

## Bar Hoppin' With Hops

The Keep On Hoppin' Tour  
Hops MacBarley's Ongoing  
Key West Bar Boondoggle

Bar #302:

### Equator Guesthouse

722 Fleming Street  
Saturday, 10/20/18, 2:45 PM

*Myers's Rum & Coke (\$8.50)*

This was one of those esoteric Bar Hops. It's not available every day, or to everyone, so I needed to pick my spot in order to score the Hop. Equator is an upscale all-male guest house that is almost always closed to non-paying-guests. In recent months, though, I had noticed a banner hanging on the upstairs porch that announced a pool party on Saturdays from 12:00 to 4:00. Aha! That would be my "in."



Many weekends came and went between then and now. There was always stuff going on, either in or out of town. But this day was empty and prime. It was also fantastic weather: not a cloud in the sky, temps in the upper 80's. Absolutely perfect for a dip in the bar-side pool.



Carrying my 30-ounce stainless steel Polar Camel tumbler, filled almost to the top with Coke and ice, I stepped to the front door of Equator. I was greeted right away by a man who opened it with a smile.

"Here for the pool party?"

"Yes, I am!"

"Right out that way. Have fun!" He sounded festive enough.

The pool area, though, was far from a party. It's beautiful back there, don't get me wrong, but there was almost no one there, and the music was just ordinary afternoon volume. There are two pools, plus a hot tub. The three-



story building flanks two sides of the pool area, and tall palms tower over everything. Really nice.

The bar is a permanent "room" under a yellow awning in the far-back. There are six backless stools. If you sit on one and face the bar, your back is to the pool.

One man floated in the front pool. His two companions relaxed in loungers. Three men sat under an umbrella at a table between the pools. And one man sat at the bar, with another in a wheelchair near him, and one more sitting motionless in the pool. Most of them seemed like guests. The bar patron was a local that I had seen around town.

So, not much of a pool party. But, what the heck, I was here and Hop-enabled. I had braced myself for frolicking naked men splashing about, but, trust me, the ultra-mellow vibe was jussst fiiiine instead.

I plunked my Polar Camel on the bar and asked the barkeep to pour in a good shot of Myers's Rum, that dark potion from Jamaica that I like so much. It was a good shot indeed. A seven-count at least. Bravo, my good barkeep, bravo. I declined the straw and used my index finger to swish the rum in with the coke. "I always carry a stirrer with me," I joked. What the heck, it's *my* finger and my drink, so who cares. If I stick my finger in *your* drink to stir it, you'll be right to object. But when it's mine and mine, no worries.

I opted for a pool-dip over a bar-sit and sauntered over to the first pool. With drink and phone on the lip of the pool, and undressed down to swim attire, I plunged on in. Mannnnnn, was it nice. It was a small pool, designed for floating around rather than actual





swimming. Water was warm, but very refreshing. It sparkled in the sunshine. Vibrant green palm fronds swayed in the breeze, backed by the azure sky. Equator sure is a nice place. For the moment, at least, life was definitely good.

My phone was in a "life proof" case that I had gotten from Amazon, so I wasn't worried about it getting some water on it as I snapped pics of the trees above. It briefly crossed my mind to try an underwater pic or two, but it was only a \$10 case and I didn't trust it all *that* much.

I stayed for maybe a half-hour, fat-assing in the pool and sipping my

delicious beverage. 'Twas a good Hop, though short. I suspect next Saturday's Pool Party – being on the climactic day of Fantasy Fest -- will have a bit more pizzazz.

And yes, "Myers's Rum" *is* the correct spelling. I know that's been bugging you.