



Break the Slot Code

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SLOT SLAYERS

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2026

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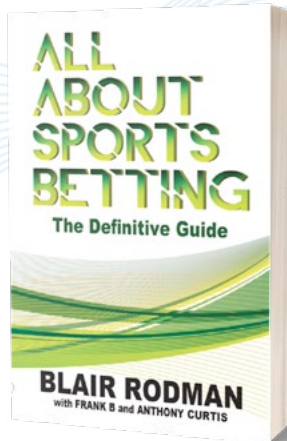
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the D	388-2400	800-274-5825
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The STRAT	380-7777	800-998-6937
Treasure Island (TI)	894-7111	800-944-7444
Tuscany	893-8933	877-887-2261
Vdara	590-2767	866-745-7767
Venetian	414-1000	877-883-6423
Virgin	693-5000	800-693-7625
Waldorf Astoria	590-8888	800-925-3673
Westin Lake Las Vegas	567-6000	
Westin Las Vegas	836-5900	800-937-8461
Westgate Las Vegas	732-5111	800-732-7117
Wildfire	648-3801	
Wynn Las Vegas	770-7000	866-770-7077

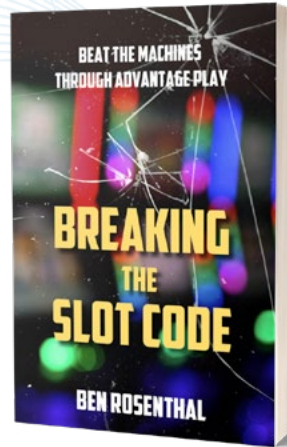
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Cover Image: SlotSlayers.com

LAS VEGAS ADVISOR (ISSN 1064-167X USPS 008602) is published monthly and is available for \$60 per year. All information is current at press time. Listed offerings are subject to change at any time. Huntington Press ©2023

COUPONOMY

SlotSlayers

Our new book *Breaking the Slot Code (BTSC)* is finally out and by now in the hands of pre-pub buyers. The book is getting a lot of attention, not just from the players, but from the casino industry, as this is a subject that has them in a quandary. Why? Author Ben Rosenthal explains in this comment from the book.

Here's the dilemma for the casinos. They're still getting their generous payouts from the advantage machines over a large sample, but their regular customers are playing them at the bottom of their builds—which is where they're often left after a grinder is through with them—and they're getting steamrolled. If they lose every time, why would they come back and lose some more?

Players of all ilk love these games and as Ben states, the casinos make a lot of money from them, but they hate the slot “vultures.” Hence, the quandary. How will the casinos react?

That's discussed in the book, but for now, the beatable slots are everywhere and that's a good thing. However, some words of caution are in order. Most importantly, *BTSC* isn't a magic pill; it doesn't tell you how to walk up to a machine and beat it out of the gate and it doesn't show you how to pick a favorite game and play it anytime you want. The strategies work on “variable-state” games, which means they're beatable only under proper conditions, and different machines become playable at different times. Even then, there's competition, so you'll need to put in the time to carve out +EV opportunities. That includes sometimes opting for out-of-the-way casinos and stand-alone bars. In fact, if you visit bars in Las Vegas and other gambling towns often, a single chapter will pay for the cost of the book: the one chapter on Ultimate X video poker. Profitable UX situations show up constantly in bars and *BTSC* is the first book to provide the proper strategy for playing them.

Back to the casino dilemma, it remains to be seen how the situation will play out, but in the meantime, we're taking things to a much higher level with SlotSlayers.com. This is a new website for players of all levels and bankrolls who intend to play these games for ongoing profit. Whereas *BTSC* covers 25 games and explains concepts so you can identify other AP slots that aren't in the book, SlotSlayers identifies more than 200 different games and shows you how to play them through videos with voiceover explanations. New videos are added as new games are discovered. You'll also find condensed strategies for all the games, which facilitate instant recognition of profitable opportunities. The SlotSlayer message boards give you direct access to Ben Rosenthal for questions and discussions, not to mention input from other members. These boards are already active and we envision building a vibrant community of like-minded contributors.

The value of this information is such that this is a fee-based website. Monthly access is a recurring \$30 per. If you opt for a year's membership, it's \$270, which equates to three months free, and it comes with a copy of the book. There's also a \$100 option that doesn't include the videos.

Of course, they're not for everyone, but AP slots represent the easiest point of entry to advantage gambling that I've seen in decades. Get more information and watch some sample videos [here](#).



Poker Books

It's poker time in Las Vegas. Not just poker time, but tournament-poker time. I can say without hesitation that Huntington Press has published the best books on the beatable gambling games, with the exception of two: horse racing and poker.

Explaining why horse racing is easy—it's extremely specialized, the house edge is large so it's difficult to overcome, and the market for the information is small. The APs who've conquered horse racing have made fortunes, but they do it on a scale that the everyday player could never compete with. Hence, we've left horse racing alone.

The other is poker, and the reason for that is even easier to explain—there was a better poker publisher out there in Two Plus Two Publishing, created by Mason Malmuth and David Sklansky. Talk about timing—2+2 popped up just as the poker wave hit, and those guys rode that wave all the way to their own private islands. They published a lot of good titles, but the Dan Harrington series really blew it open for them. They deserved it. If you play poker, especially tournaments, you have to read Harrington.

