

As seen in **recommend**

onsite
REVIEW

DATELINE: November 2007



“New” Deluxe Room

Ready for its Closeup:

PLANET HOLLYWOOD RESORT Las Vegas

LARK ELLEN GOULD



planet hollywoodTM

RESORT & CASINO • LAS VEGAS

Aladdin may have had its lamps but **Planet Hollywood** has the chandeliers—eight of them, each counting 66,000 individually hand-strung Swarovski crystals. In fact, owner Robert Earl put \$1 billion into remaking the old Aladdin into the next chic sleep for Hollywood glitterati and the new hotel is all forward designs in clean lines, handsome hues and gleaming backdrops of blinding crystal, neon and glass.

To show off the new digs, Earl brought partners Sylvester Stallone and Bruce Willis into a star-studded grand opening weekend in November that produced a performance by Barbra Streisand as the eclipsing attraction.

“I’ve had my eye on Las Vegas for years as the best place to expand the Planet Hollywood brand,” extolled Earl to a local interviewer, noting possibilities of bringing the Planet to Macau and Atlantic City. “Our entrance is right in the middle of the action.”

Earl hired architects and designers to create mood that runs hip to frenetic with an elegant lobby that has a touch of funk to keep the Hollywood splash and a casino that combines retro with edge technology, as he describes it.

“Planet Hollywood is about popular culture and the celebration of all forms of entertainment, and Vegas is the new capital of entertainment. That is what makes this a perfect marriage,” he adds.

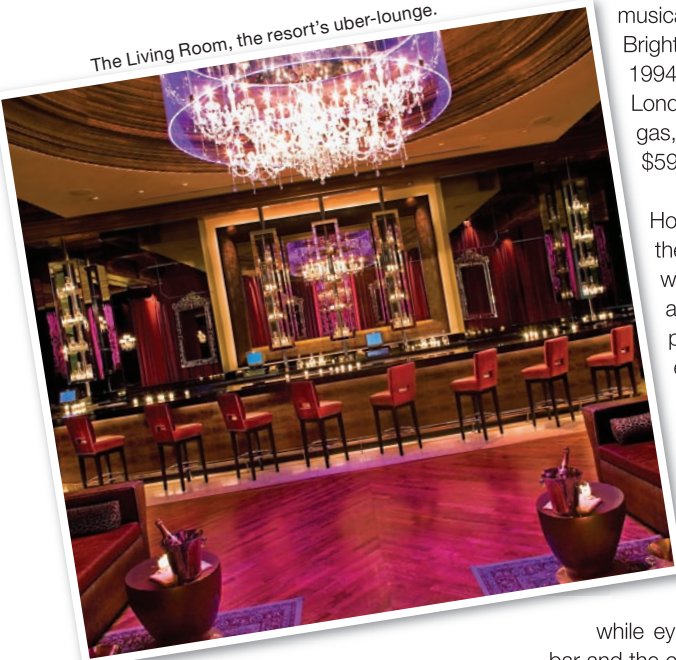
The rooms have been reconfigured for the bachelor or businessman in a sense, although the women will be quite pleased. The design

employs dark leathery browns, black veneers, a lean desk area that offers halogen lighting, WiFi and plenty of spread space, a 42-inch hi-def plasma screen TV, a marble bathroom with a large soaking tub enhanced by Elemis bath products (including shower caps and hair conditioner—not always found in Las Vegas hotel rooms), and plenty of mirror dimensions. Pillows that can be considered soft enough for sleep and hard enough for support complement the comfortable and warm cotton-blend duvet. Guests won’t find handy coffee service in the room but there is a Starbucks in the

lobby and several other coffee spots in the adjoining Miracle Mile Shops.

You'll find 2,600 rooms and suites here with a number of the accommodations bearing original clothing and accessories worn and used by major stars, encased in glass. For instance, the "Pulp Fiction" room has the suit worn by the character Vincent Vega in the cult Tarantino film hanging in a display case on the wall alongside stills of John Travolta and Samuel L. Jackson from the film and props, such as a plastic fast food cup, a pack of non-filter cigarettes and coasters, arranged in glass within a bottom-lit coffee table in the sitting area.

The Living Room, the resort's uber-lounge.



As the hotel is trying to attract the A-list away from **Palms** and **Hard Rock**, it has to have the restaurant power to make this happen and is managing with the welcoming of Koi, a favorite LA dining spot, and Strip House, a seductive corner where acclaimed New York chef John Schenk puts his muscle behind the meat. There is even a Pink's here for chilidog addicts. One hold over from the Aladdin days is the Spice Market Buffet, undoubtedly one of Vegas' best, with food stations that include curries, tandooris, pilafs, skewers and taboolies, as well as fresh crepes, hot and cold crab, Mongolian barbecue, sushi and varied Chinese dishes for the cost of what other more mundane hotel buffets charge and in airy and spacious surroundings.

