



Guest Correspondent ALMcB, Los Angeles CA: Since our retirement started a decade ago, we've been to casinos in Vegas, Reno, Monte Carlo, Hong Kong and other gambling joints throughout the world. We love the flashing lights, buffets, cheap rooms, big-show entertainment and other glitz.

Of course, all is designed to entice people to bet and lose their bank accounts and, for elderly gamblers, their children's inheritances. We're not heavy gamblers, and usually confine our bets to the 25¢ video poker machines.

We recently had an exciting experience at Morongo, located at the foot of the impressive San Gorgonio and San Jacinto Mountains, just 90 miles east of Los Angeles. As our car approached Morongo, the view was that someone had taken a Las Vegas hotel and plunked it down in the middle of the desert. The imposing 25-story building can be seen from the nearest city, Palm Springs, 20 miles away. When we entered our room on the 18th floor, we could look out the big picture window to snow-capped San Jacinto and see tiny figures on the ski slopes. However, it was 80 degrees outside the hotel on the desert level.

Throughout our three-day stay, we enjoyed the many restaurants, especially the Vegas-style buffet. The food stations included choices from Italy, Southern U.S., Mexico, Japan and my favorite, Chinese.

At that station, there were dozens of choices of raw vegetables, meats and seafood. Diners fill up plates with favorites, and chefs cook the ingredients to order and serve them sizzling hot.

The Morongo also features a posh rooftop restaurant, large meeting facilities and a health spa. There's transportation for guests to Palm Spring's golf courses and the area's many outlet stores.

Our most joyful moment was unexpected. Just an hour before we were to leave, we checked our status at the Winner's Club. We thought we may have accumulated enough points to have \$20 to \$30 discounted from our hotel bill.

Instead, we were winners of a special promotion. Together, my spouse and I had won a total of \$3,000. However, we couldn't take it as cash and go home. We had to play the money at the machines or tables, and only then keep whatever we won.

We had a great time playing those unexpected credits on video poker machines. After two hours of fun play, we actually took home more than \$2,800. www.morongocasinoresort.com