

Las Vegas Advisor

Jan 2026 Vol. 43 Issue 1



2026 PROGRESS REPORT

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2026

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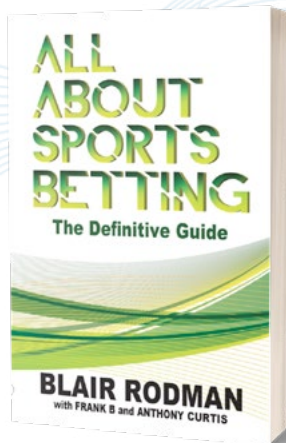
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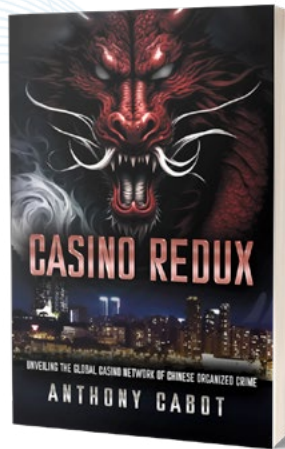
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COUPONOMY

Preview 2026—Policy Precedes Projects

Another year has come and gone and not a whole lot has changed. As expected, there were no major openings of any kind in 2025, let alone casino openings, and questions still remain about several big projects, including the baseball stadium, the associated Bally's build-out, and an NBA arena. But for the first time since we've been doing the Preview, the biggest stories going into the new year relate to policies, not projects.

One is gambling taxation. Specifically, whether or not the 90%-deduction rule will stand. There's not much to talk about there, other than to state that I'm pretty confident that it will (see GAMBLING). Far bigger is "the gouge" and the effect it's had on Las Vegas visitation. Last year there were only murmurs about prices getting out of hand; now it's everyone's story of the year. We cover it in various ways every month, so I won't elaborate here. But, yes, it's a problem and it's the primary focus going into 2026.

Although there were no openings in 2025, some significant expansions and renovations were completed. Most impressive among them was Ellis Island's. It's still a work progress, but if you hadn't been there for a year and were dropped in today, you probably couldn't identify the casino. El Cortez spruced up nicely, M Resort got a new tower, and Four Queens improved the rooms in its existing tower—good news for a place that's still holding the line against resort fees.

We did get clarification on two big projects, both of which at some point were the favorite to be the next big casino opening. TFP, as in the Tilman Fertitta Project, is no more. That one surprised me. Not so surprising is the demise of Dream, which you can read about in NEWS. The Poker Palace closed, Eastside Cannery is scheduled for demolition, the Royal Resort was torn down after a 55-year run, and Buffalo Bills in Primm will remain closed for the foreseeable future. So there really was a lot going on, just not a lot of the good stuff.

What can we expect in 2026? We've already had one name change as Rampart became The Resort at Summerlin on January 1. A more consequential name change will take place when the Cromwell becomes the Vanderpump sometime in the near future. Given the TFP and Dream departures, it now appears that Boyd's Cadence Crossing is the leading candidate for the next casino opening, although whatever turns up in the Poker Palace spot could sneak in ahead. I say "whatever," because there are rumblings that it might be a Dotty's rather than the previously announced locals joint from the purchaser, northern Nevada's Truckee Gaming. Truckee would be a notable casino opening, Dotty's would be ... just a Dotty's.

Getting back to policy, while this year looks to be another tame one in terms of openings, it won't be dull. Las Vegas needs visitors, lots more of them than showed up last year. The gouge is a problem that suppresses visitation. If you fix it, they will come, right? Las Vegas certainly has some fixing to do. It should be interesting.

The complete Report Card and Progress Report follows.



2025 REPORT CARD

Opened			Expanded/Renovated		Changed	Dead		
Miracle Eats food hall ¹	Grand Prix Plaza ⁵	Tropicana/I-15 ⁹	MGM Grand ¹²	M Resort ¹⁵	NoMad ¹⁹	Tilman Fertitta Project ²²	Poker Palace ²⁵	
Las Vegas Loop ²	Mob Museum ⁶	Flamingo ¹⁰	Green Valley Ranch ¹³	Ellis Island ¹⁶	Golden Gate ²⁰	Eastside Cannery ²³	Royal ²⁶	Lexi ²⁷
Otonomus Hotel ³	Suncoast food court ⁷	AREA15 ¹¹	El Cortez ¹⁴	Four Queens ¹⁷	HOV lanes ²¹	Buffalo Bills ²⁴		
BLVD ⁴	Venetian food hall ⁸			Rampart ¹⁸				



2026 PROGRESS REPORT

Opening

Cadence Crossing ²⁸
Vanderpump Hotel-Casino ²⁹
Mt. Charleston Lodge ³⁰
Cappella ³¹



