

## Lenox Lounge

Demolished 2017

288 Malcolm X Boulevard



*Left: Lenox Lounge before demolition*

*Right: Lenox Lounge after demolition in May 2017*

Lenox Lounge was a long-standing bar in Harlem, New York City. It was located at 288 Lenox Avenue, between 124th and 125th Streets. The bar was founded in 1939 by Ralph Greco and served as a venue for performances by many great jazz artists, including Billie Holiday, Miles Davis, and John Coltrane. Harlem Renaissance writers James Baldwin and Langston Hughes were both patrons, as was Malcolm X.

The bar deteriorated through the middle of the 20th century. Alvin Reid Sr. purchased it in 1988 and restored the original Art Deco interior from September 1999 to March 2000, during the only closure in the bar's history.

The Lenox Lounge was voted "Best of the Best" by the 2002 *Zagat Survey Nightlife Guide* and by the 2001 *New York Magazine*. On Tuesday nights, the Lounge would host parties catered towards the neighborhood's gay community.

In 2012, a rent increase threatened to shutter the establishment. In December 2012, it was announced that it would close at the end of the year. However, in January 2013 Reid said he was reopening at 333 Lenox Avenue and that it would have its iconic neon sign there. Richard Notar, who owned the Nobu Restaurant chain and who took over the lease on the original 288 Lenox location, said he would maintain the decor of the original 288 lounge which does not yet have a name. In May 2017 the building was demolished.