

Bar Hoppin' With Hops

The Keep On Hoppin' Tour
Hops MacBarley's Ongoing
Key West Bar Boondoggle

Bar 235:

Bistro Sole

1019 White Street

www.bistrosole.com

Saturday, December 20, 2014, 6:15 PM

Magic Hat #9 (draught) \$3.00 HH

This one was actually supposed to be hopped late in *The Second Century Tour*. It opened while that Tour was in full gear, but either this or that kept getting in the way. Mostly that. Then, as I was zooming in on it, the place closed up for the season. Large signs proclaimed, "GONE FISHING. SEE YOU IN NOVEMBER." Or something like that.



It seemed like a bold move for a restaurant that had only recently (as in, just a few months ago) opened its doors. It did some make sense, biznizz-wise, with September and October being such duds around these parts, but it had to be tough on the staff. *I have a job, wait, no I don't.* Bistro Sole is a child of Cafe Sole (Hop #118), a long-time staple of the Old Town dining scene, so they had the backing to survive a two-month-long break. A 60-day vacation sounds like a sweet deal, but most waitstaff that I know might kinda miss eight-plus weeks of income.



Anyway, I'm sure everyone knew the deal when they signed on. Bistro Sole did reopen and it has done well. Word in the street was that the Happy Hour was 4:30-6:30, with half-price drinks and select \$5 foods. Sounded like a good take, so when the *Keep On Hoppin' Tour* was launched, this was a

natural. Still, it took almost three dozen Hops before I got here. Ahh, such is the depth and breadth of the Cayo Hueso bar landscape.

So. Yeah. The layout is the same as the previous permutation here -- Vito's Piazza (Hop #40) -- though **much** more refined. And, with it being just a few days before the Generic Winter Gift-Giving Holiday, small white lights abounded throughout the patio and bar. Everything had that candlelight glow, even the mason jars on the stainless steel bar, which were, in fact, candles.



My barkeep was dressed in dark clothes and blended in with everything. It was like he was camouflaged. Kinda funny. Ha. I ordered my discount #9-er and he filled me in on the bargain victuals. When he said "Prime Rib Sliders, five bucks," I halted him.



I want that.

For a finner, you can have it.

Sweet, do it.

Done.

Frank Sinatra was crooning out *Let It Snow* with a horn section backing him up. Big Band Era Christmas tunes on the sound system. They were Christmas tunes back then. It was OK to call it Christmas then. Now, people are *offfffennnded*. Look, December 25th is called Christmas. It's a Christian/Catholic occasion that all are invited to participate in. Yeah, it's been commercialized to Mars, but its origins are linked to a religious thing. Now, if you are in a different religion, so what? If *you wish me* a happy Channukah, or a coolo Kwanza, or a merry Milketoast Monday, or whatever, I'm going to say *yes yes yes thank you thank you* and embrace that newfound happiness, coolness, and/or merriment. Bonus joy! Given freely! Such a deal. I'm not going to piss and moan and be *offffennnded* because you worship a different fictional deity than I do. When someone wishes you merriment, lighten up and take it!

And if you don't want to acknowledge the occasion, then, you know what, **go to work that day!** Refuse all gifts! Be a grump! None of us will give a crap. You can celebrate your own feasts and we'll carry on. No big whoop. Sometimes I think that organized religion is the worst thing that mankind ever devised. Killing in the name of God. As if anyone on this planet -- especially a military or political leader -- has the right and foolish audacity to proclaim what God wants. Yeesh.



BUT I digress.

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow. Ha. Seventy-freaking-seven degrees tonight. No snow here, Frankie.

Bistro had those propane fire towers here and there across the yard, but they need not be ignited on this balmy evening. Those things can kick off some dang

good heat, and on a chilly night you get that Sittin' By The Fire feel. 77. Ha. Love it.

My sliders were dammmmn goood. I gobbled them like they were the antidote. They tasted even better for five bucks. Yum.