

## Fitzgerald's

6615 Roosevelt Road, Berwyn, IL  
708.788.2118

www.fitzgeraldsnightclub.com

Type of Music: Eclectic

Atmosphere: 9

Prices: 9

Selection: Beer-9, Liquor-9

Sightline: 10

Overall: 9.1

Sound: House System Supplied

Booking: Bill or Anastasia

## Fitzgerald's lives up to the legend

Sparse on décor but big on sound, Fitzgerald's nightclub in Berwyn has achieved legendary status mainly due to its support of national as well as local acts which often don't get the same endorsement on the radio. By standing up for the underdog, and refusing to be pigeonholed to a single musical genre, the club has maintained its status quo as a premier showcase for live talent of above average quality.

With a compact stage that is in the dead-center of a single level of seating, the club packs as much as possible into a small amount of space. Tables and chairs are arranged tightly but not uncomfortably so, and there's enough room in front for anyone who gets the urge to jump up and cut the proverbial rug. A main bar is just inside the entrance at stage left, and a smaller bar is in the opposite corner at stage right. A selection of over three dozen domestic and imported beers is complemented by a half dozen brands on tap, including Leinenkugel's new Honey Weiss, Bass Ale, and others. The cheerful but-busy bar staff can also mix up just about anything you can think of. Snacks are limited to popcorn and a small selection of packaged chips, so it might be wise not to arrive hungry.

In season, an outdoor beer garden offers additional seating and yet another full bar. On the night I visited, the beer garden was virtually deserted in favor of the show inside. The Derailers from Austin Texas were heating up the room with songs from

their new CD *Jackpot*, as well as their previous release *Feverish Deluxe*. True to the Austin sound, this quartet blasted a nonstop mix of straightforward country swing, shit-kickin' twang, and a bit of the blues.

And thanks to FitzGerald's, bands like The Derailers have a place and a following in the hearts of Chicago music fans. The sheer range of FitzGerald's musical offerings is amazing, solo mavericks such as art-rock pioneer Shawn Phillips, acoustic talents Lucy Kaplansky and the edgy, evocative Fred Eaglesmith to a diverse group of Cajun and Zydeco acts like Queen Ida, The Midway Ramblers Cajun Band, C.J. Chenier and more. If that's not enough, try the Latin country and rock of the Alejandro Escovedo Orchestra or The Blazers; the insurgent country barnburners of The Waco Brothers, or the Big Band sounds of the Chicago Grandstand Big Band featuring Brian Perry. And that's just a sampling! Obviously, eclectic is too mild a word for the mix, and the fact that all this goes down in Berwyn, for God's sake, is a testament to the fact that not everything hip and progressive has to happen within Chicago city limits! It's this spirit of adventure that has made FitzGerald's an important cornerstone of the Chicagoland music scene, and it's the same spirit that has inspired thousands of fans over the years to see and hear such a sweeping range of dynamic and important musical performers.

Every year FitzGerald's celebrates it's musical diversity by hosting the American Music Festival.

Held in July, and going into it's 18th year, this festival is four days of Cajun BBQ, drinking, and dancing to two stages of live music. As the club continues into its third decade of groundbreaking sound, you can bet that the legend will survive and thrive into the next millennium. **III**



## FitzGerald's

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- 10/2 The Allison Brown Quartet-8pm  
Wayne "The Train" Hancock-10:30pm
- 10/3 Martin Zeller & The Hardways
- 10/7 The Fade Aways
- 10/9\* Ellis Paul-8pm  
Dolly Varden-10pm
- 10/10 Bernard Allison
- 10/15 Annie Hills CD Release Party

### HARVEST MOON FESTIVAL

- 10/16 C.J.Chenier/Billy Joe Shaver The V-Roys Honeyboy Edwards/Devil in a Woodpile/The Chicago Cajun Aces
- 10/17 C.J.Chenier/Robby Fulks The Hot Club of Cowtown Tigger Gospel/Casolando
- 10/22 Satya Graha
- 10/23 David Lindley 8pm  
Pine Valley Cosmonauts Tribute to Bob Wills 10:30pm
- 10/24 Two for the Road Tour Jimmie Dale Gilmore Dale Watson
- 10/28 Sonny Burgess
- 10/29 Kell Willis/Richard Buckner Bruce Robinson
- 10/30 Little Charlie & the Nightcats
- 10/31 Rico

### Jazz in October

- 10/1 Chicago Basie Connection
- 10/11 Bill O'Connell's Chicago Skyline Big Band
- 10/18 Chicago Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra
- 10/21 Rob Parton & the Ropa Big Band
- 10/25 The Chicago Grandstand Big Band

Rhythm & Rhyme Review  
Hosted By Scott Mumenthy

\*indicates two different covers