

# EXHIBIT 1

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February 2, 2010  
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## Possible loan from China bank keeps high-speed rail plan alive

Adrienne Packer

By ADRIENNE PACKER

LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL

Backers of a proposed magnetic levitation train that would ferry passengers between the Los Angeles area and Las Vegas announced Monday that a \$7 billion **loan from China** hinges on the U.S. government's support for the project.

The announcement comes on the heels of maglev officials learning they were deemed ineligible for any of the \$8 billion doled out Thursday for **high-speed rail** systems across the country.

Although maglev officials strongly disagree with the government's decision, spokesman Mark Fierro said that at this point, the government's hard cash is not as crucial as its support.

The Export-Import **Bank of China** is willing to lend the money with the knowledge that if the California-Nevada Super Speed Train Commission is unable to pay it back, federal officials will.

"This funding **from the bank in China** was never contingent on this round of federal funding," said Fierro, adding that the agreement was sealed in November. "They're willing to put up \$7 billion, and that is a game changer. This is absolutely enormous."

The Chinese **bank** is familiar with the **high-speed** train technology and its potential, Fierro said. It is estimated that the train would carry 43 million passengers by 2025.

Fierro said the government backing is "good common sense," noting that the **high-speed rail** line is equivalent to an eight-lane freeway with traffic moving constantly at 60 mph, or to 55 fully loaded 747s landing in Las Vegas every day. Fierro said the project would also create about 90,000 jobs.

"We want people to know there is help on the way; the jobs are an enormous part of this," he said. "The future of Las Vegas looks completely different. This makes Las Vegas a suburb of Los Angeles."

Fierro said the project would take about five years to build and would be started at each end to trigger ridership and raise revenues.

Members of the speed train commission still **plan** on protesting the denial of federal monies, saying they followed all the rules and were never informed they did not meet the funding criteria.

In a Jan. 29 letter to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Bruce Aguilera, chairman of the maglev project, asked for the opportunity to further discuss the federal government's reasons for denying Nevada a piece of the **high-speed** train funding doled out last week.

Aguilera requested a meeting "as a means of possibly curing these concerns in the event that some part of the \$8 billion is reallocated or made available in the future, and make certain that this project is 'in the pipeline' of projects for future funding."

In explaining the reasons Nevada did not receive a grant, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood said the commission is not a state agency and added that he never received an application for the funding.

"Nevada did not submit any paperwork, any proposal for any **high-speed rail** money," LaHood told Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid in a one-on-one meeting .

Aguilera rebutted that in his memo, saying that after the maglev commission submitted its application, a Federal Railroad Administration attorney sent a letter outlining his concerns about whether the commission was a state agency. A month later, in September, Aguilera and Gov. Jim Gibbons responded that the application was submitted on behalf of the state by the commission, which they asserted is a state agency, and the Nevada Department of Transportation.

"Neither Governor Gibbons nor myself received any response **from** the FRA to these letters of clarification," Aguilera wrote to Joseph Szabo, administrator for the railroad agency. "If there were a continuing question relating to eligibility we would think that the courtesy of a response **from** the FRA would have been extended."

Aguilera also noted that for a decade, the administration has recognized the commission as a state agency eligible for federal grants.

Kent Dagnall said Monday that the maglev organizers were stunned to learn they did not meet the criteria for the funding.

"The first they heard they missed a deadline or weren't eligible was when they announced it," Dagnall said.

The denial of funds has sparked suspicions that Reid, who withdrew his support **from** maglev citing the lagging progress, might have interfered with the grant process.

Reid now supports the rival DesertXpress, an electricity propelled **high-speed** train that would initially run between Las Vegas and Victorville, Calif., and eventually connect to a **rail** system in Palmdale, Calif. The train tops out at 150 miles an hour, transporting passengers to Victorville in an estimated 84 minutes.

The maglev reaches speeds of up to 300 mph and would deliver passengers to Anaheim, Calif., in 86 minutes. The maglev commission requested \$83 million in grants **from** the federal government.

During his discussion with LaHood, Reid reiterated that Nevada never submitted an application for **high-speed rail** money and noted the "good news for Nevada" is the \$2 billion in funding that California received for its **rail** system, including a **high-speed** link **from** San Francisco and Sacramento to Los Angeles and San Diego. Once California's system is built, Reid said, only 50 additional miles of **rail** will be needed to connect California's web of **rails** to the DesertXpress project.

LaHood agreed.

"Nevada certainly can be a partner in this with DesertXpress and what California will do," he said. "There obviously is a connection as a part of a regional **high-speed rail** opportunities for the citizens not only of Nevada but of California."

But maglev officials said the lost funding could have devastating effects on Las Vegas in the struggle to lure conventions, especially because Florida secured \$1.3 million for a **high-speed** train linking Orlando to Tampa and Miami.

