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*Kiki*  
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## MAY DAY! MAY DAY!

when artists and air travel haven't been in harmony  
page 20 | by blazer sparrow



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your quick-reference guide for barroom etiquette  
page 22 | by hannah one cup



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our favorite security professional unpacks the new flick  
page 34 | by nate hazen



## HISTORY OF THE TACO

the perfect month to chronicle the king of finger foods  
page 36 | by wombstretcha the magnificent

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Kota  
X EXOTIC LOUNGE

# polerotica

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HOSTED BY DJ DICK HENNESSY

**ROUNDS 1-3 FINALISTS**

PHOTOS BY  
**HYPOKX**  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
& RALPH WALKER  
PHOTOGRAPHY

Kit Kat  
KIT KAT CLUB

Destiny  
GUILTY PLEASURES

Nyx  
FIREHOUSE CABARET

Rain  
SUNSET STRIP

Remy  
CLUB DETOUR  
STARS CABARET  
SALEM

Raven Lynx  
KIT KAT CLUB  
X EXOTIC LOUNGE

Shayla  
GUILTY PLEASURES



**THE P-TOWN HAPS**

I'll get right to task this month, as space is limited! You all know I like to start with birthdays, and we have no shortage this month... The celebrations start at Union Jacks on Thursday, May 2, for Franki's Birthday Party! Just a couple of days later, on Saturday, May 4, Julie will celebrate her Star Wars-themed Birthday Bash at Guilty Pleasures. Then, on Friday, May 10, it's Fawn's Birthday Party at Union Jacks. The very next day, on Saturday, May 11, there's a birthday remembrance right back at Union Jacks. Happy Heavenly Birthday to Ilya, the beloved founder! Wrapping up birthdays for May, we have Maddi Ray's Birthday Party at Cheetahs in Salem on May 24! Happy Birthday to you all—I hope you enjoy your special day!

But wait...there's more (in my best Slap Chop dude's voice)! Who's in for some Cinco de Mayo fun? Stars Cabaret (Bridgeport and Salem) will have their Cinco de Mayo Celebration all weekend long (Friday, May 3 through Sunday, May 5), complete with food and drink specials, giveaways, and prizes. Stars is also showing the love to our active duty and veteran military members with free admission on Saturday, May 18. Awesome!

Now you know I wasn't getting through all the events this month without writing: *May the 4th be with you!* Celebrate Star Wars style at Devils Point on Saturday, May 4, with their 9th Annual Star Wars Night! I call dibs on Jar Jar Binks—nobody better show up with the same outfit, okee day!?

**POLEROTICA 2024**

Well..folks...it's hard to believe we're already at the halfway point of Polerotica! If you haven't made it to one of the qualifier rounds so far, you're definitely missing some fantastic performances and industry moments!

We'd like to congratulate all of our qualifying finalists to date:

- Round 1:* Rain from Sunset Strip, Destiny from Guilty Pleasures, and Shayla from Guilty Pleasures
- Round 2:* Raven Lynx from Kit Kat Club, Kota from X Exotic Lounge, and Kit Kat from Kit Kat Club
- Round 3:* Nyx from Firehouse Cabaret, Synn from Stars Cabaret (Salem), and Remy from Stars Cabaret (Salem) & Club Detour

(Check out the left-hand page to see photos of all the abovementioned finalists in action during their qualifying set.)

Don't miss the last three qualifying rounds: Saturday, May 4 at X Exotic Lounge, Friday, May 10 at Dream On Saloon, and Friday, May 17 at Guilty Pleasures! Then, it's the ultimate pole showdown at the Finals on Saturday, May 25, at Dante's in Downtown Portland. *Don't miss this night!*

