

AC: More Than Meets The Eye



By Missy Hatfield

When people think of Atlantic City, a myriad of things come to mind. But then again, that all depends on the person. Some come to AC to gamble in one of its thrilling casinos. Others come to enjoy its beautiful, **FREE** beaches. However, there's a lot more to Atlantic City than poker rooms and waves. There are modern, trendy hotels, delectable dining and attractions for days. Let's take a look at a few.

First of all, a great hotel is a must. It's nice to be close to the Boardwalk,

but maybe not right on it. And in case you're not an avid gambler, the noise and distractions may take away from your relaxing experience. But don't worry. I have a wonderful recommendation!



The Courtyard Atlantic City is a peaceful retreat from the hustle and bustle of the Boardwalk, yet only a block away from its entertainment, dining and casino action. It is rare that one can find convenience, location and a quiet refuge from the day's activities all in one place, but this property somehow manages to merge all of these aspects seamlessly.

When stepping into the lobby, guests are met with sweeping ceilings, a modern, slick bar and comfortable seating that encourages visitors to stop in for a drink before heading up to the room. The Courtyard Bistro is also

available for delicious, American-style meals, and boasting the convenience of Grab-n-Go Breakfast options.

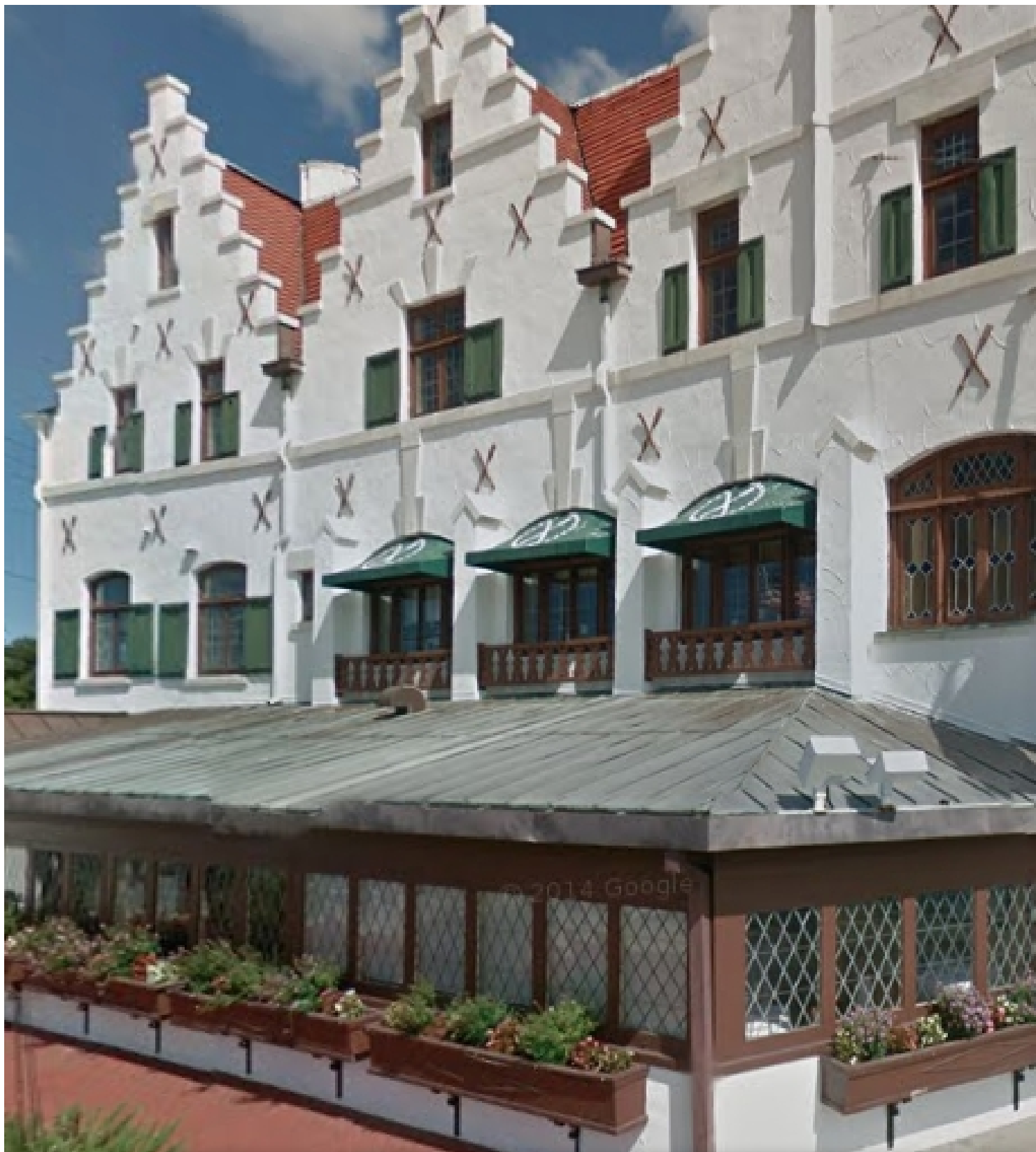
Contemporary, vibrant rooms offer flat-screen TVs and complimentary Wi-Fi, plus desks for travelers who may need to squeeze in a little work between the Steel Pier and the poker room. These inviting spaces also have sitting areas and minifridges, creating an atmosphere that feels quite like home, but just a little bit better.

