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Las Vegas Strip: How It All Started

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Before you had the luxury and convenience of enjoying all the casino games you love at amazing online gaming sites, like the [spin city kasyno](#), gamers could only gamble at traditional brick-and-mortar casinos. One of the most famous locations for people who loved gaming was the Las Vegas Strip. It is a lane that was synonymous with *entertainment*, *excitement*, and *glamor*. Covering more than **4** miles, the iconic boulevard is home to some of the most famous entertainment venues, hotels, and casinos on the globe. But how did it come to be? Let's dive into the interesting history of how the Strip became the mecca of global entertainment.

The Origins of Las Vegas

Before all the mega resorts and neon lights, Las Vegas was just a tiny railroad town without much going on in the vicinity. Established in **1905**, the town was generally a primary stopover for workers and travelers. However, in **1931**, gambling was legalized in *Nevada*, an event that marked the beginning of the transformation in the city. The construction of the *Hoover Dam* also played a significant role because it brought in many workers who in turn boosted the economy of the town.

The First Casino to Be Built

There are certain casinos that must be mentioned when it comes to the early years of the Strip and these are:

- **El Rancho Vegas:** The first casino to ever grace the town was known as El Rancho Vegas. It opened its doors in **1941** setting the stage for grand developments in the area. It was the first resort-style casino with a *hotel*, *entertainment*, and *casino*. Because it was a success, it motivated other entrepreneurs to start investing in the strip. At this time, the mobster influence was heavy in the town with public figures like *Bugsy Siegel* investing and shaping the upcoming gambling scene. The influence left a mark in the early years of the strip paving the way for the larger-than-life reputation that the town would come to enjoy.
- **Las Frontier:** This was the second most significant casino investment. It was opened in **1942** shortly after El Rancho Vegas was launched. It was also a huge success which opened up doors for other establishments like the Flamingo to also start business in **1946**;
- **The Flamingo:** A casino opened by the famous mobster *Bugsy Siegel*, it set new standards for entertainment and luxury, cementing the reputation of the Strip as a premier destination for tourists and gamblers.

The Post War Era

It is believed that the mob influence especially during the postwar era saw a surge in the development of the boulevard. All this was thanks to the significant contributions from organized crime figures. It was because mob members saw the location as a lucrative place to launder money as well as expand their gambling operations. With funds from the mobs, a number of iconic casinos were built including *Tropicana*, *Sands*, and *Riviera*.

The involvement of organized crime brought both controversy and prosperity to the Strip. Even though shady dealings were rampant, the investment from the mobs helped to catapult the city as a premier gambling destination. With time, however, increased regulations and federal crackdowns diminished the influence of the mob paving the way for corporate investments.

Corporate Takeover

This happened during the *1960s* and *1970s*, when corporations began to heavily invest in the Las Vegas Strip. A billionaire entrepreneur by the name of *Howard Hughes* played a huge role in this transformation. He bought several casinos that marked the beginning of corporate ownership. It was a great move because it not only brought legitimacy to the area but massive investments by other corporates as well. More extravagant resorts were born as a result of corporate ownership. The *Caesars Palace* and the *International Hotel* now known as *Westgate Las Vegas* opened in *1966* and *1969* respectively exemplified the trend. These came in to offer world-class entertainment, luxurious accommodations, and fine dining attracting a wide range of clientele.



The era of the Las Vegas mega resorts. Photo: Via Canva

The Mega Resort Period

The *1980s* and *1990s* saw the emergence of the mega-resort era. It was where themed casinos started cropping up becoming the hallmark of the famous boulevard. *Mirage* by *Steve Wynn* is one

of the casinos that was built as a mega-resort combining a *casino*, *hotel*, and *extensive entertainment options* under a single roof. This led to the opening of other themed resorts like *Treasure Island*, *Luxor*, and *Venetian*. All these offered immersive experiences taking visitors to a whole new world while offering top-notch amenities. The period also saw the development of family-friendly attractions as an attempt to broaden the appeal of the location beyond gambling.

Modern Las Vegas Strip

Also known as the entertainment capital of the world, the strip continues to thrive with even more extravagant results cropping up offering a fine blend of entertainment and luxury attracting millions of visitors every year. It is interesting to learn that a once dusty desert town has grown to such lengths with unique character.

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