

DESTINATIONS: TOURISM GENERATORS

Courtesy of Las Vegas News Bureau.



THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHAPTER

Travel destinations, whether natural or created, are the magnets that set the whole process of tourism in motion. In this chapter, we look at the motivations of travelers as well as the nature of mass-market travel destinations. Many of these destinations are, to all intents and purposes, a part of the hospitality industry and offer attractive career prospects for students. You will need to be familiar with the economic and operating characteristics of destinations to round out your understanding of tourism.

THIS CHAPTER SHOULD HELP YOU

1. Equate travelers' motives with their destinations by listing five common reasons people travel and a corresponding site they might select to visit.
2. Explain what factors have changed that contribute to the growth in tourism (in terms of societal changes).
3. Identify and describe four categories of planned play environments created specifically for tourism, and list elements they have in common.
4. Describe the significance of large- and small-scale urban entertainment centers as a part of a community's tourism industry, and provide an example of each type of facility.
5. Describe the important contributions that fairs and festivals make to their host communities.
6. Explain the role of natural attractions in tourism, and describe the overall contribution they make to the industry, particularly in regard to ecotourism.

MOTIVES AND DESTINATIONS

If people had no place they wanted to go, tourism would be in jeopardy. However, people travel, and they travel for many reasons—for instance, work and **recreation**. In this chapter, we are concerned almost exclusively with travel for purposes of recreation. Even when people travel for this reason, however, their motives are varied, primarily because recreation is more than just play. Building on Webster's definition of the word, recreation can also involve revivification, new vigor, refreshment, and reanimation as well as amusement, diversion, or gratification.

Recreation has a function. It is not just the opposite of work; it is its counterweight. Recreation relates to relaxation but also to stimulation and gaining renewed energy as well as to playing. In short, it contributes to the attainment of balance in our lives. It is a necessary and vital part of life, and, not surprisingly, different things attract different people. For instance, perhaps the earliest motive for travel was religion and the sense of renewal of commitment that was and is experienced by the pilgrim. Today's pilgrimage attractions include Lourdes in France, Santiago de Compostela in Spain, Guadalupe in Mexico, and Ste. Anne de Beaupré in Quebec. In fact, religious destinations exist all over the world.

Like religion, good health has always been a major concern, and health interests have long been a major travel motive. In ancient times, the Romans were drawn to springs thought to have health-giving properties, which became fashionable again in the eighteenth century. There are many hot springs in the United States, including Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Ojo Caliente in New Mexico, which saw their heyday between the 1880s and the 1940s. Springs exist all over the world, including Germany, where people still travel to such places as Bad Hamburg for the healing waters. While the healing power of natural springs is enough to attract some travelers, others seek to manage their health by different means—the Mayo Clinic, for instance, attracts so many people that its home city of Rochester, Minnesota, has one of the highest ratios of hotel rooms per resident of any city in the United States.

Another reason that people travel is to be able to experience scenic beauty, especially the mountains and the seashore. Scenic beauty is often coupled with health-building activities—hiking, skiing, and cycling, for example—so that both body and mind are refreshed. A good example of this is the current popularity of state and national park systems across North America; these systems are the most extensive response in history to these touring motives (and are discussed more fully at the end of this chapter).

Sporting events are big business but have long been popular—from the first Olympics in 776 B.C. to today's NCAA Final Four basketball tournament, the Kentucky Derby, and the Super Bowl. Events such as these attract thousands of serious sports enthusiasts

The Addi Galleries in Las Vegas offer a different type of diversion in that city. (Courtesy of Las Vegas News Bureau.)



as well as untutored onlookers. Indeed, sports arenas have become such big business that some on-site food service companies have created special divisions just to manage sports food service (as discussed in Chapter 7).

Culture, including history and art appreciation, is judged by some as not very interesting stuff, yet every year, yesterday's battlefields throng with thousands of visitors on guided tours. The popularity of the Vicksburg National Military Park in Mississippi and the Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania are but two examples, each drawing over 1 million visitors each year. In the area of art appreciation, the Louvre is one of France's major cultural treasures. Closer to home, the Smithsonian museum complex in Washington, DC, is one of the biggest draws in that city. There are museums for almost everything—even museums that celebrate work and industry, such as the Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago. (Imagine people on vacation visiting a museum that focuses on work!) The various Halls of Fame (for baseball, hockey, rock and roll, etc.) could also be considered museums of sorts. Other cultural events that attract tourists include the many music and theater festivals all across Europe and North America, many focusing on classical music (Tanglewood in Massachusetts) and Shakespeare (Stratford Theatre in Ontario). Such events are often used by cities to celebrate and enhance the cultural life of the area as well as to attract visitors' spending to strengthen the local economy.

Theater and spectacle, whether Broadway's *Phantom of the Opera* or Walt Disney's theme parks, are currently among the most significant tourist attractions. In addition,



A vintage locomotive (1882) at the National Railway Museum in York, England. (Photo by Robert Alan Creedy.)

Luxury hotels, such as those located at MGM MIRAGE's CityCenter, are part of what has turned Las Vegas into a huge tourist destination. (Courtesy of MGM MIRAGE.)



there are literally thousands of lesser-known theaters and amusement parks that stimulate the local culture and economy by catering to the interests of people close to their homes.

Although we have been discussing the reasons that people travel, it should be noted that what these motives for travel also have in common is their focus on a destination. Destinations can be of different types, such as **primary (touring) destinations** and **secondary (stopover) destinations**. Primary destinations have a wide market and draw travelers from a great distance. These kinds of destinations, such as some of the religious and health-related destinations discussed previously (as well as more current examples, such as Walt Disney World and Las Vegas), attract visitors from the entire North American continent and all over the world. Because such a high proportion of their visitors are away from home, these primary destinations can create a heavy lodging demand. Orlando, Florida, for instance, like Rochester, Minnesota (home to the Mayo Clinic), has a disproportionately high number of hotel rooms per capita.

The Grand Canyon is a popular tourist destination. Visitors to the Grand Canyon enjoy the vistas; the more adventurous can hike to the canyon floor. (Courtesy of Corbis Digital Stock.)



Secondary destinations, however, draw people from nearby areas or induce people to stop on their way by. Some secondary destinations may, in fact, have a higher number of visitors than many primary destinations. As a primary attraction, the Grand Canyon attracts about 4 million visitors a year, although they come from all over the world. In contrast, many regional theme parks (as examples of secondary destinations) draw at least that many visitors. Atlantic City, for example, which is mainly a regional casino gambling center, attracts about ten times that many. In general, we can say that a primary attraction requires more services per visitor, but this does not lessen the importance of successful secondary attractions. Indeed, even smaller secondary attractions make important contributions to their locale.

The balance of this chapter examines those destinations and attractions to which hospitality services are important enough that the attraction can usually be thought of as part of the hospitality industry. We consider primary destinations such as theme parks and casinos as well as significant secondary destinations in urban centers such as sports centers, zoos and aquariums, and museums. We then consider temporary destinations such as festivals and fairs. Finally, we also look briefly at attractions in the natural environment, such as national parks, seashores, and monuments. Our main interest is in the impact of these kinds of destinations on opportunities in the hospitality industry, their significance for hospitality managers, and possible careers in such complexes.

MASS-MARKET TOURISM

It was not so long ago that travel was the privileged pastime of the wealthy. The poor might migrate, moving their homes from one place to another in order to live better or just to survive, but only the affluent could afford travel for sightseeing, amusement, and business. That condition has not really changed; some affluence is still required for recreational travel, and certainly one's level of affluence directly affects the number and types of vacations one can take. What has changed is the degree of affluence in our society. We have become what economists refer to as an affluent society.

When travel was reserved for the higher social classes, its model was the aristocracy. In hotels, for example, dress rules required a coat and tie in the dining room. As travel came within the reach of the majority of Americans, however, the facilities serving travelers adapted and loosened their emphasis on class. Many of the new establishments have, in fact, become mass institutions. Any discussion of these types of facilities would have to include Las Vegas and Walt Disney World in Orlando.

In Las Vegas casinos, mink-coated matrons play blackjack next to denim-clad cowboys. These are not social clubs that inquire who your parents are or on which side of the

tracks you live. The color of your money is the only concern. Likewise, anybody with the money can buy a reserved seat in any of the new domed sports centers (such as Minute Maid Park in Houston with its retractable roof) or stroll through one of the new megamalls, which are discussed later in the chapter. What we see developing (and continuing to evolve on larger and larger scales) are new “planned play environments,” places, institutions, and even cities designed almost exclusively for play—that is, pure entertainment for the masses. Again, social class is meaningless in such places—Disney World has virtually no dress code for its guests. People come as they are. All comers are served and enjoy themselves as they see fit within the limits of reasonable decorum.

These essentially democratic institutions supply a comfortable place for travelers from all kinds of social backgrounds. Accordingly, as the popularity of these facilities increases, we see a new, more egalitarian kind of lodging and food service (and other hospitality-related) institutions flourishing.

PLANNED PLAY ENVIRONMENTS

Recreation is as old as society itself. However, a society that can afford to play on the scale that North Americans do now is new. Some anthropologists and sociologists argue that “who you are” was once determined by your work, what you did for a living, but that these questions of personal identity are now answered by how we entertain ourselves. Some years ago, futurist Alvin Toffler spoke of the emerging importance of “subcults” whose lifestyles are built around nonwork activities. For these people, work exists as a secondary matter, as only a means to an end. Although there is some debate regarding the balance of work and play, play is destined to serve an increasingly important role in our civilization. We are already seeing the pleasure principle (Freud’s contention that people seek pleasure and avoid pain) being elevated to a higher level in our society.

To talk about a society in which leisure is the most important thing flies in the face of the work ethic and religious codes that have dominated the United States and Canada, Japan, and many countries in northern Europe for generations. It is becoming clear, however, that the new century will see a society in which leisure plays an increasingly dominant role.

Planned play environments have actually been around longer than one might believe. **Fairs and festivals** at which work (or trade) and play were mixed date back to the mid-1800s in the United States and to medieval times, or even earlier, in Europe. Amusement parks are anything but a twentieth-century American phenomenon—according



Golf courses represent an early form of planned play environments. The golf industry is flourishing, causing incredible growth in the number of golf courses, both public and private. (Mission Hills Country Club; Courtesy of Club Corp.)

to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, early amusement parks in Europe included Bakken in Denmark, established in the 1500s, and Vauxhall Gardens in England, built in the 1600s. In contrast, the oldest continually operating U.S. amusement park, Lake Compounce (in Connecticut), dates back to the early 1800s. Others date from the 1940s and 1950s. What is new, however, is the sophistication that a television-educated public demands in its amusement centers today and the scale on which these demands have been met since the first modern **theme park** opened at Disneyland. Disneyland, in effect, showed the commercial world that there was a way to entice a television generation out of the house and into a clean carnival offering live fantasy and entertainment. That television generation has now grown up and is busy raising a newer, younger television generation or watching their children raise subsequent generations. Together, these generations are shaping the scope and nature of today's tourism destinations.

A variety of leisure environments have been artificially created for the enjoyment of tourists. These include theme parks, **casinos**, urban entertainment centers, and fairs and festivals. We discuss each of these in the following sections.

THEME PARKS

In the early 1970s, a number of old-style amusement parks closed their doors because they offered little more than thrill rides and cotton candy, even as modern Americans began to demand more from their entertainment venues. Many of the old amusement parks fell in the face of more sophisticated competition from theme parks that catered more effectively to people's need for fun and fantasy.

