

AUSTIN GO BRAGH: A GUIDE FOR THE GREEN

A GIRL WALKS INTO A BAR. . .

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Publication Date: March 15, 2007 Page: 15 Section: XLEnt Edition: Final

“Green Death” — that’s what one of my uncles calls the punch my grandfather used to make for St. Patrick’s Day.

Recently, my non-Irish, non-Catholic, from-a-teeny-tiny-family boyfriend sat in my auntie’s living room in San Francisco and listened to St. Pat’s stories of various neighbors and friends and priests dancing and singing and occasionally careening into shrubberies . . . Yes, I felt like a walking stereotype. But the stories also made me want to invite all my friends over, put on the Sharon Shannon albums and make some Green Death (lime sherbet is the key ingredient — oof).

As most of my friends will be at SXSW, I’ll probably spend the day at one, or several, of these fine places, none of which has the bad taste to use lime sherbet, much less lime sherbet with alcohol.

Note: As you think about where to celebrate, remember that St. Patrick’s Day is also the Saturday of SXSW and make plans about parking and such accordingly.

B.D. Riley’s Irish Pub. 204 E. Sixth St., 494-1335: Absolutely no green beer will be served at B.D. Riley’s, God bless ’em. Instead, hear music from 2 p.m. till the wee hours, including the band Pubcrawler (who also plays at the Dog & Duck) and Gan Fidil, a traditional-cum-modern band that plays without fiddle. B.D.’s was built in Ireland and shipped over and has a sleek, classy feel — though it will likely have a crowded feel come Saturday. Your best bet in the Driskill vicinity.

Fado Irish Pub. 214 W. Fourth St., 457-0172: Fado starts celebrating St. Pat’s early — by the time you read this, the party will be under way. Bands will be on the street Friday night, and come 10 a.m. on the 17th, the street festival opens with the Blaggards, a band that’s been (reasonably accurately) described as Pogues-like. There will be Irish dancers, there will be Irish food, there will be Irish music (lots of Irish folk rock), there will be Irish drink.

Bull McCabe’s. 714 Red River St., 478-4022: Want to hear a Dublin accent so thick and speech so quick you’ll catch only half of it? This is your joint. A pair of Dublin brothers opened the place and, man, have they got the accents. Paddy’s Yarn will play traditional music and the pipers will drop in for some tunes. Rumor has it (OK, the guys there told me) there’ll be green hair and T-shirt giveaways. And some kind of leprechaun something.

Mother Egan’s. 715 W. Sixth St., 478-7747: I couldn’t get an official schedule by press time, but rest assured there’ll be plenty of singing and dancing at the finest Irish pub on that west-of-Congress stretch of Sixth Street. Guinness, fish and chips, the big deck, the wooden snugs, the bar stools — Mother Egan’s can be a great place to pass St. Pat’s. In years gone by, I’ve even seen some face-painted kids hanging about in the afternoon — with their parents, of course. I always appreciated seeing whole families out — and appreciated the youngsters heading home as the night wore on.

Dog & Duck Pub. 406 W. 17th St., 479-0598: The Dog & Duck is not, I repeat, not an Irish pub. But it's included here because it has one of the great St. Pat's parties in Austin. Tents go up in the parking lot, Guinness flows (no hard liquor is served), fish and chips are consumed almost by the shovelful, and the pipes, they come a-calling. Music starts at 11 a.m. with the Bedlam Bards, the Silver Thistle Pipes & Drum Corps are on at 5 p.m. and the last act — Jackman — takes the stage at 9 p.m., with celebrating going on 'til late. Over the years, I've lost my heart, my keys and my head at this annual party.

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