



USA

THE CHAPEL OF GAY WEDDINGS

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parallelozero



ACCORDING TO RANKINGS PUBLISHED IN
THE ONLINE TRAVEL GUIDE GAY TRAVEL
IN JANUARY 2017, LAS VEGAS IS THE
WORLD'S GREATEST GAY DESTINATION.



WEDDING CHAPEL

Same Sex Marriage
is now Legal!
Celebrate with us at
Viva Las Vegas

HOTEL
Super
8
MARKET

77777777
Married
11.19.16

RON AND JAMIE HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO UNITE COUPLES REGARDLESS OF THEIR SEX. THAT'S WHY 16 YEARS AGO THEY DECIDED TO CREATE THE GAY CHAPEL OF LAS VEGAS, THE FIRST GAY CHAPEL IN VEGAS.

AFTER HAVING LONG CELEBRATED UNRECOGNISED HOMOSEXUAL UNIONS, THE CHAPEL HAS BECOME MORE ORGANISED ON OCTOBER 9, 2014. ON THAT DAY A FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT RULED THAT NEVADA'S BAN ON GAY MARRIAGE WAS UNCONSTITUTIONAL, THEREFORE RECOGNISING GAY MARRIAGES AS LEGAL.

HAS THE LEGALIZATION OF GAY UNIONS GIVEN THE BUSINESS OF MARRIAGE A SECOND BREATH? AFTER ALL THE NUMBERS OF CEREMONIES IN THE STATE HAS FALLEN BY 37% OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS (ACCORDING TO THE LAS VEGAS SUN).

IN ADDITION TO "TRADITIONAL" WEDDINGS, WITH OR WITHOUT ELVIS, THE CHAPEL OFFERS AN ASSORTMENT OF CEREMONIES DEPENDING ON HOW ECCENTRIC YOU WANT THEM TO BE. A "CLASSIC" CEREMONY COSTS \$375, WHEREAS YOU'LL BE SPENDING \$800 FOR A WEDDING OFFICIATED BY LIBERACE (INCLUDING GLITTER, A PRIVATE CONCERT AND A SOUVENIR PHOTO TO TOP IT ALL OFF).

IN AN ARTICLE FEATURING BOTH TEXT AND PHOTOS, WE OFFER YOU AN IMMERSION INTO THE WORLD OF MARRIAGE IN VEGAS WHERE 80,000 UNIONS WERE CELEBRATED IN 2015 ALONE. WE WISH TO VIEW THIS PHENOMENON THROUGH THE EYES OF THE GAY CHAPEL OF LAS VEGAS, A FAMILY BUSINESS WHERE RON AND JAMIE'S PARENTS ALSO WORK, TO TRY AND UNDERSTAND WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE 2014.



ILENE'S TUX AND GOWN IS AN IMMENSE STORE WHICH HAS MORE THAN THREE THOUSAND DRESSES AND SUITS UNDER PLASTIC LINING IN ITS WAREHOUSE. A LACE GOWN CAN BE RENTED ANYWHERE FROM \$100-1000.

COMING FROM MILWAUKEE ON VACATION IN LAS VEGAS, ALLYSON, 28, AND CAMIEL, 33, HAD NOT PLANNED ON GETTING MARRIED. AND YET THEY DECIDED TO EXCHANGE THEIR VOWS AT THE LAS VEGAS WEDDING CHAPEL. AS ALLYSON EXPLAINS: "FRIENDS HAD RECOMMENDED THIS PLACE BECAUSE THE OWNERS ARE GAY. WE KNEW WE WOULD BE WELL RECEIVED AND IN ON TOP OF IT ALL, WE ARE HELPING THE COMMUNITY."



THE SHOPS ON THE STRIP, LAS VEGAS' MAIN
DESTINATION, OFFER A LARGE ARRAY OF NOVELTIES
AND TRINKETS INCLUDING SAME-SEX WEDDING CAKE TOPPERS.