When it comes to amenities, the Courtyard Atlantic City truly excels, providing just what a guest will need to enjoy a night, a weekend or a full-week's stay. Guests may expect a business center, a fitness room and meeting space.

When you are spending time in Atlantic City or its surrounding areas or beaches, the Courtyard offers the perfect place for your "home base". Whether traveling for business or a family getaway, this property is a splendid example of the hospitality that AC has to offer!

For more information, please visit the Courtyard Atlantic City [online](#) or call (609) 345-7070.

Now, when hunger calls, sure, you can take a walk down the Boardwalk and have any number of tasty treats. And definitely do that, once or twice. However, AC has a plethora of phenomenal dining establishments.



If you even drive through Atlantic City and don't stop for a meal at the Knife and Fork Inn, then you have made a horrible mistake. I don't throw things around like this lightly, but if pressed, I would have to say that this is

one of my favorite restaurants... anywhere.

The building rises grandly at the crossroads of Atlantic, Pacific, and Albany Avenues, and it is safe to say that it has a story to tell. Wouldn't it have been wonderful to have been a fly on the wall during Prohibition? Plus, if you're a *Boardwalk Empire* fan, you may have grand ideas of Nucky Johnson having a drink inside. However, while these are all facets that make this establishment exciting, it's the food that will thrill you. The unique setting of the Knife and Fork Inn pairs perfectly with some of the best food that I have tasted... ever.

The salads and appetizers are generous, with choices like the Shrimp Cobb Salad and delicious Grilled Tuna Skewers. But there is no skipping the main course at the Knife and Fork Inn. With cuts like Filet Mignon and Sirloin to choose from, the crowning glory is the Dry-Aged Bone In Cowboy. The enormous side dishes must not be left out, because you must somehow find room for the Onion Rings.

For more information, visit them [online](#) , or call (609)344-1133.



Now, if you are just dying for fresh seafood, then why not dine surrounded by history? Dock's Oyster House has been delivering seafood and steaks to the locals and visitors alike in Atlantic City since 1897. The service alone should make this place legendary, but something tells me that people keep coming back for the food.

This is the ideal place to have oysters from the raw bar, as well as several shrimp selections, clams and lobster. The appetizers range from a creamy Maine Clam Chowder to an absolutely delicious Calamari, battered lightly and fried to perfection.

However, you are probably here for the seafood, and you have definitely come to the right place. Dock's Seafood Fry is an excellent choice, including a selection of shrimp, flounder, a crab cake and french fries. Also consider indulging in the Seared Sea Scallops or the Crab Meat Au Gratin. When in Atlantic City, have a meal at Dock's Oyster House. You deserve it! For more information, please visit [online](#) , or call (609) 345-0092.



