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Best Business Bars In America

Silicon Valley Madera Lounge

The tech crowd isn't exactly known for surrounding itself with glamour. The clubhouses tend to be more like frat houses--at least until about year ago, when the plush Rosewood Sand Hill Hotel opened on a golden ridge above Stanford University.

Suddenly the Valley boys grew up, and the hotel's Madera Lounge became the VC watering hole. A few minutes from Sand Hill Road's tech offices, not to mention VC and private equity firms, the place offers a taste of the good life promised by the next killer deal: rich woods, serious art, a sweeping view of the Santa Cruz Mountains, battalions of people eager to please ... it's all here. The bar's sliding doors are often flung wide, and tie-free meetings are de rigueur on the terrace (quieter meetings sometimes take place in the adjacent library). Celebratory toasts usually involve a big-ticket bottle of wine off the 900-label list, or maybe \$120 glasses of Johnny Walker King George V single malt.

When the sun sets, the music goes up and the scene factor kicks in--offering a chance to meet the movers and shakers you may never "get a meeting" with. The crowd ranges from mega-preneur Marc Andreessen to former 49er Ronnie Lott, who is, by the way, quite successful in private equity investments these days. --*Marcia Gagliardi*

TIP: Sand Hill Road office hours tend to be flexible, so regulars come early and stake out tables, especially in the summer.

GO: Madera Lounge at Rosewood Sand Hill Hotel, 2825 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park, Calif. (650) 561-1540