According to industry sources, the United States has about 600 major themed attractions and other, more traditional amusement parks. The number of visitors to theme and amusement parks in 2007 was estimated at 341 million (the equivalent of more than one visit for every person in the United States), and revenues earned were just over \$12 billion.¹ Worldwide, the industry is estimated to total \$19 billion.² Outside



LEGOLAND® CALIFORNIA attracts over 1 million visitors each year. (Courtesy of LEGOLAND® CALIFORNIA.)

of the United States, there are about 300 amusement parks in Europe, and the industry is growing in Asia. In fact, according to the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions, four of the top ten grossing parks in the world are in Asia. Tokyo Disneyland, which celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2008, draws more visitors than almost any other park in the world (17 million), second only to Disney World, and is successful despite the difficulty that theme parks in Japan have had over the last few years. Hong Kong Disney Land is Disney's most recent venture in Asia.

Although fewer in number than amusement parks, theme parks account for the lion's share of park receipts. These parks have clearly become an important part of both the national tourist market and the local entertainment market. In practice, though, about half the guests visit at least twice a year.

THEMES

Just as restaurants are expected more and more to offer entertainment as well as food (note the popularity of the Hard Rock Cafe and Hooters), today's television-oriented traveler expects a park environment that stimulates and entertains in addition to offering rides and other amusements. One way to meet this demand is to build the park around one or more themes. An excellent example of this is Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, where there are themed areas within themed areas. Most people are familiar with the different theme parks at Disney World, which include the Magic Kingdom, Epcot Center, Disney-MGM Studios, and the newest park, Disney's Animal Kingdom. Within these different parks, however, are additional themed areas. For instance, the themed areas within the Magic Kingdom include Main Street USA, Adventureland, and Frontierland, among others.



A boat ride takes visitors by sculptures built of LEGO® blocks. (Courtesy of LEGOLAND® CALIFORNIA.)

Some parks are built around one general theme. LEGOLAND, for instance, is built around the LEGO toy that originated in Denmark. LEGOLAND California is one of four LEGOLAND theme parks around the world (others are in Denmark, England, and Germany); another is opening in Orlando in 2011. The park has some 5,000 models built from LEGO blocks, including entire replica cities (such as New Orleans and San Francisco). The park attracts over 1 million visitors each year, mostly from southern California.

Whatever the theme, parks are known for their rides, among other things. One of the most popular types is water rides. In fact, Busch has developed a separate theme park, adjacent to its Busch Gardens in Tampa, Florida, built around water and water rides. Adventure Island, as it is called, offers 25 acres of tropically themed lagoons and beaches featuring water slides and diving platforms, water games, a wave pool, a cable drop, and much more.

Although some parks cater to nostalgia (a romantic longing for the past), others re-create the past in a more realistic way. The Towne of Smithville, in New Jersey, for instance, is a restored mid-1800s crossroads community. It offers a Civil War museum and a theater as well.

Some parks take their themes from animal life. Busch Gardens in Florida offers a 335-acre African-themed park that includes the Serengeti Plain, home of one of the largest collections of African big-game animals. It also serves as a breeding and survival center for many rare species. The animals roam freely on a veldtlike plain where visitors can see them by taking a monorail, steam locomotive, or Skyride safari.

The sea offers enticing themes as well. Mystic Seaport, in Mystic, Connecticut, is designed around a nineteenth-century seaport town complete with educational and

recreational activities. A quite different type of experience (also based on the sea) can be found at Sea World (also owned by Busch Entertainment), which has been successful with parks in Florida, Ohio, Texas, and California. Sea World of Florida (in Orlando) features many different live shows, including Cirque de la Mer, which is called a “nontraditional circus”; the Shamu Adventure, featuring numerous killer whales; and shows focusing on other sea life, such as sea lions and otters. Like many theme parks, Sea World offers organized educational tours featuring the work of Sea World’s research organization. A liberal amount of education-as-fun is found in its regular, entertainment-oriented shows. An official of the Disney organization summed up the theme parks’ approach to education this way: “Before you can educate, you must entertain.” Theme parks do, indeed, constitute a rich educational medium.

SCALE

Theme parks are different from traditional amusement parks not only because they are based on a theme, or several themes, but also because of their huge operating scale. As in nearly everything else, Disney leads the way here. The entire Walt Disney World (WDW) complex in Florida comprises an amazing 47 square miles and offers six distinctly different theme parks, each with its own activities, food service operations, and retail stores. The original Magic Kingdom offers seven different lands or distinctively themed areas. The Epcot Center offers Future World, featuring high-tech pavilions, and the World Showcase, which boasts representative displays from nations around the world. Disney’s Hollywood Studios gives visitors a firsthand look at the backstage workings of a major film and video production facility. Disney’s Animal Kingdom is the latest addition. The Animal Kingdom alone, which opened in early 1998, is five times the size of Disneyland (in Anaheim, California). It includes five themed areas and celebrates animal life—quite a different venue from the other three parks in the Disney complex. Finally, Disney’s Blizzard Beach and Typhoon Lagoon offer water-themed activities.

WDW also includes several smaller themed areas, such as the Downtown Disney Marketplace, which offers shopping and dining for visitors. Also located here is the theater that houses a branch of Cirque du Soleil, with over 1,600 seats. Finally, one of the newer additions to WDW is the Wide World of Sports Complex. This area includes venues for various professional sporting events, such as a 7,500-seat stadium where the Atlanta Braves play during baseball’s spring training. The area also boasts a 34,000-square-foot field house and multipurpose sports fields.

Disney is also a major provider of overnight accommodations. In total, it operates 23 different lodging facilities, including campgrounds and villas, on or adjacent to the parks that are operated by, or affiliated with, WDW.

With 55,000 employees, the career significance of WDW and similar enterprises is obvious. In fact, WDW is the nation's largest single-site employer. We should also note here that Disney's Orlando complex represents just one portion of its operations. In recent years, the company has opened theme parks in France and Japan and has expanded further in the Asia-Pacific area, most notably in Hong Kong in 2005, and it has plans to open the next park in Shanghai sometime in the next decade. Disney's expansion into Asia is considered the firm's largest growth opportunity.

REGIONAL THEME PARKS

Theme parks catering to a regional rather than a national market have been growing at a rapid pace in recent years. At least some of this development is attributable to

the increasing cost of transportation and the pressure of economic insecurity and inflation on many incomes. The convenience, however, of nearby attractions and the fact that a visit can be included in a weekend jaunt or a three- or four-day trip is probably an equally strong force. Not everyone can take the family on an extended trip to Disney World. Regional theme parks offer an alternative to many travelers.

Regional parks, aside from serving a smaller geographic area than parks such as Disney World, often target particular groups in their marketing. For instance, Six Flags Over Georgia offers special parties for high-school graduating classes, and its annual Gospel Jubilee features top Christian talent that might not be as popular in other regions of North America. In Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, near Knoxville, Dollywood re-creates the Great Smoky Mountains of the late 1800s through crafts and country music as well as atmosphere, old-time home-style food, and rides. Dollywood has a host of special events in addition to its attractions. These include the National Gospel & Harvest Celebration as well as holiday celebrations, craft competitions, and performances. There is even a church on site with non-denominational services held every Sunday. Regional



Roller coasters continue to be a popular attraction at theme parks both large and small. (Courtesy of Corbis Digital Stock.)

parks such as Dollywood are clearly major sources of tourism: Dollywood attracts over 2 million visitors each year and is the most popular attraction in Tennessee (besides the Smoky Mountains).

Regional parks, though not as large as Walt Disney World, are not small either. Six Flags Over Georgia, for instance, offers over 100 rides, shows, and attractions filling 100 acres. Rides in these parks are of impressive scale. Six Flags recently added its tenth themed area, called Gotham City. One ride in this area, Batman: The Ride, is a fast-paced roller coaster that takes passengers through parts of Gotham City. This single ride's carrying capacity is close to 1,300 passengers per hour. Another ride, Splashwater Falls, is equally as spectacular and cost nearly \$2 million to build. Although not on the same scale as Disney, Six Flags Over Georgia (and the 21 other Six Flags parks, including the first outside of North America—Six Flags Dubailand) are on a scale that is large and impressive enough to draw very effectively from their respective regions. A further look at LEGOLAND, a regional theme park mentioned earlier, is provided in Industry Practice Note 14.1.

THEMES AND CITIES

By definition, theme parks are focused on a central theme or themes. Similarly, entire cities sometimes evoke a singular theme. Examples include Hershey, Pennsylvania; Cooperstown, New York; and Plymouth, Massachusetts.

When one thinks of music, Nashville, Tennessee, quickly comes to mind. Nashville is hardly a one-theme town, but it is closely associated with country-and-western music. Since 1925, it has been the site of the Grand Ole Opry, the wellspring from which have poured thousands of country songs and where many of the major country music stars have gotten their start.

The rise in country music's popularity in recent years is undisputed. The country music audience continued to increase throughout the 1990s, and even though it seems to have plateaued, country music is estimated to hold a 10 percent market share nationally (making country music the number-one music format on the radio today). The popularity of country-and-western music (some of which is becoming closer to rock) is probably a function of many factors, including the aging of the baby boomers. As the boomers, with babies of their own, turned off hard rock and heavy metal, they began to explore country music's more traditional themes. Country music saw a large increase in listeners with the emergence of Garth Brooks in the early 1990s, and entertainers such as Faith Hill, Carrie Underwood, and Taylor Swift help to maintain its popularity.

A Different Kind of Theme Park

LEGOLAND California, located in Carlsbad (in northern San Diego County), is a good example of a regional theme park. Organized around a single theme—LEGO blocks—LEGOLAND is referred to as “the less frenetic park.” The LEGO company was founded in 1932, and the LEGO block was invented in 1949. The company branched out into theme parks in the 1960s. The first LEGOLAND opened in Denmark in 1968, and LEGOLAND California opened in 1999. According to Courtney Simmons, manager of media relations and government affairs, the park attracts its guests primarily from within the confines of the state. Out of the 1.3 million visitors each year, approximately 70 percent come from southern California and an additional 10 percent from northern California, meaning that 80 percent of guests are from within the state. The remainder come from outside the state and country. Interestingly, many of the remaining 20 percent of visitors (coming from outside of California) come from the Chicago area. Simmons attributes this to the popularity of LEGO toys and the fact that there is a LEGO store in downtown Chicago that has proven to be very popular. Many of the international visitors come from Australia.

The park consists of 128 acres of entertainment, shopping, rides, and shows. Some of the LEGO models consist of as many as 30 million bricks. There is even a model shop where visitors can watch models being built. The attractions, rides, and models are complemented by the Big Shop (which has the largest collection of LEGO toys in the United States) and extensive food service operations. There are also numerous celebrations throughout the year, including Halloween, Christmas, New Year’s Eve, and U.S. Independence Day. The New Year’s celebration, which starts at 6:00 P.M., includes music and dancing and the LEGO “brick drop.”

LEGOLAND California has won numerous awards as being one of the best family-oriented theme parks in the United States and has become an important part of the LEGO corporate portfolio. A new park, the fourth, recently opened in Germany. It is estimated that theme parks contribute approximately 15 to 20 percent of the company revenues.

