



Vegas 2002 Book One

by
Jackson Koller



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Intro

May 31st - June 10th, 2002, we made it down to Las Vegas, again.

Part of Patricia's recovery plan post repeat back surgery, and a real vacation for both of us.

To answer the question: gambling wise we broke even, roughly. Lost my \$20 per day budget, and then had a winning spree the last two days.

We didn't go to play though so much as to explore. If your going there "to Win!" You had best stay home, the odds are too high against you.

If your going there to have fun and enjoy it, gambling is a draw, but not the only one Las Vegas has though.

We had a great time...



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Flight There

We flew over Mount Rainier.

It was a beautiful day for the flight.

Had some really spectacular overflights.



Mount Rainier



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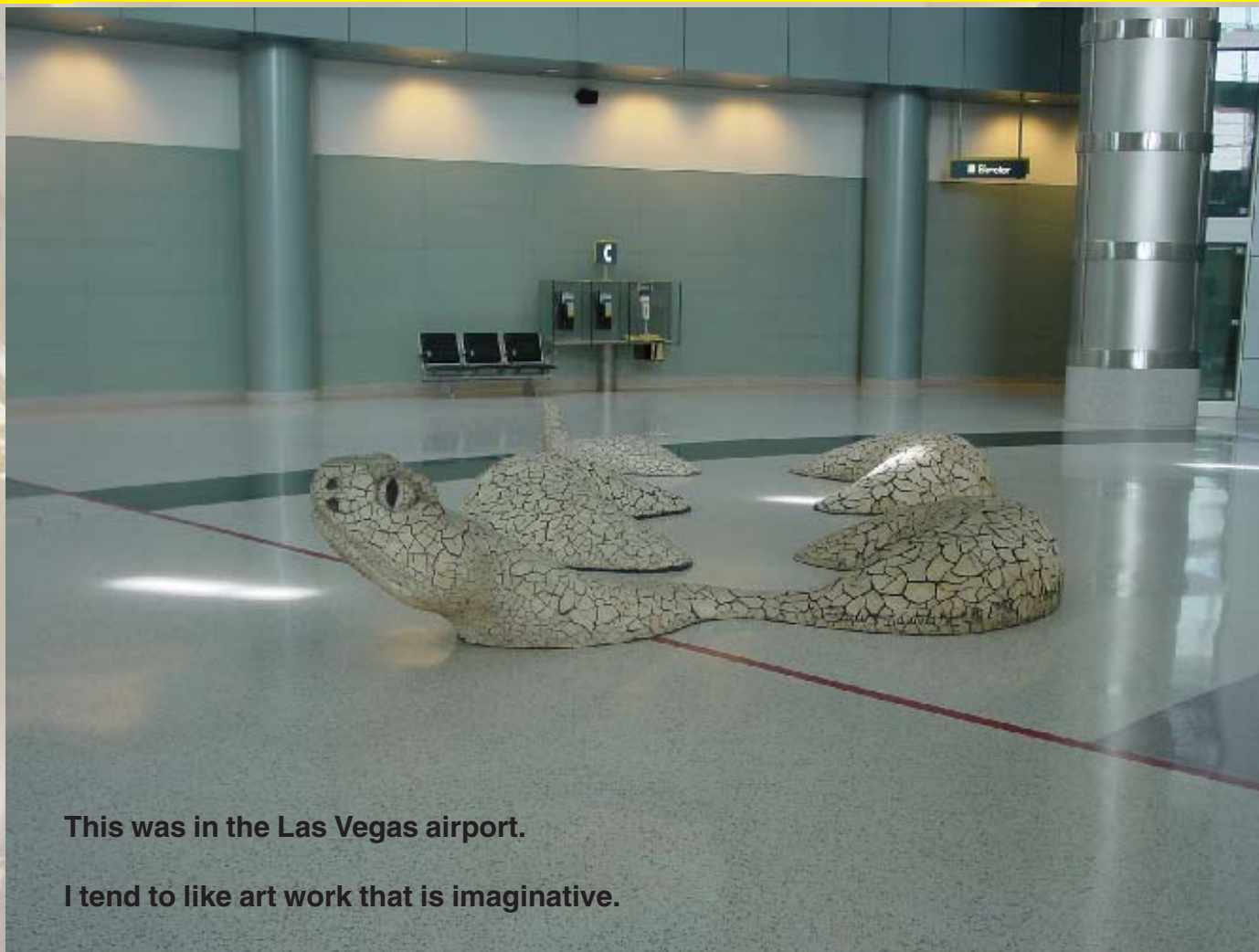
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Mount Saint Helens



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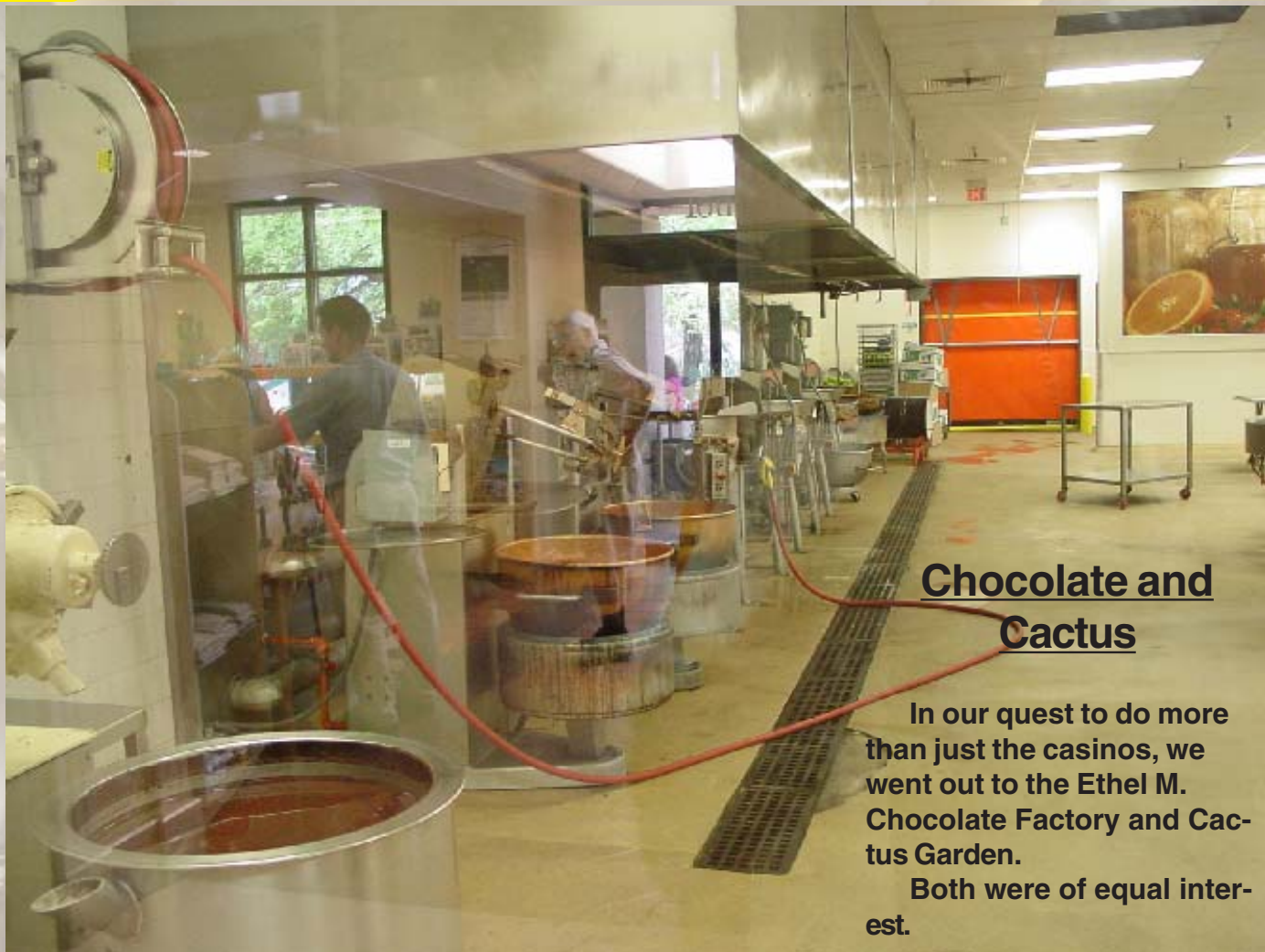
This was in the Las Vegas airport.

I tend to like art work that is imaginative.



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Chocolate and Cactus

In our quest to do more than just the casinos, we went out to the Ethel M. Chocolate Factory and Cactus Garden.

Both were of equal interest.



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Chocolate Clean Room



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Taffy puller





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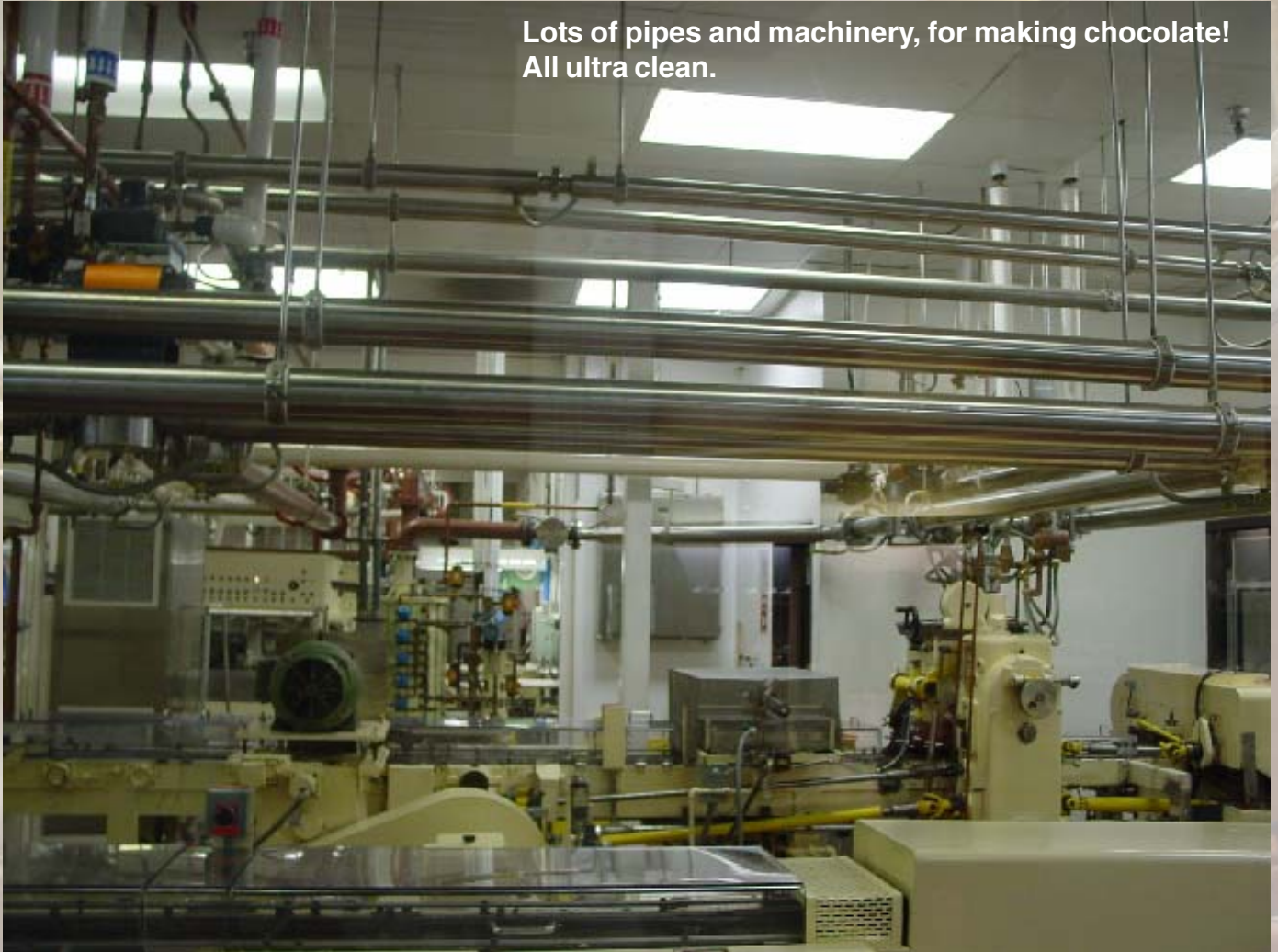


Chocolate assembly lines



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Lots of pipes and machinery, for making chocolate!
All ultra clean.





JACKSON KOLLER

Cactus

They set up this cactus garden outside the Chocolate Factory.

As a garden, but also as a water conservation recirculation project.

