

‘The Hangover’: All the Fun of Inebriation, No Next-Day Headache

Submitted by [Ebeth](#) [1] on June 5, 2009 - 1:44pm

- [Bradley Cooper](#) [2]
- [Ed Helms](#) [3]
- [Elizabeth Oppriecht](#) [4]
- [Heather Graham](#) [5]
- [Justin Bartha](#) [6]
- [Ken Jeong](#) [7]
- [Memento](#) [8]
- [Mike Epps](#) [9]
- [Mike Tyson](#) [10]
- [Movie Review](#) [11]
- [Old School](#) [12]
- [The Hangover](#) [13]
- [Todd Phillips](#) [14]
- [Zach Galifianakis](#) [15]



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

CHICAGO – Those who seek out “The Hangover” will do so wanting a good laugh. Those who see this film will occasionally be struck with the feeling that they shouldn’t be laughing. But laugh and laugh often they will as “The Hangover” will whirl you through all the fun of inebriation without the consequence of the nasty, next-day headache.



Left to right: Zach Galifianakis as Alan, baby Tyler, Bradley Cooper as Phil and Ed Helms as Stu in “The Hangover”.

Image credit: Frank Masi

“Old School” director Todd Phillips has met and surpassed the hysterics of his former film with this take-it-to-the-limit comedy. Breaking the “what happens in Vegas...” taboo, “The Hangover” allows a glimpse at the goings-on of a Las Vegas bachelor party.

From the strippers to the blackouts, the moviegoer is invited along on this three-day, two-night trip of penthouse suite-staying, lucky-streak chip-winning, unforgettable fun.

In honor of groom-to-be Doug (Justin Bartha of the “National Treasure” films), best-buddies Phil (Bradley Cooper of “He’s Just Not That Into

You”) and Stu (Ed Helms of “The Office”) plan a Vegas getaway with a quirky and loner addition to the guest list: Doug’s future brother-in-law Alan (Zach Galifianakis of “What Happens in Vegas”).

The foursome splurge on a suite, suit up and head off expecting the typical-atypical of all Sin City has to offer.



Stu (Ed Helms) wakes up with a hangover and finds a chicken in his hotel room in “The Hangover”.

Image credit: Frank Masi

And heavily dosed with the atypical they become. The group wakes to find their suite ridden with zoo creatures; their bodies riddled with unexplained injuries; stripper Jade’s (Heather Graham of “Baby on Board” and the “Austin Powers” films) baby in the closet; and, most pressing, a missing groom.

Soon they’re searching for their misplaced friend on a “Memento”-like adventure: void of memory, mapping clues and working backward to retrace their path from the night before.

Several achievements contribute to the success of this film with casting as the most significant. While “The Hangover” would have been easily broken by overacting or an unnatural delivery of its comic moments, all four of the main actors are able to make the ridiculous yet well-written script (written by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore of “Four Christmases”) believable.



Left to right: Alan (Zach Galifianakis), Stu (Ed Helms), Doug (Justin Bartha) and Phil (Bradley Cooper) raise a toast on the rooftop to commence Doug's bachelor party in "The Hangover".

Image credit: Frank Masi

Ed Helms pulls out just the right amount of an insecure, girlfriend-dominated dentist while Bradley Cooper's confident and suave Phil is the target of many a man crush.

Celebrity cameos – such as a whiz-bang yet non-Oscar-worthy appearance by Mike Tyson – are as welcome as the free booze from the casino. Allusions to other well-known films prove highly amusing while being appropriately mixed in with the new material. And the fast-forward, rewind and replay storytelling style keeps an engaging balance of mystery and humor.

Genuine creativity is displayed by the writers as typical Las Vegas comedy themes are mixed up and twisted into new and adventurous *antic* dotes.

However, while the team has several perfectly played aces up their sleeves, there are a few folds. "The Hangover" isn't for an audience conservative in their sense of humor and even the most tolerant onlooker might find an occasional dialogue or image taken too far.



Ed Helms as Stu and Heather Graham as Jade in "The Hangover".

Image credit: Frank Masi

Though he gives a liberated and courageous performance that contributes to the hilarity of the film, Zach Galifianakis's Alan could stand to put some clothes on. While these attempts at "naked humor" are overused, a partially nude scene at the suite is a keeper.

Ken Jeong of "Role Models" picks up a similar role as leader-of-the-pack and almost-tough-guy Mr. Chow. Though gifted with a grand entrance and some excellent zingers, more often than not his lines play as forced humor.

RELATED CONTENT

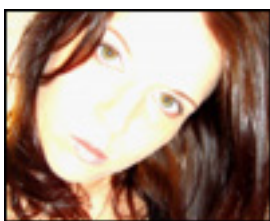


[Read more film reviews](#)
from critic [Elizabeth Opprecht](#). [4]

Despite the hang-ups in "The Hangover," the "that did not just happen!" and "he did not just say that!" moments create enough shocked snickers to carry this film far. The winning scenes have large payouts while some fall-flat humor is easy to overlook.

By the end of the film, these guys are our pals. We become an integrated part of their "wolf pack" and we look forward to hanging with them again. Here's a toast to the intoxicatingly good time "The Hangover" has to offer.

"The Hangover," which comes from "Old School" director Todd Phillips, features Bradley Cooper, Ed Helms, Zach Galifianakis, Justin Bartha, Heather Graham, Ken Jeong, Mike Epps and Mike Tyson. The film opened everywhere on June 5, 2009. "The Hangover" is rated "R" for pervasive language, sexual content (including nudity) and some drug material.



[16]

By ELIZABETH OPPRIECHT
HollywoodChicago.com
elizabeth@hollywoodchicago.com [16]

© 2009 Elizabeth Opprecht, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 18 2024 - 3:35pm):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/7901/the-hangover-all-the-fun-of-inebriation-no-next-day-headache>

Links:

[1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/ebeth>

[2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/bradley-cooper>
[3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/ed-helms>
[4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/elizabeth-oppriecht>
[5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/heather-graham>
[6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/justin-bartha>
[7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/ken-jeong>
[8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/memento>
[9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/mike-epps>
[10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/mike-tyson>
[11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html>
[12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/old-school>
[13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/the-hangover>
[14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/todd-phillips>
[15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/zach-galifianakis>
[16] <mailto:elizabeth@hollywoodchicago.com>