

# High arched ceilings spotted with dome security cameras, flashing light

The Urban Setting Thesaurus | 203

## CASINO

### SIGHTS

High arched ceilings spotted with dome security cameras, flashing lights and hundreds of backlit gambling machines, a rolling patterned carpet, players sitting on stools (pressing buttons, drinking, smoking, printing cash-out receipts), mirrored walls that reflect lights and increase the dazzle of the machines, uniformed casino workers, servers and table dealers, blackjack and other card tables, roulette wheels, crap tables, trays of chips and dice, security guards in suits, roped-off high stakes poker tables and gaming areas, giant TV monitor screens for online gambling, scrolling displays announcing jackpots, bank machines, boutique stores (selling high-end jewelry, handbags, cigars, watches and clothing), trendy restaurants and bars, a reinforced glass cash-out counter, half-empty drinks left behind on tables and near machines, flashy posters and glitzy artwork, drunk patrons, prostitutes, poker players wearing sunglasses, tourists taking pictures, luxury prizes on display (spinning cars and custom motor bikes), casino workers handing out coupons for the buffet or shows affiliated with the casino, elevators leading to other hotel levels

### SOUNDS

The swish of automatic doors leading outside, the warble of slot machines rotating electronically, buttons being punched, people muttering or swearing at machines, dinging alarms when someone wins, people laughing and talking, customers placing drink orders as they gamble, cards being electronically shuffled, the click of chips as poker players fidget before bidding, the click of the roulette ball, the dealer calling for bids, chatter feedback from the staff's walkie-talkies, the tumble of dice across felt, the squeak of stools, ice clinking as it melts in drinks, music or live singing filtering in from another room, canned voices from video display dealers, phones ringing, guests cheering as someone wins big

### SMELLS

Cigarette or cigar smoke, old carpet, perfume, cologne, aftershave, sweat, food smells, money, hot machinery, air deodorizer, air conditioning, beer breath

### TASTES

Water, soda, alcoholic beverages, chewing gum, mints, tobacco, flavored smokeless cigarette vapor

### TEXTURES AND SENSATIONS

Thin carpet underfoot, cool air-conditioning, padded stools and chairs, slick cards, plastic chips, felt tabletops, wooden table rims, warm dice, metal slot machine arms, smooth plastic buttons, a trickle of sweat when extending oneself too far on a bet, too-warm clothing, sunglasses sliding down one's nose, the bustle of the crowd, stepping in beer spills, sticky slot machines, a sleeve dragging on felt as one reaches for one's chips, dice rattling in one's palm or in a cup, rubbing sweaty hands on a pant leg, a cold drink against one's lips, blowing on the dice for luck, chips weighing down one's shirt or jacket pocket, tearing a receipt from a slot machine at cash out

### POSSIBLE SOURCES OF CONFLICT

Drunk people who lose at poker and cause a scene  
Guys who paw the wait staff  
Pickpockets  
Spilled drinks  
People drinking too much and needing to be assisted to their rooms  
Feeling sick after eating at the buffet  
A celebrity whose security team gets a little too aggressive  
Gambling a weekend's worth of money in a single evening  
Being ditched by one's friends  
Ladrage teens trying to gamble  
Trying to count cards and not get caught by security  
Gamblers secretly working as a team against the house  
Arguments between addicts and loved ones who want them to see reason  
Unknowingly picking up a prostitute

### PEOPLE COMMONLY FOUND HERE

Bartenders and servers, celebrities, criminals, gambling addicts, hotel and casino staff, patrons, security and police, vacationers

### RELATED SETTINGS THAT MAY TIE IN WITH THIS ONE

Cruise ship (258), racetrack (horses) (228), Vegas stage show (242)

### SETTING NOTES AND TIPS

Casinos that are part of a hotel will be decorated in the same style and level of grandeur. Ceilings may be low or high, and the air quality varies based on the age of the building and how effective their air filtering system is. If a person has visited several casinos, they all start to look and feel the same, but gambling enthusiasts often get a feel for one and believe their luck is tied to that establishment. Large sprawling casinos can make a person feel lost, since they look very similar in every direction, so having a few landmarks (a spinning car on a platform that is the grand prize for a poker game, wax statues of past performers, signs hanging from the ceiling that indicate which direction the lobby or buffet is) will not only help characters navigate, it will help make the experience feel authentic for readers.

### SETTING DESCRIPTION EXAMPLE

I dealt the cards, trying to keep disdain from my face. Every night, losers wearing too much cologne would sit at my table, all puffed up with the belief that their pathetic internet gambling forays had turned them into big league players. By the end of the night they looked like the people the cops scraped off the street for a police lineup . . . stooped shoulders, broody eyes, and thanks to their pride, empty pockets.

**Techniques and Devices Used:** Multisensory descriptions

**Resulting Effects:** Characterization