We thought 2+2 had poker wrapped up, including the best tournament book on the market, so we stayed out of the space. But poker tournaments got so popular so fast, they became big-money vehicles for the best players and the strategies evolved. That was when we jumped in.

We saw an opening in providing even better tournament strategies and kicked it off with Lee Nelson and Blair Rodman teaming up to write *Kill Phil*, which put forth a potent strategy for beginners in poker tournaments of any kind. Malmuth himself gave the book a 10 in his review, the only time he ever bestowed that rating on a non-Two Plus Two book. Blair stepped back from poker, as we know, and moved into sports betting (see [GAMBLING](#)), but Lee wasn't done. He went on to recruit some of the best of the new breed to write three more game-theory/equilibrium-based tournament books for HP. Here's the list:

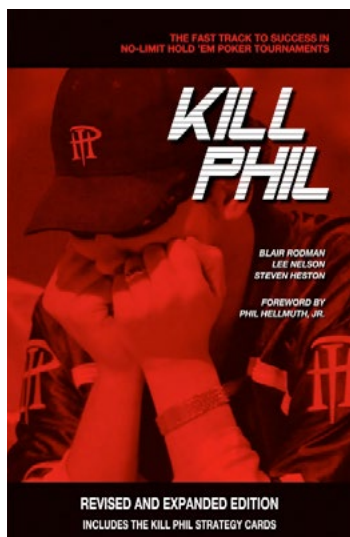
Kill Phil—The Fast Track to Success in No-Limit Hold 'em Poker Tournaments

Kill Everyone—Advanced Strategies for No-Limit Hold 'em Poker Tournaments

The Raiser's Edge—Tournament-Poker Strategies for Today's Aggressive Game

Flop, Turn, River—A Hand-By-Hand Analysis of No-Limit Hold 'em Tournament Poker Strategies

If following the WSOP this month gets you itchin' to get in the tournament game, you can find all of these books with explanations of what they cover in the [LVA store](#) and [Amazon.com](#).



Sklansky

Gambling luminary David Sklansky passed away in March at the age of 78. I knew David. Brilliant guy (he's often called the "father of mathematical poker theory"). Strange guy. But boy, his stuff was great. I still maintain that the two books you should read if you're serious about playing poker are his *The Theory of Poker* and our *Decide to Play Great Poker*. And if you pick just one, it's *Theory* hands down. David wrote other excellent poker books, but my second favorite is his catch-all gambling book, *Getting the Best of it*. Aspiring APs, find it and read it.

CET and MGM

Caesars Entertainment and MGM Resorts International are being bought out? Well, not yet, but breaking news as we go to press makes the Caesars deal look highly likely (see NEWS) and an offer has just been put on the table for MGM. As you might expect, these developments are intriguing to me, as these two companies are the primary instigators of the Vegas Gouge, of which LVA has been highly critical. It's gonna take some time to sort out what's happening, if anything winds up happening at all, but count me as being all for new regimes coming in on both fronts. I expect I'll have more to say on this subject next month.

NEWS

Caesars Entertainment—Caesars Entertainment has entered into an agreement to be acquired by Fertitta Entertainment in an all-cash transaction valued at \$17.6 billion. The deal includes a "go-shop" period through July 11 that gives Caesars six weeks to consider other offers. If this deal goes through, Fertitta will assume \$11.9 billion of Caesars' outstanding debt, meaning a roughly \$5.7 billion cash outlay for the acquisition. All the Caesars executives and management teams are expected to retain their positions; however, it will be the end of Caesars as a public company, as Tilman Fertitta will take it private and add to his ever-expanding holdings, which include the Golden Nugget casinos, the Landry's restaurant chain, and the Houston Rockets. An interesting aside, this acquisition would also give Fertitta the Tropicana and Harrah's in Laughlin. Together with the Golden Nugget there, he'd control three of the eight Laughlin casinos.

Primm—For decades, Primm, Nevada has been a first casino stop for many visitors traveling to Las Vegas on I-15 from Los Angeles. That will soon end after Affinity Gaming's announcement that the last of the three casinos there is closing. Whiskey Pete's closed in December 2024 and Buffalo Bill's closed last July. The last of the three, Primm Valley, will shutter after business on July 4. The Lotto Store just over the state line in California that drew thousands of lotto hopefuls from Las Vegas will also close. Once home to the three operating casinos, a roller coaster, a concert arena, and an outlet mall, Primm is in danger of becoming Nevada's next ghost town, though the Primm family says it's working on bringing in new operators.

Thermometer—Before getting to Primm when traveling north on I-15, you have to pass the giant thermometer in Baker, which is up for sale in a 4.3-acre package listed for \$1.85 million. At 134 feet, it's billed as the world's tallest thermometer and is considered the gateway to Death Valley, which recorded the world's highest temperature of 134° in 1913.

Club Fortune North—Though information is still sparse, Truckee Gaming has indicated that Club Fortune North, successor to the Poker Palace, will open in late-June.