"In a huge setback to the Las Vegas business community, the funding that was announced for Florida ... places Las Vegas in an enormous competitive disadvantage," according to a statement

released by Dagnall. "Orlando is among Las Vegas' strongest competition for convention business."

Maglev officials are still banking on \$45 million Reid set aside for the **high-speed** project in 2005, Dagnall said, and have secured private money to match that. Reid has said that since the maglev project is going so slowly, he **plans** to reallocate the money. Dagnall, like other maglev proponents, claims Reid's grant was written into law and cannot be changed without a congressional vote.

"We're very much in this fight and we're going to continue; the only thing standing in our way is the train to nowhere," Fierro said, referencing the DesertXpress proposal.

Contact reporter Adrienne Packer at [apacker@reviewjournal.com](mailto:apacker@reviewjournal.com) or 702-387-2904.

# EXHIBIT 2

# EXHIBIT 2

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Thread Tools

December 17th, 2009, 09:55 AM

#521

**milquetoast**  
L. A. - GOD'S HOMETOWN



Join Date: Jul 2007  
Location: Henderson NV  
Posts: 3,735

**Now THAT'S how fireworks are done!**

December 21st, 2009, 12:58 AM

#522

**Jim856796**  
No shortcuts to my goals.



Join Date: Jun 2006  
Posts: 3,797

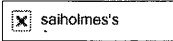
The new tower at the Golden Nugget Hotel has opened last month. Now the Golden Nugget contains 2,407 rooms. A megaresort would have that number of rooms, and because of the Golden Nugget's recent addition, shouldn't it be considered a megaresort. It doesn't have any major attractions other than an actual gold nugget. Hotels in Vegas's downtown shouldn't even be considered megaresorts because their room counts are far too small and some of them are a bore.

*I honestly think all development projects must be sustainable.*

December 31st, 2009, 05:11 AM

#523

**saiholmes**  
Registered User



Join Date: Jan 2005  
Posts: 1,404

Priceline.com Releases Its Annual List of Top New Year's Party Spots  
NORWALK, Conn., Dec 28, 2009 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX/ --

Priceline.com (Nasdaq: PCLN) today released its 6th annual list of top 50 destinations for ringing in the New Year. For the 5th year in a row, Las Vegas is the #1 destination for New Year's revelers.

Priceline.com also reported today that the average published rate for a 3-star or higher hotel in the U.S. for New Year's 2009 is \$129, which is slightly less than last year's average published rate of \$132. "With room rates in many cities still under pressure, a New Year's getaway is an exceptional value," said priceline.com's in-house travel expert Brian Ek.

For those in search of even deeper savings, there's priceline.com's Name Your Own Price(R) hotel service that can save up to 50% over published hotel prices. With Priceline's Name Your Own Price(R) hotel service, customers pick the dates, part of town, hotel star level and price they want to pay for their room. If that price is accepted by a priceline.com partner hotel, the booking is completed and customers receive their hotel details.

Priceline.com's Top 50 Destinations list is the definitive guide for those who want to find the crowds - or stay away from them on the New Year. To compile the list, priceline.com looked at a sampling of more than 30,000 Name

Your Own Price(R) hotel room booking requests made by priceline.com customers for the New Year's holiday. Because the survey is based on actual booking requests, and not on consumer preference polls or votes, priceline.com believes its annual survey is one of the more accurate predictors of New Year's travel trends. Also, by focusing on hotels instead of airline tickets, the priceline.com survey is able to include the travel intentions of consumers who will drive to their destination.

"This year, a handful of cities and destinations were the big winners in the sweepstakes for New Year's revelers," said Ek. "The Miami/Ft. Lauderdale area captured 7 spots on the list, while New York City and Los Angeles/Orange County each took 6 spots, and Las Vegas was named 4 times. The growing strength of New Orleans as a tourist destination was also evident by being named to the #5 and #8 spots on the list."

