

The Burger in Cuba Issue

# COCONUT TELEGRAPH

VOLUME 14 NO.1

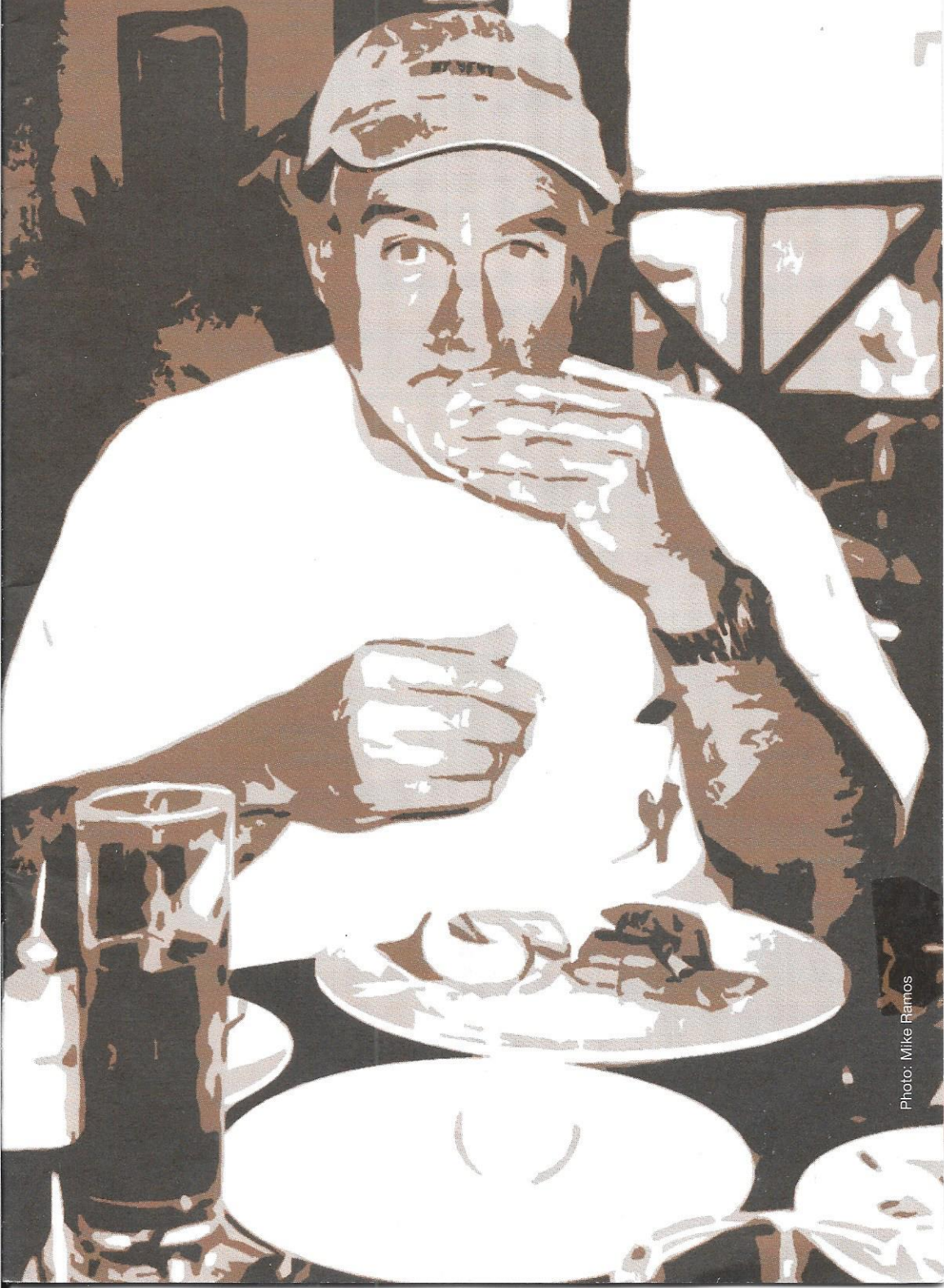
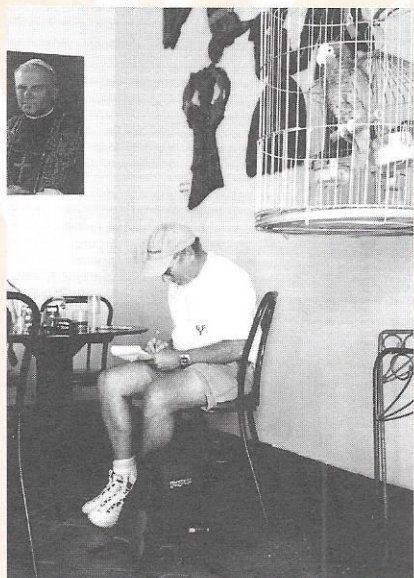


Photo: Mike Ramos





Hello Parrot Heads and Papists.  
Welcome aboard. The following are my rough notes of our trip to Cuba to see the Pope which I'll be sending back to Marty all during the trip. I'll see You in C-U-B-A