SkyVue—The 12-acre parcel of land on the south end of the Strip that was to be home to a second observation wheel and is distinguishable by the two concrete columns that have stood in the space since 2014 has been sold to a local real estate developer for \$70 million, or \$5.83 million per

acre. The developer has big plans for the acreage, including a heart-shaped 874-room hotel-casino, a giant heart-shaped LED marquee, a Fremont Street Experience-like covered pedestrian plaza, a theater, and a 265-foot-high "midair restaurant" that will incorporate those concrete columns. No financing details nor building schedules were divulged.

Bus Fares—The Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada, which oversees the Las Vegas bus system, has announced upcoming fare increases. Even facing a funding shortfall of more than \$100 million, it's the first increase since 2011. On the Strip route, a single ride will go from \$4 to \$5, the 24-hour pass will go from \$8 to \$10, and the two-hour and three-day passes will be eliminated. The new fares are expected to take effect in January.

Pahrump—Gold Town Casino has closed. It was operated by Golden Entertainment, which also runs the Pahrump Nugget Hotel and Casino and Lakeside Casino and RV Park there.

North Carolina—The first phase of the \$1.25 billion Catawba Two Kings Casino has opened in Kings Mountain near Charlotte, replacing an earlier version. It has 1,350 slots and a mix of 58 electronic and live table games, along with a restaurant and bar. It's being called an "introductory casino," with the greatly expanded complete version and a hotel due in 2027.

Statistics—Nevada's statewide gambling win was up 11.8% in March compared to the same month last year, taking in \$1.43 billion. The Strip win was up 14.4% and downtown notched a big 20.8% increase. For the second month in a row, only three reporting areas in Nevada registered a decline: Elko County (-4.8%), Wendover (-8.8%), and North Lake Tahoe again (-9.7%).

Las Vegas visitation was up for the second month in a row, with 3.5 million coming to town for a 1.9% increase. Hotel occupancy was up compared to February at 84.8%, with 93.3% weekends and 81.9% weekdays.

Airline traffic was down again at -4.2%, with 4.6 million travelers. Spirit Airlines shut down all operations, but despite being the second busiest carrier at Harry Reid International after Southwest, it didn't have a significant negative effect on travelers due to the fact that all 16 Spirit destinations from Las Vegas are served by other airlines.

For the sixth straight year, the U.S. commercial gaming industry (not including tribal and charitable casinos, racetracks, Class II devices, and lottery) set a new record for revenue. According to "State of the States 2026: The AGA Survey of the Commercial Casino Industry," the collective win was \$78.6 billion, up 9.1% over 2024.

A report by Gaming Compliance International estimates that global unregulated online gambling wagering volume was \$5.9 trillion in 2025. That makes it the world's third largest economy behind only the gross domestic product of the United States and China, and the total doesn't include the legal online and retail numbers.

SPORTS BETTING SCORECARD

There were no major developments in legalization last month, but with just 11 states without legal sports betting, some quiet periods are to be expected. Those 11 states are Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Minnesota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, and the two big ones, California and Texas.

Follow the progress of sports betting legalization across the country and track developments as they occur via our map at LasVegasAdvisor.com.

TOP 10

1	Steak Dinner - Ellis Island Daily - \$9.99	6	Prime Rib - Ellis Island Daily - \$17.50
2	Cheeseburger & Fries - Station Casinos Daily - \$5.99	7	Breakfast - Emerald Island Daily - \$5.99
3	Hot Dog/Beer - Downtown Grand Daily - \$3	8	Jimmy Kimmel Comedy Club LINQ Prom. - Daily - Free (for 2)
4	Beer - Stagedoor Daily - \$2	9	Frozen Margarita - Station Casinos 24 hrs. - \$1.99
5	Shrimp Cocktail - Slots A Fun Daily - \$2	10	Souvenir Photo - Binion's Daily - Free

The Ellis Island complete steak dinner remains in the #1 spot. 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. A cheeseburger & fries is \$5.99 all day at several Station Casinos locations (#2). 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 \$3 hot dog and beer at Downtown Grand comes in at #3. 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, or later. Heineken or Dos Equis in the bottle is \$2 at the Stage Door (#4) on Flamingo, just east of the Strip. 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). Ellis Island continues to serve the best prime rib dinner in town (#6). 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 (#7) 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. Our pick for the best show value in town is two free tickets to the "Jimmy Kimmel Comedy Club" (#9), that comes via our coupon in the Member Rewards Book and includes 20% off your food/drink. The frozen margarita (#9) is sold at the major Station casinos bars. The souvenir photo at Binion's (#10) is the best free souvenir in Sin City. Accessible 24/7, simply pose and press the button; the photo will be sent to your phone.

DINING

Buffet Update

Prices at Wynn Las Vegas have gone up \$5 across the board, resulting in a range of \$64.99 for daily brunch to \$84.99 for daily dinner. The Cosmopolitan has converted its weekday brunch to separate breakfast (\$49.99) and lunch (\$54.99); weekend brunch is priced highest at \$59.99. The MGM buffet has closed. There's good news for locals in a new incentive program at Virgin Las Vegas for Cherry Rewards members that includes the [Kitchen breakfast buffet](#) for \$9.99. Earn 100 points at the Resort at Summerlin June 2, 9, 23, and 30 and get a BOGO buffet. In Laughlin, Avi Resort & Casino has brought back its Harvest buffet on weekends for the summer. The Gospel Brunch at House of Blues runs June 14 and 28.

