

**Bar Hoppin' With Hops**  
The Second Century Tour  
Hops MacBarley's 2013  
Key West Bar Boondoggle

Bar #119:

**Mangia Mangia**

900 Southard Street

[www.mangia-mangia.com](http://www.mangia-mangia.com)

Wednesday, 19 June, 6:30 PM

*Sierra Nevada Pale Ale (bottle)*  
\$5.50

The second stage of the Tour de Southard was only about a four-minute stroll from the first. And it was a fine night for strolling. Even if we didn't know where MM was we could have found it by, literally, following our noses. The restaurant exudes the aroma of garlic throughout the neighborhood. That must drive the neighbors crazy.

My neighbors barbecue a lot. The big grill on their front porch is about twelve feet from my front door. I never get tired of the aroma. (If I had said "smell" instead of "aroma" would it still have seemed positive? Dunno. *What's that smell? What's that aroma?* The former says *uhhh*, the latter says *mmmmm*.)

I've eaten at Mangia Mangia countless times. There aren't really that many, but I've never counted them. Last time was with B&J for Jacko's birthday. He was here too. It would've been pretty odd to celebrate his b-day without him. We were restaurant people that night, sitting at a real table and eating a real meal. Felt so weird. Their food is excellent, though.

But I did notice, that night, that there was a bar-ish arrangement in the back of the main room, tucked deep in the corner. There was no Tour going on at the time, but my ever-bar-wary mind filed it away for the future.

And the future was now. Or then. Which is the past, of course. Funny how "then" can be past or future, but not present. *I saw you then. I'll see ya then!*



Anywaaaay, the Tour de Southard arrived at number 900, just as the peak dinner hour was starting. I led the assault. As soon as we were in the door, a dark-haired woman who looked like a Nancy was extending menus our way, and a thinner blonde woman with a Cathleen-ish appearance was surveying the tables for the best place to plant us.

No, no, no, I politely waved. "We're just going to the bar." That stopped Nancy cold. She continued to press the menus towards me. I continued to move slowly past her, though still offering a friendly face.

She finally said, "Umm, it's not really that kind of bar..."

"No matter. We know the way."

"But it doesn't even have any seats."

Paraphrasing the Tour Rules, I replied affably, "Welllll, if I can order a beer there and then stand there and drink it, it's good enough for us." B&J voiced their assent.

She gave a laugh and said, "OK by me then!" (Was that "then" present tense? Ooooh.)

We strode confidently to the back corner. The bar is mostly a service bar, where the servers come to get the wines and beers for the diners. Nice racks of wine bottles and shelves of glassware covered the wall behind it. The bar itself has a tiled gutter and a polished top, so it would be a fine enough place to hang out with a drink while you wait for your table. It must be damn rare to have people (like us) chilling out back there when a half-dozen tables are available.

Nancy abandoned her front door duties and met us there to be our barkeep. It may have been a defense against whatever subversive motive that we really had, or, more likely, we were just her turn no matter where we sat, and we were going to be an easy-peazy few bucks anyhow, so what the hey.

Up high on the back wall was a row of beer bottles. Brian and I both saw the flavors we craved and ordered them. Jan was in her designated walker role, keeping the Tour de Southard from straying off course. We explained our Purpose In Life to Nancy, and she enthusiastically started to wrack her brains for obscure bars that we could add to the list.

The barkeeps who have been told about the Tour have been quite helpful. They all assume the big, common Duval bars have been done, so they always suggest out-of-the-mainstream places that they have been to. Remember the old adage: Barkeeps know bars. Nancy brought up a few places that I yup-yupped, then said, "How about Coconut Mallory?"

That elicited from me one of my favorite comments: "They have a bar?" She went on to describe the dockside watering hole out there, and I added it to my cranial list of Bars To Be Hopped.

Cathleen came back for a while and got into the discussion, as did a third server. We had half the floor staff huddled around that little no-seat bar. We found plenty of things to laugh about. It was mucho coolo.

We easily could have ordered up another round and hung out for a while longer, but the Tour de Southard was only two-thirds done. We bid a fond farewell to the ladies of MM and set out on our trek to bar 120.

