

BIZBASH

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All That Jazz

To launch its new 100-proof vodka, Absolut partnered with UrbanDaddy for an event that masqueraded as a 1920s-style Halloween party.

For the American launch of Absolut 100, the brand's new 100-proof vodka, the Swedish distillery partnered with online magazine UrbanDaddy to throw parties in New York and Los Angeles. Originally intended to be a small speakeasy-themed event, Saturday's party drew such a large response that planners turned the New York launch into a massive 1920s-inspired costume party. Close to 800 flappers and bootleggers lined up to file into TriBeCa's [Bogardus Mansion](#) over the course of the night. Scheduled to run from 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., the event produced such a good turnout that planners let guests revel until 3.



Absolut enlisted [BMF Media Group](#) to produce the event, dubbed “the 100 Club,” and the firm’s biggest challenge was to pull off a believable re-creation of the ’20s. It took advantage of the mansion’s dramatically different levels by creating two distinctive spaces that reflected the decade. “Downstairs was more of a speakeasy, Prohibition-era bar, while the upstairs was a glamorous, highbrow, and elegant jazz lounge—two different looks that both spoke to the style of the time,” BMF's Brian Feit said.

Compared with the dark downstairs area, filled with wood paneling and a bar almost as long as the room, upstairs was comparatively well-lit, dotted with waiters passing miniature slices of pizza, burgers, and grilled-cheese sandwiches. To add further contrast between the two levels, each space had its own style of entertainment as well. Singer Aisha Hosley worked through a familiar jazz catalog in front of a baby grand piano on the first floor, allowing guests in the back of the room to indulge in some slower dances, while [Michael Arenella and His Dreamland Orchestra](#) led the basement’s buoyant Speakeasy revelers.

Feit used items from [Eclectic/Encore Props](#) to accent each room with ’20s-specific decor. Glasses rested on vintage drink carts, and women paraded around both floors holding cigarette trays filled with mints and Zino cigars as well as Prohibition-era sweets like black-and-white malted milk balls and wound-up strands of black licorice. Brooklyn Antique Car Club sourced the classic autos parked in front of the venue.

The biggest surprise for the planners was how many guests showed up in costume. Hats and other accessories were on-hand for those who needed them, but not many did. “I couldn’t believe how many dressed up,” Feit said. “Of course there were a few nurses, but most everyone was dressed up in the theme. The women, especially, were just over the top.”

Absolut 100 launches in Los Angeles with a similar event at [Les Deux](#) tomorrow.
—*Michael O'Connell*