Priceline.com's Top 50 New Year's Destinations

1. Las Vegas, Strip Vicinity South
2. New York City, Chelsea Area
3. New York City, Times Square/Theater District
4. Miami, South Beach/Ocean Drive
5. New Orleans, Downtown
6. New York City, Empire State Building Area
7. Atlanta, Downtown
8. New Orleans, French Quarter
9. Orlando, Sea World/International Drive/Convention Center
10. Fort Lauderdale, Beach Area
11. Las Vegas, Strip Vicinity North
12. Orlando, Disney Maingate
13. Key West
14. Orlando, Lake Buena Vista/Downtown Disney
15. Maui, Wailea/Makena
16. Oahu, Waikiki Beach
17. San Francisco, Union Square West/Nob Hill
18. New York City, Madison Square Garden/Convention Area
19. Fort Lauderdale, Downtown
20. Puerto Rico, San Juan
21. Chicago, Millennium Park/Loop/Grant Park Area
22. Las Vegas, Near Las Vegas Strip East
23. Chicago, North Michigan Ave./River North Area
24. Oahu, Waikiki Marina Area
25. San Antonio, Riverwalk Area
26. Fort Lauderdale, Ft. Lauderdale/Airport North
27. Miami, South Beach/Collins Ave. Oceanfront
28. Toronto, Downtown Toronto South
29. Newark, Meadowlands/Jersey City
30. Sydney, City Centre
31. Boston, Harbor Front/Aquarium
32. New York City, Midtown East
33. Los Angeles, Central L.A./Hollywood
34. Atlanta, Midtown
35. Miami, Miami Beach
36. Los Angeles, Central L.A./Beverly Hills/West Hollywood
37. San Diego, Downtown & Harbor Island
38. Paris, Eiffel Tower/Port de Versailles/Montparnasse
39. Seattle, Downtown/Pike Place
40. Rome, Central City
41. Los Angeles, San Gabriel Valley/Pasadena
42. Boston, Copley Square/Theater District
43. New York City, Downtown/SoHo/Financial District
44. Las Vegas, Convention Center
45. Miami, Coral Gables/Coconut Grove
46. Los Angeles, Central L.A./Airport
47. Amsterdam, City Centre & Museum Quarter
48. Miami, Downtown
49. Orange County, Disneyland/Orange/Garden Grove
50. Orange County, Disneyland/Anaheim

SOURCE Priceline.com

<http://www.priceline.com>

<http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix....9525&highlight>

Last edited by saiholmes; December 31st, 2009 at 10:19 AM.



January 5th, 2010, 04:03 AM

#524

**CrazyAboutCities**  
Registered User

Hi all,

Sorry if that is off topic here... Since Las Vegas don't have its own sub-forum like some US cities... I can't find which thread is more appropriate for me to ask people from Las Vegas with some questions.



Join Date: Feb 2007  
Location: Seattle, Washington  
Posts: 6,578

My boyfriend got a job offer which is right in The Strips and we haven't decided if he should go ahead take this job yet. We have been to Las Vegas few times before and we always enjoy visiting there. We don't know if it is worth it to move there and live there for a while... We haven't seen real Las Vegas outside of The Strips yet. We like to learn more about real Las Vegas. Thanks! ☺

### JAFS - Just Another Fabulous Seattleite!



January 5th, 2010, 09:40 PM

#525

**palindrome**  
Registered User

Join Date: Nov 2004  
Location: I am from south america  
Posts: 246

I just booked a trip to vegas yesturday! I am going March! Never have been and am so excited! Will be staying at the Luxor.

Got 2 nights in a standard room at the Luxor hotel and roundtrip airfare from Boston for \$340 total. Is that a good deal?



January 6th, 2010, 06:02 AM

#526

**Christopher26**  
BANNED

Join Date: Jan 2010  
Location: BOISE, IDAHO  
Posts: 252

If there is any city in america that can build buildings like the ones being built in Dubai is las vegas. The rotating building in Dubai will be an excellent addition to the Vegas skylines.



January 6th, 2010, 05:03 PM

#527

**PragmaticIdealist**  
Registered User

Join Date: Jun 2009  
Posts: 390

Returning to the subject of high-speed trains, Las Vegas should be supporting magnetic levitation since it has the ability to be expanded to Salt Lake City, Reno, and/or Denver. Federal funding is more justifiable if other cities and states are involved.

Mag. lev. doesn't make sense in the southern California basin, however. Instead, an intermodal rail hub should be established in San Bernardino so steel-wheels-on-steel-rails can provide connections to and from San Diego, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Anaheim/Long Beach.

Long Beach, the fourth largest city in California, is particularly interesting because of its walkable city center and because of the potential intermodal connectivity with the maritime port, the L.A. Metro Blue Line, and Long Beach Airport.



January 6th, 2010, 06:38 PM

#528

**EIDudarinodotcom**  
Registered User



Join Date: May 2007  
Location: Santa Rosa/Santa Barbara, California  
Posts: 99

Quote:

Long Beach, the fourth largest city in California

Actually 6th largest city after: 1. Los Angeles 2. San Diego 3. San Jose 4. San Francisco 5. Fresno 6. Long Beach ☺



January 22nd, 2010, 11:16 AM

#529

**DoMaBor**  
Mr. Yoso



Join Date: Oct 2007  
Posts: 77

Does anyone knows about the ongoing construction of the VA Medical Center in north las vegas? When will be the start of the activation?

The bigger the better... the biggest is the best. The higher the better... the highest is the best. The taller the better... the tallest is the best.



