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Mississippi Casinos

By Adel Awwad

Since the Mississippi legislature paved the way for casinos to locate in the Magnolia state in the early nineties, Mississippi casinos have not only added to the economy but to tourism. Visitors to the Magnolia State will be greeted with the south's warmest welcome. From the rich soil of the Delta to the waters of the Gulf Coast, guest can find plenty to do at Mississippi Casinos. All guests of Mississippi casinos can expect to be treated to world class accommodations, live entertainment, and wonderful cuisine.

Those looking to stay close to an airport hub like Memphis, Tennessee, can gamble at one of the many casinos in Tunica, which less than an hour away. They are Grand Casinos, Bally's, Resorts Tunica, Sam's Town, Horseshoe, Hollywood, Sheraton, Fitzgerald's, and Gold Strike. Just south of Tunica on route 304 is the quiet town of Lula. Here players can gamble at one of the state's many Isle of Capri casinos.

In the Mississippi Delta lies the town of Greenville with a rich heritage of blues music. The Delta Blues Festival is held every 3rd Saturday of September just outside the city limits. Greenville has two casinos: Bayou Caddy Jubilee and Lighthouse Point.

Historical Natchez with its antebellum homes has the Isle of Capri casino. Civil war buffs can tour the Vicksburg National Military Park as well as visit one of the casinos in located on the Mississippi River: Ameristar, Isle of Capri, Horizon, Resort, and Rainbow. Vicksburg is also located 45 miles east of the state capital city of Jackson, the largest city in Mississippi. Visitors to Jackson can catch a minor league baseball game or spend a day on the water at the reservoir.

Those looking for something different than Riverboat gambling just have to travel to Philadelphia, Mississippi. The Silver Star Casino and the Golden Moon casino as well as the Pearl River resort are all located on the Choctaw Indian reservation. The Pearl River resort features great things to do besides gambling including two 18-hole golf courses and a day spa.

Traveling further south, visitors will find the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Although Hurricane Katrina has left a big scare on Highway 90 and casino row, a few Mississippi casinos have reopened. In Biloxi, the

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Imperial Palace, Isle of Capri, and Palace Casino Resort are once again open for business. The Beau Rivage in Gulfport will reopen in August of 2006, and many other casinos like Hard Rock and Boomtown are planning to reopen in the near future.

Mississippi casinos are located in some of the hottest destinations of the Magnolia state. Plus, the services and amenities offered by Mississippi casinos cannot be surpassed. Come play at the casinos, take in the beautiful sites, and experience firsthand southern hospitality.

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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

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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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