**Support your local businesses, including every industry business within these pages.**



**eroticcity spotlight**

**THU 02 – UNION JACKS – FRANKI'S BIRTHDAY PARTY**

**FRI 03 – STARS CABARET – CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION**

**SAT 04 – DEVILS POINT – 9TH ANNUAL STAR WARS NIGHT**

**SAT 04 – GUILTY PLEASURES  
JULIE'S STAR WARS BIRTHDAY BASH**

**SAT 04 – STARS CABARET – CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION**

**SAT 04 – X EXOTIC LOUNGE  
POLEROTICA 2024 QUALIFIER ROUND V**

**SUN 05 – STARS CABARET  
CINCO DE MAYO CELEBRATION**

**FRI 10 – DREAM ON  
POLEROTICA 2024 QUALIFIER ROUND VI**

**FRI 10 – UNION JACKS – FAWN'S BIRTHDAY PARTY**

**SAT 11 – UNION JACKS  
HAPPY HEAVENLY BIRTHDAY TO ILYA**

**FRI 17 – GUILTY PLEASURES  
POLEROTICA 2024 QUALIFIER ROUND VII**

**FRI 24 – CHEETAHS (SALEM)  
MADDI RAY'S BIRTHDAY PARTY**

**SAT 25 – DANTE'S – POLEROTICA 2024 FINALS**

**HAPPY HOURS**

- CABARET – 2PM-6PM**
- DEVILS POINT – 3PM-6PM**
- DESIRE – 6PM-9PM**
- DV8 – NOON-3PM**
- THE LOUNGE - 11AM-4PM**
- LUCKY DEVIL – 3PM-6PM**
- UNION JACKS – 6PM-8PM**

# MAY DAY! MAY DAY!

## SIX TIMES AIR TRAVEL CAUGHT UP WITH ROCK STARS AND KILLED THEM!

By Blazer Sparrow

There are plenty of hit pieces, TikToks, pamphlets, gaudy biopics, poorly-written autobiographies, poorly-written biographies, and after-school specials about the dangers of drug and alcohol use and how they derailed the careers of otherwise upstanding and good-natured musicians. We're all well aware of how they were the pinnacle of virtue and inspiration, and then after one sip of booze or one snort of blow, it was straight to the gutter, in a bum's outfit with alimony bills stuffed in their pockets. We don't need to waste any more words on those cautionary tales, especially not in a magazine that mostly consists of naked women that you're reading in a bar.



What I will spend these pages grandstanding about is the dangers of *air travel!* Nobody talks about the health risks and addictive nature of private jets! Wake up, sheeple! I'm sick and tired of these stories of tragedy being buried in lieu of sexier, sensationalist stories of heroin overdoses and alcohol poisoning. We need to address the real monster in the room—the real temptress of all successful artists. The power to defy gravity, beat traffic, and soar like a God above the peasants below! Not even once, young aspirants! Air travel only leads to death! Just look at these fine stars, who were full of potential and cut down in their prime.

### Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, and The Big Bopper

Starting with the obvious one here. The first and likely most prolific example of air travel madness came early in the history of pop music (and air travel, for that matter.) In 1959, all three of these massively influential pop

stars gave in to the ghastly throws of deciding not to take the tour bus out of Iowa. It's heart-breaking to know that Buddy Holly himself chartered the flight. Behind those innocent-looking horn-rimmed glasses were the eyes of an addict. And it cost him, two of the biggest musicians of their time, and a pilot (whose name I can't remember) to lose their lives. Think about that next time you put on "Peggy Sue." Even the squeakiest-clean rock legends weren't immune to the lure of the skies.

### John Denver

The only thing worse than getting someone else to fly your death trap is flying one yourself! Can you believe that some musicians are so flagrant in their air travel that they go out of their way to learn how to fly themselves? The hubris. The only thing more shameful than this blatant air travel abuse is an adult animated show making light of it less than three years later. Unlicensed, homebrewed piloting isn't a joke, South Park!

### Aaliyah

Three banger albums, two questionably decent starring film roles, and all of it gone after deciding to force the pilot to take off, even though the plane was overloaded and unsafe to fly. Nothing is so tragic and unsightly as watching a fiend jonesing for a fix. Sadly, the pilot relented to the addict's demand and took off in the overloaded plane, killing not only the world-class singer and actress but also himself...in a fiery inferno! An important lesson on the dangers of being an enabler, as well. It can cost you *your* life, too!

### Stevie Ray Vaughn

I'm sure it looked so cool when the cats at Woodstock did it. Flying over the dirty, unwashed hippies stuck in traffic, trying to break through the fence to get into the festival for free, like the cheap, lazy bums they always were. Watching Santana and Sly hop off those helicopters straight onto the stage. I don't blame young Stevie for being seduced by the thrill of riding that whirlybird. But look where it got him. Dead! That's where! It always looks cooler in the movies. Nobody shows you the ugly side of helicopter rides.

### A Significant Portion of Lynyrd Skynyrd

If ever there was a cautionary tale about the dangers of air travel, it's this: If you're going to insist in partaking in the black magic that is making humans fly against God's will, definitely don't also release an album called "Street Survivors," where your band is standing amongst flaming wreckage. It's all fun and games until someone actually goes down in flames.



