

Then and now: From Sahara to Hard Rock



The Sahara Tahoe opened in 1965. Photo/BILL Kingman

Del Webb's Sahara-Tahoe opened in 1965 in Stateline.

Elvis Presley appeared in more than 100 performances in the Sahara-Tahoe's High Sierra Theater during the early 1970s. Elvis proclaimed it as his favorite showroom of all. Dozens of other major names in entertainment like Johnny Carson, Jack Benny and Liberace performed there, plus Karen and Richard Carpenter made their Nevada showroom debut at the Sahara.

The theater later offered first-run movies, and then it became the "Chuckwagon Buffet." Major live entertainment waned.

From 1983 until 1990, the resort was remodeled as Del Webb's High Sierra, featuring a western theme with Lily's Dance Hall.

Columbia-Sussex bought the property in 1990 and renamed it the Horizon. Concluding a dramatic decline in business, Horizon closed its doors March 31, 2014.

With a \$60 million renovation of the entire property, Hard Rock Hotel and Casino opened Jan. 28, 2015.

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– *Bill Kingman*