Music fans not only listen to country music on their stereos but also enjoy hearing it live. Although the Grand Ole Opry is the best-known aspect of the country music scene centered in Nashville, it is only one part of the larger Opry Mills complex, formally Opryland USA. The area encompasses 1.2 million square feet of entertainment and shopping. The complex is operated by Gaylord Entertainment.

On one side of the complex is the Cumberland River, where the *General Jackson*, a giant four-deck paddle-wheel showboat, docks. The *General Jackson* operates lunch and dinner cruises and “tailgate” parties on days on which the Tennessee Titans play. On the other side is one of America’s most successful convention hotel properties, the 2,884-room Opryland Hotel. The hotel includes 600,000 square feet of meeting and convention space. The famous Grand Ole Opry is also part of the complex and is

housed in a 4,400-seat auditorium, complete with its own radio station, which broadcasts to 30 different states. Rounding out the attractions at Opry Mills are 200 retail outlets and restaurants.

The Opryland Hotel draws from a quite different market than does the rest of the complex. Its business is driven primarily by conventions—80 percent of the hotel's customers, an upscale market, are there to attend conventions, meetings, and trade shows. Although country-and-western music, and the fun that goes with it, is an important plus to this market, it is not the main draw. Rather, the key is the hotel's extensive facilities; the hotel claims more meeting, exhibit, and public space than any other hotel in the United States. The Opryland Hotel's size means that it can accommodate 95 percent of U.S. trade shows and exhibitions, and the property's luxurious public facilities, guest rooms, and excellent service are another draw. The Opryland Hotel itself resembles a theme park at times, complete with a conservatory, a water-oriented interior courtyard called the Cascades, and lots of indoor greenery. Within these areas, which are covered with acres of skylights, and elsewhere in the hotel are situated numerous restaurants and lounges, 30 retail shops, 600,000 square feet of meeting space, and various fitness facilities including swimming pools, a fitness center, and tennis courts.

Opry Mills is a clear case of synergy between attractions, entertainment, retail shopping, and communications media that has created a major international tourist attraction. At the same time, it is a vital part of the local economy. Although Nashville and the Opry Mills complex are clearly leading the way, other cities that have made country music a major tourist attraction are Branson, Missouri, and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



The growth of theme parks (and themed entertainment destinations) is a favorable development for hospitality students because of the opportunities the parks offer for employment and management experience. Theme parks often operate year round, but on a reduced scale from their seasonal peak. Others close for several months of the year, particularly those in the northeastern United States and Canada. For others, business fluctuations can be extreme, as is the case at Paramount Canada's Wonderland (in Ontario), which has 3,500 seasonal employees but only 150 permanent employees. Few parks experience such employment swings, however. During the months when school is out or when outside weather conditions favor park visitation, attendance soars. As it does, food service volume (and demand for other support services) expands with it. Sometimes demand for these support services is quite large in proportion—Disney earns over 10 percent of its revenues from food service. In order to meet these peaks, the crew expands each summer. To supervise this expanded workforce, college-age

people are chosen, usually from last year's crew, as supervisors, assistant managers, and unit managers. These positions are often quite well paid, but more significantly, they offer a chance to assume responsible roles beyond those that most organizations offer to people early in their careers. Generally, these opportunities are accompanied by training and management development programs. Many of the supervisors and managers at LEGOLAND California, for instance, began their careers in summer jobs there and in entry-level positions, such as ride operators.

The authors have graded more summer field-experience papers than we care to recall, and some of the best opportunities and training experiences we have encountered have been in regional theme parks. Take a close look at the regional and local theme parks in your area as possible summer employers. They offer a type of hospitality experience different from what students might normally expect.

In conclusion, theme parks, both regional and national, represent one type of man-made environment available to travelers. They are increasingly popular, and the market is becoming increasingly competitive. This is only one type of such environments, however. Some very different types of tourist destinations are discussed next.

CASINOS AND GAMING

To move from the innocence of theme parks and country music to casinos and gaming may seem like a giant step, but they do have a good deal in common as tourism attractions—and they are becoming more similar all the time. Just note the many similarities that are now drawn between two tourist destinations: Las Vegas and Orlando. In fact, many aging baby boomers, who once brought their children to theme parks such as Disney World, are being lured to casinos and gaming destinations. (In some cases, they continue to go to both.) We begin by looking at two quite different **gaming markets**: Las Vegas and Atlantic City. Also, a relatively newer gaming area, the Gulf Coast of Mississippi, is presented. Finally, we look at Macau, often referred to as “Las Vegas in Asia.” First, however, some discussion of gambling in the United States is in order.

Gambling of all kinds has grown radically in the past decade. By 2007, 47 states and the District of Columbia had state- or city-operated lotteries, commercial casinos, or allowed charitable gaming. When all gaming opportunities are considered, it becomes clear that few jurisdictions are unable to offer their residents the possibility of a legal wager. According to the American Gaming Association, gross gaming revenues in 2008 exceeded \$32.5 billion; 25 percent of U.S. adults visited a casino in 2008. This number is slightly lower than in 2007 and, given the current, economic situation, is expected to remain flat for the foreseeable future.

The casino gambling environment is unique in that it combines the games usually associated with such operations with entertainment, food, and drink, lodging, and, increasingly, shopping. This makes it more of a total recreational experience rather than a single, discrete activity conducted in isolation.

Casino gaming has exploded, driven by two developments in particular. The first of these was the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988, requiring that any kind of gambling that was permitted anywhere, at any time, in a U.S. state be permitted on reservations in that state once a compact between the state and the Native American tribe had been concluded. In 2008, 224 federally recognized tribes offered some sort of gaming on their land. This number represents a significant increase, up from 184 in 1998 and 81 in 1993. The facility that is generally believed to be the largest,

as well as the most profitable, is the Mohegan Sun, the Mohegan Nation–owned facility in Uncasville, Connecticut (along with Foxwoods, which is number two). In total, this segment of the gaming industry generated just under \$26.8 billion in 2008. Sixty different Native American–run casinos had gaming revenues in excess of \$100 million in the same year.³

The other relatively recent gaming development, modern riverboat gambling, did not come into being until 1991, when Iowa legalized the first gaming riverboat. There were 40 boats operating in 1994. In 2008, there were 88 boats in operation (some riverboats are really just casinos at the water's edge) with total gaming revenues of over \$11 billion. Riverboat gaming is most common in the Midwest and deep South. Analysts expect the riverboat gaming market to continue to grow, albeit at a slower rate with fewer new casinos opening.

Three primary forces appear to be driving the current growth in gaming. The first is a change in consumer tastes in which people have come to see gaming as a



Las Vegas is still the most popular gaming destination in the United States. (Courtesy of Las Vegas News Bureau.)



Harrah's operates this riverboat casino on the Missouri River in North Kansas City. (Courtesy of Harrah's Casinos.)

legitimate form of entertainment rather than something that is done only by people of questionable background.

A second force that seems to be driving the industry is convenience. It is clear that the consumer's propensity to gamble is influenced by proximity to a gaming facility. Couple this with the estimate that there is a gaming facility within a short distance from every urban area in the country. In short, most of the U.S. population is already within an easy day's drive of a casino, and there are still many sites available for gaming, either on reservations or on riverboats.

A third force that explains why gambling is now so widely permitted is the intense need state and local governments have for funds. New gambling establishments are usually subject to a relatively high level of taxation because of the potential for profit. Gaming, in effect, is a voluntary tax. A high proportion of the drop (the total amount wagered) becomes win (winnings by the house), and a high proportion of the win is taxed by the state. In 2008, for example, U.S. commercial casinos contributed \$5.66 billion in direct gaming taxes. Even in states that may not tax gaming facilities as much as others, "gifts" to the state may be made—and these "gifts" are often in the tens of millions of dollars. It is important to recognize that as the many taxation and employment benefits to gaming are recognized by civic and business leaders in areas that have not as yet legalized gambling, there is a strong inducement to legalize it in new jurisdictions. Most recently, the state of Pennsylvania approved slot gaming in designated areas (and will issue 14 licenses). Figure 14.1 summarizes current gaming jurisdictions, and Figure 4.2 shows U.S. consumer spending on commercial casino gaming.

	LAND-BASED OR RIVERBOAT CASINO	RACETRACK CASINO ^{1,2}	TRIBAL CASINO ³	CARD ROOM ^{4,5}	ELECTRONIC GAMING DEVICE ⁶
Alabama			3*		
Alaska			3*		
Arizona			24		
California			66	91	
Colorado	40		2		
Connecticut			2		
Delaware		3***			
Florida		3	8*	22	
Idaho			7		
Illinois	9				
Indiana	11	2			
Iowa	14	3	1		
Kansas			5		
Louisiana	14	4	3		2,293
Maine		1			
Michigan	3		18		
Minnesota			31	2	
Mississippi	29		2		
Missouri	12		2		
Montana			16	468	1,603
Nebraska			6*		
Nevada	266		3		2,123
New Jersey	11				
New Mexico		5	21		
New York		8***	8		
North Carolina			2		
North Dakota			9		
Oklahoma		3	96		
Oregon			20		2,382***

Figure 14.1

Current gaming jurisdictions with gaming operations. (Source: American Gaming Association, *State of the States, 2009*. www.americangaming.org/assets/files/uploads/aga_sos2009web_FINAL.pdf)

	LAND-BASED OR RIVERBOAT CASINO	RACETRACK CASINO ^{1,2}	TRIBAL CASINO ³	CARD ROOM ^{4,5}	ELECTRONIC GAMING DEVICE ⁶
Pennsylvania	1	6			
Rhode Island		2 ^{***}			
South Dakota	35 ^{**}		11		1,478
Texas			1 [*]		
Washington			31	111	
West Virginia		4 ^{***}			1,616 ^{***}
Wisconsin			29		
Wyoming			3		
TOTAL	445	44	423	694	11,495
Number of States	12	12	29	5	6

¹In Rhode Island, there are video lottery terminals operating at a closed jai alai fronton (playing area), not considered a racetrack casino but a parimutuel facility.

²The states with racetrack casinos operate Class III gaming machines. There are two racinos in Alabama—not indicated in this table—that have Class II machines only, which are legal only in the counties where they operate.

³Native American casinos noted here include both Class II and Class III facilities. States with Class II gaming only are Alabama, Alaska, Florida, Nebraska, and Texas.

⁴The states with card rooms indicated here do not include states that have commercial casinos with poker facilities.

⁵The card rooms in Washington operate blackjack and other house- or player-banked card games in addition to poker.

⁶The electronic gaming devices operating in these states indicated are recognized as legal operations. There are some states with similar facilities, but the machines may not be authorized.

