

# Esquire

## The Beachland Ballroom and Tavern - Cleveland, OH

By Joe Oestreich



### You're Having: A Czechvar

It's debatable as to whether Cleveland deserves the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame more than, say, Memphis or Detroit. But the position rock music holds in Cleveland's conception of itself is undeniable. And if rock is one fundamental pillar to Clevelandness, the city's Eastern European stock is another. Nowhere is this clearer than at the Beachland, a venue that until 2000 was the Croatian Liberty Home -- a social club for the area's huge South Slavic population.

The Beachland's velvet-draped ballroom still looks dolled-up for five hundred dancing Croats, even when the Drive-By Truckers or the Black Keys are performing. Lesser-known bands rattle the wood paneling and glass block in the tavern. Between sets, a sweaty line forms at the bar, where beer comes varied (seventy to choose from) and cheap (starting at \$2), and at the jukebox, which plays 45s for free. All of which is more rock and more Cleveland than anything you'll find in I.M. Pei's \$92 million glass pyramid across town.