10:00PM

Departed Key West for Habana  
I don't know if it is El Nino or Pope John Paul's doing, but we have an amazing night to cross the Gulfstream. Though the visitor to the tropics might not think of it as such, this is still winter weather which in

terms of making this 90-mile voyage could be a lot more adventurous if the wind from a descending cold front were howling around our heads, but tonight that is not the case. The stars are out and we are following the blinking lights of the Key West ship channel south. If you are going to Cuba, Key West is not a bad port of embarkation. We are following the route that has connected these two cities for nearly two centuries. I myself have made the voyage only once before about fifteen years ago when I flim flammed my way onto a documentary film crew, covering the return of Ernest Hemingway's son, Bumbie, to Cuba, as a musical advisor. But my connection to Cuba goes back a long way before that. My grandfather was a sailing ship captain and his favorite Caribbean port was Habana, so I have heard about it all my life. My father celebrated his first birthday in Habana harbour in 1921, and as was fitting the first son of the skipper, Captain Buffett hung out all of his signal flags. Soon all the ships in the harbour followed suit. If there is one thing more I could wish for on this night out on the sea, it would be for my dad to be along on this voyage, but he sits in Alabama, almost an angel stricken down by Alzhiemer's.



Going to Cuba is not like going to the Bahamas. There is a long history of mis-guided animosity and political fuck ups that have spawned paranoia on both sides of the Gulfstream. In Cuba you're more likely to see a gunboat on the horizon than a cruise ship, and though I have done it before, it still leaves you with a little sense of anxiety when you enter Cuban waters. However, the bark is much worse than the bite.



10:45PM

Cleared the sea bouy at the end of Key West harbour and picked up a 208 degree course for Marina Hemingway.

4:30AM

Got up to look around. The wind is out of the east and we are riding kind of a quartering swell, but it's not that bad. Stars above are

glistening and truly look like holes in the floor of heaven.

6:00AM

Picked up a blip on the radar, probably a gunboat.

7:45AM

Beautiful sunrise, following sea and reflection off the buildings of



downtown Habana are visible. Our gunboat turned out to be a fishing trawler. We are 17 miles from Cuba. The last time I was out here, I was singing "Havana Daydreamin'" on the foredeck of the old Western Union Schooner. The documentary never did get made and I have tried to find copies of the footage with no success. This morning I am not singing. I am brushing up on my Spanish.

8:15AM

Finally made contact Marina Hemingway and we are cleared in. There is a gunboat off our port bow about 2 mi., but he is not heading our way.

10:00AM

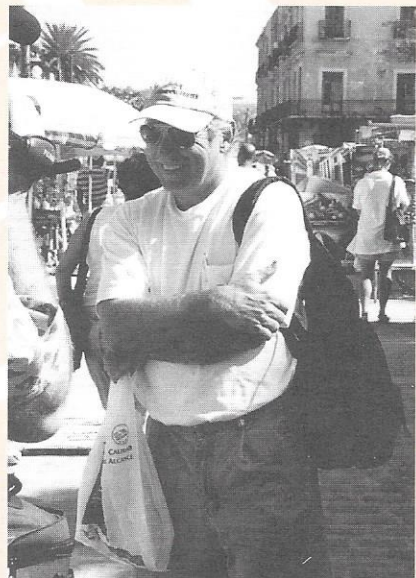
We are along the dock in the marina with about a dozen government officials waiting to greet us. The doctor does our immigration forms; don't ask me why, and we wait to see who else comes on board.

12:00PM

After two hours of a complete search of the boat, which I haven't seen in years, we are alongside the dock. After tearing the boat apart, all the custom officials apologized and said that it was not usually this way, but because of the Pope's visit they had tightened security.

12:30PM

We hook up with Patrick, our liaison who has a whole day of activity planned for us. We decide to go and see the Pope enter the city. More about this tomorrow.





### *Wednesday afternoon Habana, Cuba*

Cuba is a big chameleon. Like the lizards that are everywhere you step on this island, Cuba has many shades. Yeah, there's socialism and politics and the embargo and cigars and Santeria and baseball and mojitos and sugar cane, and if you stay long enough, you can certainly find someone to talk to about one or all of these subjects, because talking is something Cubans love to do. The main drag to town from the Hemingway Marina where our boat is docked is called 5th Avenue, and it is on 5th Avenue that you see this chameleon country's most visible coats of camouflage in the antiquated automobiles that traverse the street and the amazing colonial architecture that sits in the shadows under a canopy of tropical shade trees. The cars are relics of the fifties. We, in fact, are cruising in a 1957 Chevy coupe, held together for the last forty years with bailing wire and duct tape. The engine is a diesel from Czechoslovakia and the smell of diesel fumes permeates the interior. Our driver, Ernesto, speaks no English but Patrick interprets and tells us what we need to know. He is supposed to be in school at Duke, but is playing hooky and working for me this week as a guide and interpreter. I am sure at some point before I leave here, an excuse note will be necessary.

As we head to town, I am a bit perplexed by the stories I have heard about the embargo and it's effects on the Cuban people. I am seeing a different picture than I imagined. I remember sometime back there was a story about Fidel buying a jillion

bikes from China and calling the faithful to task. Fuel was scarce and it was time for a little more sacrifice for the revolution, and it was the duty of the people to ride bikes. In perspective, it was probably a lot better than being shipped off to Angola to fight in the jungle, and the roads are now filled with bikes. I expected to see all the cars just sitting by the side of the road, but that is not what I see. Granted, it doesn't look like 5th Avenue on the island of Manhattan, but the gas stations are open, there are no lines and there are lots of cars on the road. About every two or three minutes, another relic from the past rolls by and causes my lower jaw to drop open in awe and I grab my video camera to capture the image. Desotos with shark fins, even a few Edsels and class old Buick Centuries whiz by. They might be missing, and belching smoke, but they are hanging on. It is a true tribute to Body by Fisher in Detroit and the Cuban mechanics.

