Liven up your nightlife this fall and winter with an infusion of culture. From beer school to the symphony, elegant piano bars to raucous museum fetes, we've got the rundown on what will inspire you to stay up well past your bedtime.

Anthology
Music lovers, take note: this gorgeous, three-story venue in Little Italy caters to you. While the supper club's programming covers a wide variety of sonic territory, Anthology has become the place in town to see traditional, contemporary and Latin jazz. Up in October: Larry Coryell and Alphonse Muzon (October 12-13) and Amber Skirtlock (October 17).

Belly Up Tavern
Probably the best-known music venue in North County (and cited by Rolling Stone as one of the hottest clubs on the West Coast), the Belly Up has been booking a stellar lineup of acts for more than three decades. This month, Joan Osborne (October 9), Pinback (October 21), Taj Mahal (October 22), and Stereolab (October 24) are just a few of the great shows. (858/481-8140, www.bellyup.com)

House Of Blues
The walls are bedecked with vibrant outsider art culled from the small chain's central collection, and the kitchen serves up zesty Southern cuisine. The place has a "one people, one love" vibe, despite its corporate ownership, and the entertainment lineup ranges from hip indie-rock and blues bands to Sunday's ever-popular Gospel Brunch. (619/299-BLUE, www.hobsandiego.com)

San Diego Opera
The 2009 season, opening January 24, features five operatic favorites, Puccini's Tosca and Madama Butterfly, Massenet's Don Quixote, Verdi's Rigoletto, and Britten's Peter Grimes. If you've never experienced opera (shocking, but it happens), Puccini is the safest bet. You'll quickly learn that the art form has little to do with hefty ladies and Viking hats and everything to do with melodic, heavens-soaring case of the opera's soprano in a bubble of voice. But if you're really up for a challenge, check out the San Diego Symphony's Thursday night performances of Verdi's Requiem or Wagner's Tristan und Isolde.

San Diego Symphony/Pops
The much-ballyhooed Summer Pops may be over, but the San Diego Symphony has plenty more in store for the fall and winter seasons. From the Open 2008 opening gala concert on October 4 to the Holiday Pops! series December 17-21, San Diegans will have plenty of opportunities to enjoy one of the city's top cultural institutions as the year draws to its grand finale. (619/235-0804, www.sandiegosymphony.com)

San Diego Sizzle
Balboa Theatre
This grand old Gaslamp dame was first built in 1924 and reopened last year after extensive renovations. Since then, the theater has been captivating locals and tourists with its historic trappings (dazzlingly high ceilings, Morhish accents) and engaging lineup. Coming up in the 2008/2009 season: Defending the Caveman (November 11-16), Classics 4 Kids (January 25), New Shanghai Circus (February 1) and Swan Lake (February 10). (619/579-7878, www.sdopera.com)

Grants Grill
Since 1951, the Grant Grill, the historic U.S. Grant hotel's signature restaurant, has been the domain of downtown's movers and shakers. Pre-theater, dine on contemporary fare in the dining room, or keep it simple and slide into the Grant's mahogany-paneled cocktail lounge, elegantly outfitted with buttery leather lounge chairs, inviting lighting and a piano man. Here, during the 4-7pm happy hour, never old-school martinis and satisfy your belly with treats from the half-off-bar menu: truffled steak fries with white cheddar sauce — yes please! (619/744-2077, www.grantgrill.com)

Neighborhood
Have you heard? Beer's the new wine. If you don't know hops from a hole in the wall, it's time to get schooled. Good thing this East Village hot spot — famed for its vast inventory of brews, Guiness-topped house burgers, and heaping plates of sweet-potato fries — offers a new monthly beer school. Here, casual connoisseurs can learn the ABCs of craft brewing. That's Ales, Belgians, and Chimays in case you were wondering. For $15, you'll sample two flights, each with four 6-ounce beers. The next event is October 7. (619/446-0002, www.neighborhoodsd.com)

UCSD's ArtPower! And The Loft
ArtPower!, which celebrates its fifth anniversary this year, continues to wow with a 2008/2009 lineup featuring innovative chamber music, dance, film, and lectures. Special events include an October 11 performance of Red Fish Blue Fish at the Salk Institute. Led by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and UCSD professor Roger Reynolds, the ensemble mixes live experimental percussion through real-time computer processing. New this season at the La Jolla campus is The Loft, a super-hip space in the expanded Price Center. It's designed primarily for students (though sometimes is open to the general public) with youthful arts events, a wine bar, and tapas-style nibbles. (619/534-4900, www.artpower.ucsd.edu)

Scott White Contemporary Art
Little Italy's art scene is white hot these days, thanks to this highly regarded gallery's new digs on Kalmia Street. White's walls have seen some boldfaced names, including a Willem de Kooning drawing and a massive Frank Stella piece that was once shown at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. On display now is an exhibition of sculptures by Chicago minimalist artist Peter Ambrose. Also check out White's new neighbor, JETT gallery, run by sculptor and furniture designer Joey Vaisauo. (619/501-5669, www.scottwhiteart.com)

TNT At The Museum Of Contemporary Art San Diego
MCASD's downtown location started San Diego's art-party trend six years ago...
great parties? Kathy Jolla, Harvard-educated, has been an art dealer for more than two decades. Owner and CEO Lorna York has been a collector and dealer for more than two decades. Director Alex Salazar, Boston College and Harvard-educated in art and religious studies, has been a dealer for a decade. And acquisitions director Kathy Art also has 20 years in the business under her belt. Oh, and did we mention they throw really great parties? (858/459-0836, www.madisongalleries.com)

Susan Street Fine Art Gallery
A favorite of Solana Beach's Cedros Design District since 1984, this gallery hosts monthly evening events that are as exciting as the contemporary art that fills the space. During October's Cedros Third Thursday Gallery and Shopping Night, swing by Susan Street to check out works by Miguel Osuma, Josh Goldberg, and David Kessler. (858/793-4442, www.susanstreetfineart.com)

Timmons Art Gallery
This Rancho Santa Fe space was voted Best Art Gallery by Ranch & Coast readers in 2006. Works from the gallery's collection of paintings, photography, and sculpture grace some of the finest homes in San Diego. Through January, check out New York cityscape oil paintings by Miro Simovic. (858/756-8488, www.timmonsagalleries.com)

Lux Art Institute
You don't just see art at this innovative, eco-friendly Encinitas museum. You see art happen. In fact, it's not really a museum at all, but an artist-in-residence program where visitors can watch internationally acclaimed artists do their thing. The third Wednesday of every month, the institute hosts Lux@Night, which features music, refreshments, studio tours, and the chance to interact with the talent. (760/438-6611, www.luxartinstitute.org)

Calypho Café
This laidback Leucadia eatery and bar is as beloved for its menu of seafood and vegetarian dishes as it is for its nightly lineup of live and unplugged music — everything from jazz and blues to salsa and reggae. Ike Turner, The Paddelina, and Candye Kane are just a handful of the acts that have graced Calypso's stage. (760/632-8252, www.calyphocafe.net)

Red Tracton's
Racing season is over, but Red Tracton's — right across the street from the Del Mar Fairgrounds — is still as happening as ever. The steaks and lobster are a huge draw; of course, but so is the extensive wine list and the lively piano bar. Tuesdays through Saturdays, settle in for a Scotch, neat, and let the piano man sing you a song already. (858/755-6000, www.redtractonca.com) — Axtellaria Stephen