

100 Bars in 100 Days

Hops MacBarley's 2012 Key West Bar Boondoggle
"The Peace, Love, and I.P.A. Tour"

BAR 21:

The Cafe

www.facebook.com/pages/The-Cafe/55760479970

509 Southard Street

Friday 8/3, 9:15 pm

Monk in the Trunk (draft)

Virgin turf. Of course, it was virgin turf. I am a carnivore and The Café is a "mostly vegetarian place." That makes the Venn diagram of Hops and Café look like two large empty basketballs with a tiny football where they overlap. And in that football is one little word. Yes, *beer*.

But it's not a *bar*. You don't just go into a mostly vegetarian place just to drink, do ya? I mean, do ya?? I never do. Or never did. But in the interests of spreading Peace and Love, and in the hopes of finding tasty IPA, I ventured in.



Ever since this place opened years ago, I thought it looked really cool. Hippie cool, even, with its painted windows and little designs. But I knew there was nothing in there that I would eat. I am SURE that the food is wonderful, delicious, healthy, and excellent (or they wouldn't still be there), but it's just not meaty enough for my tastes. So I never went in.

Actually, that's not true. I went in once. To have beer. Shipyard had a beer-tasting session in here during Brew Fest last year, and I met up with Brian and Jan there to sample a few. The samples were in those silly little less-than-a-shotglass cups, though. Come on, guys, we were the ONLY ones there! Nobody else was coming. Part with some of your beer! Throw us a bone for leaving the Swamp Ape pool party for your lame-ass non-gathering. But no, tiny cups it was. They did give us t-shirts, though. I would have far preferred a six-pack. Or even a cold bottle.

So that visit doesn't count. Didn't buy anything. Didn't even get anything from The Café itself. Never even sat down. But I did dig the interior decorations and atmosphere.



This time, though, counted. I took a seat at the unoccupied bar – as usual, right by the taps – and was immediately delighted by the selection: Magic Hat, Left Hand, Monk In The Trunk, Jai Alai, Ommegang Witte, and Shipyard Blueberry. Wow!! An unexpected all-star team!

I happily ordered the Monk. And as a bonus, my glass had spacey swirlies all over it! This was jackpot. The bardude asked if I wanted a menu and was, in fact, handing me one. I declined, briefly explaining my purpose. Some people get a boot of the 100-bar quest, but others, like this one, shrug it off. He seemed a bit offended and pulled back his menu, probably muttering, *stupid drunk* to himself. I didn't care what he thought, though; I was enjoying myself.

The tunes only added to the good time. Talking Heads' *Once In A Lifetime* has always lifted my spirits, and this time was same as it ever was. That was followed by Grateful Dead's *Light Of The World*, which floods me with memories of my 1993-94 KW Winter in a Van, and I always enjoy that.

So I was diggin' it. The vibe in here was clicking crisply, except for the staff. The bargirl seemed a little more amiable, but only a little. It was like they expected me to pull out a bomb or something. Nobody comes in here without getting food, WTF is this weirdo up to? Look at him, drumming his fingers to the music, writing in that odd little book, taking pictures of the rooms, and of his beer! Jayzuzz.



Fukkett. You can't please everybody. It's certainly not the first time that people didn't get me, and it will not be the last. Years ago, when I was still young enough to dance without looking like I was too old to be dancing, I abided by the adage *Dance Like There's Nobody Watching*. I did, and had a ball. Funny thing was,

most people thought I was an outstanding dancer because of it. Some, though, thought I was just showing off. Maybe I was, or maybe I was just flying with the seagulls and having fun. Rather than skulk from their disapproval and negative waves, I just kept on being me. So it was with the overly wary Café staff. Joke 'em, ya know?

I enjoyed my Café visit, and will likely come back for another beer or two sometime. In fact, I even looked up the menu online to see if maybe I might find something that I'd like to eat. Nope. I read every line of that document and couldn't find a thing that my taste buds wanted to make love to. So it goes. Maybe I'll get a steak and cheese next door at Mr. Z's, and then wash it down with a Café Jai Alai.