Randy Rhoads

If post-Sabbath Ozzy and shredtastic guitar is your thing, this one probably hit you pretty hard. It's hard to disagree that Ozzy's best solo output was with—and most likely due to—the input and inclusion of this mostly sober little whipper-snapper. But while this tiny guitar tapper avoided the more famous vices of musicians, he gave in to that same silent killer that took out Buddy Holly, The Big Bopper, and Ritchie Valens. The Beechcraft Bonanza! (Seriously, look it up. Same fucking airplane! Will these reckless rock stars ever learn?!)

They won't. But you can, dear reader! Just like *Reefer Madness* successfully dissuaded an entire generation from using the devil's lettuce in 1936, and its use is practically unheard of now, I hope this article (that you can get for free in a strip club) will save all you poor, lusty souls from dabbling in air travel. How Led Zeppelin spent a good chunk of the '70s in a Boeing 720 fitted with a fully-stocked bar, an electric organ, a TV, several couches, a sex room and survived God's punishment is beyond me. But they are the exception, not the rule. The above-listed and many others are the more common and unsexy inevitable destination of the devil's road through the air. Quit while you still have the chance, Taylor Swift! Abstinence is the only way!



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Model: Gi Mary Jane Photographer: @saintsashaphotography

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# THE WEIRDO AT THE BAR

BY HANNAH ONE CUP



I had an experience recently at a local beer store...er bar, which prompted me to write an article about it, specifically because my partner did not understand why it made me feel the way it had, which was, in the politest way of putting this, uncomfortable.

The thing that bothered me most was that my partner did not understand why this made me so uncomfortable because, to him and many other individuals of the “masculine” type, this situation could be easily brushed off and never thought of again. Unfortunately, for myself and many other individuals out there (males not excluded here), this type of thing happens so frequently that you almost don’t feel like going out anymore—just because trying to make the situation *not happen* takes more effort than it did to put on an outfit that day (which is a feat for me some days, let me tell you).

I need to give my partner credit here, as he did try to make it noticeable that I was with him and that I should join the conversation he was holding with another patron, but this didn’t put a halt or deter the individual trying to talk at me, in the slightest. It was also on me for not verbally stating how uncomfortable I was becoming, which is why I am writing this article. Because that last sentence is exactly what stops change from occurring, and when someone or a group of individuals are being repulsive adult toddlers, they need to be told that’s what they are acting like so that it doesn’t happen again—or at least not to you.

So, whoever you are, if you’re reading this article, read on. We can all learn something from my experiences, if not what to do, what *not not* to do. Don’t

worry; I’ll make it fun. Because I’m nice, and I might like you. This is really just about proper etiquette when it comes to talking to people in public, how to notice obvious social queues, and what to do with them.

1) If you are sitting alone and minding your own business, it’s ok to stay that way. This goes for everyone. You do not have to feel pressured into holding a conversation with anyone in public. Did you just want to go to a bar and grab a drink because you had a long day? Maybe you’ve had your share of hearing people talk, or maybe you don’t need an explanation at all *because you do not owe anyone anything*...except for the bartender. Pay them. They might even be able to help you out of a jam like this.

2) When you notice someone you’d like to try starting a conversation with, especially if you don’t know them, try introducing yourself first. Simply saying, “Hey, I’m Tad. Do you mind if I sit here? We don’t have to talk if you don’t want to. I just didn’t wanna be the weirdo in the corner” might break the ice a bit. It also lets the person choose if they want to even have you by them, let alone converse. If they say, “No, I’m saving this seat for my friend,” then no means no. Even if that person has no friend and is kind of being a bit of an “uppercase B” by taking up two seats at a bar, respect their personal space.

3) Don’t talk about politics to someone you don’t know, and try arguing your point of view. That’s it. If you both are trying to have open forum-style conversations about world events, neat. But don’t try shaming someone into believing you’re more correct than them. It just makes you into a huge ass.

4) Asking questions like, “What do you



think the future of the world is?” is a *loaded* question and one I’m personally unable to respond to with a stranger, let alone one sitting at the bar next to me. So don’t go there. If you go there, prepare for a weird answer. It’s also especially hard when that person is extraordinarily drunk and trying to order you a drink you don’t want, which brings me to number 5.

