

Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas Sign : The Complete Guide

Written by Susan Stapleton February 13, 2020

The biggest and brightest, 60-year old star on Las Vegas Boulevard won't be found in a glitzy Strip resort showroom, but sits in the middle of the road, surrounded by traffic, under the sound of incoming planes.

Since 1959, the 25-foot-tall, "Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas" sign has become the legendary marker point for vehicles arriving from the west, signaling the true starting point of a Sin City adventure. The 24-hour, totally free attraction is recognizable around the world, luring countless tourists, newlyweds, and social media mavens every year.



Designed by Betty Willis for the Western Neon company, she chose not to trademark her iconic, '50s style design, but gift the logo to the city. That's one reason why you'll see it on plastered on every imaginable type of souvenir at shops across the region.

YESCO, another legendary sign company, now maintains the attraction and you'll probably only notice their logo once you get up close. You also might have missed that the letters spelling "Welcome," are positioned over seven "lucky" silver dollars, a nod to Nevada's nickname as the "Silver State."

Incredibly popular, if only as an enviable check-in on social media, a live feed provided by [Earthcam](#) will give you a handy real-time clue as to how many people already made the same plans as you.

Location

Located on the far, far southern end of the Strip, technically located within the unincorporated town of Paradise, drivers arriving from California will need to make a U-turn to gain access to the parking lot, only accessible on the west-bound side of Las Vegas Boulevard. Ride-share drivers will also be dropping off and picking up, and taxis are frequently waiting to take visitors back to the Strip. With only a dozen parking spaces, you could be waiting a while before you turn off your engine. Patience and early arrival are a year-round solid tip.

If you are bold enough to walk the three-quarters of a mile from the Mandalay Bay resort's front entrance, remember you might also be standing on line for a photo in the un-shaded desert heat before walking that same, rather dull three-quarter of a mile back to air-conditioned comfort. It's a good idea to have sunscreen and some water handy.

When to Go

Depending on the time of day, be prepared for a long line of fellow tourists anxiously waiting for their moment to strike a pose. There is absolutely no fee, and anyone asking or expecting to be paid to take a photo is not authorized to do so. If you decide to take a picture with one of the unofficial showgirls, Elvis impersonators, or costumed characters, they do expect a tip.

At night, the crowd disappears, the temperature cools, and the sign truly pops against the inky black sky. But if you have an old digital camera or phone, be warned, the harsh contrast of light and dark might be too sensitive for your old electronics. Take a look at your screen before you leave to check if the brightness of the white cabinet has drowned out all the details in your photo. And be extra careful of the cars as you leave the parking lot. Las Vegas traffic is notoriously treacherous once the sun goes down.

Tips for Visiting

Be a good neighbor, and if someone asks you take a photo of them, give them a hand. For many, this is a genuine once in a lifetime visit. Take a couple of extra camera clicks as a back-up. You'd want them to do the same for you.

Common sense will tell you not to physically grab at the electrically wired pylon, although there is a little known way to legally and safely take a piece of the signage home with you. Since 2006, the [Official Las Vegas Light](#) company has been selling the actual yellow, incandescent light bulbs that were cheerfully glowing while you snapped a picture. They even detail the exact location on the sign your bulb was positioned. Position it on a shelf next to your framed selfie and display a unique souvenir of your visit. And then, as the back of the sign reads, "Come Back Soon."

Can't make in in-person? Check out of these [Las Vegas webcams](#) for action day and night.