

# LOCALE



## This Bar's New Makeover is All The Rail

### The Rail in Hillcrest Just Got A Fab Makeover

A little facelift, some Vegas flair and a revamped menu has given The Rail, formerly The Brass Rail, a reboot in both appearance and popularity. The bar was shuttered temporarily after 2016 Pride to allow for extensive renovations and the official relaunch, which took place in February. Changes to the venue include structural redesign inside the bar, an updated patio, drink menu changes and the introduction of both a daily food and weekend brunch menus.

Change isn't foreign to The Rail. As the oldest gay bar in San Diego, the establishment has been through many phases. Originally opened as The Brass Rail in 1934, the bar resided in downtown (Sixth and B Streets). In 1963, the bar made the move uptown, to the corner of Fifth and Robinson...although, not to the address where it currently stands. The Brass Rail first called the northwest corner of Fifth and Robinson home, before crossing the street in the late '70s and finding its final resting place where it stands today.



The bar originally took its name from the sunken bar, which boasted a long, brass foot rail. Though the sunken bar and foot rail are gone, The Rail's popularity and strong footing in the LGBT community remain unwavering. The remodel and revamp have helped the bar meet the needs of their current customers and attracted additional patrons.

Some of the elements of the remodel included removing the outdated drop ceilings and installing accordion doors adjacent to Fifth Avenue. The ceiling facelift now showcases the original ceilings, with a network of wood rafters. The patio also received some touch-ups, with new paint to lighten up the space.

"The interior has been totally transformed," General Manager, Dustin Santillan said. "We also just hired two amazing chefs who created our brunch menu."

One of the biggest changes for The Rail has been the reintroduction of a food menu. Munchies haven't been offered at the bar since the mid '90s. Now, bar goers can indulge on a variety of grilled cheese sandwiches during the week, and a brand new brunch menu on the weekends. The drink menu has also received an overhaul, with more focus on craft cocktails and an updated beer list.

"We just started serving brunch on Saturday, Sunday and all Monday holidays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. We just launched our brunch menu this month and it's already getting rave reviews," Santillan said.

The masterminds behind the already-popular brunch hail from Las Vegas, where they were both working at the Cosmopolitan. Little known to one another, they both interviewed for positions at The Rail.

"Neither of them were aware that the other was interviewing with us. We thought they would make a great team. The two were totally surprised when they found out they would be working together. They've made an amazing team and we could not be happier about our decision to bring them both on board," Santillan said.

The brunch menu is designed to be shared, as all good experiences should be. The menu is loaded with delicious classics like waffles, biscuits and gravy and benedicts. Diners can also enjoy salads, sliders, flatbreads and more. Brunch isn't the only shareable experience that The Rail is offering. During the week, visitors can find a variety of activities to participate in.

“We always have fun stuff happening here—Trivia Tuesdays, Karaoke Wednesdays, starting June 21, with all night drink specials. And we're always coming up with awesome events and themes. For example, we just hosted a Gaymer Night (Video Game tournament with a cash prize). We get pretty creative,” Santillan said.

**The Rail**

3796 Fifth Ave

San Diego, CA 92103

619.298.2233