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## Strap on the Stiletto

Drink discounts and impractical footwear? Happy hump day.  
Monday Aug 07, 2006 by [Erin Brereton](#)



My e-mail is, for the most part, less than exciting. Sure, I get the occasional missive from a distant friend; a message here and there from my dad, claiming he's putting on weight because he's "eating too much corn"; an offer or two for some very competitively priced Viagra.

But it's the e-mail invitations that are the most fun, which is how I found myself at home holding a measuring tape up to my shoe rack. I'd received a forwarded invite from my friend Emily, who had signed up for a listserv several weeks ago when dining at the [James Hotel](#).

The announcement, advertising [J Bar's](#) Wednesday night special—\$1 off each drink per high-heel inch from 6 p.m. to 2 a.m.—was a no brainer, partially because I'm thrifty, partially because I have a closet full of ridiculous footwear that likes to go out drinking almost as much as I do.

I made plans to check out J Bar, 610 N. Rush St., right after work. But as I was putting on my capris the next morning, hoping the bus would be waiting when I went downstairs (and *somewhat* low on its daily quotient of the clinically insane), I realized that it's not too easy to phase four-inch heels into your work outfit. I quickly stuck a lacy evening-appropriate skirt into my bag for later.

When 5:30 p.m. came, I shut down my computer and scooted into our office bathroom. The skirt/high heels look was definitely more bar friendly—but at barely 6 p.m. in an office building bathroom, it also looked somewhat tarty, so I grabbed my bag and tried desperately to sneak into the elevator without being seen.

I then realized it had actually been quite some time since I'd last worn heels this high, and my motor skills, never particularly strong to begin with (I once fell up a flight of stairs), were somewhat impaired. I was walking very slowly. It felt like it took about 10 full minutes to wobble from the bathroom 15 feet to the elevators.

As I hobbled down the street to the White Hen—the first glamorous stop of many—to use the ATM, I decided that, in daylight of the street, I didn't look tarty—I looked like a prostitute. Well, from the waist down anyway—up top, I was wearing a plain black T-shirt, messenger bag and a barrette.

At first Emily and I accidentally hobbled past J Bar. It's not marked clearly—as many hip spots aren't—so we accidentally walked (slowly) into the James Hotel restaurant, where confused tourists pondered my hooker-meets-the-Gap outfit until we realized our mistake and hobbled back out.

Once we got in the evening started to turn around. The bar was fairly empty, so we snagged a great seat by the door. Our waitress was prompt and encouraged us to register for the shoe raffle (each Wednesday, one entrant wins a pair of swanky shoes, picked out by a personal shopper). When asked about the special, she told us they just estimated the heel length and that she'd say ours were four to five inches, which was generous. We ordered wine and sat back to enjoy the trendy view.

And as trendy as J Bar is, on a weeknight at least, the crowd was low-key...and after a second glass of wine, so we were. We sampled the bar's lightly fried lobster spring rolls, and when we inquired about the name of two delicious looking chocolate martinis on the bar, the waitress told us they were something new the bartender was trying out and brought them over to us for free. Score!

Based on the small crowd size, the secret of stiletto night isn't out yet—but I bet it won't be in the dark long. However, the bar will be—candles appear to be its main light source. Despite the low lighting and my general lack of leg ability, after a couple of hours, I was ready to try to make my way to the bathroom, another seemingly endless journey during which it appeared I was working an invisible

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Shortly after, I wobbled my way into a cab and home. Three drinks and a snack had cost us less than \$30 each—not bad for a midweek night out. I was a bit intoxicated, true—but really, those are the kind of risks you take when you chose to live at that altitude.

*Want to strap on your highest heels and head out for discounted drinks? Check out more details about J Bar at [Jameshotels.com](http://Jameshotels.com).*



*Erin Brereton is our resident urban cowgirl on a bi-weekly search for life on the cheap. If you know of the mythic happy hour that she missed, do [clue her in](#).*

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