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NEWS & COLUMNS

So Madonna's new album has gotten you all energized and longing to get back into the groove again, huh? You want to go dancing, for sure, but you're tired of the once-trendy hip-hop scene and decidedly unimpressed by the recent glut of cookie-cutter high-end lounges. So what you need is an old-fashioned house fix, a night out partying in a mammoth, cutting-edge nightclub listening to a world-famous DJ? The options should be plentiful in the supposed "nightlife capital of the world." But sadly, these days, choices are a bit limited in good ol' Manhattan.

Crobar is pretty much the only venue that consistently fits that cutting-edge bill, with Spirit and Avalon lagging somewhere behind. The drought may be about to be properly addressed, though, courtesy of international über-brand Pacha.

The hype surrounding the anticipated early-December opening of the Big Apple's adaptation of the infamous European super-club with the equally famous double-cherry logo is nothing new. An almost endless list of similarly lauded clubs pepper New York's storied past, not the least of which was Madonna gal-pal-cum-celebrity-magnet Ingrid Casares' flagrantly displayed but ultimately doomed attempt in 1998 to open a northern outpost of her immensely popular Liquid nightclub. Unexpected (and unprecedented) community opposition, as well as rumors involving her since-convicted hoodlum partner Chris Paciello, swiftly put an end to any such ambitions, blonde or otherwise, to expand her South Beach empire.

But some clubs do live up to the hype, most notably the aforementioned Crobar. Happy Valley is another spot to keep your eye on, despite its unfortunate Flatiron locale. Boasting a 14-foot-tall, suspended disco-ball DJ booth, gigantic animatronic fishnet-clad female legs (that open and close on command) and mirror ball-appointed restrooms, the owners of this new hot spot are intent on injecting fun back into New York's stagnant nightlife scene. Add complimentary shots every hour on the hour, and you've got a recipe for pure bliss.

Getting back to the former Sound Factory space, Pacha should have no trouble meeting its 2,000 person capacity—at least to start. With a monthly (or possibly bi-monthly) residency by Erick Morillo (one of America's most-exported

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DJs), an imported, high-end German sound system (one of only three Alpha Dynacord models in the United States), local backing by Discotheque owner Eddie Dean and ubiquitous promoter Rob Fernandez (whose innovative ideas recall the much-missed vibe of the Mark Berkley and, dare I say, Michael Alig days) and a renowned commitment to customer service, success may very well be imminent.

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