2026 and BEYOND

In Progress

Hard Rock ³²
Cello Tower ³³
Durango ³⁴

Pacifica Vegas ³⁵
A's stadium ³⁶
High-Speed train ³⁷

On the Drawing Board

Bellagio ³⁸
Galileo ³⁹
Neon Museum ⁴⁰
Tropicana 2.0 ⁴¹

"Hollywood 2.0" ⁴²
Sahara Overpass ⁴³
Oak View Arena ⁴⁴
Majestic ⁴⁵

Inspirada ⁴⁶
NLV Station ⁴⁷
Silverton ⁴⁸
Convention Center ⁴⁹

Casino Royale ⁵⁰
Fashion Show Casino ⁵¹
Resorts World ⁵²
Caesars-Rio Skybridge ⁵³

Evel Knievel Museum ⁵⁴
LV Spaceport ⁵⁵
Ivanpah ⁵⁶



Image Credit: 2. Boring Compnay; 11. AREA15; 15. M Resort; 16. Ellis Island; 28. Caesars Entertainment; 29. Mt. Charleston Lodge; 30. Symphony Park Block C High Rise; 36. Las Vegas Athletics; 54. Dapper Development

1. Six fast-food outlets in new Miracle Mile Shops area
2. Two new stations at Westgate and Encore; tunnel extending to Virgin and UNLV
3. Non-casino all-suite 303-unit "AI-powered" apartment-hotel near Allegiant Stadium opened in July
4. Massive 400,000-square-foot four-story retail-dining-entertainment center in former Hawaiian Marketplace location

5. Year-round programming at company HQ: go-kart racetrack, racing simulators, museum, plus restaurant and merch shop
6. Starlight Lounge outdoor venue opened, first of planned expansions on vacant lot next door
7. New food court in former buffet space
8. Via Via Food Hall just off casino floor, including All'Antico Vineaio sandwich shop and five first-in-Vegas outlets

9. Two-year traffic-snarling upgrade of interchange and feeder roads completed
10. Major renovation of GO Pool
11. 100,000-square-foot standalone Universal Horror Unleashed opened
12. All 4,212 rooms remodeled, 111 suites added, total cost \$300 million
13. \$200 million renovation: new restaurant row in former buffet, high-limit rooms, pool amenities
14. \$20 million expansion of casino floor, new high-limit pit, two bars, Asian restaurant, Starbucks
15. \$200 million expansion with 375-room tower and expanded meeting space
16. 6,500 square feet added to casino, including sports book expansion in micro-brewery space and a rooftop bar
17. \$24 million renovation of all 300 rooms in the North Tower
18. Name changed to The Resort at Summerlin and casino renovated
19. Brand changed to Reserve at Park MGM
20. 1.3-acre Golden Gate lot sold by granddaughter of original owner (1905) to Derek Stevens for \$19 million
21. High-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) restrictions returned, in effect 6-8 am and 4-6 pm Mon.-Fri.
22. Proposed \$200 million 43-story hotel-casino on Strip at Harmon canceled
23. Never reopened after the pandemic, will be demolished so lot can be sold
24. Second Primm resort closed in June; might reopen for special events
25. Closed temporarily, announced reopening in 2026 as yet-unnamed Truckee Gaming casino
26. Small Convention Center Drive hotel-casino that operated under multiple names demolished in August
27. 64-room cannabis-friendly non-casino hotel, former Artisan, foreclosed
28. \$100 million resort rising on Boulder Highway site of Jokers Wild in Henderson
29. Cromwell rebranding with complete renovation
30. Cabins and restaurant open, lodge building completed by year's end
31. Construction wrapping up on first luxury high-rise apartments (240 units) in Symphony Park downtown
32. Guitar hotel on Strip continues to ascend, on schedule to open in 2027
33. Second high-rise condo tower in Symphony Park slated to open by end of 2027
34. Expansion of casino, new restaurants, 2,000-space parking garage underway
35. Three-story \$70 million retail, dining, and entertainment project on vacant Chinatown; construction to begin by summer and be completed by end of 2027
36. Lack of funding transparency notwithstanding, it appears progress is being made, budget now north of \$2 billion
37. Construction continues on high-speed rail line between southern California and Las Vegas
38. Expansion to add new restaurants/bars, retail, viewing spaces overlooking fountains
39. Tentatively named mixed-use longshot on Wet 'n' Wild site on north Strip, with 2,500 rooms and condos, 6,000-seat theater, 18,000-seat arena, shopping center
40. Plans announced to move from present site to much larger venue in Arts District
41. Renderings released for new Bally's hotel-casino around A's stadium, with 3,000 rooms, 105,000-square-foot casino, 2,500-seat theater; half-million-square-foot dining, entertainment, Vegas Loop station.
42. Multi-billion-dollar movie studio/filmmaking center voted down by state, will resurface sooner than later
43. Long-planned pedestrian bridges at Sahara/Strip inching along in design phase; construction could start in 2026
44. \$3 billion integrated resort with 20,000-seat arena shopping for a location
45. Long-stalled development for former site of Paddle-wheel/Debbie Reynolds/ Clarion showing signs of life
46. Plans for Station Casinos' 600-room hotel-casino on 45-acre parcel in Henderson
47. Land acquired and plans submitted for a Station Casinos' resort in North Las Vegas
48. Plans approved for 300-unit hotel tower adjacent to parking garage and Skyline Project retail, dining, entertainment district
49. \$435 million renovation announced to bring three of the four halls up to newest West Hall standards
50. 699-foot tower approved for small Strip site by FAA; no schedule announced
51. Idea floated to build a casino on top of mall
52. Plans submitted for 370,000-square-foot convention center at northwest corner of property
53. Possible pedestrian bridge over I-15 to connect Rio to back of Caesars Palace
54. Work proceeding on museum in Arts District, with a planned opening sometime during the year
55. Hotel-casino/astronaut-training-center/spaceport/executive-airport planned for 240-acre site near Pahrump
56. Environmental impact proceeding for planned new airport on 6,000 acres of federal land near Jean