On my first trip here fifteen years ago, I had a vivid memory of all these amazing structures along 5th just sitting vacant and boarded up as if they were being punished by the revolutionaries and stripped of their splendor. Their presence clearly speaks of a time of have-and-have-nots on this island, which was what the revolution was all about. They seemed to stand there as a reminder of the evils and excesses of rampant capitalism. That is what I expected to see again, but it seems that now many of these beautiful old buildings had been rescued from purgatory. There seems to be life,



# AUTOMOBILES AN



rather than existence in the neighborhoods now.

Of course this is not a normal day in Habana. Fidel gave everybody the day off work, with pay, to welcome the Pope to Habana and the preparations are very visible. Juan Pablo, as he is called down here, is hanging from buildings and plastered on signs all along the main route to town and the rear ends of the bicycle taxis that are everywhere. We move through the Miramar, it is a tarnished version of Coral Gables and A1A in Palm Beach. A lot of "tear downs" and a lot of "fixer uppers", and cops everywhere. Boy are they young.

We pass through the 5th Avenue tunnel and are on the Malecon. This is the main drag of Habana. I love the fact that long ago someone decided to put the street next to the ocean, not the buildings. It reminds me a lot of Lakeshore Drive in Chicago. The Malecon runs for 4 miles from the tunnel to the heart of the city. As we are moving along in our Chevy I see a huge grouper come flying over the seawall and land flapping on the sidewalk. A young diver quickly follows, grabs his catch of the day, ties it quickly to his bicycle and rides off with the fish still flapping. My stomach starts to growl. The crowds are starting to gather in small groups along the road in anticipation of the Pope's motorcade. There is not much to do in Habana for local Cubans. I'm used to seeing hanging out in small doses in Key West, and in Miami, but the heart of the Cuban hang is the Malecon.

We burn a little time before we have to get to the parade route and wind through downtown. There

are an unbelievable number of old buildings that speak of days gone by with their beauty. The Hotel Nacional, designed by Stanford White, sits atop La Rambla facing north out over the Gulfstream and takes me back to the twenties. Meyer Lansky's Riviera and the old Havana Hilton conjure up visions of the mob in the fifties, and ahead the heights of Morro Castle takes me back to the days of galleons and gold, when Habana was the Oz on the Indies. It's all still here, and going nowhere fast.

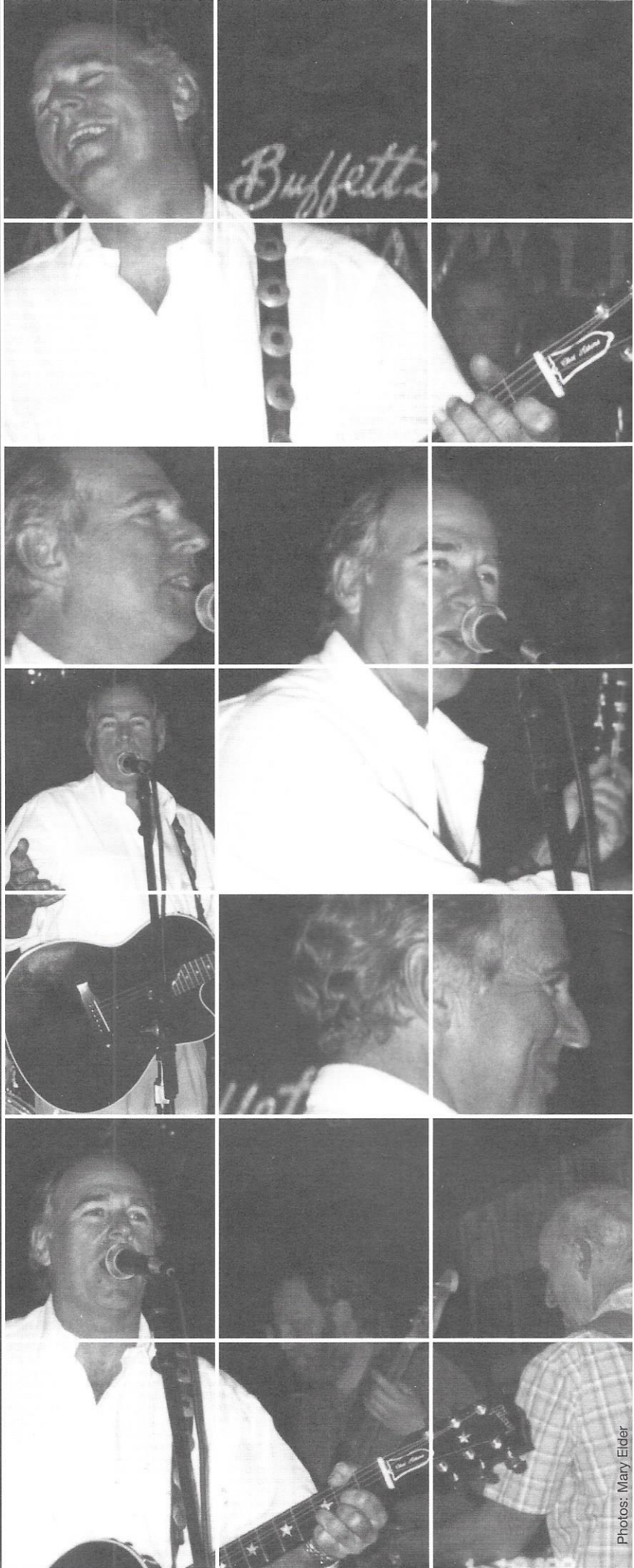
From there, we journey down the main street of China town. Patrick had worked in the CNN bureau for the past two summers and he knew the town like a local. We passed on the obvious tourist sites and requested a look at the "underbelly" of Habana. Ask and you shall receive. Next thing we knew, we were walking down the entrance to China town where few gringos go. It only took about 15 seconds to be propositioned by moneychangers, and taxi drivers selling rides and romance. Hookers are everywhere. The neighborhood is funky. I have definitely seen better and worse in the big cities of the islands, but I don't feel like I will have to duck at any minute like I do on Port Au Prince or Kingston. At one point Cuba had the second largest Chinese population in the world. They all came here after the revolution on mainland China to escape the Communists. Talk about bad timing. About ten minutes of the underbelly is plenty and we are drawing a crowd. Back in the Chevy. It's time to go see the Pope come to town.



