

See Video: A New Bar Scene in Baltimore



Tuesday, July 02, 2013
Anthony Doherty

A new bar trend from one of the country's top pub touting cities has made its way to Baltimore.

Paint Nite, founded in Boston by Sean McGrail, offers bar patrons an opportunity to "Drink Creatively" by holding painting classes at local restaurants and bars, helping even those who haven't touched a paintbrush since elementary school unleash their inner Picasso.

Baltimore's inaugural session was held at Alonso's in Roland Park, where master local artist Caren Shelly served as instructor. Shelly has been emphasizing that *Paint Nite* is, "Definitely geared more towards socializing and having fun. It's laid back."

According to its founder, *Paint Nite* is intended to let those who don't consider themselves the creative-type, explore their creative side. Shelly says a bar setting helps in this situation.

"Having drinks in hand while you create, it definitely brings down your guard and makes you more playful," she said. "I think people were more accepting and willing to participate and get goofy with it than in a professional art studio setting."

When consumed responsibly, the drinks "add to the quality not only of the paintings, but [also] the interaction," Shelly said. "There were some very intense conversations; then there were some very silly ones. People were actually talking about planning their weddings and stuff, so people were there just to relax, and socialize and have fun."

Paint Nite instructors provide a different sample painting for each class, and then provide patrons step-by-step instructions on how to create that image themselves.



Paint Nite participants show off their finished products at Alonso's in Baltimore (Photo taken by WBAL's Anthony Doherty)



Male Paint Nite participants display their artwork at Alonso's in Baltimore (Photo taken by WBAL's Anthony Doherty)



Paint Nite in action at Alonso's in Baltimore (Photo taken by WBAL's Anthony Doherty)



Local master artist Caren Shelly provides instruction to patrons at Alonso's in Baltimore (Photo taken by WBAL's Anthony Doherty)

Paint Nite has now spread into 20 states, and those who picked up a brush at Alonso's said they enjoyed it.

One patron gushed on the way out, masterpiece in hand, "I think it's a great idea. It helps people who aren't the best artist come up with a pretty good painting that can hang on your wall." She added, "It's a nice summer night activity."

When it was all said and done, even those who were dragged to the event by friends and family admitted that they had fun.

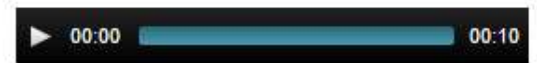
One of the male participants, who was highly outnumbered and appeared to have been swayed by his wife into coming, exclaimed, "It was a blast! I really didn't want to come down here at all. I kind of got dragged down here, thought it wasn't a good idea, but I really had a blast. It was a lot of fun."

Baltimore *Paint Nites* are planned throughout the summer with events planned for Alonso's and the Inner Harbor's Tatu.

Click [here](#) for information.

One piece of advice Shelly gives to those who decide to embrace this new experience: "Don't mix up your paint cup with your beverage cup."

Audio



Paint Nite participant gives her opinion on the new trend

[Download This File](#)



Paint Nite participant reacts to her first experience at Paint Nite in Baltimore

[Download This File](#)



Paint Nite participant explains his impression of Paint Nite in Baltimore

[Download This File](#)



Instructor Caren Shelly explains the benefits of Paint Nite

[Download This File](#)