The Garden has it's own hydroponics recycling. Goldfish in the tanks to aid in filtration by eating the algae.

Some interesting cacti also...





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Patricia on cactus trail



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Hydroponic tanks



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Fremont Experience

The old strip on Fremont had to do something to compete with the 'new' strip. So, they closed the street to traffic, built a curved framework over the street to hold lights. Though the camera picked up the spaces between the bulbs, to the naked eye it appears as one panel. Every half hour to an hour they have a light show, jets fly the length of the street, birds fly around, etc. Very impressive. Open air bandstands at each end as well.





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Lights, lights

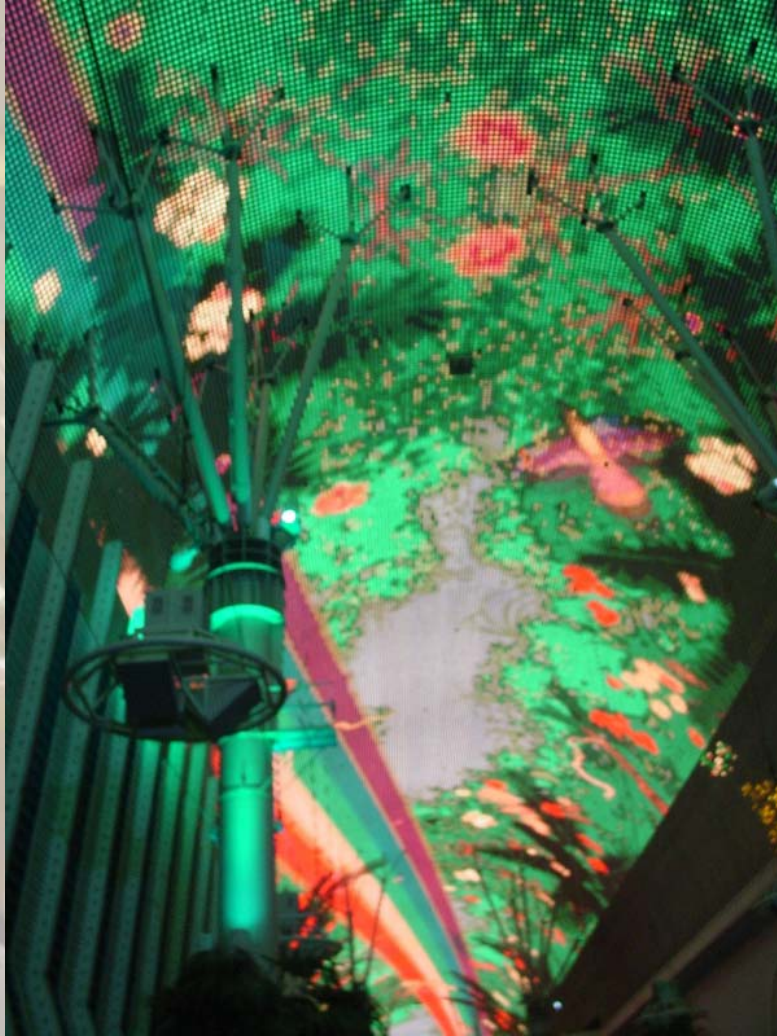


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JACKSON KOLLER





JACKSON KOLLER

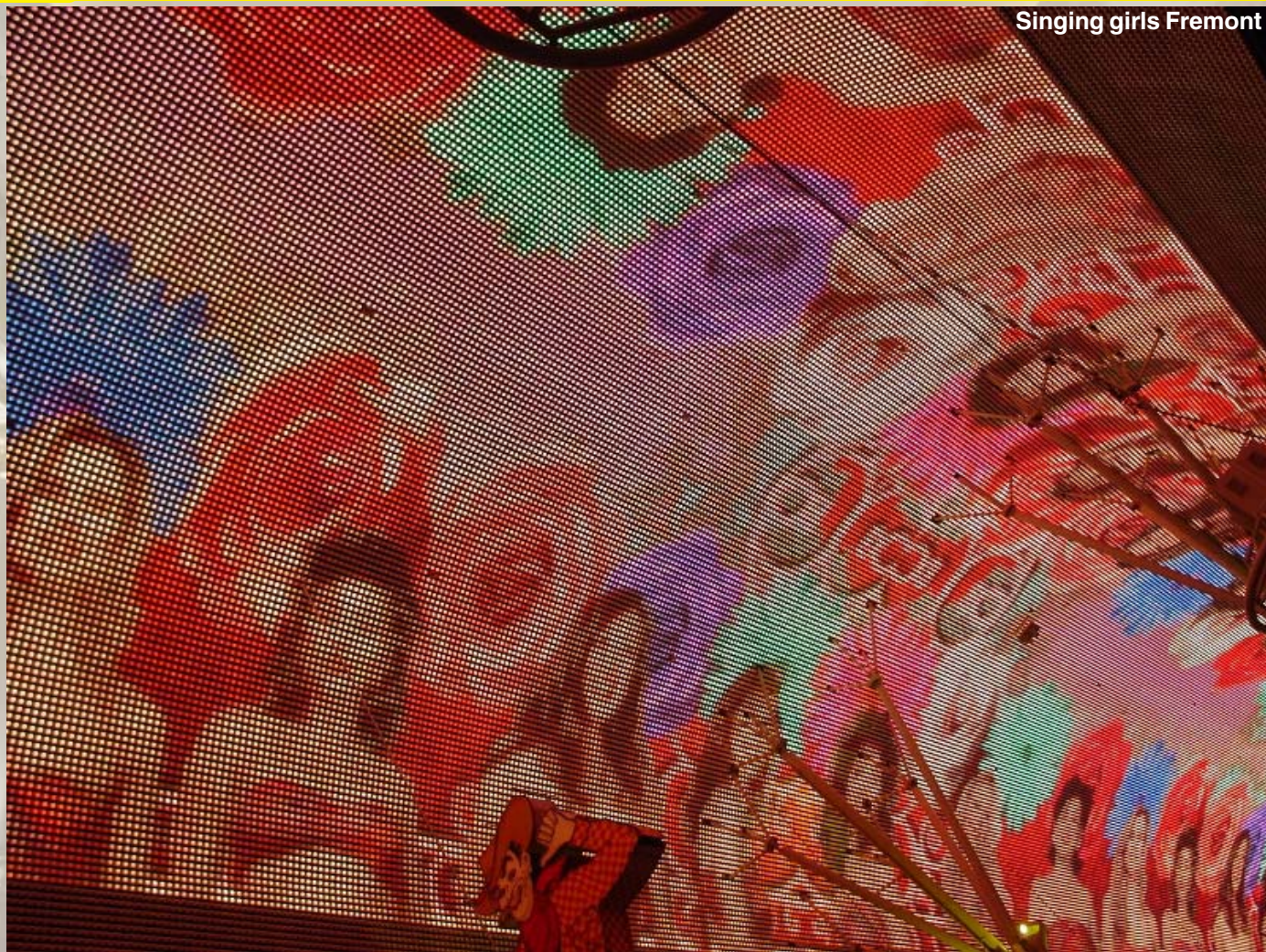
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Singing girls Fremont





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Flag on Fremont



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Fremont fireworks



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Fremont St. Patricks



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Fremont bandstand



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Exteriors

With the car we rented the first five days we were able to expand our movements along the strip.

Able to get to places that were inaccessible for us on our first trip down.

Both of us do not tolerate long walks anymore.

Plus, we could explore out of town with a car.





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Same shot in the daytime





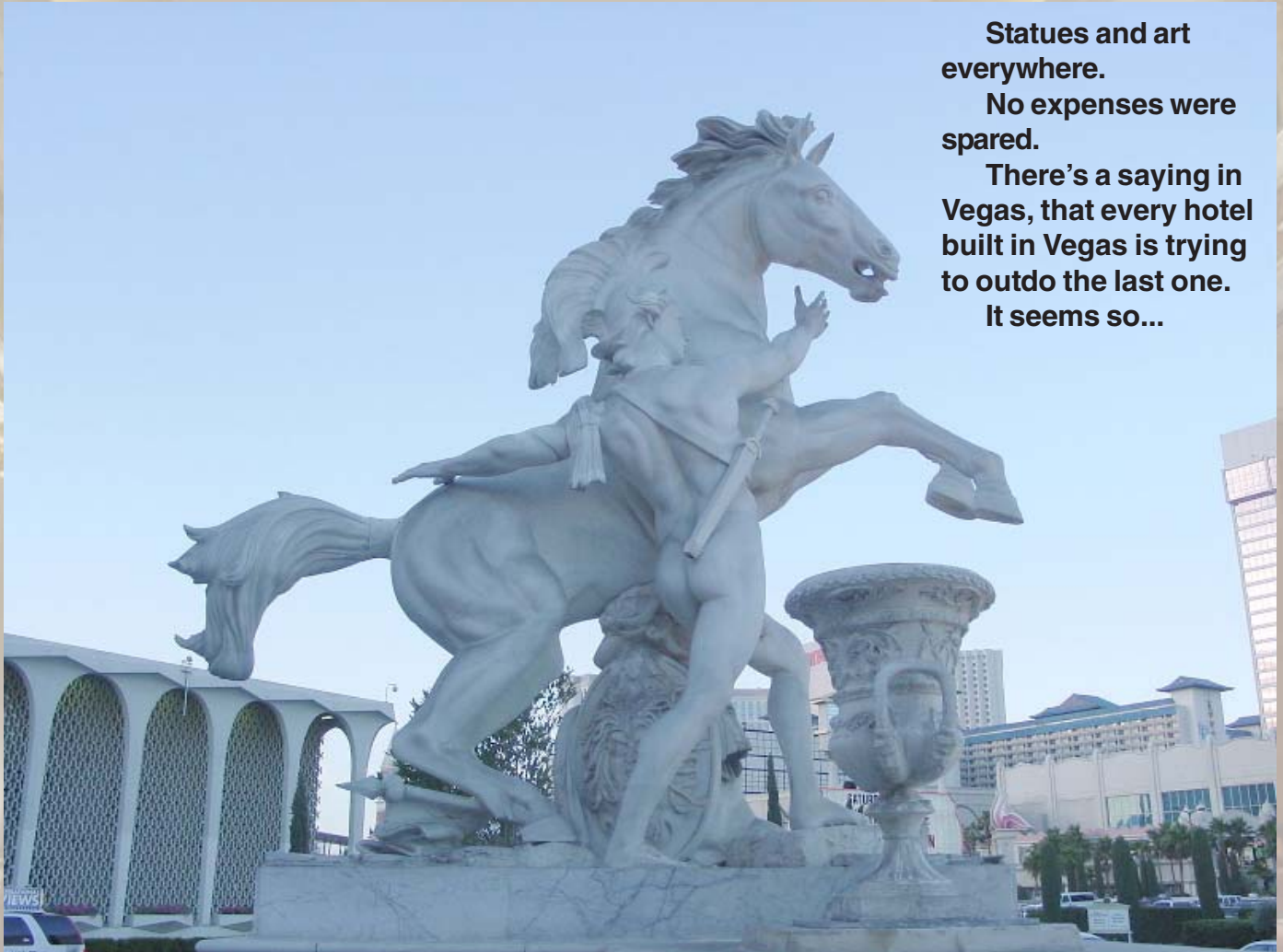
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Statues and art everywhere.

No expenses were spared.

There's a saying in Vegas, that every hotel built in Vegas is trying to outdo the last one.

It seems so...





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I say 'part'
as it was only
a part.

Seemed to
be one loop-
ing pool all
through the
garden com-
plex.

Part of the Flamingo pool complex.





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Wedding area at the Flamingo.





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What we HAD to walk
through every day.
Gardens were beautiful.



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Mandala Bay.
Most of the new
hotels have the three
pronged wing floor
plans.





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The Luxor.





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Griffins
Outside Mandala Bay.