D ARCHITECTURE



Jimmy showed up at the Margaritaville Cafe last Sunday. "I just finished a book and I'm on my way to Cuba to report on the Pope's visit for Rolling Stone Magazine, so I thought I'd drop by." Jimmy played a set with Iko Iko, then a thirty minute acoustic set of his own, and then his show-stopping rendition of "You Can't Always Get What You Want."





# THE MARGARITAVILLE S.T.O.R.E.

Buffett's MARGARITAVILLE

**A 1998 Parrot Head Club T**  
Annual collectible still available. Size: M,L,XL&XXL. White or Grey  
#CRS1CS98 \$15.95



BREAST

**B Colorful Conga Line Cap**  
Design embroidered on front of 6-panel cotton cap. Store logo embroidered over back vent. Adjustable velcro strap, available in Black only.  
#CP2CONGA \$20.00





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B



D

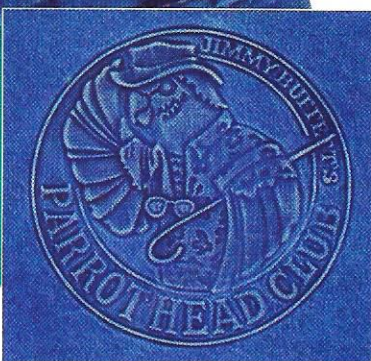
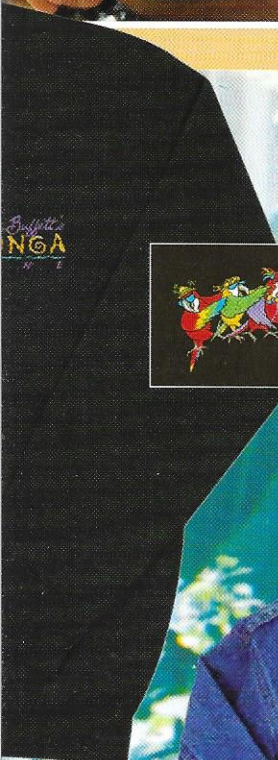
E

1-800-COCOTEL



# JIMMY BUFFETT

1998 CALENDAR



- A Long Sleeve Denim Shirt** features embroidered Margaritaville design above left front pocket. Reinforced shoulder, button down collar, extended tail. Available in Teal only. Size: S,M,L& X. #WL2OVAL \$47.00
- B 1998 Jimmy Buffett Calendar** Monthly photos and recollections by long-time Buffett photographer Tom Corcoran. Also includes recent photos. #BKJBCAL \$13.95 **NOW \$9.95**
- C Conga Line Sweatshirt** Design embroidered on 50/50 crew neck fleece sweatshirt. Available in Black only. Size: S,M,L& X. #SW2CONGA \$37.95
- D Margaritaville Gift Certificates** Gift Certificates are available in any denomination and are redeemable at either Margaritaville Store - 500 Duval Street in Key West, or #1 French Market Place in New Orleans, and through The Coconut Telegraph.
- E Parrot Head Toque** Knit sock cap with embroidered Parrot Head Club. Available in Navy #CP2TOQUEBL or White #CP2TOQUEWH \$10.00
- F Parrot Head Jacket** Heavy 100% cotton jean jacket. 6-button front with 2 front pockets, 2 side pockets. Back adjustments for comfortable fit. Reinforced shoulders and sleeves. Parrot Head logo embossed on back measures 9" in diameter. Machine washable. Size: S,M,L& X. #JK1PHC \$98.00