*Class II games only

** Limited-stakes gaming only

***Video lottery terminals

Figure 14.1 (Continued)

LAS VEGAS

The first settlement in Las Vegas can be traced back to 1829, but the town's formation dates from 1905, when it was a small desert railroad town. Casino gambling was legalized in 1931. Following World War II, Las Vegas grew more rapidly as large hotels were built, and by the 1950s, Las Vegas had become an established tourist destination

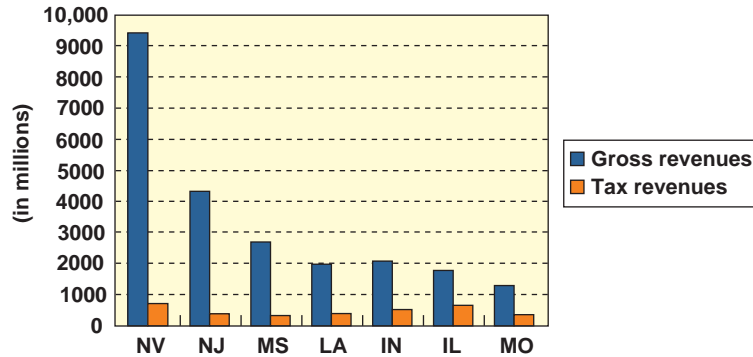


Figure 14.2

U.S. consumer spending on commercial casino gaming, 1999–2008. (Source: American Gaming Association, *State of the States, 2009*. www.americangaming.org/assets/files/uploads/aga_sos2009web_FINAL.pdf)

combining casinos, superstar entertainment, and lavish hotel accommodations. Today, the Las Vegas metropolitan area has over 1.8 million residents and over 140,000 hotel and motel rooms—roughly one room for every 12 inhabitants. The latest project, which will dramatically increase the number of hotel rooms, is the MGM’s. Built on the 68-acre lot between the Monte Carlo hotel and the Bellagio, the nearly \$11 billion CityCenter will include a 60-floor, 4,000-room mega resort and casino, two 400-room boutique hotels, and a 1,543 condo/hotel tower.

Las Vegas has a good deal more to offer than just casinos and hotel rooms. The city is also known for its incredible stage shows, such as *Cirque du Soleil*, which is currently running six different performances at different casinos. *Mystère* is the longest running of its shows. It began in 1993 and is performed at Treasure Island. Described as a show “where dreams become reality and reality is only a dream,” it has drawn over 9 million spectators since it opened. It has performed *LOVE*, based on the music of the Beatles and performed at The Mirage. At the nearby Excalibur, King Arthur’s Tournament features medieval knights mounted on horseback, charging one another in the fashion of a joust. Down the street is the Tropicana’s *Folies Bergère*, which brings a bit of Paris to Vegas, complete with showgirls and dancing. At the Luxor, which mimics an Egyptian pyramid, guests are transported by boat down the river Nile to the elevator that takes them to their rooms. The Luxor also has the King Tut Museum for visitors. The Venetian hosts the Blue Man Group, whose performances have been popular in Chicago, Boston, and New York. Many attractions are free, including the Sirens of TI battle at Treasure Island (which replaced the pirate battle), the fountains at

Bellagio (complete with music and lights), the volcano explosions outside the Mirage, and the circus acts at Circus Circus. One other attraction that is quite different bears mentioning. At the MGM Grand, one is able to partake in the prescreening of television shows and television movies at Television City. Participation is free. Participants enter a screening room, watch a screening of a show that is either in production or in partial production, and then rate it at the end. Respondents' feedback is then considered as a factor in the decision whether to finish production and eventually televise the show on national television. In addition, one encounters many other free attractions walking down the Strip. Finally, downtown is the Fremont Experience (an incredible light show billed as the world's biggest).

Particularly in the down economy, hotel room rates in Las Vegas are among the most affordable in the resort industry, and eating inexpensively is no problem. Hotels still advertise rates for as little as \$29. While the 99-cent breakfast is becoming harder to find, travelers can select from packages that include meals.

Interior of the casino in New York, New York Hotel in Las Vegas. (Courtesy of MGM MIRAGE)



One of the newer trends, however, is the high-end restaurant experience. Today, all of the large casinos feature a restaurant with a celebrity chef. Among the most recognizable names are Wolfgang Puck and Emeril Lagasse. Puck leads the Las Vegas chef list in terms of restaurants with his name on them. At Caesars Palace, you can find his Wolfgang Puck's Spago and Chinois restaurants, and his Postrio is at the Venetian. Lagasse's Delmonico Steakhouse at the Venetian is considered one of the finest steak houses in Las Vegas. At the Bellagio, celebrity chef Todd English's Olives is consistently ranked among the best restaurants in Las Vegas. Of Top Chef fame, Tom Colicchio is another television personality who has a restaurant. His Craftsteak restaurant at the MGM Grand is another of the top steak houses in Las Vegas.

Las Vegas also sports over 40 golf courses, many of them of championship caliber. In addition, there are numerous tennis and racquetball courts as well as other recreational facilities. Entertainment and sports facilities as well as lodging and food service bargains are used to attract visitors to the city and to play in the casinos.

Seven kings unite in a sword salute at Excalibur's "Tournament of Kings." (Courtesy of MGM MIRAGE.)



Las Vegas literally is able to offer the tourist the “entire package.” In addition to the activities and attractions available within the city limits, there are also natural attractions that enhance the city’s image as a destination. The famous Hoover Dam and Lake Mead, with its 500 miles of shoreline, are less than a half hour away. Death Valley is a half day’s drive away, and the Grand Canyon is an easy day’s drive from Las Vegas. Less well-known attractions within an hour’s drive include the Valley of Fire, Red Rock Canyon, and a clutch of ghost towns.

Las Vegas is a fully developed tourist mecca, served by 60 major airlines—McCarron International Airport averages over 900 flights daily. The city drew almost 37 million visitors in the year 2009. Almost 5 million of these were from international origins. Most international travelers to the city come from elsewhere in North America, Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

In addition to its recreational features, Las Vegas has a highly developed convention business, including a 3.2-million-square-foot convention center with another 7 million square feet available at major hotels in the area. Las Vegas regularly hosts some 4,000 conventions per year, drawing over 4 million conventioners.

There is not a lot in Las Vegas except tourism, the businesses that serve tourists, and the businesses that serve those businesses and their employees. Las Vegas is the ultimate in destinations—the city that tourism built.

Although gambling continues to be Las Vegas’s biggest business, the city has been repositioned as a place to go for entertainment, including gambling but certainly not limited to it. As more people across the country are exposed to gambling and consumers’ perceptions of it evolve to a much wider acceptance, the kinds of people going to Las Vegas are changing. There are many more first-time visitors, and more families are making it a family destination. In addition, the city is now drawing a great many more international visitors than ever before.

Even with its entry into family entertainment, however, it is important to remember that gambling is the mainstay of the Las Vegas (and greater Clark County) economy. Casinos take in roughly \$9 billion in Nevada (2009 figures), with most of that being generated in Clark County.⁴ Tourists spend over \$400 each per visit on nongaming expenditures, while conventioners and trade show attendees consistently spend more in addition to the sums spent on gaming. In 2008, visitors contributed over \$42 billion to the local economy.⁵

Those newly acquainted with gambling, it seems, want to visit the big one. Las Vegas is a national, and increasingly international, center that probably stands to gain from the spread of gaming without suffering unduly from the proliferation of riverboat and Native American gaming competitors. However, it is likely that local and regional gaming centers will, in time, feel the effects of intensifying competition. It’s even possible that some markets are now approaching saturation.

ATLANTIC CITY

Atlantic City, New Jersey, has a lot to teach us about tourism, both good and bad. Atlantic City has always been a tourist city since its founding in the mid-1850s. It was once the premier resort city on the East Coast of the United States, famous for its boardwalk and its resort hotels, catering principally to prosperous upper-middle-class Americans. With the coming of automobiles, motels, cheaper travel, and changing tastes in leisure, however, Atlantic City began to deteriorate. From 1960 to 1975, the city's population declined by 15,000, the number of visitors fell to 2 million, the number of hotel rooms decreased by 40 percent, and Atlantic City became a case study in the difficulty of reviving a tourist center once it has gone downhill.

As one observer put it, Atlantic City was a tourist resort without any tourists.⁶ From a peak tourist center for earlier generations, Atlantic City became virtually an abandoned hulk, rusting away at its moorings. Like many older, worn-out tourism centers, its plant was outmoded and in bad repair. Perhaps more serious, it no longer had any appeal in the market, and the revenue wasn't there to rebuild. Then, in 1976, gambling was approved, and in 1978, the first casino hotel opened.

The city's turnaround has been remarkable. In 2007, Atlantic City drew about 35 million visitors, making it one of America's largest tourist attractions. Planning has also played a large role in its success. Atlantic City casinos are required to reinvest 1.25 percent of their gaming revenues in the community and state through the state-run Casino Reinvestment Development Authority. Literally billions of dollars have been invested in the city's infrastructure and housing stock. Atlantic City now boasts a new convention center and thousands of new hotel rooms, with more in various stages of planning.

Casinos offer many different types of games to attract different demographics of players. (Courtesy of PhotoDisc/Getty Images.)





Casinos offer many different types of games to attract different demographics of players. (Courtesy of PhotoDisc/Getty Images.)

Atlantic City is quite different from Las Vegas, aside from being a much younger gaming destination. Although there are two major cities within a day's drive of Las Vegas, Los Angeles and San Diego, Atlantic City has one-quarter of the U.S. population within a 300-mile range. New York City, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., are all within 150 miles. Over two-thirds of Atlantic City's visitors arrive by car, and just one-fourth arrive by motorcoach. Few, in comparison, arrive by rail or air.

In contrast to Las Vegas, Atlantic City has far fewer hotel and motel rooms (less than 30,000), although this number is expected to increase in the next couple of years. (For example, Pinnacle Entertainment, which purchased and subsequently demolished the Sands Atlantic City Hotel, plans on replacing it with a mega-casino resort but has halted the new construction at the time of this writing.) With the large number of day-trippers, Atlantic City has never needed, and probably will never need, as many overnight accommodations as does Las Vegas. Yet Atlantic City hotel operators and tourism officials have recognized that overnight guests have a potentially greater impact on the economy. As a result, the agencies responsible for marketing Atlantic City and southern New Jersey have launched a collaborative effort to encourage longer-stay guests. Visitors are encouraged by this new regional program to see the historic and scenic attractions that abound in the area. New Jersey is, after all, one of the original 13 colonies, rich in history. Moreover, its beaches, which border the Atlantic Ocean, have long been famous as vacation spots.

Atlantic City's skyline was once a study in contrasts. Its new or renewed casino hotels are the latest word in casino glitter, but between them, for a long time, were either run-down buildings where speculators had purchased property or open spaces where old buildings had been razed. Outside the boardwalk's immediate vicinity, much of the city was filled with dilapidated slum housing—an element that many often focused on

when discussing Atlantic City. In recent years, however, the face of the city has begun to show the impact of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority as well as other private and public investment. Today, the city is benefiting from a \$1 billion face-lift. At its core is a new \$250 million convention center, part of a corridor that was designed to create a spectacular entrance to the city. The corridor is a multiblock complex of enclosed shops as well as an urban entertainment center that includes the new transportation center and connects the convention center to the famous boardwalk and several of Atlantic City's casino hotels. Further, new hotels are being built—some of the noncasino variety. Finally, much of the empty space on the other side of the main street has been filled with public parking garages to accommodate the many cars that visitors drive to the city.

The economic impact of Atlantic City is also being felt outside this city of 40,000 people, in the 125,000-person Atlantic County and in the wider southern New Jersey area. Much of the tax revenue is dedicated to funding programs for disabled, disadvantaged, and senior citizens. Further, casinos in Atlantic City (still the only municipality in the state where casinos are allowed) employ about 47,000 people. (The vast majority are state residents.) Finally, regulatory savings are being used to develop new facilities—recent additions include a professional baseball park (where the Atlantic City Surf play) and an aquarium, the Ocean Life Center. Case History 14.1 presents a summary of some of the changes that are taking place in Atlantic City.

MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST

The growth of the Mississippi Gulf Coast is perhaps the most significant development in the gaming industry in recent years. Over the course of a mere decade, the Mississippi Gulf Coast (including the towns of Biloxi, Gulfport, and Bay St. Louis) has become a major player in the hospitality/gaming industry. Mississippi has 29 state-licensed casinos (plus two Indian casinos), 12 of which are located on the Gulf Coast. These casinos generated about \$1.2 billion in gross gaming revenues in 2004. In August 2005, the area was struck by the devastating Hurricane Katrina, after which all activity came to a halt. The casinos were closed for several months and began to reopen only in December, with limited activity. They began to come back in early 2006; by the end of the year, ten casinos were open generating almost as much revenue as 12 did in earlier years. At the time of this writing, 11 casinos are open, one is under construction and six more are planned to open. This is all the result of a focus on redeveloping the area, the state issuing new licenses, and a change in the law, which now allows land-based casinos.

An area that used to attract mainly regional tourists for their annual beach vacations now attracts travelers in the millions—upward of 12 million per year (calculated as person-trips). The number of hotel rooms has increased by 400 percent, convention

Changes Come to Atlantic City

This chapter has outlined some of the key differences that exist, and have existed, between Las Vegas and Atlantic City as gaming destinations. Consider the comparisons of the two cities in terms of scale: Las Vegas has over 140,000 hotel rooms; Atlantic City has fewer than 30,000. The state of Nevada has well over 200 casinos (the majority in Las Vegas); Atlantic City has 12 casinos. Las Vegas has been a gaming capital since 1931; Atlantic City has offered gaming only since 1978. Still, Atlantic City remains the second largest gaming market in the United States (about 20 percent less in gaming revenues than Las Vegas) and draws almost as many visitors. Historically, though, these visitors have come from shorter distances, stayed for shorter periods, and spent less than the visitors to Las Vegas. However, changes are occurring that could help Atlantic City to become more like Las Vegas and become more of a direct competitor.

Unlike Las Vegas, Atlantic City does not “reinvent” itself every few years. In fact, the city went 13 years without a new casino until the Borgata opened in 2003 in the marina district. The Borgata was a billion-dollar project, the likes of which Atlantic City had not previously seen. Besides bringing a new emphasis to Atlantic City (including shopping and fine dining), the development also prompted further growth and development in the way of other new casinos, hotels, shopping, and nightclubs. Borgata, already with 2,000 hotel guest rooms, has a planned expansion under way. Other casinos are also renovating and expanding including Tropicana (with 500 new guest rooms). Atlantic City already has the famed boardwalk but has added other entertainment districts including The Pier at Caesars and The Quarter, which boasts fine dining, shopping, and nightclubs. The city itself is also redeveloping parts of town away from the boardwalk, including an area called The Walk, which offers many shops and parking. There is a new convention center, new retail space, and numerous noncasino hotels and restaurants.

In making these changes, the city is attempting to market to a younger, more affluent crowd as well as becoming more family oriented, as did Las Vegas several years earlier. So far, it seems to be working. Gaming revenues almost reached \$5 billion in 2008, and the city has increased the average length of stay for visitors from 8 hours to 1.3 days. Also, the city is attracting a more diverse crowd.

Atlantic City learned (as did Las Vegas a decade earlier) that the longer tourists stay in town, the more they will spend on hotels, gambling, shopping, and the like. As a result, Atlantic City has made a concerted effort to move beyond its reputation for attracting day-trippers to a destination that can provide more things to do beside gambling, and thus encourage people to spend additional time there.

It is unlikely that the city will ever rival Las Vegas in terms of scale. After all, Las Vegas still has almost five times the number of hotel rooms, and the state of Nevada has over 200 casinos while Atlantic City has 12. However, Atlantic City has changed tremendously in just the last few years, with additional changes to come—including additional teardowns, expansions, new casino licenses, and an expected increase to 35,000 hotel rooms in just a few years.

Source: Information for this note was gathered from the following sources: Personal communication with Jim Wortman, Director of the Gaming Education and Research Institute, University of Houston. Personal communication with Cliff Whithem, Director, Hospitality and Tourism Management, The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. Standard & Poor's Net Advantage, *Lodging and Gaming Survey* (August 2006). “The AC,” *Washington Post*, March 13, 2005, www.Washingtonpost.com.

space has doubled, and the airport continues to expand. The area is also interesting given that, prior to Katrina, the state of Mississippi allowed gambling only on riverboats, so all of the casinos are at the water's edge, and most are situated on large barges, giving the appearance of more permanent buildings.

One of the more recent additions to the landscape is MGM Mirage Resorts' Beau Rivage, in Biloxi. The complex originally opened in 1999 with an investment of \$800 million. It changed Biloxi into a resort destination as well as a gaming hot spot. The complex reopened in August 2006 after a \$550 million renovation. With the area's 20 golf courses and its own course, a 1,550-seat theater, extensive meeting space, and a 20,000-square-foot spa, Beau Rivage offers plenty of entertainment choices besides its 85,000-square-foot casino.

The Gulf Coast area continues to expand, with several new projects scheduled to open over the next few years. Interestingly, the area of Mississippi known as the North River region, in the northwest part of the state, generates even more gaming revenue than does the Gulf Coast (although the gap is lessening). Whereas most of the visitors to the Gulf Coast come from other gulf coast states (Florida, Alabama, and Louisiana), most of the out-of-state visitors to the North River region come from the greater Memphis area and the midwestern United States.⁷

OTHER MARKETS

Certainly, Las Vegas, Atlantic City, the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and the native-run casinos in Connecticut represent some of the major gaming markets in the United States. Some other gaming markets in the world merit discussion, though, including: Britain (almost 100 new casinos in two years), France, Australia (where much of the gaming takes place in private clubs), Mexico, Singapore, and other parts of Asia (including South Korea). Perhaps the market with the most potential is Macau. According to Standard & Poor's, a leading provider of financial-market intelligence, Macau is already the second largest gaming market in the world (after Las Vegas) and is positioned to grow even more. Macau is a Special Administrative Region of China—the only such area in China where gambling is legal. Several U.S.-based companies are partnering with local operators to open large casinos between 2005 and 2015. One of the reasons that Macau is expected to continue to grow is because of its location and its proximity to China and other populous Asian countries. Two factors have contributed to Macau having become an international gaming destination: the area being given back to China (by Portugal) in 1999 and a 2002 law allowing foreign companies to invest and operate there. Its popularity is also rising because more and more Chinese are traveling each year. Some expect that gaming revenue in Macau will exceed the combined revenue of Las Vegas and Atlantic City sometime in the next decade.

CASINO MARKETS AND THE BUSINESS OF CASINOS

The business of casinos is gambling, with table games such as roulette, blackjack, and dice. In addition, a major and growing gambling pastime is the slot machine. From the casino's point of view, what matters in evaluating a customer is his or her volume of play, because the odds in every game clearly favor the house. Big winners are good news for the casino because of the publicity they bring. In the long run, however, the casino wins.

Casino markets can be divided into four general groups: tourists, **high rollers** at the tables, high rollers at the slot machines, and the **bus trade**. Tourists are those who visit the city to take in the sights, see a show, and try their hand at the games, but with modest limits in mind as to how much they are prepared to wager and lose, usually up to \$100 but often as much as \$250 or \$500. (The average gambling budget for a tourist visiting Las Vegas is \$559.)

The high roller, as one Atlantic City casino executive put it, is a person who plays with black chips—that is, \$100 chips. In Las Vegas, industry experts indicate that a high roller's average bet would be in the \$150 to \$225 range and that he or she would be expected to have a line of credit of \$15,000 during a typical three-day visit.

For high rollers, gambling is the major attraction, but they also thrive on the personal attention given to them by the casino and hotel staff. They benefit as well from **comps**, complimentary (no-charge) services and gifts provided by the casino. Some high rollers wager more than the average, and a few bet much more. In general, the level of comps is based on the volume of play, with some casinos prepared to provide free transportation, luxurious hotel suites, meals, and show tickets, for instance. More modest but still significant is the high-roller slot player. In Atlantic City, a \$500 gambling budget qualifies someone as a slot high roller, but \$2,000 is a closer figure in cash or line of credit for Las Vegas. Comps and special recognition are extended to these players, too, according to their level of play. Casinos issue cards with an electronic identification embedded in them. Players insert these cards into the machine to record the player's level of play, and comps are based on the volume of play (not losses). In fact, a \$1 slot player is worth more to the house than a player who bets \$100 in a table game.

Because there is very little labor associated with slot machines, the house earns an 80 percent operating profit compared to 20 to 25 percent on table games. Some areas depend greatly on such machines. The increasing proportion of casino space taken up by slot machines is explained, in good part, by a changing consumer base that includes a much wider spectrum of society than it did 20 or even 10 years ago. As you can see, however, the superior profit margins of slot machines probably

enter into the calculation, too. On Las Vegas's Strip, slot revenue is 49 percent of the market, while table games account for 51 percent. In the newer gambling areas, however, such as riverboat and Native American–owned casinos, slots can account for as much as 75 percent of the wagering. In Atlantic City, slot machines represent 70 percent of gaming revenues—across the country, they account for about 60 percent of revenues. Standard & Poor's survey of the gaming industry estimates that there are some 700,000 legal machines in the United States.⁸ A final category of players is the bus trade—effectively, the “low rollers.” These are often retirees and, surprisingly, people on unemployment compensation. They, too, come for the gambling but usually have a budget of only \$35 to \$70. They are often attracted by a bargain price for bus transportation to and from the casino.

In Atlantic City, this bus trade still provides a substantial portion of the year-round volume of business, but as we have already noted, the city's casinos are deliberately reducing the significance of this segment while trying to build volume among better-heeled players. Like their high-roller neighbors, the bus trade, too, is attracted by relatively generous comps. A bus deal, costing \$10 to \$12, might include round-trip bus transportation, a \$5 meal discount coupon, and a \$10 roll of quarters (“coin,” as it's called in Atlantic City) to get players started.

CASINO STAFFING



The casino gaming staff is made up of dealers (and croupiers), casino hosts (who play a very important role), a floor person who supervises several dealers, and a pit boss. (In craps, a box-man assists the dealer, handling the bank.) In the pit (a group of similar games), the pit boss is assisted by a pit clerk who handles record keeping.

The pit boss is really a technician, expert from years of experience in the practice of the game. He or she generally supervises the play, approves “markers”—that is, the extension of credit (within house limits)—approves in-house food and beverage comps for known players, and generally provides personal attention to high rollers.

Casino hosts serve a very important function at many casinos around the world. They help customers in a variety of ways, from handling special requests to helping to interpret for international visitors. They also handle problems that may arise at the tables. High rollers are assigned their own hosts when they are in the casino.

Slot machine areas are staffed by change people working under a supervisor. Change people and supervisors also offer recognition and personal contact for frequent visitors and slot high rollers.

Comps above a certain dollar level are generally approved by the casino's senior management. Comp services for a junket group are approved by the casino's marketing staff. Junkets are similar to tours that might be sold by a travel agent, except that the sights



Casinos employ large numbers of well-trained employees. The floor person supervises between two and five dealers, depending on the game, and never more than four games. He or she is also responsible for closely watching repeat customers to estimate their average bet, a figure that is crucial to the casino's marketing intelligence. (Courtesy of Las Vegas News Bureau.)

are generally the casino and its hotel environment, and there may be no charge for any of the services because of the expectation of casino play by the visitor. Junkets are put together by the casino or, more commonly, by junket brokers in distant cities.

