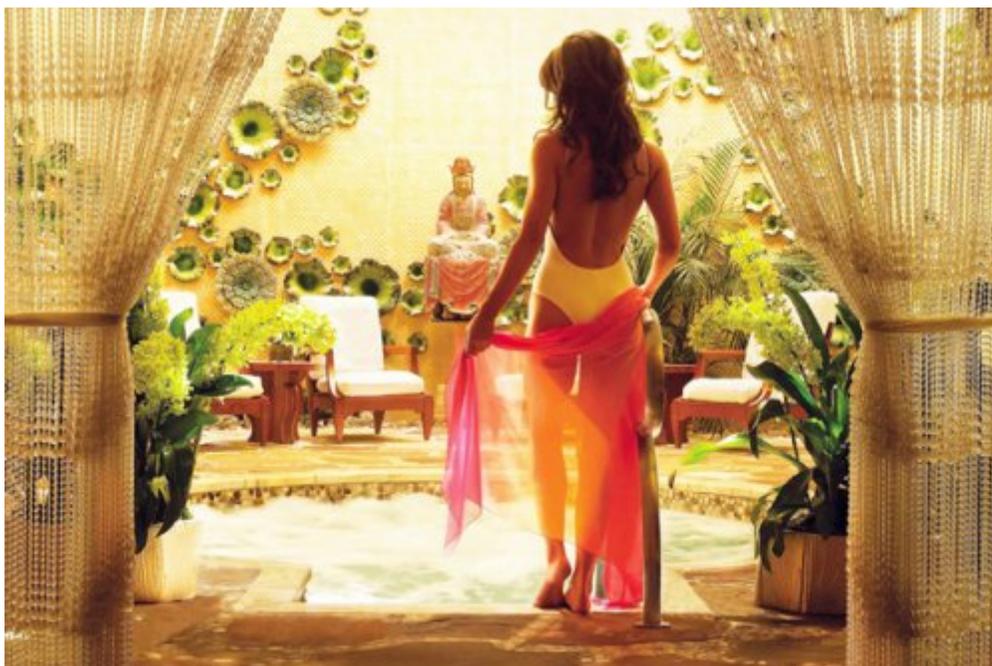


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# The All-American Lesbian Vacay

## With this much fun, why would you ever leave Las Vegas?

LAUREN MARIE FLEMING



When my sister first decided to move to Las Vegas, I thought she was crazy. We grew up in a desert and I couldn't imagine why she'd be stupid enough to move back to one. As usual with my sister, though, she knew what she was doing. Over the past three years I've learned that Vegas, a town known for its frat boys and bachelorette parties, has quite the active LGBT community—and a lot to offer lesbian visitors.

To help fight the heat, I like to spend my days in or near a pool. Luxor is the first hotel to market to the gay community, and they host the "Temptation Sundays" pool party, which caters mostly to gay men, but still offers some nice eye candy for us gals. During Las Vegas Pride, Luxor also collaborates with the Women's Empowerment Network to host "Get Wet," an all women pool party.

Kitty Dip at Tao Beach in the Venetian is a lesbian-focused event that tends to be a little less crowded than the Luxor. If you're looking for something even more relaxing, head over to Mandalay Bay for sandy beaches, palm trees and a tranquil tropical atmosphere. Dubbed "Mandalay Gay" by the locals, it's not infrequent to see scantily clad girls engaged in heavy petting in the private cabanas.

The pool parties are only foreplay, however, for the sexually charged evening entertainment to come. Well worth their ticket price, the Cirque du Soleil shows will blow your mind and Zumanity is especially titillating. Located in the New York, New York hotel, Zumanity features glorious naked acrobats, gender bending eroticism and a remarkable girl-on-girl in a fish tank act that borders on pornography.

After the shows have you worked up, head out to one of the many clubs that cater to the Sapphic scene. Booty Bar, a monthly event at the Bootlegger Copa Room, is well worth planning your travel around. However the most popular lesbian night is Saturday at Krave in the Planet Hollywood hotel.

If you're looking for something a little more low key, try Down at Ghostbar, an indoor-outdoor lounge on top of the Palms Hotel, or better yet Freezone, which hosts the longest running drag show in Vegas and offers a Tuesday Ladies Night. The Gold Lounge at the Aria Hotel also hosts an LGBT night on Thursdays, but it tends to have more men than women.

When you're ready to crash, do so at the Wynn hotel, or Wynn's "little sister," Encore, which is my favorite luxury hotels on the strip. With the most Forbes five-star restaurants in Vegas, Wynn and Encore offer special pampering packages designed for the gay traveler and a dedicated LGBT concierge who will cater to your every decadent need.

If you're looking for something a bit closer to the action (and a bit less expensive) try Harrah's casino or its neighboring sister hotel Paris. Both are located in the middle of the strip and offer reasonably priced rooms, but I prefer Paris' painted ceilings and romantic atmosphere over Harrah's nice, yet less exciting interior.

When hunger hits, scarf down some of the world-class buffets offered all over town. From jiggling green goop to lobster and champagne, there's a buffet for every palate and wallet. The Harrah's casino chain offers an all-access pass to every one of its buffets for one low price, making it by far the best dining plan on the strip.

Well worth the drive off the strip, the M Resort has the best luxury buffet in town, featuring live-action cooking demonstrations and a seafood feast to die for. Best of all, it's a good \$15 cheaper than the strip buffet counter-parts. While you're out there, check out the M's Villagio Bar, located poolside and offering splendid views overlooking the strip.

After you are good and full, head to one of the many hotel spas to wash away last night's sins and rejuvenate before you do it all again. Like everything else at Wynn, the spa offers decadent pampering including body treatments, airbrush tanning and, my favorite, couples massages. Book early, or buy a treatment with a hotel package, and the prices are relatively affordable.

If you're looking to go green, Aria Hotel—a part of CityCenter, the largest private sustainable development in the world—boasts an eco-friendly spa offering organic skin treatments and en suite services that don't even require leaving your spectacular room.

Best of all, every hotel mentioned here, and its parent company, boasts a 100 rating on the HRC Equality Index and supports LGBT rights, which makes me even happier to support them in return.