

**100 Bars in 100 Days**  
Hops MacBarley's 2012  
Key West Bar Boondoggle  
*"The Peace, Love, and I.P.A. Tour"*

BAR 92:  
**La-Te-Da Hotel**  
1125 Duval Street  
[www.lateda.com](http://www.lateda.com)  
Sunday 10/21, 4:00 pm

*Yuengling (bottle) \$3.75*

In retrospect, I probably should have chosen a different Sunday for this venue. LTD hosts an every-Sunday party known as Tea Dance, and it runs from 4:00 till 7:00. It's "tea time", I reckon, and that's an effective euphemism for Happy Hour.



When Atlantic Shores did the Tea Dance, back before they got demolished, it was an early evening thing, and people actually used to dance out on the big deck. I used to dance in the pool. In the warm months, which are many, I'd often bike to the Shores around starting time, go for a run, come back all sweaty and gross, and refresh myself with a plunge in the big pool. Sometimes others would already be in there too, other times not. Or my entry would open the gates for others to come a-plunging. I always had a stash of dry shorts-n-shirt, so I could join the party refreshed.



The La-Te-Da version, though there is a pool, just doesn't slant that way. It's a classier venue, so the crowd acts accordingly. At least, that's what I'm told. I've popped in a couple of times to see what's what and the place was packed. Every place to sit was taken, and just about every place to stand was occupied as well. DJ Neil had the dance tunes pumping, but there wasn't any space for anyone to dance.

Both times were on days that were beastly hot, and for this event, LTD is primarily an

outdoor place. Roofs (rooves?) cover the bar and the makeshift dance floor area, and big fans crank a breeze through the crowd. Even the indoor bar -- the "parlor", I called it -- had the doors wide open, allowing the coveted air conditioning to just flow on out.

AC costs at some of these places must be astronomical. You look at a place like Lazy Gecko, or Irish Kevin's, or any of those places that keep a wide-open front, and the AC is blowing, blowing, blowing and keeps on blowing right out over the sidewalk. Bad enough to have to cool off a place that cavernous, but your hard-earned money is also cooling off the freeloading passers-by. A casual summertime walk down Duval is a roller coaster of hot-cool-hot-cool as you pass the open doors.

It can be a good hook, though. You're strolling around downtown, getting thirsty from the summer heat anyway, and then you feel this wash of chilled air flow over you. It can be quite compelling. You find yourself saying, *Ahh, let's check his place out for a bit.* And eleven Mojitos later, and \$120 lighter, you stumble back out into the heat, only to have it happen all over again a few blocks later.

But a bar needs a LOT of those episodes to offset the AC wasted. Next time I find myself wondering why beer costs so much....

So, anywayyyyyy, it's mid-afternoon, the day after Goombay, and KW's streets are in siesta mode. It's a big week coming up, and the big inhale is palpable. The first official Fantasy Fest event of 2012 will be happening in a



few hours. I won't be participating - - I have my duty to do for the Southernmost New England Patriots Fan Club at 4:05 -- but I do hope to see the Zombie Bike Ride as they hit Duval later in the evening.

Well, given the circumstances -- Goombay hangover (physical and financial), imminent festive event (that would end up drawing two thousand -- yes, 2000 -- zombies), and the pre-week prudent pause (physical and financial) -- perhaps it shouldn't have been surprising that Tea Dance was so dead. Really, there were not even a half dozen people here. I guess they all figured that TD would be here every other Sunday anyway, so no big whoop to skip it today. Or maybe all the usual Tea Dancers are zombies.

My stay was going to be brief anyway, but now, with no socializing to fret about, it would be a quick look around for neat pics, and a semi-chug of my Gling.

La-Te-Da is quite the nice place. It's a hotel, too. A lot of people don't know that. Hardly anyone in Egypt knows it, for instance. Apart from Tea Dance, La-Te-Da is probably best known for their top-notch female impersonator shows. Randy Roberts and Christopher Peterson headline regularly in the Crystal Room, and will rock your socks. I think the drag shows a few blocks down the road can be fun, but these dudes do their own singing and truly perform.



The Crystal Room wasn't open, so I couldn't get any photos in there, so I snapped a few around the bar and pool and parlor. I told the parlor barkeep about the PLIPA Tour, but he was in leave-me-alone mindset and gave me a polite but disinterested, "Oh ya? Cool." I couldn't blame him; no money to be made off such a non-crowd. Probably a zombie too and was pissed about missing the bike ride.

Well, it was quick duty here; I had to skedaddle down to Island Dogs to catch the Pats-Jets game. Had there been a better crowd, I might have felt bad about doing such a quick stop, but today being today, I don't think I missed much.