Dealers need to be alert to players' attempts at cheating, and they themselves are constantly scrutinized by supervisors and security personnel because of the temptation of dishonesty where so much cash is changing hands. The security systems in casinos are incredibly sophisticated and unlike anything in other segments of the hospitality industry. After tours of casinos, students inevitably comment on the security before anything else.

Working in casinos is very challenging. It requires a quick mind and an ability to work with people who are under considerable pressure. Players sometimes become abusive and unreasonable, and whenever possible, staff members are expected to avoid a difficult scene, which may permanently alienate a player and his or her friends. Not surprisingly, the higher the roller, the greater the patience that may be expected of the staff. As is true with other segments of the hospitality industry, the casino industry is not for everyone. However, for those who like the excitement and the challenge, the segment provides great opportunities.

URBAN ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS

When traveling for recreational purposes, people do not limit their visits to theme parks and casinos. People are drawn to many other types of environments when vacationing. The term **urban entertainment centers** means just that—destinations located in cities (or even the cities themselves) that offer a variety of tourist-related activities. Urban entertainment centers vary widely. Some are designed on a smaller scale as a draw for local traffic and an enhancement to the local environment. Others are on a scale nearly as grand as those we considered in regard to theme parks, and many fall between these two extremes.

Sports stadiums, one type of urban entertainment center, have been with us since the time of Rome's Colosseum, but a relatively recent variety of such centers is the covered superdome (and increasingly with retractable roofs), such as those in Houston and Toronto. These types of stadiums have been around only since the 1960s, (although ancient stadiums did provide covering for nobles). Domed stadiums tend to be multipurpose (or used for more than just one sport). These facilities (particularly the covered stadiums) host not only sports events but various types of entertainers, rock concerts, and circuses, and may also double as a convention center of sorts, such as the Superdome in New Orleans.

Turning our attention to baseball, a more recent development in stadium design has been to re-create the stadiums of old, as has been done at U.S. Cellular Field, formerly Comiskey Park (Chicago), Jacobs Field (Cleveland), the Ballpark at Arlington (Texas), and Camden Yards (Baltimore). Further, after decades of relocating sports teams to the suburbs, teams are returning to the cities they once left. These stadiums (along with their teams, of course) have been given credit for drawing baseball fans back to the games as well as building all-important foot traffic in downtown areas. Sporting events do not just attract locals, however. They can be a major tourist attraction. Some fans/tourists take this to the extreme and go on extended trips during which they attend as many games as time will allow. Such travels have been chronicled in a number of recent books, such as Bruce Adams and Margaret Engel's *Baseball Vacations* (Fodor's, 2002). Spring training is also a major tourist attraction. Major League baseball teams train in February and March of each year in Arizona (referred to as the Cactus League) and Florida (referred to as the Grapefruit League). The *Wall Street Journal* estimates that the visitor spending on attending spring training games contributes \$600 million to local communities in Arizona and Florida. Stadiums used for spring training games tend to be much smaller, and as a result, fans are able to be much closer to the action.

A close relative to sports centers are downtown convention centers, which allow for a mixture of business and pleasure. The visitors to a convention or trade show are on business. However, many of these gatherings are more social than professional, and even the most business-oriented meetings are, in large part, devoted to having a good time. Conventions bring major influxes of people and spending. Chicago, for instance, attracted almost 8 million delegates who were attending various conventions, trade shows, and corporate meetings in 2008. Case History 14.2 examines one of the better-known hospitality industry trade shows.

Convention, trade show, and sports centers were once largely the preserve of great metropolitan centers such as New York, with its Jacob Javits Convention Center, and Chicago, with McCormick Place. Increasingly, however, cities that are large but of second rank in size, such as Seattle, Washington, and San Jose, California, have developed urban entertainment centers as a means of challenging established travel

The National Restaurant Association Restaurant Show

The annual National Restaurant Association (www.restaurant.org) Restaurant Show, held in Chicago, celebrated its eighty-ninth anniversary in 2008. It is the food service industry's largest gathering of people, exhibitors, and products/supplies. In order to appreciate the sheer magnitude of the show, consider the following:

- Attracts over 75,000 attendees
- Offers almost 2,000 exhibits, which include anything and everything having to do with the restaurant/food service industry
- Shows the latest products and services available to the industry
- Covers 1.3 million square feet of exhibit space
- Offers culinary competitions, speakers, and activities for attendees, including the “Salute to Excellence,” to which select hospitality students are invited¹

The show should be of interest to hospitality students for a variety of reasons: It represents a “destination” for people either in or affiliated with the restaurant industry; it is a good example of an enormous convention/trade show, as discussed in this chapter; and it is a major industry event that every hospitality student should attend at least once. About 60 hospitality programs were represented at the 2008 show. Each of these programs managed a booth on the show floor, where they were able to promote their schools. In most cases, the booths were staffed by both faculty and students of the program. Those who go each year already know what a valuable learning experience the show provides. Additional information about the show is available from the NRA office.

1. National Restaurant Association Exhibit Guide and Program, 2008.

patterns and increasing the travel business in their markets. It should be noted that many cities are currently in the midst of expansion projects that will allow them to compete more effectively with New York, Las Vegas, and Chicago.

Although medium-size cities cannot bid in the national convention market for the very largest conventions, they often can attract smaller national meetings and regional conferences. Many cities successfully sell bond issues to build civic meeting centers that improve a community's ability to compete for its share of the travel market. That travel market, more and more city leaders are learning, means higher sales for local businesses, increased employment, and greater tax revenues.

Whether the results of these civic efforts always justify such an investment is subject to debate. In any case, though, somebody must operate these centers, and the skills involved (dealing with travelers, providing food service, and managing house-keeping and building operations, to name only a few) clearly fall within the hospitality management graduate's domain. The significance of this new area of hospitality management may be measured by the fact that ARAMARK has a special division to manage conference centers.

Increasingly, urban planners are including in their developments plazas designed to accommodate amusements, dining, and other leisure activities. One is also likely to find fine arts, gardens, and other visually appealing items adorning the areas. The prototype of this kind of plaza is Rockefeller Center, in the heart of New York City. Rockefeller Center takes up all of 11 acres of prime real estate, which represents a combination of leisure/tourist and business activities. Among other things, it has fine shops, restaurants (including the world-famous Rainbow Room), and tourist attractions, such as tours of NBC studios. The 6,000-seat Radio City Music Hall is also located in the complex. It even has an ice-skating rink in winter and hosts horse shows, karate demonstrations, and model airplane contests in milder seasons.

Chicago is another city known for its architecture and public spaces. Some of the developments in that city include the First National Plaza, in front of the First Chicago Building, which is a model for plazas to come. A computer controls the fountain, so that visitors won't get splashed on windy days. From May to October, the plaza features free noontime entertainment, late-afternoon concerts, and an outdoor café. It also has, year round, a restaurant, a bar, a theater, and retail shops.

City waterfront redevelopment projects, too, have become centers that attract visitors and enrich the lives of local people. Efforts of both Boston and Baltimore have received a lot of attention over the last couple of decades; they literally changed the image and demeanor of those cities. Other cities, albeit with different types of waterfronts, include New Orleans and San Antonio. These cities have done an effective job of using waterways as a central focus of their cities.

Restoration and revitalization of aging sections of a city require the involvement of hospitality industry operations. Dallas Alley (in Dallas, Texas) was built in what was a half-forgotten area that housed freight cars, warehouses, and factories. In an old Sunshine Biscuit factory and an adjoining building that was once a Coca-Cola bottling plant, a group of private investors built Dallas Alley, an aggregation of nine nightclubs. The center is located near a \$25 million festival marketplace housed in a former cracker and candy factory. Dallas Alley alone attracts over a million visitors annually. Similarly, the old Jax Brewery in New Orleans was converted and now houses retail shops and restaurants.

SHOPPING CENTERS

Shopping centers are usually thought of as catering principally to local shoppers. Even so, such centers can be more than a little ambitious. The St. Louis Centre suggests the scale of a large, locally centered mall and the often-close relationship of such centers to the hospitality industry. The Centre was begun as an urban renewal project in 1972 and was completed 13 years later at a total cost of \$17.5 million. Comprising a two-block stretch of downtown St. Louis, the Centre serves about 10 million people each year, comprising a mix of locals, conventioners, and tourists. The Centre has a mix of retail shops, sit-down restaurants, and a food court. Despite the fact that it has had financial problems in recent years and has subpar retail occupancy, it is still considered a key project in enhancing the downtown area. Another landmark is Water Tower Place, prominently located on North Michigan Avenue in Chicago. The mall is a marvel to look at and a shopper's destination—it has over 100 stores, many food service operations, and visual spectacles. The mall draws over 20 million shoppers each year. It recently underwent a \$17 million renovation. Other cities that have established similar retail attractions include New Orleans and Boston, among many others. As shopping continues to grow in popularity (some have called it the new religion), malls such as the ones described will only proliferate and will continue to anchor both urban and suburban development. The fact that shopping has become the most favored tourist activity will only fuel this growth (40 percent of shoppers at Water Tower Place are tourists). Retail shopping centers only continue to get larger, as well, as illustrated in the examples given below.

Finally, let's look briefly at four exceptionally large shopping centers, one in western Canada, one in Minnesota, and two in China. In the case of the West Edmonton Mall (in Canada), the aim from the very beginning was to attract tourists as well as local residents to the center. This was necessary because Edmonton, Alberta, a city of less than 1 million, could not support a mall of this scale by itself. Such facilities have been termed **megamalls**.

The scale quite literally boggles the mind. Consider its total indoor area of 5.3 million square feet, equivalent to 28 city blocks. It is a combination megamall/amusement park/food court/hotel/recreation center/museum/casino. In fact, it combines all of the elements already discussed in this chapter. Malls are also supposed to have stores, and it has 800 of them, along with over 100 restaurants, miniature golf, an aquarium, movie theaters, and several major attractions unto themselves. The ceiling peaks at 16 stories with a mile-long, two-level main concourse. The interior plantings include \$3 million worth of tropical plants, which includes a grove of 50-foot palm trees. The mall houses an amusement park and a water park with a five-acre pool where you can surf on six-foot waves, water-ski, ride the rapids, and get a suntan, even when the outside temperature is well below zero. The sights include a dolphin show, a Spanish galleon,

Many of the 40 million travelers who visit the Mall of America each year choose to extend their stay in one of the many hotels available. (Courtesy of Carlson Hotels Worldwide.)



an 18-hole miniature golf course, a 50,000-gallon aquarium, and four submarines. The 33-foot-long computer-controlled subs seat 24 people. The mall is dedicated to the idea that shopping is more than just a utilitarian chore and can be an opportunity for fun.

About a third of the visitors to the mall are from Edmonton and its trading area. Nearly a fifth are from Alberta outside the 60-mile trading area. The other half comes from the rest of Canada and the United States. Half of these Canadian visitors, and 75 percent of the Americans come specifically to visit the West Edmonton Mall. Visitors from the United States average a four-day stay. Visitors, interestingly enough, spend as much or more money outside the mall as they do inside.

In Bloomington, Minnesota, just outside Minneapolis, is another megamall only slightly smaller than the West Edmonton Mall. The Mall of America covers 4.2 million square feet (about 78 acres). An indoor seven-acre theme park, Camp Snoopy, at the heart of the mall, offers 50 rides, shows, and other attractions. The mall also includes over 500 retail outlets as well as an 18-hole miniature golf course and over 50 restaurants, nightclubs and bars, movie theaters, and live entertainment. To top it off, there is a university, a health care clinic, and the “Chapel of Love” for those maritally inclined.

