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Canadians eager to prolong the amount of time they can spend outdoors this summer can pick up tips from the Las Vegas masters. After all, it's the town that coined the term "daylife," that is, the art of partying poolside all afternoon much the way one would at a nightclub — think cocktails delivered by scantily clad servers, loud music delivered by mega-buck sound systems, a bar at which men and women frolic and flirt, and lounge areas from where you can check out the action whilst the action checks out you. Thanks to the success of hotspots such as Wet Republic at MGM Grand, Wynn Encore is among the latest to get in the game with the opening of its Encore Beach Club: 60,000 square feet of deck space, three tiered pools, luxurious cabanas and bungalows and a staging platform on which top-name bands and solo artists appear. Aria, one of the two major hotels at the new CityCentre, boasts daytime hotspot Liquid; and Caesar's Palace recently unveiled Garden of the Gods, an eight-pool oasis at which one pool, Venus, is dedicated to the daytime scene.

Interestingly, in addition to developing adult-only poolside clubs, Vegas resorts are pouring buckets of resources into their general pool areas. Why?

Simply put: At the end of the day folks have to do something during the day, and according to Sven Van Assche, the vice-president of MGM Mirage Design Group, these days people want to spend more time outside.

"Back in the '40s, '50s and '60s the pools in Vegas were little more than concrete pads with the pool and a bunch of umbrellas at best. But now, people want to be outdoors more often so they are utilizing the pool decks more often."



THEY WERE DAY TRIPPERS

Forget nightlife, get into daytime: The art of partying poolside is making a big splash in Las Vegas, but you can recreate the experience at home, too *By Rebecca Field Jager*

Hence, he says, the proliferation of poolside spaces that look like indoor spaces, the idea being that if all the amenities of the interior were made available in the exterior, one would never have to venture inside. He cites cabanas as a perfect example.

"They're like mini guest rooms with all the comforts and conveniences such as fridges, mini-bars and flat screen TVs."

Among the guiding principles of poolside decor, says Mr. Assche, is to strive for a sense of balance and harmony between the interior and exterior of your home. Just as Bellagio matches its pool decor with the resort's Italian-themed interior, you need to create indoor/outdoor synergy, to mentally get rid of the wall. The inside should seamlessly spill into the backyard.

Lori Duran, the director of interior design for MGM Mirage properties, has a few suggestions on how to do so.

"Create various pockets of living spaces like the ones you'd find inside your home. A dining area in one spot say, and a living room area in another with a settee, a couple of chairs and a coffee table all anchored by a rug."

Fortunately, there are plenty of furnishings and accessories on the market to help you achieve the effect from outdoor-friendly woods and wickers to mats and table lamps constructed to withstand the elements. Fabrics too have come along way. Beyond palm-tree and floral patterns, a gamut of colours and designs are available, meaning your cushions don't have to look like they've been cut from the same cloth as your uncle's Hawaiian shirt. Solids are in. At Aria, bright orange accessories add pop to neutral furnishings. MGM Grand keeps things young and playful by dotting its daybeds with bursts of yellow, orange and aquamarine pillows.

What else is hot? A romp through the pools of Vegas reveals a tendency towards clean lines, for example, small ottomans that tuck neatly under minimalist coffee tables made of teak or darker woods. Chaise longues that accommodate two or three people and come-sprawl-on-me daybeds abound. And everywhere you go, sunbathers are draped over chaise longues that are situated in shallow water.

Of course, the poolside experience isn't complete without food and entertainment. Hotels are positioning full-



Get outside! Clockwise from top: Wet Republic; Aria; a funky wall at Caesar's and boys chilling; and the turquoise cabana at MGM Grand.

service restaurants poolside — diners at Border Grill at Mandalay Bay enjoy tapas and cocktails as folks float past on inner tubes on the resort's "river." It's all the rage — better to serve small platters of mini-wraps, sushi and the like versus a sit-down, heavier meal.

Cocktails should be fun, advises Mike Gilmartin of Pure Management Group, a Vegas-based entertainment company.

"One of the most popular refreshments at Venus is sno-cones, with or without alcohol. Mojitos are big, as

are colourful vodka drinks, and good tequila like Petróñ."

If you're throwing a pool party, he suggests paying careful attention to flow. The idea is to have several stations set up as opposed to one buffet-like table.

"You want people to move around and not congregate in one area, a wine bar in another, beer in another, and maybe a mojito station in still another."

A word to the wise regarding entertainment: If you can't swing a live band, at least get a disc jockey.



"You can put on an iPod sure, but people underestimate the value of a DJ. These guys do more than play music, they read the crowd. For instance, if a bunch of people show up but it's kind of awkward, a DJ will know what to play to break the ice. Or if a certain group arrive, a DJ can look at them and predict the kind of music they like."

And don't forget to pamper. After dining al fresco at Verandah, lunch guests of the Four Seasons can lounge poolside as servers come around offering everything from popsicles to

chilled towels to sunglass-cleaning service. For those who don't wish to be disturbed, a stone coaster bearing "zzz" tells wait staff to stay away. Several resorts have brought their spa services outside — imagine hiring a masseuse for your next party to offer poolside rubdowns.

Of course, after all this effort, you must reward yourself for hosting such fabulous parties. A me-day soaking up the rays on your new daybed works, or perhaps a trip to Sin City for further inspiration?

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