

Elvis has not left the building

If you hear a sweet voice calling you for one night of sin, look again, because it's not just the pretty girls on Soi Bangla who like to shake, rattle and roll. Elvis is back (again) and this time he's making his home at the newest addition to Patong's nightlife scene, H2O.

Located in Phuket's most inventively named soi (Soi Post Office), H2O is a bar with a bucketload of differences: water, to be precise. After a soft opening at the beginning of June, the teething problems of the water features are close to being resolved.

When complete, patrons will be able to tip-toe across a network of flowing water channels integrated into the floor, while two waterfalls will cascade from the top of the bar behind customers being served. There won't be any drinkers washing their hands in muddy water here.

Owner Ashton Adams, 35, explained a little about his philosophy, saying, "Phuket is changing. It's not just full of young people looking for cheap beer and cheap sex any more. There are families and groups of older people who want something different."

Doused in blue light, H2O is not your average bar. The interior is lit up like a Christmas tree with the dé cor creating a lagoon-like ambiance. The area on the first floor can seat around 50 people before a small stage.

Upstairs is a cozy VIP area with comfortable sofas and Playstations. Wireless headsets and movies will be available in the future for drinkers who want to relax in seclusion.

And the pié ce de ré sistance of the bar? "People have commented that the ladies' toilets are the best in Patong," said Ashton. "My theory is that if women come here and like the toilets, they will probably come back."

Opting to move away from

the formulaic approach to music adopted by other bars in Patong, Ashton said that the tunes at H2O will make for better socializing. "I don't want the music to be too loud," he said. "I want people to come here and be able to talk without songs blaring at them."

Situated at the end of a small soi off the beach road, you might think that the location would hamper H2O's chances, but Ashton was quick to point out that

Soi Post Office is the second busiest soi after Bangla.

With a grand opening slated for the coming high-season, 70 baht bottles of beer

should keep tourists happy.

H2O is open until 1 am with the chance to stay later if the venue is sufficiently busy. You can catch Elvis on Tuesdays and Saturdays, although he has been known to shake things up on other days of the week.

A Filipino band will be on stage when the "Hunk of Burnin' Love" doesn't have his mojo working, but it's the Elvis impersonator that Ashton is most excited about. "I think he's great because he really loves what he does."

As Ashton was speaking we got lucky and Elvis emerged from his dressing room and bounced onto the stage with his big boots and white jumpsuit. His beaming smile was infectious and didn't leave his face for the duration of his set. After a spot of dancing and some athletic gyrations, Elvis got down to business and rattled off a few numbers.

"Thank you, thank you very much," he said, before greeting the crowd and inviting them to dance. Viva Patong!

Soi Post Office is next to McDonald's and Zen on the beach road. For more information visit www.h2ophuket.com or contact Ashton at Tel: 084-6644050 or email: ashton@h2ophuket.com



H2O, where Elvis rocks amid waterfalls and rivers, all inside the bar. Playstations, televisions and sofas in a loft make for a more relaxing place to watch the rock 'n' roll.

AFTER DARK

By Matt Crook

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