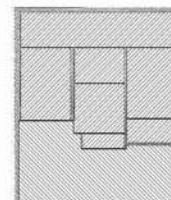


Phil Peterson's Key West Poker Run started some 43 years ago as just an idea to drum up some business during a normally slow time of the year for his motorcycle business in Miami and Key West. Phil thought if he had a Poker Run to Key West in August and made an event out of it, that would do the trick. Phil and a handful of local motorcycle riders, mostly from the Mustang Motorcycle Club, decided to try it. The Run started early Saturday morning with sign-up at the Miami Store, a ride to Key West hitting five restaurants or bars to draw a card and arriving in Key West in time to get cleaned up for the Awards Dinner, Dance and Bike Show. The best hands would win prizes and as an added attraction, they had a Best Dressed Contest (where riders and their passengers would wear matching boots, pants and shirts with their helmets painted to match their bikes) so not only was the bike judged but also the riders were judged for the best looking couple and they were awarded trophies. On Sunday morning they would have a Field Meet showing off their rider skills and scored for different events, i.e. slow race, roll a barrel with your front tire, ride over the teeter-totter plank etc. competing for trophies) in those days there were small well-organized riding clubs with a lot of camaraderie and friendly competition between clubs. Everyone would return home on Sunday afternoon and this went on for many years in the early days of the Poker Run.

Today the Poker Run has grown into a major event with police estimates of ten to fifteen thousand riders. In the recent years it has managed to sell out all of the Key West Hotels with more and more riders staying on nearby Islands and traveling into Key West for the day or for parties that they want to attend. Drew Peterson, Phil's son, now manages and promotes the Poker run and believes another way that we can grow this event is to make it a Key's Bike Week with a Key West Poker Run. So this year the plan is to have motorcycle rides, events and attractions throughout the Upper and Middle Keys to attract riders to come and stay for the Week and Island hop. There are thousands of hotel rooms and places to stay throughout the upper and middle keys. The idea is to ride down and ride all over the Keys for the first three or four days and enjoy many of the things, like snorkeling or dive trips, fishing and fishing trips, kayaking, jet skiing, para-sailing and of course, enjoying Paradise while eating, drinking and shopping. Then there is the Poker Run that will start on Thursday September 17th this year and end on Saturday



the 19th at 5pm at the last stop. The Conch Republic Seafood Company in Key West. So far the Island Fish Co. on Marathon and Boondocks on Ramrod Key are planning on having special events and parties all week long with each of them having one big party day in that week. You will find all hotel accommodations listed by mile marker and rates with phone numbers and e-mail addresses for all of the Keys by visiting Petersonsharley.com and clicking on the Poker Run link, look for last year's program and events.

Again this year, the Peterson's two Miami Harley-Davidson Dealerships will start the week off with a Pre-Poker Run Party, 2016 New Model year Open House and Demo Rides on Saturday September 12 and Sunday the 13th, 2015. Come and see all that is new from Harley-Davidson including the all new Street 500 and 750, sign up for the Poker Run, get your Duval parking bands, buy your collectors addition Poker Run t-shirt, cap and pin and get ready to have a good time partying with us. All of the yearly recurring events in Key West will happen auto-magically as they do every year and as they are listed on Petersonsharley.com in the poker run link and in the agenda or programs.

Events like the 8th Annual Upper Duval Crawl on Thursday Night, Vendors Village on Green street on Friday and Saturday, Sunset Festivals at Mallory Square, The Hog Roast at Schooner Wharf Bar Friday Night, Duval Street Party closed to motorcycle parking and foot

traffic only Friday and Saturday, Rick's / Durty Harry's Bike Show by Road Rage Magazine Saturday, Sloppy Joe's Biker Beer Garden sponsored by Yuengling Beer, 21st Annual Blessing of the Bikes by the Christian Motorcycle Association, Biker Bash Pool Parties and last but not least, The Biker Bloody Mary Brunch on Sunday at 10:30am at the Conch Republic Seafood. The main event is the awards for the best poker hands and the one game of Texas Hold-em for the New Harley-Davidson 500 Street held 11pm Saturday Night at Rick's/Durty Harry's on the corner of Duval and Greene Street.

Again this year, you can sign up online now for the Poker Run at petersonsharley.com or in person starting September 1st, at one of the Peterson's Harley-Davidson Dealerships. You can also sign up in Key West at the Conch Republic Seafood starting September 17th and you can do the Poker Run in reverse or draw all five cards on the spot. Buy as many hands as you like and increase your chances. Sign up for the Poker Run is ten dollars a hand and you will also receive a discount price of five dollars for a parking band for each motorcycle. The band will give you free parking on Duval Street for the Friday and Saturday Street Parties. If you do not sign up for the Poker Run you will have to buy a Duval Parking band for ten dollars on site when entering Duval Street. All proceeds go to help local charities like the [Diabetes Research Institute](http://DiabetesResearchInstitute.com) and the Key West Rotary Club, so sign up and help a good cause.

Again this year there is a contest for the Oldest

Official Phil Peterson's Key West Poker Run t-shirt for a \$300 Peterson's gift card going to the winner. There will also be the Furthest Traveled Contest for a \$200 Peterson's gift card, the winner must have ridden their motorcycle the entire distance, to be announced at the final awards at 11 pm Saturday night.

Sign up and stay up on the latest updates for the Poker Run at petersonsharley.com and on our app at Petersons Poker Run. Brought to you by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council.