5) Do not ask what someone is having and say you’re buying them a drink. Telling someone you’re buying them a drink is, in this day and age, creepy and a bit insulting for reasons I have a



hard time describing. *Asking* if you can buy them a drink is great. I love when people *ask* if they can buy me a drink. If you're turned down, don't make it weird, *bud*. Just accept it, move along like it didn't happen, and *do not ask again*.

6) If you are speaking to someone and they start turning their head and attention towards another direction or person, they probably don't want to continue your conversation. That isn't true in all instances, but to be on the *improved* social etiquette side of things, don't try continuing to talk to them. At that point, you're talking *at* them and trying to force a conversation they don't want to have. It makes you look creepy again. Which is not what you want to go for. Also, no hands. Do *not* put your hand on their shoulder, and try turning them around. It's so off-putting and repulsive it almost makes me want to throw a glass of liquid in someone's face when it happens.

7) If you are on the receiving end of 5 and 6, do *not* feel bad about turning them down. You aren't doing anything wrong, and politely stating your "No, but thanks" will hopefully sway them in the correct direction and help them understand that they might be making you feel uncomfortable. You owe them nothing, I repeat, you owe them *nothing*. They should feel *honored* to have had you even acknowledge them when they said hello (*see end paragraph\**).

8) If you are with someone, and another individual is trying to get your attention, but you are feeling awkward, do *not* be afraid or embarrassed to let the person you are with verbally know. If they aren't getting the hint, make eyes with the bartender and then tell the person talking at you, "I'm trying to hang out with these people," or "I'm just trying to sit in peace for a bit." That way, the bartender also openly heard your statement and can keep a tab on the weirdo making unwanted advances. Again, this works for both men and women. Bartenders and industry folks, I can't say it enough, they want to have your back. They like good groups of people and good customers and want you to feel safe. They might be like me and not like most people, but they want you returning and don't appreciate weirdos breathing down their backs.

\* *When I say this, I full-heartedly mean it. Everyone's breath and time are worth a dollar amount, and the dollar amount you set for yourself will be what determines the quality of people in your life. You might not be a millionaire boat owner with two pet cows, and your friends might all be warehouse workers or school lunch ladies with a secret flask of Malört in their bosom, but that isn't the point. The point is the quality of these people and how they interact with you tells you and those people how much you are worth to them. And it better be the whole damn world.*

Hannah One Cup can be found on soc meds...on Facebook by her name, and Tik-Tok @thursdaynight\_depression.



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**TROPHY'S GENTLEMEN'S LOUNGE 31** **FOOD**  
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Portland: 237 SE MLK JR Blvd | (503) 239-1678  
Daily 8am-2am  
Sun-Thu 10am-12am, Fri-Sat 10am-2am  
Portland: 14712 SE Stark St | (971) 888-5159  
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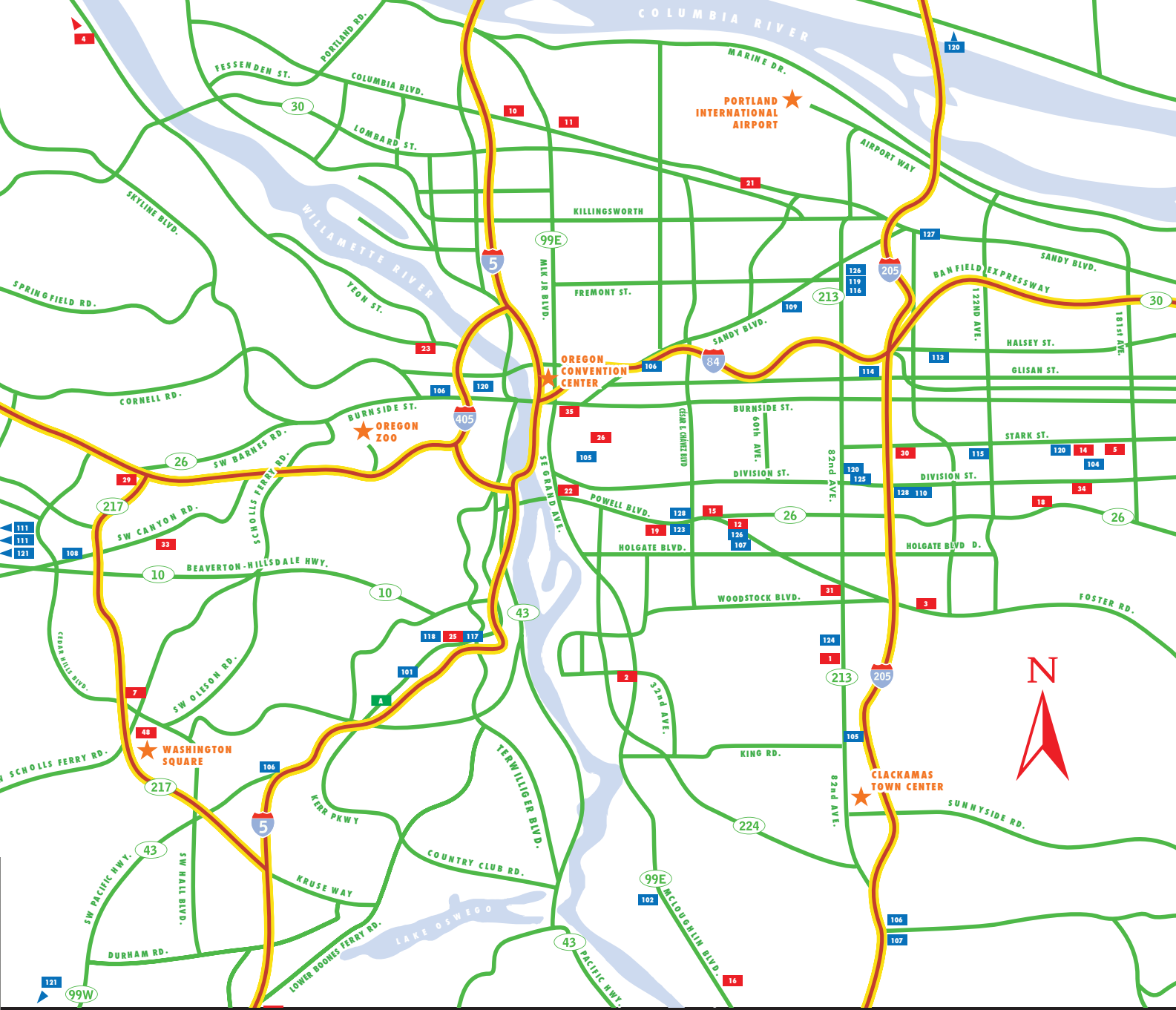
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# THE NEW *Road House*

