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KID-FRIENDLY VEGAS

BY KIM-MARIE EVANS



WELCOME TO Fabulous LAS VEGAS Baby!

Because really, how many times can you do Disney?

There are many destinations where you can arrive with kids in tow and just wing it. Las Vegas is not one of them. The key to a family-friendly Vegas getaway is doing your research. (No one really wants their kids to learn about what “stays in Vegas.”)

WHERE TO STAY

BELLAGIO

The Bellagio is classically elegant and almost out of place on the strip. The pool complex feels more

old Hollywood than MTV spring break. There are five different pools to choose from, with chaise lounges and cocktail service as far as the eye can see. Though they don't specifically cater to children, **kids are**

welcome and only hotel guests have access to the pools, which keeps the crowd exclusive. From the spectacular fountain display out front to the sprawling interior gardens, the Bellagio just feels like a breath of fresh air. Fresh, luxurious, expensively scented air.

COSMOPOLITAN HOTEL

Don't believe the reviews that say this hotel is not kid friendly, they clearly have never taken a child for a stay. This super trendy hotel has chic suites with

comfortable velvet sofas, **Froot Loops on the room service menu and colored pencils on the desk.**

There are three pools with floating loungers. A walk through the casino feels like a visit to Monte Carlo circa 1964.

FOUR SEASONS LAS VEGAS

Farther off the strip you'll find the Four Seasons to be the hotel **most welcoming to children.** In addition to its legendary white-glove service, **the hotel offers babysitters and a trail**

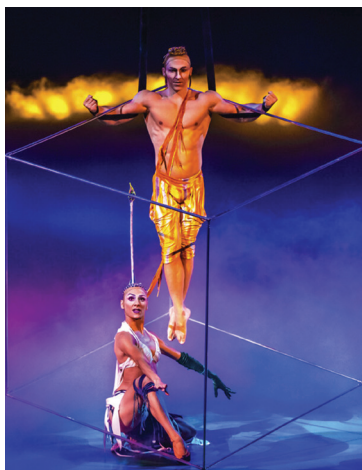
for walking with tikes or strollers without the risk of stumbling over last night's party passed out on the pavement. **The Four Seasons has a lush private pool for lazy days of floating and napping.** Right next door, however, **Mandalay Bay has built a huge aquatic playground with 2,700 tons of real sand, a lazy river and giant wave pool.** Guests of the Four Seasons enjoy access to this party, without having to stay there.



WHAT TO DO

TAKE A TRIP OFF THE STRIP—WAY OFF THE STRIP

You can leave your hotel at noon, experience the Grand Canyon and be back in time for an early dinner. How can you not love Vegas? Most helicopter services will shuttle you directly from your hotel to the nearby air terminal; from there you fly directly to the Grand Canyon for a bird's-eye view of the canyon, Lake Las Vegas, Lake Mead, the Hoover Dam and the Strip. Not afraid of heights? Go for a stroll on the Skywalk, which is suspended more than 4,000 feet above the Colorado River. Many tours include time on the ground for a picnic, or at the very least, souvenir photos.



CIRQUE DU SOLEIL (IT'S STILL COOL, WE PROMISE)

This iconic French circus has set up tent in Vegas since Mystere opened

there in 1993. The classic show is still running at Treasure Island and is a family favorite. The show features babies, clowns and the expected acrobatics. They have recently opened rehearsals to the public for a free peek on the weekends. Visit the website for details.

CHECK OUT MARINE LIFE

Visit Shark Reef Aquarium at Mandalay Bay. It's North America's only predator-based aquarium and houses 2,000 animals. In addition to sharks, kids can get up close and personal with sawfish, giant rays, endangered green sea turtles and lots of other exotic species.

DOS & DON'TS

DO
CABS IN VEGAS ARE EXPENSIVE, AND THE LINES TO CATCH THEM ARE LONG. CAR RENTALS ARE REASONABLY PRICED, AND THERE IS VALET PARKING VIRTUALLY EVERYWHERE.

THE BELLAGIO FOUNTAINS THAT IS NOT COMPLETELY DODGY. WALK THAT, NOTHING ELSE.

DO
THERE IS A LOCAL'S SECRET VIP PARKING SPOT, IT'S CALLED VIP VALET, JUST PAST THE SELF-PARKING STRUCTURE ON FRANK SINATRA DRIVE AT CAESARS. CASH MAKES YOU A VIP AND THERE'S NEVER A WAIT FOR YOUR CAR.

DON'T
DO NOT EVER WALK THE STRIP WITH YOUR KIDS, DAY OR NIGHT. THERE IS A SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF

DON'T
DO NOT BE FOOLED INTO THINKING YOU CAN WALK FROM ONE HOTEL TO ANOTHER. THESE PROPERTIES SPAN HUNDREDS OF ACRES EACH, AND IT'S HOT, SO HOT.

DON'T
THE WYNN MIGHT BE A SWANK HOTEL, BUT IT DOESN'T ALLOW STROLLERS. SO UNLESS YOU WANT TO CARRY YOUR TOT EVERYWHERE, DON'T BOOK HERE.

WHERE TO EAT

SAY OUI

The best place for lunch with kids is Mon Ami Gabi, a little French bistro on the sidewalk at the Paris hotel. They can enjoy the view of the Bellagio fountains, and Mom and Dad can enjoy good wine and great food.

WHEN IN ROME

For dinner, head over to Caesars and the Forum Shops. The hokey Fall of Atlantis statue show has been a kid pleaser since 1964, and it was recently revamped to add

fireballs and other spectacular effects. (Sadly, kids never take to heart the cautionary tale being told about sibling rivalry.) The notoriously tough-to-get-into Rao's of New York has recently opened a restaurant in Vegas. The wait to get into the original Rao's is anywhere from five years to, well, never—you'll have considerably better luck at this location. After dinner hit another famous New York City outpost, Serendipity, for a world famous frozen hot chocolate.



CONTRIBUTED