



In the 80s, 90s and early 00s, your travel4seniors.com editor went with my spouse to Sin City four or five times a year. Because we always stayed at our favorite Strip hotel, the room and some buffets were comped.

We were modest gamblers, usually limiting ourselves to \$2 blackjack tables and 25¢ video poker machines. We played for about six hours each day. While we were in the casino, whether gambling or at the bar, our drinks were free. When we did have to pay for a room, the rate at most of the city's mid-priced hotels was no more than \$20 per night. Once a year or so, when we told the desk clerk it was our anniversary, we were upgraded at no cost to a suite with a spa. All-you can scarf buffets were \$4.99.

On our most recent visit this year, nothing was comped. The rate for the same type of room was \$100+ a night, buffets were \$29.99 and casino drinks cost from \$10 plus tips. That means Las Vegas, within just a decade, has inflated as much as 500%. During that time, our retirement income has gone up a grand total of about 10%.

Just recently, to add to the gotcha attitude, MGM Resorts and Caesars Entertainment issued an edict that non-gamblers would no longer be getting free drinks at their bars. Of course, that's why most casinos have embedded video poker machines at the bars.

And now, if you're bar-stooling and not drinking, a blinking red light tells the bartender not to serve you. When you do drink, the light goes green and you're rewarded with free booze. Didn't a Russian scientist named Pavlov use that in his lab with dogs?