



Travel Stories by Amaru & Suzanne



Viva Las Vegas!

by Amaru & Suzanne, August 1st 2007

Our flight from Hawaii to mainland USA was ok but in no way good, we flew with United airlines again which I had sworn to avoid like the plague.

This airline doesn't serve food on their domestic flights (nevermind the fact that we are flying for 5 hours) and the only form of entertainment is a small TV in the top corner.... and the service, non-existent! In the future we will just have to make sure we fly anything but United (and this time I mean it!!).

Anyway, after touching down in San Francisco, changed airplanes and flying for another hour, we reached Las Vegas. Our first impression? Well, it's quit funny and just a bit bizarre to see all the slots machines in the airport just as soon as you step off the plane, but that's Vegas baby =)

Since we had already cleared immigration in Hawaii and this was a domestic flight we didn't have to worry about any lines or pain in the a** officers, so we just strolled to the luggage area, waited for around 20min before the luggage arrived and then headed off to catch a Shuttle Bus.



A Huge Lion
Guards the MGM



New York?
...or Vegas?

We had reservations at the Hooters Casino Hotel and reached there around 9am, unfortunately, the earliest we could check-in according to the receptionist was at 4pm. We had expected this but were kind of hoping for an early check-in. None of us had slept on the plane so we were quite tired by now....but, with nothing else to do but store our bags and leave to explore the city, we left.

Las Vegas is unfortunately not a city that should be explored in daytime, it's bloody hot! Good thing that it was a cloudy day...

Luckily there are quite a few stops along the way where one can sneak in for a bit of a/c. Our first stop was the New York New York Casino, quite an impressive building the way it resembles the NY skyline.

We found a nice place to sit and have a snack and just look at people, one of them was hilarious. This was quite an obese American lady who went up to one of the service attendants at one of the fastfood joints and in a very loud nagging voice asked "Where is the buffet, is there no buffet in here, how can you not have a buffet!!!". Obviously the New York New York doesn't have a buffet and we thought this lady was going to have a heart attack on the spot when she found out.....some people.

We left and continued to explore the casinos along the strip such as the elaborate Excalibur, walking into MGM and see its lions, past the Monte Carlo and the Bellagio with its fountains (unfortunately it was too early for a fountain show) and eventually we ended up at Caesars Palace.



Ahhh....
It's New York New York!

Caesars Palace is MASSIVE!! We walked around the casino, had a look at the impressive reception area and continued walking along the its shopping mall. Lots of big Roman statues and architecture gives you the impression that you might be in Rome. After walking for a while we got bored and started looking for the exit....so we looked, and looked and just to make sure looked a little more. Nope, we couldn't find it!



Suz on the Brooklyn Bridge
Well, kind of...

We had to retrace our steps to find our way out, that's how big the place is....

By now we were getting very tired so we decided to start heading back to the hotel, and if we thought it was hot before, it was now boiling, the sky was now all blue and the sun shone on us with a vengeance. Normally this would have been exhausting for anyone... now imagine not having had any sleep and you can see how this was hitting us ;)

We did eventually make it back to Hooters and since we still couldn't check in we relaxed in the bar with some cold drinks and some hot Buffalo Wings....yum!

When we eventually managed to check in we dragged ourselves to our room and got a very nice surprise, the room was awesome. We had booked this online a few months ago at the price of \$37 per night so we didn't quite know what to expect. Well, we sure weren't expecting a King size bed with a big TV, quite a good deal!

After a few hours sleep we made a short tour of the southern part of the strip, just to get a first quick look at Las Vegas by Night, and it's pretty amazing.... very tacky but still amazing! They really have gone all the way when it comes to the lights, one of the most impressive ones is by far the Luxor with the beams that shoot out from the top of the pyramid. These lights can be seen from anywhere on the strip.



The Casino at New York New York
Plenty more of these to come

After our first day in Las Vegas we decided that sleeping in is a good idea since walking during day time is too hot, so that's what we did during the next few days.

We also wanted to try out one of the Buffets so we went to the MGM for a lunch buffet. There is lots and lots to eat and the people there are eating lots! We had our share of the food, some of it good, some just ok and were able to finish off with some fruits and dessert. After the buffet both of us were so full that we couldn't understand how some people have these buffets several time a day. We figured that once during a three day period was enough.



New York New York
By Night!

