SO WHAT IS HOOKAH?

A hookah is a water pipe used to smoke tobacco through cooled water. The tobacco is heated in the bowl at the top of the hookah and the smoke is filtered through the water in the base of the hookah.

Alternate names for hookahs include: water pipe, goza, hubble-bubble, borry, arhile, and narghile.

A BIT OF HISTORY...

The hookah tradition, dating back at least 500 years, originated in the Middle East regions of the world. Countries cited for the first use include Egypt, India, and Turkey. Smoking the hookah is one of the oldest, most popular Turkish traditions. The tradition has traveled to the United States and today there are more than 300 hookah establishments in the U.S.

Did You Know...

Compared to a single cigarette, hookah smoke is known to contain higher levels of arsenic, lead, and nickel, 36 times more tar, and 15 times more carbon monoxide than cigarettes. This is because smoking a hookah requires taking longer and harder drags, increasing levels of inhaled nicotine and carcinogens in the lungs. The longer the hookah session, the more nicotine and toxins one takes in. A 45 to 60 minute hookah session can expose the smoker to approximately the same amount of tar and nicotine as one pack of cigarettes.

Although you may be hanging out in a hookah bar, but not smoking, you are still exposed to secondhand smoke. If you do choose to use, remember that sharing mouthpieces without washing them can increase the risk of spreading colds, flu, and infections—even oral herpes.