

100 Bars in 100 Days
Hops MacBarley's 2012
Key West Bar Boondoggle
"The Peace, Love, and I.P.A. Tour"

BAR 91:
Fat Tuesday
305 Duval Street
www.fattuesdaykeywest.com
Saturday 10/21, 5:30 pm

Rum Runner (frozen) \$7.00

I know, I know, there's no hops in a frozen Rum Runner. But there is rum, and it's yum rum, chum. So, Special Dispensation From On High at this Tour stop. WTF, my Tour, my rules.

I had slipped away from Goombay's grasp. There'd be plenty of time for festival festivity later on. Right now, I had a 2-4-1 Fat Tuesday coupon to attend to. It was summertime hot as I walked down Duval, and the beers from Blue Heaven and Santiago's Bodega were already sweating out of me. What I needed, and **badly**, was water. Well, a frozen drink must have ice in it, and ice is frozen water, right? Right?? So, there ya go. This stop was actually medically necessary.

Fat Tuesday rocks the late-night on weekends here. The women come here for the drinks and the men flock here for the women -- and to end up buying them their drinks. The music is Miami-ish, and the vibe is more gangsta than most K-Dub bars. So are the guys hanging around out on the sidewalk.



I can't help thinking that these are the guys who either don't have any money, and are relying on their social smoothness to score, or who don't want to drop all their cash playing Buy Bitches Booze -- which can get verrrry expensive -- and are looking for

a more, ummmm, thrifty score. Let some sucker dude inside spend, spend, spend, only to have some chick blow him off, and then make your move on the departing damsel. Kinda like the barracudas who let the shark do the



kill, then swim in its wake, gobbling up the scraps.

Ahh, that's probably a bit harsh. My mind runs amok at times (which is what I like about it). Maybe those guys just don't like crowded places.

This place was sure to be that kind of crowded in about six hours, but for now, it was pretty empty, and with much mellower music. The bar itself was maybe half-full, and only a couple of tables were taken. The video screens had UF football, but the audio had music. If you need to *hear* the game too,



then get your ass to a damn sports bar.

Tuesday is an open-air kind of place, albeit under a roof, but they had their misters running strong, and it felt cool and refreshing in here.

After a moment (but not two), the powerful-looking young barkeep came over. He was

one strong and fit dude. Handsome too. Real loser type, right? Especially in a chick bar like this. His name was Derek.

I returned his friendly greeting and proffered my coupon. He gave a clap and a thumbs-up, and went to fill a cup with Rumrunner. When he returned with the cup, I was impressed. It was thick, sturdy, clear plastic, adorned with colorful text and graphics, with a screw-on lid and a durable clear straw. I asked how much, and he plucked the ticket from my hand.

A tad confused, I asked, "Won't I need that for my second drink?"

Derek gave me head shake and a finger wag. "Usually, yes," he said, "but I'm going to use it on your first, which costs \$14, and then you can buy the refill for \$7." He gave me a hands-out *That work for you?* gesture.

It most certainly did. I gave him a lively salute and took the drink in hand. Taking the prudent approach, I unscrewed the lid and removed the straw.

Past experience had taught me that an aggressive first pull on the straw was a first class ticket on the train to Brainfreeze.

The freeze was inevitable at some point. It was a requisite part of the Fat Tuesday experience. At some point, I'd sneak ahead of pace, or I'd start watching the Gators and accidentally swill with too much zeal, and the freeze would be on.

The girl next to me was wearing a Cat In The Hat hat, one of those tall, floppy, red-and-white, stovepipe hats. Her name was Cary, and she was going bonkers for the Gators, who were handily dispatching the Gamecocks. Her companion was wearing UMiami gear. He was far less enthused. He had the look of someone who wanted to be fishing next to a case of beer, or knocking back some Jäger shots at the Gecko, rather than listening to his girl woo-hoo about a school that he despised, and have to drink a fruity slushy to boot.

You can't chug frozen drinks. You can't really rush them either. But I had other places I wanted to go and my coupon was already cashed in. I actually still had some slush in the bottom of the cup when I handed it over for the refill. I took it to travel, thanked Derek heartily, and headed off through the mist.

I still have the cup. It is my at-home drinkin' vessel for sodas and fruit juices and such. It's double-thick so it doesn't sweat as quickly, and the ice stays ice longer. Mainly, though, I kept it because I paid for it. Not *really*, I suppose, due to the coupon deal, but it's a pay-money-for-me cup and not a giveaway. A giveaway soon becomes a throwaway. A pay-for-me is an investment, and if you know me, you know what a shrewd investor I can be. Ha.