*Note: I'll try to keep spoilers to a minimum, but truth be told, I'm probably not going to try very hard. I assume anybody who gives a shit about Road House has already seen both versions at least a handful of times by now.*

When I learned a few months ago that a remake of *Road House*, starring Jake Gyllenhaal as Dalton, was in the works, I immediately knew I'd be writing about it once it was released. Those of you who have been reading my shit since I started writing for *Exotic* last summer might recall a piece that I wrote in July, praising Swayze's Dalton for his approach to bouncer work (*The Dalton Approach*, July 2023. You can find it in the archives at [xmag.com](http://xmag.com) if you missed it!). People who know me well know how much I love the original.



Of course, since a big part of that love is because of its portrayal of my chosen profession, a remake in which Dalton is a UFC fighter rather than a career bouncer caused me some concern. I worried that this version would disregard the professional ethos of Swayze's Dalton and simply become a fighting movie. No more "I want you to be nice until it's time to not be nice." Just a bunch of dudes punching each other's heads in. Connor McGregor making his acting debut as

the final boss bad guy sure didn't do much to reassure. They were going to wind up validating Family Guy's assertion that the only message in *Road House* is "that every problem in life can be solved by kicking."

Then there's the problem of movie remakes in general, especially when it's a remake of any Swayze flick. *Point Break*? *Dirty Dancing*? *Red-fucking-Dawn*? The remakes were all hot garbage. Not one of them is fresher than 19 percent on Rotten Tomatoes. Do you know why? Because to try and improve on anything Swayze has ever done demonstrates a level of hubris that tends to anger the gods...that's why. Yet, here they were, re-making Swayze again. It's like they *wanted* to get their livers pecked out by eagles for all eternity. Or at least see their movie flop like the rest, which is arguably worse.

The first couple of times watching through it, I hated it. I knew I would initially hate it for all the reasons I just listed. Then, I watched it a couple more times, having shaken off my preconceptions. When giving it a more objective view, my impression was that it was a pretty decent action flick. I thought Connor McGregor was amazing, and I hope he does more acting after this, which surprised me a little bit but probably shouldn't have. His character Knox was possibly the most entertaining, chaotic, evil character I've ever seen. Gyllenhaal was awesome as Dalton, which didn't surprise me at all. I've admired him as an actor since his portrayal of Anthony Swofford in *Jarhead*. As an action movie, this new version of *Road House* has everything: fighting, explosions, corruption, speed boats, fighting *on* speed boats, *explosions* on speed boats, a crocodile, more fighting, and Post Malone's shirtless, inked-up dad bod.