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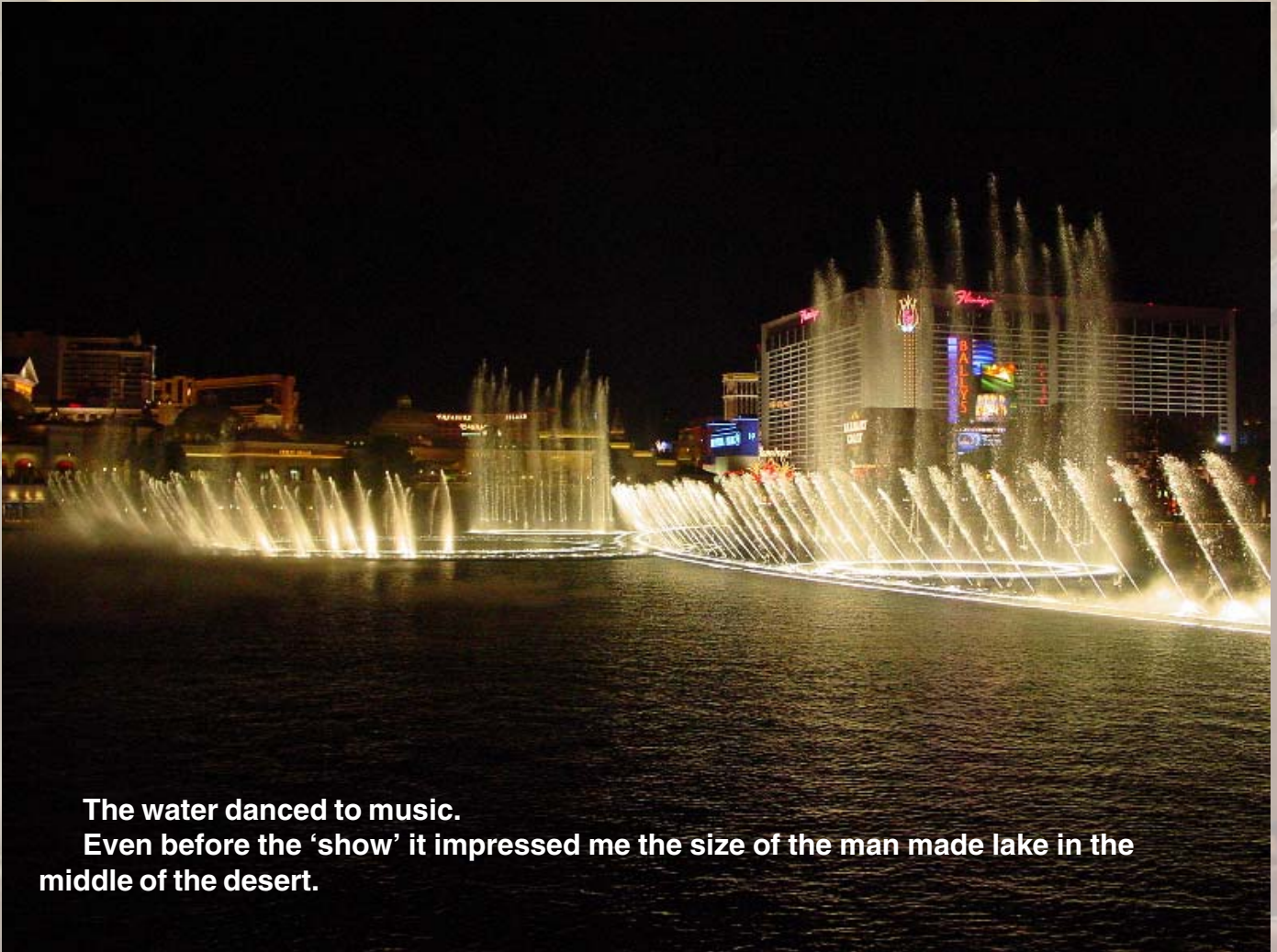


Water show at Belagio's.



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The water danced to music.
Even before the 'show' it impressed me the size of the man made lake in the middle of the desert.



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Paris (hotel) Arch





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They use a lot of misters in the daytime.





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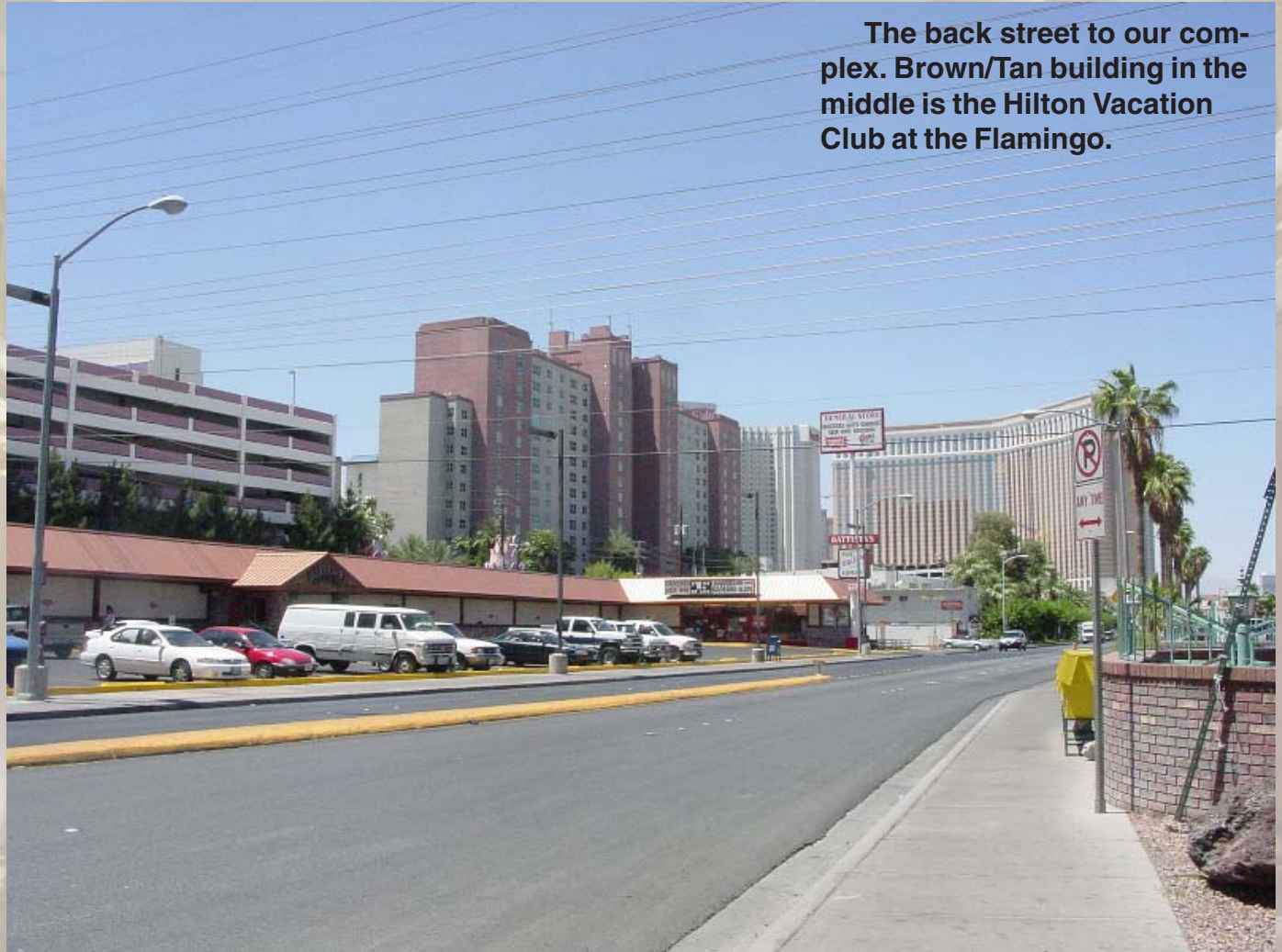
Flamingo pools would loop into grottos.





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The back street to our complex. Brown/Tan building in the middle is the Hilton Vacation Club at the Flamingo.





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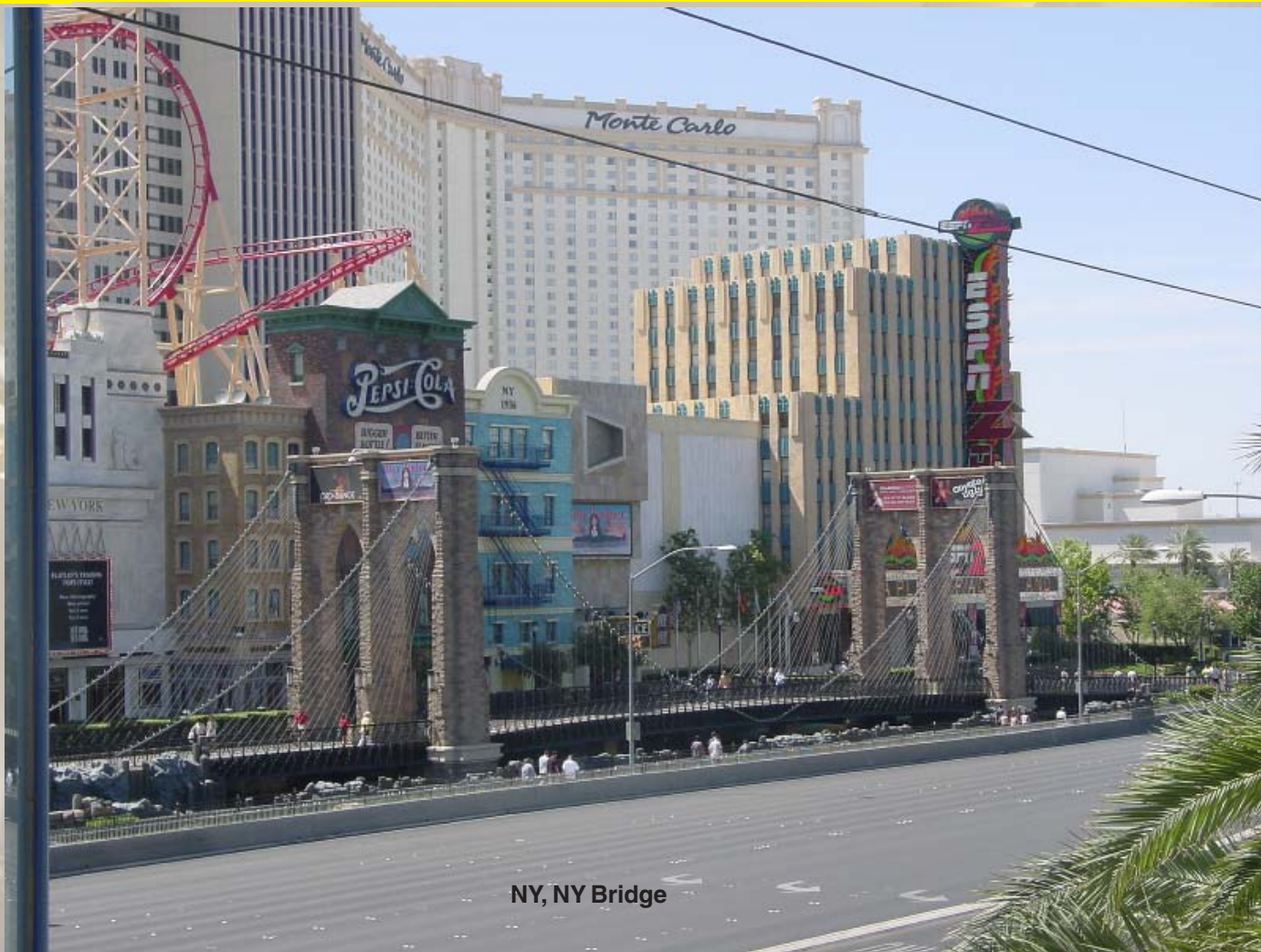
Monorails run between several of the hotels, but not interconnected, though they do help a lot.





