

Key West 5/1/22-5/5/7/22 ~ Our Little Treehouse in Paradise

Sunday, 5/1/22-We picked up Rob & Donna Reiley at 9am for the start of our drive down to Key West. It has been several years since we used our time share and we are really excited to go! We had an easy ride across the Everglades and down to the Keys.



We stopped at **Sharkey's** for some lunch. There were some fishermen on the dock cleaning their huge catch. At Sharkey's we had excellent grouper sandwiches and chorizo steaks. We finally arrived at **The Banyan** at 4pm, checked in, got our parking space #26 and went



up to "our little treehouse in paradise". The condo looks great. After unpacking, we all had a cold beer on the deck. There was a wedding in the courtyard of the Oldest House which we enjoyed. We began our first walk-about of Old Town to check out the many changes. Sad to see that there are so many empty storefronts along Duval Street. We walked down the alley to Smokin Tuna and were surprised at how busy they were. They have really expanded both in the back room and they added seating from the street at one of the bars. The big dance area is now covered with tarps so that it is usable during rain.



Next, we walked over to **El Mason de Pepe** and had delicious Mojitos with lots of rum. We strolled with our drinks to Mallory Square and over to Sunset Pier where Cindy managed to get us a space to watch the sunset. There was every type of boat imaginable going out for the sunset. There was a great band, **Robert Albert Band**, playing until 9pm. The base guitar player was fantastic on his 12-string base. We went to Two Friends for some dinner and were surprised by the great music of Shanty Hounds, a husband-and-wife duo who chatted with us during their set. This week there will be lots of great music because it is the Songwriter's Festival. We got back to our condo around 11:30pm. It has been a great first day!



Monday, 5/2/22- We enjoyed a beautiful morning on the deck. After a light breakfast with **Bloody Marys**, we walked down to catch the Conch Train. We enjoyed a great tour with Kenny as our driver. We learned a few new facts and because Kenny was a lifetime resident of Key West, we actually believed some of them! There are 21 bars on Duval Street, which is also known as the longest street in the world as it goes from one ocean to another ocean. The Southernmost Guest House, where we stayed one year during Fantast Fest, was moved across the street because the owner, Mr. Gato, didn't like how the sun came into the house on the other side of the street.



After our Conch Train tour, we walked down to **Schooner Wharf Bar** where **Raven** was playing. Eddie and I really love her music as it is very eclectic and raw. We had lunch and listened to Raven

for a while. The hot sun was giving me a food coma, so we came back to the condo for a little rest. Our next stop was **Virgilio's** for Martini Monday's. Our bartender Alex was excellent! There is an extensive list of fabulous martinis, all made with top shelf liquors, and on Monday they are all \$7 each! We had 2 each and they were delicious.



Our original plan was to go back to the condo and cook a pizza for dinner. On our walk back we decided to stop off for a few drinks. We went to **Smokin Tuna** again and had a few beers and enjoyed the music of **Glass Cats**-a great funky bluesy band. As we were walking back on Caroline Street, we



stopped at **Hanks Hair of the Dog**, where they had an amazing performer, **Nick Burnell**. He was doing a really nasty song...a sing-a-long with lyrics about "eating pussy, kicking ass". Of course, we had to go in, get a beer, and listen. This guy was a one-man band. He did a lot of country songs and when he did a number by Fleetwood Mac it sounded like the whole band was there. Most of the songs he did with a cigarette in his mouth! The place was absolutely packed. We arrived back at the condo around 11pm. NO pizzas tonight!



Tuesday, 5/3/22-After breakfast on the deck we walked through Truman Annex and out to the new **Truman Waterfront Park**. What a great

job they have done! What was once an ugly, empty lot is now a beautiful park with playgrounds for the kids and lots of trees and shade. There is a new building, **Florida Eco Discovery Center**, but it was closed. We walked a little further and came upon the **Coffee Butler Amphitheatre**, which looks like an amazing venue for big concerts. Next time, we must try and see a concert here.



We walked down to **Green Parrot** for some breakfast beers. Donna walked back to the condo for a little rest while Eddie, Cindy, and Rob went over to **Rams Head Southernmost** for a great lunch of appetizers and beers. Dewey was our waiter. Fully sated, we walked back to the condo to rest up a bit before tonight.

At 5:30pm, we walked back to **Green Parrot** for a soundcheck concert of the **“Beatle Band”**. It was packed and very loud, so we got some “belongers” seats across the street from the Parrot and enjoyed the concert there. There was a cool breeze and the music sounded just right.



