

# A Street Car Named Desire

By SHERRIN SEN

**G**aming in style, wining and dining with sophistication and driving a swanky car are synonymous with Las Vegas, the city of excess, where literally anything your heart desires is available at a price. For many holidaying or conducting business in Vegas, the city's variety of offerings and easy accessibility of "all things extravagant and downright unusual" provides the perfect excuse to wallow in the lap of affordable

luxury. Cars of any shape or form are all literally a phone call away: exotic cars, sports cars, luxury two- and four-passenger convertibles, sporty roadsters, classic cars, and Hummers. Whether it's a Lamborghini or a Viper, a Jaguar convertible, a Prowler Roadster or Cobra Roadster, Vegas has them all.

Just under half all of those that visited Las Vegas last year brought their own cars (43 percent). The other half was split almost equally among those who rented vehicles, took

taxis or just stuck to using their own feet. Figures from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) showed that in 1999, 21 percent rented automobiles, 21 percent took taxis and 23 percent walked. A smaller minority (15 percent) took buses, while another 15 percent opted for shuttles. The number of people renting vehicles may not be all that high, especially when the tax on rental rounds out to 23.25 percent (including airport tax — 10 percent is the airport tax, 7.25 percent is



sales tax and 6 percent is the vehicle pass-through fee), but the variety and options available put Las Vegas on the map

for extraordinary car rental.

According to Shaun Zuzik, customer service manager at Dream Car Rentals, the reason why luxury car rental is so popular here is that "people want to experience something different," and for many that will never have the chance of owning a luxury car, rental provides the perfect opportunity. Parking provides another plus: Vegas resorts charge little or nothing for parking, and more often than not, it is secured. (Some resorts do require a form of validation, however.)

Dan Park, client manager, Resort Exotic Car Rentals, advises "if you're coming here on the weekend book at least a month in advance, for week days book one or two weeks ahead of time, except in March, our busiest month."★

## Where To Rent

### Exotic/Sports Car

- **Rent-A-Vette**  
(800) 372-1981
- **Resort Exotic Car Rentals**  
(702) 795-3800
- **Dream Car Rentals Las Vegas**  
(877) 373-2601.

Prices range from \$1,249 a day to \$269 for Cobras.

### Limousines

*Limousines are fairly cheap to rent. They vary from the basic black stretch at about \$40 an hour to flamboyant parties-on-wheels with TVs, VCRs and fully stocked bars.*

- **Ambassador Limousine**  
(888) 519-LIMO
- **Rent-A-Limo**  
(702) 798-5253
- **West Limousine Service**  
(702) 203-6133

## Exotic/Sports Car Rates

### RENT-A-VETTE

Business day 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Vehicle	Daily rate	Weekly rate	Free Miles	Age
Lamborghini Diablo	\$1,249	\$6,250	100	30
Porsche 996 (new 911)	\$449	\$399	100	30
Cabriolet				
Ferrari 348ts (targa)	\$449	\$399	100	30
Cobra Roadster (replica)	\$269	\$229	100	25

### DREAM CAR RENTALS

Vehicle	5 Hours	24 Hours	Free Miles
Jaguar K8	\$200	\$269	100
Hummer	\$200	\$300	75
BMW Z3	—	\$169	100
Mustang GT	—	\$89	150

# A Vacation That Feels Like Home On The Range

By TINA BARSEGHIAN

**F**orty-five minutes and 100 years away from Las Vegas sits the embodiment of Americana, a place where men and women can live out their fantasies of the rugged, cowboy way of life.

Sandy Valley Ranch, which officially opened in February, offers visitors a chance to acquaint themselves with a rancher's life by way of day trips and overnight camping tours.

"Almost everyone has experienced the Las Vegas fantasy," said owner Marilyn Gubler. "But what child hasn't grown up playing cowboy? We provide them the opportunity to play out that fantasy."

This dude ranch, however, is different from other dude ranches; visitors are encouraged to chuck their country club attire for chaps and jeans. There is no

satellite TV or piano bar, but there are plenty of cows to round up and barbecue grub to chow down.

Since its opening, Gubler has tried to promote the attraction, working with Las Vegas hotel concierges and the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Bureau. She's hoping to lure ASTA agents to the ranch to give them a taste of genuine cowboy living. Gubler said she would be offering ASTA delegates discount prices on many of the ranch packages.

One of the packages the ranch offers is an authentic Western round-up, where visitors dress like they did 100 years ago, complete with chaps, dusters and hats. Wranglers and guests round-up cattle and herd them into holding corrals.

Hearty chuck wagon meals are served out of cast iron pots over an open fire for evening and overnight

trips. A big campfire beckons guests to do some storytelling.

Round-up packages provide a number of options: All group members can spend several days in Las Vegas and partake in a one- or two-night round-up, camping under the stars after riding the range rounding up steers from the plains and canyons of the Clark mountains.

Those who do not want to camp out or participate in the round-up can join round-up riders for ranch breakfasts and barbecues.

They can go on trail rides or hay rides or go roping.

The cost for overnight round-ups is \$500 per night per rider. Prices include all round-up activities including meals.

For those who are willing to embark on an adventure, but only for the day,

the ranch offers riding instruction and a one-hour trail ride for \$45.

Or visitors can go on lunch or dinner trail rides, which in addition to riding horses, include activities like bucking barrel, horse show pitching or cow pie tossing (gloves provided).

For \$125, riders on dinner trails get hors d'oeuvres, a few riding pointers, a one-hour trail ride and Big Tony's "lip smackin' Cowboy barbecue." After that visitors do a cowboy campfire, with singing and cowboy poetry, and try a quick draw.

Lunch trail riders receive a three-hour trail ride followed by Big Tony's buffet lunch, games and a hayride.

The ranch can also customize trail ride tours.

Call (702) 255-7948 for more information. ★