

TRAVEL

Casino Windsor offers glitz, luxury and excitement

BY PAISY L. LAFAVE
SPECIAL WRITER

Lights are flashing, bells ringing, buzzers buzzing. Clinking and clanking is heard. Excitement fills the air. What's going on? Just another night at the Casino Windsor.

Casino Windsor, a 2-million-square-foot casino-hotel just across the Detroit River at 377 Riverside Drive East in Windsor, Ontario, overlooks the Detroit skyline and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Best of all, it's easy to get to. Just take the tunnel or bridge, then follow the signs.

The luxurious, 21-level hotel has 399 guest rooms and suites; 134 have a view of the Detroit River. Elevators, gaming areas and some special rooms are wheelchair accessible and fire alarms are equipped with strobe lights for the protection of their hearing-impaired patrons.

When not playing games, you can relax in the indoor pool, whirlpool, sauna, exercise room or salon. For those special events, there are 11,000 square feet of banquet facilities. Valet parking and a 3,000-vehicle free parking structure attached to the casino-hotel by a temperature-controlled skywalk are there for your convenience and comfort. Concierge services, round-the-clock room service and

a 24-hour nursing staff are also available if needed.

When you are through feeding the slots, there are three restaurants and a food court for you to choose from to satisfy your hunger and live entertainment nightly.

Separating the hotel and casino is the main entrance graced with a 60-foot high waterfall cascading three stories and ending in a pool on the lower level, surrounded by rocks, streams and tropical plants. While sitting having a snack, you can enjoy the lights and dancing water show or throw a coin in for good luck at the casino.

Whether you call it gaming or gambling, the 100,000-square-foot space offers the casino's approximately 20,000 patrons a day, mostly repeat customers, plenty of opportunity to try their luck at the casino.

There are almost 3,000 slot machines and more than 130 table games. Along with blackjack, various poker games and roulette, craps will be available as soon as it is made legal in Canada, "hopefully within the next few months," said Kelly Cusinato, manager for corporate communications for Casino Windsor.

"We already have dealers in training to deal craps," Kelly said. "We have to be versatile

and flexible. When Detroit gets its casinos, there will be changes in the market conditions. But change is good. It keeps everyone on their toes. We will have to introduce things and things that any business does to maintain customer loyalty.

"Customer service is important. That, sometimes, is what brings them back," she said. "We are optimistic that the Detroit casinos and ours will make this a bigger tourist region and will be good for all of us."

Of the 20,000 patrons, half are slot players. Can you beat these computerized machines? Yes, if you're lucky. By knowing how slot machines work and having a few tips at hand, you might be one of those leaving with bulging pockets or at least a jingle when you walk. I wasn't.

There are a wide variety of slot machines. Some of the most popular are the Casino Caro Ten Times Pay, Silver and Gold, "em In, Filthy Rich and some designed specifically for Casino Windsor - Giant Windsor Jackpot and Carousel of Nations. Ranging in denomination from five cents to \$100, they all work the same. You push a coin in the slot, push a button to pull the handle, and if the appropriate symbols line up, coins clatter out. If you hit the jackpot, that's when the racket begins - usually you yelling.

Slot slots operate on tokens purchased at the slot machines from change attendants on the floor, or you can also purchase credits on your machine. Although winnings are in Canadian dollars, there are full foreign currency facilities available. Since slot machines are programmed to a certain payback percentage, timing is everything. It all depends on when and where the generator stops; and it is constantly moving, like a marquee, even when no one is playing it.

Your prize depends on the number of coins you play in the Play for Pay machines. If you have three sevens on a line but nothing comes out, you didn't play the correct number of coins for that win.

On the other hand, progressive machines have a jackpot that increases as more money is played. They are linked with other machines to calculate a progressive jackpot, not a set amount. All linked machines



Popular game: Blackjack is a perennial favorite at Casino Windsor.

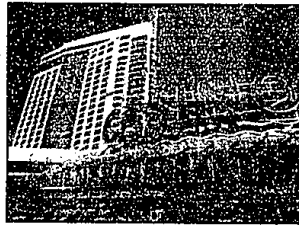
contribute to the jackpot; and the first machine to hit the jackpot symbol wins all. But to win the jackpot, you must play the maximum number of coins. The machine then reverts to the minimum jackpot amount and starts over.

Before you start to play any game, be sure to stop by the Players Prestige booth and join the Players Prestige Club. Membership is free and your plays entitle you to great casino perks. It's their way of rewarding you every time you visit. The more you play, the more they pay.

Some hitters have strategies they believe increase their chances of winning. These are just a few of their suggestions. You can learn more by visiting the games section in the bookstore or library, searching the Internet or attending table gaming lessons at Casino Windsor.

Never gamble more than you can afford to lose.

Know what you are playing. To win the big jackpot, be sure to play the right number of coins. There is a schedule, usually on the upper right-hand corner of the machine, telling the prize and what is needed to win the big one. You don't always have to put in the maximum coins to hit. Smaller wins are fun, too. Beverly, a Casino Windsor regular, usually plays one coin. She doesn't



Gambling fever: Casino Windsor beat the proposed Detroit casinos in providing a place for gamblers to go.

n't always hit big but she does hit often.

Set your limit. Don't play five coins if you can only afford one. If you win, run. The saying "quit while you're ahead" applies to playing the slots. You're not a winner if you put it all back in.

Divide the amount you have decided to play by the number of sessions you want to play. Don't play more than that at any one session.