Thirteen thousand people are employed at the Mall of America. The mall drew 35 million visitors during its first year, and it continues to draw between 35 and 40 million people each year. The mall even has its own newspaper to keep its faithful properly informed of current and upcoming events.⁹ Although a description of the mall cannot begin to do it justice, readers might want to visit its Web site and take the virtual tour (www.mallofamerica.com).

For a long time, the two malls just discussed claimed supremacy in terms of size and traffic. This has changed, though, as China and other Asian countries have begun to build malls on a grand scale. It is estimated that eight of the ten largest malls in the world are now located in Asia, and most of these are located in China. In fact, China will soon be home to seven of the world's largest malls. Currently the largest in the world is the South China Mall (in Dongguan) and the second largest is the Golden Resources Mall (in Beijing). At a size that is 50 percent larger than the Mall of America, Golden Resources is advertised as "the mall that will change your life." The growing economy of China is driving the building (and patronage) of such malls. The malls in China have more diverse offerings than typical North American malls, such as numerous entertainment venues. More malls are currently under development, including some that are on an even larger scale.¹⁰

ZOOS, SANCTUARIES, AND AQUARIUMS

Zoos and aquariums can be major tourism generators. For instance, each year roughly 5 million people visit the San Diego Zoo. The zoo also operates an 1,800-acre wildlife preserve 30 miles north of San Diego. The zoo and preserve, like so many other tourist destinations, have a substantial educational mission. The preserve, for instance, is visited by 40,000 elementary- and secondary-school children each year. Other well-known zoos in the United States include the Bronx Zoo and the Washington Zoo. Aquariums, too, are becoming ever more popular. Fine aquariums exist in Baltimore, Boston,



Aquariums are helping to attract tourists to downtown areas. (Courtesy of Las Vegas News Bureau.)

New Orleans, Chicago, and Vancouver as well as in some smaller cities throughout North America. Well-known international zoos include the London Zoo and the Antwerp Zoo in Belgium. Unique sanctuaries exist all over the world as well. In Central America, the Community Baboon Sanctuary in Belize helps to protect the locally known baboons (or black howler monkeys). The sanctuary has received funding from the World Wildlife Fund and is a major attraction for visitors to that country. In Australia, the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary (outside of Brisbane) allows visitors to interact with kangaroos, wallabies, and koalas. Revenues help support the local wildlife hospital.

As with other attractions discussed earlier in the chapter, zoos, sanctuaries, and aquariums must provide food service to their visitors. Also, like other attractions, the number of visitors to these destinations expands when school is out. As a result, these operations can offer summer employment opportunities to students, with a decent chance at getting into a supervisory position.

TEMPORARY ATTRACTIONS: FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

Here we change our orientation somewhat, from the new megamalls to a very different, and longer-lived, type of attraction: fairs and festivals. Fairs date from the Middle Ages, when they served as important centers for economic and cultural revival. Festivals also have their roots in history and were originally religious events. Towns both large and small have long hosted such events.

World expositions (world's fairs or expos) are yearlong attractions, but even a local event, such as the agricultural fair in DuQuoin, Illinois, which annually attracts a quarter of a million people to this town of 7,000, can have a major impact on a city. Some fairs celebrate local industry whereas others have cultural, religious, and historical roots, as is the case with Mardi Gras in New Orleans. (Mardi Gras could perhaps be best characterized as a citywide celebration rather than a festival per se.) Tradition is not enough, however. A successful event must attract tourists, whether local, regional, national, or international.¹¹ Indeed, a festival or fair is a quasi-business activity. Its success is measured by its ability to attract visitors, cover its costs, and maintain sufficient local support to keep it staffed, usually almost entirely with unpaid volunteers. World's fairs, perhaps the most renowned of fairs to most North Americans, continue to prosper and dazzle.

Festivals may be seasonal in nature. For instance, winter festivals reposition the season of slush and rust as a community asset. The growing popularity of winter sports fits well with ice carnivals. The one in St. Paul, Minnesota, which dates all the way back to 1886, includes events such as concerts, skiing, sleigh rides, ice sculptures, hot-air

balloon rides, parades, a royal coronation, car racing, and a softball tournament on ice. Carnaval de Québec, a winter celebration, began in 1954 to energize a stagnant economy and is now the city's third largest industry. It attracts over 1 million visitors each year and generates \$36 million annually. Summer festivals in warmer climates may accomplish similar objectives.

Events such as these clearly affect the economy of the cities and regions that sponsor them. Local patrons spend money from their family entertainment budget that might otherwise have left the community. Visitors spend on food, lodging, souvenirs, gasoline, public transportation, and the like. In most cases, the event itself makes purchases that contribute to the local economy.

The economic effects of fairs and festivals can have a major impact on the community and especially on its hospitality industry. For this reason, hospitality industry managers are often prominent sponsors and backers of such events. In some instances, festivals and events actually may be organized by the local industry. This was the case with the French Quarter Festival in New Orleans, which was established in an effort to draw locals back into the downtown area.

We ought not lose sight of the fact, however, that like so many other aspects of tourism, fairs and festivals also bring important social and cultural benefits to their communities: They celebrate the local heritage and bring members from all parts of the community together to work as volunteers. A good example of this comes, again, from New Orleans. The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, known worldwide for its music, brings together several elements of local and international cultures into one big festival. It has grown from a small local event that drew several hundred people to one that attracts about 500,000 people each year. (See Case History 14.3.) Money from the event also goes to support the local community radio station, fund grants, and provide numerous other community benefits.

Festivals may also celebrate a particular food or beverage product, local or otherwise. Festivals have been organized around shrimp, garlic, mirliton (a type of squash), wine, and beer. It seems that with the increasing popularity of microbrews, more and more festivals focusing on beer appear on the scene. Examples include the Great American Beer Festival held in Denver each year (with almost 50,000 attendees in 2009), the Great British Beer Festival, and the International Beer Festival held in Qingdao, China. Qingdao is a city in the eastern part of China and is famous for its beer (the name was formerly translated as Tsing Tao). In June 1991, the city successfully organized its first International Beer Festival. Since then, the Beer Festival has been held annually, getting larger and larger each year. The number of attendees has increased from about 300,000 in 1991 to over 1.6 million. The Qingdao International Beer Festival not only focuses on beer but also explores the integral aspects of local

The New Orleans Jazz Fest

Many festivals have music as their primary focus: the Newport Jazz Festival, the Chicago Blues Festival, and (once upon a time) Woodstock. Internationally, there are such renowned annual musical events as the Montreux Jazz Festival (Switzerland). One festival that stands out in the United States, however, is the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival (or Jazz Fest, to locals). New Orleans itself is a melting pot of cultures, which is one of the reasons it is unique, and Jazz Fest is uniquely New Orleans.

Jazz Fest celebrates all that is New Orleans as well as cultures that have a direct connection to the city. Over 4,000 artists (musicians as well as crafts and culinary practitioners) participate in the festival each year. Imagine a festival with eight major music stages and several smaller ones; three crafts areas, each representing a different genre of crafts; over 70 food booths offering the best food that New Orleans (and the rest of the world) has to offer; plus interviews, cooking demonstrations, exhibits, activities for the kids, and much more. It's a music festival, culinary event, and crafts fair all rolled into one. Every year, in addition to the usual offerings, one particular country is highlighted (such as South Africa in 2004) with exhibits, performances, and dances from that country.

The Jazz Festival, along with the rest of New Orleans, suffered tremendously from the effects of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. But the festival was held in 2006, in the spring following the hurricane. As Quint Davis, the executive producer said,

The true heart and soul of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, as with New Orleans itself, is music. It is the force that drives and defines us. Not merely for entertainment, but to feed our souls. It is overwhelming how our musical family has rallied to our cause, especially the New Orleans musical mainstays, many scattered throughout the country, all committed to returning to be a part of the renewal of our spirit. Jazz Fest 2006, the great New Orleans homecoming. Anybody who comes to this year's Festival will bear witness to the healing power of music.¹

Jazz Fest grew from a small gathering, where there were actually more performers than attendees, to a major event, with close to 500,000 people attending in recent years. In a city that is known for its Mardi Gras, Jazz Fest has become the preferred event for a lot of people and a good example of a festival that truly has a positive impact on its host city.

1. New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival (www.nojazzfest.com).

tourism, culture, economy, and technology. This festival has truly grown into an internationally recognized special event.

Large or small, then, festivals of all kinds can be a vital part of the life of a community, city, or region. In some cases, they may help to define or reinforce a community. They clearly serve a variety of functions and, like other entities discussed earlier, offer opportunities for graduates of hospitality programs.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Urban entertainment centers may be the epitome of man-made tourism attractions. Not everything that contributes to tourism, however, is man-made. In the public sector, national and state parks, forests, and waters (all part of the **natural environment**) should interest hospitality students just as much. These uniquely American recreation areas have been copied the world over. As far as hospitality innovation goes, they are, in fact, relatively new. The first park created by Congress, Yosemite, was established toward the end of the Civil War in 1864.¹² The National Park Service (NPS) itself was not established until 1916.

The number of visits to national parks grew rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s, expanding roughly to four times the 1950 total by 1965 and doubling again by 1980. The early 1980s saw both a serious recession and an energy crisis. As Figure 14.3

The National Park Service oversees many parks, such as Arches National Park in Colorado. (Courtesy of Corbis Digital Stock.)



YEAR	RECREATION VISITS
1988	282,451,441
1989	269,399,837
1990	255,581,467
1991	267,840,999
1992	274,694,549
1993	273,120,925
1994	268,636,169
1995	269,564,307
1996	265,796,163
1997	275,236,335
1998	286,762,265
1999	287,130,879
2000	285,891,275
2001	279,873,926
2002	277,299,880
2003	266,099,641
2004	276,908,337
2005	273,488,751
2006	272,623,980
2007	275,581,547
2008	274,852,949

Figure 14.3

National Park Service recreation visits. (Source: National Park Service, www.nature.nps.gov.)

indicates, growth began to decrease up to 1990 but has since begun increasing again. Because the largest number of parks and other reserved areas under NPS administration are located in areas distant from population centers in the midwestern and eastern United States, national park visits are sensitive to economic conditions and to the price and availability of gasoline. Total park visits (for recreation purposes) exceeded 274 million in 2008, just slightly less than in 2007. Nonrecreation visits added another 161 million visits.¹³ Interest in nature and environmental experiences continues to grow beyond visits to national parks. Americans seem to have rediscovered the great outdoors,

and this trend appears to be cutting across demographic lines, with a mix of individuals getting involved.¹⁴

In 2008, there were almost 14 million overnight stays in national parks. Lodging in park concession hotels and tent camping accounted for most of those stays; recreational vehicles and backcountry camping accounted for much of the rest. The balance is largely accounted for by organizational group camping and overnight boating trips.¹⁵

The National Park Service Organic Act of 1916 established the national park system with the clear intention of providing recreation and, at the same time, preserving the parks for the enjoyment of future generations. The increased crowding of existing facilities has led those interested in preservation as well as recreation, including the NPS itself, to propose drastic limitations on the use of private automobiles within the parks. The National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA), a private group that supports a conservationist view of natural parks, has suggested that such accommodations as hotels, cabins, and campgrounds be restricted or even reduced within these parks.