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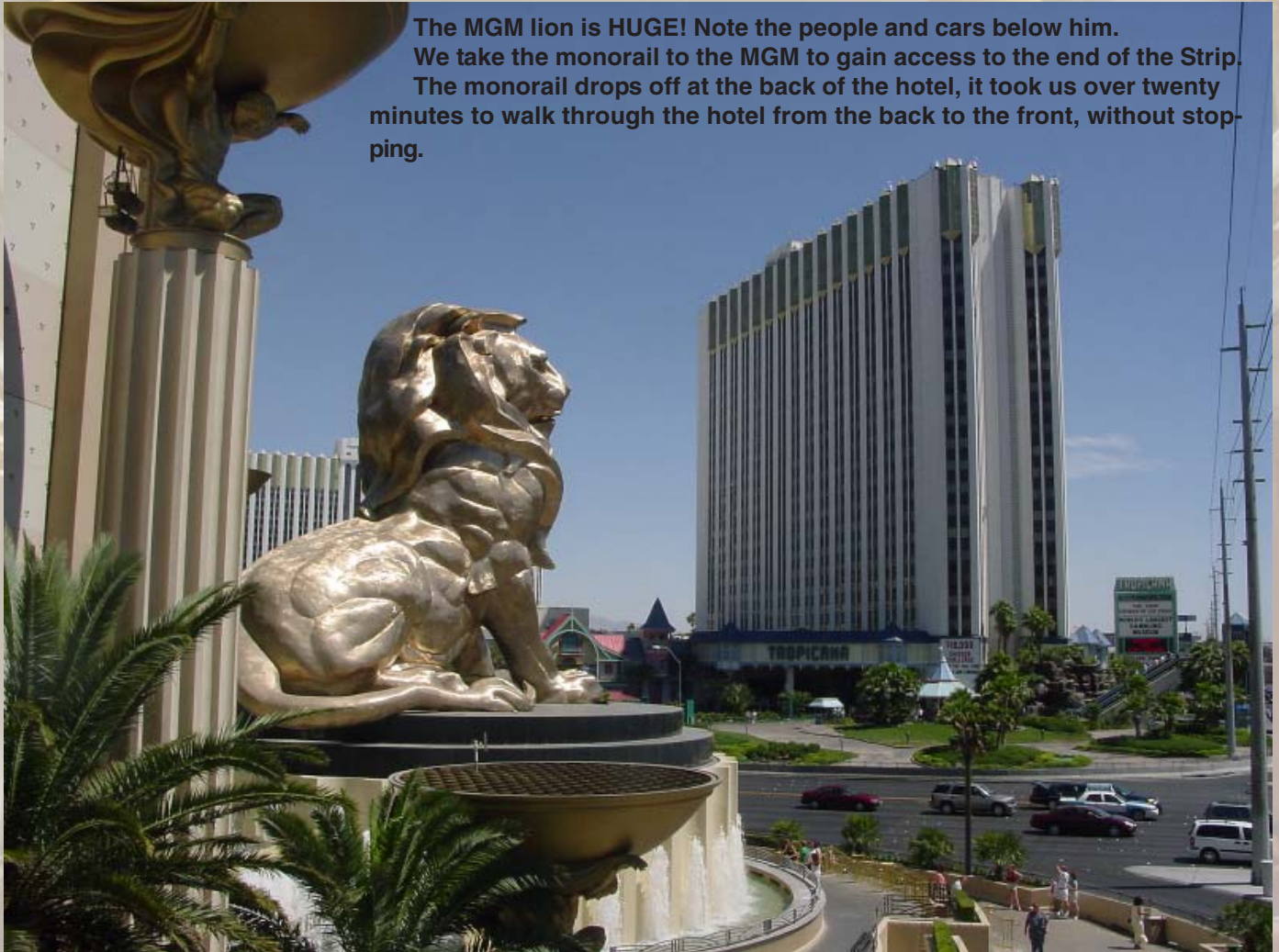


NY, NY Bridge



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The MGM lion is HUGE! Note the people and cars below him. We take the monorail to the MGM to gain access to the end of the Strip. The monorail drops off at the back of the hotel, it took us over twenty minutes to walk through the hotel from the back to the front, without stopping.





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Even tugboats at the base of the Statue of Liberty at New York, New York.

Across from the MGM Grand next to the Excalibur.



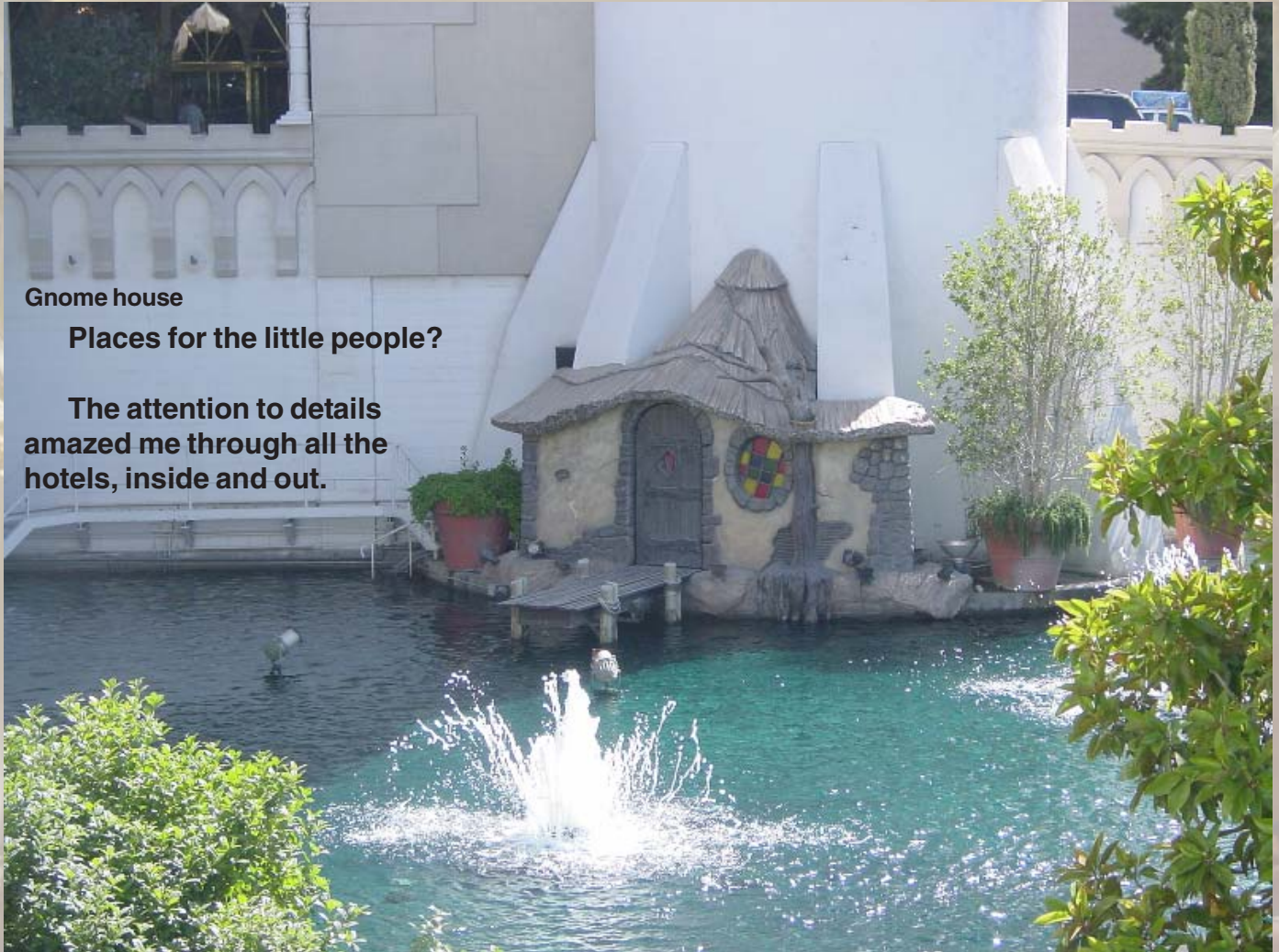


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Gnome house

Places for the little people?

The attention to details
amazed me through all the
hotels, inside and out.

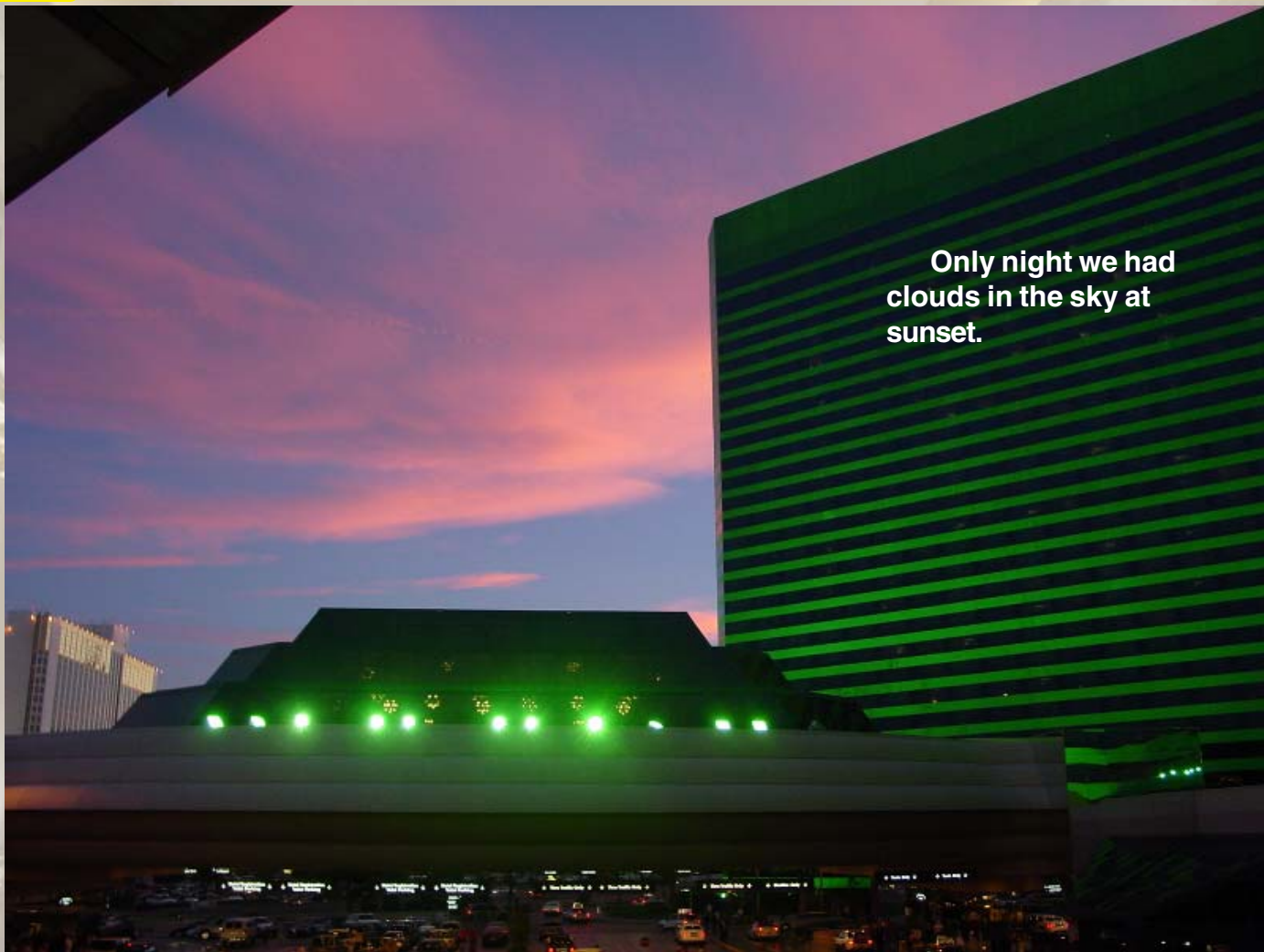




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Only night we had
clouds in the sky at
sunset.

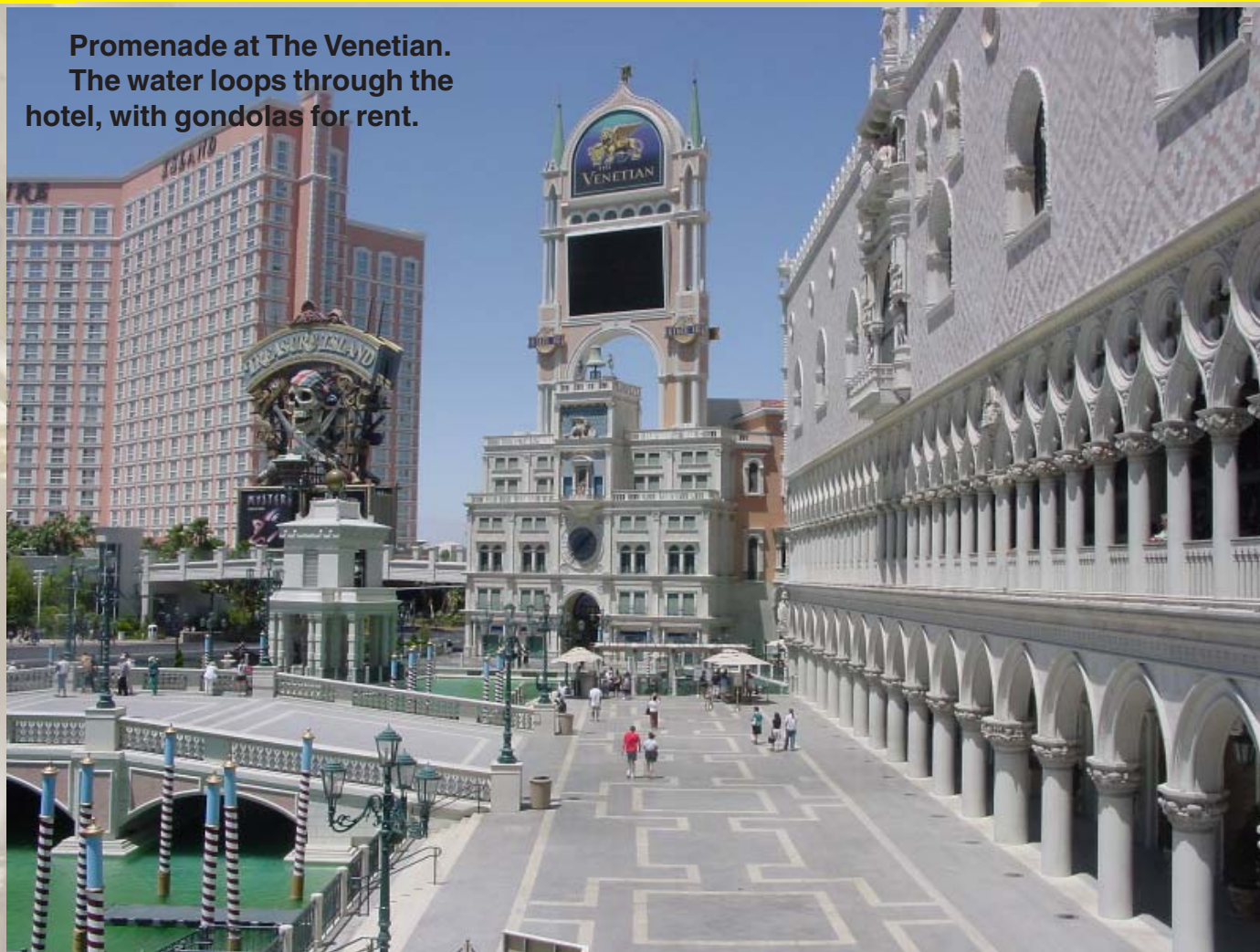
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Promenade at The Venetian.
The water loops through the
hotel, with gondolas for rent.





