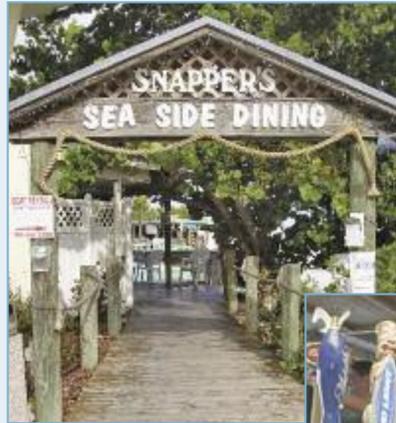
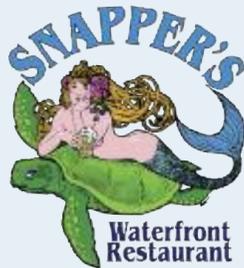


Restaurant of the Month Snapper's

Story by Rachel R. Peine



Snapper's has recently added a new delight to their Sunday Jazz Brunch - the "Build Your Own" Bloody Mary Bar. Now, we all know the pleasures of a salad bar - "Hmm, I'll have two slices of cucumber, a scoop of potato salad, I'll skip that nasty applesauce, and I can squeeze a dollop of cole slaw over here on the edge of the plate." It's the enjoyment of picking and choosing your favorite items in precisely perfect proportions.



Well, as a veteran Bloody Mary maker and consumer, I've never seen options like those on Snapper's Sunday spread. Frank the bartender hands you a large glass with your chosen spirits and a skewered shrimp. You then turn around to ponder a smorgasbord of choices: Four types of juice, including Clamato. At least a dozen scary sauces from

Worcestershire to Cholula. Shakers and little dishes of spices. Capers, pearl onions, fresh sliced veggies and peppers, plus those long skinny pickled dilly beans. Olives stuffed with garlic or blue cheese or pimento or garlic and anchovy. I was in Bloody Mary heaven. Just thinking about the potential combinations made my mouth water.

Enthusiasts enjoying their "garden in a glass" (Karen's description) at the outside bar included Margot, who chose the house Bloody Mary mix, "Whiskey Willie's", with peppers, tomatoes, cukes, a cheese-stuffed olive, horseradish and a dilly bean. Ron and Donna told me they walked in and said, "Oh my God, what do I do with all of this? Can I have a

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Key West Honors Captain Tony

Story and photos by CC Hemingway

At 92 years of age, the Legendary Captain Tony has done a whole lot of living and seen a whole lot of life - from running the streets of New Jersey to presiding over The Last Resort as the Honorary Mayor of Key West; and he's still got a whole lot of living to do! At Capt. Tony's birthday party this year, he was honored by the City of Key West with a plaque designating him Mayor Emeritus of Key West and proclaiming that August 10 will forever more be celebrated officially as Captain Tony Day.

Anthony Tarracino was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, about 20 miles from Brooklyn, NY on August 10, 1916, when the average male life expectancy was 53 years old. He grew up in the era of prohibition; speakeasies, flappers, gangsters and crime. In 1920, the Volsted Act had made alcohol illegal and it ushered in the Roaring Twenties. Dutch Schultz was running the show in New York, and Al Capone was the man in Chicago.

Tony was 8 years old in 1920 when the first American radio broadcasting station was started by Westinghouse. He was ten when gasoline was



invented in the US in 1922 and insulin was discovered. When Tony was 12, frozen food was invented by Birdseye, and when he turned 13, circuit breakers were invented and the Charleston was all the rage.



In 1927, when Tony was 15 years old, Charles Lindbergh flew an airplane non-stop from New York to Paris, television was invented, and the first talking picture shows were released by Warner

Brothers. At age 17, Tony witnessed Black Tuesday, the day the stock market crashed and the beginning of the Great Depression. During the Recession he was just 25 years old; and World War II began just a few days after his 27th birthday.

Tony Tarracino was always a gambler, and in 1948, when he was 32, he'd devised a scheme to beat the bookies. After the

word got around, he was beaten and left for dead in a dump in Newark, NJ. He woke up two days later and left town to elude the "mob," driving South in a pink Cadillac with a girl from New Jersey. They stopped at Hialeah's Tropical Park long enough for Tony to gamble away all his money; then he sent the girl home with the Caddy and hitched a ride to Key West on a milk truck with twelve dollars in his pocket.

When Tony first got to Key West, he was heading shrimp at the old Seaport where the Schooner Wharf Bar now stands. He worked for a while as a shrimper, and later signed on as a mate on the party boat, The Greyhound. Ultimately, he bought The Greyhound and Captain Tony, charter boat captain emerged in Key West lore for all time. During those years, Capt. Tony was a gun runner for Cuban mercenaries during the Bay of Pigs, and he got involved in the Haitian invasion in the mid sixties and saved the US government a lot of embarrassment. In the early fifties, Captain Tony worked as the diving stand-in for Robert Wagner in a movie titled Beneath the Twelve Mile Reef. In 1958 he purchased the bar at 428 Greene Street that had started life as Sloppy Joe's, and re-named it Captain Tony's Saloon. In 1980, Stuart Whitman portrayed the already legendary Captain Tony in a movie about his exploits titled Cuba Crossing.

Captain Tony has fathered thirteen children with three wives, the youngest born in 1987 when Tony was 71 years old. He met his wife Marty back in the seventies when she was tending bar at his saloon. She's quite a bit younger than Tony; he calls her his "hippie wife."

Tony Tarracino has run for Mayor of Key West five times, and was finally elected to the position officially in 1989; he says it was the best two years

of his life, but he's always been the Honorary Mayor in everyone's hearts and minds. Jimmy Buffett says as much in his song, The Last Mango in Paris, written in Capt. Tony's Saloon as a tribute to Capt. Tony. Buffett actually ran one of Tony's mayoral campaigns.

"Jimmy Buffett was one of those kids that was always hanging around," said Tony. "I gave him \$10 and three Budweisers to play, but I didn't hear him because I was hitting on a blonde by the door."

I was standing in the doorway of the famed Captain Tony's Saloon last week waiting my turn for an audience when I was suddenly pelted by a coin. When I looked up, an attractive young woman apologized, claiming she was trying to pitch it into the mouth of that big Jewfish hanging over the sign above the door.

When I walked into the street to watch her next attempt, she smiled and said "I was here last year and Captain Tony autographed my stomach. He wrote 'Capt. Tony was here' with an arrow pointing down." She and her husband laughed as she indicated her bikini line. I smiled and told her that Tony was inside and that if she asked him, he'd probably do it again. I'd just left him with his arms wrapped around another lovely young female asking "Are these real?" Her significant other was quick to reassure Capt. Tony that they were indeed real. "Go ahead, check 'em out," I heard him saying as I walked away.

I had also come to Key West last year to see Capt. Tony and I'd been a little concerned about his health ever since. In all the years I've known Tony, it was the first time he didn't quite seem himself. I'm happy to report that after his recent surgery at Mount Sinai Hospital in Miami, Capt. Tony is doing very

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