



The Players: The Men Who Made Las Vegas

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Las Vegas has been described as "the last great, mythic city that Western civilization will ever create, " and its brief, phenomenal history has been largely shaped by a handful of colorful and astute casino operators who turned a dusty desert town into the gawdy, booming holiday mecca that it is today. The essays in this book introduce us to these "players" and outline the decisions that led them and their chosen city unparalleled heights of success. We discover how early leaders like Cliff Jones, Moe Dalitz, and Benny Binion first grasped Las Vegas's potential as a center for high-stakes gambling, and we read of mobster "Bugsy" Siegel's efforts to bring to reality another man's dream of a glamorous resort-casino on a then-remote site at the edge of town. Other visionaries like Jay Sarno, Sam Boyd, and Jackie Gaughan helped turn casinos into islands of fantasy, replete with lavish entertainment spectacles, that have become the norm for subsequent construction in the city, and they began the now-standard practice of mass-marketing the Las Vegas experience to middle America. The arrival of eccentric Howard Hughes introduced a new style of corporate management to an industry hitherto led by independent entrepreneurs and their families - a style of management since carried on by Kirk Kerkorian and Steve Wynn.

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