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Mai-Kai: History And Mystery Of The Iconic Tiki Restaurant



Synopsis

In 1956, a few brash young men created the Mai-Kai Restaurant and bar in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, by poaching key staff from Don the Beachcomber's, a Polynesian-themed Chicago restaurant. The Mai-Kai became the playground of celebrities and playboys, and the beautiful women working there used it as a jumping-off point for adventure and fame. Through first-hand stories and more than 400 images, this book documents the history, allure, and enduring legacy of the mid-twentieth-century Tiki era. Focusing on the period 1955 to 1971, it is the story of how the Mai-Kai and its iconic elements came to exist, and the men and women who shaped it and went on to shape the world. Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Mai-Kai is the only place on earth that still serves the "Rum Rhapsodies" that kicked off that indulgent era.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This year marks the Mai Kai's 60th anniversary and what could be better than Tim Glazner's well written tribute to the "last" iconic Tiki temple. The extensive amount of fantastic photos used by the author to support the text will really want to make the reader drive or catch the next flight to Fort Lauderdale. A+ Enjoy

Tim is an expert on all things Mai-Kai and takes you on a historic trip through it's iconic doors. You'll want to mix up a Zombie or Mai Tai to sip on while enjoying all the history and photos that Tim presents here, they help the reader soak in the last true original Polynesian Temple left from the 1950's, the Mai-Kai!

Full disclosure: I helped with the production of this book. Tim spent years putting this book together - it's been a labor of love for more than a decade, and it shows. The publisher did an excellent job with layout, fonts, and graphics. Tim's own collection of vintage photos and those kindly provided by others are beautifully laid out and flow with the stories throughout the book. The stories are first-hand accounts of the creation of this iconic establishment and of times spent there during its heyday. If you have an interest in tiki, mid-century modern, architecture, photography, pinups, celebrities, cocktails, or amazing life stories - you will love this book. It's a treasure trove of eye candy, but also an entertaining and enlightening read about people, a place, a lifestyle, and an amazing period of time.

If you love Tiki you will love this book. The pictures are beautiful and interesting. The writing is very good and keeps you involved. There are lots of first hand accounts that bring Mai Kai to life. My family grew up with a love for this tiki pop culture in the 1950's and past it on to my brother and I. Mai Kai gave me a better understanding of that time, why my family enjoyed it and why everyone tried to copy it.

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