BACK



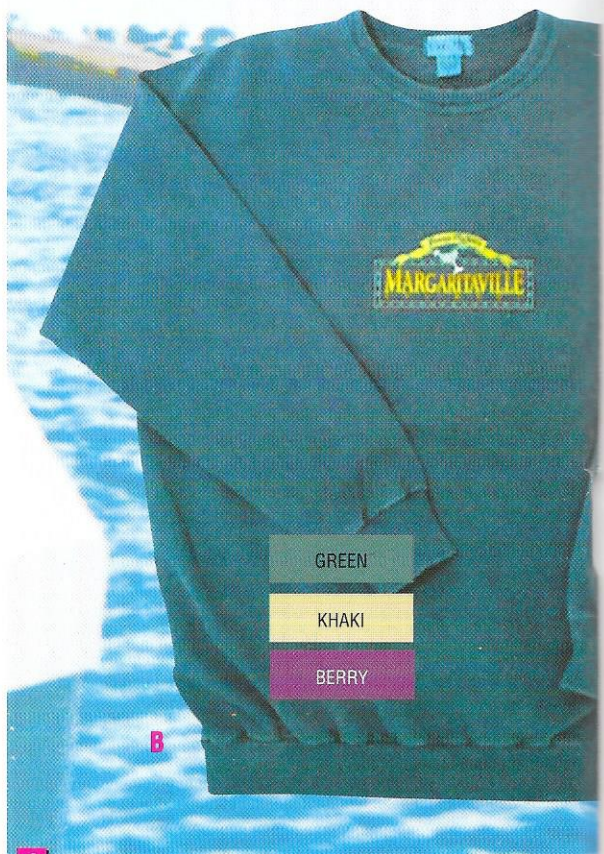


A

**A Funky Margaritaville** silk screened on front of long sleeved 100% cotton crew neck T'. Available in White, Ash Grey, Navy and Burgundy. Size: M, L & X.  
#CRL1FUNKY \$21.95

**B Weathered Sweatshirt** 100% cotton crew neck sweatshirt. Detailed Margaritaville Glass design embroidered on front. Each garment has a unique dye saturation, and therefore a distinct look and colour. Available in Green, Berry, Khaki & Teal. Size: S, M, L & X.  
#SW2GLASS \$55.00

**C The Jimmy Buffett Trivia Book** 501 Questions and Answers for Parrot Heads Paperback book will stretch the memories of even the most diehard fans.  
#BKJBTRIVIA \$9.95



