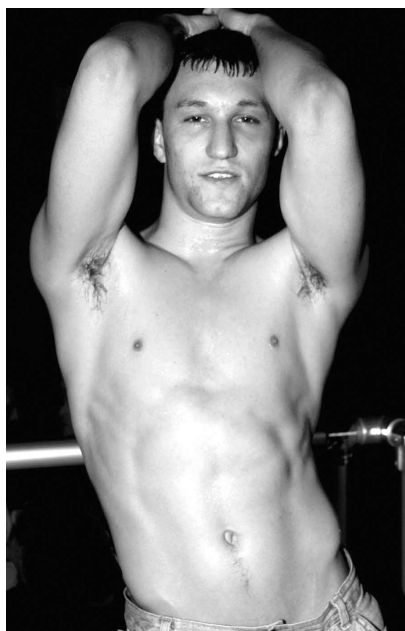
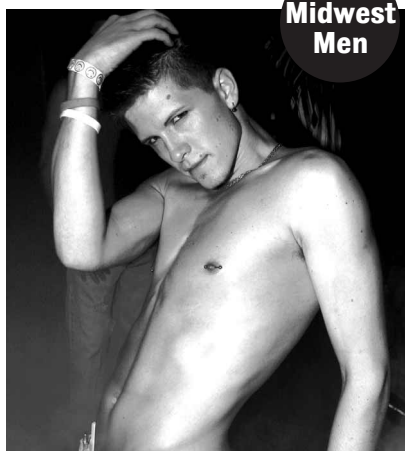


Midwest Men



# OHIO

*If you've never visited Ohio, you may be in for a surprise. The men here may be laid-back, but they know how to enjoy life – a great combination in the center of America's heartland. Come enjoy the charms of big city nightlife and easy, country-boy smiles as we visit Cleveland, Akron, and Columbus.*

Matt Mathrani

## CLEVELAND

Once the smoky center of American industry, this city perched on the bluffs above Lake Erie has a downtown that rivals the centers of London or New York for grand capitalist architecture. Fine urban sculpture overlooks the now-much-bluer waters of the lake, and glorious mansions sprawl along tree-lined boulevards. Cleveland still boasts a large and serious theater district, a ballet, and a world-class symphony. And the city's ethnic diversity means that men from every corner of the world grace the dance floors and lounge about the two biggest bath houses in the nation.

### Events

CLAW, the Cleveland Leather Awareness Weekend (Clawinfo.org), will take place April 24 to 27. A pansexual event for straight, gay, lesbian, men, women, and everyone else into leather, this will be the sixth annual weekend with over

4,000 people from all over the world.

On the third Saturday of June, Clifton Boulevard in Cleveland's gayest neighborhood shuts down for the Annual Arts Festival and Street Fair. What could be better than to cruise while you shop? And on the last Sunday in August a couple of blocks of Clifton Boulevard near Twist shut down for Dancing in the Streets. Celebrate the steamy Midwest summer with guys that are both friendly and gorgeous.

### Shopping and accommodations

**Body Language** (11424 Lorain, at West 115th; Body-language.com) is the best first-stop for any gay visitor. You'll find local information and gay and lesbian books, gifts, cards, pride items, and aromas. They have the area's largest magazine and book selection, erotic videos and DVDs for sale or rent, classic male erotica, an exotic leather department, plus lots of kinky fetish items including goods from Folsom Electrics, such as tens units and penis sounds (if you don't know, ask!). Body Language, open 11 a.m. until 11 p.m. daily (6 p.m. Sunday), com-

bines customer service with a contemporary, ever-changing selection of unusual merchandise. Shop anytime at their website.

**Dean Rufus House of Fun** (1422 West 29th, at Detroit), located within A Man's World complex, is a unique shopping experience. Cleveland DJ Dean Rufus and local fashion designer Tom Bayne created the space, which carries everything from designer clothing and accessories to DVDs and toys. Minutes from downtown Cleveland in the historic Ohio City area, the shop is open until 11 p.m. during the week and 2:30 a.m. – just right for late-night shopping and socializing.

Other stores include: **Clifton Web** (11512 Clifton), for gifts and cards; and **Truffles** (11122 Clifton), for pastries, coffee, and wi-fi internet.

*Outlines* (Outlinesmagazine.com) and *Xpose* magazines have local maps and listings.

