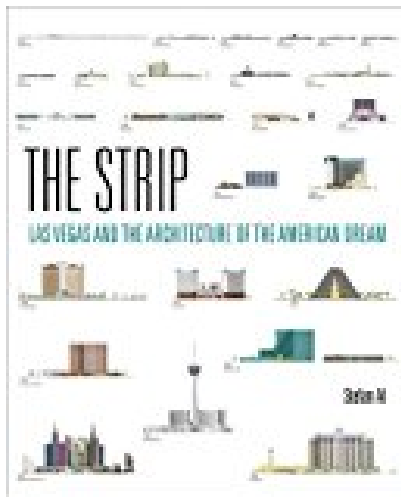


The Strip Las Vegas and the Architecture of the American Dream MIT Press



BOOK DETAILS

- Author : Stefan Al
- Pages : 272 Pages
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BOOK SYNOPSIS

The Las Vegas Strip has impersonated the Wild West, with saloon doors and wagon wheels; it has decked itself out in midcentury modern sleekness. It has illuminated itself with twenty-story-high neon signs, then junked them. After that came Disney-like theme parks featuring castles and pirates, followed by replicas of Venetian canals, New York skyscrapers, and the Eiffel Tower. (It might be noted that forty-two million people visited Las Vegas in 2015 -- ten million more than visited the real Paris.) More recently, the Strip decided to get classy, with casinos designed by famous architects and zillion-dollar collections of art. Las Vegas became the "implosion capital of the world" as developers, driven by competition, got rid of the old to make way for the new -- offering a non-metaphorical definition of "creative destruction." In *The Strip*, Stefan Al examines the many transformations of the Las Vegas Strip, arguing that they mirror transformations in America itself. The Strip is not, as popularly supposed, a display of architectural freaks but representative of architectural trends and a record of social, cultural, and economic change. Al tells two parallel stories. He describes the feverish competition of Las Vegas developers to build the snazziest, most tourist-grabbing casinos and resorts -- with a cast of characters including the mobster Bugsy Siegel, the eccentric billionaire Howard Hughes, and the would-be political kingmaker Sheldon Adelson. And he views the Strip in a larger social context, showing that it has not only reflected trends but also magnified them and sometimes even initiated them. Generously illustrated with stunning color images throughout, *The Strip* traces the many metamorphoses of a city that offers a vivid projection of the American dream.

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