The Cromwell is a new breed of Vegas hotel

ROCHELLE LASH
Checking In

The vast Caesars Entertainment empire in Las Vegas thinks small is beautiful.

The Cromwell is a new breed of Vegas hotel, a game-changing boutique-style property with 188 rooms and suites and superlative features that create different vacation styles: the fashionable Giada, Vegas' hottest, newest restaurant by celebrated chef Giada De Laurentiis, for delish Italian gastronomy; Bound by Salvatore for the ultimate cocktails in the classiest, most sophisticated bar in town; and Drai's Beach Club — Nightclub, the sexiest pool scene on The Strip, which rocks from day to night — to the morning after.

That relatively petite package is unique in Vegas, which is home to most of the world's largest hotels, including The Cromwell's mother ship, the 4,000-room Caesars Palace. The boutique style has a remarkably different, even quaint, ambience. It's personal, intimate and chic, with professional concierge service and without the awful lineups at the mega-hotels.

The Cromwell and its affiliated Caesar properties, including the fabulous new LINQ Promenade, connect via walkways and overpasses, creating a pedestrian village of infinitely varied experiences — a world of enticing restaurants, bars and shops at different price points. There is free Wi-Fi everywhere, as well as the convenience of signing to your hotel room for drinks and food throughout the network.

Drai's Beach Club & Nightclub at The Cromwell Las Vegas is the ultimate party place, day or night. After dark on weekends, the area explodes into a bacchanalian, multi-sensory party. *PHOTOS: CAESARS ENTERTAINMENT*

The elaborate decor of the guest rooms is inspired by fin-de-siècle Paris.

IF YOU GO

The Cromwell: 844-IAM-CROM (844-426-2766), 702-777-3777, caesars.com/cromwell; 3595 Las Vegas Blvd. S., (The Strip), Las Vegas.
Price: Web specials are lower, but deluxe rooms often start at US$149, and luxury suites (some with soaking tub, multiple TVs, living-dining rooms) at $575; all rates include fitness room, coffee corner and 5 p.m., Fri-Sat., Champagne hour at Bound. Caesars Total Rewards loyalty program applies if you book directly with hotel.
Giada: 855-442-3271, breakfast from 9 a.m.; lunch from 11 a.m., dinner and lounge from 4:30 p.m., 24-hour in-room dining; vegan and gluten-free available.
Las Vegas: 877-VISITLV (877-847-4858), lasvegas.com

THE SLEEP

In spite of its thoroughly British name, The Cromwell is decked out in seductive decor that recalls glamorous, fin-de-siècle Paris. The tiny reception area is a bibliothèque lined with antique books. The casino is lit with the hotel's original chandeliers of scarlet glass and crystal. The Gallic character comes alive with suggestive French-isms scrawled on the walls: La Belle Vie, La Première Passion, etc.

The guest rooms have a boudoir look, with tufted Art Nouveau sofas and tables and dressers that are studded, like vintage steamer trunks. And, fabulous art photography by Deborah Anderson adorns the suites. These naughty scenes have a Sin City-sur-Seine look, with painted women in corsets flirting with dapper gents.

Small, luxurious details are big. The TVs all are sizable 47-inchers. The bathroom fixtures are top-of-the-line. And the Cromwell supplies nourishing MUK hair products and styling irons for pre-party primping.

THE PARTY

Celebrity chef De Laurentiis recently opened her first restaurant, Giada, at The Cromwell, with great Italian-inspired cuisine and market-style antipasto bar.

Warm white-and-wood decor, an open-air dining section and the open kitchen are the main attractions. Chefs and bakers toss, knead and mix fresh pasta, oven-fresh goodies like rosemary focaccia and Parmesan bread, as well as rich-but-light desserts like strawberry polenta cake and lemon-ricotta cookies.

Special dishes include lemon spaghetti, chicken cacciatore, bone-in rib eye and carbonara pizza. Even breakfast is a gourmet journey with Giada's polenta waffles and salmon cake benedict. The lunch menu features such antipasti as wood-roasted mushrooms, burrata cheese, charcuterie, lemon-pesto grilled cheese plus juicy beef tenderloin sliders and luscious lobster rolls.

Bound by Salvatore, the Cromwell's exceptional bar-lounge, has a classy, clubby look with a circular bar, 100-year-old bottles of brandy on display and a torch singer purring classics on weekends. The hotel holds a 5 p.m. Champagne reception for guests on Fridays and Saturdays, but Bound really is spirit-driven, and serves what might be the best cocktails in Vegas.

European bar maestro Salvatore Calabrese created Bound's artisan drinks using hand-crafted potions of infused syrups, herbs and fruit. A few standouts are the Breakfast Martini (gin with accents of orange marmalade), the Keep Me Awake Bro (rum, Peroni beer, espresso and honey syrup), the Spicy Fifty (vodka and heat) and the Cromwell Fizz (Macallan, citrus and Moët & Chandon Imperial Champagne).

Meanwhile, Drai's Beach Club — Nightclub rocks two totally diverse energies. This is the only rooftop pool on The Strip and it has million-dollar views of Caesars Palace and the famous fountains at The Bellagio.

During the day, sun worshippers enjoy multiple pools, lounge chairs, day beds and cabanas, surrounded by towering palm trees. Servers — pretty young things in barely there string bikinis — glide back and forth with pitchers of passion-fruit sangria, blueberry mojitos and vodka-spiked lemonade.

After dark (on weekends), Drai's explodes into a bacchanalian, multi-sensory party on two levels of dancing and lounging, with LED lights, luxe pink and black booths, 150 VIP tables and high-tech sounds by DJs and performers like Nick Cannon, Chris Brown and Iggy Azalea.

Upcoming acts include Weeknd Live in Concert (May 23, June 13 and July 3; yes, Weeknd spells its name that way); Chromeo (July 31, Aug. 28, Oct. 9); and Capital Cities (May 8, Aug. 8, Oct. 10). For the complete lineup, visit: draislv.com.

The action at the 65,000-square-foot nightspot (about the size of one city block) segues into the secluded basement bar, Drai's After Hours, for Vegas-style partying until dawn and beyond. Emerge at sunrise and you'll be in time for a restorative morning at the pool: perhaps a breakfast pizza and a bottle of Dom Pérignon.

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