**Clifford House** (1810 West 28th; 216-

589-0121) and **Greystone** (10405 Lake; 216-939-0405) are area guesthouses.

## Nightlife

**Bounce** and **Union Station Video Cafe** (2814 Detroit Avenue) are open daily from 5 p.m. Union Station has a lively crowd on hand for dinner and to enjoy the mix of music videos and gay TV. They have pool tables, games, and internet access, too. On Sundays there's brunch and evening Show Tunes. Monday is karaoke night, and Torso Tuesdays sport all-male revues. Bounce is open for dancing on weekends, with first-Friday Black-Out Party dates, and a third-Thursday Steam Party, with a different adult entertainer in the shower all night. Drag cabaret Divas on Parade is on Sundays at 11 p.m., while Saturdays are now Girls' Night Out.

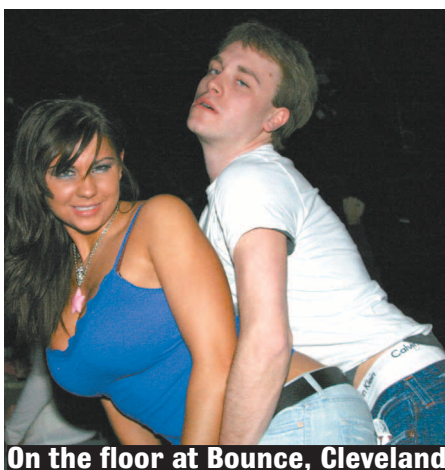
On the East Side, **The Grid** (1437 East St. Clair) has four bars, lots of parking, and **Orbit**, a huge dance club that can boast the biggest Saturday night dance

crowd in town (18 and over). In the front bars there's free pool and drink specials, tournaments, and Thursday Dick Daze strippers. Orbit is open Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday nights for drag shows and dancing. Sundays feature free pool and karaoke. Guest DJs appear, and there are special parties.

**Twist** (11633 Clifton) is a sociable cocktail lounge on two levels. In the summer the front opens up to the street, with sidewalk tables – the perfect place to watch the foot-traffic and activity at the heart of Clifton Boulevard's gay Village. Good music and conversation dominate the ground level, and they showcase the area's best DJ talent – one Sunday a month they do ten DJs in ten hours. The basement is a classy, cozy getaway with big sofas to sprawl. There's Happy Hour daily 9 a.m. to 8 p.m., except Sundays, when it's a noon kick-off with a "build your own" Bloody Mary bar. Twist is the center of the fun for Dancing in the Streets as



**Bartender Alex at The Grid, Cleveland**



**On the floor at Bounce, Cleveland**



**Bartender Joey at The Grid, Cleveland**



**Scott with owner Paul of Body Language, Cleveland**



**A glimpse of Dean Rufus House of Fun, Cleveland**



**Justin the  
bouncer  
at Bounce,  
Cleveland**



**Byron with David Pfeifer  
at Club Cleveland**



**At Club Cleveland**



well as the arts festival and street fair.

Located within what's called "A Man's World complex," **The Shed** (2901 Detroit) is a premier leather/Levi bar. Tucked downstairs is also a leather bar, called Crossover. There's even a patio bar in the rear of The Shed. A tent is provided for smokers. The Shed boasts the longest cocktail hours, beginning at 7 a.m. and running through till 9 p.m.!

Other bars include: **Apex** (11633 Lorain); **Cocktails** (9208 Detroit); Deco (11213 Detroit); the lesbian-oriented **5-Cent Decision** (4365 State); **The Hawk** (11217 Detroit); **Leather Stallion** (2205 East St. Clair), a long-time men's favorite; **Club Argos** (2032 West 25th), with male strippers; **A Man's World** (2909 Detroit); and **Muggs's** (3194 West 25th).

## Steaming up

How many cities can boast two bath-houses that rival the luxury and sensuous grace of the baths in ancient Rome?

