

Museum of Organized Crime – The Story of the Mob

It has been dubbed the Mob Museum and although it is barely two years since the National Museum of Organized Crime and Law Enforcement, Las Vegas was established it is already an instant classic, a place worth traveling to see.

The centerpiece of this establishment is the old courthouse, where in 1950 –1951 fourteen hearings were held that busted the biggest organized crime syndicates (read mafia), Las Vegas then being a hotbed for, well, the Mob.



The Background

Some of the chief exhibits at the museum include items that highlight mob violence as it was practiced then, wiretapping the law enforcement agencies used to combat organized crime, those early slot machines and other equipment used at the time in casino money skimming, even a history of the blood-stained wall where the Valentine's Day Massacre took place.

But for the visitor today, the big attraction is not so much the ancient testimony that was recorded at the hearings or the paraphernalia of organized crime at the museum; it is rather the chance to experience interactively the fascination that the mafia and Sin City have had in modern minds due to pop culture. Here at the Mob museum history and pop culture live side by side, where collectibles from popular movies like The Godfather are on display alongside the .38 Colt used in the St. Valentine's Day massacre.

History & Location

The museum opened to the public on Feb. 14, 2012, after the original courthouse structures were renovated for forty-two million dollars. In 2000 the federal government had sold the former federal courthouse, along with the post office building to the city of Las Vegas for the awesome price of \$1, with the condition that it is perfectly restored to its former looks and turned into a cultural establishment.



One wall in the museum, the wall of mobsters, is filled with mug shots and photos of famous mobsters from all over the United States who at some point in their lives defined organized crime as we know it today, hundreds of faces every bit as noteworthy as the actors that have portrayed them in the movies.

The museum is located at 300 Stewart Avenue and you should set aside at least two hours for the interactive tour, which is very affordably priced.

The Highlights

Besides the gift shop on the first floor, the museum is great for its hand-on exhibits, displays, and interactive techniques all state of the art museum technology that uses photos and text to teach the visitor all the history of organized crime and the fight that waged against it by state and FBI. Since it is also a museum of law enforcement, the visitor is treated to the history of famous names like J. Edgar Hoover, Al Capone, and Howard Hughes in almost equal measure. The tour of this classic museum normally begins on the third floor, where the actual wall of the St. Valentine's Day Massacre is on display.



Rich Collection

A visit to the museum will certainly excite and educate, bringing back to life prohibition, the famous Las Vegas casinos, origins of the FBI, and lots more. A visitor may even sit in a replica electric chair, or listen to actual wire taps recorded at the time. The more adventurous will get a chance to train in a police simulator, or perhaps to fire a veritable Tommy Gun.

Las Vegas of course has other attractions guaranteed to be a treat for the whole family if you decide to visit the Mob museum, including the Fremont Street Experience, which is four blocks of the city's most impressive concentration of fashion shops and children's arcades all gathered together under a ninety foot high transparent canopy. And this being Vegas, you can expect to be treated to the spectacular light shows that make this city famous, practically every hour.

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