

The Longest Bar in The World

I was asked by Mike to join him in Dubai to do a training course at the Emirates Training centre. Due to a previous commitment, I had to fly out overnight and join him at the hotel for breakfast prior to going to the training centre to start the course. It was my first time in Dubai and I was very conscious of ensuring that I maintained the correct etiquette and manners whilst with the local delegates and when out and about in the city.

Once the first day of the course was over, we returned to the hotel and I was hoping to have a nap before meeting up for dinner. However, Mike said that he needed to go into the town to find a Mall where he could purchase a gadget that he needed for his laptop. I was persuaded that a walk would be good and would help to keep me awake. I agreed to keep him company and go with him.

On the way to the Mall we came across a large cross roads intersection where there were a great deal of people hanging around and I thought I knew what was going on, but didn't say anything to Mike as he was transfixed with a sign on the other side of the road that said, "Welcome to the Longest Bar In The World". It was like a magnet! He immediately said that this would be the place to visit on the way back from the Mall, as we would be able to boast that we had been there.

We found the Mall and bought whatever gadget it was that Mike needed and started our return. When we got back to the intersection and the location of the Longest Bar, I took a closer look at all the people that were lingering in the area and concluded that, even though this was a Muslim country, all of the ladies that were there were 'looking for business'! Mike was totally oblivious to this and I said nothing.

We made a 'B' line to the Longest Bar, which was at the top of a large building, and access was by lift. Before we could get into the lift, we were told that we had to pay an access fee. Mike dutifully paid the exorbitant fee and we arrived in the bar.

The bar was very long, some 100 feet, but you could barely see it due to the very subdued lighting. We ordered our drinks and I then pointed out to Mike that we were in a 'hookers' bar and that it did not belong to T J Hooker. It was at this point that he looked around and it suddenly occurred to him where we were. He drank his pint quicker than I have ever seen him do so, he warded off a couple of proposals and couldn't get out of there quick enough.

When we got back out onto the street I then pointed out that all the people lingering there were mostly young Filipino women and they were speaking to potential clients. The rest of the walk back to the hotel was quicker than it would normally have been and ended up in the hotel bar to just get a stiff drink. We had a really good laugh about the experience once Mike had got over the shock.

Mike was a good friend, colleague and boss, but there were times when he was incredibly naïve!