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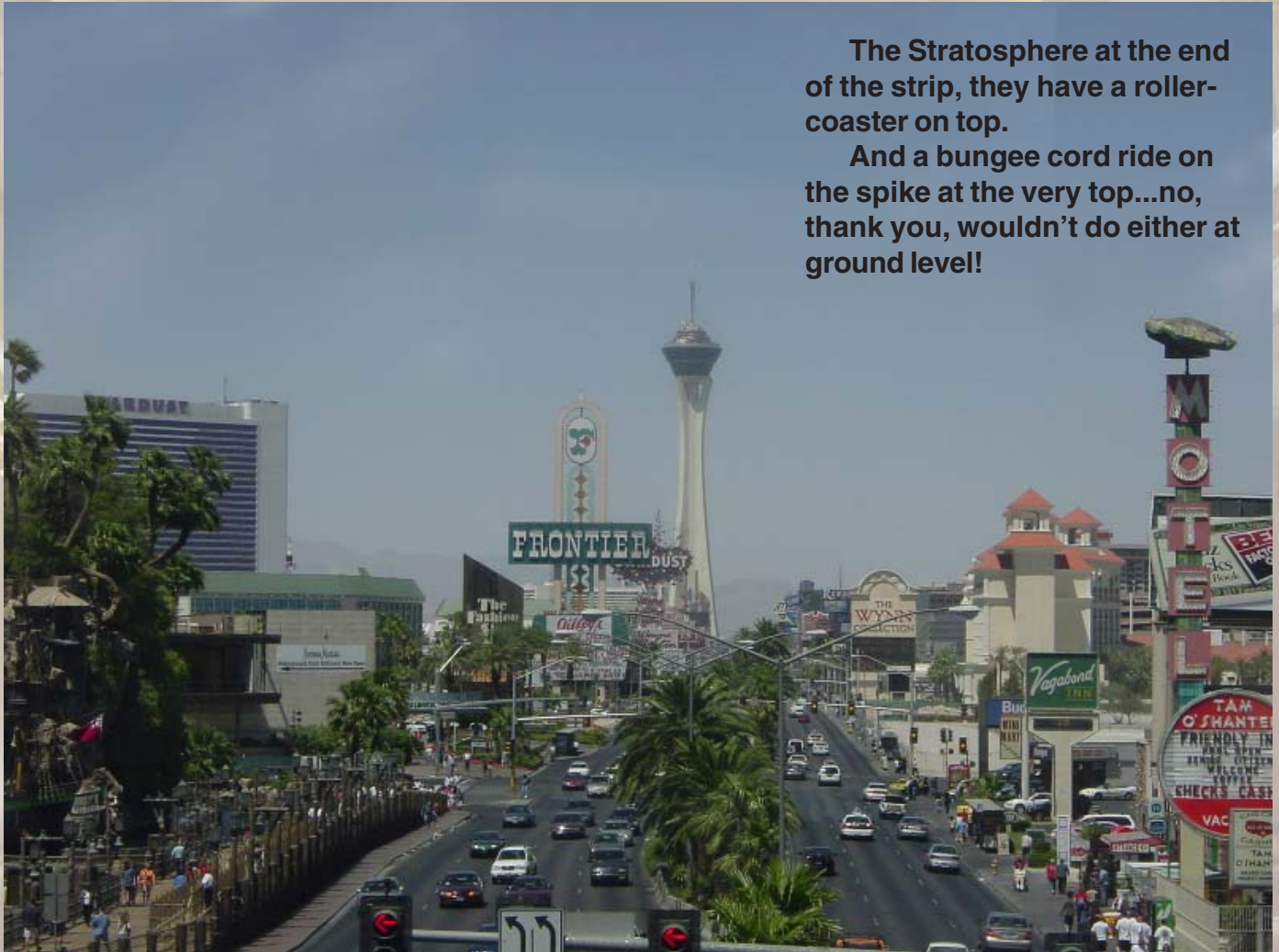
Mirage volcano dormant



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The Stratosphere at the end of the strip, they have a roller-coaster on top.

And a bungee cord ride on the spike at the very top...no, thank you, wouldn't do either at ground level!





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Interiors

With all the water outside it's hard to remember your in a desert.

With the detail and openness, it's hard to remember your inside buildings.

Shopping malls, exhibits, so much to see. Some of the hotels seem bigger than some towns, you can get lost in them. Just in awe...



David



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Caesar Promenade



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Dining with the Gods





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Caesar shops





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Cesaers has two statue sets at opposite ends of the building, that move and put on performances.

Caesar on his throne with the gods around him.



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Even the toys are bigger than life.

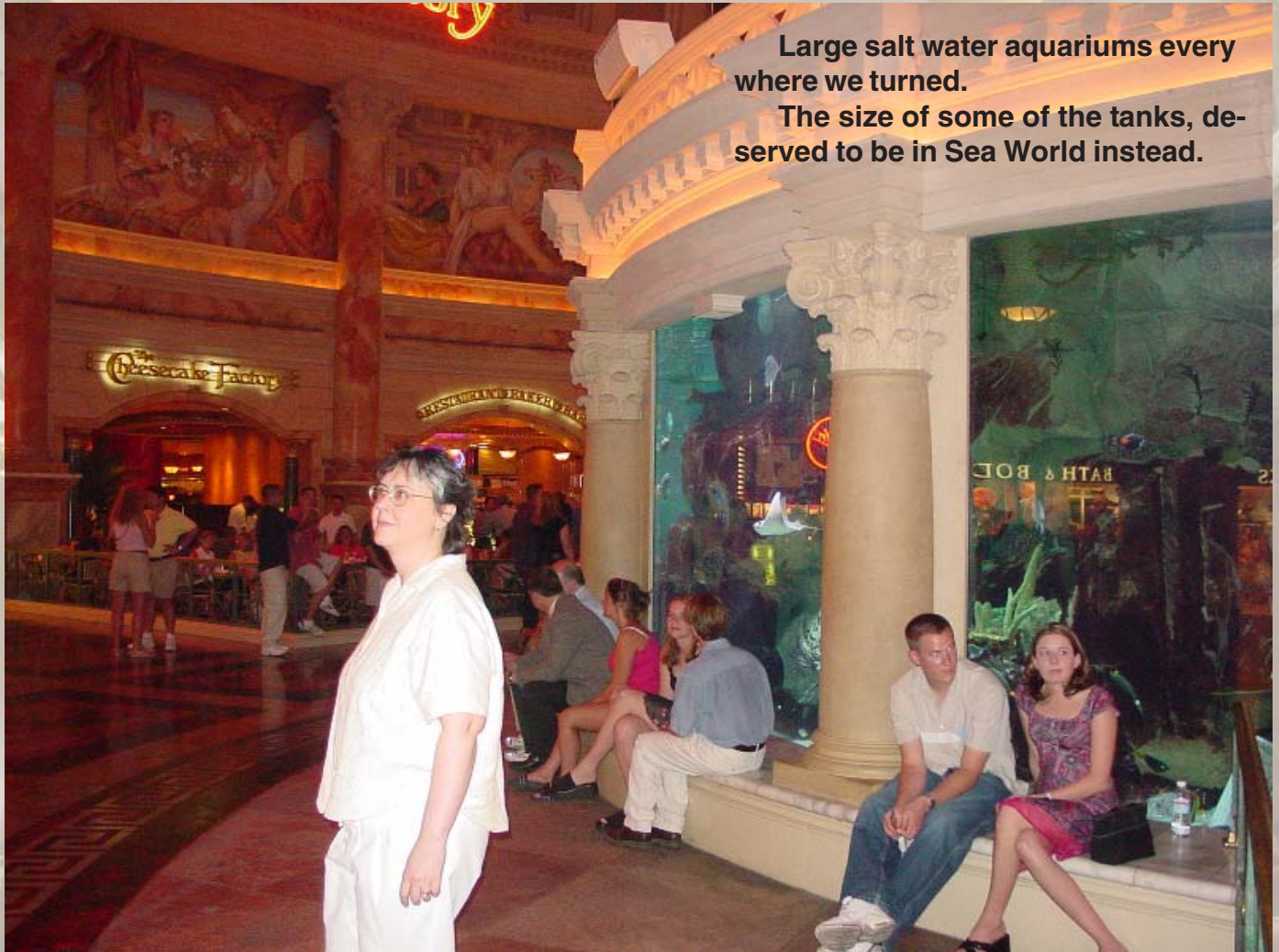




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Large salt water aquariums every where we turned.

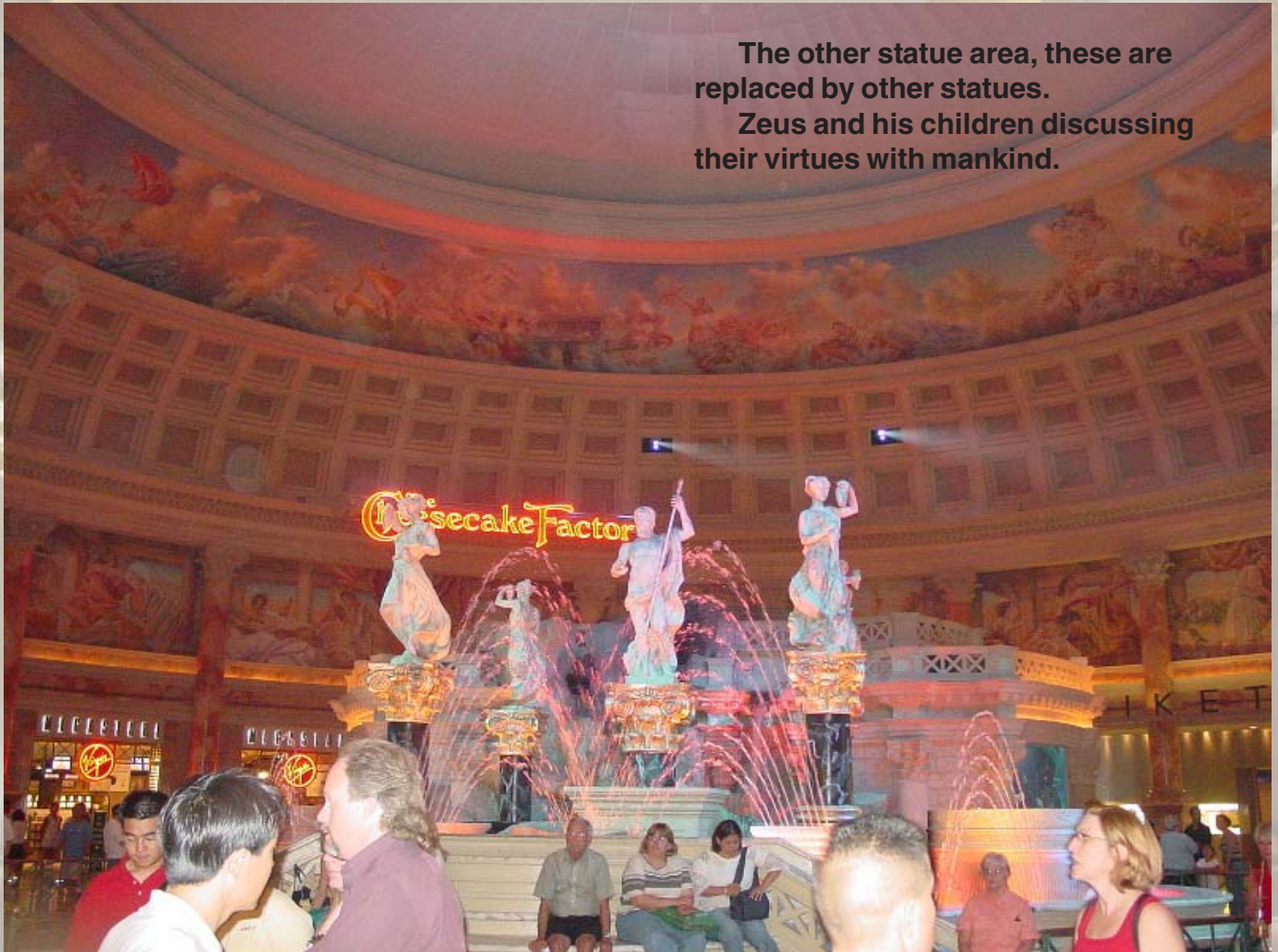
The size of some of the tanks, deserved to be in Sea World instead.