B

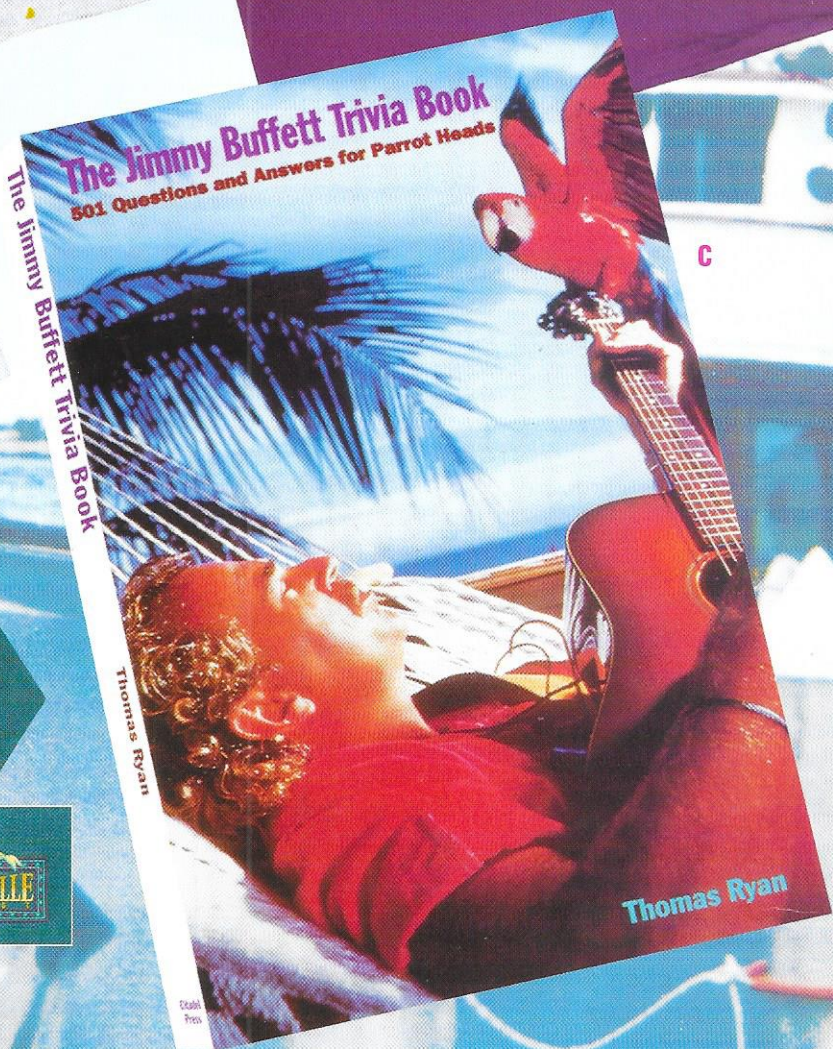
GREEN

KHAKI

BERRY







1-800-COCOTEL





PASSPORT  
TO  
PARADISE

BACK

A

B

C

FRONT

Jimmy Buffet's  
MARGARITAVILLE  
Key West

D

Margaritaville  
KEY WEST

NATURAL

E

KEY WEST

BLUE

GREEN

G

KEY WEST

Jimmy Buffet's  
MARGARITAVILLE  
KEY WEST

1-800-COCOTEL

6



# 3/4 TIME 25% OFF



- A Passport to Paradise** 100% cotton crew neck T<sup>®</sup> available in White or Grey. Size: M, L, X & XX.  
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- B Parakeet Jersey** 100% cotton with left chest embroidery. Navy only. Size: XS (18 months), S (2-4), M (6-8), L (10-12), XL (14-16).  
#YWS2KEET \$23.00 **NOW \$17.25**
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#YROMPKET \$25.00 **NOW \$18.75**
- D Flip-Flop Sweat** 90/10 sweatshirt available in White, Natural, Black or Teal. Size: M, L, X & XX.  
#SW1FLIP \$27.00 **NOW \$20.25**
- E Wasted Away in Margaritaville** Lightweight 50/50 sweatshirt available in White, Ash Grey, Blue or Green. Size: M, L, X & XX.  
#SW1WSTD \$21.95 **NOW \$16.46**
- F Banded Collar Long Sleeve** Palm design embroidered above left front pocket. Available in Natural only. Size: S, M, L & X.  
#WL2PALM \$47.00 **NOW \$35.25**
- G Margarita Glass Cap** Black with Teal stitching & Teal Margaritaville over back vent. Adjustable velcro strap, available in Black only  
#CP2GLASS \$15.00 **NOW \$11.25**
- H Colorful Computer Monitor Frame** Includes velcro tabs for easy installation, and punch out center for notes, memos, etc.  
#NVCOMPFR \$15.00 **NOW \$11.25**





- A Manatee Christmas Stocking** 18" plush manatee with pocket for stocking stuffers. #NVMANSTOCK \$13.00 **NOW \$7.15**
- B 1997 Christmas Design** Youth Sizes Only. 100% cotton long sleeve crew neck shirt. "Tis the season to be Jolly, Mon" White only. Size: S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16). #YCRL1XMAS \$15.00 **NOW \$8.25**
- C Christmas Drawers** 100% cotton boxer short available in White only. Size: S (30-32), M (34-36), L (38-40), X (42-44). #SH1SANTA \$12.00 **NOW \$6.60**
- D 1996 Christmas Parrot** in a Wreath design available on a White 90/10 sweatshirt. Only XXL remain. #SW1XMASXX \$27.95 **NOW \$15.37**



A



B



C



D

**45% OFF**



# Behind the Counter...

Another great year at Margaritaville has come and gone. We all survived our annual Christmas party, and I think we can go back next year. New Year's at the cafe was rockin'. Jimmy's daughter Savannah rang in the new year here at Margaritaville.

Jimmy stopped in Key West for a few days en route to Cuba to see the Pope and sang in the bar to a packed house.

Jimmy went to Cuba, and Cuba came to us. Cuba Gooding "Drop Dead Fine" Jr. was in Key West filming a movie and the Margaritaville Store staff met and got pictures with him, which now adorn our celebrity wall. Roscoe Lee Brown, from Super Fly and Jumpin' Jack Flash, published author and poet, perhaps best known for his voice in Oliver & Company, shopped in the store while in town doing a play.

Michael Utley sent us a copy of the not-yet-released Don't Stop the Carnival CD to play in the store.