Well, what else did we do? We saw the Bellagio fountain and its show to music a couple of times, during daytime, dusk and evening =) We even made it up to the Eiffel Tower to see the show (yes, they have an Eiffel tower at the Paris casino.....crazy!).

We also saw the free show that the casino Treasure Island offers, the Sirens of Treasure Island and it was quite fun to see (lots of women in skimpy outfits....why wouldn't you want to see it =)) From there we made our way all to the top of the Stratosphere where we had an awesome view over the Las Vegas Strip.

By this time we had decided that the bus that runs up and down the strip is a really good idea, it might not look very far on a map but it really is, our feet were a bit sore from the first 2 days of walking.

On our last day we had to check out at noon and our flight didn't leave until midnight, so we stored our luggage and left for a last look of the city. Still too hot though so after sitting in a food court for a while we decided to do a movie to waste some time, we saw The Simpsons which was hilarious by the way.

Later on we made it to the Venetian, another of these casinos modelled after a European city (I think they are a bit jealous....) and walked around watching the gondolas making their way along the canals. We didn't do a ride here since we'll be in Venice for real soon =)

Eventually the time had come for us to make it back to the hotel, pick up our bags, jump into a taxi and leave for the airport.

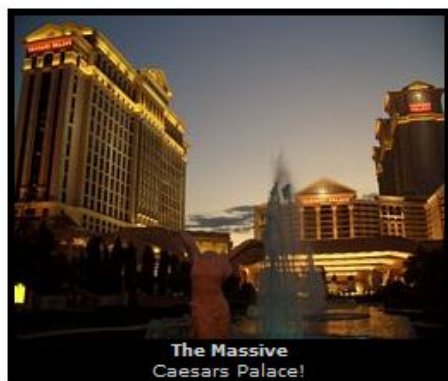


On the way to the airport we noticed a temperature reading that said 104F, that's around 40C....and this was at 10pm. Yes, it was hot!

Las Vegas was a lot of fun, it's very tacky but that was exactly what we had expected (well, Suz had been here before but it was all new to me). The casinos are really spectacular and the best thing about them is that you can just stroll around in them and just have a look at them, no one is going to charge you to enter and you don't have to gamble. We did watch quite a few games of blackjack and Craps....which we don't understand at all!

Suz and I did some gambling as well but only on the slots machines, and the damage... well, we spent a whopping \$7 on the machines. Those are 7 bucks that we will see again ;)

Oh, and yes, we did do a day trip to the Grand Canyon which included ride with an airplane and a helicopter....read all about it on our next blog!





Still here at Caesars Palace
It was so huge we got lost...



Excalibur!
Cool Castle



Looking out over
The MGM



Suz playing the slots
Didn't win anything though



Amaru and the slots
Didn't win anything either



The real life Lions
at The MGM



MGM Grand Buffet
...can't do Vegas without a buffet



Lots and lots of food
and some nice fruits



Desserts Galore
Don't know where to begin



Suz
at the Bellagio



The Bellagio fountains
are warming up



The fountains are massive
Very impressive!



Seeing the Bellagio fountains
From the Eiffel tower



Still on top of the
Eiffel tower



Love the show!!
And it's all done to music



Lights and more lights
All along the Las Vegas Strip



The Mirage
and its gorgeous waterfall



The Sirens
of Treasure Island



Las Vegas
by Night



Las Vegas
by Night



The Strip
as seen from the Stratosphere!



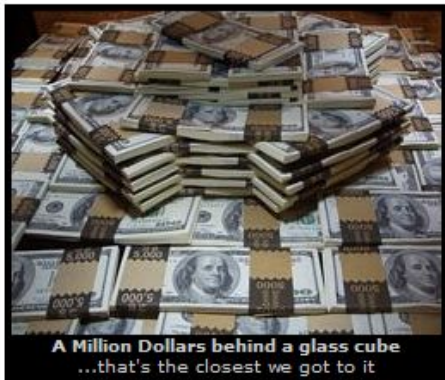
WEDDINGS
WORLD FAMOUS
Chapel
of the
Bells
LICENSE SERVICE



The Riviera and all its lights
Very hot to walk underneath them



Amaru found some
"Crazy Girls"





**Inside Hooters
Casino**



**Funny finding this sign
in Hooters =)**



**Hooters Blackjack
...where they try to distract you!**



**A last game before boarding?
Just in case you haven't had enough**

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