

FIVE OF THE BEST LOCAL... Summer Nights

Vanessa Grall takes in the warm and sultry evening breeze and heads out to sample west London's most summery bars



Beach Bar

Trailer Happiness

Let's admit it, summer nights out are all about going out on the prowl. So where can you find west London's best-looking sophisticates? Notting Hill's beautiful people flock to the intimate lounge bar, Trailer Happiness. The Portobello basement bar boasts killer cocktails (try the Tiki shots) and the easy-going, mid-1960s California Valley décor is a retro-sexual haven of cosmopolitan kitsch. See it for yourself.

177 Portobello Road, W11 2DY (020 7727 2700; trailerhappiness.com)



Lovers' Hideaway

Julie's

Julie's is a honeycomb of small socialising areas, each in a different style. An organic and romantic building, every turn takes you to a hidden romantic enclave, which makes it perfect for lovers; both illicit and otherwise. Match your mood to the décor – the Champagne bar is cream and green with intricate Islamic designs, while Julie's also boasts outdoor seating in the centre of charming Clarendon Cross.

135 Portland Road, W11 4LW (020 7229 8331; juliesrestaurant.com)



Street Party

The Westbourne

The seemingly innocuous local favourite draws in massive, trendy crowds, especially in summer. Spilling out onto the street, merging with punters of adjacent pubs like one big street party, the atmosphere here is purely fun-loving. Staff are known to be a bit short-tempered, but when you have to deal with that many people all day without a break, you'd be a bit stressed too. The Westbourne remains firmly in first place for Notting Hill's best summer pub.

101 Westbourne Park Villas, W2 5ED (0207 221 1332; thewestbourne.com)



Feel the Night

Beach Blanket Babylon

We couldn't talk about summer nights in west London without mentioning Notting Hill's most glamorous establishment, Beach Blanket Babylon. Whether you're sitting on the terrace having an intimate cocktail with a friend or feeling the breeze from the open French doors in the bar, BBB is always the place to feel really summery in west London.

45 Ledbury Road, W11 2AA (020 7229 2907; beachblanket.co.uk)



Simply Summer

Montgomery Place

The secret to a great bar is doing the simple things well and Montgomery Place does just that. On summer evenings, we love nothing more than people-watching on the ever-charming Kensington Park Road. Drinks here are wonderfully old-school, harking back to the age of the cocktail and taking inspiration from classic bars such as The Savoy, Harry's Bar and El Florida. When you get peckish, summer snacks are a-plenty with tapas-style dishes from the Orient, Middle East and Europe.

31 Kensington Park Road, W11 2EU (020 7792 3921; montgomeryplace.co.uk)