We update our casino buffet listing with a call-around every month and input the changes. Check the listing for [current prices](#) and see all of [this month's changes here](#).

Following is the list of the 10 operating buffets in order of overall pricing, from lowest to highest: South Point, Circus Circus, Main Street Station, Resort at Summerlin, Excalibur, Cosmopolitan, Palms, Bellagio, Wynn, Caesars Palace.

Restaurant Week

Now in its 19th year, Las Vegas Restaurant Week will be held June 1-12 (it's actually a 12-day event). Several of the city's top restaurants offer special three-course prix fixe menus, donating a portion of proceeds to Three Square Food Bank. The list of restaurants that participate in the event continues to grow and this year there are nearly 300 to choose from, including many of Las Vegas' best—Amalfi, Bouchon, Delmonico, Breeza, Peter Luger, Sparrow + Wolf, and Partage among them. You can see all participating restaurants, including their special three-course menus and prices, and make reservations, [here](#).

Lotus Returns

After a nearly 10-year closure that began with a leaky roof, the original Lotus of Siam has reopened in the Commercial Center on E. Sahara. Lotus became one of Las Vegas' most acclaimed restaurants and remained so by opening additional restaurants on E. Flamingo and at Red Rock Resort, but the original venue started everything and now it's back. The place has been modernized, but you can get a sense of the nostalgia by checking out the vintage photos on the walls (look for the photo with Anthony Curtis, Jessica Roe, and Blair and Roxanne Rodman). Hours are Wed.-Sun. from 5 to 10 pm.

Bootlegger

It's one of the great old-time Italian joints in Vegas and the only place you'll find neck bones.

[Continue Reading](#)

Giant Ham & Eggs (Mad Matty's)

Remember when a Vegas staple was the monster ham & eggs where the ham steak covered the plate? It's alive and well at this local bar, along with some other good deals.

[Continue Reading](#)

Inside NADC Burgers

In this month's Neon Feast contribution, Al Mancini talks to one of the smashburger kings of Las Vegas and gets to the bottom of why "pressed" is better than "smashed."

[Continue Reading](#)

Quick-Reviews Blog

This month Quick Reviews checks out two local options: a bar with a \$19.99 steak night and a rare source for broasted chicken.

[Continue Reading](#)

Reader Leader

You should check out *Hearthstone at Red Rock*—\$1 oysters on Wednesdays, plus if you use points from your players card it's half-price for over 50s. That's a dozen oysters for \$6!

LVA: It's been a while since we've seen 50¢ oysters, and they're just \$1 if you buy retail; it's the current best oyster deal in town.

Dining Notes

Summer in Italy—Ferraro's Ristorante has brought back its "Summer in Italy" special, running from June 15 to Aug. 23. The four-course meal with antipasti, pasta, main course, and dessert is \$75 per person, slightly up from last year's \$69. Ferraro's is an excellent non-casino restaurant located across the street from Virgin Hotel.

Lender's List—In a strange restaurant survey conducted by the financial lending company OnDeck that used Yelp rankings to determine the "highest-rated independent restaurants" (no chains) in the U.S., Las Vegas had two in the top 10. This result is interesting to us, given that neither restaurant has ever been mentioned in LVA. Listed at #3 is Alchemist Bar and Restaurant in Chinatown (4300 W. Spring Mtn.) offering an eclectic mix of drinks and Asian fare. At #9 is Rang's Cocina Moderne (5900 W. Charleston), serving Spanish/Italian/Asian fusion. Top-rated was the Japanese restaurant Sonmari in Los Angeles.

Yelp List BBQ—Here's strange-restaurant-survey number two. In a "Yelp Elites" (most-active reviewers) list of the "Top 100 BBQ Restaurants in the U.S.," Las Vegas has five spots. However, given all the good traditional barbecue joints in Vegas, all five on the Yelp list are Asian barbecues: Samurai Japanese BBQ and Grill (#14), Hobak Korean BBQ (#27), 8OZ Korean Steakhouse and Bar (#55), Master Kim's Korean BBQ (#78), and WinKee HK BBQ & Noodle (#97). We second the choice of 8OZ. Tops on the list was Little Miss BBQ-University in Phoenix.

Discount Down—The 30% discount at Mukgo Nolza that we wrote about last month has been discontinued.

Openings/Closings

Redhead Burger out of South Beach Miami has opened in the Grand Canal Shoppes at the Venetian, serving smashburgers daily until 2 am.

The local smashburger restaurant With Love, Always has opened its third location at Red Rock.

Nielsen's Frozen Custard has opened at Green Valley Ranch. Nielsen's are also located at Durango casino and at three other non-casino locations in town.

Third Street Grill has opened in the food hall at Fremont, serving breakfast and lunch with diner-style selections that include seven hot dog choices, open-faced turkey sandwich, meatloaf, fried chicken, and fish & chips.

