

I'll take a Jin and Tonic (Band) please

by Cheryl Lyman
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Recipe for fun:

Mix together 2 hot chicks and 4 smokin' gents
Add a handful of instruments
And toss in a couple of microphones

Stir together and you get Jin and Tonic Band, a Chicagoland cover band that really knows how to shake things up. Now, I'm not one to go out to bars to listen to a band, generally. However, I was taking an evening stroll a few weeks ago, and saw through the window of Bowman's Bar and Grill (corner of Lincoln and Montrose) this group setting up. I checked out the poster hanging in the window and thought, "Hey, why not? It could be good." It turned out to be beautiful timing on my part. That was one of the best times I had out in a long time.

Playing local venues in the Wrigleyville, North Center/Lincoln Square area, as well as private events, Jin and Tonic Band really has a good time helping others have a good time. They tout themselves as playing your favorite Rock, Pop and Country covers, but this doesn't adequately describe their performances. Yes, they play that music. In fact, they jam that music, and their playlist is extensive.

They started the evening with Gretchen Wilson's "I'm Here for the Party" and just kept right on

rockin'. "Sweet Child of Mine," "Sweet Home Chicago" and "Sweet Home Alabama" all were, well - sweet. Van Morrison, Journey, Joan Jett, Pat Benetar, Bon Jovi, Jimmy Buffet and The Eagles all made appearances in song, as well as Pink, Miranda Lambert and AC/DC. They also cover songs by Shania Twain, The Isley Brothers and Rick Springfield, as well as many more. These are not necessarily groups that you would think of together, but Jin and Tonic mix them together flawlessly. There was perhaps one song done that I didn't know the words to. Looking around at the large crowd there that night, I could see that I was not alone in knowing the music. People who weren't born when some of these songs were written were singing and dancing and just having a blast.

Partway through the evening, the ladies hopped up onto the bar, and invited anyone else who wanted to join them, for two of the best 'dancing on the bar' songs around: "These Boots are Made for Walking," and "Save a Horse, Ride a Cowboy." Several ladies did get up to strut their stuff (which pleased the many men in the bar.) - Yes, I did - I'm proud of it and I'll do it again.

The band members are all very friendly, and I chatted with them a little between sets.



Jenn Fletcher (Jin) and Nickey Farr were the ladies singing that night, and they told me that Toni Siprut (Tonic) wasn't with them for that gig because she is quite pregnant. However, I went to see them the following weekend, and Toni did join them. All three women are absolutely lovely; you can tell they really enjoy what they are doing. Jenn and Toni have been best friends for 12 years and sang jazz together during college at the U of NE-Lincoln. Jin and Tonic Band has been together for about two and a half years. Rounding out the band is Frank Loria on guitar, Matthew Kerr (the first) on guitar, David Malatesta on bass and Nate Green on drums.

Next time you want to go out and enjoy some fantastic music, think about checking this group out. I think you will enjoy it immensely. They will be playing at Bar Celona, 3474 N Clark St, Chicago, on Sept. 25 and Oct. 2. Visit their MySpace page <http://www.myspace.com/jinandtoniccountr> to hear some of their songs, see their pics and find out about their upcoming gigs. Hope to see you there!

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The Band: Nate, Jenn, David, Toni & Frank. Matt is with us in spirit in this pic.

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