



Brewhaha #13: The Lompoc Cafe, Bar Harbor ME

It was a fair walk to the Lompoc. Jill – remember Jill and her ethereal cleavage? – had told me it was “not far” but I’m sure she assumed I would be on wheels and not heels. I passed right by the Wonder View and angled for the glitter and glamour of downtown Bar Harbor.

Glitter, my ass. Mannn, it was freaking **dark** out here! But it’s not like I felt endangered by traffic, or feared the evil gnomes that lurked in the roadside woods – I mean, I’m sure they were there and all, but I just never felt threatened by them. For one, I’m bigger than your average gnome, and, for two, the only reason I’ve been a runner all these years was so I’d be able to outgallop gnomes when need be. I was prepped.

Anyway, a few blocks past the WV, the streets became better lit and I found my way to the sidestreet bistro known as the Lompoc Café.

It’s an unassuming place, settled in just beyond a much brighter restaurant, and brandishing an illuminated but mostly black sign. The artwork on the sign suits the atmosphere: really kicked back, with some outdoor tables on a uneven stone patio laid out under some leafy trees. The bar within is non-fancy wood and comfortably ordinary. Easy to picture many of the local artists and writers doing the hang-out thing in here.

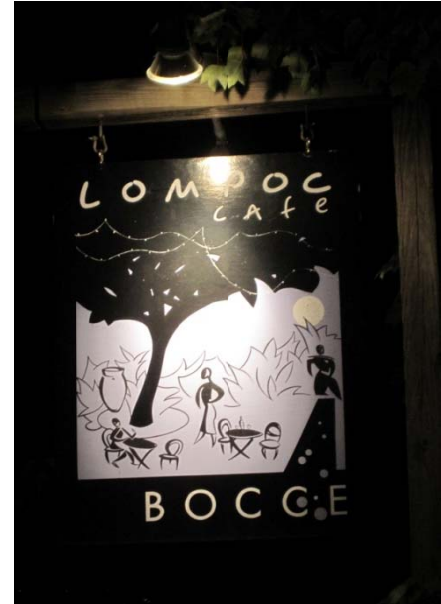
And they had a bocce court! It said so on the bottom of the sign, but somehow I missed that. I was too concerned about finding the entrance and the bar and not looking like a clueless tourist while doing so. That sounds like it shouldn’t be very hard, but this, after all, was the last of several hahas and my vigilance had slipped a tad.

At the bar, I looked at the taps protruding from the plain, blank, wooden wall, and quickly chose a Bar Harbor Real Ale. The Lompoc, according to legend, was actually the birthplace of that brew – some 20+ years ago -- which was the first baby step for the Bar Harbor Brewing Company. Real Ale was originally brewed in the Lompoc’s kitchen, but its popularity soon outran the space, and the brewing had to relocate, leaving the LC to its placid café-ness.

The barkeep was a large young man with ruffled hair on all sides of his head. He was mellow, but not particularly friendly. A “what’ll it be / there ya go” kind of guy. No howyadoin’s or other idle banter, but no grunts or scowls either. It was a slow night and he was just doing his time.

There were diversions to be had in here. A cribbage board sat unused a few seats down, and the young man and woman next to me – we’ll call them Jen and Kirby, just because they kinda looked like a Jen and Kirby -- were embroiled in a game of Scrabble. I jotted a few blingies in my Notbook as I relished my chilled BHRA, but I had to look up when I overheard a question that Jen was posing to the barkeep. She was referring to a word that Kirby had tried to use on the board.

“Is there such a word as c-e-d-e-r, ceder? That’s not a tree, is it?”



She was trying to be nice. Her dumbass friend probably misspelled “oke” and “mapel” already, and she was “just making sure” with Furryhead.

Sometimes I should just mind my own biznizz. This was a good example of such a time. But, I offered in a calm low voice: “Actually, it is a word. If someone gives up ownership of something, he cedes it to the other party. So he would be the ceder.”

She gave me a smile that said, *Shut the fuck up, old man*, but said, “Well, I don’t think we’re going to allow it.”

I floated back a smile that said, *You cheatin’-ass twat*, and turned my attention back to my ale.

Friends were not stepping forward really fast here, so I thought it would be a good time to retire to my sumptuous motel room, after a quick downtown peripatetic tour. On the way out, I noticed the bocce court, tucked along the side of the property, just beyond the patio. It seemed shorter than the Key West courts, but maybe that’s because those are longer. It was littered with some leaves, a few small papers, and two young boys who were randomly rolling the balls around.

I moved on.

The weather was bugging me. I had come up here expecting a break from my Florida Keys summer swelter – maybe even a cool crisp seaside sweatshirt night – and instead I ran right into a three-day record-breaking binge. It hit 96 today, and would aim for 98 tomorrow. I thought it felt pretty ordinary, but people were melting before my eyes. Even in the Lompoc. With its open-door patio, it must routinely rely on cool evening breezes, so A/C is not a kickass priority. As a result, their system was just too wimpy to keep out the warm mugginess. It was not comfy in there. Departing was not regrettable, which, in itself, is kind of regrettable.

As I strolled down the streets to the actual harbor, my brow became dotted with beads of sweat, just as if I was on my typical Duval Dawdle. As I passed a place called Finback Aleshouse, I spied a TV with a local weather alert. I paused to listen: Hurricane Earl, now a Cat-4, was spinning past the Carolinas, angling for Cape Cod and eastern Maine. Should be here in a cuppla days.

OK, now cut the fucking shit. Not only did the tropical heat come with me, but now this hurricane was stalking me too.



But despite the temps, tonight was niiiiice, so I figgered I’d bridge that cross when it crooned.

The breeze swooshed up off the hahbah, and a waxing gibbous moon rose, behind a tall schooner anchored beyond the piers. Great, grrreat scene! All I had was the crappy camera in my phone, but I still tried to take a good pic with it. Didn’t work, but you get the gist.

A little more than a kilometer of walking found me back at the wonderful Wonder View, walking that long wonderful uphill driveway.

It was an early night, by MacBarley standards, but there was a big day looming once this planet spun around another quarter-turn or so.

