

Bar Hoppin' With Hops
The Second Century Tour
Hops MacBarley's Summer 2013
Key West Bar Boondoggle

Bar 112:

Agave 308 Tequila Bar

308 Front Street

www.facebook.com/agave308tequilabar

Wednesday, 11 June 2013, 7:00 PM

Dos Equis (bottle, with lime) \$5.00?

Jan and Brian rendezvoused with me here for a drink-n-ahhhh. Jan had a yum tequila concoction, while Brian and I settled for beer. I made mine a Dos Equis, just to seem interesting, and even stuffed a lime into the bottle. Not a whole lime, mind you; that would have been overkill. And messy.



The three of us had actually crossed this threshold a few nights before. We trekked alllllll the way over from WOB -- more than three blocks! -- with the intention of making Agave 308 the 7th Hop of the Second Century Tour. Our main mission for coming here as a team -- apart from scoring the new Hop -- was to get Jan a yum tequila drink. God knows, Brian and I don't touch that swill.



There must have been a flaw in our communication, though, because, when we got here, Jan elicited surprise. I guess she thought we had another venue in mind, or was just following along to see where we crazy guys were going next, because she immediately called a halt to the Hop, citing the Tequila-and-Cabernet-No-Mix-Well Law of Nature. We saw the flaw in the plan, nodded agreement, and plotted a new course over to Greene Street Cigar, which was less than a block from where we had started.

But this time, we had our plan straight. The Tequila Bar was Hop 1 of a Double-Hop night, so we rendezvoused here.

This place was not in existence when the *Peace, Love & IPA Tour* roamed the island. It launched with what was billed as an End Of The World Party for its Grand Opening last December -- right about the same time that 90 Mile Lounge came into being. I never heard of this place until I saw something on Facebook in May. I guess once the *PLIPAT* ended, I kinda shut off my bar-dar and missed a few of the new developments.

Like 90 Mile, Agave has a nice sign hanging overhead. Like 90 Mile, the sign escaped my vigilance for a half-a-year. It's that above-eye-level thing.

I used to post stickers everywhere I went. Not like my kitchen, my bedroom, or my bathroom; not that excessive. But every time I'd go on a road trip, I'd bring a stack o' stickers and place them discreetly -- or sometimes not so discreetly -- to mark my presence. Ya, just like a dog, but without the sniffing.

I never leave them, for instance, on the middle of the front window. That's just vandalism. Plus, it will be removed immediately. I want this to still be there if I ever go back. A maintenance man I knew once told me that janitors and their ilk rarely look above eye level; their main concern is the



floor and the counters. Armed with that knowledge, I tended to stick my stickers up high (being taller than average helps). Restroom air fresheners serve the purpose, for example.

The stickers aren't anything political or offensive or even funny. Most are just a small color picture of me running, only about 1" x 2". No text, no message, just this anonymous dude running along. There's one on an ice machine in a convenience store in central Florida that will be there forever. The brand name was Sprinter, and it was off-center, leaving a perfect spot for my sticker. I placed it years ago on a visit to Malt, the family patriarch, and I check on it almost every time.

Patrick once called me several years ago from a bathroom stall on the New Jersey Turnpike to tell me he was looking at one of my stickers on the air vent.

The best one, though, was in Lewis' Bar & Grill in Norwood, Mass. In 1997, I stuck a sticker up on the emergency light fixture above the window, waaaay

up near the 9-foot ceiling. That sucker was still there in 2011. It looked a tab shabby, but so would anything that was in that room for 14 years.



So, how did I get on that topic?? (Scroll, scroll.) Oh, yeah, overhead signs.

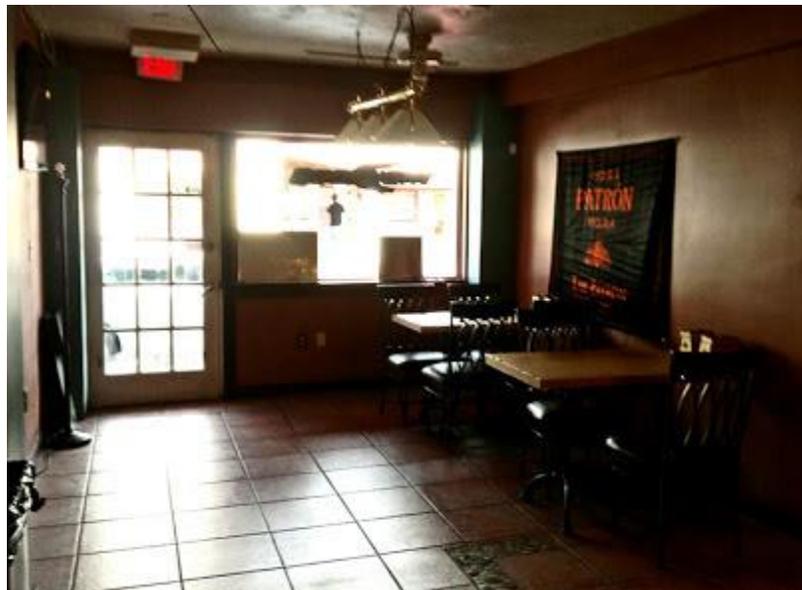
To be fair, though, Front Street, except for Island Dogs during football season, has been pretty unfamiliar territory. My boozin' and strollin' routes over the years have seldom ranged lower than Greene Street, or as much as a block off Duval. This 300 block of Front was definitely new *boîre terre*.

The first thing that strikes you here at 308 is the four-foot-tall, backlit agave leaf. It has a rotating color

light wheel in back. It's easy to get a little transfixed by it as the wall behind it changes hues. The next thing I noticed was a plethora of skulls throughout the room.

Not real ones -- I think I'd've noticed that first -- but in the artwork and decorations. They weren't gross or scary skulls, but skulls just the same.

The stucco walls and simple furniture make it a comfortable place. A hallway out the back slants out of sight, but if you follow it, you find the Dart Room. An extra room with windows on



Fitzpatrick Street, it has two tables and a dart board. Seems like it could use another table or two, but it would make a cool little private hangout. There is a lighting rig hanging from the ceiling near the middle of the room, making me think that it either once was or soon will be a billiard

room. Maybe both. For now, though, a dart board is a lot cheaper than a pool table.

Agave's beer selection was not especially extensive, but it's a tequila bar, not a beer bar, so whaddyexpect?

Brian and I were happy they had any at all. We drank 'em down with our usual zeal. Jan opted for a more leisurely pace, switched over to pedestrian plastic, and we headed out for the long trek to #113.