

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

Bar #148:

Martin's Martini Lounge

917 Duval Street

www.martinskeywest.com

Sunday, 14 July, 7:00 PM,

Kronenbourg (bottle) \$4.50

Why did the Hoppers cross the road?

To get to (the bar on) the other side.

The other day, I saw a T-shirt that I got a chuckle out of. It read:

I envision a world where chickens can cross a road without having their motives questioned.

Utopian.

Anyway, there was barely time to burp between this Hop and the last. Look



at the addresses: 917 and 918. The two front doors just stare at each other all day every day. I wonder if they taunt each other in some weird door language that's too much of a medium frequency for humans to hear? Yeah, I do wonder fuktup stuff sometimes, thanks for noticing. It's fun. Keeps me from dwelling on that Reality bushwa.

So, we crossed Duval and --



whaddayaknow! -- B&J knew the hostess at Martin's. Small world? No, just small town (city, island, whatever).

Think about any other place you've ever lived. How wide an area would you have to go, and through how many diverse urban neighborhoods, towns, suburbs, or even counties, to go to 157 bars? If you knew someone who worked at #21, how unlikely would it be to bump into that same person working at #121? In K-Dub, it's almost expected.

This was fortuitous, indeed, though, because there had been a ripple of apprehension in our intrepid foursome about the nature of the Martini Lounge and the potential umbrage towards our ilk. For my part, I'm figuring, as usual, that my lower-middle class money is every bit as good as the upper class's -- I just have less of it.



Still, we suspected the average Martin's lounge was a little less shabby than we were. We weren't all that bad -- especially Jan, who, as usual, elevated our Social Decency Quotient -- but between some torn off sleeves, unwashed athletic shorts, and the general aura of having been drinking free beer for most of the afternoon, we were manifesting some shab.

Having Karen, the hostess, be our point of first impression took that onus off us. And without putting the offus on us. Even better. Her first-level recognition and approval of our presence signaled to the staff that the Hoppers were A-OK and lord help the faint of heart.

It didn't hurt that we were just about the only ones there, so there would not be many people who could harrumph us anyway.

Martin's has a nice indoor dining room, but they also have several outdoor tables in the lounge area, which is open and partially roofed. We made the big move to the loungiest area of the lounge -- the only loungy area, I thought -- where a long couch and a few big, boxy, cushioned chairs sit around a low table, with a huge, green, leafy mural as a backdrop. I took the couch and immediately sprrrrreadddd out. Ahhhhhhh. This Hopping shit

is tiring stuff.

The beer prices were MUCH better than at the Bistro across the street. My Kronie -- the beer of Danish kings -- was less than five bucks! Jan, killing two vices with one glass, got a Chocolatini. That thing was sinful. She let us take a sip -- a small one -- and then lost herself in the indulgence for a good while.



There was a sheer curtain to my right, behind which was a dining table with a family of six. They had that not-locals look about them. The 11-year-old boy had a Patriots cap on, so we gave them all tacit approval. At one point, though, they rose from the table to line up and pose for a group photo. Some elder unit must have told the boy to doff his cap, and he grudgingly complied while the shutter clickety-clicked.



As they were sitting back down, Jan called over amiably to the group, "You didn't have to hide the Patriots hat, you know!" Some friendly exchange ensued and we even offered them some advice on seafood restaurants in town. Wendy's, for instance, has a better fish sandwich than McDonald's. That's about as relevant as I would have been in the conversation, so I kept to myself.

Brian, Bog Dog, and I had a second round of beer while Jan made love with the rest of her Chocolatini. We were damn comfortable in that lounge. Probably me, most of all, and I was fine with that.

This had been quite the afternoon of hopping -- nearly five hours and

double-figure beers -- so it was time to chill it down and pull the wagon into the corral for the night, right?

Ha ha, wrong, you wuss. Hop on, we would!