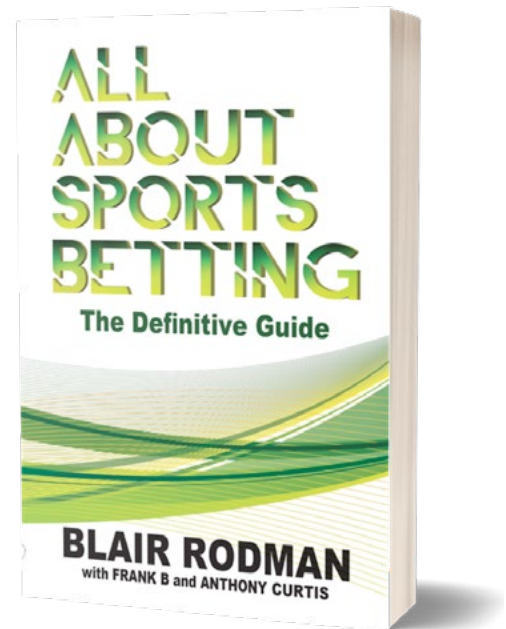
All About Sports Betting

Our new book, *All About Sports Betting—The Definitive Guide*, is at the printer. The author is Blair Rodman, who also wrote our poker-tournament book *Kill Phil* and has worked with LVA for many years. Frank B and I are co-authors. This marks the first time that Frank has been a part of a book. He's long been considered one of the top sports betting experts in the world and you won't be disappointed with what he brings to the effort.

The book is big, over 350 pages, and it covers many aspects of sports betting. It was originally conceived as a guide for beginners and it fulfills that purpose—if you've wanted to learn how to bet in a sports book or online, AASB shows you how. For those who already know how to make a bet, there's a lot of information that will improve your game, including a 98-page chapter titled "Can You Win?" that addresses betting strategies. To be honest, it was the amount of time it took to write this chapter, in which all three of us are involved, that delayed publication by a year.

If you want AASB right away, it's available now from [Amazon](#). Or if you're willing to wait until we get our shipment later this month, you can take advantage of our [pre-pub offer](#) that includes free shipping for the best deal (see offer on the wrap). This is a good one.

Next up: *Breaking the Slot Code*.



Member Rewards ETA

The ETA on this year's Member Rewards Books looks like January 16, at which time they'll be available at our office and we have stacks of envelopes waiting to be stuffed and dropped in the mail starting that day. Apologies to those coming to town before then, but it's the only way we've been able to do it in recent years, as many deals aren't finalized until the first week of the new year, then there's the printing period. In the meantime, the Member Rewards Online (MRO) offers are available to print and use now.

NEWS

Rampart—Rampart Casino has a new name. The casino is now the Resort at Summerlin, which was its original name when it opened in 1999 before changing to Regent Las Vegas in 2000, then soon after to Rampart. The name change coincides with the completion of a \$75 million upgrade of the resort that includes renovated rooms and convention space, a new high-limit room, a food hall, and a Caesars sports book that will open in time for the Super Bowl.

NoMad—Almost two years after it was acquired by Hilton, NoMad at Park MGM has finally rebranded. The hotel-within-a-hotel is now The Reserve at Park MGM. As a result, all NoMad venues will be renamed. NoMad Pool will turn into the Terrace Pool, NoMad Library will be just the Library, and NoMad Bar will become The Reserve Bar. Being an MGM property, it's expected that the new Reserve will be incorporated into Marriott Bonvoy's Autograph Collection.

Cadance Crossing—Boyd Gaming reports that Cadance Crossing is on track to open on Boulder Highway this summer, though a specific date hasn't been named. A story in the *LV Review-Journal* says there will be 450 slot machines, but there's no mention of table games, the first indication we've seen that it may be an all-slots/ETGs casino.

Durango Casino—The first elements of the expansion at Durango Casino have been completed. The resort debuted a new parking garage and a high-limit slots room last month. The garage adds 2,000 parking spaces.

Dream—What was to be Dream Hotel-Casino on the far south end of the Strip has been put up for sale by the lead contractor, which became the owner after a settlement over unpaid bills. The listing broker says it has received offers in the "\$50 million range" for the 4.7-acre parcel that was originally purchased for \$21 million in 2020; however, the project has reportedly had more than \$120 million invested in early construction, which will provide a new developer with a major head start on whatever the site turns into.