February 2nd, 2010, 09:48 AM

#530



**TonyAnderson**  
Registered User



Join Date: Jul 2009  
Posts: 25

City Center is looking amazing

**Salt Lake City** | [SSC Page](#) | **America's 'Crossroads to the West' - 2002 Winter Olympic Host - The Saint City - The Blossom of the Deseret - Zion**

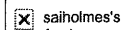
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February 5th, 2010, 07:41 AM

#531

**saiholmes**  
Registered User



Join Date: Jan 2005  
Posts: 1,404

Possible loan from China bank keeps high-speed rail plan alive

By ADRIENNE PACKER  
LAS VEGAS REVIEW-JOURNAL  
Feb. 02, 2010

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"We're very much in this fight and we're going to continue; the only thing standing in our way is the train to nowhere," Fierro said, referencing the DesertXpress proposal.



February 10th, 2010, 10:48 PM

#532

**Jason B**  
Registered User

Join Date: May 2008  
Posts: 40

### FAO Schwarz lets Forum Shops lease expire, quietly leaves Las Vegas

By Steve Green (contact)  
Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2010 | 2 a.m.

For rent: a three-level storefront at one of the most successful shopping malls in the country, previously filled with toys. The previous tenant's 48-foot-tall equine will be removed.

That's right, the iconic FAO Schwarz on the Strip quietly closed Jan. 23, and the next to go will be the wooden Trojan horse that has entertained children, tourists and locals at the store's entrance since 1997.

The toy store let its lease at the Forum Shops at Caesars expire at the end of January. So, Maureen Crampton, marketing director of the Forum Shops, said, "That space will be demolished (for renovation). Unfortunately, the horse will not remain."

Mall officials are hopeful that they can lease the space to a national retailer that wants to establish a flagship store or its largest store nationwide in one of the country's premier shopping destinations.

"That space is considered to be an ideal location for a small group of select retailers," Crampton said of FAO's old location in the wing of the mall tourists walk through to reach the popular Niketown store, Cheesecake Factory restaurant and Atlantis aquarium and show.

Las Vegas retail industry observer Scot Marker, a senior vice president at brokerage Colliers International, said the Forum Shops maintains its status as one of the nation's premier high-end malls.

And in the short term that may make leasing the Forum Shops space challenging, given the national downturn in spending on luxury goods.

"The Forum Shops set the bar — it set it high," Marker said. "It has the only Niketown. It's prestigious.

"I don't know of many high-end retailers out there rolling out stores," Marker said. "There's probably only a handful of tenants that could take that space."

Described by owner Simon Property Group of Indianapolis as "part Beverly Hills, part Rome's Via Condotti and part

Madison Avenue," the Forum Shops has about 160 stores and has boasted it is visited typically by 50,000 people a day.

One thing that probably won't work for the 635,000-square-foot mall, Marker said, is another toy store.

For years, the relationship between FAO Schwarz and the similarly high-end Forum Shops seemed to work.

Forum Shops, long known as the nation's highest-grossing mall with annual sales last reported at \$1,400 per square foot, was a must-see spot for tourists staying at the adjacent Caesars Palace and other Strip resorts such as the neighboring Mirage.

And within Forum Shops, the three-story FAO Schwarz became a key attraction after opening in 1997 in 55,000 square feet.

But then came the recession.

Visitation to Las Vegas tumbled and locals slashed their spending. Although store-specific numbers haven't been released, FAO Schwarz at the Forum Shops likely endured the economic pain like the rest of the city.

In the end, FAO Schwarz owner Toys R Us chose to close the store after the 2009 holiday shopping season. The lease expired at the end of January and "after much thoughtful consideration and a thorough business evaluation, we decided not to extend the agreement," Toys R Us spokeswoman Jennifer Albano said Monday.

About 60 employees were affected by the closure and, where possible, were offered work at Toys R Us and Babies R Us stores in the Las Vegas area, she said.

FAO Schwarz has no plans to open elsewhere in Las Vegas, and remains focused on the FAO Schwarz brand with its flagship New York City store and its Web site.

"Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right. Greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms, greed for life, for money, for love, knowledge has marked the upward surge of mankind." -Gordon Gekko



February 11th, 2010, 04:52 AM

#533

**CrazyAboutCities**  
Registered User

That's bummer!

### JAFS - Just Another Fabulous Seattleite!



Join Date: Feb 2007  
Location: Seattle, Washington  
Posts: 6,578

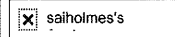


February 17th, 2010, 04:53 AM

#534

**saiholmes**  
Registered User

Celine Dion coming back to Vegas for 3-year stint  
By OSKAR GARCIA (AP) - 5 days ago  
The Associated Press



Join Date: Jan 2005  
Posts: 1,404

LAS VEGAS — Celine Dion is returning to the Las Vegas Strip in 2011 to begin a three-year run at Caesars Palace.

The Grammy award-winning singer announced Wednesday she'll return to the 4,300-seat Colosseum, home of her previous show, "A New Day." It grossed more than \$400 million and was seen by nearly 3 million fans over five years before closing in December 2007.

