

A look at some entertainment options in Las Vegas

Broadway Beat

ALEXANDRA COHEN



LAS VEGAS – There is lots to do in the City of Las Vegas, Nevada (<https://www.visitlasvegas.com/ca>). We had less than a week on the ground, so a follow up trip very soon to complete our list is definitely needed soon.

We were thrilled to see Jabbawockeez (www.jbwkz.com) for the first time after their energizing 70-minute show. The Jabbawockeez first caught the nation's eye when they competed on "America's Got Talent" in 2006, before ultimately winning the grand prize on the first season of the MTV reality show "America's Best Dance Crew," produced by Randy Jackson.

Their live show at the recently renovated Jabbawockeez Theater at the MGM Grand Hotel & Casino (www.mgmgrand.com) on the Vegas Strip is absolutely fantastic. Entitled JREAMZ, it takes audiences on a journey of mesmerizing sights and sounds, entertaining everyone with a dynamic mix of choreography, music, videos, characterization, and special effects. The imaginative production finds a way to seamlessly combine dance, drama, and a surprisingly effective amount of comedy. Donning expressionless white masks and white gloves, Jabbawockeez somehow manage to achieve the perfect balance between blending together as a unified group when necessary and also giving each member a unique character to play. They do not simply use the stage, but navigate through the audience, integrating us into their show and in fact taking selecting several volunteers to take part in their comedic routines.

Jabbawockeez perform Thursday through Monday at both 7 pm and 9:30 pm. **Tickets** are available for purchase at any MGM Resorts box office, by phone at (702) 531-3826 or (866) 740-7711 and online at mgmgrand.com or ticketmaster.com.

Michael Jackson ONE

When in Vegas, experiencing at least one Cirque de Soleil production is a must. As proud Montrealers, we did just that and chose the Cirque's incredible *Michael Jackson ONE* (<http://www.cirquedusoleil.com/en/shows/michael-jackson-one/show/about.aspx>), an awe-inspiring show that fuses acrobatics, dance, storytelling, and visuals, taking the audience on an immersive journey through the music and spirit of Michael Jackson. Shows take place at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino from Fridays to Tuesdays at both 7 pm and 9:30 pm, while Wednesdays and Thursdays are dark days.



The Bellagio Art Gallery.

Driven by the late King of Pop's powerful, multi-layered music – heard like never before in a riveting, state-of-the-art surround-sound environment – *ONE* takes the audience through a series of seamless visual and musical tableaux.

The talented cast of 63 dancers and performers quickly reel you in, taking over the stage and at times even the audience with their infectious energy and brilliant tricks.

This show captures the essence, soul and inspiration of the King of Pop, celebrating a legacy that continues to transcend generations. You will surely be captivated by the aerial acrobatics and special effects during this unforgettable performance, while trying not to sing along to Jackson's most popular songs, from "Smooth Criminal" to "Thriller" (a particular highlight).

ONE somehow manages to get better with every routine. Each time you think that there cannot possibly another trick left to perform, someone will fly through the sky or trampoline upside down and once again, you will find yourself amazed.

While the hits in *Michael Jackson ONE* have been rearranged to suit the show, they remain very close to the album versions and are treated in a highly cinematic fashion. Kevin Antunes, who was also the Musical Designer on *Michael Jackson THE IMMORTAL World Tour*, took the multi-track master recordings and manages to make audience members feel the music is surrounding them, a beautiful musical assault coming from all directions. In fact, each of the theatre's 1,804 seats has three speakers, leaving the room with a total of 5,412 seat speakers!

In *Michael Jackson ONE*, the video content is also an integral part of the storyline, featuring key aspects of Jackson's career, including some images from his younger days as a member of Jackson 5. The theatre is equipped with 26 projectors, which display video content on the stage and around the proscenium. Not only that, but there are also 11 TV monitors and a 40 feet-wide, 30 feet-high LED wall.

This show, in its technical and energized glory, truly is not something that you want to miss.

For ticket information call 877-632-7400 or 800-745-3000. Go to www.cirquedusoleil.com/mjone or www.mandalaybay.com.

Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art

The beautiful Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art (BGFA) is committed to presenting intimate exhibitions featuring works by some of the world's most compelling artists. Since opening in 1998, the gallery has presented exhibitions of artworks and objects drawn from internationally acclaimed museums and private collections. I was excited to learn that through April 28, the BGFA is presenting two installations by renowned artist Yayoi Kusama, *Infinity Mirrored Room – Aftermath of Obliteration of Eternity* and *Narcissus Garden*. An immersive experience for visitors, **Yayoi Kusama** offers a unique wonderland of lights and reflections where guests become part of the artworks and can experience Kusama's exploration of infinite space. I was particularly looking forward to experiencing the second



Jabbawockeez takes audiences on a journey of mesmerizing sights and sounds.



A scene from Michael Jackson ONE.

exhibition — *Aftermath of Obliteration of Eternity* is a room of infinite, shimmering lights.

Topnotch Escape Room

Last year in Montreal, I experienced my first-ever escape room. Having really enjoyed the experience, I looked forward to trying one in Las Vegas, so we visited Trapped: A Real Life Room Escape Adventure. This location was launched in 2015 and is centrally located at 4760 Polaris Avenue, a quick drive from the Strip.

For those who have never experienced an escape game of this nature, it involves a group of people being placed in a room where they must use all elements present to solve a series of puzzles, find clues, and complete the objective within a set time limit. It is a great bonding activity, as it requires a lot of teamwork in order to succeed. The recommended minimum age to participate is 12 years old. All rooms cost \$35 per person for regularly scheduled times.

There are currently two rooms, with a third one on its way, at this location. We chose The Lair of the Puzzlemaster. What is the scenario? You are your teammates are federal agents tracking an international criminal known as "The Puzzlemaster." You have found his hidden lair and are moving in to take him down, but you have to also avoid falling into his many traps. This game is good for anywhere from three to eight participants. It is very well constructed—my favorite escape room experience thus far. Info: www.trappedescaperoomvegas.com.