



NEWS UPFRONT ▾

<< [BACK TO MAIN PAGE](#) >>

If It Looks Like a Tourist and Walks Like a Tourist ...

It must be industry pros on Tourist Thursday

By [Martin Stein](#)

In our rarefied existence at the Weekly, dress codes tend toward the jeans-and-T-shirt variety, and it's not uncommon to see the odd bathing suit or bathrobe with slippers. Except for me. At work, I wear Kenneth Cole shoes and pants and shirts from Express. My eyeglasses are Versace and my watch is Wenger, a gift from the Swiss government. Weekends, when I have yard work to attend to, I wear exactly the same thing. But Thursday, I found myself wearing an open Hawaiian shirt bought from an Albertson's over a Sin strip-club T-shirt, jeans and sneakers, all topped off by a Legends On Ice cap with flashing lights that change color. (OK, the sneakers were Skechers, but still.)



Courtesy of Tracy Lee / [Napkinnights.com](#)

What made it worse is that I was dressed like this in public: at Fat Tuesdays at the MGM Grand. And my wife, who was wearing the tank-top version of my T, at least had the good sense and taste to combine it with a Bebe hat and sparkly belt. And what made it even worse was being spotted by the head of the casino's nightlife publicity while I was holding a yard of Octane 190. Even worse, I was at the wrong Fat Tuesdays.

Up the Strip at Caesars, a somewhat-like-dressed crowd was waiting for Bob Shindelar to appear. The occasion was Tourist Thursday, a monthly event of Bob's creation, during which various club industry folks—and stowaway, undercover Arts & Entertainment editors and their spouses—put on their vision of stereotypical tourist garb, grab some drinks and proceed to run around the Strip, making complete asses out of themselves.

Bob is one of the resident DJs at Ice. Along for the ride this particular night were Brian Klimaski, Ice VIP host, and his schoolteacher wife, Cari, wearing a matching Hawaiian shirt and dress (Cari wore the dress); Tracy Lee, Tatiana Hantig and Jessica Blair of [NapkinNights.com](#); Matt Mochida, Mike Cirkosz and Jason Carpenter in redneck finery with Bass Pro Shops hats and shirts; Adrian Boylan, lead singer for local band Otherwise; Mike Ty dressed as Hunter S. Thompson, pre-ash; and a host of others. Bob? He was wearing Elvis glasses, complete with sideburns, while his girlfriend Kristine Frei was decked out in a torn Vegas T and ripped jeans. In other words, Kristine was the only one who looked like a real tourist.

But that's one of the points, if there is a point to an exercise like this, other than putting one's liver and pride to the test. To gently mock the tourists who, let's face it, are this town's lifeblood, while at the same time enjoying the anonymity that the costumes provide. When most of your nights are spent working at clubs, and most of



your free nights are spent in the company of industry peers, you can't really cut loose, act out, molest mannequins or belly-flop into fountains. You're always on your best or at least second-best behavior. But not Tourist Thursday.

Bob and Kristine were an hour late; in other words, on schedule for Clubbing Standard Time, giving Tracy plenty of time to get a lap-dance from a Cheesecake Factory staffer. Our yard-long drinks in hand, we hit the bricks: gasping in mock amazement at the animatronic Atlantis battle, panicking the sales staff at Exotic Cars at Caesars, climbing on statues, posing with confused Asian tourists, trying out makeup at Mac, feeling up the window display at Lacoste, embarrassing the bartender at Boa in front of her boss, and teaching little kids how to take money out of fountains.

We were actually given the OK to go into OPM, dress codes be damned, but Bob doesn't so much lead the group as simply try to exert influence, the same way a heat source influences an amoeba to direct its pseudopodia in a particular direction. And our pseudopodia was intent on jaywalking across the Strip like any decent tourist.

We made our way to Tequila Joe's karaoke night, where we managed to cut the line and get onstage for off-key renditions of "Lean On Me" and "Free Falling" (never underestimate what management will do to get a horde of drunks out of the way). Breaking character to accept a party-bus ride—complete with stripper pole—from VIP Exclusive Transportation, we were disgorged at the Rio, where we headed straight upstairs to the Voodoo Lounge. The management at Voodoo showed themselves to be equal to that of Tequila Joe's, letting us past the line and into the VIP entrance—though they had some 'splainin' to do with the legitimate public, some members of which couldn't quite understand why a bunch of people in shorts and torn T-shirts got in ahead of them.

A bottle of Grey Goose and some sort of undetermined type of shot later, I found myself gazing at the undersides of go-go dancers performing on the club's new staircase. Then my wife punched my shoulder and I shifted my gaze to the one of the world's most fantastic cityscapes, with its ocean of neon and tides of headlights. And for that one moment, I felt what most tourists must: exhausted awe.

[Back to homepage](#)

[About Us](#)

[Advertise](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Employment](#)

www.lasvegasweekly.com

LAS VEGAS WEEKLY : ARTS // ENTERTAINMENT // CULTURE + EVERYTHING THAT MATTERS

All contents © 1998 - 2006 Radiant City Publications, LLC

Questions or problems? [Click here](#). Privacy questions? [Click here](#).