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Check out these check-in apps to enhance your Vegas experience



Posted by [Jorge Labrador](#) on Feb 22nd, 2011



The Foursquare experience integrates quite a bit into the Miracle Mile Shops

Check-in apps are a recent craze in the mobile phone scene, and there's a lot more to them than just announcing where you are to the world. You can use apps like Foursquare, Gowalla and Facebook to add an entire new dimension to your trip to Vegas.

There are usually two things people get out of these apps: they can supplement their travel experience with advice and ideas, or they can find deals nearby. All you have to do is download the app that strikes your fancy to your phone (using the app store/market for your particular phone) and sign up. It's as easy as that.

Where to go and what to do

Foursquare and Gowalla are pretty useful for finding things to do in Vegas. These features are made even better if you have friends who also use them, but you can also use the input of other people.

Foursquare offers to-dos, which are suggestions by other people that you can save and add to your own personal to-do list or just encounter as you explore the city.

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Some of the best Foursquare to-dos I've seen: to tweet at the Miracle Mile Shops and see it on the entrance big screen, to take advantage of the several great photo opportunities near Crystals and Mandarin Oriental and to "Check out the Men's room. It's pretty funny" at the Las Vegas Hilton (they're talking about the one just past the Shimmer Cabaret – if you haven't seen what he's talking about, you really should!)

Gowalla's equivalent of to-dos is "Highlights," which lets users pick certain places as their favorite burger joint, music venue, great photo spot, where they've had a celebrity sighting or others. You can pull up this info when you check into a certain place, much like Foursquare's to-dos, and you can add your own. Some of the categories are pretty eclectic, with names like: "Sketchy," "Mmm, Tacos!," "LOL," "FTW" and "WTF." There are plenty of places that come to mind in Vegas that fit at least some of these descriptions!

You can add notes for your friends who also use Gowalla, which will pop up when they check in to a certain place. This feature is great for surprising a friend with a suggestion (or perhaps a warning?) at a place you've already been to. I've got one waiting for me at Benihana and I'm dying to see what it says.

There are also Gowalla trips, which can be a pretty cleverly used feature. Think of it as a guided tour on your cell phone: we've seen everything from pub crawls to historical tours to movie-themed journeys using this feature.

There are quite a few Vegas trips on Gowalla that are worth checking out. We've even got a few trips of our own: family-friendly destinations, places with historic mob ties, restaurants with extraordinarily large dishes and a few others. Be our Gowalla friend and check them out! – <http://gowalla.com/users/vegascom/trips>

Strike a bargain

Both Foursquare and Facebook Places make a big deal out of their... well, deals. For both of these, all you have to do is check in to a place and follow the instructions on the screen to redeem your offer.

With Foursquare, checking in to a location can open up a special offer. Furthermore, being the "mayor" of a place — in other words, you've checked in the most times in the past 90 days, might unlock an even better deal.

As of the present, Foursquare deals near the Strip include Wynn and Encore offering \$10 off Sinatra Dance With Me, Ghostbar, Moon, Playboy Club and Rain at The Palms offering VIP passes for their mayor, Imperial Palace serving up a 2-for-1 burger offer and Harrah's will give you a free appetizer at Toby Keith's I Love This Bar & Grill. The Miracle Mile shops in Planet Hollywood offers various deals and has had offers for the mayor in the past.

These are ever-changing, so it's worth seeing what's around when you visit, and remember: you can see what deals are nearby simply by opening up Foursquare on your phone and pulling up the list of nearby locations. Deals are marked by a golden box that reads "SPECIAL."

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If you've used Facebook Places, you've probably already seen the abundance of deals at chains like Starbucks and Subway. On the Strip, these are joined by offers like buy one, get one free buffet deals at Caesars Palace, Planet Hollywood, Flamingo and Harrah's, free Voodoo Lounge admission at the Rio, free upgrade or extra night at Palms. Like Foursquare, you just have to pull up the nearby locations list to see what deals are in the area: on your Facebook app, they're usually marked by a yellow coupon icon.

Have you run into a particularly good deal or suggestion with these or similar apps?