

Atlantic City resort has Montreal connections



ROCHELLE LASH
CHECKING IN

If you book a visit at Revel, the gorgeous luxury hotel-casino in Atlantic City, your New Year's resolutions will be shot in no time. But it might be worth it.

Go ahead, drink, eat, smoke, gamble and ogle burlesque dancers pole-dancing in pasties and G-strings. You can clean up your act in 2014.

An astonishing \$2.4-billion showcase of contemporary architecture, Revel is a new landmark on the oceanfront skyline of Atlantic City and already is a celebrity magnet. Beyoncé sang at the opening party and since then VIPs have included Jennifer Lopez, model Christy Turlington and Kim Kardashian.

In a vintage town that has seen it all during the past 100 or so years of tourism, Revel is an original. It is a remarkable modern design, a streamlined monolith of blue-tinted glass that rises 47 storeys and reflects the sky above and the waves of the sea below. In a town where hotel size counts, Revel's gigantic ground area is equivalent to more than 100 football fields and it was built with the steel equivalent of five Eiffel towers.

The revolutionary aspect of Revel as a vacation getaway in a casino town is that its focus is not solely on slot machines, roulette and blackjack tables, as in most casino hotels. It is designed to be an urban resort, with nighttime beach parties, spa life and dining. And it's built so that all of the rooms have views of the ocean and Atlantic City's marvellous stretch of beach.

Once inside Revel, an escalator swoops guests up, up, up through 11 storeys of the Ellipse, a series of glass pavilions with views of the Atlantic far below. You're heading for 1,399 high-tech guest rooms, magnificent gardens and terraces, three nightclubs, a boutique alley, the Bask Spa and a stunning indoor-outdoor pool. Revel has 14 restaurants, large and small. Tough choices, but I singled out Amada, where Iron Chef Jose Garces does tapas and such specialties as lobster paella and a bullish cocktail called the Matador.

A highlight of the crystal-



PHOTOS: REVEL RESORT AND CASINO

Montreal artist Pascal Girardin created a giant mobile of golden metal flakes suspended on steel cables for the 11-storey Ellipse at Revel hotel-casino.



The spectacular new Revel has changed the landscape of casino-hotels in Atlantic City, N.J.

line Ellipse is a spectacular giant mobile of golden metal flakes suspended on steel cables, shimmering in the light and swaying gently in the soaring cathedral space. This artwork, called Mobile Ellipse or Vertige, was created by Montreal artist Pascale Girardin, whose work appears worldwide, from New York to Shanghai.

Revel also can thank two Montreal firms for some of the casino's razzle-dazzle. ScénoPlus — it uses all-one-word for effect — was the lead design firm on virtually all of the public and entertainment spaces, including stage-show spaces for audiences of 400, 1,000 and 4,000

people. ScénoPlus worked with Lightemotion, a leading lighting company in Montreal. Together, they used innovative techniques to create a unique casino look.

"It's our biggest project to date, and it fully uses our expertise in theatrical design," said Patrick Bergé, an architect and president of ScénoPlus, which also has designed for Cirque du Soleil and Céline Dion.

ScénoPlus's casino design lets in natural light throughout, from dawn to dusk, and then creates an exciting nightlife force with lighting projected onto the textured walls and colourful floors of the casino.

Apart from a few smackeroos gambled at the blackjack tables, I'm not a player. But those who are into wagering need to know that Revel offers 25 per cent more progressives than any casino in Atlantic City (slot machines at which the jackpot increases slightly on every game). It is the first in the city to offer Four Card, Let it Ride poker progressives and Digideal E-Host Games, which are digital games usually with a live dealer, and also the first in the U.S. to have electronic Multi-Saber Roulette.

You're up, you're down, it's that kind of 24-hour town. Eventually, you get to rest, and you will do so in deluxe

IF YOU GO

Atlantic City is an eight-hour drive from Montreal via Highway 15 south to the U.S. border and New York Highway 87 south to New Jersey's Garden State Expressway. It is a two-hour drive south of New York City. U.S. Air flies from Montreal to Philadelphia, which is an approximately one-hour drive from Atlantic City.

Revel: 855-348-0500, www.revelresorts.com; 500 Boardwalk at Connecticut Ave.;

Atlantic City, N.J.

Price: Three levels of rooms and suites, \$139-\$239-\$339 U.S. per night, including the In-Out Pool, hot tub, lounges and terraces. Extras: Bask Spa access and treatments, self-parking or valet-parking.

Atlantic City info: 888-AC-VISIT/888-228-4748, 609-348-7100

www.atlanticcitynj.com

The writer was a guest of the hotel. The hotel did not review or approve the story.

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