To me, though, it certainly didn't hold its own against the original. There was just too much missing, not least of which...precisely the things I had worried they'd leave out. Sure, there were a few cool nods to the original: Dalton telling the doctor stitching him up that "No one wins a fight," the restaurant next to the bookstore named the Double Deuce, hell, even the bookstore itself echoed the original Dalton's penchant for reading (I'm not entirely certain Gyllenhaal's version even knows *how* to read, but I *am* entirely certain he didn't have Swayze's philosophy degree). On the other hand, the absence of Dalton's mentor, Wade Garrett, left a noticeable void in the story. Gyllenhaal's Dalton sure could have used someone giving him sound advice, watching his back, and calling him "mijo" on a regular basis. Swayze and Sam Elliott portrayed a really great example of a hetero-male friendship grounded in a healthy brand of masculinity; their trust in—and vulnerability with—each other and the ease with which they expressed affection to one another really added to the sense that Dalton was a level-headed guy who wasn't approaching his job with undue aggression or machismo. Trading that out for Gyllenhaal's archetypal sullen loner felt like a step backward for the character.



It wasn't until a few nights ago, when I was discussing the movie at work with my friend Bill, that I began to see it in its proper context. The remake is best viewed, he informed me, as a prequel. Holy shit. It all clicked into place. It's not meant as a reimagining of Swayze—it's Dalton's origin story. Of *course*, the character took a step backward; Gyllenhaal's character lacks the benefit of years of

experience that Swayze's version had; we're watching his first bouncer gig ever, with no training at all. Everything makes sense when you frame it that way. In the original, Dalton was known throughout the Eastern United States at least; the owner of the Double Deuce traveled to New York to recruit him to work in Missouri because of his reputation as a bouncer. I always thought it was weird that a bouncer would be known that far and wide just as a bouncer, but Gyllenhaal's Dalton is a UFC fighter. It makes way more sense that he's already known for his UFC career, and people take an interest when they learn what he's been up to since he stopped fighting.

Without giving away too much, a mid-credits scene sets up the possibility of a sequel, and that opens up some really cool opportunities. What, you may ask, am I hoping to see in the next movie? Okay then...since you asked! Picture this: Dalton, having figured out that five grand a week is a pretty sweet deal, has done a few more jobs since the Florida gig. At the end of the night, at his most current job, a dude (I'm picturing either Jeff Bridges or Kurt Russell playing said dude, but feel free to picture whoever you want) introduces himself to Dalton as a bouncer at one of the other bars in town. He tells Dalton something to the effect of, "I heard about you, so I came here to see you work. I've been doing this a long time, and you're a hell of a fighter, kid, but you're a shit bouncer. Let me teach you a thing or two. Name's Wade Garrett."



I want to see them make a trilogy out of it. There's a whole lot of room for Dalton's character development between the events at the cleverly named Road House in Florida and the Double Deuce in Missouri. Jake Gyllenhaal has spoken about his respect and admiration for Patrick Swayze, which leaves me optimistic that if they do turn *Road House* into a whole movie franchise, they'll do right by the character and let us see him grow into the top-notch bouncer who made the original Dalton so legendary. I'm just hoping the success of this new version doesn't embolden some asshole to remake *Ghost*.

*Nate Hazen is a bouncer, movie buff, and writer, with aspirations to become a TV creator and screenwriter. He works as Head of Security at X Exotic Lounge. Come see him on the job between Wednesday and Saturday and chat him up about Road House. He'll give you free cover if you show up ready to discuss which of Swayze's bouncer rules Gyllenhaal obeyed and which rules he didn't.*

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THE MONTHLY

# COLUMN

BY WOMBSTRETCHA THE MAGNIFICENT

## THE HISTORY OF THE TACO

Tacos! Everyone loves them. That's a straight fact. We can argue for days over what actually belongs in a taco, but no matter who you are, there's one for you...vegan tacos, vegetarian tacos, gluten-free tacos (which would really just be a corn tortilla taco) and tacos for people who eat anything and everything. The taco is a simple concept: a tortilla of some kind with things inside it. We all know what it is, and it's a staple of handy meals, from breakfast to lunch, dinner, and even dessert (Choco Taco!) There's no wrong time to eat a taco—or six. However, where did they come from, and when? Well, since it's May (which is officially taco month\*) and this is the time wherein the most tacos are consumed\*\*, we're going to explore this. Let's tac-go!

