



Falling for FALLSVIEW

CANADA BRINGS A BIG-TIME VEGAS FEEL TO NIAGARA FALLS

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They call it the “eighth wonder of the world, overlooking one of the seven wonders of the world.” That’s the read on the new Niagara Fallsview casino resort, which celebrated its grand opening in early June, to the tune of US\$700 million. At 2.5 million square feet of public area, the sprawling complex is Canada’s largest casino, easily on par with any Vegas casino in the luxury category—and a far cry from the kitschy wax museum and tourist shops long associated with Niagara Falls.

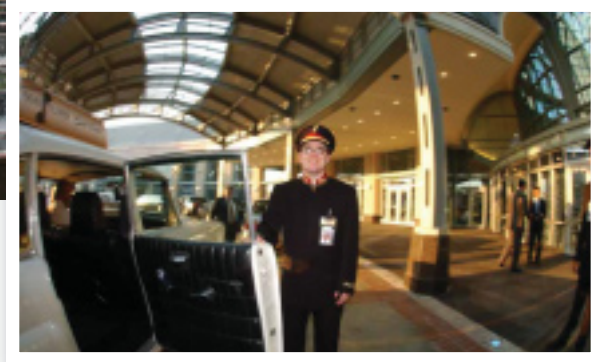
From the Hummer limos outside the front door to the acres of Italian marble, granite floors, gold-leaf columns and painted ceilings, Fallsview has spared no expense in creating an architectural masterpiece. And if you think the lobby is luxurious, wait till you relax in one of the Jacuzzi tubs overlooking the Falls.

Early on, Niagara Fallsview advertised itself as “Where Vegas Meets the Falls.” Located on Fallsview Boulevard atop Murray Hill, Niagara Falls is literally right in front of it. Larry Lewin, president of Hyatt Gaming Management Inc., notes, “When you look at Las Vegas having to build wonders for people to see, [consider that] we already have one of the wonders of the world, since Niagara Falls is right here.”

The Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLGC) is the local government entity that owns the resort’s license. Falls Management Company is the consortium of five firms that was selected by the OLGC to develop and manage it. While the OLGC won’t reveal its first-year projections for the resort’s revenue and attendance, the success of Casino Niagara gives some indication. A smaller, sister property in Niagara Falls, Ontario,



With its stunning view of Niagara Falls, Fallsview is truly one of the wonders of the casino world; no expense was spared in creating an architectural masterpiece



Casino Niagara had revenue of over C\$540 million and 9.3 million visitors in its first year. Those numbers made it the most popular commercial attraction in Canada, and there's every reason to believe the numbers will be even better for the Niagara Fallsview.

The casino interior has an inviting, "resort village" theme. Ten different décors are used throughout the gaming floor, delineated by different chandeliers, wall sconces, murals, skylights and hand-painted ceilings that evoke turn-of-the-century Paris, Edwardian England, even Manhattan in its sophisticated Art Deco period.

Exchanging currency at the cashier's window is simple. You can also exchange money while sitting at a slot machine by pressing the change button and waiting for an attendant. All machines accept tokens and Canadian bills, and feature ticket-in/ticket-out technology. American dollars may go farther in Canada, but winnings are paid in Canadian dollars—which the cashiers can quickly switch back to American.

The 150 table games include all the familiar favorites: blackjack, craps, roulette, Caribbean Stud, Let It Ride, baccarat, casino war, Spanish 21 and Three Card Poker. Slots range in denominations from five cents to \$100. Both the table pits and slots are located throughout the casino, which stays open around the clock. Other slots, ranging in denomination from \$2 to \$100, are located in a special high-limit section.

A separate Salon Privé, or private salon, offers high-end slots and table gaming for high rollers. Choices include \$5, \$20 and \$100 slot machines and roulette, baccarat, pai gow poker and blackjack.

A clock tower stands in the center of the casino floor, a design feature which Lewin calls "an industry first." Be aware that on two of its faces, the minute and hour hands are reversed. "I wanted another little item as a conversation piece, with a Mad Hatter approach," quips Lewin.

The airy, skylight-filled atrium at the main entrance offers views of the Falls and contains "The Fountain," a 45-foot, 7,000-gallon, \$10 million waterworks that shoots off several times nightly with an

explosive array of high-tech lasers and colorful lighting. It was designed by Larry Lester, the special-effects master responsible for the Atlantis animatronic show at the Forum Shops at Caesars Las Vegas.

The lofty, five-star Hyatt hotel tower features 266 standard rooms, each measuring a generous 480 square feet. Rooms feature oversized, high-back wing chairs, large headboards, and kidney-shaped desks that can serve as in-room dining tables. Amenities include floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the Falls, down comforters, 300 thread-count sheets, spacious bathrooms with oversized, glass-enclosed showers and granite counter tops, Internet access and coffeemakers.

