

Day 2 – Lake Mead and travel to Tahiti [Sunday 23-Jan-2011]

We got up quite early (local time). I started to work on the diary. After a while, I called the front desk and confirmed our check out time: 12 noon. That was good. I had worried we needed to be out by 10AM. We went down to the local buffet place in the Mirage hotel and ate a big breakfast. We also grabbed a few fruits on our way out, for an afternoon snack. After we had packed and gotten ready we started the day's travel. Today we decided to head out to the Lake Mead area and the Hoover Dam. But first, we had to go to a sports store and get a part to our camping kitchen that we forgot. While Lilli went into the store, I talked with Erik about his most recent adventure in college.



Per talking with Erik about his most recent adventure as “That guy”



A view of Lake Mead (man made) just east of Las Vegas. It feeds the Hoover Dam.

Although the fee was normally \$10 to enter into the Lake Mead area, my National Parks pass gave me free admission.



At Lake Mead you can see how low the water level is (about 120 feet below normal)



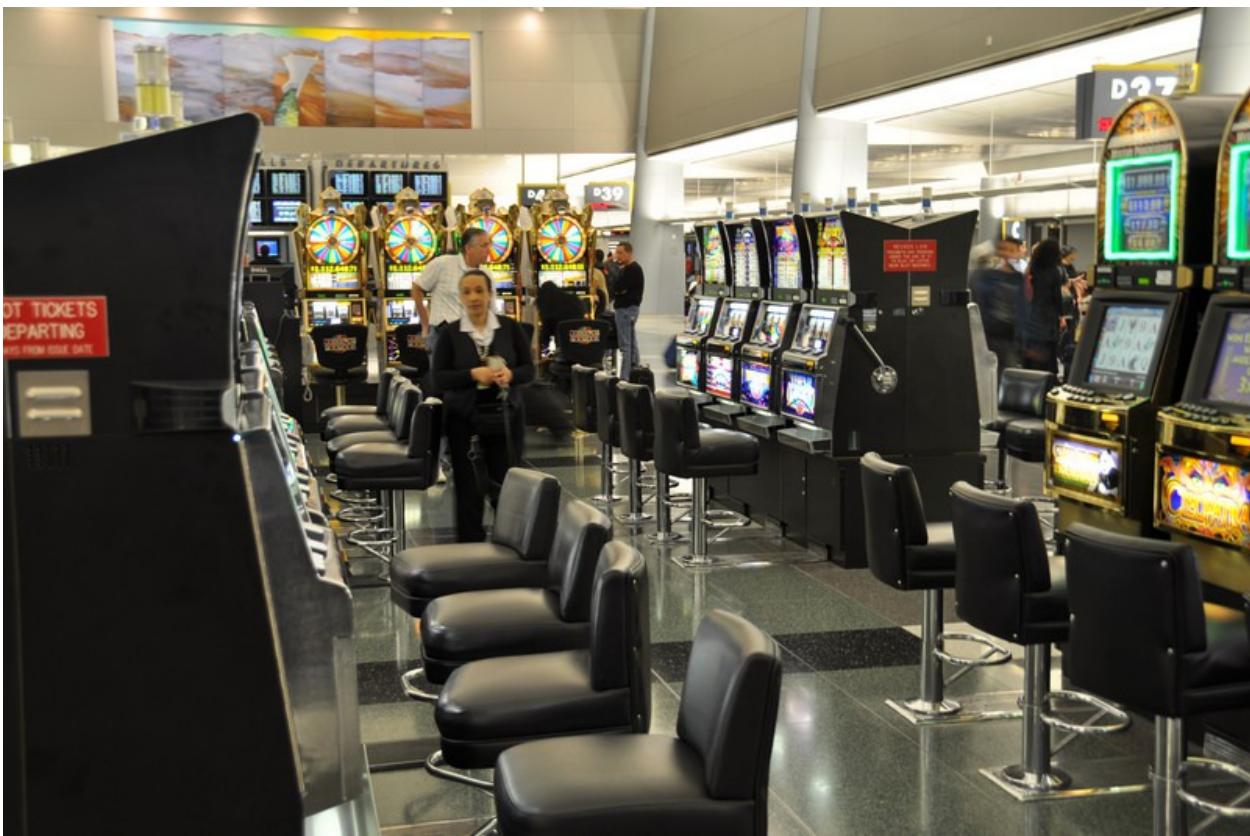
The campground (that used to be at the base of the lake) up on the right

I could not resist but to check out the campground closest to the entrance. This is definitely worth a visit in the future.

