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ENTERTAINMENT

Shows recall Vegas of old

Remember the old Vegas? Some still miss it, even if they are not the people in line for the Encore Beach Club. But the summer show scene is taking a look at the Strip through a rear-view mirror.

Old Vegas by design: Friday saw the soft opening of "Vegas! The Show" in the Miracle Mile Shops at Planet Hollywood Resort.

"I don't want to be so anti-Cirque (du Soleil), but I can't help it. For me, growing up here, that's not Vegas to me," says David Saxe, who is overseeing the theatrical look at the "best of" the city's entertainment history over the years.

Looking around to see what kind of shows were missing, he realized "Vegas! Vegas isn't in Vegas. For me, it was a no-brainer."

Old Vegas by association: Singing impressionist Greg London had only done private corporate shows in Las Vegas until he opened "Icons" at the Riviera last week.

In fact, when he took his act to London (the city) in 2007, he hired David Taylor, a theater director with a long resume, to make the show a little more respectably West End. But the British Theatre Guide mistook London for one of our regulars and said his show had "a glitzy Vegas tone."

"I don't have a fascination with the old Vegas. I like the big productions," London says. "I'm more of a rock 'n' roll guy. I love the rock of our age. That's the soundtrack of my life," says the man who pays tribute to Rod Stewart, Ozzy Osbourne and other '70s stalwarts.

But he does cover the Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. bits all impressionists are required by law to do. "I guess I am an old-style entertainer because I do care about every face in the audience."

Old Vegas by attitude: Brad Garrett is a poker guy as well as an actor-comedian made flush by "Everybody Loves Raymond" residuals. Poker people do more than most entertainers to keep the old Vegas attitude alive.

"It's a town I've always loved. I've always been fascinated," Garrett says to explain his new comedy club at the Tropicana opening. "I want to go back to when the lounges used to be the place, when Sinatra would go watch Rickles in the lounge."

Old Vegas by DNA: People who stay up too late or watch too much TV know and love Tony Sacca as the unsinkable host of "Entertainment Las Vegas Style."

Now he's running the Las Vegas Rocks Cafe, where the menu includes "Craps Suzette," a "Dean Martini" and "Louis Primavera Pasta."

Last week, Sacca started his own "Vegas the Show" as a lunch thing at his place. He's mad at Saxe for using almost the same title and says he had it first.

They can argue about that, but no one can dispute Sacca couldn't be "new Vegas" if he tried.