

100 Bars in 100 Days

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

BAR 61:

Maddy's Hot Dogs

www.facebook.com/MaddysKeyWest

722 Duval Street

Saturday 9/15, 11:30 pm

Heineken (can) \$3.25

When the PLIPAT started, #722 was vacant. Over the years, Magnolia's, Quizno's, and a quirky place called Peanut Butter 'n' What? had given it a go in that location, but none could make it stick.

Magnolia's was a good fit; it was popular with the gay folk and the 700 block is gay folk territory. To us Key Westers, that's really no big deal. If you live in K-Dub, then you interact just fine with gay folk every day. You probably have friends who are gay, and there's a good a chance that you work with someone who is gay – whether you know it or not. Not everyone waves a rainbow flag or talks with a lisp, you know.

Quizno's may have looked at that dynamic and said, yeah, we'll be OK here. There was a little sand in that Vaseline, though. While the majority of locals are cool with it all, I've seen many tourists – especially men – screech their Duval Stroll into an abrupt about-face as soon as they catch the vibe from In Touch, Aqua, Bourbon Street or 801. I'm definitely a To Each His Own guy, but I also know that many people don't look at the world that way.



Anyhoo, that had to put a dent in Quizno's hoped-for walk-by bizniz. Pizza Joe's, next door, did not knuckle under when the sub chain

moved in either. Slices remained the late night snack of choice, and both lunch and dinner traffic was too light for the corporate Q to stay. I would've thought that a big corp like that would've done its homework better.

Peanut Butter and What? was actually a pretty cool place. If they could have found a niche five or six blocks down the road, they might have made it. They would have been the perfect impulse buy down on Front Street or Greene Street: grab a quick and quirky PB snack for only three bucks and walk around eating it. People see it, think "man, that would taste good right about now", and go get one for themselves. It would have been viral.

PB&W had the same foot traffic woes at #722, though, but they did not have any corporate backing to keep them afloat. I'll tell ya, though, they were cool people and they had some good stuff cheap. I couldn't believe how good the PB-and-Grilled-Cheese was. Mmmmm, makes me want one now. On quite a few occasions, I enjoyed of those as I neared the end of a night of street sauntering. Or grabbed a quick one on the fly after a good ocean swim. The PB-and-Bacon samich was mighty tasty too. PB is good food, dude. And they only cost \$3.00! Tree bux! I guess you don't make enough rent money at three bucks per sam.



So, now, along comes Maddy's Hot Dogs. Will hot dogs be enough of a draw to support a Duval Street store front? It's fine for the carts on the corners of Caroline and Greene, but they're not paying utilities. How much would you suppose it would cost just to run your A/C for a month in a 1000 sq.ft. place with a wide open front door? That's a lot of wieners.

It's a long and narrow space, with a long counter running down the middle. The owners were smart enough to put up a lot of cool and eclectic pictures, posters, and pieces along the walls to draw people in. They also put up a 60" flat screen and constantly broadcast concert videos over a kickass sound system. All in all, a pretty good take. But hot dogs?? They needed to add another hook.

In the first few days of their existence, I popped in and tried a bow-wow. Ehhhh, nothing special, even though I got it with bacon and mayo. Tasty, but it was boiled; it would've been better grilled. The \$4 price tag didn't kill me, but it seemed kinda high for a fairly thin dog. If the specialty of the house is a doggy, you expect a hefty doggy.

I asked the server woman if she was Maddy. She seemed kinda like the owner type. She laughed and pointed to an older gent seated at the front counter, "No, Maddy was his grandfather's dog."

I did survey the menu while I was there, and noticed burgers and Sloppy Joe on there for only \$5. Wary of the wafer-thin patty, I decided to give them another try sometime; a finner for a booger is a much better deal than a four-spot for a woofie.

Well, "sometime" happened to be at the south end of a six-block walk from Bagatelle. The first thing that caught my eye as I reached the entrance was a modest line of cans spaced equally across the front counter. They had found their hook: beer. They had beer! I could order a beer, and sit at the counter and drink it. That made Maddy's a **bar!!** Welcome to the *Peace, Love, and IPA Tour*, Maddy's! Bonus day, baybee!



So, I had me a seat in the front row, a burger on a fresh bun, and a Heineken in a cold can. Prepositional phrases all. A concert by The Band was playing on the video. Good sound, great picture, and a wooden conquistador next to me. That collar looks ridiculous. But so do neckties.

The burger impressed me. It's no competition to Caroline's or Jack Flats – or any of the other \$10-and-up burger barons – but neither is the price. Maddy's doesn't give you a mound o' fries and they don't give you a 12-ounce slab of beef. But it was an honestly thick burger and it tasted purdy dang good. Me pleased.

A good-enough burger and a quality imported brew, all for \$8.25. That'll bring me back to this *bar*. Next time, though, I'm going for the Sloppy.

