

Grandissimo: The First Emperor of Las Vegas



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by David G. Schwartz

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 11747 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 328 pages
Lending : Enabled

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Grandissimo, born Frank Brana in 1901, was a larger-than-life character who played a pivotal role in the development of Las Vegas. Known for his flamboyant style and eccentric personality, he was a master promoter and showman who helped transform the city into the entertainment capital it is today.

Brana arrived in Las Vegas in 1936, at a time when the city was still a small desert town. He quickly saw the potential for gambling and entertainment, and he set about creating a new kind of destination resort. In 1946, he opened the Flamingo Hotel, one of the first luxury hotels in Las Vegas. The Flamingo was an instant success, and it helped to put Las Vegas on the map as a major tourist destination.

Grandissimo was not just a businessman; he was also a visionary. He believed that Las Vegas could be more than just a gambling town. He wanted to create a place where people could come to be entertained, and he spared no expense in bringing the biggest and best shows to his hotel.

Grandissimo's vision for Las Vegas was not without its challenges. He faced opposition from the mob, who wanted to control the city's gambling industry. But Grandissimo was not afraid to stand up to them. He worked with law enforcement to crack down on organized crime, and he helped to create a more legitimate and respectable atmosphere in Las Vegas.

In 1955, Grandissimo was assassinated by a hitman hired by the mob. His death was a tragic loss for Las Vegas, but his legacy lives on. He is remembered as one of the most important figures in the city's history, and his contributions to Las Vegas are still felt today.

The Flamingo Hotel

The Flamingo Hotel was Grandissimo's masterpiece. It was the first luxury hotel in Las Vegas, and it set a new standard for entertainment and hospitality. The Flamingo featured a world-class casino, a luxurious pool, and a variety of restaurants and bars.

One of the most famous features of the Flamingo was its live entertainment. Grandissimo brought in some of the biggest names in show business, including Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis Jr. The Flamingo was also home to the Folies Bergere, a world-renowned cabaret show.

The Flamingo was an instant success, and it helped to put Las Vegas on the map as a major tourist destination. The hotel is still one of the most popular in Las Vegas today, and it is a reminder of Grandissimo's vision for the city.

Grandissimo's Legacy

Grandissimo's legacy is still felt in Las Vegas today. He was a visionary who helped to transform the city into the entertainment capital it is today. His contributions to Las Vegas are immeasurable, and he is remembered as one of the most important figures in the city's history.

One of Grandissimo's most important contributions to Las Vegas was his insistence on quality. He wanted to create a world-class destination resort, and he spared no expense in doing so. The Flamingo Hotel was one of the most luxurious hotels in the world when it opened, and it set a new standard for entertainment and hospitality.

Grandissimo also had a knack for marketing and promotion. He was a master at creating buzz and excitement, and he knew how to get people talking about his hotels. He was also one of the first hoteliers to use television advertising, and he helped to make Las Vegas a household name.

Grandissimo's legacy is one of innovation and creativity. He was always looking for new ways to entertain his guests, and he was always pushing the boundaries of what was possible in Las Vegas. He was a visionary who helped to create a city that is unlike any other in the world.

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