

Rama Resort a multi-faceted getaway destination

Mark Pavilons



There's a reason Ontario's only First Nations resort is so successful.

Dedicated to our history, luxurious surroundings and attention to every detail all make Casino Rama Resort a prime destination.

I find the farther away from the GTA I get, the more the stress melts away, and my breathing is less laboured. Heading into Ontario's Lake Country resembles a trip to the cottage, only more spectacular.

My wife Kim and I headed up to the resort for some much-needed R&R recently. Even though it was only an overnight excursion, it felt like a week away with no burdens, no nagging offspring and no mundane chores to worry about.

Rama celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2016 and has never closed a day in its history. It's described as "relaxed luxury," and the dedicated staff of some 2,500 employees make it run like a Swiss watch.

According to Jenna Hunter, who handles PR, Rama's success lies in its amenities, value and above all, customer service.

Since the facility sits on First Nations land, it's brimming with culture and history. It's true Canadiana and it's a partnership that has endured and flourished.

The facility has undergone many changes and upgrades over the years, which have included the hotel, 5,000-seat entertainment complex that attracts some very big acts, the rotunda and large casino floor. If you would rather do your gambling on your mobile device, then a casino phone could be just what you're looking for.

I have played a few online casino games in my time and they have all been highly enjoyable. A friend of mine recently recommended that I take a look at [888 Dragon the Chinese 88 slots](#) next, so I must remember to check out their website once I get some free time to play games.

The casino was redesigned with input from staff and the result is wider aisles and more functionality.

Technological improvements over the years have impacted the venerable slot machines, which if you looked far enough ahead to these days, you can see the influence on Scientific Gaming Slotszone Casino games. Rama boasts some of the newest tech marvels, including video and pop culture-themed machines. Many are fully immersive and engaging.

There are 2,400 slots to choose from, ranging from penny slots to the high-roller room that demand \$100 per pull. I was surprised by the number of 1-cent machines that keep you busy, but won't suck up all your money in a hurry.

It was one of the first casinos with a poker room, which can be reserved in advance for private events and tournaments.

Hunter helped dispel some myths about gambling as well. These slot machines, governed by a special body, come to the casino sealed and tamper-proof. The results are completely random. Payouts from all sources are in the 85% range. Those who enjoy slot machines may enjoy the range of online games like the book of of oz slot.

People are attracted to Rama for many different reasons. Sure, it's a gambling mecca and the impeccably clean casino floor is busy, but not loud. It's a fun atmosphere and there's no shortage of servers or stations to grab a drink or a bite to eat. This makes the experience more of a treat.

The facility draws some big name entertainers, and the walls are lined with autographed photos of some of the greats.

We had the good fortune of catching the opening night of Styx, an iconic rock band of the late '70s and early '80s. The bulk of the group is intact, with the addition of Ontario's own Gowan as keyboardist and singer. I've seen Gowan a couple of times and remember his hits growing up. He is immensely talented with boundless energy. They all performed almost non-stop for just under two hours. Amazing.

Styx has a place in my heart. I recall as a teen getting my first set of wheels and installing a tape deck and "power booster" from Radio Shack. I wore out several of their tapes.

Ticket prices are reasonable and there's literally no bad seat in the place. It's no wonder many of their shows sell out in just a couple of days.

The complex has been host to major sporting events as well, such as boxing, gymnastics MMA, even curling.

The resort is well used, considering it welcomes 8,000 visitors per day, or some 3 million per year. But it's kept spotless by the staff. It's a great alternative to heading into the Big Smoke for dinner and a concert. You're getting great value, and don't have to fight traffic or worry about parking.

We were lucky enough to dine at St. Germain's Steakhouse, named for the First Nations man who got the ball rolling for the Rama resort many years ago. This place is uber-nice, and the prices are surprisingly comparable. To pay \$35 for a perfect rib-eye is right in the ballpark. The jumbo shrimp were the size of my fist and the service was excellent. Everything about this place was first-class.

There are many dining options and all boast good value and good food.

The hotel is deemed an all-suite facility and the rooms are spacious, comfortable and reasonable. Our bathroom was lavish was in comparison to typical hotel rooms.

During a fun-filled, whirlwind visit, your room is reserved to catching a few winks in between the action. We made our way to our room at roughly 3 a.m. after I grabbed a bowl of spicy pork noodles at the Noodle Bar. The intoxicating smell was following me all night, and let me tell you, it was worth it.

We all need a little down time to decompress and perhaps "escape" from our tedious, chore-filled lives.

If an escape is what you're after, give Casino Rama a try!