



The Summer Plunge

A closet full of reasons why one well-pedicured Las Vegan can't wait for the heat **BY REBECCA ZISCH**

For me the first day of summer is the first morning that it's sunny and warm enough to swim before work. Some years, this can happen as early as April, which to many Las Vegans sets off premature dread of triple digits. To me it means not having to drive off to the gym and face the elliptical trainer, but exploring the desert morning by wading into my pool and swimming under the cloudless sky. From the calm privacy of my own back yard, I can simultaneously see the sun and the moon and the planes that appear to fly between them on their way to McCarran.

You see, I love the Las Vegas summer. I embrace the beautiful early mornings and immerse myself in those long luxurious nights. I approach each and every scorching day with guile and glee. It's not hard and it's not insane. You just have to know how to keep your cool.

Summer allows me to shed any inhibitions left from the winter and spring by donning my

favorite halter tops, sundresses and open-toed shoes. I anticipate the emancipation of limbs to the open air. I revel in the natural sun-kissed glow to my skin that comes from swimming each morning. I don't endorse tanning or the casting off of sun block, but I also don't hide from the sun under giant hats—unless said hat is a necessary part of a stylish ensemble.

The rest of the year I often browse past the polka dots and circle skirts in my closet wondering, "Why do I own so many things I have to wear with sandals?" But as the weather nears the century mark, I vividly remember. In anticipation of everyone seeing a lot more of my toes, I accept the excuse to treat myself to frequent pedicures.

And once my toes are beautiful, what better way to show them off than by walking. Admittedly, walking is a rare pastime in Vegas, but the time has come to rethink that notion. For instance, the best climates for meandering around the First Friday festival in the Arts District are always the late spring and early summer. And this year, with new nightlife venues opening on Fremont East—the side for locals—I'm planning to take advantage of their proximity and live music by strolling from one to the other.

Yes, walking in either flat or high-heeled sandals is a wonderful way to show off new shades of OPI nail polish. Better yet, such shoes are easily kicked off when lounging outdoors in the beautifully temperate and long summer nights. And during those nights, when even the lightest sweater isn't needed, it's a joy to recline barefoot on a blanket in the Clark County Amphitheater for an evening of jazz or enjoy live theater outdoors amongst the red rocks at Spring Mountain Ranch.

I also look forward to showing off my open-toed heels when dining outdoors. For example there's nothing nicer than sipping sangria, cross-legged, high on a stool on the misted patio at Firefly. Or if I'm feeling terribly posh in a strapless summer frock with a date that's picking up the tab, sitting outside at someplace like Bouchon at the Venetian.

For some more inhibited folks, summer in Las Vegas might just mean months cooped up with air conditioning and oscillating fans. But I would never dare let something as inconsequential as the temperature keep me from enjoying my spa pedicures and shoe shopping. In fact, I welcome, née invite, the summer with open arms—my open, bare, suntanned arms.

Rebecca Zisch can be heard regularly on Nevada Public Radio as commenting on popular culture and Las Vegas.