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Indiana Casinos

By Adel Awwad

Indiana casinos are located in the "Hoosier state," a Midwest state at the "crossroads of America."

Indiana, with a population of over 6,000,000 and an area of 35,867 square feet, is known for agriculture, manufacturing, and mining of decorative limestone. The capital of Indiana is Indianapolis, the "amateur sports capital of the world," with a population approaching 2,000,000. The largest single-day sporting event in the world, the Indianapolis 500-Mile Race, is held in Indianapolis.

Gambling in Indiana casinos is very popular and there are a number of riverboat casinos in the state, where the minimum age for gambling is 21. Some of the casinos are open from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 Midnight, seven days a week, and others stay open for 24 hours. Indiana casinos offer a variety of table games, such as blackjack, roulette, craps, and several types of poker, including Pai Gow, Draw, Stud, Let It Ride, and 3 Card, as well as frequent poker tournaments.

The majority of the larger Indiana casinos are open for 24 hours, such as Caesars Indiana, in Elizabeth, with 93,000 square feet of gaming area, 2,349 slots, 120 table games, including poker, blackjack, craps, roulette, and baccarat, 10 restaurants, and a hotel. Another large Indiana casino, the Argosy Casino and Hotel, in Lawrenceburg, is open 24 hours and has 74,300 square feet, 2,384 slots, 87 table games, and five restaurants. In addition, the Resorts East Chicago Hotel and Casino has 53,000 square feet, 1,966 slots, and 50 table games.

There are several smaller Indiana casinos, as well, including the Majestic Star in Gary, also open 24 hours, with 43,000 square feet, 1,600 slots, and 47 table games, and the Horseshoe Casino, in Hammond, with 42,573 square feet, 2,000 slots, 49 table games, several bars, and restaurants. Another popular Indiana casino is the Grand Victoria Casino and Resort, in Rising Sun, open Monday through Thursday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 a.m., and Friday through Sunday, open for 24 hours. This 40,000 square foot casino has 1,497 slots, 36 table games, and four restaurants.

Indiana casinos bring an enormous amount of revenue to the state and the enthusiasm for gambling in Indiana is widespread. It is estimated that Indiana casinos in Northwest Indiana rank third in the gambling market of the United States. The worldwide appeal of poker tournaments and the excitement of gambling in Indiana casinos continue to attract more travelers, boosting the economy at a

remarkable rate.

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Riverboat Casinos

By Adel Awwad

Riverboat casinos were first legalized in Iowa in 1991 and their popularity has increased dramatically since that time. At first, gambling on riverboat casinos was limited to \$5.00 bets and a maximum loss of \$200.00 for each cruise passenger. Riverboat casinos gradually moved to Illinois and Mississippi, where there were no limits and casinos were open 24 hours a day. In 1994, riverboat casinos were introduced to Missouri, the last state to legalize riverboat casinos.

Riverboat casinos are legal in six states, Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Missouri. They resemble the grand riverboats of the past; however, they seldom leave the shore and remain at dockside. The Mississippi riverboat casinos must be permanently docked, with gangplanks from the shore to the casino. Some riverboat casinos, "boats on moats," are large barges with casinos on deck, designed to float on pools adjacent to the river. The majority of the riverboat casinos operate on the Missouri, Ohio, and Mississippi rivers, with the exception of Illinois, which allows them on the Des Plaines, Ohio, and Illinois rivers, as well. Each state has its own gambling restrictions for riverboat casinos, including number allowed, types of games, admission charges, number of hours spent in cruising, and amount of gambling time allowed.

There are a variety of games on riverboat casinos, including blackjack, craps, roulette, poker, slots, and video poker, as well as frequent shows, featured performers, dinner, and dancing. Some popular riverboat casinos include the Argosy VI in Indiana, with 2,300 slots and 80 table games for over 4,000 passengers; the Grand Victoria Casino in Illinois; the Ameristar Casino in Missouri, with the largest floating casino floor in the world; and the Mississippi Belle II in Iowa. The Tunica Queen, a 3-deck riverboat casino featuring afternoon and evening gambling cruises, is very popular in Mississippi. One of the newest riverboat casinos is L'Auberge du Lac in Louisiana, a single-level deck, with 30,000 square feet of gambling space, 60 table games, and 1,600 slot machines. Another well-known riverboat casino in Louisiana is the Treasure Chest, featuring 1,000 slot machines and several types of poker games.

Riverboat casinos add millions of dollars in revenue to the economy of each state, as well as providing employment for thousands. Although natural disasters affect the riverboat casinos each year, gaming

developers and individuals contribute to rapid reconstruction and reopening. There remains a bright future for riverboat casinos because of their convenience, reasonable prices, and inexpensive entertainment.

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