



Tour Name

Reinventing the Heart of Las Vegas

Tour City

Las Vegas

Tour Snapshot

Las Vegas is an oasis in the desert. An entertainment metropolis that is part fantasy with a sprinkle of true grit. It is a place that is larger than life but hard to get your arms around. Our downtown walking tour takes you on a journey in search of the historic heart and vibrant engine of the city –a trek through three dynamic neighborhoods where you’ll see how imagination, art, and commerce intersect. This is where locals are animating and re-creating downtown neighborhoods, and a place that you’ll want to see and experience for yourself to really understand Las Vegas.

Highlights

- Explore 3 historic and vibrant neighborhoods that are redefining the arts and commerce of downtown Las Vegas
- Tour an amazing new redevelopment district with sensational murals, unique shops, cozy cafés, and cool bars
- Meet some local entrepreneurs or “culture builders” who are turning downtown into a thriving place of originality and commerce
- Tour the downtown’s oldest cultural neighborhood that’s home to an historic 19th-century ranch as well as the famed Neon

Museum

- Savor the homegrown tastes of Friday's Downtown Farmers' market offering fresh organic produce and baked goods, with local arts and crafts exhibitors (Fridays only)

Inclusions: Local English-speaking guide, 1 beverage at the start of the tour, souvenir map, 1 complimentary cocktail/refreshment at the end of the tour. On Friday tours, some samples from the Farmers' Market are included.

Exclusions: Additional food and drinks, museum entrance fees, transportation to and from the meeting and end points, tips/gratuities for your guide. Note that the museums we pass on this tour require a longer time to properly explore, therefore we are unable to include them on this tour – but your guide will be happy to offer tips should you want to visit them after the tour.

Schedule details

- Duration: 2.5 hours
- Meeting point:
On the sidewalk in front of the main entrance to the Neon Museum Visitors Center, 770 N. Las Vegas Boulevard, 89101. (In inclement/hot weather, we'll meet just inside the entrance/foyer of the building.)
- Starting time: 9.30 AM
- Ending point:
The El Cortez Hotel and Casino, 600 Fremont Street.

Full Itinerary

This downtown arts and history tour is a journey to discover the historic heart of Las Vegas. You'll get an intriguing look at the city's classic past and explore an exciting resurgence in three neighborhoods where the arts, imagination, and hard work are taking center stage. This is a story of people, place, entrepreneurs, and culture!

Your tour starts in the oldest arts neighborhood in Las Vegas, called the Cultural Corridor, just a few blocks from the downtown core. The neighborhood is home to a community of cultural facilities including the legendary Neon Museum Boneyard, a two-acre outdoor site with over 500 historic neon signs. We'll meet in front of the Neon Museum entrance, step into its historic lobby

and then proceed to an adjoining neighborhood park for a morning refreshment. Here your local guide will introduce the tour while giving you a short narrative about the Boneyard collection, with personal insights into the history of the museum. (Note that we do not go into the museum on this tour; however, your guide can give you tips should you want to return later.)

We'll then trek down the hill to the Natural History Museum, where the geologic past is on display along with a collection of exotic animal specimens — but what we've really come for is the famous “showgirl” feathered dinosaur, an unusual Vegas type of cultural spectacle.

Next, we'll arrive at the historic 19th-century Stewart Ranch, a place that is the true heart of Las Vegas. Here was once the 1,800-acre rancho where Las Vegas started, now authentically recreated with an adobe fort, demonstration gardens, a remnant of the original Las Vegas Creek, and a new interpretive center—all part of a 5-acre state park. It's a quiet place that few tourists know about but it is the enduring heart of the metropolis.

We'll then turn back up the hill towards downtown, crossing a neon-inspired artist-designed bridge, over to the Downtown Library, one of the city's most iconic civic buildings. It sits near the once-flowing Las Vegas Creek, and, thanks to a little-known architectural feature, you can place your ear to a stone wall and might, on a good day, hear the murmurings of what is still an underground stream. Heading south, we'll note a new artist-run center, The 705 Hub, the first of its type in the neighborhood, and which will feature a resident theater company and art gallery. We may on occasion meet up with the entrepreneurs developing the project. Next, we'll pass by a small historic residential area, the Biltmore Bungalows Neighborhood, from the 1940s with charming cottages and even a community garden in progress, whose master gardener is often on-site.

