

SMOKING IN BARS AND RESTAURANTS IN HONG KONG

The soon to be introduced smoking bans will be a welcome change to most restaurants and bars in HK.

Katrina Mayer, Managing Director of Loft 9, Hollywood Road, believes that the new rules soon to be in place will not deter business for bars or restaurants.

To the contrary, she believes it will encourage a more open, fresh approach to drinking. Imagine being able to wake up the next morning after a big night out, and not being drenching in that sickly smoke smell.

HK is behind many other countries, such as Australia, Ireland and the US. In these countries, smoking in restaurants was outlawed some time ago. Now other countries are following suit. Positive results have been achieved with the number of patrons increasing in some cases due to the fresher environment. Results also show the number of smokers has significantly decreased in these countries, with many people quitting as a result of stricter regulations.

A smoky bar is not a desirable place to be, even for most smokers. Bar and restaurant staff are among the biggest sufferers, receiving nightly doses of passive smoke within their workplace without being able to do anything about it.

Katrina, who is in the process of opening a new bar in Central, believes that this fresh new approach will indeed encourage the non-smoker a 'night-out' more often while the smoker will just understand to take it outside.

Smokers will have the option of going outside. In Hong Kong, the weather is fine most of the year. Smokers will be able to socialize outside and enjoy themselves just as much as if they were smoking inside.

A number of outlets in Hong Kong have already introduced non-smoking rules, and business has not been affected to a large degree.

Katrina believes that the new non-smoking rules should be brought in at the same time for all outlets in Hong Kong, to be fair to everyone.

The new rules, soon to be introduced will bring Hong Kong up to speed with the rest of the world and should create a healthier, environment for all.