ANDREW & RALPH. LGBT AN ECONOMIC STUDY BY THE WILLIAMS INSTITUTE PREDICTED A \$52 MILLION ECONOMICBOOM FOLLOWING THE ARRIVAL OF MARRIAGE EQUALITY. IN THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF OCTOBER 2014, HUNDREDS OF MARRIAGE LICENSES WERE SOLD TO SAME-SEX COUPLES. SINCE THAT TIME, GAY MARRIAGES HAVE BEEN ON THE RISE: AN INCREASE OF 10.9% BETWEEN 2015 AND 2016 WITH 4,490 LICENSES ISSUED, ACCORDING TO THE CENSUS BUREAU.

MARRIAGE CONSTITUTES A MARKET WORTH AN
ESTIMATED AT \$2 BILLION. THE STATE OF NEVADA IS
CASHING IN: THE SINGLE LICENSING OFFICE
REPORTED EARNINGS OF \$5 MILLION IN 2014 ALONE.





THE VENETIAN, A FAMOUS LAS VEGAS
HOTEL WHERE COUPLES OFTEN GET MARRIED.

STEPHANIE AND TAMMY CAME OVER FROM ENGLAND WITH THEIR FRIENDS TO BE MARRIED BY ELVIS IN A ROCKABILLY SETTING. THEY CHOSE THE VIVA LAS VEGAS CHAPEL, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RON DECAR AND JAMIE RICHARDS, TWO OF THE CITY'S MARRIAGE OFFICIANTS AND OWNERS OF THE CITY'S FIRST SELF-PROCLAIMED GAY CHAPEL, WHICH HAS BEEN IN OPERATION SINCE 1999.





THE WEDDING CHAPELS ARE CRAMMED ONE AFTER ANOTHER ALONG LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD, A STONE'S THROW FROM THE FAMOUS STRIP WHERE THE GAMBLING CASINOES ARE LOCATED. HERE YOU CAN ALSO FIND A MACHINE GUN SHOOTING RANGE, A MOTEL, 8 RESTAURANTS AND VACANT LOTS.





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NOVEMBER 12, 2016, DONALD TRUMP WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT.
PROTESTERS SWARMED THE STREETS TO EXPRESS THEIR FEARS AND
DISSATISFACTION IN CITIES ALL OVER THE US. THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY
MADE THEIR PRESENCE FELT AT THE HEART OF LAS VEGAS' CASINOS.



STEPHEN AND YEIRON, 63 AND 24, LIVE ON THE BORDER BETWEEN NEVADA AND ARIZONA. ON THIS NOVEMBER DAY, THEY DROVE TWO HOURS TO VEGAS AND RENTED TWO GRAY SATIN SUITS TO GET MARRIED AT THE VIVA LAS VEGAS CHAPEL, THE CITY'S SELF-PROCLAIMED FIRST GAY CHAPEL.



SINCE A LAS VEGAS WEDDING IS AS OFFICIAL AS ANY OTHER WEDDING, THE BUSINESS SURROUNDING DIVORCE IS FLOURISHING. TO SIMPLY NULLIFY A MARRIAGE LICENSE HERE, IT MUST EITHER BE PROVED THAT THE UNION COULDN'T HAVE BEEN LEGALLY OFFICIATED (BIGAMY), OR THAT CONSENT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN GIVEN DUE TO AN "ALTERED STATE" (I.E. UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS). THERE ARE MANY LAW FIRMS OFFERING DIVORCE PACKAGES BETWEEN \$300 AND \$500.





THE VIVA LAS VEGAS CHAPEL OFFERS A NUMBER OF WEDDING PACKAGES; AN EGYPTIAN WEDDING DRESSED AS PHARAOHS, AN INTERGALACTIC WEDDING OR LGBT LIBERACE. THIS COUPLE CHOSE THE ROCKABILLY WEDDING SET IN A ROOM WITH A JUKE-BOX, NEON LIGHTS AND VINYL COVERED CHAIRS.



A LIMOUSINE SERVICE IS OFFERED TO NEWLY MARRIED COUPLES AT THE VIVA LAS VEGAS CHAPEL.

THIS COUPLE CHOSE A TRADITIONAL CEREMONY: "YEIRON IS DOMINICAN, AND SINCE HE WAS LITTLE HE HAS ALWAYS DREAMT OF A VERY CLASSIC MARRIAGE, SOMETHING WITH A MENTION OF GOD. I WANTED TO GET MARRIED SO THAT THE LOVE OF MY LIFE WOULD BE PROTECTED, FOREVER," EXPLAINS STEPHEN.



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