

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

Bar #176:

Tuti-Fruti Juice Bar

828 Duval Street

www.facebook.com/pages/Tutti-Frutti

Saturday, 10 August, 5:39 PM

Yuengling (bottle -> cup) \$3.00

This one was bound to happen sometime, so it might as well be today. Beautiful summer afternoon, long and empty sidewalk ahead of me, it just made sense to have a cup o' beer to carry. Man, I do love that about Key West.



I had already trekked a couple of blocks north from Lush -- all *uphill* -- so you know I was thirsty. Tuti-Fruti Juice Bar made itself available, so I jumped into the Hop.

This place has been here for a long time. Twenty years ago, when I spent the winter living in my van, and spent my days working in a t-shirt shop on the 100 block, I had a co-worker named Iwona who did some second-job duty here with her sweetheart Mya.

Iwona cracked me up. What a character. About 27, and only a year removed from Poland, she was a total kick. One day, as we were wasting time standing in the front door watching Duval Street walk by, she said to me with a sigh, "Kee Vest is zo conserrrrratif."

I looked at the pedestrians, with the smattering of tie-dyes, stoners, aging hippies, and people who clearly didn't give a smack about propriety and such, and said, "where the hell did you live before you moved here?"

"Greenwich Village."

"OK. That's about the only answer you could have given."

There was a stretch when the local radio station played *What's Up?* by Four Non-Blondes at 2:30 PM for about eight days a row. We got so we knew

when it was coming and climbed up on top of the shirt-pressing counter, overlooking the whole store, and did a charged up lip-synch performance. We were quite the show. Richard, the British manager, was initially displeased, but when it became obvious that our antics were bringing passers-by into the store, he let us loose. Iwona got crazier every day, and I had to follow suit. (Or was it the other way around? Ha.).

Then there came the day when the radio station changed their afternoon playlist and we were left stranded on the table with no Non-Blondes. It was the end of an era. Eight days can be an era, yes. Fukkin-A right it can.

So, yeah, Iwona. Where are you now, baby? She'd probably freak if she knew I was back in KW.



So, yeah, yeah, Tuti-Fruti Juice Bar, or TFJB as those in the know call it. According to Facebook, nobody likes this place. That is so sad. Maybe because nobody spells Tutti-Frutti with single T's. Maybe. Ya think? Actually, I think lots of people like TFJB. Twenty-years-plus ain't gonna happen without lotsa love.

What people mostly love here are the blended fresh fruit smoothies. TFJB may well have invented this concept. Bananas, pineapples, oranges, and apples were on display all over the front and back counters, all just waiting and praying to be mixed with *rummmmm*.

Wouldn't that be the best chosen fate for a piece of fruit? Say you're a banana. Look at your options once the tree kicks you out. You could fall and rot on the ground, and be overrun by ugly insects; or you could get chomped, still ripe, and enjoyed by an animal or human, which would fulfill your purpose; OR you could get tumbled playfully into a blender with a few other fruity bastards, get drowned in delicious rum, whipped into a purée until you are one with the booze, and then served as a total delight to some eager drinker. What a way to go out. They gotta **love** that.

Also prominently displayed on TFJB's front counter was a row of bottled beers. *Yummmmm, beeeer*. The selection wasn't huge. It didn't need to be; I only needed one. There were ten bottles: a few imports, a few of the usual lame American macrobrews, and Yuengling.

The barkeep/server/blendmaster was a fine looking blonde woman who looked to be about 27. She had a strong Eastern European accent, which only reminded me more of Iwona. We had a short exchange of pleasantries during the transaction, then, as she poured my Gling into the standard 14-ounce translucent plastic cup, her voice took on a dark and sinister tone and she warned, "Stay out of trouble."



It could have seemed ominous, but it was pretty much my plan for the rest of the afternoon anyway: grab a couple of beers and stay out of trouble. You don't usually state the second part of that in your plan description, but it's in there, deep and fundamental. You can't even call it implicit, because that would imply that you were implying it, maybe impishly, when there actually were no such impish implications.

Still, there was something a bit oraclish about her admonition, so I made a mental note to avoid trouble. It was an explicit part of the plan now.

I goodbye-tipped my cup at Lady Oracle and resumed my northwesterly walk up Duval. Less than a block away, I encountered Tony. I greeted him with a big, "Whaaaat's uppp?"

He shook my hand and said, "Hey, big guy! Stayin' out of trouble?"