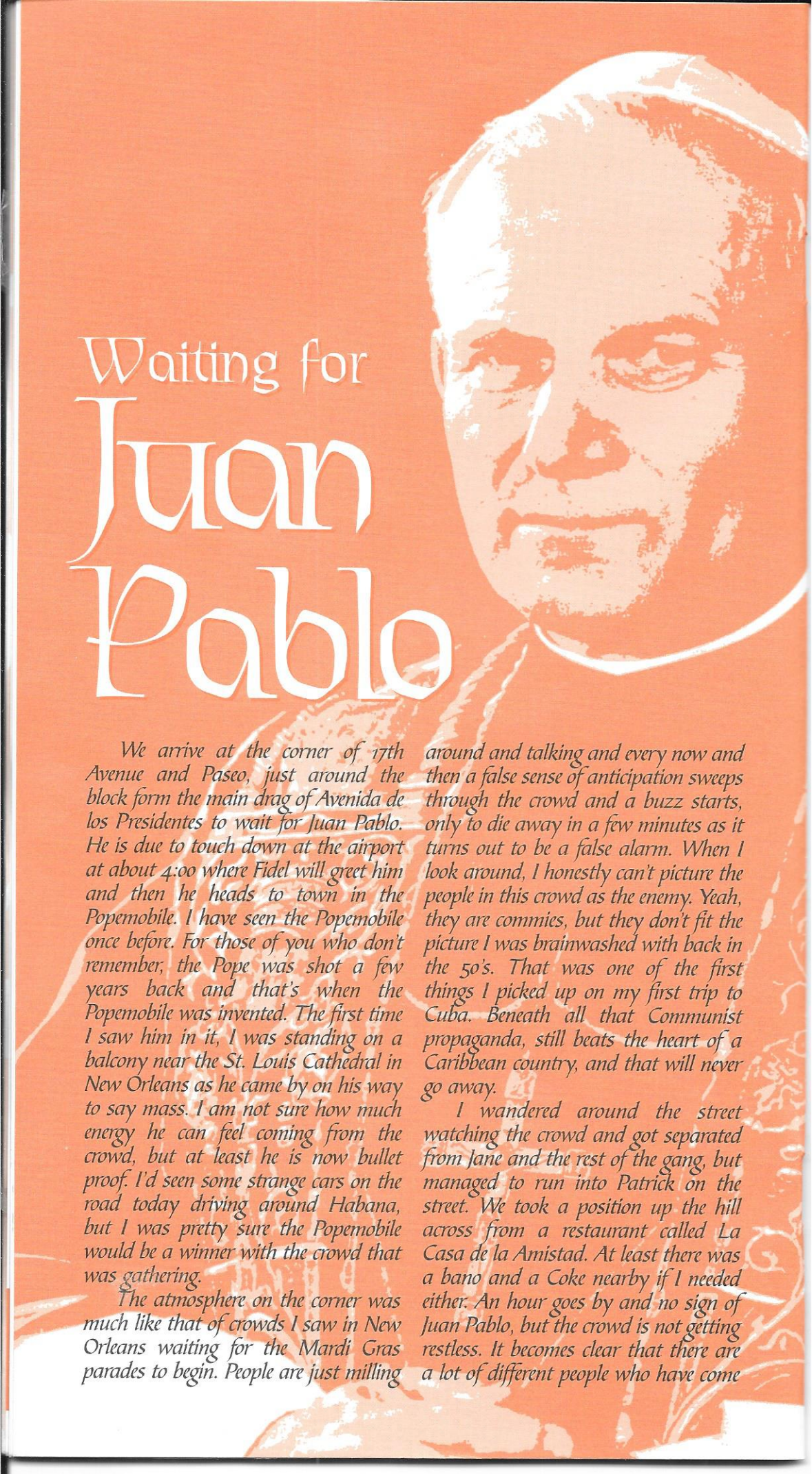
Jimmy sings on most of the songs, and the customers love it. The CD should be out April 28.

Key West is hopping during Yacht Race Week. In two weeks we'll be back on the bus and off to West Palm Beach for Jimmy's February 7th concert.



Jamie, Wendy, Cuba Gooding Jr., Melissa and Gina





# Waiting for Juan Pablo

*We arrive at the corner of 17th Avenue and Paseo, just around the block from the main drag of Avenida de los Presidentes to wait for Juan Pablo. He is due to touch down at the airport at about 4:00 where Fidel will greet him and then he heads to town in the Popemobile. I have seen the Popemobile once before. For those of you who don't remember, the Pope was shot a few years back and that's when the Popemobile was invented. The first time I saw him in it, I was standing on a balcony near the St. Louis Cathedral in New Orleans as he came by on his way to say mass. I am not sure how much energy he can feel coming from the crowd, but at least he is now bullet proof. I'd seen some strange cars on the road today driving around Habana, but I was pretty sure the Popemobile would be a winner with the crowd that was gathering.*

*The atmosphere on the corner was much like that of crowds I saw in New Orleans waiting for the Mardi Gras parades to begin. People are just milling*

*around and talking and every now and then a false sense of anticipation sweeps through the crowd and a buzz starts, only to die away in a few minutes as it turns out to be a false alarm. When I look around, I honestly can't picture the people in this crowd as the enemy. Yeah, they are commies, but they don't fit the picture I was brainwashed with back in the 50's. That was one of the first things I picked up on my first trip to Cuba. Beneath all that Communist propaganda, still beats the heart of a Caribbean country, and that will never go away.*

*I wandered around the street watching the crowd and got separated from Jane and the rest of the gang, but managed to run into Patrick on the street. We took a position up the hill across from a restaurant called La Casa de la Amistad. At least there was a bano and a Coke nearby if I needed either. An hour goes by and no sign of Juan Pablo, but the crowd is not getting restless. It becomes clear that there are a lot of different people who have come*



out for many different reasons. Behind us a group of old loud Cuban men are obviously in the middle of a good old-fashioned rum buzz and cracking jokes about the Pope. They remind me of the crowd that used to gather for breakfast at the Fisherman's Cafe in Key West. Across the street, there is a family reunion in progress. It looks to be at least four generations of a Cuban family assembled. They are all standing together taking pictures and clutching their little Cuban and Papal flags. I know a large Catholic family when I see one. Grandmother is running the show, while her offspring cater to her needs and try to control their small children.

Off to the right, a group of pretty young girls are gossiping and laughing. They run back and forth across the street at least a half a dozen times like models on a fashion runway which serves the intent of catching the eye of all the men on the block. They are dressed as if they are going to the disco instead of going to see the Pope. They don't look like the kind of girls who are going to run from the parade route after the Pope passes and join the Sisters of Mercy. They look more like they could slip into the Friday night routine along South Beach with no problems at all.

To my left, a lone man, dressed in khaki leans against his bicycle, which is decked out with double headlights, two bells, baskets and a host of reflectors in the spokes. He just stands in silence, and after a few minutes Patrick asks if he is Catholic. He answers with a firm no, and then goes on to explain that he is here because it is his duty. Fidel has ordered him to the streets to welcome the Pope, and that is his contribution to the revolution today. Fidel may make some changes around here, but he's not leaving Cuba. Because despite all of his good and bad deeds, he still is a living hero and a mythological character. There are not many of those people around here at the end of the century.

