

100 Bars in 100 Days

Hops MacBarley's 2012

Key West Bar Boondoggle

"The Peace, Love, and I.P.A. Tour"

BAR 95:

The Garden of Eden

224 Duval Street

www.bullkeywest.com

Monday 10/22, 11:00 pm



Sam Adams Oktoberfest (draft)

\$6.00

Keep going up! It was planned all along for this address: all three bars in the same night. Saves on gas. And, please, make NO attempt to claim that these should count as one stop just because they all sit on the same map coordinates. These three bars are three different worlds. Ground floor, underbelly, band; second floor, pool, darts, balcony; third floor ... nakedness.

Naked is the hook here, no doubt about it. You don't come up for the scenic view, because you can't see anything from up here; all the thick-n-tall tropical potted plants that line the walls make even a peak down to the street more difficult than it's worth. The Whistle will have to suffice for that.

The clothing optional -- not "clothing prohibited", mind you, you can wear all you want -- aspect makes any trip up to the roof a total crap shoot. As I've said before, sexy does not always mean naked, and naked is NOT always sexy.

A number of people like to boast, "I'm proud of my body!" and I feel like saying, "Damn, dude, don't be." If you want to say that you're *not ashamed* of all the wiggling flab, the by-product of all those gorgings on bacon, ice cream, doughnuts and bourbon, that's a whole 'nother story. Be yourself, dude. I'm with ya all the way on that.

But being "proud", to me, means that you have accomplished something;

you've put in effort and made sacrifices, and you take pride in the results because it was freaking hard to do. Letting your body go to shit, clogging every artery, and pummeling every internal organ, is not an accomplishment to be proud of. Not ashamed? Cool. Whatever floats your boat. Proud? Nah-nah.

But, OK, enough of that, yes? Just one man's opinion.

So, my expectation when I reached the roof was a whole bunch of not-ashamed people. I think there are two types of people who go to The Garden Of Eden: those who want to get naked and go-fuck-yourself-if-you-dont-like-it, and those of us who are there with the faint hope of seeing beautiful people -- people who are legitimately and justifiably proud of their fit-oh-so-fine bodies. Odds? Less than Not Good. *Way* less.

Every now and then -- well, not even that, more like a now-and-then once in a great while -- lightning strikes, but you don't count on it. And, very importantly, most of the time, it doesn't cost anything to check it out. You climb up, look around, and either stay or walk right back down, depending on your initial view.

BUT, this being Fantasy Fest, the word "free" did not apply. You don't find many cover charges in Key West. On certain festive occasions, Rick's, Sloppy's, the Gecko, and a few others might tap you for a finner to get in. And that riles us. We'd be ucked-fay in Boston, New York, or even Miami, where \$20 for entry is considered dirt cheap.

So, here, tonight, the crap shoot stakes were



raised. A payment of \$10.00 was required to gain entry to the top floor. And they were smart enough to collect it about five steps up from The Whistle so you couldn't get any hint as to the wisdom of your investment. But, there was no hesitation here, even though some previous visits here lasted about 15 seconds. *This was Bar #95, for Crissake, The Garden Of Fucking Eden, during Fantasy Fest.* Stifle that inherent Scottish thrift, pay the damn sawbuck and climb!

At the last turn in the staircase, there was a sign on the wall -- white, with plain, very legible, red text -- warning that if you try to take a photo they will shove your camera up your heinie. Or something along those lines.

As I ascended those final few steps, I hastily convened the PLIPAT Rules Committee in my head. If the landscape turned out to be decidedly unscenic -- to the point where it became a health risk by jeopardizing my gastric equilibrium -- could I still count the bar as "toured" if I just grabbed a beer to go and skedaaaaaaaa-- *neverrrr minnnnnd. Helloooo, lightning!*

Now, **here** was a woman who should be rightfully proud of her body! In the center of the spotlight floor was a very fit, young, athletic woman, with buzz-cut, punk-lezzie hair, and not a stitch on her body, nor a hair to be seen below her ears. She danced with reasonable grace, but she was no ballerina. She was not slender and delicate; she looked more like a gymnast, specifically a vault specialist, with her solid and lean leg muscles and firm square shoulders. I was reminded, actually, of the pole dancer from Bar #69.

She **had** the floor. Whether out of respect or fear, the 40 or so other people up there were about as far away as they could get, backs to wall, but eyes locked on her. She was having a great time. She was dancing, but she knew she didn't have to dance well; all she had to do was dance **naked!**

Her friends were neither as sexy nor as a bold, but they still had the rest of the crowd beat. Two were small-breasted topless, the third was in a bikini top. They did a little bouncing and swirling, but this was a one-woman show, and she was digging the attention, movin' and groovin', yet never being obscene.

Normally, the six-dollar beer price is shruggable here -- or at most of the live entertainment venues -- since they don't charge to get in. Tonight, though, it did seem a tad high. When did it get so expensive to have a beer? Gotta be the fault of the Republicans.

You actually hit the bar before you reach the open area here at The Gahhden, so once I had my Octofest in hand, the next task was to find my niche -- my perfect spot to stand, drink, observe, enjoy, and avoid dickheads. Not always an easy find. I moved towards Tioti's airbrushing hut, near the back stairs, and surveyed the roof. A tall, mid-20's guy in a white collared shirt approached me.

"Dude," he began with a sly smile, "I'm sure you're just listening to your tunes, but if you take that iPhone out of your pocket, I'm gonna have to put it through the shredder."

I laughed. The white earbuds betrayed me. I had shut the music off before I even climbed the stairs, but the buds were still nestled in my sexy ears. "Ha. Forgot I still had them in. No worries, chief."

He gave me a sly thumbs-up, with an odd little *How did you know my name is Chief?* look and wandered off, looking for someone else to threaten.

As for me, I scoped out my spot and moved confidently towards it -- straight across the dance floor, within a meter or so of HDW (Hot Dancer Woman), and against the wall near her topless friends. If you're gonna gawk, you might as well do it from Prime Gawking Position, yes?

The rest of the story should go something like, *I doffed my shirt, she danced over and cozied up to me, kissed my chest, slid my shorts to my ankles, and ...*

But it doesn't. This ain't no fiction novel. I did get a smile from her when I raised my glass to toast her performance, and that was about all I could reasonably hope for.

I finished my Octoberfest about the same time that she decided she was done dancing for a while. There was a lot of partying going on at street

level, and, without HDW to hold my attention, the crowd, with a few "not-ashamed" here and there, just wasn't whistling Dixie. I aimed for the back stairs -- safer than The Whistle's black-diamond slope (or, at least, not as visible) -- popped the earbuds back in, and rejoined the street party.