The Sourdough Cafés at both Arizona Charlie's have been replaced by Denny's.

A second location of Istanbul Mediterranean serving Turkish fare has opened downtown in the space that was formerly Flippin' Good Burgers; the original is at the Grand Bazaar Shops in front of Horseshoe Las Vegas.

A second location of Café Breizh, serving French pastries and sandwiches, has opened at 9550 S. Eastern in



Henderson. The original is on the west side at 3555 S. Ft. Apache.

The Jonas Bros.-branded Nellie's Southern Kitchen has closed at MGM Grand; no plans for a replacement have been announced.

Heart Attack Grill, a long-time fixture at Neonopolis downtown, has closed. The eatery was well known for its servers dressed as nurses and cholesterol-clogging fare, including the gigantic Bypass Burger. HAG

closed with a condemnation of the Vegas Gouge by way of an open letter from the owner stating, "This decision stems from the reality that major casinos have intentionally priced the average person out of the quintessential American experience of affordable indulgence. The soul of Las Vegas has been replaced by corporate greed."

Le Café Central has closed in Chinatown.

Entertainment

Welcome to Our Nightmare

Shock-rock superstar Alice Cooper sings the hits and illusionist Criss Angel does the tricks on a shared stage at Planet Hollywood. The result is spectacular, and there's still time to see it.

[Continue Reading](#)

Entertainment Digest

We cover Las Vegas happenings daily in "Vegas News" on the LasVegasAdvisor.com home page. Following are links to entertainment-related stories that ran in March.

["City of Las Vegas: The Eighties" \(video\)](#)
[Scorsese Reprises Casino](#)
[Vanderpump Hotel Begets Reality Show](#)

Bars and Happy Hours

Beauty & Essex at the Cosmopolitan has a happy hour Sun.-Thurs. from 6 to 7 pm, with \$10 drinks and appetizers.

Mad Matty's has happy hours daily from 3 to 6 pm and midnight to 3 am, with \$5 beer, wine, and well drinks, and appetizers starting at \$5.

Ta'Chingon Flavors of Mexico (9360 W. Flamingo) has a happy hour daily from 3 to 6 pm, with \$3-off beer, well drinks, and appetizers, and \$8 margaritas.

The Déjà Vu topless club runs "Triple B's" (Bud, Bud Light, and boobs) daily from 8 pm to closing; bottles of the beers are \$1, we didn't price the boobs.

In its monthly contribution for LVA, [Happy Hour Vegas](#) zeros in on six new HHs, that range from a downtown tike bar to a scratch

kitchen (everything made in-house) in Henderson

If you're planning on having drinks at the airport on the way out of town, save some of your trip budget. A 20-ounce Modelo at the Budweiser Track & Grill is \$15.16.

Gigolo bar has opened at The Vanderpump Hotel in the space that was formerly Bond Bar. It's named for Lisa Vanderpump's tuxedo-wearing Pomeranian made famous in her TV shows and a commemorative statue of "Giggy" sits in the center of the bar.

Sunset Station has reopened the Gaudi Bar after a renovation. We haven't seen the new version, but the original was among the most aesthetically pleasing bars in Las Vegas.

PT's Gold Cadence has opened at 903 E. Lake Mead Pkwy. in Henderson.

Entertainment Notes

Fireworks—Las Vegas is pulling out all the stops to celebrate America's 250th birthday with eight consecutive Saturday nights of fireworks shows either on the Strip or downtown beginning June 6 and running through July 25. The eight-minute displays will start at 9 pm. Separately, beginning June 5 and running through September 4, downtown's Plaza will present its own fireworks shows on Fridays starting at 9:10 pm, preceded by a rooftop pool party starting at 7 pm.

Bolero at Plaza—*Bolero—The Show* will play one night only (June 20) at the Plaza. We don't know much about the production, but presenting good limited-run Broadway-style shows seems to be a reasonable option for the casino's perpetually vacant showroom. Tickets are \$75.

Mystere Family Night—*Mystere* at Treasure Island has initiated "Family Nights" on Mondays and Tuesdays for its early (6:30 pm) performances. There's no price adjustment on adult tickets, but kids (11 and under) are 50% off.

Pools Update—The slide that runs through the shark tank and, the entire aquarium area at the Golden Nugget pool have shut down and will be out of commission for the rest of the season due to "unforeseen maintenance." The Hideaway Pool at Top Golf has opened.

Pool Movies—Poolside movies are running this year at three casinos. Movie nights are on Mondays at Cosmopolitan, admission is \$15 for non-hotel guests; Tuesdays at Fontainebleau, \$15; and Sundays at M Resort, \$10.

Evel Knievel Museum—The Evel Knievel Experience, an interactive museum devoted to "America's original daredevil," debuts June 27. Long rumored and planned, the museum has finally relocated from Topeka, Kansas, to downtown Las Vegas in the Arts District. Tickets are \$35 and \$16 for ages 6-12.

FI Extended—Clark County commissioners have approved a 10-year contract extension for the Las Vegas Grand Prix, meaning the race will run through 2037, at least. The event has been controversial since year one in 2023,

because of the associated traffic snarls and disruptions of local businesses; the extension came with an admonition that race organizers "further condense future construction timelines and improve traffic mitigation." We'll see. The 2027 race will take place November 19-21.

