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Ritz-Carlton, Lake Las Vegas

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Address 1610 Lake Las Vegas Pkwy, Henderson, NV, 89011

Phone 800/241-3333; 702/567-4700

Web Site www.ritzcarlton.com

Price \$\$\$\$

Reader Rating

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Frommer's Review

Vegas prides itself, these days, on offering all sorts of "luxury resorts." Vegas exaggerates -- in some cases, by a lot. Truth be told, this is the *only* luxury resort (Four Seasons Las Vegas is a luxury hotel more than anything else because of its setup), and it's not even in Las Vegas. It's on the outskirts of next-door suburb Henderson, on the shores of Lake Las Vegas, meaning a 30-minute or so drive from the Strip.

Why on earth are we recommending it? Because to come here is to come to a gobsmackingly beautiful resort -- between the sparkling water and the crisp mountains, all the better in the early evening with a warm breeze blowing, this is the serene oasis everyone dreams of when he or she comes to the desert. Plus, it has all the pampering bells and whistles you could want. Here's the thing you have to remember: Those Strip "resorts" aren't in the hotel business; they are in the casino business, and the hotel is just a sideline. Ritz-Carlton is a proper hotelier, and you are the beneficiary. Certainly, the price is not cheap (though watch the website for some *great* deals), but once you realize what's included -- all manner of treats that Strip "resorts" will charge you for as extras, plus impeccable service and a setting that's a dream -- it's not a bad deal. Come here for a true getaway, and treat Vegas as a nearby attraction, an

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additional perk for your vacation.

Set right on the shores of the man-made (but so's Lake Mead, and we've gotten over it) Lake Las Vegas, and styled like an Italian lakeside resort, this property couldn't be more handsome, from the lobby to the cool-palette rooms, with plump beds, comforters, and Frette linens. All bathrooms are large and fully marbled (not tile, but real marble), with deep, long soaking tubs and amenities for miles. Most rooms have water views (make sure you get one of those) either of the serpentine lake (our favorite) or of the little bay that abuts the property. Some have balconies, and all have windows that open (keep an eye on the lake for sightings of the big fish that occasionally cruise just below the surface).

The health club is the sort where all machines have flatscreen TVs, and the spa offers hot and cold plunge pools, plus a 360-degree Vichy shower. There is one basic pool (with nice gazebos for shade) and one "sandy beach" little dipping area. And the overall service? We felt like if we sneezed, three people would have rushed at us with tissues, and four would have called doctors, just to make sure we were okay. It's also quiet, a great change from the hurly-burly found at most Strip hotels. And yet, it's not at all stuffy; no one minds if you run around in a bathing suit and bare feet.

The activities are the best around, from a large array of desert and mountain hikes, both on your own and guided (including a restful evening one that includes a round of tai chi), to stargazing (you are far enough from city lights, so the looking is good), to boating on the lake, to honest-to-gosh fly-fishing. Daily yoga sessions and other physical fitness classes are also offered. And the hotel has access to two high-level golf courses.

Parents, in particular, should note that the club-level rooms offer, for an extra \$100 a night, access to a lounge (complete with its own concierge and even more fabulous service), with nearly 'round-the-clock free "snacks," generous (and most of the time, rather fancy) enough to cover all your meal needs -- that, plus free drinks, alcoholic and otherwise, makes this option a bargain. (Think how much you spend on meals and drinks, and tell us that it doesn't routinely go over an extra \$100 a day.) Right next door is a charming faux Italian village with nearly 40 shops and restaurants (so you need not rely on the hotel's restaurant, though it is excellent), plus a large, if borderline dull, casino, if you want that kind of action but don't want to drive to the Strip. There are regular shuttles to the Strip (for a \$35 fee!), though why anyone would leave here is beyond us.

Facilities: Casino; restaurant; bar; 2 pools; health club & spa w/some free exercise classes; summer children's program; concierge; tour desk; business center; shuttle to Strip; water taxis to nearby attractions; salon; 24-hr. room service; in-room massage; babysitting; laundry service; dry cleaning; executive-level rooms.

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1. September 8th, 2007 11:49 pm

ritz carlton lake las vegas is wonderful!! it is outside of las vegas proper in a very quite desert setting. it is a self contained spa resort with shops and a casino nearby. The staff, service, food and amenities were superb. BUT if you have young children - check the windows!! the windows in my room on the 5th floor were not baby safe and opened wide enough for a child to slip through. I must add that the housekeeping staff fixed it immediately.

- *maigoe*

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