The NPCA does not argue that hospitality facilities and services should be unavailable. Instead, it proposes that staging areas with lodging and other services be established in nearby communities and that these staging areas be connected to the parks by low-cost transportation. Proposals such as this would reduce private auto use and help preserve parks' natural beauty, which is their principal attraction and reason for being. It might also create major new commercial recreation areas and opportunities for hospitality firms and graduates of hospitality management programs. Moreover, given the leadership of the national parks in the field of recreation, this pattern might well extend to state parks and forests in future years if it is accepted by Congress and the people.

An extension of tourism that focuses on the natural environment is ecotourism (discussed earlier in terms of resorts in remote locations). Ecotourism is responsible travel to fragile, pristine, and usually protected areas that strives to create no adverse effects on the local environment. This is a burgeoning field. For some countries, in fact, it represents a major industry. For example, in Costa Rica, Nepal, and Madagascar—just to name a few examples—ecotourism represents a substantial portion of the gross domestic product.

Ecotourism in places such as Africa have become synonymous with adventure tours, nature tours, and cultural tours. This is a good example of how the various areas of tourism overlap. We expect that this type of tourism will continue to evolve, and the same trends in social responsibility that we discussed in reference to lodging will emerge as leading factors in the tourism industry.

In conclusion, this huge tourism activity has created many opportunities for tourism enterprises serving the areas that surround natural recreation sites. Although park management is a specialized field, addressed in professional parks and recreation management programs at colleges and universities, the management of the auxiliary services in and around parks—particularly food services, hotels, and motels—lies

within the hospitality management career area. Park lodging and food service concessions hire large numbers of students and, in fact, are staffed largely by students during peak periods. People who work for the same concessionaires for several summers have a good opportunity of gaining supervisory experience and of seeing some beautiful country.

ON A LIGHTER NOTE

We end this chapter on a somewhat more “qualitative” rather than “quantitative” note. Behind all of the facts and figures surrounding travel and tourism, destinations, and tourist behaviors lies an undying interest to explore new things, to be surprised, and to see something strange. This is the only way to explain some of the out-of-the-ordinary tourist attractions that have gained some press over the last few years. And North Americans do not have a monopoly on zany tourist attractions; they are to be found all over the world. Here is a short list of some of the “destinations” that have captured tourists’ imaginations in recent years:

- *The Spy Trail.* Capitalizing on the popularity of James Bond and other British spies, this walking tour of London includes many historic “spy” landmarks.
- *Cemetery tours.* Tours are given of New Orleans cemeteries, one of the most fascinating features that the city has to offer.
- *The International UFO Museum.* The museum is located in Roswell, New Mexico, believed to be the site of a UFO crash in 1947.

The cemeteries in New Orleans are a very popular tourist destination. (Courtesy of Save Our Cemeteries, Inc., www.saveourcemeteries.org.)



- *The Ice Hotel*. First built in Sweden, and later in Quebec, guests are able to spend the night in a room lit by candles on a bed made of ice. The hotel is rebuilt every winter.
- *Cadillac Ranch*. Vintage Cadillacs are buried headfirst in the ground.
- *Tornado chases*. Tour companies offer close-up looks at tornadoes during tornado season in the “Twister Alley” region of the United States.
- *Space tourism*. Independent companies have been rushing to become the first to be able to offer private flights into space. This may be the next big industry in the years to come.

SUMMARY

In this chapter, we discussed recreation, its motives, and different types of destinations. After explaining why people travel, we divided destinations into primary (touring) and secondary (stopover). Then we talked about planned play environments, such as national and regional theme parks, casinos (as exemplified by Las Vegas, Atlantic City, and the Mississippi Gulf Coast), urban entertainment centers such as sports stadiums and megamalls, temporary attractions, and the natural environment, especially national parks. Finally, we looked at some of the more offbeat attractions/activities that have been attracting tourists in recent years.

Along the way, we pointed out the possible employment opportunities for both temporary jobs and permanent careers. Destination attractions are often big hospitality businesses in themselves and act as magnets that keep the flow of tourism not only going but also growing.

Key Words and Concepts

Recreation

Primary (touring) destinations

Secondary (stopover)
destinations

Planned play environments

Fairs and festivals

Theme parks

Casinos

Gaming markets

High rollers

Bus trade

Comps

Urban entertainment
centers

Megamalls

Natural environment

Review Questions

1. What are some of the reasons that people travel?
2. What is the difference between primary and secondary destinations?
3. What do country music, theme parks, and casinos have in common as tourist attractions? How are they different?
4. Briefly describe a theme park that you have visited, and explain why you think it is popular.
5. How do national theme parks, such as Walt Disney World, differ from regional theme parks, such as Six Flags?
6. Besides gambling, what else does Las Vegas offer?
7. What are comps, and why are they important to casinos?
8. Describe how megamalls combine different tourism elements.
9. Describe the role of the national park system and why it is important to tourism in the United States.
10. Which of the destinations and attractions identified in the last section are primary destinations? Which are secondary?

Internet Exercises

1. **Site name:** Vegas.com
URL: www.vegas.com
Background information: Vegas.com features more Las Vegas travel choices than any other Web site, from hotels to shows, to tours, to front-of-the-line nightclub passes and beyond.
Site name: LasVegas.com
URL: www.lasvegas.com
Background information: LasVegas.com is a destination for hotels, air-hotel packages, shows, golf, spas, weddings, dining reservations, and more. You'll find extensive information to help you plan your trip. And when you're ready, we have everything you need, all in one place.
Site name: Atlantic City
URL: www.atlanticcitynj.com
Background information: A complete guide to Atlantic City including nonstop gaming action, top-name entertainment, world-class golf and fishing, luxurious casino hotels and resorts, and beautiful white sandy beaches. You'll also find information on Atlantic City, New Jersey, dining and shopping, attractions, outdoor recreation, and so much more.

Site name: Visit New Jersey

URL: www.nj.org

Background information: This is the official New Jersey Web site with a special page for the Jersey Shore and the casinos.

Site name: Mississippi Gulf Coast

URL: www.gulfcoast.org

Background information: This is the official Web site for the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Exercises:

- a. After reviewing the Web sites above, which Web site is the most attractive to you, and why?
- b. Which Web site(s) provide the most information for the prospective traveler to these cities?
- c. There are two Web sites for Las Vegas and two for Atlantic City. Of the two for each city, which one do you like the best, and why? Which one provides more information?

2. Site name: National Park Service

URL: www.nps.gov

Background information: Most people know that the National Park Service (NPS) cares for national parks, a network of nearly 400 natural, cultural, and recreational sites across the nation. The treasures in this system—the first of its kind in the world—have been set aside by the American people to preserve, protect, and share the legacies of this land.

Exercises:

- a. Choose a state that would be of interest to you. Indicate the state you chose and the national parks that are in that state.
- b. Describe the educational opportunities that are available through the NPS.
- c. Go to the employment page on the NPS Web site and select a state of interest to you. Next, choose a job series where you think you would qualify after graduation, and search for job openings. Indicate the openings that would be of interest to you.
- d. Go to the employment page for the NPS and select a job series that would be of interest to you. Search for all jobs nationwide that are available in that job series. What positions did you find most interesting, and where were they?
- e. It is important that tourism planners consider how tourism will impact the environment. Surf the NPS Web site, and describe how the NPS strives to make the parks environmentally friendly.

3. Site name: Theme Park City

URL: www.themeparkcity.com

Background information: Theme Park City provides a comprehensive listing of theme parks, amusement parks, water parks, and zoos in the United States (by state), Canada, and Europe. It also provides directories for circuses and carnivals.

Site name: Theme Park Insider

URL: www.themeparkinsider.com

Background information: Theme Park Insider provides a listing of theme parks in the United States (by state), Canada, Europe, Japan, and Australia. It also provides directories for circuses and carnivals.

Exercises:

- a. Describe the similarities and differences between these two Web sites. Which Web site provides the most comprehensive information to potential theme park enthusiasts?
- b. Choose a theme park in the United States and one overseas. In a class discussion, describe the overall theme, rides/attractions/shows, prices, job opportunities, and so on for each theme park.

4. Site name: World Casino Directory

URL: www.worldcasinodirectory.com

Background information: World Casino Directory is a complete and current directory of casinos worldwide that is arranged by geographical region, then by alphabetical order. It also provides news and a newsletter for those interested in casinos.

Site name: Casino Checker

URL: www.casinochecker.com

Background information: This Web site provides a listing of land-based casinos around the world.

Exercises:

- a. Discuss the similarities and differences between these two Web sites. Which one provides the most information? Which one is the most user-friendly?
- b. Choose a casino in any state (e.g., the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, New Jersey). Which Web site provides the most complete information on the casino you have chosen?
- c. Compare casinos in different parts of the world, such as one in Macau versus Las Vegas. What are the similarities? What are the differences?

5. Site name: The American Gaming Association

URL: www.americangaming.org

Background information: The American Gaming Association (AGA) represents the commercial casino entertainment industry by addressing federal legislative and regulatory issues affecting its members and their employees and customers, such as federal taxation, regulatory issues, and travel and tourism matters.

Exercises:

- a. Browse the Web site and find the page with gaming fact sheets. Review the variety of fact sheets available, and choose at least three categories to review.
 - i. What information is contained on these fact sheets? Is the information backed up by research, or is it opinions presented by the association?
 - ii. What statistical information is included on these fact sheets? How would this information be helpful to groups that would like their state legislature to approve gaming in their state?
- b. What is the code of conduct for responsible gaming and what are the major elements of this code?
- c. Review “The AGA Survey of Casino Entertainment” for the most recent year. What information is contained in this document? How would this information be helpful to managers in the gaming industry?

Notes

1. International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions Web site, www.iaapa.org/pressroom/Amusement_Park_Attendance_Revenue_History.asp.
2. Christina Valhouli, “The World’s Best Amusement Parks,” *Forbes*, March 21, 2002. www.forbes.com/2002/03/21/0321feat.html.
3. National Indian Gaming Commission, December 4, 2009, www.nigc.gov.
4. American Gaming Association, www.americangaming.org.
5. Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, cber.unlv.edu/.
6. David Gardner, Executive Vice President, Atlantic City Casino Association, personal communication. Gardner was employed as a city planner in Atlantic City during the 1960s.
7. Mississippi Development Authority, “Economic Impact for Tourism and Recreation in Mississippi, 2004,” Annual Report (January 2005). www.visitmississippi.org/resources/tom_total_fy04_tourism_report.pdf.
8. Standard & Poor’s, “Lodging and Gaming Industry Survey,” February 2, 2006. sandp.ecnext.com/coms2/description_RS_LNG_ITM.
9. Mall of America Web site, www.mallofamerica.com.
10. Tom Van Riper, “The World’s Largest Malls,” *Forbes*, January 18, 2008. www.forbes.com/2007/01/09/malls-worlds-largest-biz-cx_tvr_0109malls.html
11. Donald Getz, *Festivals, Special Events and Tourism* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1991).
12. The first national park was Yellowstone, established in 1872. Yosemite was originally a California state park created by the U.S. Congress. It became a national park in 1890.
13. Public Use Statistics Office, National Park Service, www.nature.nps.gov/stats/.
14. Joan Raymond, “Happy Trails: America’s Affinity for the Great Outdoors,” *American Demographics* (August 2000).
15. National Park Service, Public Use Statistics Office. www.nature.nps.gov/stats/.

Part

5

MANAGEMENT IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