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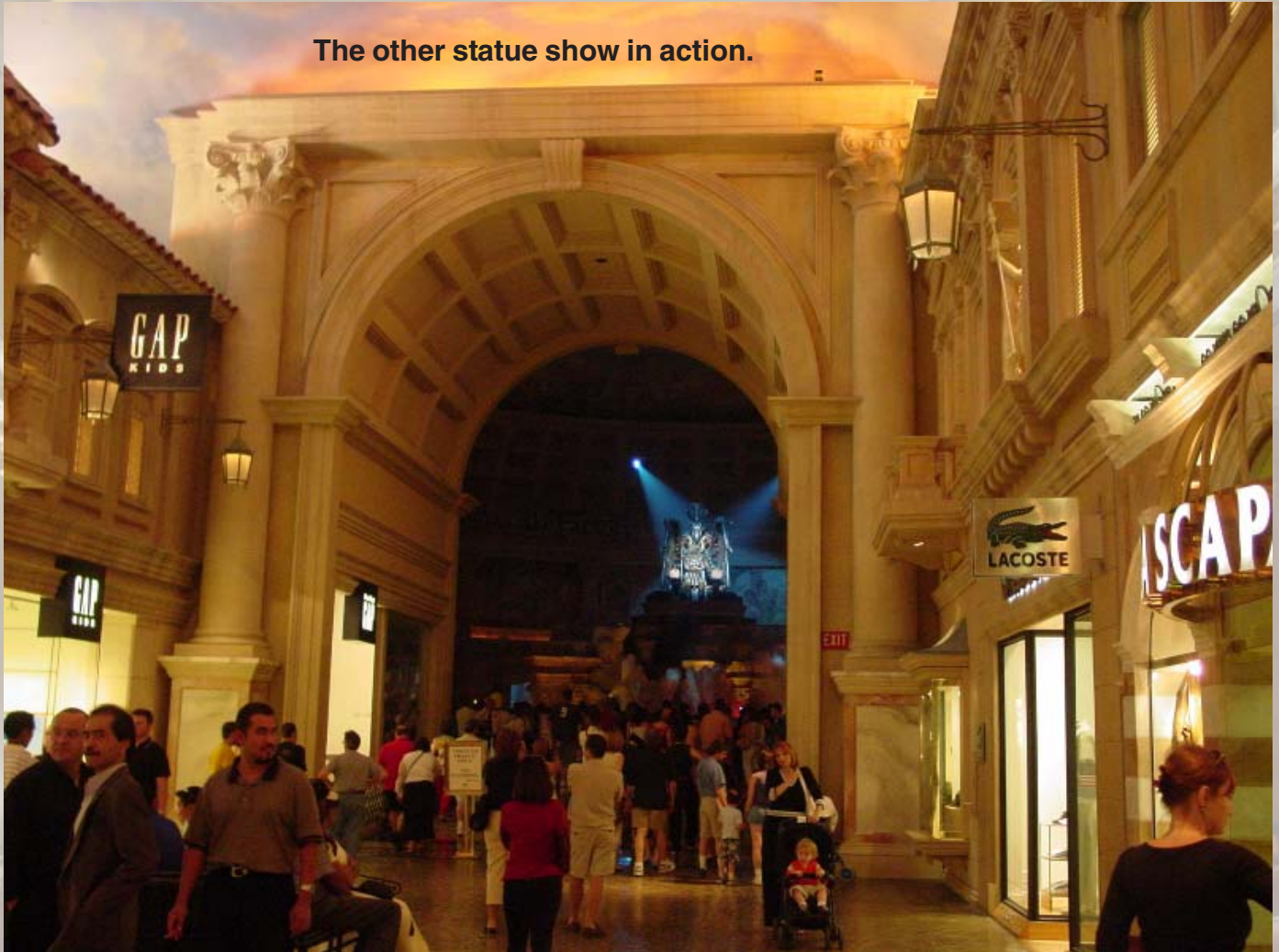
The other statue area, these are replaced by other statues.
Zeus and his children discussing their virtues with mankind.





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The other statue show in action.





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Even the light fixtures are fancy.





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The hallways appear even larger and more opulent empty.
This is 'only' a side hall between the Mandalá Bay hotel and their Shark Reek.



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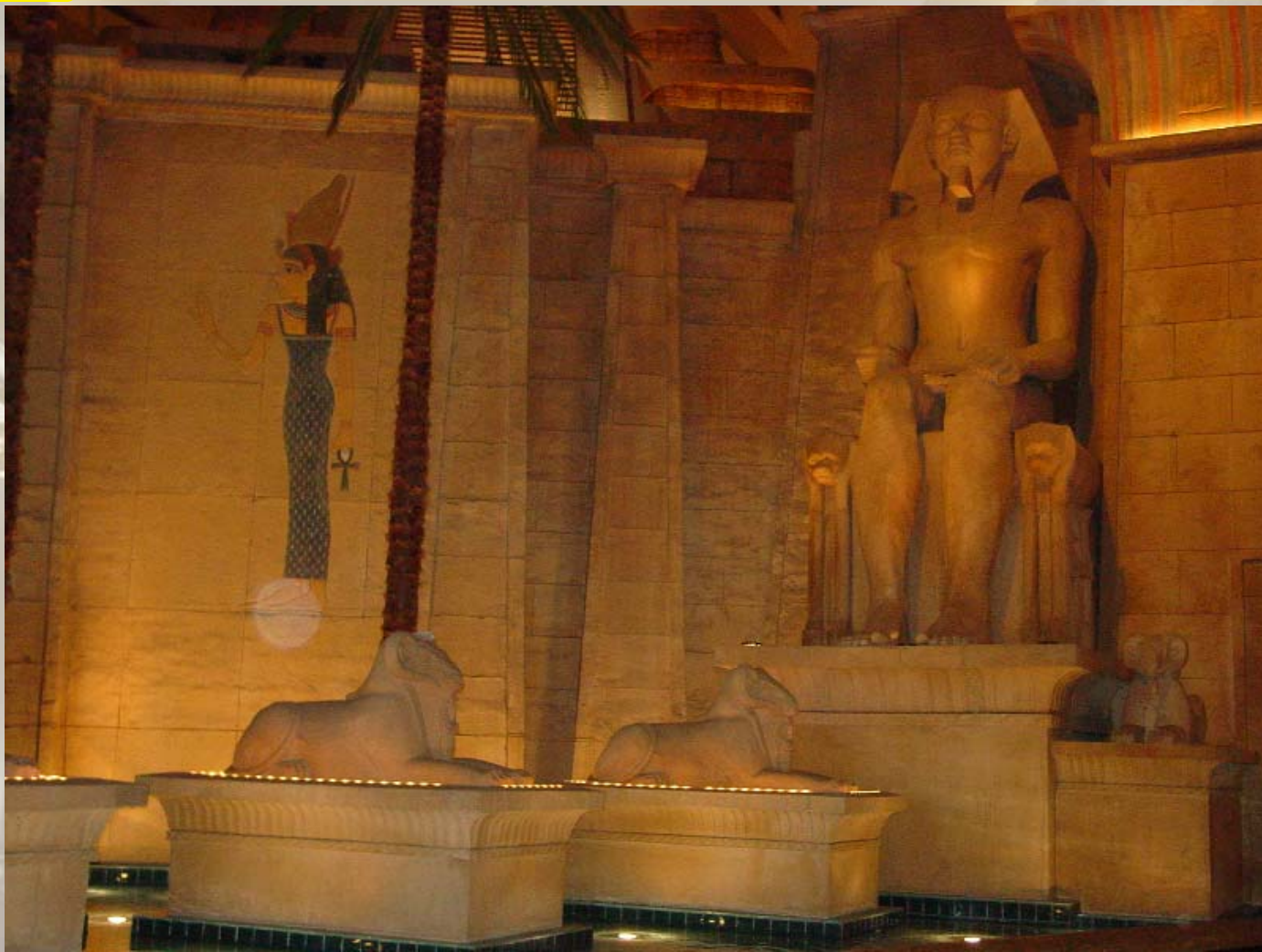


Luxor temples



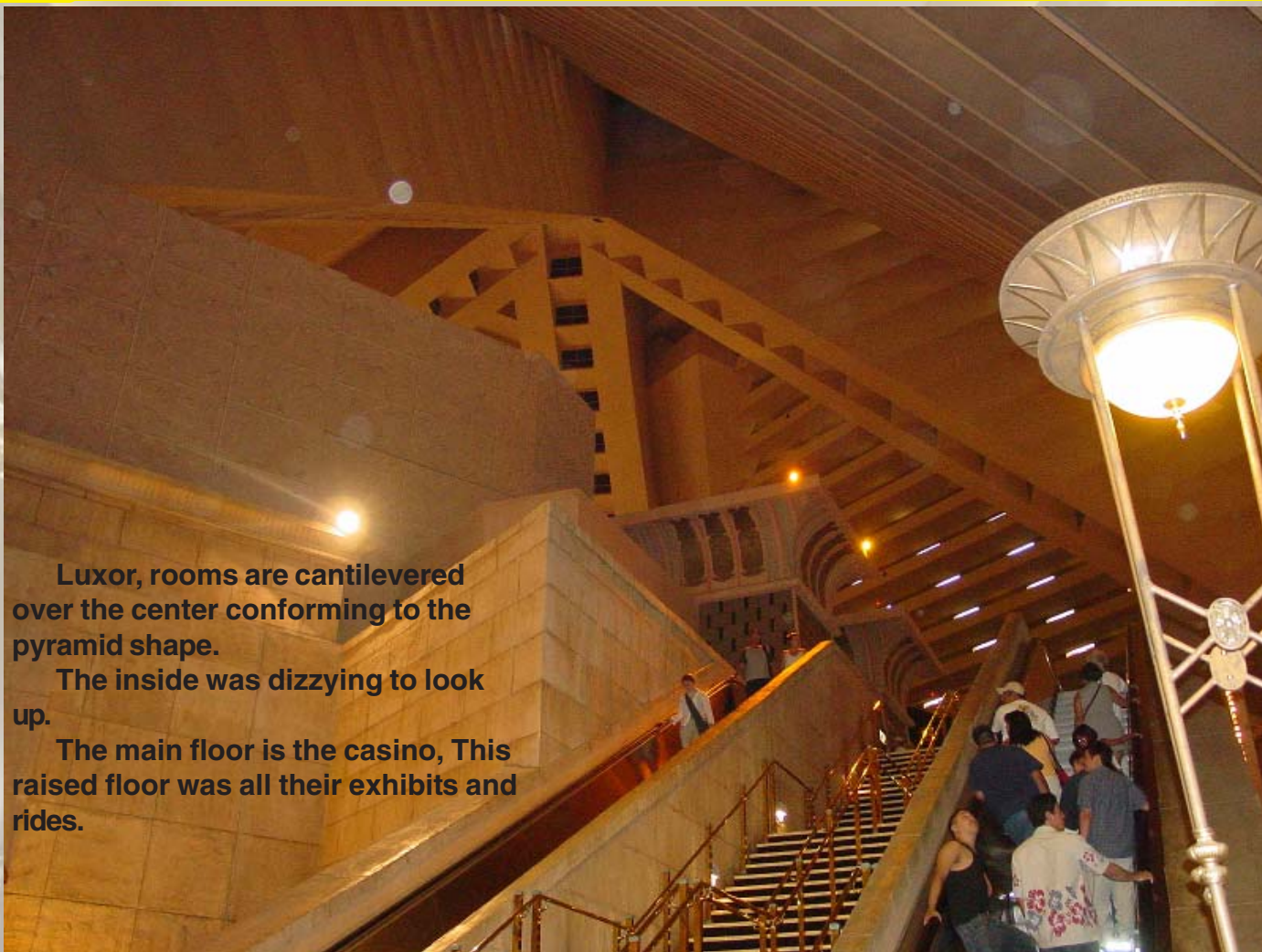
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Luxor, rooms are cantilevered over the center conforming to the pyramid shape.