The hotel also offers 108 suites, which range from 600-1,500 square feet. The nine Premier suites have late 19th-century themes, such as the Trophy Room Suite, which is adorned with paintings of wild animals.

To unwind away from the gambling action, hotel guests have access to a 15,000-square-foot spa, which includes a sauna, steam room, whirlpool, fitness center and lounge. Among their various specialty treatments are two-hour "caviar facials." The spa also features an indoor pool and an adjoining outdoor terrace for summer sunbathing.

The resort's signature restaurant is the high-energy 17 Noir, appointed in black and red tones suggestive of a massive roulette wheel. The circular room is divided by a "wall" of floor-to-ceiling copper beads, while curtained booths offer privacy. A VIP area and outdoor patio offer more stunning views of the Falls. Acoustic sensors within the restaurant determine the size of the crowd and adjust the music volume accordingly.

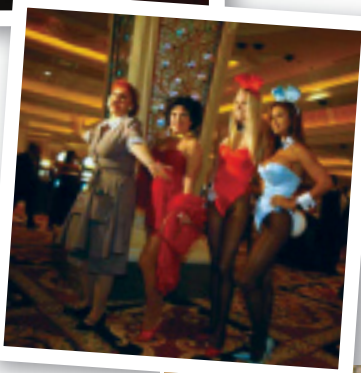


17 Noir's renowned chef, Ontario-based Michael Olson, is known for using local, organic ingredients. He gladly honors special requests, and his staff already knows some of its regulars so well that their meals begin preparation even before they are seated. Gourmet dining here includes steaks, seafood and duck. The chef's table, located inside the kitchen, offers select diners a bird's-eye view of Olson and his staff in action. One flight below 17 Noir are two other elegant choices, including a sushi bar and noodle bar.

Other options include the Grand Buffet, which seats 750 for lunch or dinner, with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking Niagara Falls; The Famous, a 24-hour, art deco diner; and Café Court, containing five specialty restaurants with a common seating area overlooking the Falls. On the casino floor are the Breeze Bar and 365 Club, where you can enjoy a trendy bar atmosphere.

Meanwhile, The Galleria contains 250,000 square feet filled with 47 boutique-style retailers and still more diverse restaurants spread out over three floors. Look for high-end shops Swarovski, featuring crystal gifts, jewelry and decorative objects, and Giorgio, offering contemporary men and women's designer fashions such as Dolce & Gabbana.

On its opening night, the intimate 1,500-seat Avalon Theater wel-



Talk about a view—you won't want to leave your room!

If you're willing to venture away from all that Niagara Fallsview has to offer, you'll find plenty of sightseeing options. Travel to the edge of the thundering Falls on the Maid of the Mist tour boat (seasonal), or experience Journey Behind the Falls (year round), a series of tunnels that pass behind and in front of the Horseshoe Falls. The Falls are illuminated nightly most of the year, an attraction in itself.

For golfers, the Niagara region has over 40 golf courses, including the brand-new Legends on the Niagara. Beyond all of this, there is the Butterfly Conservatory, Marineland Aquarium, Skylon Tower and the Aero Car ride. Or you can take the scenic Niagara Parkway to nearby Niagara-on-the-Lake and enjoy its historic, 19th-century architecture. Other options include plays at the acclaimed George Bernard Shaw Festival, browsing the charming shops of quaint Queen Street, or touring one of over 40 renowned wineries, including Hillebrand Estates Winery. ("Icewine" is a local desert wine specialty made from grapes that are picked after several frosts, which allow the grapes to achieve maximum sugar content.)

The Government of Ontario, in partnership with Falls Management, has done a first class job of guaranteeing millions of visitors to this exciting, luxurious escape. A new Niagara Falls has arrived, and players are flocking to get in on the action.

UNITED STATES-CANADA BORDER-CROSSING INFORMATION

The closest major airport to the resort is Buffalo-Niagara International Airport in Buffalo, NY, about 25 miles away. It is served by most U.S. airlines. To enter Canada and return to the United States, U.S. born citizens should carry either 1) a passport or 2) a government-issued photo ID such as a driver's license and a birth certificate (either the original or an official copy with raised seal). Naturalized citizens need naturalization certificates with photo ID; permanent residents (who are not citizens) need an alien-registration card. Although the border process is friendly, in this post 9/11 era, you will be turned away from either side without proper identification. At any of the four local border crossings, allow extra time during peak times (summer weekends, holidays and rush hour.)