Chinatown—With the Chinatown improvement project underway and three major developments recently announced, a fourth shopping complex has been added to the mix. This one, called Jade Promenade, is to be located on a vacant lot on the north side of Spring Mountain Road at Wynn Road. Ground is expected to be broken on the \$40 million six-building commercial center at the end of the year. A second \$30 million phase, a 150-unit apartment complex, is also planned. Work is slated to begin on all four projects by summer.

New York—Hard Rock, Bally's, and Resorts World have been approved as the three licensees to operate full-scale casinos in New York City. Hard Rock, in a partnership with the NY Mets, will build near the baseball stadium; Bally's will be in the Bronx; and Resorts World will expand its operation in Queens. While HR and Bally's have to build their casinos, Resorts World will be able to add previously disallowed table games, sports betting, and poker in its existing casino, but will also begin building a new casino-hotel of its own. All three are projecting 2030 completion dates.

Macau—Aiding its steady trek back to being the gambling capital of the world, the 2025 visitor total in Macau has exceeded 39.4 million, the pre-pandemic record set in 2019. The number doesn't include the New Year's count. The year's gambling win has not yet been reported.

Statistics—Nevada's statewide gambling win was up 5.9% in October compared to the same month last year, taking in \$1.35 billion. The Strip win was down 8.2% and the downtown win down .2%. In a flip-flop from last month, the Strip baccarat win was up 69.4% while the slot win was down 2.4%.

Visitation was down 4.4% with 3.4 million coming to town. It was the 10th consecutive monthly decline, but the smallest percentage-wise since January. Hotel occupancy was up compared to September at 83.7%, with 92.7% weekends and 80.1% weekdays.

Airline traffic was down 8.2%, with 4.9 million travelers. In its yearly review, the global flight-tracking app Flightly.com found that Frontier Airlines, fifth on the list of busiest airlines at Reid International and first among the ultra-low-cost carriers, experienced the most flight delays in 2025, with 28% of flights delayed nationwide by an average of 14 minutes. Frontier was followed, domestically, by Jet-Blue and Southwest at 25%, American (24%), and Alaska (23%).

SPORTS BETTING SCORECARD

Sports betting proponents are making a renewed push for legalization in Georgia, where gambling initiatives have been turned back for years. Most of the attention nationally, though, is on the prediction markets as they attempt to open and grab market share. Both FanDuel and DraftKings have resigned from the American Gaming Association, due to its opposition to the exchanges, with both companies in the process of entering the space. See more on this in GAMBLING.

Follow the progress of sports betting legalization across the country and track developments as they occur via our map at [LasVegasAdvisor.com](https://lasvegasadvisor.com).

TOP 10

1	Steak Dinner - Ellis Island Daily - \$9.99	6	Hot Dog/Beer - Downtown Grand Daily - \$3
2	Beer - Stage Door Daily - \$1	7	Prime Rib - Ellis Island Daily - \$17.50
3	Cheeseburger & Fries - Station Casinos Daily - \$5.99	8	Breakfast - Emerald Island Daily - \$5.99
4	Buffet - Palms Daily - \$23.50/\$40	9	Jen Kramer - Westgate Fri-Sun - \$56.80 (for 2)
5	Shrimp Cocktail - Slots A Fun Daily - \$2	10	\$1 Blackjack - Downtown Grand Daily - \$1.20

The Ellis Island complete steak dinner returns to the #1 spot after being displaced by the bargain room rates in December. Served 24/7 in the Café, get the \$9.99 price by playing at least \$5 in any machine with your club card inserted, then downloading the required discount coupon from an EI kiosk. If you don't want to play, you can get it for \$12.99 (\$3 off the listed price) just by downloading a coupon from the kiosk that's available to everyone with a club card. Budweiser in the bottle is \$1 at the Stage Door on Flamingo (#2) just east of the Strip. The street says this one might not last long, so get 'em while you can. A cheeseburger & fries is \$5.99 all day at several Station Casinos locations (#6). It's available in the Brass Forks at Palace, Sunset, and Santa Fe Stations, the Lucky Pennys at Green Valley Ranch and Red Rock, and Game On at Boulder Station when you show a Boarding Pass players card. The A.Y.C.E. Buffet at the Palms (#4) drops a couple spots due to some restrictions on this year's Member Rewards offer, but it's still the best in town with our deal (listed prices reflect LVA discount). Las Vegas' best-deal shrimp cocktail is at Slots A Fun (#5). It's available 24/7 at the bar, along with \$2 hot dogs, popcorn, and beer (park at Circus Circus and walk over). The \$3 hot dog and beer at Downtown Grand comes in at #6. The dog comes with kraut (there's also an excellent taco alternative) and the beer is PBR; it's served from the Lucky's snack bar daily from 11 am till about 10 pm. Ellis Island continues to serve the best prime rib dinner in town (#7). It's available from 11 am to 11 pm daily in the Café (listed price reflects LVA discount). The \$5.99 breakfast at Emerald Island (#8) is served in the Emerald Island Grille, daily from 11 pm to 3 pm and comes with two eggs; bacon, sausage, or hot link; hash browns or home fries; a slice of fruit; choice of toast, English muffin, or biscuits & gravy; add coffee for \$2.49. Westgate's *The Magic of Jen Kramer* checks all the boxes as the best show value (#9). Get two tickets for this excellent magic revue for \$57 with your Member Rewards discount. Downtown Grand's \$1-minimum blackjack game (#10) is dealt daily starting at 11 am until the pit closes at 2 am on weekdays and 5 am on Saturday and Sunday mornings; the \$1.20 listed cost is your expected loss for one hour of play at these stakes.