An hour and a half and still no Pope, but a loudspeaker truck runs up and down the street with the high pitched voice of a female driver repeating a socialistic slogan about showing the

Pope that this is the best country in the world. There is some applause, and some muffled laughter that I pick up. I can see others laughing and making comments in guarded whispers and it's obvious that there are some people in the crowd who do not share the loudspeaker women's view of the utopian socialistic society. Finally the real sign of the nearness of the pontiff comes in the sounds of a turbine engine from above. An old Soviet helicopter is making continuous circles overhead. The crowd comes alive. Those standing at the corner all stretch their necks looking up the street. Those lounging under the palm trees or on park benches rush like attacking ants to join the crowd along the route. Here comes the parade.

I get my camera ready, and it's a damn good thing because the motorcade comes by at about forty miles an hour. The flags and arms high and waving. Motorcycle cops roar by followed by the ever present news truck with cameraman hanging all over it, and then the Popemobile; a new and cool Popemobile. Juan Pablo is standing behind the bulletproof glass that sits high above the cab of a GMC duelly. He whizzes through the viewfinder of my camera in about two seconds. Dressed in white and barely moving with the exception of the patented "Pope wave." He looks like a statue on the back of a truck, and then he is gone. It is over that fast. I feel a bit ripped off, after having stood there for two hours. I thought we would see a slow procession and the Pope stopping to kiss some babies, hell, maybe even a miracle, but all I saw was a papal blur. The masses, though, seemed amazingly content and in a few seconds I too succumb to that nonchalant island attitude. The crowd mills around and neighbors talk to neighbors. The bars open back up, the streetlights come on, the traffic jam is in full swing, and another Habana night unfolds. I come away from Avenida de Presidente with a few conclusions. Fidel ain't going anywhere. I'm being overcome with a burning desire to buy a 57 Chevy when I get home. And the Pope can still draw a crowd.



Social activities for  
people with similar  
tastes and interests.

# PHLOOCKINGS

Dear St Louis Parrot Heads,

I am writing in regards to the generous donation you made to The Pediatric Rehabilitation Institute at Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital. The toys that you all donated helped out many children who are in the hospital throughout the holidays...The monetary donation was so thoughtful and generous it is difficult to put into words how much it meant to us...We thank you very much for your heartfelt kindness at this time of year.

Sincerely,

The Rehabilitation Institute  
at Cardinal Glennon

E-MAIL...

JIMMY'S SONGS ARE INTERPRETED BY PARROT HEADS IN MANY DIFFERENT WAYS. THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ILLUSTRATE THE EFFECTS OF A GOOD BUFFETT LYRIC.

I'VE NEVER WRITTEN OR ATTEMPTED TO CONTACT YOU AND I HOPE THAT YOU DO RECEIVE THIS BECAUSE I WOULD LIKE TO SEND MY MOST HEART-FELT THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOUR MUSIC AND WRITINGS HAVE DONE FOR ME. ALTHOUGH I DO NOT LIVE ON THE COAST, I HAVE ALWAYS HAD A KINSHIP WITH THE SEA...I UNDERSTAND THAT MOST PEOPLE LISTEN TO YOU TO FORGET THE EVERYDAY DRUDGERIES AND PARTY FOR A WHILE HOWEVER, FOR ME IT RUNS MUCH DEEPER THAN THAT. I RELATE TO THE SPIRITUALITY OF YOUR MUSIC AND KNOW THAT IT IS MUCH MORE THAN SEEING HOW MUCH YOU CAN DRINK IN A DAY.

Hey Jimmy,

YOU SON OF A BEACH. I STARTED LISTENING TO YOUR MUSIC BACK IN THE DAYS OF BEFORE THE BEACH. I USED TO BE A PROMISING MUSICIAN AND SONGWRITER, NOW ALL I DO IS DRINK RUM AND DROOL ALL OVER MY GUITAR. COME ON UP AND LET'S GO FISHING. WHILE YOU'RE HERE YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT TO DO WITH THE REST OF MY LIFE, SINCE I'VE BLOWN MOST OF IT LISTENING TO YOUR PHILOSOPHIES.

*and the winner is...*

Congratulations to Stump the Band winner Nancy McMenemy from Perkinsville, VT. Nancy stumped Jimmy and the band with Reggae Accident. Her name was drawn from the list of successful stumpers throughout the tour. When Jimmy called to let her know she'd won, Nancy was out - thankfully - because Jimmy left a message on her machine. The tape is safely locked away. Nancy and her husband Jay spent New Years in Key West.







**MARGARITAVILLE**  
The Coconut Telegraph  
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Key West, FL 33041

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**WHAT BOOKS WOULD JIMMY BUFFETT HAVE WITH HIM  
TO READ IF SHIPWRECKED ON A DESERT ISLAND?**



**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,**

Volume II of The Shipwreck Editions, is now available. Each limited edition will be published exclusively for Margaritaville. Books are certified, numbered and affixed with the publishers seal. Hard cover clothbound book features gold foil title and artwork, and is stamped with the Peninsula Press Limited Edition Seal.

**#BKHUUCKFINN \$15.00 NOW \$11.25**

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