

Ask the Concierge

At Fifteen Beacon, Jonathan Nicholson gives his top tips for taking in the Hub. **By Margit Feury**

"I never tell a guest I don't know. What I don't know, I find out," says Jonathan Nicholson, concierge at the swanky Fifteen Beacon hotel.

And this guy does not just call around to find out. He really goes all out to get the dirt. He spends much of his free time checking out local restaurants, clubs, museums and even the singles scene, so he can confidently make the best possible recommendations.

We decided to quiz Nicholson on his expertise. Here is his advice.

BEST PLACE FOR A DRINK

"Well, is that singular or plural? For one drink, I would have to say go for one of the specialty martinis at our bar, The Federalist. The decor alone is worth a stop in, and if you are not into martinis, our wine list and single-malt scotch collection are said to be the best in the city.

If you're interested in an evening out, I would suggest starting with a cocktail at the bar upstairs at Mantra. Then head across the street to Limbo. It's not large, but the downstairs jazz room is often hopping with some great jazz. I'd then suggest going around the corner to Felt for either some retro billiards playing upstairs or some hip house music downstairs. Then to mellow out a bit before heading to bed, stop for your last drink at blu."

BEST PLACE TO PICK UP A LAST-MINUTE OUTFIT

"I would have to look at what the person was wearing when they asked. If they look like clubheads (male or female), I'd send them to Players or Allston Beat. If they look a bit more dressy than that, I'd actually say check out Filene's Basement. You can seriously get a Hugo Boss suit there for less than half the price you'd pay in the store. If they are not into that, then I'd send them to Newbury Street. There is something for everyone there: Serenella for women; Louis Boston for men, and on and on."

WHAT NOT TO MISS ON BEACON HILL

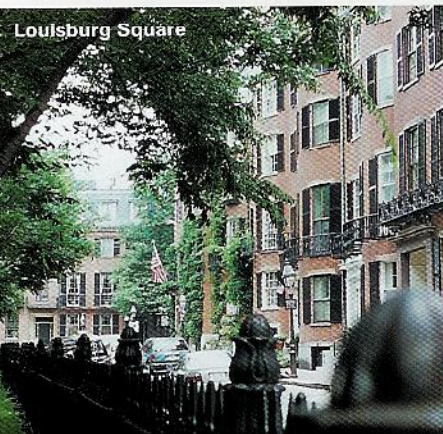
"Louisburg Square, which some say is the most exclusive address in Boston. It is true urban elegance defined, with the cobblestoned street and immaculately maintained brownstones. I would also say check out the antiques stores on Charles Street, even if you are just peeking in the windows."

BEST PLACE FOR A SLICE OF PIZZA

"Pizzeria Regina in the North End. It's great pizza—as close to New York as you can get. Sorry, I grew up in Brooklyn, so I am biased."

WHERE TO GO WHEN IT RAINS

"I'd say the best thing about Boston is its museums—the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Fogg [Art] Museum at Harvard, the ICA (Institute of Contemporary Art ... it's small, but take a look), the Museum of Science, Boston (with the Omni theater for kids) or the New England Aquarium (with the IMAX theater, also terrific for kids). Also, the third floor of the Boston Public Library has an amazing gallery with a really cool permanent exhibit. That's a great place to go if it starts to rain while you are shopping on Newbury."



Louisburg Square



Where to Find It

FOR FOOD AND DRINKS

The Federalist
15 Beacon St.,
617-670-2515

Mantra
52 Temple Place.
617-542-8111

Limbo
49 Temple Place,
617-338-0280

Felt
533 Washington St.,
617-350-5555

blu
4 Avery St., 617-375-8550

Pizzeria Regina
11 1/2 Thacher St.,
617-227-0765

FOR SHOPPING

Filene's Basement
426 Washington St.,
617-542-2011

Serenella
134 Newbury St.,
617-262-5568

Louis Boston

234 Berkeley St., 617-262-6100

Players

251 Newbury St., 617-266-1718

Allston Beat

348 Newbury St., 617-421-9555

TAKING IN THE SITES

The Fogg Art Museum
Harvard Campus, Cambridge,
617-495-9400

The Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA)
955 Boylston St.,
617-266-5152

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
465 Huntington Ave.,
617-267-9300

Boston Public Library
700 Boylston St.,
617-536-5400

Museum of Science, Boston
Science Park, 617-723-2500

New England Aquarium
Central Wharf, 617-973-5200

The Federalist