DINING

Buffet Update

There were no significant changes in pricing or availability in the casino buffets this month. Virgin Hotels has a new breakfast-only buffet that we're listing in [Spot Buffets](#) (see "[Quick-Reviews Blog](#)").

There are no dates for the Gospel Brunch at House of Blues in January.

We update our casino buffet listing with a call-around every month and input the changes. Check the listing for [current prices](#).

Following is the list of the 11 operating buffets in order of overall pricing, from lowest to highest: South Point, Circus Circus, Main Street Station, Palms (with MRO), Rampart, MGM Grand, Excalibur, Cosmopolitan, Bellagio, Wynn, Caesars Palace.

Landwer Cafe

Landwer dates back to 1919 and its Israeli-Middle Eastern dishes are nothing if not traditional/authentic and scrumptious/huge.

[Continue Reading](#)

Nom Wah

The first restaurant to open in Manhattan's Chinatown in 1920, Nom Wah has 120 years' experience serving dim sum, buns, and wonton soup.

[Continue Reading](#)

How Ya Dough'n

Just opened at the new BLVD mall, this pizzeria is tailor made for the Las Vegas Strip, which might or might not be a good thing.

[Continue Reading](#)

Restaurant Recap

What's a new year without a recap? We've got a doozy for you, with Neon Feast's epic three-parter that covers the whole Las Vegas dining scene.

[Continue Reading](#)

Quick-Reviews Blog

This month we review the Virgin Hotels breakfast buffet and a new AYCE sushi restaurant with the lowest price in town.

[Continue Reading](#)

Dining Notes

Shrimp Cocktail—Two more shrimp cocktail specials have surfaced. The first for \$2.99 is available in the Brass Fork at Palace Station and Game on at Boulder Station and the second for \$3.99 is at the Toscana Bar at Tuscany.

Charlie's Breakfast—Arizona Charlie's Decatur and Boulder are running breakfast specials in the Sourdough Cafés from 11 pm to 6 am, including bacon/sausage & eggs for \$5.99 and steak & eggs for \$10.99 with a club card.

BOGO Fajitas—Mi Casa at Silverton has 2-for-1 fajitas on Thursdays in January.

AYCE Seafood—The three Crab N Spice restaurants in Las Vegas have an all-you-can-eat seafood boil for \$38.99. A fourth Crab N Spice that's scheduled to open at the "end of January" (6910 S. Rainbow) is advertising the AYCE deal for \$27.99.

Single Steakhouse—So much for steakhouses in Las Vegas, at least according to London-based 101 Best Steak Restaurants, which deploys 21 anonymous inspectors on five continents, each with its own best-of list,

to evaluate steakhouses worldwide. On this year's just-released list, New York is the dominant U.S. city with 20 of them, followed by Chicago with five and Los Angeles with four. Las Vegas' lone entry is Delmonico at the Venetian. Topping the list is Don Julio Parrilla in Buenos Aires.



Michelin Returning—After a more than 15-year absence, the *Michelin Guide* is returning to cover the Las Vegas restaurant scene. Nevada will be part of a 2026 Southwest edition that will also include Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah.

Openings/Closings

Gymkhana, a two-Michelin-star Indian restaurant from the United Kingdom, has opened at Aria.



Eggslut has opened at the Rio, filling the void left by the closing of Hash House A Go Go. It's the second in Las Vegas; the first opened at the Cosmopolitan in 2016.

The former Night + Market at Virgin is now Chef Xue, serving Chinese cuisine.

The hot pot restaurant Copper Sun has opened at Resorts World.



Avenue Café returns to MGM Grand this month, reclaiming the space it relinquished to the one-year run of Netflix Bites, which concluded January 4.

Salt & Straw ice cream restaurants have opened at the Flamingo and Paris. There's also a Salt & Straw in the UnCommons complex.

A Denny's has opened on the second floor of Silver Sevens, replacing the City Café coffee shop.

Ada's Food + Wine has shortened its name to Ada's after a move from Tivoli to the first location of Esther's Kitchen in the Arts District.

Guerrilla Pizza has opened in Soho Lofts on Las Vegas Blvd. near downtown. Specializing in Detroit-style pizza, Guerrilla formerly operated out of the Hard Hat Lounge.

Saint Felix Sin City has opened in The Bend complex at Sunset and Durango. It's a restaurant/nightclub out of Hollywood.

Carlos 'n Charlie's has closed at the Flamingo.