The new show begins March 15, 2011, with tickets for the first 54 performances going on sale Friday. Officials say ticket prices will range from \$55 to \$250 before taxes and fees.

Dion says the new show will feature songs ranging from timeless classics to fan favorites, with a concept incorporating the romance of classic movies.

"It's going to be a very beautiful show, and I think we'll be raising the bar higher than we've ever done before," Dion said in a statement. "There'll be some truly wonderful moments."

The 41-year-old Canadian singer spent a year on an international tour after her previous Las Vegas show ended, and plans to spend the year before her Sin City return with her family.

Dion is the youngest of 14 children in a musical family. She sang publicly for the first time at age 5, and released her first two albums simultaneously when she was 13.

Dion has since sold more than 200 million albums worldwide and won five Grammy awards.

Two songs recorded by Dion have won Academy Awards for best original song, including the title song of "Beauty and the Beast" and "My Heart Will Go On" from "Titanic."





March 11th, 2010, 06:10 AM

#535

saiholmes  
Registered User

saiholmes's

Join Date: Jan 2005  
Posts: 1,404

The best tastes of CityCenter in Las Vegas  
French, Spanish, Thai, Japanese, American fare — haute cuisine has a new home on the Strip.  
By S. Irene Virbila, Los Angeles Times restaurant critic  
The Los Angeles Times  
March 11, 2010

How many high-end restaurants can Vegas support, particularly in this economy? Easily a dozen more just opened in the new \$11-billion CityCenter complex on the Strip and a number of them definitely have enough wow factor to pull in the hungry tourists.

Admittedly, the planning for CityCenter began long before the slump, still, here comes Michelin three-star Paris chef Pierre Gagnaire joining his illustrious (and extravagantly starred) colleagues Joel Robuchon, Alain Ducasse and Guy Savoy in a gamblers' paradise.

Ten years ago, the idea of such world-renowned chefs deigning to grace Vegas with their cooking seemed preposterous. Today, though, Gagnaire's debut at the Mandarin Oriental with his first American restaurant seems almost ho-hum.

Yet I can't help but think that this new group of restaurants from Masa Takayama (Masa in New York), Shawn McClain (Spring in Chicago) and Julian Serrano (Picasso in Vegas' Bellagio), among others, may be the last such extravagant wave of restaurants for quite awhile.

They're sophisticated and glam, reflecting the thrilling architecture of the complex designed by some of the world's most lauded architects. But what a disappointment inside the Aria casino: Instead of taking the opportunity to redefine the genre, MGM Mirage has gone with the same-old same-old and scribbled over the space inside with busy ornamentation as if the beautiful plain spaces made the bosses nervous.

Here then, for your dining explorations, is my pick of the CityCenter crop.

With Twist at the top of the Mandarin Oriental hotel, Michelin three-star chef Pierre Gagnaire has opened a quietly confident restaurant. It's certainly not over-the-top luxurious, but more like a smart restaurant in Paris' chic 16th arrondissement. It has just 60-some seats, a view of the Strip's tangled neon (yes, that's Mickey D's down there on the left) and a flight of glowing glass balls overhead. Service is more relaxed than it would be in Paris, making everyone comfortable.

The great thing here is that whether you order a la carte, or go for the six-course \$185 tasting menu, you get all the three-star bells and whistles. First come the canapes — and more and more canapes until the entire top of the table is covered with dainty bites of this and that. My favorite? The salmon chantilly to spread on crisp, bubbly house-made rice crackers. The tasting menu runs six courses without being as overwhelming as his menu in Paris, where each course bristles with five or six side dishes. This food is much less elaborate, much more approachable and is built on impeccable technique and arresting flavors. Scallops with rare squab breast, foie gras and black olive gelée is brilliant. I also loved the John Dory fillet poached in Malabar black pepper-citrus butter and served with cannellini beans and a seafood velouté. His signature dish is langoustine five ways, each served on its own small plate and each as different as can be, a tour de force. At the end, a flurry of mignardises arrives. You'll want to linger over these delicate sweet bites, basking in the crazy quilt of neon lights and the desert night.

As someone who very much misses Ginza Sushiko, the legendary sushi bar in Beverly Hills, I was thrilled that Masa Takayama was opening Bar Masa at CityCenter. In a soaring space the size of an airplane hangar, Takayama presents sublime sushi, and in the adjacent Shaboo, set-price shabu-shabu meals at \$500 per person. For me, Masa is one of the country's greatest chefs. But Bar Masa is by no means Ginza Sushiko, and it isn't supposed to be. The a la carte menu is pretty standard sushi fare, albeit with seafood flown in daily from Tokyo's Tsukiji market.