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# Club Cleveland Daily Specials - Winter 2008

## Manly Mondays

**\$1.00 Lockers**  
*Midnight - Midnight*

## Half Price Days

**Tuesdays and Thursdays**  
*All Rooms and Lockers*  
*11am - Midnight*

**Wednesdays**  
*(\$7.50) Lockers*  
*(\$10.00) Single Rooms*  
*11am - Midnight*

**Friday Day Lockers**  
*\$10.00 8am-4pm*

## Buy One Get One Friday

*4pm - Midnight*  
*Purchase a Single Room or Locker*  
*and receive a complimentary pass*  
*for the same - No Restrictions*

## SUPER SUNDAY

*\$10.00 Lockers 4pm-8pm*

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**Staff Jeff, Heidi, and Keith at Twist, Cleveland**



**Bartender Jeff, owner John, and bartender Russell at Twist, Cleveland**

with a fully-equipped gym with state-of-the-art equipment. There's a spacious steamroom, a cedar dry-sauna, and a lap pool in the beautiful indoor solarium. Two large media rooms for TV and video have the latest electronics. The second floor is packed with rooms and lockers. Open for warm weather, the private sun-deck overlooks Lake Erie. Lockers and rooms are half-price Tuesdays and Thursdays (11 a.m. to 11 p.m.). On Sensuous Sundays (with 6 p.m. buffet) lockers are \$12 from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday-Friday daytime lockers (8 a.m. to 4 p.m.) are \$10 (except on half-price days). Always open, the Club admits ages 18-plus, and parking is free and secure.

**Flex Cleveland** (2600 Hamilton; Flexbaths.com) is the most elaborate and lavish flagship facility of the Flex chain, and boasts a new international standard for men's health spas, continuing a 40-year tradition of service to Cleveland, where it all began. Featuring the world's largest bathhouse hotel, they have 16 quiet rooms with queen sized beds, 18 elegantly appointed hotel suites from standard Queen to Presidential, each with private bath. There are indoor and outdoor pools, a giant whirlpool, a steamroom maze as large as a house, two saunas, and a eucalyptus vapor room. They have a 5,000-square-foot gym and cardio area, too. Massage therapy, HIV testing, and a cafe/lounge are all on hand. See their website to reserve hotel and quiet rooms.



**The hotel within Flex Cleveland**

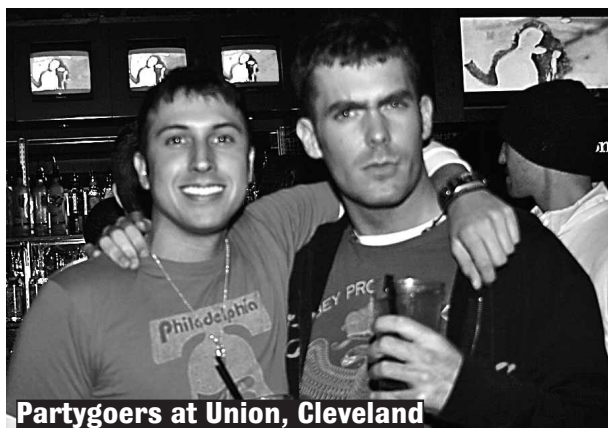
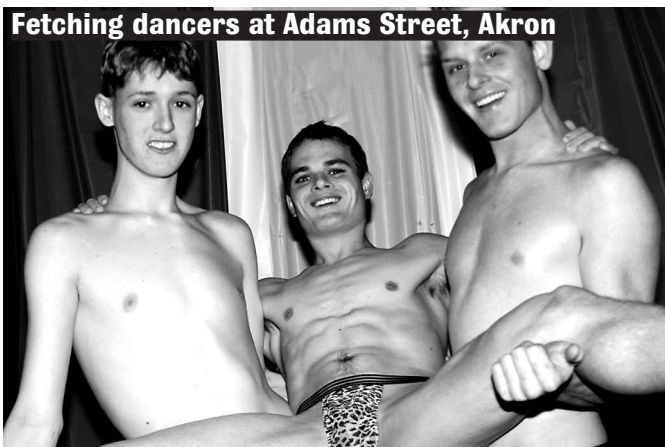