EDC Expanded—Just days after the end of this year's Electric Daisy Carnival music festival, it was announced that next year's event will expand to a second weekend. The estimated 230,000 attendees overwhelmed the facilities this year, leading to the decision that will create "Dusk to Dawn," with the first weekend dubbed "EDC Dusk" and the second "EDC Dawn."

Yelp List Sports Bars—In a Yelp list of the "Top 100 Sports Bars," Las Vegas had three selections, including the overall #2, McMullan's Irish Pub. Also on the list was Hofbrauhaus (#16) and Roadrunner Saloon (#30). These follow this month's curious-selection trend (see DINING), given that McMullan's and Hofbrauhaus are predominantly bars for watching soccer games. The #1 sports bar in the U.S. was Shakespeare Pub and Grille in San Diego.



BTS at Pioneer—In another strange occurrence, the members of BTS, the Korean band that sold out four shows at Allegiant, K-Popped in for a surprise visit to the Pioneer Saloon in Goodsprings. Jung Kook, V, Jimin, and crew apparently wanted to hear some country music.

VGK Viewing—With the Vegas Golden Knights playing in the Stanley Cup finals, pretty much every bar in town will be airing

the games and most will be packed with the VGK's local, vocal, and extremely loyal fan base. Stadium Swim at Circa is showing the games with free entry if you wear VGK gear.

World Cup Viewing—The soccer World Cup begins June 11 and will be aired in all the sports books and bars. The bars mentioned in the Yelp list (pg. 9), along with Crown & Anchor and The Irish Spot, will be prime viewing spots for the premier matches (if you get there early enough to squeeze in). Circa is promoting its "World Soccer Championship Fan Zone," that will feature event-related photo ops and jersey giveaways.

More Sports—Still no NBA team, but Las Vegas will get one eventually and in the meantime is checking off other boxes for both professional sports and major events. The latest addition is the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL), which has announced that an expansion team will come to Las Vegas in time for next season. Additionally, Major League Soccer is said to be looking to relocate the Vancouver Whitecaps soccer team, with Las Vegas a leading candidate. The World Wrestling Championships come to Las Vegas Sept. 11-19, 2027, the first time in 12 years that it's been held in the U.S. And World Gymnaestrada will come here in 2031, the first time the biggest gymnastics event in the world will be held outside of Europe.

Casino Collectibles—The 33rd annual Casino Collectibles Association Show will take place June 18-20 at South Point. The show features more than 30 dealers of casino memorabilia, including chips, tokens, dice,

slot cards, Silver Strikes, playing cards, matchbooks, swizzle sticks, table felts, room keys, postcards, and more that are up for sale and auction bidding. Admission is \$10 on Thursday, \$5 on Friday, and free on Saturday. We reviewed last year's show [here](#).

Wine Legend—It's the end of an era at

Four Queens, where sommelier Jon Simmons is retiring (June 22) after more than 40 years at Hugo's Cellar. Jon is near and dear to LVA for two reasons. First, he was one of our first interviews back in the '80s, so long ago that we can't even link to a digital copy, but it was cool. Second, Jon's stepdaughter, Taylor, is our front-desk receptionist.



Jon was one of the first sommeliers in Vegas and he blazed the trail for the many that followed. Get to Hugo's this month and let Jon pick one more perfect bottle for you.



Cool Concerts

Tower of Power/War at Westgate Aug. 8 • Roger Daltrey at Encore Aug. 26-29 • Air Supply at Westgate Sept. 4-5 • Tom Jones at Encore Oct. 21, 23-24 • Nelly/Lil John at Laughlin Event Center Oct. 24 • Smashing Pumpkins at MGM Grand Oct. 30

GAMBLING

WSOP Begins

The 57th World Series of Poker is underway, held again on the Strip at Horseshoe Las Vegas and Paris and comprising 100 bracelet events. Key tournaments include Colossus (6/10); the \$250K-buy-in Super High Roller (6/13); Seniors (6/15); Millionaire Maker (6/18); Poker Players Championship (6/21); Gladiators of Poker (7/8); and the Main Event (7/2-12). The most expensive buy-in is \$250,000 for the Super High Roller; the least expensive is \$300 for Gladiators of Poker.

The big story of this year's tournament is the return to a pause before play of the final table. Rather than continue straight through, the final table will begin on August 3, three weeks after its nine players are determined. It's a return to the premise that the delay creates a bigger buzz, though it's not the extreme delay until November that was in place from 2008 to 2016. The WSOP is referring to it as a "cliffhanger break."

Another interesting subplot is whether or not participation will be hurt by the new gambling-loss-deduction tax rule, in effect for the first time this year. It's been posited that the 90% limit on deductions will dissuade players from participating, but we'll be surprised if it has a significant impact.

Poker-Tourney Alternatives

As always, several alternative tournaments are running at other casinos to take advantage of the influx of poker players during the WSOP. Coinciding weeks-long tournaments, many with lower entry fees, are being held at Venetian, Wynn, Aria, MGM Grand, Golden Nugget, and Orleans, and daily tournaments with even lower entry fees are ongoing at South Point and other poker rooms.