To understand why Masa is so revered, order omakase, or chef's choice. Since someone I know had recently spent more than \$400 per person here, I told the waiter we didn't need any of the pricier items like Kobe beef or caviar. You set the price: The minimum is \$100 per person, but we upped it to \$150 per person. It wasn't much food, basically four modestly sized dishes for two of us to share, plus three pieces of exquisite sushi and three pieces of sashimi each. In the end, we went away a little hungry and disappointed. To get the real experience, you'd need to spend at least \$300 per person. And if you're going that deep into your pockets, why not just go full pop for the \$500 shabu-shabu? But reserve ahead of time. That night a party of 26 had booked the room, and the kitchen had run out of uni, hamachi and kampachi. And I thought we were in a recession.

One of the things I remember with, well, longing from this trip is the paella at Julian Serrano, the Spanish restaurant from Madrid native (and Picasso chef) Julian Serrano. At lunch, I shared a paella for two, the Valenciana, sitting on a high stool at the bar of this bright, inviting restaurant just off Aria's lobby. The paella is the most authentic I've had in this country. Cooked in the typical shallow metal pan, the rice layer is just an inch thick, each grain separate and suffused with the taste of high-quality saffron and tomato and larded with chunks of moist rabbit, chicken and chorizo sausage. I found myself scraping off every bit of rice from the edge of the pan where it gets a little crunchy. If I'd had the time, I would have come back to taste the seafood version too, or the fideua (made with noodles instead of rice).

Since it takes the kitchen 35 minutes to cook the paella, order a few of the generously sized tapas to eat while you're waiting. Escalivada — grilled eggplant, sweet peppers and sweet onions, drizzled with good olive oil and sea salt, is perfect. They've also got padrones, stubby green peppers from Galicia simply seared on the griddle and sprinkled with sea salt and olive oil. There are fine chicken croquetas and lipstick-red piquillo peppers stuffed with molten goat cheese too. You can sometimes catch a glimpse of Serrano having lunch by himself at the bar. Finally, a restaurant with real Spanish food.

The new American restaurant from Chicago chef Shawn McClain is called Sage. The cozy bar up front staffed by expert mixologists gets a local crowd for the dashing bar menu (oxtail and beef marrow crostini, crispy sweetbreads and Wagyu beef tartare). The spacious and rather austere dining room is tucked away from view at the very back. McClain's food is deeply delicious and satisfying. He owns a steakhouse in Chicago, so it's no surprise that the menu is meat-driven. Start with his brilliant kushi oysters with a dab of Tabasco sorbet and tequila mignonette. Or his charred baby octopus caponata, a vivid bouquet of Mediterranean flavors. Sheep's milk ricotta gnocchi are tender and sweet; his slow-poached organic egg with a velvety smoked potato puree and shaved black truffles outstanding. As for that meat: Check out the Belgian ale-braised short ribs with the taste of hops and a tang of orange or the sumptuous melt-in-your-mouth braised veal cheeks with Picholine olives and shaved fennel. You may have to waddle back to the baccarat table, but who cares?

I could fit in only lunch at Lemongrass, a contemporary Thai restaurant from Bangkok chef Krairit Krairavee. Though the crowd was almost entirely Asian, I'd been cautioned that it sometimes tend to be on the mild side and to ask for my food Thai-style. Our Thai waiter took me at my word, suggesting dishes and asking how spicy we could take it. Seven was water-gulping hot, just how I like it. Grilled beef salad, thick fingers of rare beef with shallots, lime and chile could wake up any sleepy-headed gambler. Softshell crab salad weaves the flavors of crab, celery, lime, lemongrass garlic and chile into a beautiful composition. Rice noodles with squid, shrimp and scallops is less compelling. I loved that I felt so far away, eating such distinctive Thai food in such a smart setting. To cool down, have some young coconut juice from the shell or one of the shaved ices in exotic flavors.

Jean-Georges Steakhouse from Jean-Georges Vongerichten, one of New York's most lauded chefs, has a low-key glamour, with an open floor plan, caramel leather banquettes and a wall motif based on the shape of a cow's nose, of all things. The sophisticated take on a steakhouse has a menu strong in first courses and sides: terrific roasted sweetbreads with the rich floury taste of chestnuts or wonderful crab beignets with a blast of black pepper. Like Cut, Jean-Georges offers an array of Wagyu steaks from Japan at elevated prices — our waiter recommended the Wagyu tasting, a sampling of Wagyu steaks at \$240 per person. I didn't win that big that night, so I went for the special Australian Angus 300 New York strip instead, which was truly impressive, not only for being cooked perfectly but also for its marvelous flavor. Yellow-gold fries were memorable, as were the lamb chops in chile-caramel sauce. For dessert, the tall fragrant passion fruit souffle had the texture of a cloud.

Design-conscious friends who live in Vegas suggested Silk Road in the Vdara Hotel at CityCenter for breakfast for its sweeping views of CityCenter's architecture. The LEED-certified design by Karim Rashid is kind of fun, futuristic swirls in the colors of the spice road. Chef Martin Heierling (who created Sensi in the Bellagio) is one of the best in Vegas. What he's doing at this below-the-radar spot, which now only serves breakfast and lunch, I don't know. But do try his Turkish eggs, poached and layered with free-range turkey hash and topped with fiery kirmizi (a Turkish red pepper) butter.

