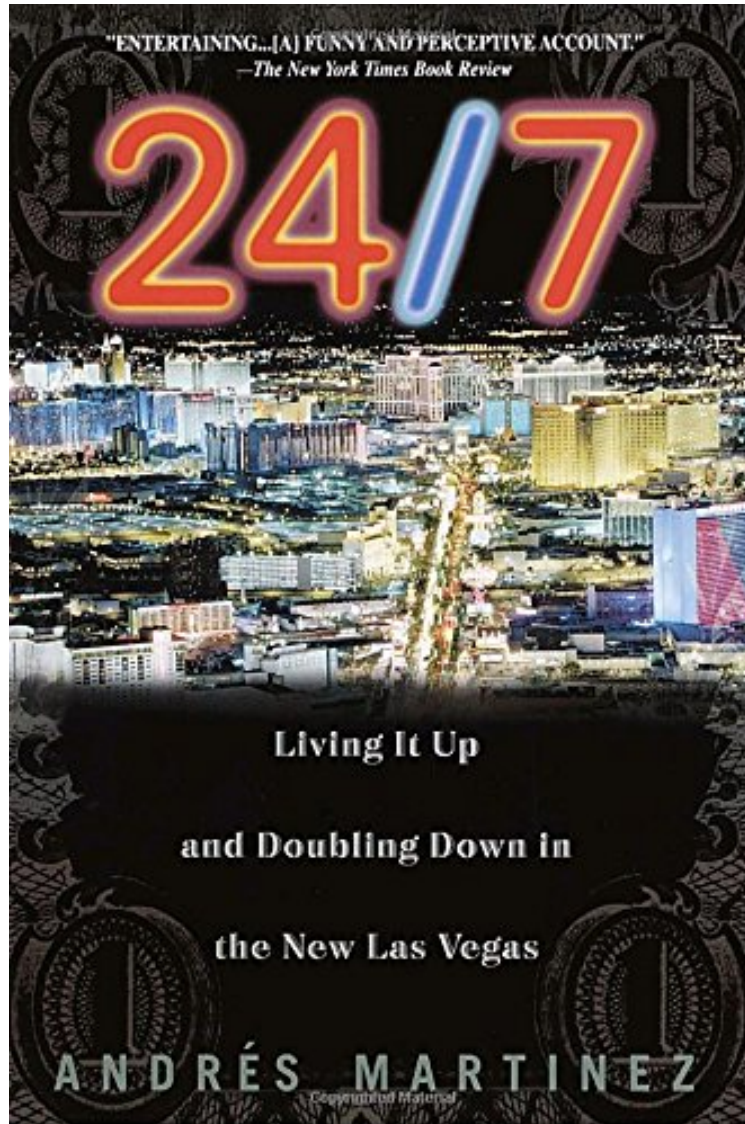


(Get free) 24/7: Living It Up and Doubling Down

## 24/7: Living It Up and Doubling Down

Andres Martinez

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**Andres Martinez : 24/7: Living It Up and Doubling Down** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised 24/7: Living It Up and Doubling Down:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Entertaining premiseBy Sean ClarkA very interesting concept wherein a writer secures a \$50,000 dollar advance to gamble all over Las Vegas playing a fairly high roller role for a single month. Well written with interesting sidebars or interviews with various types of vegas residents. I think a lot of us could fantasize about doing exactly what this writer was actually able to pull off. I do recommend the book and enjoyed the writing style.2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Compelling ReadingBy Gregg HollmannI

have been reading the Wall Street Journal for years, and while it is chocked full of information, the writing tends to be bone dry. It's amazing how Martinez, a former staff writer for the Wall Street Journal writer, is able to combine facts with fun, and paint a compelling and factual view of the "New Las Vegas". The action moves seamlessly from resort to resort, and from game to game. Two memorable quotes: Martinez, speaking to a dealer early in his trip: "'How fascinating this work must be,' I said to the dealer, wearing my most earnest smile, 'to have a front seat at fortune's amphitheater, to see human nature in its rawest form, stripped of all pretense, to witness the ultimate agony and the ecstasy.'" Martinez, commenting on the gritty downtown Las Vegas: "Downtown is a subsistence economy, where uniformed cocktail waitresses play video poker over at Binion's Horseshoe while on break, pawnshops hover vulturelike down every dim-lit street, and prostitutes come cheap. You cannot spend an hour walking through downtown without coming away with a sense that gambling is a cannibalizing endeavor that will wear down and corrode those who persist at it. There are no swashbuckling pirates or pyramids to disguise that fact." The organization of chapters into different resorts keeps the action fresh, as does Martinez's \$50,000 gambling binge. Overall, I found the Martinez approach more interesting than Pete Earley's Super Casino. Both were educational, but Martinez's was more fun. 24/7 is an excellent read for those who are Vegas-bound. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An enjoyable book, but ironically, it doesn't take chances. By Eugene 24/7 is a great book to read as an introduction to the city of Las Vegas (not just the gambling life), and is an entertaining jaunt through Sin City by a novice gambler. Martinez is an engaging writer, one who is informative and humorously entertaining at the same time. My only problem with this book is that for a book on Las Vegas, there really didn't seem to be too many chances taken by the author. What gripped me about the book was the excerpt in the back describing how the author had just lost over \$20,000, and fretting at how he was going to tell his wife and his publisher. In the end, that was the most gripping tale in the book as far as gambling went. Martinez ultimately left Vegas only down about 10% from what he brought with him. It seemed like an unsatisfying trip, one where he never really got off the pot, so to speak. Ultimately, the closing sequence where much of his losses occur seem almost to be a frantic attempt to lose his nest egg to at least close out his book with a flourish. It feels rushed and forced and didn't really do the trick. However, gambling aside, the book is still entertaining and informative. Much is shared about the people living in Vegas, the history of the town, and the development of the casino culture. Those are the true strengths of the book.

