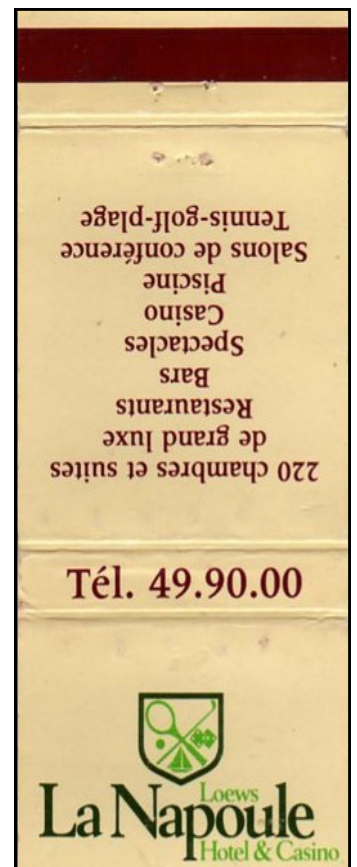
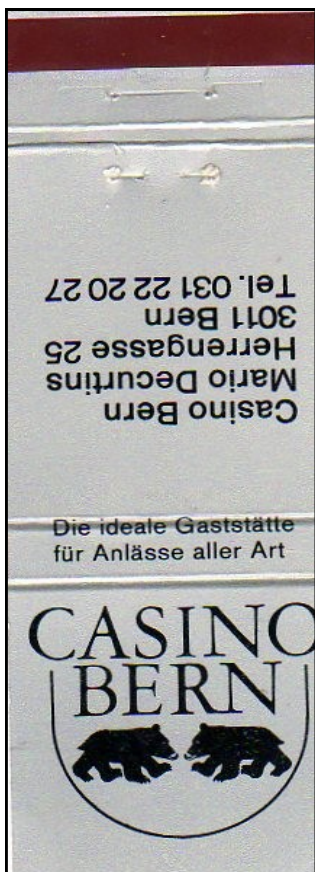


Foreign Casinos

by
Mike Prero

With our own gambling industry booming, we often tend to overlook the casino centers in other parts of the world...and the covers and boxes they issue. Just think of how we used to watch James Bond suavely plunking down a few hundred dollars' worth of chips in those fabulous European casinos. These international casinos exist, you know, and the variety of covers which flows from them, while nothing compared to our domestic variety, is worth your attention.



Although gambling is found around the world, in so many forms that it would make your head spin faster than a roulette wheel, the major foreign casino centers which issue covers and boxes are located in the Caribbean and Europe. The European casinos were developed by and for Europeans; the Caribbean casinos were developed mainly for tourists...and that means Americans.

Within the Caribbean, the bulk of the more well-known casinos are located in the Bahamas (off the coast of Southern Florida) and the Lesser Antilles (off the coast of Venezuela). Most of the casinos in the Caribbean are part of very posh hotel-resorts, catering to American tourists and the world's jet set. Shown on the first page are covers from the Aruba Caribbean Hotel and Casino and the Casino on Aruba, and the Trois Ilets and Casino on Martinique. Almost all of the covers from the Caribbean casinos are of U.S. origin.

The European casinos tend to be a different sort of animal, altogether. For one thing, you're not going to see people in these casinos wearing shorts, sandals, and baseball caps. These casinos you dress for! Their covers are, understandably, of European origin, rather than having been made in America. That means you're dealing with odd sizes, and, unlike the Caribbean covers, these covers won't necessarily be in English, either.

Although the European casino centers are more dispersed than those of the Caribbean, the main locations are: Monte Carlo, Monaco (SE corner of France, on the Mediterranean); Baden Baden (southern Germany); and France.

Previously pictured are covers from: Loews La Napoule Hotel and Casino, France; and Casino Bern, Switzerland . Just to give you an idea, I also have covers from Casino Baden Baden (Germany), King's Casino (Antigua, Lesser Antilles) several betting establishments in Mexico, the Bahamas Princess Resort & Casino and The Bahamian Club & Casino (both in the Bahamas), Aruba-Concorde Hotel-Casino and the Alhambra Casino (both in Aruba), Adelaide Casino and Lassaters (both in Australia), Flamboyant Hotel & Casino (Puerto Rico), Casino president (Czechoslovakia), and so on. And, of course, there are a number of Canadian casinos now, as well.

The current explosion of gambling in the United States probably won't have an significant effect on the Caribbean casinos, since the latter are basically for tourists, and it certainly won't affect the European casinos. So we can probably expect the flow of covers and boxes to continue from the foreign locations...unless there's an anti-smoking turn there, too. It's just a matter of obtaining them..and that's usually the problem. You're over here, and they're waaaay over there!

You could wait until one of your regular traders sends some your way, perhaps, but your anticipations would be more efficiently served by trading with someone directly in the area (assuming that you're not going to actually go to the casinos and collect them yourself). You might try establishing contacts with a few of our international members. The postage is high, but the covers are worth it, if you're a Casino collector...and don't forget to put the word out to your regular traders; a number of collectors make trips to the Caribbean and Europe each year.

Sid Barlow, in England, reported having 698 Foreign Casinos as of January 2002...of course, Sid being in England, I'm not certain how he defines 'foreign'! I probably have well over 100 in my own collection. Anyone have any concrete numbers from their collections?