Then after breakfast, drive 17 miles west to the stunning Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area and its stunning landscape for a post-prandial hike. That should set you right after a couple of days' indulgent eating at CityCenter.

In the Aria casino, 3730 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas; restaurant reservations, (877) 230-2742; <http://www.ariasvegas.com>.

Bar Masa, (877) 230-2742. Chilled dishes, \$26 to \$89; salads, \$15 to \$18; braised dishes, \$34 to \$68; hibachi grilled items, \$18 to \$120; sushi items, \$18 to \$240; seasonal sushi or sashimi tasting, \$98; omakase, \$100 per person and up. Shaboo (the adjoining shabu-shabu restaurant), \$500 per person. Open 5 to 11 p.m. Thursday to Monday.

Jean-Georges Steakhouse, (877) 230-2742. Appetizers, \$13 to \$32; entrees, \$26 to \$39; grilled prime beef, \$35 to \$78; sides, \$8 to \$16; four-course tasting menu, \$85 per person. Open 5 to 10:30 p.m. daily.

Julian Serrano, (877) 230-2742. Dinner ceviches and seafood, \$10 to \$30; tapas, \$8 to \$14; cheese and charcuterie, \$12 to \$30; paellas, \$40 to \$50. Open 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

Lemongrass, (877) 230-2742. Dinner appetizers, \$8 to \$15; curries, \$15 to \$20; other entrees, \$12 to \$28. Open daily 11 a.m. to 2 a.m.

Sage Restaurant, (877) 230-2742. Appetizers, \$12 to \$25; entrees, \$33 to \$49. Bar items, \$16 to \$19. Open daily 5 to 11 p.m.

In Vdara Hotel and Spa at CityCenter, 2600 W. Harmon Ave., Las Vegas; (866) 745-7111; <http://www.vdara.com>.

Silk Road Restaurant, (866) 745-7111. Breakfast items, \$15 to \$20; lunch items, \$17 to \$20. Open daily for breakfast and lunch from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

In the Mandarin Oriental, Las Vegas, 3752 Las Vegas Blvd. S., Las Vegas; (702) 590-8888; <http://www.mandarinoriental.com>.

Twist by Pierre Gagnaire, (888) 881-9367. Appetizers, \$19 to \$39; main courses, \$42 to \$56; desserts, \$16. Six-course tasting menu, \$185 per person. Open 6 to 10 p.m. Tuesday to Saturday.



March 11th, 2010, 08:52 AM

#536

**jbkayaker12**

Registered User

Join Date: Nov 2004  
Location: LV NV USA

LAS VEGAS HOTEL ROOMS ARE NATION'S MOST AFFORDABLE

By Liz Benston (contact)  
Wednesday, March 10, 2010 | 4:30 p.m.

Posts: 2,749

Thanks in part to the recession, Las Vegas has the nation's most popular and affordable hotel rooms, according to a twice-annual survey by the travel reservations Web site Hotels.com.

Rates plummeted significantly from the first half of last year, when Las Vegas was ranked 45th in hotel pricing nationwide.

Las Vegas was the top destination for domestic travelers and the No. 2 destination for international travelers, behind New York, according to the survey, which is based on Hotels.com bookings made in the last half of 2009.

Average daily rates in Las Vegas from July to December fell 18 percent to \$79, the company reported. By comparison, rates were \$109 per day in the first half of the year.

Las Vegas also was the nation's top U.S. travel destination in the first half of last year.

Other major cities are commanding higher prices than Las Vegas in spite of double-digit declines, the survey said. Average daily rates in Seattle were \$129 in 2009, followed by \$127 in San Francisco and San Diego and \$119 in Los Angeles.

New York City had the nation's highest average hotel rates of \$197 per day in spite of a 25 percent decline in rates last year.

[Las Vegas Sun](#)



April 2nd, 2010, 12:09 AM

#537

**Gerasim**

Gerasim

Join Date: Apr 2010  
Location: Lvov, Ukraine  
Posts: 10

I was about meeting my friend living there but unfortunately he died suddenly.



April 2nd, 2010, 08:45 AM

#538

**saiholmes**

Registered User

saiholmes's

Join Date: Jan 2005  
Posts: 1,404



Work on high-speed rail set to begin this year

By Richard N. Velotta

Las Vegas Sun

Thursday, March 25, 2010 | 6:03 p.m.

Environmental approvals for the proposed \$4 billion DesertXpress high-speed rail project between Las Vegas and Southern California are taking longer than expected, but executives with the project said Thursday they expect construction to begin this year.

"It's all just process and working through the details," DesertXpress Enterprises President Tom Stone said in a media briefing on the project. "No environmental showstoppers have been identified."

