hr. minimum
 Map

There is a banner advertising free parking on the chain link fence of the lot across the street, on the northeast corner of the intersection of Flower and 18th, right by the freeway on ramp.

This is a "hybrid club" that most closely resembles LA Grand in format. By that I mean the girls are mostly latinas, but they cater to all ethnicities and the clientele is not dissimilar to what you'd see at LA Grand or Fantasy. There is a security guard at the entrance downstairs, who pats down all customers before they are allowed to go upstairs. A sign just inside the entrance listed all the items that are supposedly prohibited:

- No sneakers?!?!)
- No tank tops
- No ball caps
- No shorts
- No T-shirts
- No bandanas
- No gang attire
- No weapons (duh!)

I say "supposedly" because I have seen guys wearing sneakers, shorts, and ball caps.

The entrance is downstairs. You first enter a small, bare foyer area, which also serves as the designated smoking area. Up the stairs to the right the first thing you see is a counter which is usually staffed by a female. It seems to mainly serve as a storage area for the girls' personal belongings.

To the left of the top of the stairs around a wall are the bathrooms. The men's room is slightly larger than the one at CF, with both a regular and handicapped stall. On the same floor are two offices with interior windows. There was another windowless room that may have been a storeroom.

As you pass the counter to the right, a short corridor takes you into the main area of the club. At the end of the corridor to the right is the front desk, and behind the desk is the DJ booth. The corridor opens up into a square shaped room with a shiny, hardwood floor where the girls sit. On the far right is the snack bar. At the far end of the room is another room with two pool tables.

Opposite the front desk to the left is the entrance to the TV room. Actually it's a double TV room, with a fairly sizeable main area and a smaller, secondary area behind it with its own TV separated by a short wall. There is a single file of couches running the length of the long, rectangular room along the near wall. Across the aisle against the far wall there is a double file of couches set end to end, like what you'd see at the Latino clubs like Las Palmas, Galaxy, and 907. The couches are of the cloth variety, with short backs. A leopard print carpet runs the length of the room. At the front of the room is another short wall with two files of couches. Just beyond the couches is the dance floor, which is slightly bigger than the one at CF. The TV room is more brightly lit than at LAG and CF, and there aren't any good nooks and crannies for freaking.

Patronizing Tropical has frequently been a frustrating experience. The reason I say that is because the one thing you can count on there is that they are consistently inconsistent in how they enforce the rules, and boy do they have a lot of rules:

For starters, when you clock in a girl you have to leave a \$60 deposit at the front desk. In lieu of that you can leave your credit card and ID.

There is a minimum one hour clock in time, which means no matter how quickly you bring a girl back you'll be out at least \$40. The way that works is \$30 for the clock fee, \$5 admission fee (which is only charged if you clock in a girl), and \$5 (or more) for the two drink minimum.

If you keep a girl past 1:00 AM, you will be charged until 2:00 AM, even though they start clearing the place out at 1:30.

If you have a cell phone, you have to leave it at the front desk when you clock in a girl, then before entering the couples area the upstairs security guard will frisk you again and ask you to open your wallet (to see if there are any condoms inside).

Although it's never happened to me, I've even heard that customers have sometimes been told where to sit with a girl after entering the room.

Handkerchiefs and pens are not allowed in the couples area. You can guess as to the reason for the first item and as for the second, it's so you can't write down the girls' phone numbers. That's also the reason for the ban on cell phones.

No gum chewing is allowed in the club at any time.

The girls are not allowed to talk to each other while seated in the waiting area, and they are told where to sit.

They are only allowed to go to the restroom one at a time. I understand the reason for this is the owner is worried they might do drugs in there.

For a while the mileage was good enough to make putting up with all the BS worth it, but ever since the club was raided in August of 2008 it was never the same. They even gotten rid of some of the couches along the south wall, supposedly because they could not be viewed from the entrance to the TV rooms where the security guard usually hangs out. In the several months leading up to its closing in the fall of 2009, the place was a virtual ghost town with only 10-15 girls and only a few who were actually attractive. The club has recently opened effective April 2, 2010. Initial reports indicate they have new chairs and re-covered bar stools, but the all the same rules as before. There were about seven girls working on Saturday, April 3 at 6:00 PM, which is not too bad for that time of night.