

Calypso Cabaret serves up a feast of glamor, entertainment

If you're seeking glamorous nighttime entertainment, served up in style, Youthapong Charoenpan recommends a visit to the Calypso Cabaret at the Asia Hotel.

Youthapong Charoenpan

In Greek and Roman mythology, a nymph was any one of numerous minor deities represented as beautiful maidens inhabiting, and sometimes personifying aspects of nature, such as a tree, a waterway, or a mountain.

Another somewhat more general definition states, "a girl, especially a beautiful one". And while the performers from the Calypso Cabaret at the Asia Hotel would seem to conform with the latter definition, on closer inspection you'll discover that they are, in fact, a troupe of ravishingly beautiful transvestites.

The troupe has been performing its flawless dance and lip-syncing routines since 1988, the format proving an appealing option among international visitors to the 'City of Angels'.

The unreal McCoy

I've had the opportunity to visit quite a few different drag queen shows over the years, including, during my time in the UK, events held in some of the shadier parts of London's inner city district of Camden Town. These performances tended to hone in on a sense of mischief, including plenty of tongue-in-cheek dialog.

In contrast, one of things that really stands out in my motherland is the truly convincing femininity of the members of this high-profile transvestite troupe, which only adds to the impact of the performance. And while the show has been held at the Asia Hotel now for over 10 years, based on my visit, there were certainly plenty of satisfied customers.

The show itself is filled with brightly colored performances, accompanied by plenty of recognizable music, making it easy for the audience to join in the fun. Most phases of the show had the crowd clapping along, or up on their feet dancing, as was the case with some middle-aged Chinese guys sat next to me.

Such is the bubbly enthusiasm, energy, and expertise of the performers that it's really very easy to get sucked in and, before you know it, you're clapping or singing along, too. I was particularly impressed to see how amazingly well the troupe was able to carry out its performances while wearing huge and extravagant costumes. One example worth mentioning is the performance of the Carmen Miranda, who manages to dance her heart while wearing an ornate ostrich costume.

The musical score, like all the best musicals, is strong enough to keep the crowd involved throughout. I was

particularly impressed by the way this troupe combined top class music with impressive costumes and choreography.

The crowd is treated to a rendition of *Dis Moi Josephine?*, along with other classics made popular by the French, Afro-American entertainer and actress Josephine Baker (1906-1975).

Other numbers made famous by Marilyn Monroe are purred, along with more modern songs such as Tina Turner's *What's Love got to do With it?* and the late Michael Jackson's *Billy Jean*.

The music isn't restricted to English-language songs either so with the inclusion of some compositions sung in Asian languages, there really is something for everyone.

Finally, I should point out that the show is filled with glamorous touches, be it the 'dancing paintbrushes', or the Divas dressed up like cockatoos – and while I'd like to tell you more, it may spoil some of the surprises, so I'll leave the rest to your imagination!

With several promotions available and options with or without a buffet dinner, call Calypso Cabaret for further information or to make a reservation on Tel: +66 (0)2 653 3960-62.

Transport connections:

Train: The nearest BTS skytrain station is at Ratchathewi. The Asia Hotel is just a short walk from the station.

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