

# The Hemingway Look-Alike Contest Begins (Video)



**KEY WEST, Florida Keys** — Some 140 men, most with white or graying beards, stocky builds and a resemblance to Ernest Hemingway are in Key West this week — drawn by the chance to compete in the 2021 Hemingway Look-Alike Contest that began Thursday night.

The coronavirus pandemic forced organizers to cancel last year's competition, so this year's event a reunion for past contest winners and current contenders.

The look-alike challenge is a highlight of Key West's annual Hemingway Days, a celebration of the writing talent, sporting pursuits and colorful lifestyle of the legendary author who lived on the island during the 1930s.

Thursday's preliminary round was the first of three nights of competition at Sloppy Joe's Bar, the Duval Street saloon where Hemingway often relaxed with local and literary cohorts.

Many "aspiring Ernests" are repeat entrants, including some who have been competing for up to 27 years. Most wear sportsman's attire reminiscent of the author, and attempt to emulate his later-years "Papa" persona as they swagger across Sloppy Joe's stage.

The contest is judged by former winners including 2019's Joe Maxey, a retired Tennessee banker.

The second preliminary round is set for Friday and the 2021 winner will be chosen during Saturday night's finals.

Hemingway Days continues through Sunday with events including a “Running of the Bulls” spoof, a street fair and the Key West Marlin Tournament.

Ernest Hemingway wrote some of his most enduring classics during his Key West years including “For Whom the Bell Tolls” and “To Have and Have Not.” **FloridaKeysNewsBureau release posted on SouthFloridaReporter.com, July 23, 2021**