Football Contests Go Bigger

Circa has raised the stakes again. After easily covering the \$15 million guarantee in last year's Survivor contest, this year's guarantee has been boosted to \$20 million, while Circa Million VIII will again guarantee \$6 million. The entry fee is \$1,000 for each with a maximum of 10. The \$100,000-entry-fee (max 2) Circa Grandissimo has a \$4 million guarantee, up from last year's \$1.5 million. Collectively, that's an unheard of \$30 million in contest guarantees and all three contests return 100% of the money collected.

Following the switch to Caesars Sportsbook, Westgate hasn't announced its schedule. However, it's expected that there will be few changes in this first year of the new management, which means keeping the SuperContest, along with SuperContest Survivor and SuperContest College.

Contest Proxy

If you don't live in Nevada, you'll need to work with someone who does or use a proxy service to play in any of these contests. This year again, we're recommending FootballContest.com. We've worked with them the last two years and LVAers who've used the service have reported 100% satisfaction. Prices start at \$99 per entry and you can use the promo code LVA for a \$50 discount.



Betting on Soccer

It's estimated that \$3.3 billion will be wagered on this year's World Cup and all the Las Vegas sports books will put up lines. But soccer is boring, right? It is to most Americans, because there's hardly any scoring. But that's the very thing that makes soccer one of the most exciting games to bet on.

In a soccer match, the sides tend to have pointspreads of $\frac{1}{2}$ or 1 and totals are often 2 or 2.5. That means that every score (of which there are few) is extremely consequential to your result, and by extension, every scoring opportunity (of which there are many) is riveting. If you're betting for entertainment, riveting is exactly what you want. And speaking of entertainment, these games are awesome to watch in a bar filled with fans of the teams from other countries (see ENTERTAINMENT for recommendations).

Should you decide to wade in with a soccer bet, you need to be aware that the lines are presented differently from other sports, due to the use of a "3-way" line. The following is from our new book, *All About Sports Betting*.

Money-line bets where there are only two options and bets are refunded on a draw are called "2-way" bets. In low-scoring sports where draws are common, "3-way" betting is typically offered. This type of bet lists the draw as an additional betting option. The essential thing to know is that when the draw option is part of a bet offering, if the event is a draw, the draw bet wins, but bets on either side lose, rather than push! Soccer is the primary sport where 3-way betting is common, but you might also see it in hockey regulation-time bets and other events where draws are common. Here's an example.

Ghana	+103
Panama	+263
Draw	+255

Depending on where you bet, you might also see the line in the form of an "Asian handicap."

An Asian handicap, a type of bet originating in Asia, hence the name, eliminates the possibility of a bet ending in a tie (which would be no action). It's mostly used in soccer, where ties are commonplace, and is an alternative to 3-way bets. Here's an example:

Spain	$-\frac{1}{2}$	-130
Germany	$+\frac{1}{2}$	+110

If either side wins by a goal or more, that side is the winner. However, if the game score in regulation, plus added time, is tied, a bet on Germany would win and a bet on Spain would lose. (Whether an extra period or penalty kicks are required to determine a game winner is irrelevant for Asian handicap bets.) Adjustments aren't always $\frac{1}{2}$ goal. You might see $1\frac{1}{2}$, $2\frac{1}{2}$, or more, depending on how big of a favorite is involved.

There are a few more potential wrinkles in soccer betting, such as encountering lines like $-1\frac{1}{4}$ or -1 & $-1\frac{1}{2}$. You won't find these at most U.S. books, but they're covered, along with just about any other sports gambling question you might have, in *All About Sports Betting*.

Gambling Notes

Jackpots—A player at the Palms hit for \$1.1 million playing a \$5 progressive side bet on baccarat. The six dealt cards in the photo accompanying the press release show Ac Kc Kc Qc Qc 6c, which is neither a royal flush nor a straight flush, so we're not sure what triggered the win or if those were even the cards dealt.

Boomer's Again—Another month, another Boomer's Sportsbook opens. Or two. Boomer's books have opened at Sierra Sid's in Sparks and Silver Sevens. The openings bring the Boomer's total to 13, with more planned.

ATM Deal—Ellis Island is advertising no ATM fees if you use its system on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. You'll also get a wheel spin, so it's a profitable withdrawal, a rare ATM result. The normal ATM fee at EI is \$3.50.

Prediction Slots?—While the fight to disallow prediction markets in Nevada goes on, the chairman of the Gaming Control Board brought up the specter of prediction-style slot machines, saying "They will take these prediction algorithms, put it in a cabinet, and have ... casinos that are unregulated and untaxed sitting right next to Bellagio on Las Vegas Boulevard." That's a bit of a stretch, but the overall point that the application of prediction protocol could skirt gaming laws in many ways is probably valid.

Dana Appeals—UFC boss Dana White has appealed (in a letter) to President Trump to rescind the 90%-deduction rule. He states, "The current law makes it irrational to bet in the United States." White is a staunch Trump supporter and, by all appearances, a close friend, so perhaps he has some sway with POTUS.



