

Vegas, Baby, Vegas

Stick with me, babe, and you'll be back to Vegas.

Bright lights, neon signs flashing Live Nude Girls
Win \$10,000 here with us win — come gamble, free drinks, dance.

Silicon breasts, nipples showing, L.A. Style, high heels, no underwear lines cause underwear lines are cliché, baby! All you can eat buffet style — all the lobster, sea food, steak you can eat for just \$6.99 there, baby!

It all goes through the casino, baby. These guys that designed this place, they're masterminds, baby. Masterminds. The endless sea of flashing multicolored slot machines that jingle, that jangle, that yell, that scream.

In all the chaos you can't think, only room for ch-chings, baby. Only room for "oh, yeahs!" and the sound of the slot machine handles being pulled down by yet another cigarette-touting middle-aged tanned-to-death brown-skinned white lady with lots of fake gold rings on her hands and the obligatory drink. Vegas is that whiskey-breathed lady who nose-dived in front of me and said, "Oh, sorry ... it must be the shoes" Yeah, baby, the shoes, sure, baby.

Vegas is polyurethane rocks, trees that have electric sockets, sky-blue colored ceilings and statues of Caesar that can speak and can sing, the endless charade of wedding couples, of bachelorette parties, of fantasy, of fake Venetian gondola drivers who sing into Disney-like microphones and "row" engine-powered boats. White lions with stripes, lazy orange tigers, and multicolored gambling chips, a series of boob tubes, ogling men, high priced Italian designer shoes and two-for-one deals at the convenience store.

Vegas is glittered eyelashes and polished nails. A collage of thongs sticking out of hip hugger pants, nipples popping out of low cut shirts, six packs rippling under tight white t-shirts. The men on the corner shoving business-card-sized photos of women sucking their enlarged breasts. The corner newspaper racks lined with nude women and places to order them, try them, see them, and taste them.



It is the skyline, the fake New York City Skyline, baby, the black shiny glass Pyramid, the roller coaster that runs through the downtown.
A crazy place, baby!

Good or bad, baby, it's Vegas all the way.
Stick with me, baby, and you'll be coming back to Vegas.

MARISSA KELLER-GUSMAN



A native of New York City, Marissa Keller-Gusman lives in Chapel Hill and works as the sales/marketing manager at a software-development tools company in Research Triangle Park. She writes regular columns for the newsletter The Quest Kagami (www.questkagami.com) and has conducted writing groups at the Women's Center in Chapel Hill.