

## JIMMY BUFFETT

by Tamela Meredith Partridge

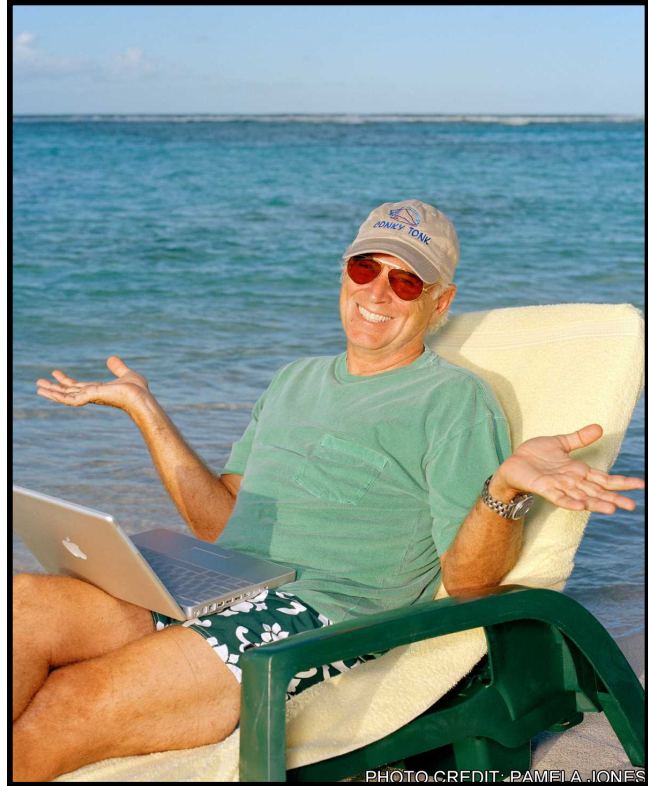
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In the real world of taxes, crime and living from pay check to check, Jimmy Buffett's mythical land of Margaritaville becomes a musical tropical escapism for his numerous self-proclaimed Parrothead fans of all ages.

Just in case you are completely clueless About the lyrical aspects portrayed in Buffett's Top Ten single, Margaritaville, it all revolves around that care-free sun, sand and surf paradise which one mentally visits in an effort to momentarily flee from the stresses of everyday life and relationships.



Only in Margaritaville can cares and concerns be easily washed away by the subsiding tide, succulent aroma of shrimp beginning to boil, snacking on sponge cake and silently sipping frozen concoctions of liquid sunshine.

"In many ways, my failure to adopt the technically correct terms of the day happily brands me as a hopeless romantic," Buffett said.

For more than 30 years, Buffett's fans, the Parrotheads, have been buying records and attending his concerts dressed in exotic island fashions consisting of coconut-shell bras, grass skirts and outlandish parrot motif headgear. And that's just the men. Parrotheads of all genders come from near and far to attend these concerts, turning them into inflatable shark and beach ball tossing family events with a giddy, swaying-to-the-music audience ranging in age from six to sixty. Good, clean fun, sing-a-long lyrics and flamboyant tropical Bermuda shorts and Caribbean shirt costumes make hopping on board Buffett's melodic boat to Margaritaville well worth the trip.

"We have been making records for a long time," Buffett said in the liner notes of his current '99 enhanced CD, 'Buffett Live —Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays.' "We have been on the road for a long time, and one of the great joys in keeping this boat moving, is that we have put a lot of water and time in our wake. Some crewmembers have come and gone, but many are still here. The passenger list is more interesting and larger than it has ever been, and their uniforms maintain a tradition of defying good taste. On earlier voyages, we ran at a faster speed and stopped at a thousand ports along the way. These days, however, we just play Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. When our ship comes in, the party begins."

Even though Buffett has consistently maintained a solid fan base, various fluctuations have occurred throughout the years in his Coral Reefer Band member roster.

"The greatest thing about this band is the immense talent that it contains," Buffett said. "So, I naturally take advantage of it to shore up my shortcomings. Hey, they have to earn that per diem!"

The singer, songwriter and universal favorite "son of a son of a sailor" has recorded thirty-two albums, including seven gold, four platinum and two multi-platinum releases. His recording, "Boats, Beaches, Bars & Ballads" is one of the biggest selling box sets in MCA Records history.

An interesting "cool factor" trend that is currently sweeping through many of today's musical genres is the prestigious listing of Jimmy Buffett as a major influence in a versatile assortment of popular artist career biographies. It seems that Buffett is suddenly "in" again - but according to Forbes magazine and the legion of Parrotheads who reportedly spend over \$50 million a year on Buffett concert tickets, albums, and merchandise — Buffett has never really been "out."

When it comes to inspiring the youth of today, Buffett keeps his advice simple and to the point.

"We're not only mired in a sound byte world, we have no sense of geography or history, and that is where real stories and songs come from. I would suggest that young people today unplug their computers, stuff them in their back packs, get their asses offline and out into the territory to see the world in three dimensions as opposed to two. Technology should enhance your life adventure, not replace it."

Buffett, 53, was born on Christmas day in Pascagoula, Mississippi and reared in Mobile, Alabama. After earning a degree in journalism from the University of Southern Mississippi, he worked from '69-'70 as a Nashville correspondent for Billboard magazine. When his initial venture into country music recording bit the dust, Buffett decided to leave Nashville and a failed first marriage behind in '71 and settled in Key West, Florida.

While singing his folk-pop tunes and passing the hat in a Key West bar in '71, Buffett met a beautiful blond named Jane Slagsvol, who was visiting the Keys while on spring break from the University of South Carolina. The couple eventually married in '77 and have two daughters, Savannah Jane, 21, Sarah Delaney, 8, and one son, Cameron Marley, 7.

Besides the hit single "Margaritaville," other Buffet legendary pop culture classics include "Cheeseburger In Paradise," "Changes In Latitudes, Changes In Attitudes," "One Particular Harbor," "Come Monday," "Fins," "Boat Drinks," and "Why Don't We All Get Drunk and Screw."

Buffet has also written three No. 1 best-selling novels, "Tales From Margaritaville," "Where Is Joe Merchant?" and "A Pirate Looks At Fifty."

Other profitable Buffett business endeavors include his "Caribbean Soul" clothing line based in Orlando, FL and Margaritaville Store and Cafe chains located in Key West, New Orleans, Charleston and Orlando.

Always concerned about the environment and welfare of children, community, and endangered species, Buffett created the Singing For A Change Charitable Foundation and has often donated time and financial support to other charitable organizations such as the Save The Manatee Club, the Florida Inter-American Scholarship Fund and the Friends of Florida.

Buffett's party boat is scheduled to set sail for Illinois and arrive in Tinley Park on July 27 and July 29 at the New World Music Theatre.

So grab your suntan lotion, Caribbean clothing and parrot hats and escape to Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville, located somewhere between the Port of Indecision and Southwest of Disorder, where the sun is always warm, ocean breezes are cool, people are friendly and island music rules.

Just exactly where is Margaritaville?

It's simply a state of mind, an attitude, a haven from the human condition....or all of the above.