Video Poker Lost and Found

The online database vpFREE2 reports that the best schedules at Arizona Charlie's Decatur have been removed. The best game now is 8/5 Bonus Poker (99.17%), but only at \$1 and \$2. Best at lower denoms is its unique 9/6 Double Double Bonus game that pays 55 for a straight flush (99.04%) from 1¢ to 25¢.

The best game at the Rio is now 9/6 Bonus Poker Deluxe (99.64%) from 5¢ to \$1, but only in 25, 50, and 100 Play. We're told that 9/6 Jacks or Better (99.54%) at the sports book bar has been devalued to 8/5 (97.30%) for quarters, but remains for dollars.

Mad Matty's has a play-\$100-get-\$10 sign-up bonus; the best game is 6/5 BP (96.87%). A free video poker tournament on Sundays pays \$100 in free-play for first, \$50 for second, and \$25 for third; play is two rounds of two minutes. Parlay with Sunday brunch described in DINING for a cool freeroll.

Earn 600 points (\$4,800 coin-in) at Four Queens or Binion's in June and get \$60 in free-play. You can do it at both casinos. This is a positive play worth \$25 to \$50 (depending on game selection), plus good comp dollars, but with a lot of risk.

Play \$200 through a machine at The Martini (1205 S. Fort Apache) on Tuesdays and get a bottle of wine. The best game is 6/5 BP, so your expected loss for the prize is about \$7.

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

These promotions change frequently, check for updated information here.

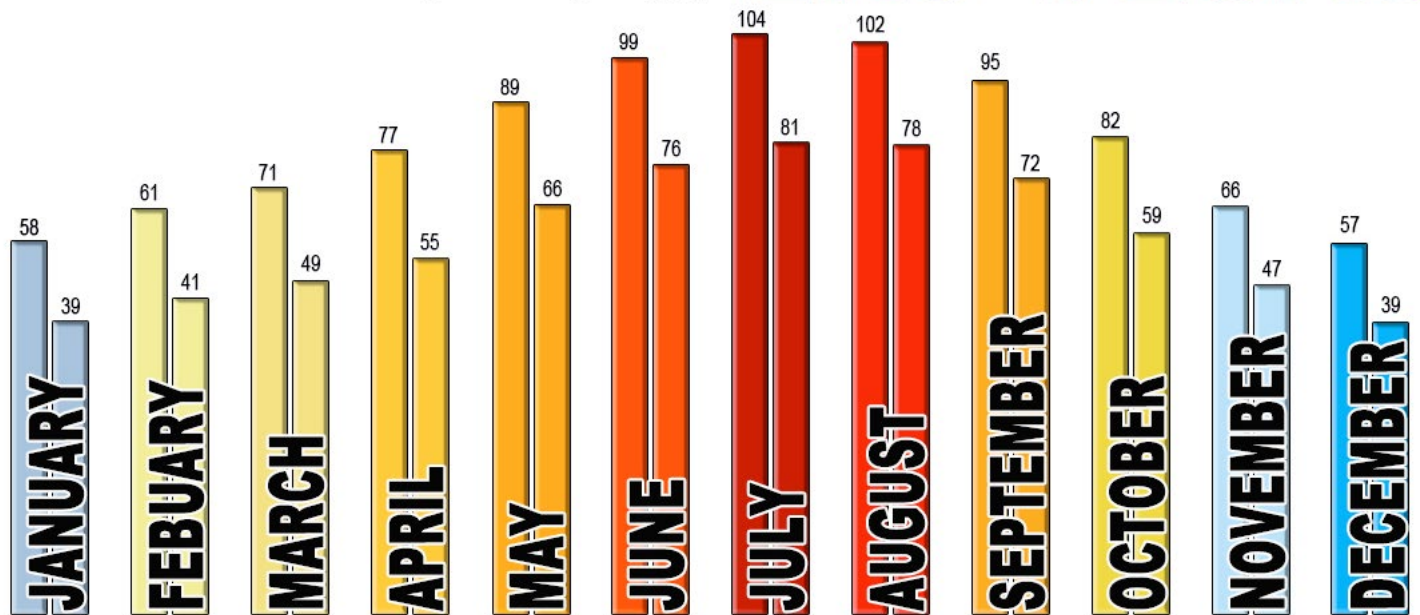
Question of the Day

I see a photo of a guitar tower rising from the Strip. I assume I'm looking at the Hard Rock hotel. How far along is it?

This QOD ran on May 22, 2025. [Read the answer here.](#)

AVERAGE

HIGH & LOW TEMPERATURES IN LAS VEGAS



JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Mean 82° Avg. Max. 102° Avg. Min. 61°	Mean 87° Avg. Max. 107° Avg. Min. 67°	Mean 85° Avg. Max. 104° Avg. Min. 66°
The first of the hot dry months. Welcome to the desert.	Dry sauna-like heat. Sun worshipers enjoy 85% sunny days.	A very hot and wet month. Desert electrical storms are spectacular but can cause dangerous floods on and around the strip.
Pools: Open	Pools: Open	Pools: Open
Attire: Minimal.	Attire: The skimpier the better.	Attire: Summer cool, bathing suits.