The inside was dizzying to look up.

The main floor is the casino, This raised floor was all their exhibits and rides.



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Patricia in Luxor



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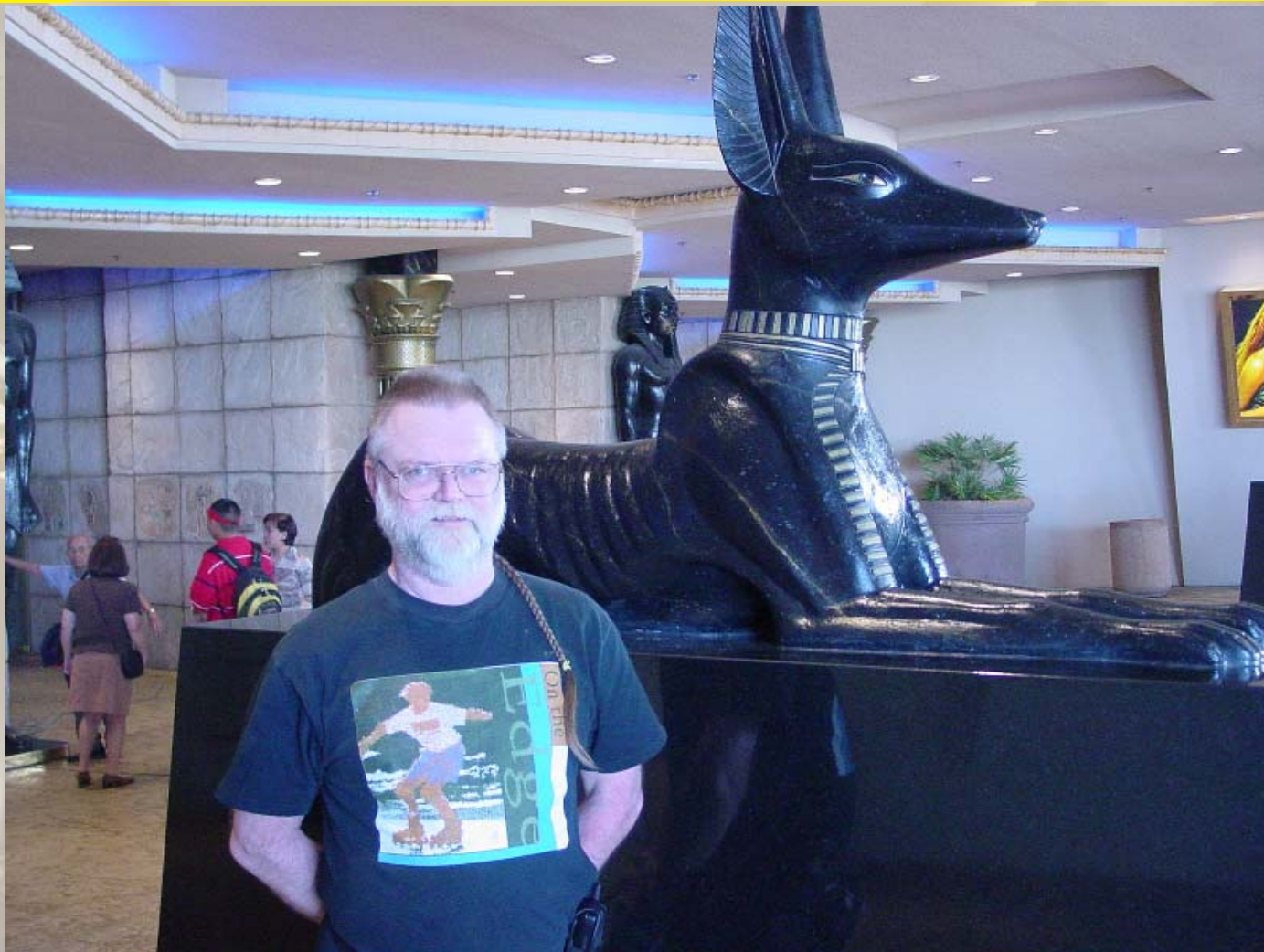


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Belagio staircase





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Garden inside the Bellagio



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Lobbies are huge for influx.





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Patricia gaming





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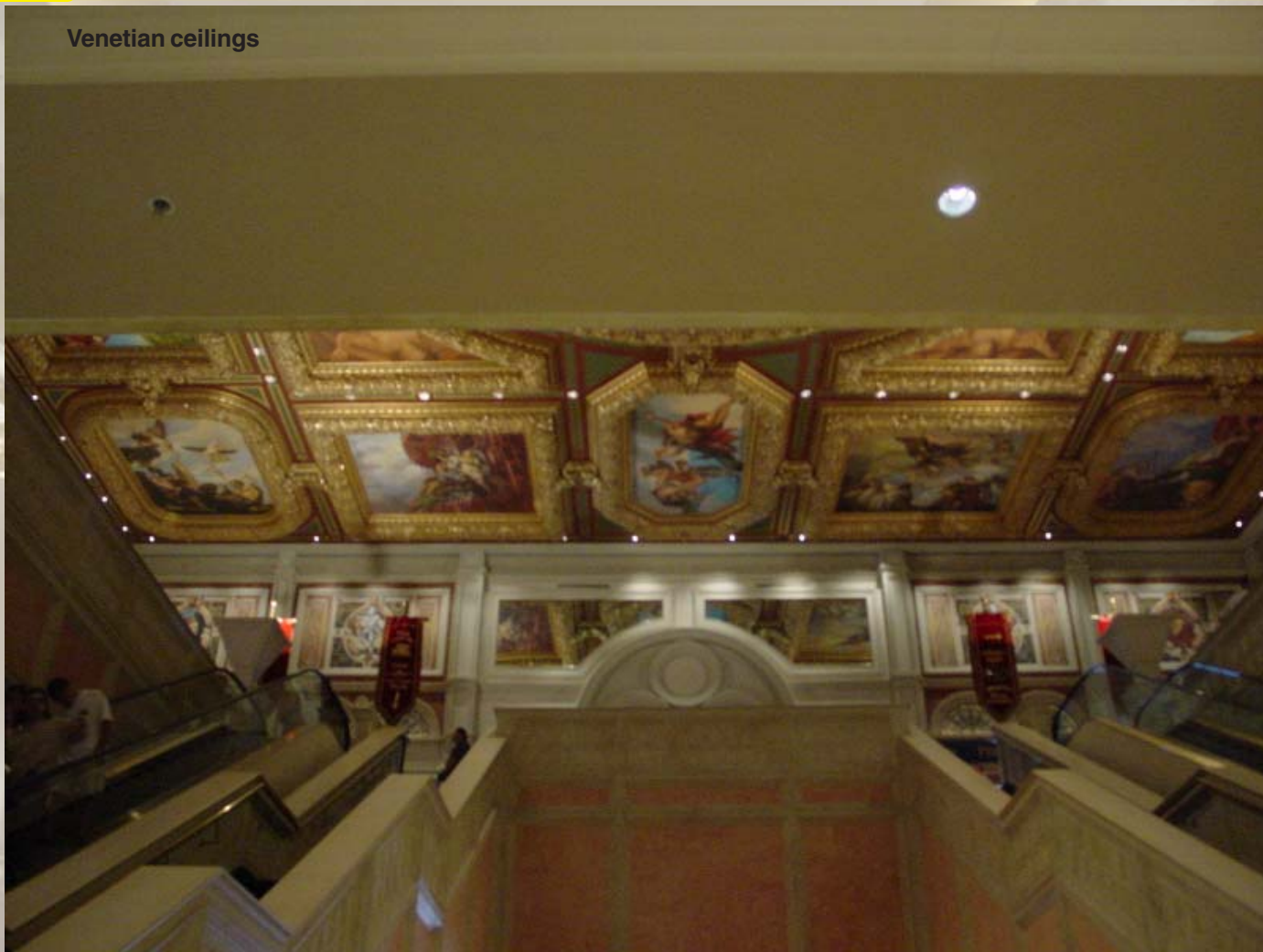


Patricia inside NY, NY



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Venetian ceilings





Venetian promenade





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Venetian annex



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MGM column



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Our Room at HGVC

Our room at HGVC (Hilton Grand Vacations Club, and surrounding area.

Separate rooms, small apartment size was very comfortable and enjoyable. Though we went to a lot of buffets, it was nice having our own kitchen too.

Hot tub in the room, as well as the private pool and hot tub for members only.



HGVC kitchen/entry



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HGVC living room from entry





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HGVC hot tub in room



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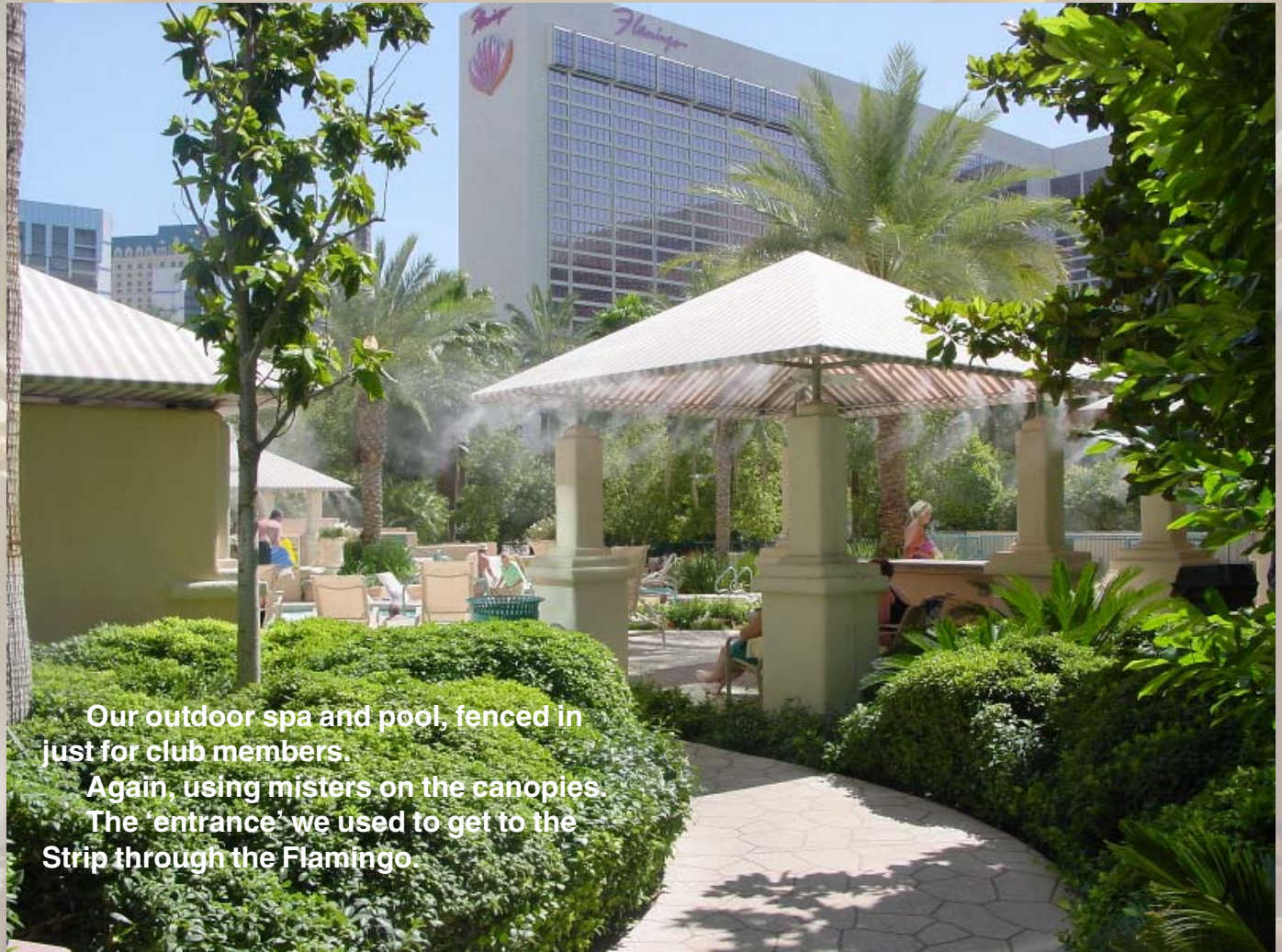
HGVC bedroom





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Our outdoor spa and pool, fenced in just for club members.

