

## 100 Bars in 100 Days

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

### BAR 73:

Smallest Bar

[www.facebook.com/pages/The-Smallest-Bar-in-Key-West/199153750125111](http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Smallest-Bar-in-Key-West/199153750125111)

124 Duval Street

Sunday 9/30, 5:00 pm

Red Stripe (bottle) \$5.00

The "smallest bar" is no idle claim. I was with B & J and BB and Jeff on a Sunday afternoon. We were in high spirits (no, not that high) after a Pats victory and were heading up to the Gecko to gloat and live up to our reputation. I waved our posse to a halt and said, "Gotta get a beer here!"

Every time I've passed by here – and I do mean *every single mother-lovin' time* – I've been on my way somewhere, or already had a full one, or, quite often, the place was just too full, and I just never went in. Not once. That is preposterous. Eleven freakin' years in the Keys and I'd never *once* been in the Smallest Bar. What a fucking loser.

Well, I am *not* a loser, Pauly, I'm a winner now, because today that seal is broken, and a SBIKW beer has been purchased and consumed. Huzzah.

There were already three people in the SB, so there was no room at the bar itself. The place is not much wider than six feet, and runs maybe 12 feet from doorway to bar. I saw somewhere that it was 72 square feet, so that would work.

Many times, I've seen 20 or more people packed in here, with plenty of sidewalk overflow. I remember walking into the Gecko one night after the HH crowd had shuffled onward, and commenting to Ray, "There are twice as many people at the Smallest Bar than in your whole place."



My entourage stayed outside under the awning while I went in and bought a round. Well, half a round. B & J declined this cycle: J is a wine person and B abides by the town's oft-ignored No Open Containers On The Streets Of Key West edict. To each his own.

For myself, I totally thrive on the ability to carry my beverage down (or up) the sidewalk. It's at the point that I hate leaving a bar empty-handed. It's like I'm squandering one of life's great opportunities when I'm not carrying (and drinking from) a cup, can, or bottle.

I can see frowning on the bottle usage. Broken glass on the ground sucks, and having a bottle broken over your head sucks. Just ask Richie, my old Boston buddy who got whammed on the noggin with a wine bottle (cringe) one night. I guess you just don't walk into a dark alley in downtown Boston and try to take a leak behind a dumpster. He's lucky that he lived to regret the decision.

But cans and cups? Go ahead, Fred, bonk me on the skull with your 12-ounce red Solo cup. I can take it and laugh. Cans pack a little more wallop, especially if they're full, but that's a major violation of beer drinker's etiquette anyway. And if you drop 'em they don't shatter and slice through people's feet, severing arches and tearing toe tendons.

So, when I do carry a bottle, it is always in a koozie. Most of the time, it will be one of those zip-up wetsuit style koozies, so even if I do drop it – which is extra unlikely since I loop my pinky through the ring on the end of the zipper – and it does break, all the breakage (except maybe the top of the neck) will stay inside. Theoretically, I could then slurp the beer through the besogged rubber, which would filter out the shards. Theoretically.

Anyway, The Smallest Bar got the smallest visit of the Tour so far. Maybe four minutes. But I got to chat with Josh, the manager/barkeep who has been there for more than 12 years. "That's a long time in such a small space," I commented. He quipped, "About the size of a jail cell."

But with more booze.