After a while, we did our big walk down to **Seaside Café at Southernmost Mansion** where we enjoyed a table on the patio right on the water. This is a new place, actually a food truck does the cooking, and the food was delicious! We had Lobster salad honey biscuits and Lobster pizza. Yum!! On the

way home, we stopped at Flamingo Crossing for some of the best ice cream in the world. We stopped in at Wyland Gallery to see the art and chat. Neither Wyland nor Stephen Muldoon were there, but it was a nice stop anyway. We enjoyed a leisurely stroll back to the condo for a glass of wine. We did over 15,000 steps today and knees are swollen!



Wednesday, 5/4/22- After a leisurely breakfast of coffee and brownies on the deck, we did another morning walk all along the waterfront. We went all the way down to the seaport area, then back to the condo where we had pizzas and beer for lunch, then siesta and pool time. We walked back down to **Conch Republic Seafood Company**

to hear the **Songwriters Concert**. The area was very crowded, but just as we walked up to the restaurant, we lucked into the best seats for people watching along the dock. The huge crowds of people were all waiting to go onto their various boats for sunset cruises. We enjoyed 4 strong drinks each plus some food and enjoyed the spectacle of seeing all of these boats come back and dislodge their passengers. There must have been 1,000 people on all of these boats. It was amazing to watch these big boats maneuver in the small bay. While there, we met Bill Meaghan who owns Lakeside Creamery in Deep Creek Lake, MD. Rob & Donna know this



place. On the way back home, Donna wanted to try some street food, so she got something at the **Bull**. After a while we walked back to the condo for wine and chocolate.



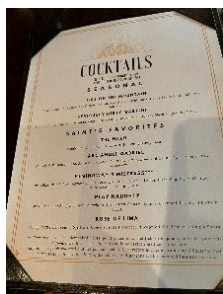
Thursday, 5/5/22- Today is Cinco de Mayo, so we must celebrate! After coffee and biscotti on the deck we did another morning walk through the neighborhood streets. We stopped into the beautiful **St. Paul's Episcopal Church** on Duval where we admired the gorgeous stained-glass windows. We walked through the "dead center of town", the **Key West Cemetery**. It was pretty hot here as there is not much shade, so we headed back towards our condo after a stop at Fausto's for supplies. We enjoyed Bloody Mary's, guacamole and chips, and salsa music on the deck. Rob is our own personal bartender...life is good!



Since it is Cinco de Mayo, we went to the **Old Town Mexican Café** for \$5 Margaritas and Queso Fundido. Maria was our lovely waitress from Venezuela. After 2 rounds of drinks, she gave us each a huge shot of Tequila, on the house! Next stop was **Rams Head Southernmost Restaurant** where we were greeted by Mariosa from Argentina and our handsome waiter Mark from Florida. We enjoyed beers and crab tater tots.



We were all pretty well served by now, so we came back to the condo and cooked lasagna for dinner which we enjoyed with a couple bottles of wine.



Friday, 5/6/22-This morning Eddie and Cindy went shopping at Kinos and for a cat sitter gift for Kim, who is taking care of Tonya for us. Rob & Donna went for a walk. Then it was back to the condo for pool time and siesta. We got cleaned up and went to the **Saint House** for their Happy Hour- "**4:17pm-7:14pm**". This is a cute boutique hotel on Eaton Street and it looks small but is actually a huge place that goes all the way up to Duval Street for its upstairs bar. The hostess took us up to the Roof Top Bar which overlooked Duval Street, but it was very hot and extremely loud with the musician playing, so we went back down to their inside bar, which was very elegant and featured fun cocktails with interesting names. This was a fun place, but pretty expensive even at happy hour.



As we were walking along Duval Street, we stopped at **WineO Bar** for \$5 happy hour wines. This is a very elegant looking bar in the LaConcha Hotel. After our wines, we did the big walk up to **El Siboney Restaurant** for delicious, authentic and very filling



Cuban food. On the way home, we stopped back in CVS for Eddie to buy Cindy a cute kitty magazine holder like we bought for Kim. This will be my Mother's Day gift from Tonya.

There are still a few bars we missed, but we were all too full and too tired to do more, so we will save them for next year. Also, next year we will definitely book a trip to the Dry Tortugas ahead of time.

Saturday, 5/7/22-This morning we packed up and drove back to Marco. We stopped for lunch at the excellent Mexican restaurant in Homestead. Then home to Marco. It was a great little trip to our Treehouse in Paradise.

Created by *Cindy Crane*

May 2022