Again, using misters on the canopies. The 'entrance' we used to get to the Strip through the Flamingo.



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HGVC pool area



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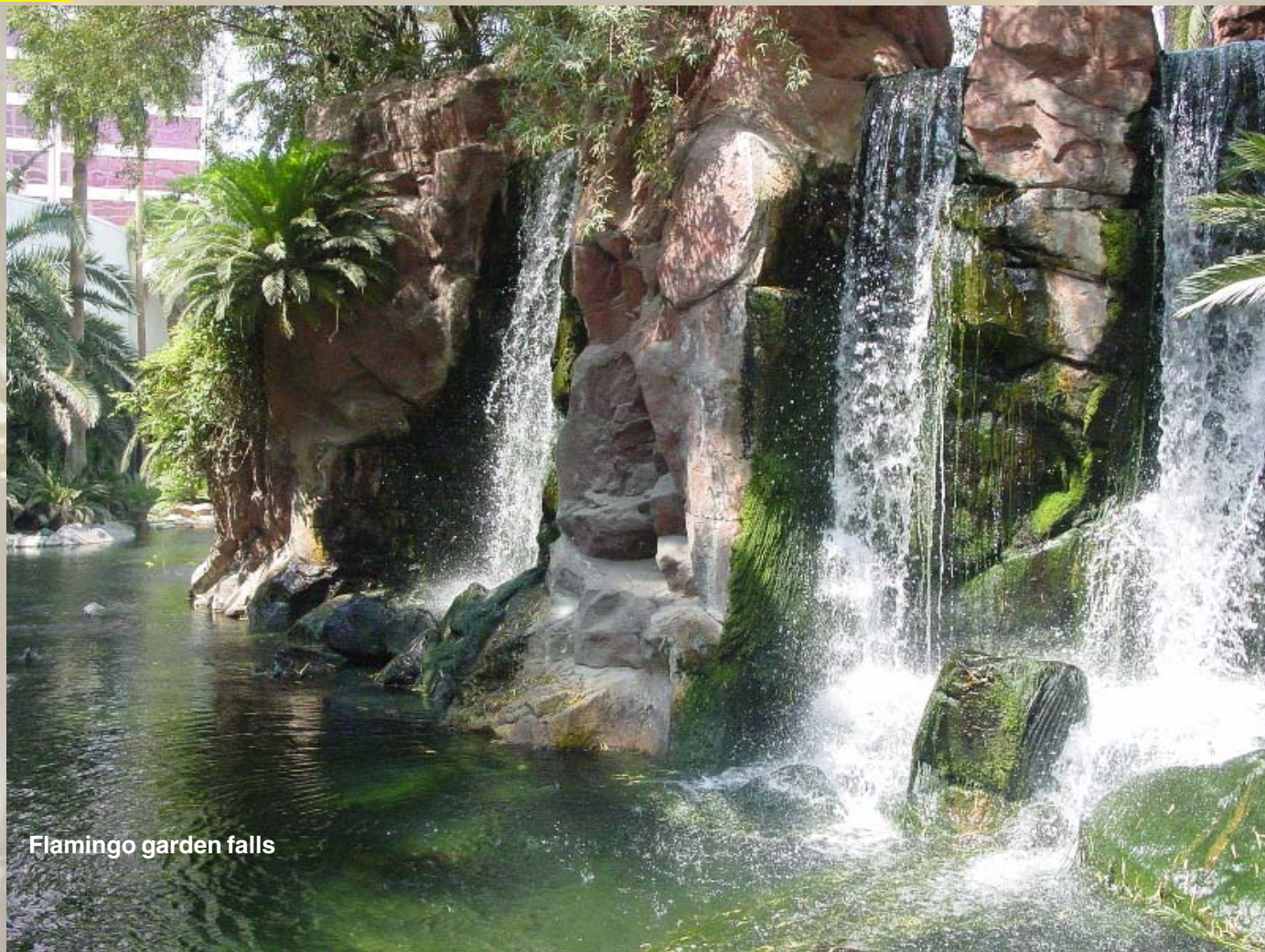


Personally I have always thought that the wood ducks were the prettiest ducks.



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Flamingo garden falls



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Flamingo koi





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Mandarin ducks



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Flamingo turtles



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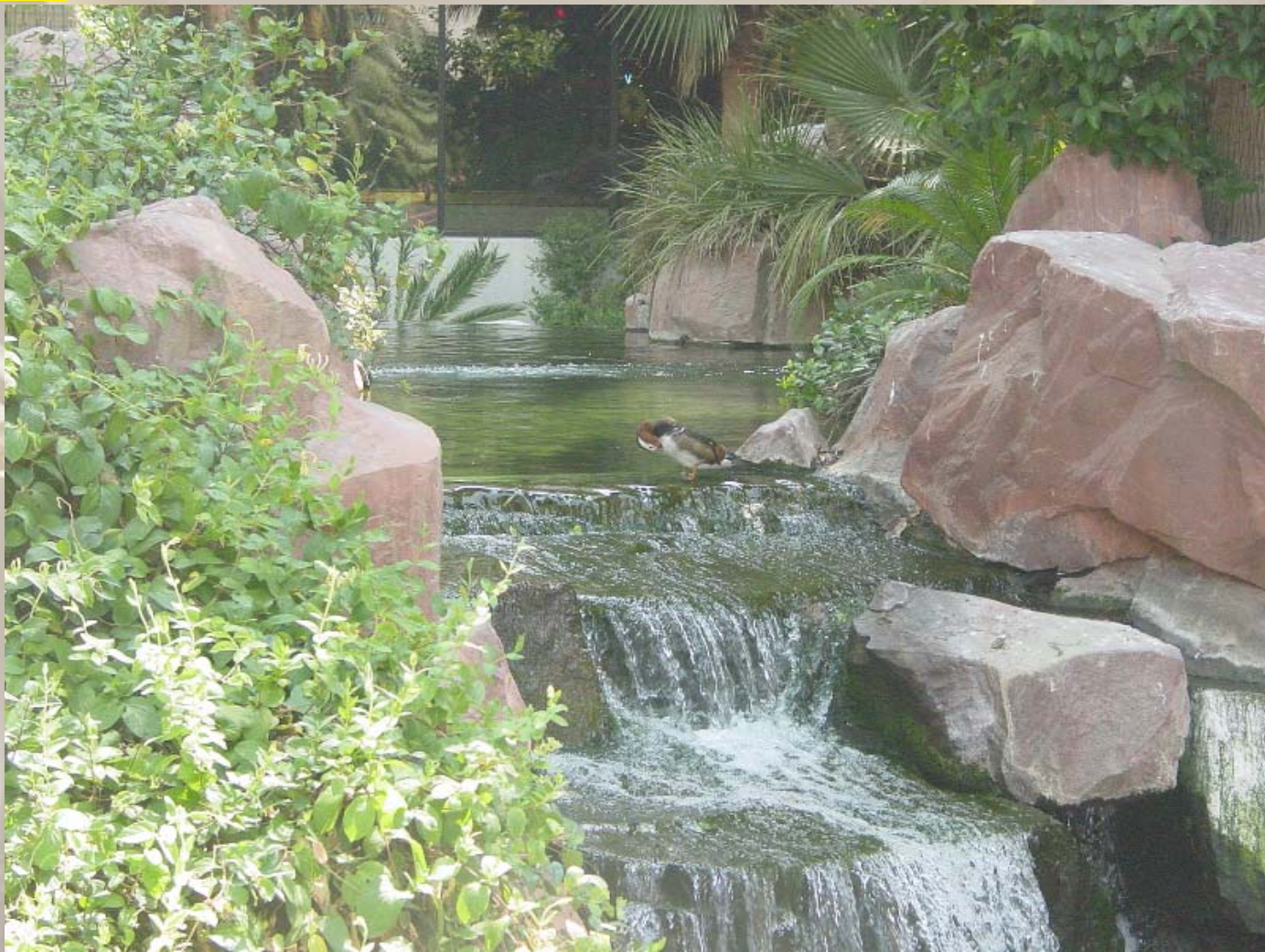


Their enclosure is nicely shaded, the white areas are refrigerated from below and their water is cooled.



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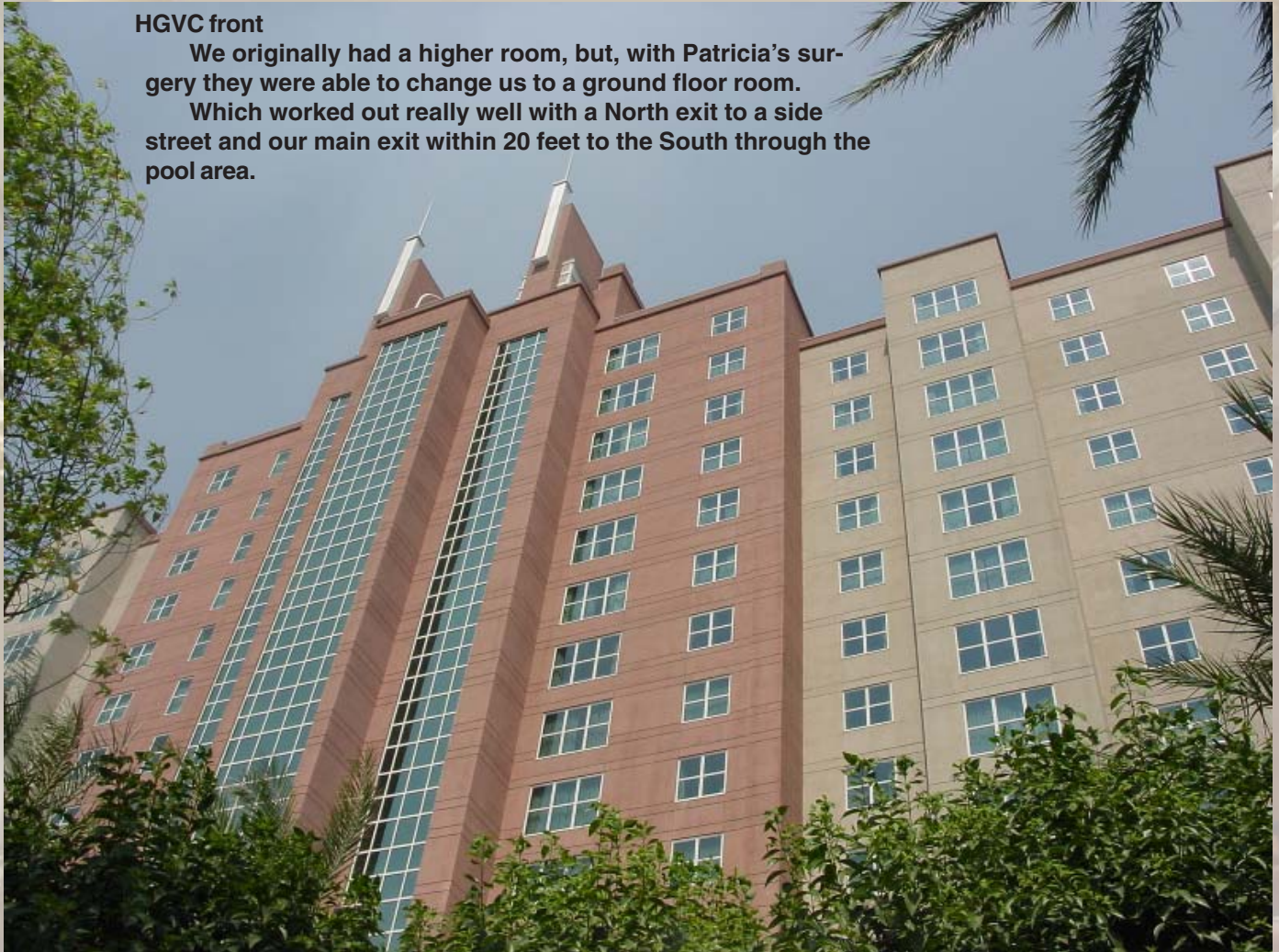


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HGVC front

We originally had a higher room, but, with Patricia's surgery they were able to change us to a ground floor room.

Which worked out really well with a North exit to a side street and our main exit within 20 feet to the South through the pool area.





Prologue

This is the first book of our Vegas 2002 trip.

Vegas has grown up and become the Adult Disneyland, a wonder to see. No expense was spared and it shows. One cab driver told us The Venetian was paid off in five years after completion.

Even if you don't gamble or even drink, it is a sight to see. Well worth the trip.

I highly suggest nothing less than a full week, even in ten days we didn't cover all of it.

It was a great trip, lots of fun...



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