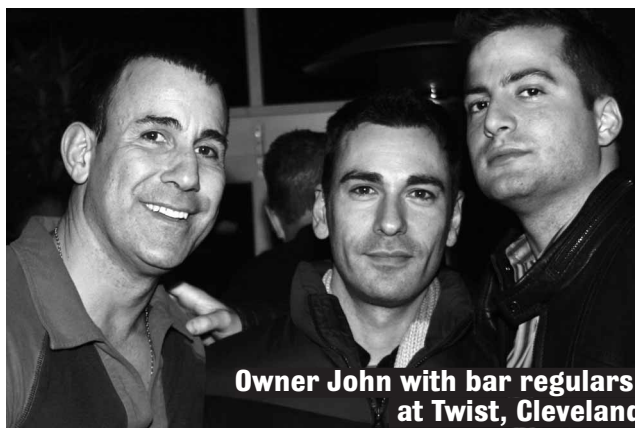


Owner Richard with  
bartender Johnny at  
The Shed / Man's  
Complex, Cleveland

Fetching dancers at Adams Street, Akron



Partygoers at Union, Cleveland



Owner John with bar regulars,  
at Twist, Cleveland



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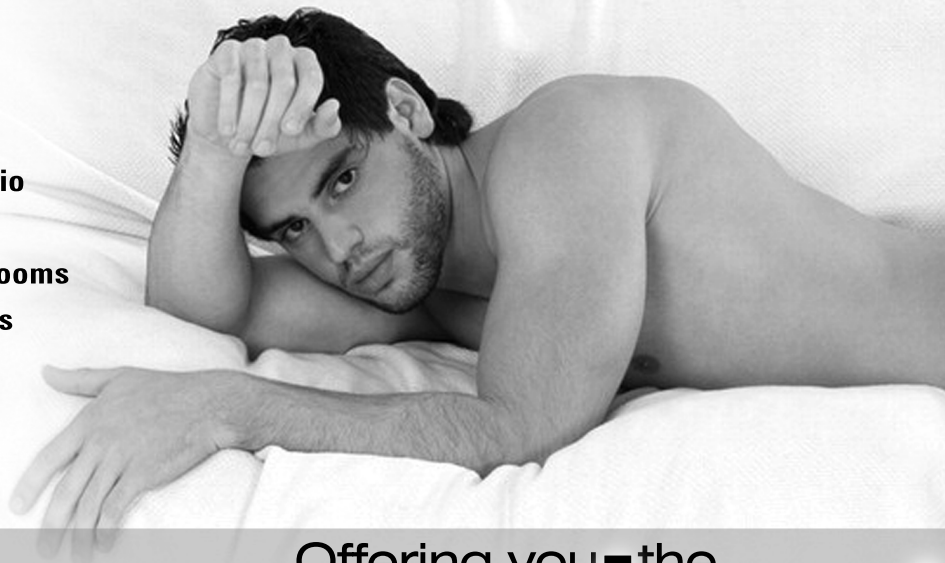
Bartender Mike, with bar patrons Ron, and Bert at Adams Street, Akron

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# AKRON

Students from the University of Akron and young workers from the gigantic Goodyear plant mingle in this clean, well-planned city spread over several hills.

At **Tear-EZ** (360 South Main) – pronounced Terry's, but that spelling was already taken – the staff and regulars make visitors truly welcome. Open daily with the most generous pours in town, there's always a good time but never a cover charge. Each Wednesday, and on select Saturdays and Sundays, hot male dancers put on a show.

**Adams Street** (77 North Adams), open nightly from 4:30 p.m. till 2:30 a.m., is Akron's most venerable neighborhood bar attracting a clientele of college boys, Levi/leathermen, and drag fanciers. **Pecs**, their dance club, is a piano bar with Ingy on Wednesdays and Fridays, and there are drag shows each Sunday and Tuesday. Fridays ring in Akron's Funniest Friday Night Out, and Saturdays here are country-west-

ern nights. Strippers appear Tuesdays and Thursdays. **Boyz Gone Wild** are on first Saturdays, while the infamous Full Moon Party every month will have hot dancers and free food. Uniform, Black-Out, and other theme parties also dot the calendar.

**Interbelt** (70 North Howard) is a big dance club with a young crowd. **The Square** (820 West Market) is set to open at the old Babylon bar location.

Other Akron bars include **Club Amsterdam** (358 South Main); **Cocktails** (1009 South Main), with strippers nightly; and **Lydia's** (1348 South Arlington).

**Akron Steam/Sauna** (41 South Case) is the local tubs.

**Crew** (304 Cherry Avenue SE) is down the road in Canton.

In neighboring Warren, the **Queen of Hearts** (1977 Ridge Avenue SE) has a new, bigger location with pool tables, summer patio, strippers, and leather nights. The **441** (441 East Market) and **Funky Skunk** (139 East Market) are nearby.