The Halal Guys in Chinatown is closed after being destroyed by a fire; there's no word on plans to rebuild and reopen.

— Entertainment —

Golden Gate Open Bar

Golden Gate's "The Night Starts Here" promo is bumping things up in the new year. The daily one-hour open bar is bringing back the dancing girls who performed in the pit before the live games closed and adding a few more elements. Higher-tiered players club members will have a priority check-in line and bigger free-play bonuses, along with access to the High-Limit Status Bar. Lower tiers will still get the open bar from 6 to 7 pm daily, along with an envelope with free-play of \$5 or more. There's also a new tournament element that will award a pool of \$1,000 in free-play divided among the top 10 point earners (coin-in accumulation) between 4 and 8 pm. You can get more details about the promotion [here](#).

DiscoShow Down

DiscoShow, the Spiegelworld production at The LINQ, has closed. The writing was on the wall when they began giving away tickets last month. We pointed out the good opportunity in last month's LVA, but the show didn't last as long as reservations for the freebies were being taken. That's unfortunate, but good work by those who took advantage early and got the free show. Lesson learned.

Bars and Happy Hours

Viva at Resorts World has a happy hour daily from 3 to 5 pm, with \$6 beer and wine and \$12 margaritas.

Borracha Mexican Cantina at Green Valley Ranch has \$5 margaritas on Wednesdays.

Saint Felix Sin City (see DINING) has a happy hour Wed.-Sat. from 5 to 8 pm and Sunday from 3 to 8 pm, with wine and cocktails starting at \$10 and \$5-\$10 small bites.

Nevada Brew Works has a happy hour Mon.-Fri. from 2 to 5 pm, with \$6 beer, \$7 call drinks, \$8, wine, \$9 martinis, and \$10 appetizers (we think the first 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 HH we've ever seen). A second HH runs Sun.-Thurs. from 9 to 11 pm, with the same offerings as the first, plus 50%-off steaks. The steak discount is also good all day on Sundays.

In its monthly contribution for LVA, Happy Hour Vegas lists the [favorite happy hours](#) of some Las Vegas celebrities, with some you've seen before and some you haven't.

Arizona Charlie's Decatur is advertising \$2.50 draft beer 24/7 at all bars.

A third Born and Raised bar has closed, leaving only one in the northwest part of town (6470 Kevin Way).

The Tiki Bar has opened at Excalibur. It's the first tiki-style bar ever at an MRI property and the only one on the Strip.



Entertainment Notes

Ross Returns—The legendary Diana Ross, now 81, will perform three shows at the Encore Theater over Valentine's Day weekend. Her show, "Diana in Motion," will play on Feb. 12, 14, and 15.

Allegiant Soars—Allegiant Stadium was the top-grossing stadium in the United States and the second highest in the world for 2025, according to *Billboard Magazine*. It's the second consecutive year that Allegiant was number one in the nation. The stadium grossed more than \$281 million from live events, including concerts by Billy Joel, Sting, and Beyoncé, plus WrestleMania 41, the Alvarez/Crawford boxing match, the 2025 Concacaf Gold Cup, Rugby League Las Vegas, the Las Vegas Bowl, and eight Raiders home games. The LVCVA estimates that 62% of Las Vegas visitors come specifically for events at the stadium, resulting in a \$1.1 billion economic impact for southern Nevada.

Oz Surges—*The Wizard of Oz* at Sphere has surpassed another milestone: 1.5 million tickets, generating nearly \$200 million in sales. That's about \$2 million a day, just in ticket sales. Sphere topped the Arena category worldwide in the *Billboard* survey referenced above.

CardVault—Former NFL star Tom Brady is growing his brand in Las Vegas. CardVault by Tom Brady, a platform for sports and trading

cards and memorabilia, has opened in The Shoppes at Mandalay Place at MBay. It's the 10th location of the brand, which Brady is a part-owner in and spokesman for. Brady is also a partner in the Las Vegas Raiders and hosts a memorabilia museum at Fontainebleau.



Museum of Art—Plans have been unveiled for the Las Vegas Museum of Art. The 60,000-square-foot freestanding building will be located in downtown's Symphony Park area in the vicinity of the Smith Center and is scheduled to be completed in 2029.

Winter Bikinis—The "Winter Swim Bikini Contest" takes place at Circa's Stadium Swim on January 31. The contest runs from noon to 4 pm and admission is the standard Stadium Swim admission charge of \$25.

Paradox Closes—After a little more than two years of operation on the Strip, the Paradox Museum has closed.

GAMBLING

Taxes

The Internal Revenue Service has finally confirmed that the threshold for gamblers being issued W-2Gs for slot and video poker jackpots will change from \$1,200 to \$2,000, effective now. It's the first time in nearly 50 years that the threshold for IRS paperwork on machine jackpots has been raised. In addition, the level will be adjusted annually for inflation. It's not expected that all slot machines nationwide will be reprogrammed by January 1; many will no doubt continue to lock up at \$1,200 for a little while. But no W-2Gs will be issued unless the jackpot is for \$2,000 or more. For video poker players, that means a 50¢ royal flush, as well as royals in higher denominations and all progressives that reach \$2,000 and above.