Every tour booked for a Friday brings a bonus to the experience of downtown Las Vegas: visiting the weekly one-day-a-week Farmers' Market. Here is an unexpected and welcome encounter in urban Las Vegas: an organic market where you can savor the many homegrown tastes of local produce and tasty baked goods. We may meet the innovative entrepreneur behind the effort, the “Produce Whisperer” as she is called, and we'll have a chance to talk to many of the local producers, from the honey guy to the organic baker.

Next, we encounter the city's other famous pop culture museum: The Mob Museum that opened in 2012, in a classic 1930s building that was once the stately courthouse of the Hoover Dam era. Here, on the steps, you'll get a brief history from the guide about the museum and the just-announced plans to open a speakeasy and new forensics attraction for amateur sleuthing (we won't go inside, but feel free to return later for a self-guided tour of the museum!).

We then arrive at our second downtown neighborhood, and one of the most famous sites in Las Vegas. The historic Fremont Street became the social and commercial heart of the city when it was founded in 1905 in a railroad land auction. The city became a boom town with the building of Hoover Dam – and then was reinvented with new purpose with legalized gambling in 1931. You'll hear about our iconic casinos back then and the larger-than-life figures who ran them, and see for yourselves how neon became the visual landscape of Las Vegas. Today, Fremont is a pedestrian street dominated by the world's largest video screen – featuring electronic shows playing nightly on the hour. It's a street in constant performance, and we're sure to

encounter the bevy of carnival-like buskers who represent a unique brand of entrepreneurial performers.

We'll trek several blocks to Fremont East, the third and final neighborhood on your arts and history tour. Along the way, we cross Las Vegas Boulevard at the iconic Horse & Rider, the flagship sign of the Neon Museum installed about 20 years ago. Now it's part of a neon trail linking the world-famous "Welcome to Las Vegas" sign to the Neon Museum — a 7-mile stretch of Las Vegas Boulevard that has been designated the only nighttime scenic byway in America.

On arriving in the heart of the new entrepreneurial Fremont East neighborhood, we'll see how the urban landscape comes down to pedestrian level. This new entertainment district encompasses about 30 blocks, with cozy restaurants and popular local bars – mostly all driven by The Downtown Project of Zappos fame. Here is a new arts neighborhood of festivals, public art, and a range of creative entrepreneurs, a few who we may encounter on the walk. We'll check out some fantastic murals in the Ogden neighborhood produced by some of the most noted mural artists in the world.

Finally, we come to the end of our walking tour, at Fremont Street and 7th Street — an intersection that brings together classic old-school Vegas, the El Cortez Hotel, together with the new model of urban downtown, the Container Park. It's a pairing that tells the constant theme of reinvention. On one corner is the historic hotel of Bugsy Siegel fame with great architecture, iconic neon, local Vegas charm, and maybe even a ghost or two. The Container Park (as in shipping containers), is the flagship effort of the Downtown Project and features 40 shops and studios of local entrepreneurs.

We'll end the tour at the El Cortez historic Parlor Bar for a complimentary cocktail/beverage and offer a locals' list of where to catch lunch. We'll also provide you with a limited edition map of downtown, and send you off with a spirited toast for more urban adventures!

Note: Please be sure to give yourself enough time to reach the meeting point. The colossal oasis of the strip gives a false impression of how far things really are!

Additional information

Inclusions: Local English-speaking guide, 1 beverage at the start of the tour, souvenir map, 1 complimentary cocktail/refreshment at the end of the tour. On Friday tours, some samples from the Farmers' Market are included.

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Dress standard: Please wear light clothes and comfortable walking shoes, and bring a hat, sunglasses, and a bottle of water. And don't forget your enthusiasm for a good time!

Your Trip: For your Urban Adventure, you will be in a small group of a maximum of 12 people.

Confirmation of booking: From your voucher please reconfirm 24 hours prior to your departure time by text or call to 7025922164; or an email to info@lasvegasurbanadventures.com. We'll see you at the start point. Get in touch if you have any concerns or require more information via the email address or phone number (business hours only) on your voucher.

Child Policy: Travellers under 21 years of age are not permitted to join this tour.

Local contact

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