Adam at Adams Street, Akron



Carla Visconte at Adams Street, Akron

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Photo Courtesy of [www.alanilagan.com](http://www.alanilagan.com)



# COLUMBUS

Skyscrapers rise from the flat fertile fields as if they were on the cover of a sixth-grade civics book. This classic American city is comprised of many ethnic neighborhoods. German Village, a gracious area of stately homes with narrow brick-paved streets shaded by vast spreading elms, sports truly fabulous local restaurants such as **Barcelona** (263 East Whittier), **G. Michael's** (595 South Third Street), or for a truly German meal, **Juergen's** (525 South 4th Street). German Village's architectural treasures were threatened in the '60s by the bulldozers of Progress. Many were saved by the outraged cries of local gays and lesbians, and are now some of the jewels of Ohio.

Ohio State University, with 60,000 students, is itself the size of a small city within Columbus. Whether it's the open mindedness of college students, or the high intellectual caliber of 21st century industry in this post-industrial town, there's a nonjudgmental acceptance of others here. Indeed, *The Advocate* rates Columbus one of the best places in the country for gay folk to live. At gay pride last year, some 100,000 people turned out.

The Short North area is the one of the gayest in town, with shops, cafes, and bars aplenty along High Street between downtown and Ohio State University. Downtown is reinventing itself with condo lofts and affordable rentals, which are attracting many gays and lesbians along with their watering holes. German Village has been gay for years. North High Street and South High Street connect all three neighborhoods with ease.

For accommodations, the **Brewmaster's House** (1083 South High; 614-449-8298) is a B&B for men in a grand historic German Village house. The four rooms have cable TV and wi-fi, while some have a fireplace; there's a full breakfast. Bathrooms are shared.

## On the town

Short North's attractions, all walk-

able from one another, include **Union Station Video Cafe** (630 North High), a classy, relaxed, video cafe and bar serving freshly-prepared food. Open daily, their before-the-bars happy hour pulls a crowd, as does the Sunday brunch and Sunday evening's Show Tunes. Throughout the week, the latest music videos, gay TV, comedy, and classic clips are on the big screen. Play pool or darts, or get on-line with wi-fi.

Nearby **Axis** (775 North High, in a courtyard off the street) is open Friday and Saturday nights from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. On Fridays and Saturdays there is an all-male revue upstairs. Check out first-Friday Frat Night parties and third-Friday Shower Nights, with hot jocks in two large showers all night long. Male-erotic-video stars appear periodically. On Saturdays at Axis college boys fill the dance floor.

**Havana** (862 North High) has an urbane upscale mix, good martinis, a pool table, plus a packed all-male revue at Sunday night's "Church." On Wednesdays, there's karaoke.

**Eagle in Exile** (893 North Fourth), open daily 9 p.m. to 2:30 a.m., has a weekend leather dress code, and the guys get into some hot bondage play. Male strippers perform Sundays as only the Exile can present them. Amidst the prison and St. Andrew's Cross, there's karaoke on Wednesdays, Country Music on Thursdays, and the Rock and Roll Fag Bar on Fridays. It's Columbus: everyone's into a little of everything.

Open seven days a week, **Q Bar and Nightclub** (205 North 5th) is a video and dance bar in the heart of the downtown Warehouse District. Happy hour is a local favorite, featuring some of the best martinis in the city. Q offers a great view of the city from its heated patio, complete with outdoor TVs. Mondays are comedy nights, while Sundays and Tuesdays offer karaoke. Thursdays are show tunes, first Fridays are disco, and fourth Fridays are '80s request dance nights. Saturday is a big dance night at Q, and everyone grooves to the lights of the city.

**Tradewinds II** (117 East Chestnut

Street) is also downtown. Check for beer-themed happy hours and some of the most relaxed socializing in Columbus. It's a complex of three bars and a restaurant, and with a **Torso** store tucked within.

**Scorebar** (145 North 5th Street) is a sports bar for straights, gays, and lesbians.

**Pyramid II** (211 North 6th Street) is a long, narrow dance and showbar with female illusionists and strippers providing much entertainment. Dart boards and pool tables add a sports-bar flair.

Bars in the Brewer's District/German Village area include: **Some-where Else** (1312 South High), **Tremont** (708 South High), and **Woofs** (1409 South High).