Now, the gambling world is holding its collective breath for clarification of the 90%-of-losses issue. It should exhale. As we predicted, little was done to push for an amendment of the new law until very late last year and it didn't change; it's now in effect. Hopes persist for a retroactive amendment, but any kind of change at this point seems highly unlikely. Our best advice is to keep good records, so you have as much information as possible when it comes time to determine how to settle with the IRS. The issue is explained in depth in [LVA 8/25](#).

Silver Sevens Reversal

After replacing its live tables with electronic table games (ETGs) last year, Silver Sevens has reversed course and brought back live blackjack. There are three tables in the pit, all with \$5 minimums when we checked. All deal 6 decks from continuous shufflers, naturals pay 3-2, dealer hits soft 17, double after split and resplit aces allowed. That's a .55% casino edge versus perfect basic strategy, easily making this one of the best games in town for this low of a minimum. There's also a hybrid (digital betting) crap table in the pit that isn't yet active.

The Silver Sevens reversal is interesting in light of Golden Gate's recent switch to ETGs, which some thought would stimulate similar actions elsewhere, not a move back to traditional play. The same thing happened at Tuscany, where live tables returned in 2023 after a three-year absence. We'll see if Golden Gate holds the line.

Prediction Contradiction

Prediction markets—which can function as sport betting exchanges—are attempting to gain footing, both legally and commercially, and the battle with traditional sports books is heating up. Last month, the head of one of the leading prediction companies, Polymarket, took the gloves off in an interview: “None of them [major sports books] innovate. They all rip off the consumer ... They can go and ban you if you make money, they can kick you off, and they can profile you as a user and change the prices based on you, like, that's a scam.” Okay, good point. At the same time, however, an analysis conducted by Citizens Financial Group indicated that pricing on NFL money lines, totals, and parlays at another major prediction player, Kalshi, was inferior to what was available in traditional-bookmaker wagering at FanDuel and DraftKings. It's one study and the difference wasn't large—mostly in the .25% range after prediction transaction fees—but a potent promise from prediction/exchanges was to provide a better deal for the bettor. The prediction companies will have to make good on that promise if they're gonna break through on a significant level.

Gambling Notes

Jackpots—A player at Fontainebleau hit a \$1.2 million jackpot off a \$25 bet on a Dragon Link slot. A player at Resorts World hit for \$1.2 million playing a \$5 Double Super Times Pay video poker machine when he made three royal flushes with a 20x multiplier.

Five Survived—The Circa Survivor contest went into the final week with six players remaining, five of whose teams won for a split prize pool that paid \$3,743,600 to each. If you've ever felt star-crossed while playing a contest, consider this: The lone player whose team lost this year also lost in the final week of the contest last year.

Strip Bingo—Circus Circus has announced the opening of a bingo room in February. The 225-seat room on the second floor will be the only live bingo on the Strip, and the first since the last one closed at the Riviera in 2012.

GVR Poker—The Green Valley Ranch poker room has reopened, bringing back live poker there

for the first time since the room closed in 2020 during the COVID shutdown.

Bracelet Glut—In an interview with *Card Player*, Phil Hellmuth made the point that the value of World Series of Poker championship bracelets is being diluted by the addition of so many WSOP-bracelet events, including tournaments in Europe, the Bahamas, and online. Being the record holder with 17, Phil has a self-serving reason to want to limit the number of bracelets available, but it's hard to argue with his contention that at more than 200 per year and growing, the prestige factor is compromised.

Ivey/Sun—A 19-minute YouTube video titled “How They Legally Cheated Every Casino For \$21 Million & Then Vanished” animates the story of Phil Ivey and Kelly Sun as they beat casinos in London and Atlantic City playing baccarat. The story has been told before, including in our book, *Advantage Players*, but this video provides visual examples of the edge-sorting technique employed. It's worth a watch.

Lottery—A single player in Arkansas won the Powerball jackpot of \$1.82 billion, the second largest in U.S. lottery history, after a record-setting 46 drawings without a winner. The winning numbers were 4, 25, 31, 52, 59, and Power Ball 19.



Video Poker Lost and Found

According to the online database vpFREE2.com, Suncoast has removed its highest-returning schedules, but still has a good selection, including 9/7 Triple Double Bonus (99.58%) from 25¢ to \$1, 9/6 Jacks or Better (99.54%) from \$1 to \$10, and 8/5 Bonus Poker (99.17%) from 5¢ to \$25.

Also from vpFree2, Emerald Island continues to improve on its excellent game selection and now has several good progressives, topped by a nickel 10/7 Double Bonus game that returns 100.17% at reset and only gets better from there. At the bar, there's 9/6 JoB progressives for 25¢ (breakeven at \$1,225) and \$1 (BE \$4,900) and Deuces Wild Bonus progressives paying 9 for a straight flush for 25¢ (BE \$1,300) and \$1 (BE \$5,125), among others.

