

## 100 Bars in 100 Days

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

### BAR 14:

The Gardens Hotel (Pool Bar)

<http://www.gardenshotel.com>

526 Angela Street

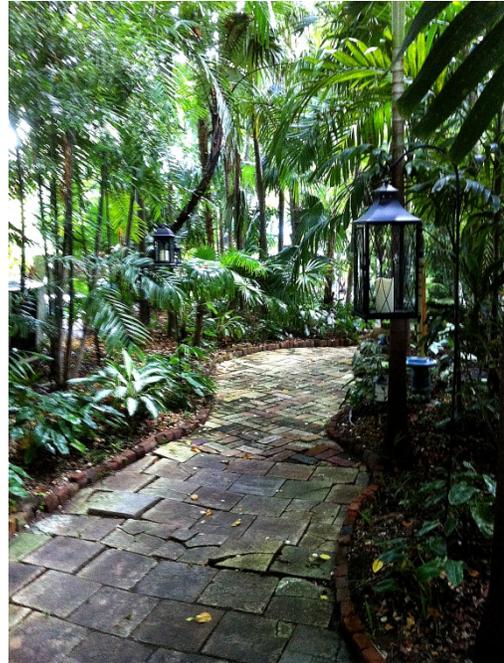
Sunday 7/29, 5:00 pm

Yuengling Lager (can)

Sunday Jazz by the pool. I've never been back here. It is, of course, niice. I didn't actually set foot inside the hotel, but I did roam around the jungle that engulfs their grounds.

First, of course, I had to procure a beer. This is a BAR tour, after all. The bar itself is kinda tucked back behind the porch, so I had a moment of panic as I dealt with the possibility of there *being no bar*. But, then I realized how absurd that would be. Even in a stuffy place like this, people coming to KW still want alky-hol.

And then, yes, there it was, small but ample. Beer choices were limited. The somewhat flamboyant barkeep did a little fussing about as he tried to answer my simple poser: *what kind of beer do you have?* He slid open some cooler lids and peeked in a



few doors, muttering something about, *we're almost ouuuut of beeeeeer...* But when he mentioned Yuengling, I said search no further; that one will do. No draft here and, being a pool deck bar, no bottles, but the barkeep was happy to give me one in the can.

As it turns out, they were almost out of beer because this was to be the last Sunday Jazz session for a while. This weekly event is being shut down till October, and this was the final day. I had no idea, so pretty lucky that I just happened to choose this venue on this day. One of the musicians said there would be a lot of tree work and such done back there, but I suspect that the number of patrons attending would not be great in August

and September anyway. A few establishments around town close up completely for the September scorch.

The band was on Key West time. Sunday afternoon, mid-summer, small crowd, jazz mindset, what's the rush? No stressin' allowed here. I sure wasn't frettin' about it. I had my beer, so life was good. And I got to wander around the red brick pathways that snake through the jungle, taking photos of the bizarre art (bizzart?) that is positioned here and there. Quite a collection it is too.



Well, the band finally got in gear and started playing. Just like at Virgilio's, it was a mutt band, and they proudly admitted so, saying right off the bat that they'd been friends on the music scene in Key West for decades, but rarely got to play together. Their shifts from one to other were a bit awkward, but the music was pretty good. It was melllllowwwwww, though. Like put-an-insomniac-to-sleep melllllowwwww. But that was OK, it seemed to suit the listeners just fine.

I felt like slipping into the pool and floating around to the music, but I had a hunch that the pool was off limits to us non-hotel-guests. I didn't want to ruffle any feathers, so I let that mood go.

It's a good take if you're into mellow times in nice places. I think it will be even better on an afternoon that is not sweltering and breezeless (i.e., in October or later). I'll definitely do it again when they bring it back.