Circling and seamlessly connected to the hotel is the Miracle Mile Shops, formerly Desert Passage, which contains more than 160 shops, nearly two dozen dining venues and a veritable mile or more of air-conditioned style. Clients will find mostly chains here—Occitane,

Sharper Image, Z Gallery, Victoria's Secret, BCBG and onward, mixed in with commercial art galleries, casual eating spots and, oddly, ultra-lounges and production shows. Clients can see a pet trick show in the afternoon and a full magic production at night at the V Theater in the Miracle Mile. Or, they can see top-tier performers on stage at the 7,000-seat Theater of the Performing Arts.

And the Planet has its own shows to present. "Stomp Out Loud" opened in April inside a new \$28 million, 1,500-seat theater specifically created for this production. The show delivers a combination of percussion, movement and visual comedy to form its own brand of musical entertainment. It originated in Brighton, UK, opened in New York in 1994 and currently plays in New York, London's West End and now Las Vegas, where ticket prices range from \$59 to \$99.

Also playing at Planet Hollywood has been "Hans Klok: the Beauty of Magic," with "Babewatch" wonder, Pamela Anderson, although that production is expected to morph into something else for 2008.

The 100,000-sq.-ft. casino has a heart by Hollywood standards. Namely, the Heart Bar—a centerpiece where martinis are sipped quietly by well-coiffed women in tight black dresses and guys out of GQ who press their vanity

while eyeing plasma screens above the bar and the celluloid wanna-be's vamping below.

Prive, straight from the scene at South Beach, is the club du jour for Planet Nightlife. There's also The Living Room, a shadowy uber-lounge on the mezzanine, which sports a '40s gothic look of large leather chairs, leopard skin pillows and carpets, wrought iron room dividers, heavy burgundy drapes and dripping chandeliers.

Couples who want to say "I do" under the spotlights can head for the chapel at mezzanine level or have the party in the Grand Ballroom, part of the hotel's 75,000 sq. ft. of function and meeting space.

To ensure their guests never have to leave the property, the hotel sports two outdoor pools and jacuzzis on a terrace above the Strip, a 32,000-sq.-ft. *Planet Hollywood by Mandara Spa*, a fitness center, a business center, and plenty of amazing wall art in the corridors and mezzanine areas.

VIPs and those booking suites can enter through a special VIP entrance from the porte

cochere to a private check-in area on the mezzanine level, where there are comfortable couches, coffee and the day's local and national papers.

At lobby level lies a grand check-in desk draped in neon shadows just steps away from a gallery of floor-to-ceiling crystal illuminations. The check-in is handled quickly and efficiently and as a **Starwood** property, guests retain all the corresponding points and rewards.

Average room rates for the location and the buzz, are quite reasonable: \$150, with rates as low as \$89 to be found in abundance.

Package It

As for packages, it's a Hollywood extravaganza. A *Grand Opening* package with an intro rate of \$99 includes dinner for two at the Spice Market Buffet.

A *Hollywood Hip* package geared for the LA crowd offers a *Fly Back to Las Vegas* air certificate for \$19 with rates that start at \$119 on weekdays and \$149 on weekends. There is also a Miracle Mile Shops coupon book included (valued up to \$2,000).

The *Bed & Breakfast* package includes accommodations and two breakfasts at the Spice Market Buffet, per stay. A 2-night minimum stay required at going rates. The package also offers a 40 percent discount on admission for two at the *Mandara* spa.

The *Gas Credit* package has guests staying at the Planet Hollywood for rates starting at \$89 per night, 2-night minimum. A \$40 gas credit will be applied to guest folio at check-out. Guests also receive \$10 in free slot play after playing \$20 at any slot machine.

The *Mix & Mingle in the Heart of Vegas* package brings a round of golf (20 percent discount off rack and twilight rates at Badlands and Revere golf courses), a gaming lesson or two, and a signature pair of cocktails at the Heart Bar, one bottle of Chandon Champagne, six chocolate-covered strawberries and turndown service.

The *Stomp Out Loud Room & Show* package requires a minimum 2-night stay at going rates and a 72-hour advance booking but brings two tickets to "Stomp Out Loud" (\$75 ticket level), 2-for-1 Spice Market Buffet for breakfast or lunch (Monday–Friday), \$10 in free slot play with \$20 coin-in, 2-for-1 admission to the *Mandara* spa (Sunday–Thursday) and a 20 percent discount on rack and twilight fees at select golf courses. ■

CONTACT INFORMATION

Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino: (866) 919-PHRC (7472);
planethollywoodresort.com
Leisure Sales Inquiries (groups of 21 or more):
(877) 485-2020, Press 4