

ORIGINAL NIGHTS OUT: TOKYO

FHM and the Smirnoff Co. take you on a trip to the neon-lit mega-city where ninjas come armed with misty sushi...

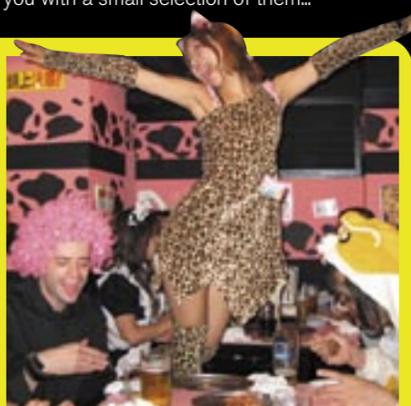
Until the planet of Quaoar is put on the tourist map, Japan will always be the most surreal place British folk can hike their luggage to. And nowhere is that more apparent than Tokyo at night. The city might boast more Michelin-starred restaurants than any other on the planet, but it's also a place where it's *de rigueur* for women go out on the town dressed as their favourite Manga characters. At adult comedy bars such as

Kagaya, a man in a frog costume serves you while humming cacophonously and leapfrogging over your head. There's even rumoured to be a restaurant where a baboon waits tables. Tokyo is such a potent place, that you'd have to be a zombie in order not to get an adrenaline rush from it. With a Sumo-sized amount of original nights out to be had in the city, here *FHM* and the Smirnoff Co. present you with a small selection of them...

COS-PLAY RESTAURANTS

Tech-y Tokyo district Akihabara is littered with restaurants devoted to cos-play ("costume-play") and OK Bokojou is the best. Giggly waitresses attired in outfits ranging from sailors to croc costumes, usher you in and select a costume for you to wear. And then giggle some more. As you sit down, shoes-off and in the lotus position, they barbecue food at your table, before blowing on it and poking it into your mouth with chopsticks.

www.ok-bokujo.com



EAT NINJA-PREPARED SUSHI

Possess a male chromosome? Raised in the 1980s? Then it's likely, that out of all the innumerable themes that a restaurant can take, anything Ninja-related will get you most excited. Loaded with secret passageways, Akasaka's 'Ninja' eatery is dotted with black-catsuited shadow warriors who perform magic tricks and serve up stone soup and floating sashimi. www.ninjaakasaka.com



CATCH YOUR OWN DINNER AT ZAUO

There's no menu at Zauo. Instead, customers reel in their own dinner with a rod from a scaly assortment of fish (think horse mackerels, spiny lobsters and unidentifiable whelk-like things). It's then whisked to a kitchen where it's transformed from wiggling slimy beast into sushi. www.zauo.com

SNAG A MODEL AT NEW LEX EDO

Sympathy for supermodels does not rank up there with the works, of, say, Oxfam. But New Lex Edo's owner, Bill Hershey, hit upon marketing gold dust by offering rookie models (plus visiting rock stars) free entrance and drinks everytime they visited his Roppongi niterie. The result? An uproariously fun joint thronged with celebs. www.newlex-edo.com

CUSTOMISED CAKES AT MILK

Looking like something from *A Clockwork Orange* and swarming with outlandishly-coiffured hipsters, this sweaty Ebisu bar is spread over three subterranean floors. Expect shouty gigs by *femme* Jap punk bands, and a be-suited man in the basement making bespoke vegetable-flavoured cupcakes at 3am. www.milk-tokyo.com

SING KARAOKE IN A JACUZZI

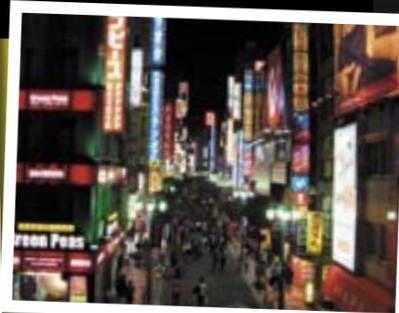
In the UK, karaoke is a hideous affair colonised by tawdry Bournemouth hen parties screeching Spice Girls tracks at the top of their lungs. But in its homeland, it's a different matter. Lovenet Karaoke has 33 themed private rooms, ranging from 'Candy' to 'Ibiza'. Best is the Jacuzzi suite where clusters of Japanese ladies warble tinny J-Pop in their bikinis. www.lovenet-jp.com



WIN

A TRIP TO TOKYO!

The Smirnoff Co. is offering one reader and a friend the chance to win a trip to the Land of the Rising Sun. Staying in a skyscraping hotel in Tokyo, you'll have time to explore the



city's customised bidets and drink snakeskin-flaked cocktails. Plus, the chance to return home armed with technological gadgetry so futuristic, it won't be launched in the UK until 2048. Head to fhm.com/smirnoff before February 29 to win...



THE LOST IN TRANSLATION BAR

It may have failed to wipe the lugubrious expression from Bill Murray's mug, but the New York Bar & Grill, perched on the 52nd floor of the Park Hyatt, is the best place to view Tokyo's crazed town planning ("Hey, how about we bung 16 flyovers on that bridge over there?"), decompress from jet-lagged delirium, gaze at the human jungle below and gush, "This is just like *Bladerunner!*" every five minutes. <http://tokyo.park.hyatt.com>



AND AT HOME...

London's Bush Hall has gone through many startling incarnations to reach its current day status as gig-going venue *par excellence*. Edwardian dance hall, Blitz-era soup kitchen, pensioner-ridden 1950s bingo hall, seedy snooker hall in the 1980s and musty concert space for the likes of Amy Winehouse, Kings of Leon and REM in this decade, 2008 will see it reinvented once more when Smirnoff sponsors the chandelier-strewn Terrace Bar. Promising that "two nights will never be the same", for this month's listings check out [URL HERE??]



SMIRNOFF TEN UK REP

Jammy globe-traversing rep, Steph Prentice on her most original nights from the last few months...

Torre, Sao Paulo - *Favela*-chic bar which we discovered on a Portuguese blog. Has a waterfall cascading down to the dancefloor and a DJ booth accessed by a rickety ladder. So fun, the dancefloor is still full at 9.00am.

Parlotones gig, Cape Town - I recently attended a gig by by this South African band at a house. If the taxi driver hadn't told me I look like Celine Dion, it would have been better...

NEXT MONTH: MUMBAI
Bollywood awaits as *FHM* and the Smirnoff Co. hit India for the fourth chapter in the Original Nights Out series...