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Around Midnight, When It's Your Turn to Be Seen: What's Hot in Parisian Clubs

By **Rebecca Voight International Herald Tribune**

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Sally Bowles would feel right at home at Cabaret. Liza Minnelli, a friend of the owners, was one of the first to try out the small stage at this intimate new Paris bar where guests shimmy between tiny round tables, sup on caviar and are regaled by a revolving troupe of 30 cabarets acts featuring everything from rope tricks and performing poodles to magicians and tap dancers.

In the former location of an erotic theater, Cabaret attracts a chic, Parisian crowd in film, television and fashion. Raphael Santin, who managed top models at Elite before launching his Celebrity Service to put famous faces and big projects together, has wanted to open the club for the past four years. The music here swings from vintage Charles Trenet to disco and funk. Santin and his partner, Franck Maillot, left the late 1930s rococo decor intact. Guests tend to start the evening with a drink and a light meal on selected nights before midnight.

The venerable Paris nightclub institution Le Palace, closed recently because of financial woes, left a hole in the city's dance floor lineup. This has been quickly filled, however, by a batch of new-style dance party evenings organized by Parisian personalities who send out elaborate flyers — some specifying cryptic dress codes like "high heel funk" — fly in legendary DJs from New York and Ibiza or put on dinner and entertainment in unexpected places.

Sylvie Chateigner of Thanx God I'm a V.I.P., or TGV, has been running the hottest dance parties in town one Saturday a month at the Elysee Montmartre over the past year, and is extending her reign to include three nights in October. Her musical choice is Garage, and she features leading French DJs like Gregory and special guest star DJs like New York City's Frankie Knuckles.

The crowd at TGV looks good, thanks in large part to Chateigner's clothing store of the same name, where she spends her days reconditioning secondhand goods from the 1970s and producing the in-house collection. The shop, on a small Les Halles street, resembles the dream closet of a best-dressed Parisian night owl. Low-waisted three-piece velvet suits, once bell-bottomed, are cut down to straight legs by Carlos, the shop's resident tailor. The racks are filled with polyester print body-hugging shirts and plunging neck disco dresses. The store attracts a young Parisian fashion and music crowd who would rather wear vintage Charlie's Angels items than designer labels.

The dance party host Axel has taken over Friday and Saturday nights at La Casbah near the Bastille for his Stylelife evenings. He features easy listening lounge music from Paris's renowned DJ Pedro Winter upstairs, and Hard House on the dance floor downstairs. During collections week, guest appearances are scheduled for DJ Mike Lovechild from the Limelight in New York as well as the Lipstick duo Gan and Bizar from Belgium.

THE biggest dance floor in town, Paris's premiere gay club, Queen, is the site of the new Respect,



