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Casinos Italiani

By Adel Awwad

When most people think of Italy, they think of the food, the art museums, or the ancient Roman

culture. What most people don't know about Italy is that it can be a great destination for people who want to include some gambling on their vacation. Although Italy doesn't have many casinos, the places they do have are well worth the visit for tourists who want to experience something a little different than what they expected on a trip to Italy.

While there are only a handful of casinos in Italy, visiting one of them is well worth the trip. There are two distinctive sides to gambling in Italy. One is very much like the American version, casual clothes and lots of slot machines. On the other hand, many Italian casinos have what is called the "French Games" section. Even in the more casual Italian casino, the Casino Municipale di Campione d' Italia in Campione d' Italia, part of the casino has a dress code as well as an entrance fee (about \$12.50 US). The other Italian casinos, including Casino De La Vallee in Saint Vincent (near Turin), Casino Municipale di Sanremo in San Remo (near Nice, France), and the Casino Municipale di Venezia in Venice, don't allow people in street or casual clothing and all charge some type of entrance fee. Indeed, Italian casinos epitomize the glamorous image of European gambling made famous in James Bond movies.

All of the cities mentioned only have one casino except for Venice. The Venice casino is interesting because it is really one casino split in two, one which is open in the summer and the other that is open in the winter months. Also a little bit different is that the Casino Municipale di Venezia also offers gin rummy tournaments in addition to the gambling.

Besides the dress codes and the entrance fees, there are other things to be aware of before you plan a trip to an Italian casino. The first thing is that in all of Italy's casinos, the language spoken is Italian. If you are planning on spending any time in casinos, you should, at the very least, learn some Italian phrases and other gambling vocabulary. Also, the gambling age in Italy is 18 so students and younger people who may not be allowed to gamble in the USA, where the legal age is 21, are permitted to do so in Italy. In addition to gambling, Italian casinos feature live music and entertainment as well as restaurants and nightclubs. One thing Italian casinos do not have, however, are hotel rooms, so lodging arrangements need to be made separately.

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Online Gambling And Legislation

By Adel Awwad

With more than a trillion dollars changing hands around the world on online casinos alone, sooner rather than later legislation will step in to exercise some form of control in the casino industry. Those measures to control casinos and gambling during the early years worked as the casino had a physical location. Today however casinos have moved online with no real physical location. The question arises how legal are these online casinos?

Gambling legislation has not changed much since Congress passed the Wire Act in 1961. The Wire Act states that "Whoever being engaged in the business of betting or wagering knowingly uses a wire communication facility for the transmission in interstate or foreign commerce of bets or wagers or information assisting in the placing of bets or wagers on any sporting event or contest, or for the transmission of a wire communication which entitles the recipient to receive money or credit as a result of bets or wagers, or for information assisting in the placing of bets or wagers, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both." This however only covered sports betting and not casinos. There was also no Internet or Internet casinos during that time.

During 1998 both MasterCard and Visa sued Cynthia Haines for money she lost while gambling on an online casino. She had lost more than US\$70,000 to an online casino and could not settle her account with the plaintiffs. She filed a counterclaim well within the state laws of California which prohibited credit card loans for gambling be it online casinos or bricks and mortar casinos. That case was settled out of court. Many states have now enacted their own legislation however casinos have moved their gambling operations off shore to casino friendly countries.

Gambling has increased drastically with the advent of the Internet and online casinos. With huge profits and vested interest in casinos there are also very strong lobbyists in government to keep gambling unimpeded. The Internet Gambling Prohibition Act which was defeated in 2000 shows how much vested interest there is in the casino and gaming industry. Cyberspace is the last frontier when it comes to laws governing casinos. Only time will tell how legislation will catch-up with online casinos and gambling websites.

Adel Awwad is the webmaster of Online Casinos – Copyright © 2005

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