

CALIFORNIA

Up All Night in South Lake Tahoe

The airport shuttle leaves at 8 A.M. and you're feeling...like the guys in *Swingers*. You're so money. —SUSAN SCHNIER

SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

- 1 FIRE + ICE
- 2 MCP'S PUB
- 3 FRESHIES
- 4 TO WHISKEY DICK'S
- 5 ALTITUDE AT HARRAH'S
- 6 CLUB NERO AT CAESARS
- 7 MOTT CANYON
- 8 LAKESIDE CASINO
- A DART DISCOUNT LIQUORS
- B TO KIRKWOOD
- C TO SIERRA-AT-TAHOE
- D GONDOLA TO HEAVENLY
- E CASINO



HAPPY HOUR

1. Fire + Ice

People-watch on the outdoor deck, located directly beneath Heavenly's gondola. At the sleeker inside bar, assemble ingredients from the Mongolian-barbecue-style buffet, and then wa-hoo as the chef sets them on fire for all to see. [3300 Lake Tahoe Blvd.]

2. McP's Pub Tahoe

Quintessential ski-town vibe: party-girl bartenders in torso-hugging baby-Ts, two pool tables, nightly live music (punk, rock, funk), and above-average pub grub (we recommend the Philly cheesesteak). Watch the base-area chaos unfold from the second-story deck. [4093 Lake Tahoe Blvd.]

REFUEL

3. Freshies

It's almost two miles off Main Street, but friendly, floral-shirt-clad staffers and the Hawaiian-themed menu—fresh fish tacos, "magical" potato balls (the wizardry is in the cheese and sour cream), and piña colada bread pudding—make it worth the wander. [3360 Lake Tahoe Blvd.]

EDITOR'S PICK

4. Whiskey Dick's

The bartenders breathe fire—Bacardi 151 anyone?—while the locals do body shots at this crowded, backlit joint. Pinup-girl posters and a Ms. Pac-Man table lend the place a retro feel, but the live music is progressive, from punk to jazz to DJs. The best part: A "drinking buddy chalkboard" lets you buy a drink for an absent friend, who can redeem it later. [2660 Lake Tahoe Blvd.]

PAST MIDNIGHT

5. Altitude at Harrah's

Vegas-style debauchery, only with far fewer women. Expect long lines of hair-gelled dudes and a smattering of tube-topped gals. Some of the female staff dance topless—yes, as in fully topless—along the stainless-steel bridge, while cage dancers take showers in glassed-in stalls. [15 Hwy. 50]

6. Club Nero at Caesars

It's like Altitude at Harrah's, only with less nudity and more famous people. Aura, a sushi-and-tapas lounge just a few blackjack tables away, will open its swanky doors in January 2006. [55 Hwy. 50]

7. Mott Canyon

Space out in front of the massive fireplace, a 300-gallon saltwater aquarium, or a wallful of trophy bucks. Or ride out the Red Bull surge playing bar-top poker, foosball, or pinball. The kitchen is open until 3 A.M., and the (second) happy hour starts at midnight and lasts until 4 A.M. [259 Kingsbury Grade]

SUNRISE

8. Lakeside Casino (Timber House Restaurant)

When you decide to put the landing gear down, duck into this greasy spoon for the \$2.99 breakfast special (served from midnight until 11:30 A.M.). Drinks are \$2 all day—even the Bloody Marys, which should set you straight for the trip home. [168 Hwy. 50]