Last year, developers of the 185-mile rail line that would link Las Vegas with Victorville, Calif., said they hoped they would get final environmental approvals by the end of the first quarter of 2010 and that they would be able to break ground by summer. But Stone said the process is running three to four months behind what they had hoped, although they still expect a groundbreaking before the end of the year.

Construction is expected to take four years, meaning that revenue service for the train could begin by late 2014.

The project includes the construction of two parallel grade-level tracks across the Mohave Desert, mostly along the I-15 corridor and the accompanying electrical catenary.

Stone explained that five federal agencies are a part of the process that eventually would lead to the issuance of a Record of Decision that would give developers of DesertXpress the green light to begin construction.

The Federal Railroad Administration, a division of the U.S. Department of Transportation, is the lead agency on the adoption process. Cooperating agencies that are participating include the Federal Highway Administration (another Transportation Department agency), the Bureau of Land Management, the Surface Transportation Board (formerly the Interstate Commerce Commission) and the National Park Service.

The FHA is involved because much of the route is within the right-of-way of Interstate 15 while the BLM controls most of the other land through which the line would pass. The Park Service is involved because one of the alignment alternatives could pass through a small portion of the Mohave National Preserve in California, just south of the Nevada border.

The route between Las Vegas and Victorville includes several alignment alternatives and there are four potential sites for a station in Las Vegas and three in Victorville that must be resolved. Stone said the agencies need to determine which alternatives present the least environmental impact.

While the federal agencies work on the Record of Decision, DesertXpress Enterprises is narrowing the field to select its implementation team partner -- a process that began last August. The implementation team will be responsible for the final engineering, construction, operations and maintenance of the train system as well as participate as a financial partner for the project.

Stone said DesertXpress received 12 proposals from prospective partners. Executives cut the field to six and there are now three finalists. He did not identify what companies are in the running.

Architectural and engineering firms that have worked on the project so far include Korve

Engineering, EarthTech, AECOM, EDAW, URS, Stantec and Marnell Consulting.

Private investors have paid for DesertXpress' costs to date and construction will be financed with private equity combined with long-term public- and private-sourced debt with the repayment coming from private sources. No taxpayer money has been used, although executives say they are considering federal loans.

Indirectly, stimulus funds appropriated to California's rail system could benefit DesertXpress if they are used in the High Desert Corridor highway project, which includes the development of the right-of-way to include the rail line. DesertXpress officials have agreed to provide technical support, engineering, right-of-way width documentation and noise-abatement specifications to California transportation planners.

When construction begins, Stone said he expects there would be multiple construction sites throughout the rail corridor at any one time. One of those sites would be a train station in Victorville. Three prospective sites are under consideration, all within close proximity of I-15.

A model of the Victorville station was unveiled at the briefing and Stone noted that it is being designed to allow trains to pass through the structure in anticipation of the line extending west to Palmdale, where it would connect with the proposed California high-speed rail line and a route between Sylmar and Bakersfield.

While work hasn't begun on the 50-mile line between Victorville and Palmdale, Stone said he has received assurances from transportation planners in Southern California that the link would be fast-tracked to enable a direct line between Las Vegas and Los Angeles. Because the California system and DesertXpress would be compatible, Stone said it would be possible for riders to board in Los Angeles and travel without changing trains all the way to Las Vegas. The trip would take between two and 2 1/2 hours, he said.

Ideally, Stone said, the environmental approvals would be completed as construction winds down on the Las Vegas-Victorville route so that workers could move to the next building phase.

But for now, the focus is on Victorville.

Andrew Mack, chief operating officer of DesertXpress Enterprises, stands behind a model of a proposed Victorville station during a news conference for the DesertXpress high-speed rail project Thursday, March 25, 2010.

The model of the Victorville train station includes a 15,000-space parking area, some of it surface parking and some of it within a parking garage. It's 1 1/2 times larger than Disneyland's parking lot.

Despite mountains of public criticism, Victorville was chosen as DesertXpress' southern terminus -- until the connection to the California line is completed -- because most Southern California highway traffic must pass through Victorville to get to Las Vegas.


DesertXpress Vice President Andrew Mack said the company is placing an emphasis on the Las Vegas experience starting in Victorville, so parking at the station would be free, just as it would be in Las Vegas, and passengers will be able to check their bags all the way through to their Las Vegas hotels at no additional cost.

Stone and Mack have not wavered from earlier estimates that the average ticket cost for a trip from Victorville to Las Vegas would be between \$50 and \$55. The executives stressed that the figure is an average and that during peak operational periods the price could be higher. There also will be higher-priced first-class seating on the trains.

"Basically, where we are is that the project has made great progress," Stone said. "We are close to conclusion of this entire environmental process and we are looking forward to getting started by the end of the year."



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# EXHIBIT 3

# EXHIBIT 3

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