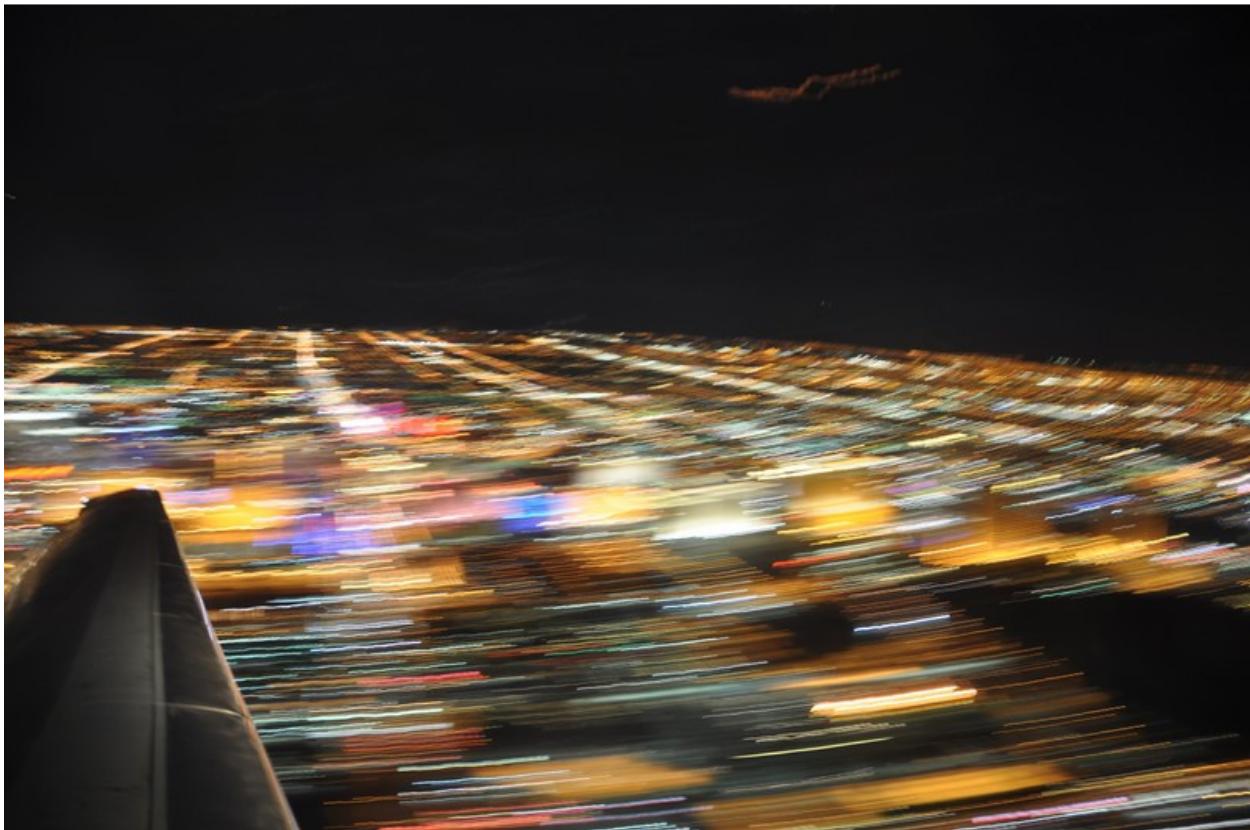


The low water level in also evident at the Hoover Dam

The photo above is taken from the Arizona side of the dam. So, aside from the east cost, we've now visited three states (Nevada, California and Arizona).



One last chance! There are slot machines at the departure gates in the Las Vegas airport.



I took this picture from the plane's window as we were leaving Las Vegas



Once at the International Terminal in Los Angeles you can really feel you're far away



At LAX: Wonderful meet up with an old friend from Digital in France, Martine Tracqui.

Way back in the 1980s, at Digital Equipment's European Technical Center, I used to work with Martine Tracqui. She is from Tahiti but was living in the south of France at the time. I lost contact with her back in 1990. Thanks to Facebook I was able to connect up with her again. She moved to Tahiti in 1990. By a strange sequence of events, she had to leave Tahiti on short notice when we had planned to meet up. But, we were able to meet up at LAX. She drove out to the airport for our quick meet up.

After we had talked over a drink we were a bit late for our gate. So we ran to the gate that was printed on our boarding cards, gate 136, all the way at one end of the airport. When we arrived at the gate, panting, there was no-one there, and a half hour before departure. I asked at a few counters over. They told me that the airline had changed the gate to 102, all the way at the other side of the airport. Oh, man. No time for fuming. But we ran all the way to the extreme opposite of the airport. We made it onto the flight, but I was hacking for a good $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after I sat down.



After a mad dash we're finally on board.

Soon after takeoff, we were served an excellent warm meal that included goat cheese ravioli. What a treat!