If you asked most people where tacos are from, they'd say Mexico. They would be right. It seems, according to my research, that they indeed originated in Mexico hundreds of years ago. The form factor, however, has changed a bit over time before becoming the familiar tasty food we know today.

### The Background



In the 18th century, there were many silver mines in Mexico, along with many miners. These miners needed something that was easy to eat and quick

to prepare, as they were working hard. Thus, the taco was born. Why is it called a taco, though? Well, there is much speculation and no direct way to link things to the past. They just made tacos and ate them. The prevailing theory is that the miners would use rounds of gunpowder to blast rock, and they were wrapped in little rolls called "taquitos," which I understand means "dowel" or "cylinder" in Old Spanish. An alternate hypothesis suggests that it comes from the native Nahuatl people and their word "tlacocho," which allegedly describes a flatbread with tasty junk on it. However, the tlacocho is speculated to have been more like a pizza, and most Mexicans at the time did not speak Nahuatl, so it is difficult to say if that has any bearing on the name.



Back in the days of the Mexican working class, the first tacos were rolled, not folded, like the tacos we know today. Rolled taquitos, of course, still exist and can be found everywhere. However, taquitos, and by extension, tacos, have their roots in blowing shit up. During

those days, they were called "taco de minero"—miner's taco and most working-class Mexicans enjoyed them because they were cheap, easy to eat on the go, and tasty.



The more modern incarnation of the taco as a folded shell with filling came later, during the Industrial Revolution. Mexico City was the destination for all sorts of migrant workers from more pastoral regions, who were seeking work and money in the hustle and bustle of the big city.

Naturally, if you were moving your whole family, women came along, and they brought with them fancy cooking skills. Back in the day, the men labored in fields and mines, and the ladies cooked and maintained the household. So, what's a lady to do to help the family? Well, set up a stand making tacos.

With every state and region in Mexico having different flavors and tastes, the marketplace for food was a diverse envi-

ronment for many types of tacos. Ladies would set up stands, each claiming that theirs (from wherever they were native) was the best. To me, that sounds incredibly awesome. I'll take one from each of them. The taqueria became an institution in Mexico City, spreading far and wide, as people could not get enough.



Tacos came to the United States only later, around the late 1800s to early 1900s. The first mention of a taco in American media was an article from a newspaper in 1905. Mexicans were increasingly coming to the USA to work in mines, on the railroads, and on farms. Naturally, when you have something you like, you bring it with you. Tacos were that thing. The prevalence of tacos in the American working class, regardless of national origin, took off. This is where the more modern incarnation of the taco shows up. Rolled tacos... they're still there, but the "dump stuff in a tortilla and fold it" method became the dominant technique. Californians and Texans embraced the taco, and the prevalence of taquerias in the USA took off, to the delight of Americans and Mexicans alike.

Fast-forward to the 1940s. Tacos began making it into cookbooks like Betty Crocker and Good Housekeeping, and so America began its conventional relationship with the taco. Later, in 1952, a man named Glen Bell had worked in a taco shop earlier in his life and decided that his current business selling burgers and hot dogs was stupid. He opened a new business: Taco Bell. He soon expanded, franchised, and sold Americans tacos like a maniac.

As many Americans were unfamiliar

with Mexican food at the time, the farther north he expanded, the more confused people were. However, when they got their first taste of those tacos, they came back for more. Back in the 1960s, when Taco Bell was starting to expand, they even had pronunciation guides on the menu, "Taw-ko," to familiarize folks with how to say the names of these things, as people at the time were not accustomed to them.

The taco, as it exists in the USA, has come full circle. We saw Mexican tacos and Americanized them, and now we're like, "Naw, we want more authentic tacos," and now we lean towards street tacos and real Mexican places rather than joints like Taco Bell, which is really only good if you're drunk at 4 a.m. Sure, they still sell plenty of tacos, but in the end, the real deal is the way to go. If the owner's name is Paco, go get that taco.

#### Fun taco facts:

If you've read my articles before, you know that most of the time, I have a list. This is the taco list.