How would it sound to dine just off the Boardwalk, with gorgeous views of the Atlantic Ocean? Then head over to Harry's Oyster Bar, right inside Bally's Casino, for delicious food in a fun, festive environment. The smells that welcome you upon entering the restaurant give a delightful preview of what is in store for your taste buds.

If you'd like to have a casual lunch with festive menu items like giant pretzels, nachos and a wide selection of beers, then this is the ideal place to be. However, if you are here for a beautiful, outdoor dinner, complemented by the smell of sea air and a cool breeze from the ocean, then Harry's can accommodate this, as well.□

Try sandwiches, salads, chowders and a bounty of fresh fish offerings. The Raw Bar offers a plethora of oysters, lobster, clams, shrimp, and other culinary delights to tempt you even further with specialties like Linguine and Clams, Mahi Mahi Soft Tacos and the best Fish and Chips on the shore!

For more information, visit them [online](#) , or call (609) 431-0092.



Now when the sun is high in the sky and a gentle breeze blows in off the bay, it is the perfect time to visit the Historic Gardner's Basin! If you'd like to step away from the bustle on the Boardwalk, this is the ideal location to relax, have a meal, take a dolphin watching cruise, or shop for unique gifts at the Crafters Village. However, most visitors come to see the interesting creatures at the Atlantic City Aquarium!

The Atlantic City Aquarium, added to the Gardner's Basin in 1999, is an exciting, educational attraction that gives visitors a peak into New Jersey's

Coastal Marine Environment and the rest of the Mid-Atlantic region.

Patrons can come face to face with a Moray Eel, see the beautiful Moon Jellies, or watch Groman, the Loggerhead Sea Turtle. You can even touch stingrays, horseshoe crabs, and sharks at the Atlantic City Aquarium!

And the aquarium doesn't just stop with sea life. See a nice array of snakes, lizards, and other land creatures.

For additional information, please visit [online](#) , or call (609) 348-2880.



When you need a break from the casinos and want to see some beautiful scenery, hop aboard Atlantic City Cruises. Whether you'd like to search for dolphins or have a happy hour celebration, these guys have the cruise for you!

The dolphin cruise definitely draws the most attention, as that it is suitable

for all ages, and it is the perfect outing for the entire family. Plus, if dolphins aren't sighted, you receive a free ticket to return any time at your leisure. But trust me, these guys know their stuff, so if dolphins are in the water, they will find them! Not only are they experts at locating these delightful creatures, but they ensure that guests on both sides of the vessel are able to take the perfect photograph.

Not only does Atlantic City offer wonderful public cruises, but you can also charter the boat for your special occasion.

For more information, please visit Atlantic City Cruises [online](#) or call (609) 347-7600.



Now, to visit Atlantic City and not take a stroll on the Steel Pier, would be like visiting Paris and not seeing the Eiffel Tower. Stretching out over the Atlantic Ocean, the World Famous Steel Pier has been thrilling Atlantic City residents and visitors alike since 1898. It is legendary for the Diving Bell and the infamous Diving Horse, and numerous other entertainers and rides that offered an escape from the everyday routine.

While its attractions have progressed to the likes of the SlingShot, the Crazy Mouse, and the Mix, the fact that it continues to draw in crowds along the Boardwalk has not changed. They come to take a chance at a game for a giant stuffed bear, or to eat a plethora of tasty creations that come served on a stick.

They come to experience the classic, unique feel that is Atlantic City's Steel Pier.

For additional information, please visit them [online](#), or call (609) 345-4893.

When you decide to visit Atlantic City on your next vacation or weekend getaway, be sure to take advantage of everything that the city has to offer. Don't eat at a chain restaurant in a casino, but rather explore some of the locally-owned eateries that, in my opinion, should make AC famous. Visit some of the attractions that are unique to the city, and most of all, COME BACK... again and again. For additional information on Atlantic City, check out [Visit AC](#).