

# HOW CASINOS MAKE YOU SPEND MONEY



We all know the allure of casinos. The bright lights and the feeling of power the floor brings, the irrational assurance that the next hand would turn your luck, you just know it and most importantly, the sensation that time flies by within the bubble of shouts and laughter and music that is the casino floor. This isn't an individual experience. Most everyone feels it, and most often it is by design.

The golden rule, 'Thou shall get into something only when thou understand what thou are doing', might seem like something that can often be hit and missed. But when it comes to gambling, it is the mantra sensible people go by. Even in a seemingly straightforward game like baccarat where the gameplay ultimately comes down to a decision as simple as heads or tails, there are rules and intricacies in the different versions that can make it or break it for a player. And while the fast gameplay makes the version engaging and dynamic, playing quick-fire rounds can easily get you on a losing streak which means that you will have to adapt your betting strategy. That's why the experts recommend avoiding negative progression systems and instead opting for strategies that will reduce the number of decisions.

Such subtleties can have a huge impact on your bankroll and losing expectations. But knowing the rules and knowing the game isn't everything. Casinos would lose a lot of money if a patron won one too many times, or didn't win enough, or even if he/she got weary or bored while on the floor. To combat these undesirable reactions, the operators take ingenious, and sometimes just plain startling measures. Knowing what is going on will make your chances of winning, or at least making a dignified exit, much stronger.

## **Be careful of the pomegranate**

Remember Persephone and her one seed of pomegranate? The one that earned her eternity in hell? Casinos sure aren't hell and free booze and food are not mere seed, but the fundamental concept of both remain the same. Casinos have mastered the theory of plying a prospective patron with bait. Most offer complimentary food and drinks, which inevitably leads the players to lose their inhibitions as time goes by and they continue to bet. Some even place a minimum limit on the patrons' spending before the drinks start flowing.

Loyalty is awarded (or not?) in a similar, though more subtle manner. Frequent customers find themselves the recipients of rewards for their fidelity, like a complimentary spa treatment or luxurious 'free' rooms. Most people fall for the face value of these gifts and fail to notice that the services are paid for through their eventual losses on the floor.

## **Light and sound hypnosis**

Slot machines, looking all innocent and sweet with their flashing lights and funny sounds, are in truth the biggest revenue makers in any casino. The reason is simple. A person thinks that a nickel or cent machine could only take so much money to play, and there is always the chance of winning, but they don't realize that they end up paying more for less payout. The machines are programmed to present near wins, interspersed here and there with an actual victory, which keeps the player glued to his/her seat looking for that one lucky round.

Wins are proclaimed with much fanfare, even little ones, which can be heard and watched across the

casino floor. This assures the other patrons that they are only just missing their own lucky chances, and the time to celebrate would come eventually. But, of course, it is safe to assume that the odds are most certainly against you.

Some casinos even, allegedly, pump oxygen and pheromones into the air, which vitalizes and energizes the customers, keeping them awake and interested longer.

### **Time does fly**

Like shopping malls, casinos can make huge profits only when people stay in it and continue to spend money. And the easiest way to ensure that is if they are cut off from the rest of the world. Casino floors, when one pays attention, display a prominent lack of windows and clocks. The patrons lose track of time, do not realize when the sun went down or when the rooster started to call. Add to that the general atmosphere of perpetual intoxication, the throbbing lights, and the stimulating music, and the fact that onsite ATMs and credit make sure money is always at hand and available. No wonder patrons get addicted. They are virtually trapped in a bubble.

### **Where is the exit?**

Next time you visit a casino, pay close attention to the layout of the floor. Yes, that's right. It looks like a maze. Casino floors are notorious for being hard to get out of. They are designed in such a way as to have intrigue hidden around every turn, drawing people closer even as they try to leave. The restrooms, restaurants and other necessities are often situated deep in the center of this arrangement, making sure people have to traverse a whole minefield of temptation before they get to where they want. Most lose the battle halfway.

The intrigues don't end there. Add to these scantily clad servers and waitresses, stimulating shows, celebrity chefs, and easy access to the establishments, and one truly sees how elaborate the tactics are. Behind the indulgent smiles of casino operators works a calculating and clever mind. These astute men and women know what they are doing and what they are in the business for.

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