- Americans alone eat 4.5 billion tacos a year.
- The biggest taco ever made weighed 1.654 pounds and was constructed, of course, in Mexico. I must wonder how many people it took to eat it.
- Soft shell tacos are the preference of 64% of Americans, and 36% would rather have hard shell tacos. (I personally prefer the double-decker, where you use refried beans to glue the soft shell over the hard shell to make sure that if it breaks, it ain't going anywhere.)
- In the USA, 72% of tacos are made and eaten at home, while 28% are eaten at restaurants.
- Taco Bell is the highest-volume taco seller in the USA, with a 32% share of the fast-food market. Better than Jack in the Box, though I love their tacos. Jack tacos are like watching "Plan 9 from Outer Space"—so bad, it's good.
- The city in the USA with the most taco

places is San Antonio, Texas. Not really a big surprise, there.

- 37% of Americans would rather have ground beef as a taco filler and 30% for shredded chicken. The remainder is a mix of pork, shrimp, shredded beef, fish, or tongue, in smaller stats.

There you have it: a succinct history of the taco, our beloved Tuesday meal and cultural institution. Tacos have both returned to their roots and gone crazy with those fusion cuisine people putting Chinese food in a taco and whatnot. That said, a taco is but a canvas upon which one can paint deliciousness however they see fit.

Enjoy life, and go get a taco—or ten.

*-Wombstretcha*

PS – My favorite is birria tacos. Fight me if you disagree, and try 'em if you haven't.



\* *This is true.*

\*\* *Pulled that one straight outta my ass, as I couldn't get good data, but it would seem likely.*

*Wombstretcha the Magnificent is a taco advocate, hot sauce enthusiast, honorary Mexican, writer, and retired rapper from Portland, OR. He can be found at his website, wombstretcha.com, on X (Twitter) as @wombstretcha503, and on MeWe and (begudgingly) Facebook as "Wombstretcha the Magnificent."*

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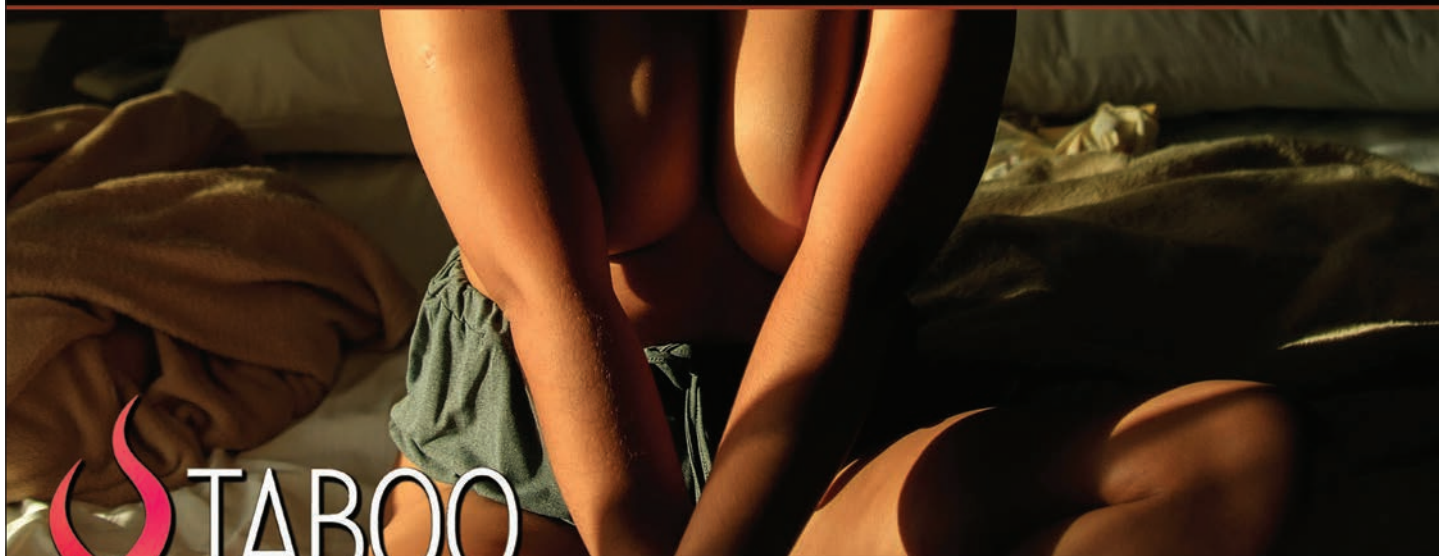
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SAT, MAY 11

**FRANKI'S BIRTHDAY PARTY**  
THU, MAY 2

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FRI, MAY 10



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5/12

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