

Encore Boston Harbor: 5 things you need to know about the Everett casino

Written by Administrator
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Encore Boston Harbor is finally opening its doors Sunday morning — and they're not closing.

Looming over industrial Mystic River waterfront in Everett, the lavish resort casino begins full-tilt operations — 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year — at 10 a.m. Encore officials expect it to draw 23,000 visitors on an average day and around 50,000 a day during peak weekends.

Offering literally thousands of slot machines, games, and poker tables, the \$2.6 billion project is the second full-scale resort casino in Massachusetts, following the MGM resort in Springfield. The 33-acre property also includes a hotel (perhaps you've noticed the massive copper-colored structure from I-93), a vibrant array of dining and nightlife options, boutique shops, conference rooms, a spa, a riverside park, and even an 11,000-jewel-embedded carousel.

Doug Williams, the head of table games for Encore Boston Harbor, says it's the first "true Vegas casino" in the Northeast.

"I'm not saying the other casinos aren't nice, but if you come here you will see the Wynn attention to details and the brighter lights and the chandeliers and the flowers and the carousel — everything that is known for the brand that you wouldn't get at the other properties," Williams said in an interview.

Anyway, there's a lot.

Here are the five essentials to know if you're interested in visiting (or just want to plan around the traffic):

1. What does the actual casino have?

Encore has a lot of attractions, but at its core it is, after all, a casino.

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The gaming floor includes precisely 3,158 slot machines — from the classic mechanical reel games to digital video machines. Williams says they virtually have “every new slot machine known to man,” which take up the majority of the first floor below 40-foot-high ceilings and range from penny slots to \$500 minimums.

According to Encore’s website, the offerings include popular themed machines, including Monopoly, “Wheel of Fortune,” and “[Game of Thrones](#) .”

There are then of course the table games: 143 in total ranging from blackjack to craps to baccarat to roulette to war (yes, [war](#)). The first floor will have stadium gaming with terminals and \$5 minimums for novice gamblers, as well as dealers willing to teach newcomers. Each table also includes phone chargers and complimentary drink service.

Williams says most first-floor tables will have at least \$25 minimums during Encore’s first few weeks, due to the expected opening wave of guests. Tables on the second floor — which are more spread out and surrounded by big screen TVs — will usually have minimums starting around \$100 and ranging up to \$500. The poker room is also located on the second floor, equipped with 88 tables (including 11 high-limit tables) and buy-ins from \$100 to \$1,500, Williams said.

Finally, there are six private gambling rooms for the so-called high rollers, which Williams says require an average \$1,000 minimum. According to Encore’s website, four of the rooms overlook the main casino floor. All of them are staffed by the “the most experienced dealers from around the U.S.” and a team of butlers.

Williams notes that, due to Massachusetts state law, guests cannot take out credit card cash advances at the casino and tables will not accept checks. That means visitors should bring cash. Or they can take out money from Encore’s on-site ATMs.

And while state lawmakers, [including Gov. Charlier Baker](#) , are looking at [legalizing sports gambling in Massachusetts](#) in the wake of [last year’s Supreme Court decision](#) , they haven’t yet advanced any such legislation. Encore is

[reportedly saving space on their property](#)

for sports betting. But for now, fans will have to

[head to Rhode Island](#)

if they want to make money on New England's sporting success.

2. What if I'm not a gambler?

Encore will have [plenty of non-gambling entertainment options](#) as well.

The casino's flagship nightclub, Memoire, will [open next week](#) with shows from Steve Aoki and DJ Diesel (the NBA legend better known by his real name, Shaquille O'Neal) and is open to general audiences. Encore has also signed

[a partnership to host boxing matches](#)

beginning next month.

Additionally, the resort features a six-acre waterfront park — also open 24/7 — that is linked to surrounding riverside paths; a hair salon with manicure, pedicure, and makeup services; a barbershop; and a collection of upscale clothing and beauty stores.

3. What do the food and drink options look like?

Encore's opening could draw food enthusiasts as much as gambling enthusiasts.

The casino resort will feature [a total of 15 dining options](#) — spanning from sports and cocktail bars to classic steakhouse and Italian fare to a marble-floored Dunkin' on the casino floor. There'll be several Asian and seafood restaurants, the latter of which will be helmed by the former chef of Neptune Oyster. And, of course, no Vegas-style casino would be complete without a decadent buffet.

Boston-based Bully Boy Distillers and Woburn-based brewery Lord Hobo have also crafted Encore-exclusive gin and beer for the casino. Speaking of which, Encore [recently won approval](#) to serve alcohol to "active gamblers" until 4 a.m. — two hours later than the statewide closing time of 2 a.m. (MGM Springfield has a similar 4 a.m. extension). Alcohol service will also start back up at 8 a.m. six days a week and at 10 a.m. on Sundays.

4. What's the best way to get there?

In preparation for its opening, Encore and Everett officials are urging guests to take public transportation options — and not drive — to the casino. Did we mention they're expecting up to 50,000 people to visit on their busiest days?

"If you want to have a nice day on Sunday, don't drive," Everett Mayor Carlo DeMaria said [during a press briefing this week](#)

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After all, there are plenty of alternatives. The casino will have free shuttles from the MBTA Orange Line's Wellington and Malden Center stations, Bluebikes docks, \$7 ferries from Boston's Seaport and Long Wharf, and \$7 buses from park-and-rides in Millbury, Rockland, and Londonderry, New Hampshire.

For those who must drive, the casino does have a parking garage priced at \$22 for six hours, and \$42 for 24 hours, as well as a 700-space lot across the street. Officials also noted that there is no street parking in Everett — so don't try it.

Some advice Williams had for those parking at the casino: Take a photo of the garage elevator and floor you park on.

"They're all colored, so when you do leave the casino, if you don't know where you are in the building and you show it to one of our workers, we can show you exactly where you parked," he said, adding that the tip comes "from experience."

5. Where do I stay?

As expansive as the casino's amenities are, the most visible part of Encore — the 27-floor curved tower on the Everett skyline — is [its hotel](#) .

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It includes 671 guest rooms and suites ranging from 650 to 5,800 square feet. The standard 650-square-foot rooms are roughly three times the size of the average New England hotel room. The rooms feature custom furniture, a 55-inch 4K high-definition TV, exclusively designed beds outfitted with 507-thread-count linens, high-speed Wi-Fi, and espresso makers. There's also a TV in the bathroom.

But unlike the drinks, casino-goers do have to pay for their rooms. And the going rate for a standard room is currently about \$1 per square foot for a night. Yes, \$650. But as Encore Boston Harbor president Bob DeSalvio says, "there's nothing standard about them."

Read more <https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2019/06/21/encore-casino-boston>