**Club Diversity** (863 South High) resides in a converted townhouse, complete with exposed brick walls and new artwork. It features live jazz three nights a week with no cover and great martinis. A small theater on the second floor offers serious drama several nights a week. This is a grown-ups bar for people who relish good conversation and fine music.

Other area bars include: **A.W.O.L.** (49 Parsons); **The Closet** (1297 Parsons); **Club 20** (20 East Duncan); **Pyramid** (211 North 6th), also with strippers; **South Bend** (126 East Moler); **Summit Station** (2210 Summit), a women's bar; **The Vine** (73 East Gay Street), a bar and restaurant; and **Wall Street** (144 North Wall), a dance club.

## Steam and body

For a night at the tubs or a good workout, Columbus has two choices. **Club Columbus** (795 West Fifth), near the University, has a complete gym with free weights, top-notch equipment, steamroom, dry sauna, a whirlpool, a heated outdoor lap pool, single and double rooms, and lots of lockers. They have guest memberships, in/out privileges, and they never close. Enjoy the complimentary buffet every Sunday. A new cafe within, **Cafe Etc.**, is a welcome addition. Here you can enjoy recovery shakes, specialty cof-

## A glimpse of Torso, Columbus



Joe of Tradewinds II



Staff Candice, Sammy, Joe, Jason, &amp; Mark of Score, Columbus



Wes of Flex Columbus

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fees, and protein bars after a vigorous workout (of whatever kind!).

**Flex Columbus** (1567 East Livingston) has a workout room with complete weights, a dry sauna, steamroom, video lounge, and rooms and lockers galore. For those who like to play, there's a glory-hole room and for the more adventurous, a basement dungeon with sling, St. Andrews cross, cage, chain web, and spanking bench. Fridays are now officially leather night here. Open 24 hours, Flex is 18-plus, with a friendly and informal staff.

## Shopping and eats

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this June in the Short North, **Torso** (772 North High Street; [Torsoonline.com](http://Torsoonline.com)) is mainly a clothing store but features jewelry, hysterical greeting cards, and unique seasonal gift items, as well. They're renown for their wide selection of denim and fashion shirts from Couture, Pistol Pete, Eight X, Rass, and others. You can also find funky t-shirts from Hard 8 and Ajaxx63. And then there's an incredible selection of under-

wear lines from around the world. Shop online at their website.

**Torso Leather & Fetish** (117 East Chestnut Street), located inside Tradewinds II bar, is an offshoot from the main store. It's open Thursday through Sunday, 10 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. Here you'll find fetish wear from Nasty Pig (Oink), 665 Leather, Leather Masters, and a new line of underwear from London England called "Dirty Fukker." They also carry lubes, toys, and the lowest-priced video head cleaners in Columbus. The on-site "cockologist" can fit you with a new cockring made from leather, stainless steel, or lightweight aluminum.

**Piercology** (190 West 2nd, two blocks west of High Street) is open daily offering professional, safe, and creative body-piercing work that is nationally recognized and always over-and-above all state standards. The store is a friendly, relaxed place, and they have a large selection of jewelry with which to embellish yourself.

Merchandise on hand at **Columbus Leather** (642 North High, off the corner;

[Columbusleathercompany.com](http://Columbusleathercompany.com)) includes a large selection of leather clothing, boots, harnesses, luggage, accessories, and furniture. Plus there's rubber wear, Neoprene items, toys, magazine, calendars, cards, and DVDs. Lubes, lighters, watches, military clothes, and bondage/restraint gear are also available. Also buy online at their website.

Phone David at **German Village Floral** (614-443-5296) for all your floral needs, plus delivery. **An Open Book** (685 North High) is a well-stocked gay bookstore with videos and gifts. And if you're traveling with your pets, stop in at Columbus's only gay-owned pet store, **Village Pet Supply** (364 East Whittier Street) where the owner, Jeff Lowe, also pours drinks at Club Celebrity.

**L'Antibes** (772 North High) is one of several fine area restaurants. **Union Cafe** (782 North High) features designer ethnic fusion cuisine.

For lighter fare, the **Coffee Table** (731 North High), **Piece of Cake** (772 North High), and **Cup O'Joe** (400 North High and 627 South 3rd) are nearby options. ▼



Travis, Matt, & Trevor at Q Bar, Columbus



Aaron at Q Bar, Columbus