

SCENE | ON THE RISE



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"King of Clubs" Chris Barish swaps bottle service for CrazyShakes and redefines an American classic.

BY MATTHEW WEXLER

Why is one of New York City's most successful nightclub veterans now promoting burgers and milkshakes? Ask Chris Barish, who, along with owner/chef Joe Isidori, launched Black Tap Craft Burgers & Beer in 2015, and the answer might be "likability."

Introduced by a mutual friend, the pair hit it off but didn't have a specific project in mind. Isidori came back after a few months with his eye on a 550-square-foot storefront on an off block in Soho and a craft burger concept. "I liked Joe," recalls Barish, "and thought it was a good idea. I said, 'Sure, let's do it.'"

That leap of faith has transformed from a single restaurant into an international phenomenon with eight locations (including Dubai and Geneva) and more on the way. Barish says it's been a natural evolution from his nightlife career. Elevating the dining experience has been vital—

and customers are responding in droves. "Chris' background in nightlife has been a huge part of creating the Black Tap experience," says Isidori. "Taking the elements that make an awesome nightclub—design, music, service—and applying it to Black Tap's more casual environment has created this incredible vibe in all our restaurants."

And while the burgers, shakes and design elements like eye-popping street art have generated a social media storm (@blacktapnyc has more than 250,000 Instagram followers), a burger binge is always better with a soundtrack—in this case, '80s pop and '90s hip-hop. "We've grown organically," says Barish. "We're no longer just burgers and beers—we're in our own lane." 529 Broome St., 917.639.3089; 177 Ludlow St., 646.813.1013; 136 W. 55th St., 212.315.4356, blacktapnyc.com

Clockwise from left: Funky interiors at Black Tap Midtown; the Sweet N' Salty CrazyShake; co-owner and nightclub veteran Chris Barish.



INTERIOR AND FOOD PHOTOS COURTESY OF BLACK TAP; CHRIS BARISH PHOTO BY RICK WENNER