Eureka on E. Sahara runs a promotion called “Young @ Heart,” whereby customers 55 years old and up get \$25 in free-play on Sundays. No additional play is required, but if you earn 300 points, you also get a \$10 food comp. You must have a club card and show ID at the cashier's cage. You can play it at lots of 99%+ games on the floor, including NSU Deuces Wild (99.73%) from 5¢ to 25¢. Best at the bar is 7/5 Bonus Poker with a RF progressive that's BE at \$1,900 (no taxable now) and was at \$1,764 on our last visit.

Four Queens is extending its November/December deal to January/February. Earn 600 points (\$4,800 coin-in) at Four Queens or Binion's and get \$60 in free-play. You can do it at both casinos in both months for a total bonus of \$240. This is a good play worth \$150-\$200, plus good comp dollars, but with a lot of risk.

Jackpot Bar and Grille has adjusted its daily promo and is now requiring \$250 coin-in for a \$20 bonus. That's just an 8% premium, which is still a positive play, but also involves a lot of risk for a low expected win. Our cutoff for playing comfortably is 10%.

Jackson's bar has discontinued its 350/50 bonus.

Check out Bob Dancer's Tuesday blog at LasVegasAdvisor.com.

These promotions change frequently, check for updated information here.

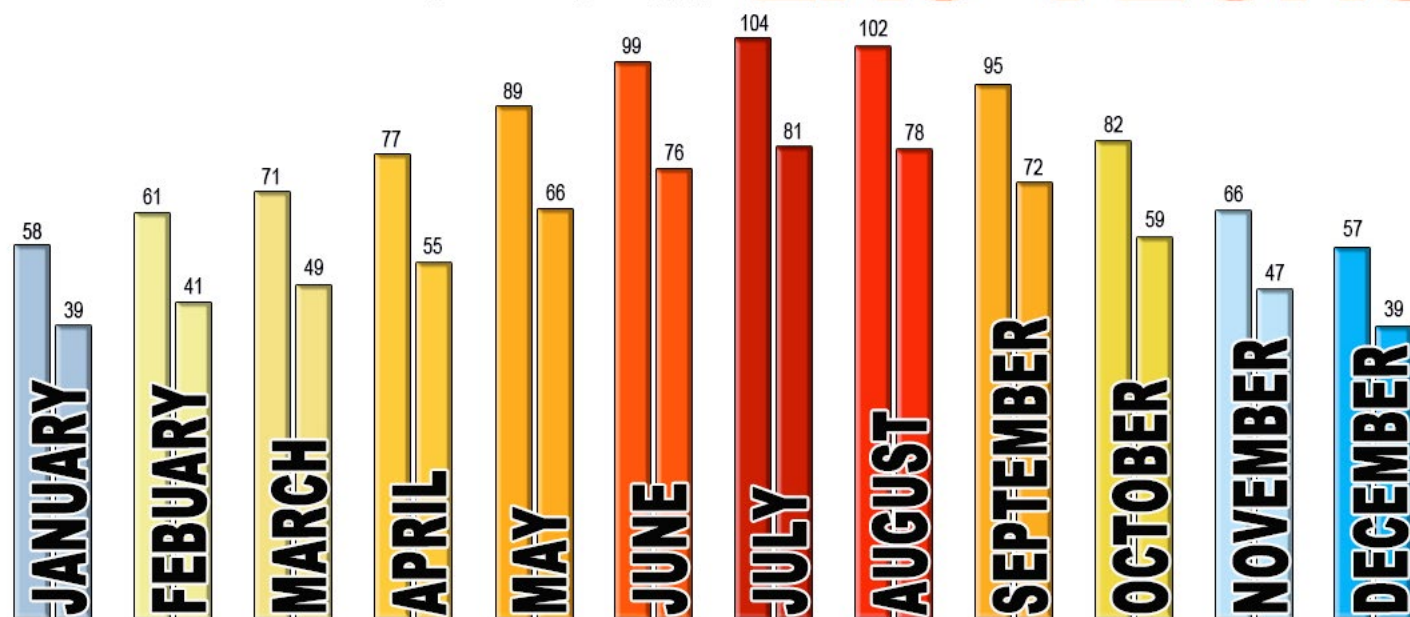
Question of the Day

Did Terrence Watanabe really lose
\$200 million to Las Vegas?

This QOD ran on November 13, 2025. [Read the answer here.](#)

AVERAGE

HIGH & LOW TEMPERATURES IN LAS VEGAS



JANUARY

Mean 45°
Avg. Max. 58° Avg. Min. 39°

Cool and dry. Days are crisp,
but pleasant. Cold evenings.

Pools: Closed

Attire: Sweater and jacket—
desert winters are cold.

FEBRUARY

Mean 50°
Avg. Max. 61° Avg. Min. 41°

Days begin to warm, evenings
still cool.

Pools: Closed

Attire: Light jacket for day,
something warm for evenings.

MARCH

Mean 56°
Avg. Max. 71° Avg. Min. 49°

A fickle month for weather.
Occasional rain and high
winds, warm days.

Pools: Closed

Attire: Light jacket or sweater
for evenings.