



THIS ROUND'S ON...

# Avalon's Steve Adelman

Boozy conversations about what makes people smile

**SINGAPORE** – It's been a laudable career in nightlife entertainment, one that has in no small way transformed the social practice of heading out for drinks. Steve Adelman, founder of Avalon, also has a reputation for moulding creative ideas and bottom-line economics into acclaimed projects across continents.

Surprisingly, though, his secret to success seems comparatively unpretentious. What does he see that much of the competition fail to? "Two things: One, people need a social escape; Two, there is an 80-per-cent margin to the person who can provide it through cocktails. Seems like an easy equation," Adelman piped.

That may be oversimplifying things a tad. But we hardly expected the man behind some of the hippest places to knock one back to give it all up. Because we're talking about hotspots like The Roxy, mega-club Tunnel, Avalon, and themed lounge Spider Club in New York City, Bardot in Hollywood, as well as Singapore's Avalon

and Spider Room at the Marina Bay Sands.

And is it necessarily more difficult to establish a successful nightlife venue in Singapore, or in South-east Asia, for that matter?

"There are distinct cultural differences for sure, and getting our US staff situated here has been challenging," Adelman confessed. "In the end, I think the elements that make up a successful club are universal: Great music and service, creativity and focus. Once you have these elements nailed down, the rest will follow."

No doubt, his followers have been lining up in droves. **DOH WEN DOOZA**

**Favourite drink to start and to finish your day?**

**Steve Adelman:** Start: A single iced-espresso with cold cream (which is now known in LA as a Steve-O). End: An Old Fashion, in honour of my grandfather, which he drank until he was 95 years old.

**Is there an Asian drink culture that could catch on in the West?**

Yes, for sure. I'd label it as Volume Drinking.



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**Fill in the blanks:** I drink champagne when life is good, scotch to forget the bad times, and an Old Fashion (Grandpa lived to 99!) when contemplating what your last supper tippie would be.

**Favourite borrowed drink philosophy?** The problem with the world is it's always two drinks behind.

**How has the partaking of alcohol as a social lubricant evolved over the last 20 years?**

More choices — good and bad — with faster gratification. The art of cocktail-making has gotten lost, and with it some social elegance.

**Worst drink you've had that you wouldn't mind giving another chance?**

An Orgasm. As a college student, I was attracted by the name, which lost its appeal after drinking too many of them and spending two days in bed.

“The problem with the world is it's always two drinks behind.”  
Steve Adelman