



# Many Things To Do in Vegas During SSA Gathering

By John Dunlap – Editor, SSA Globe

Las Vegas is nothing if not full-time, high-gear entertainment. And we're not just talking about the antics of gamblers in the casinos. Ever since the Nevada state legislature legalized gambling at the local level in 1931, getting big-name performers to come and entertain at the casinos has been a top priority. By 1954, over 8 million people were visiting Las Vegas annually and the biggest stars of films and music like Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Abbott and Costello, Bing Crosby, Carol Channing were performing in intimate settings. It is no different in 2011.

For example, if you were to have arrived a little early for the SSA's Fall Conference & Trade Show in Las Vegas, on Saturday of Labor Day weekend you would have found Rod Stewart, Sade, Kenny Rogers, Kings of Leon, Ben Harper, Bill Cosby, The Beach Boys and David Spade all performing on the same day. But if you missed that extravaganza, fear not—there is still plenty of great entertainment to enjoy while you are in town.

Rod Stewart, the former rock star who has adopted a greater interest in performing old standards of late, will be performing a long list of hit songs at the Colosseum at Caesars Palace on Wednesday, September 7. It is advised that you move quickly

to get those tickets as his show will be hugely popular with those in town that day. Of course, as is the nature of Vegas, if you miss Rod Stewart, you'll still have a dizzying array of ongoing performances of musicals, circus shows and magic readily available.

For example, the seemingly ageless Donny and Marie Osmond will be performing on at The Flamingo Showroom while the SSA Conference & Trade Show is in town, as will modern-day magician Criss Angel (who is teaming with Cirque du Soleil in a special show at The Luxor).

Speaking of Cirque du Soleil, which has become a closet industry unto itself, numerous possibilities will exist to catch its varied and themed offerings in Vegas. This Canadian-based modern day version of the circus (with more emphasis on music, choreography, gymnastics and artistic presentation) might well call Las Vegas home, given the fact that it will offer up no less than six different presentations while the SSA gathering is in town. The only animals that you will see in in this circus are those played by humans dressed in wonderful and extravagant costumes. But the shows are endlessly eye-opening and fantastic.

Here are the Cirque de Soleil offerings from June 6 to 8: *Mystere* (at the

Mystere Theater in Treasure Island at The Mirage); *Ka* (at the Ka Theater in the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino); *Viva Elvis* (at the Aria resort and Casino at CityCenter); *Zumanity* (a more adult-oriented version of Cirque at New York New York Hotel and Casino) and *The Beatles: Love* (at The Mirage). You shouldn't miss The Beatles: Love, as the music was organized by former Beatles producer George Martin and all The Beatle families gave their blessings to the show. It is a wonderful, joyous presentation.

## Musicals, Perennials and the Unusual

Among the musicals and stage presentations from September 6 to 8 are Disney's *The Lion King* at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino, *Jersey Boys* at the Palazzo Resort Casino, *Phantom – The Las Vegas Spectacular* at Venetian Resort Hotel Casino, and *Rancid and H20* (September 6) at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino.

Then there are the Las Vegas perennials who can be counted on to put on a good show. The Blue Man Group has been performing since they were blue in the face at the Venetian Resort Hotel and Casino, while magician/comedians Penn & Teller bring their

sharp-edged show to the Rio All-Suite Casino and Resort. David Copperfield also has been around the magical block for awhile and will be performing at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino. And prop comic Carrot Top brings his crazy antics to the Atrium Showroom at the Luxor Hotel and Casino.

The Luxor will do its part to contribute to the artistic and educational side of life with two daytime ongoing exhibitions. The first is Titanic – the Artifact Exhibition (with several hundred authentic artifacts recovered from the Titanic) and Bodies – The Exhibition (an up-close look inside our skeletal, muscular, respiratory and circulatory systems).

Of course, it wouldn't be Las Vegas without more adult-oriented fare, like Stripper 101 class at the V Theater in the Planet Hollywood Resort and Casino. That one is for the ladies only and introduces them to the joys of exotic dancing. All of which naturally leads to the featured presentation PeepShow (featuring TV star Holly Madison) at Planet Hollywood.

For those of you who want a little less exotic fare, there are beginning salsa lessons, an easy and fun way to learn salsa dancing techniques, held at the Dance Attack Studio, 8 to 9 P.M. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Hey, it's Las Vegas—would you expect any less? ♦



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