Play your decided amount on one machine once and don't replay any coins you win. Then take the winnings and quit. If you are hitting big, you may want to play your winnings up to the amount of your original bankroll, once more. Then move on.

Play the maximum coins for three pulls. If you hit, keep playing that machine. If you don't, move on. If you get a good hit, play another couple of pulls and run.

Play the blitz method. (This is not for those of weak heart or sick purse.) Play your entire bankroll through, win or lose. Either you are a big winner, or you're done for the day.

Go ahead have fun. But play to win. If you're not having a good time, you are probably playing outside your limit. And if Lady Luck smiles on you and you hit the jackpot, don't keep playing; scoop up the winnings and head for the hills - laughing all the way.

For more information on Casino Windsor, call (800)991-7777.

Patsy LaFave lives in Waterford.

GREAT ESCAPES

SHOP TILL YOU DROP

Nicole Christ of Nicole's Revival in Westland and Carolyn Schneider, author of "The Ultimate Consignment & Thrift Store Guide," are promoting a European Resale Shopping Tour for Sept. 30 to Oct. 7. The tour will include airfare from New York (with a Detroit add-on of \$150), three nights in a London hotel, three nights in a Paris hotel, continental breakfast, visits to resale shops with the tour leaders, a visit to a Paris fashion show and opportunities to experience theater, museums and restaurants in the European cities. The tour costs \$1,059 per person. For travel information, call Four Corners Travel at (800)973-0853.

CRUISE MICHIGAN

A group consisting of representatives from 19 ports from around Michigan has formed an association called Cruise Michigan to help promote the re-emerging cruise industry in Michigan waters. The association will undertake joint marketing programs and work together to promote Michigan ports to cruise companies.

ITALY AND GREECE TRAVEL

Longtime LPS foreign language teachers Fred and Linda Hebel have a few openings remaining for travelers on their

12-day trip to Europe, July 26 to Aug. 6, touring Rome, Pompeii, Delphi, Isle of Capri, Sorrento, Corinth, gulf cruise between Italy and Greece, Mycenae (Europe's oldest city), Athens and more. The charge is \$2,623 includes roundtrip air and all land travel, hotels (double occupancy), all breakfasts and dinners, many museums and fees. An optional high-speed train tour to Florence is \$91. For more information, call Fred or Linda Hebel at (734)459-1665 or (313)565-0297 and leave a message.

AAA SEMINARS

Europe, China, Australia, the United States and Central America are a few of the innovative land vacation destinations AAA Travel and Tauck Tours will show during a seminar at the AAA Club's Denborn branch, 18900 Hubbard Drive, 2-4 p.m. Tuesday, March 16. The free seminar will outline some of the advantages of a land-based Tauck tour. Call (313)336-0845 for reservations.

AAA Livonia will show how to experience Ireland with a variety of Irish tours at a free travel seminar 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Wednesday, March 17, at 37383 Six Mile, Livonia. Irish refreshments and travel catalogs will be available. Call (734)462-8000 for reservations.



Reflections on African American Art in the 20th Century

Poetry Performance
Carl Hancock Rux
Friday, March 19, 8 p.m.

Performance poet and playwright Carl Hancock Rux reads from his provocative, controversial and politically charged book, *Pagan Opera*. Rux was selected by the *New York Times Magazine* as one of 30 artists under 30 most likely to influence culture. Admission: \$10, members and seniors \$8, students with I.D. \$6. For tickets call: 313.833.4005

A One-Day Conference

To Those Who Move with the Tide
SHARON F. PATTON, ALLEN MEMORIAL ART MUSEUM,
OBERLIN COLLEGE

REPRESENTATION/IDENTITY/RESISTANCE
HOWARDENA PINDELL, ARTIST

FIGURATION: A MODERNIST RESPONSE IN
AFRICAN AMERICAN ART
EDMUND BARRY GATTHIER,
MUSEUM OF THE NATIONAL CENTER
OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ARTISTS

STYLE AS WEAPON: GORDON PARKS
JUDITH WILSON, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

FADE TO BLACK: AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL
PRODUCTION IN THE WAKE OF GLOBALIZATION
CHRISTIAN HAYE, THE PROJECT (NYC)

Saturday, March 20, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Five renowned artists and historians discuss the vital contributions of African Americans to 20th century American art. Speakers examine how artists have dealt with critical issues, such as representation and identity. Fee: \$15, members and seniors \$12, students with I.D. \$10. For tickets call: 313.833.4005.

Presented in conjunction with the exhibition-Hall's Past Autumn: The Art of Gordon Parks.
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 - Hilton Suites Auburn Hills 248-334-2222 \$99
 - Hilton Suites Detroit Metro Airport 734-728-9200 \$79
 - Hilton Toledo 216-447-1300 \$74
 - Hilton Toronto 416-869-3456 \$155-\$195 (Canadian)
 - Hilton Toronto Airport 905-677-8900 \$115 (Canadian)
 - Hilton Windsor 519-973-5555 \$129-\$139 (Canadian)

It happens at the Hilton.

Rates are valid through 12/30/99. Day of week availability and stay requirements vary by hotel. Rates subject to change without notice. Early check-in subject to payment of higher rate or early departure fee. Kids 18 and under stay free in their parents' or grandparents' room. Beverage reception not included in suite price. Subject to state and local laws. Limited availability, advance booking required. Rates exclusive of tax and gratuity and do not include group or other offers. Other restrictions apply. ©1999 Hilton Hotels.