In the spring of 1998, mild-mannered, Ivy League-educated Andrs Martinez took \$50,000--most of the advance his publisher was paying for this book--and headed to Las Vegas for thirty days, ten casinos, and a wild ride through the belly of a neon beast. The result: this brilliant, often hilarious chronicle of flesh, flash, and gambling in a city where everyone dreams of hitting the jackpot--and once in a while, someone actually does. From seedy strip clubs to sprawling suburbs, from the sumptuous Bellagio to the Liberace Museum, Martinez meets a host of colorful characters...gathering tricks of the trade from blackjack dealers and fellow bleary-eyed gamblers, attending Easter Sunday mass on the Strip, befriending a family man who raised six kids while losing eight million dollars as a sports gambler. An exhilarating joyride of a read, 24/7 is a breathless tour of America's Sin City...as seen through the eyes of a man making \$1.65 million in wagers in a single month. Guess how much he took home?

.com Perhaps the most fun of a bushel of books about the "new" Las Vegas, 24/7 is as surreal and addictive as a hot game of blackjack at 4 a.m. In this first-person chronicle of a month in Las Vegas, Andrs Martinez whirls through casinos and hotels with his \$50,000 book advance, taking notes on characters, nightclubs, and hotel lobbies between wild betting sprees at the blackjack table or roulette wheel. Part of what makes 24/7 enjoyable is the fact that Martinez is no down-and-out gambler, but a former lawyer with an Ivy League pedigree whose main vice seems to be an addiction to Diet Coke. He takes to his exploits with the intoxication of someone released from dull routine, without ever falling down on the job. As a result, he's never too delirious to note the weirdest details of this desert mirage. It's a city "where buildings themselves perform," lined with such features as a Jules Verne theme park, erupting volcanoes, and battling pirate ships. Early on, the author gets philosophical: "What type of city did we build in the middle of a desert, a metropolis with no reason, beyond our willpower and playful imagination, to exist?" Anyone who's ever asked themselves the same question will satisfy their curiosity with this entertaining, firsthand view of the fastest-growing city in America. --Maria Dolan From Publishers Weekly Here's the concept: ex-lawyer and ex-Wall Street Journal reporter Martinez visits some 10 casino hotels in five frantic weeks, jeopardizing \$50,000. Most of his book advance at blackjack, baccarat, roulette and the slots. His overstuffed journal sandwiches brief glimpses of the changing city. Via such characters as a local historian and a minister/bathroom attendant at a topless bar. Within a lengthy blow-by-blow account of his time at the tables. Some engaging passages do capture local lunacy. A Martinez's betting pace quickly gets him comped, and he shepherds a Gamblers Anonymous member cashing her paycheck at a casino so that she will leave the premises without gambling her money away. And Martinez displays a sly wit, observing, for example, that future archeologists will conclude that "Las Vegas was an important religious center." However, though he ends each section with a report on his ever-fluctuating "nest egg," and inserting reflections on Dostoyevski's *The Gambler*, Martinez doesn't elevate his notebook into narrative. He recounts the antic thrill of

dropping \$450 in new winnings on a gift for his wife, but never reveals enough to convey what risking his stake means to him. Indeed, though the author, returning to Vegas after his initial stint, ends up losing big, he concludes his book with a happy shrug, having "felt the exhilaration of truly letting go." His whimsicality makes one wonder about the source of his immunity toward ill fortune. (Nov.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus sLas Vegas, the fastest-growing city in the US, as seen by a skeptical and often funny journalist. Martinez, a native of Mexico who has worked as a lawyer and Wall Street Journal reporter, operates from a goofy plot angle that would chill most freelance writers: He committed the whole of his \$50,000 advance for this book to research that is, to gambling. His sensible wife protests at the outset, Why dont you just write your book about Vegas, but keep the advance? However, Martinez, evidently working from the George Plimpton journalist-as-participant school, presses on, and each chapter closes with a tally of his occasional wins yet usual losses until, four weeks later, his advance has been whittled down to \$5,120. Martinez, obviously, could have kept the money and written a whiz-bang book; hes a sharp and witty observer of the passing scene, he has done his homework, and he has a delicious sense of irony, all of which serve his narrative well. Still, the hundreds of hours he logged before the green felt of the gambling tables give him an unusual peg on which to hang his story, which is one of dislocation and weirdness, populated by losers, con artists, and, even more, ordinary folks just looking to get a break. Although they never do, of course, they keep trying in the face of staggering odds. So does Martinez, who finally closes with an admission of defeat after having entertained the delusion he might just make it out with his grubstake intact: The war was over. Any chance of amassing unspeakable riches off this clever boondoggle was now foreclosed, and the finality of that realization was overwhelming. Call it pop sociology, gonzo journalism, or social criticism: Its all good fun. -- Copyright 1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.