

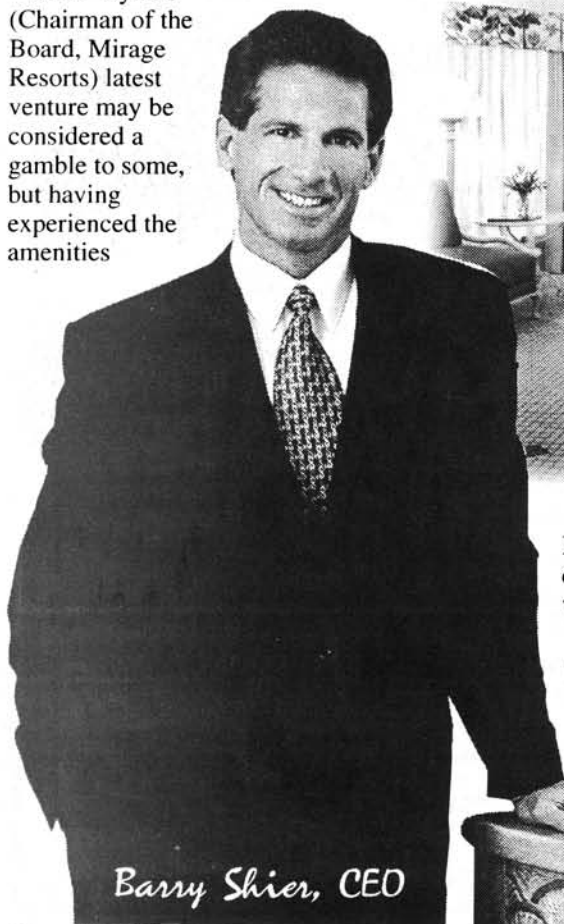
Biloxi's Beautiful

Beau Rivage

by Melissa Wolcott

Beau Rivage. Or rather, Beau Riv-a-a-a-h-h-ge. So pronounced, as this is indeed a lovely oasis found on Mississippi's Gulf Coast in Biloxi. Actually, "Beau Rivage" is French for "beautiful shore." With its magnificent location overlooking the Gulf, and emphasis on the comfort and pleasure of its guests, the new resort/casino will be a drawing card to all who wish to get away for pampering or fun or both.

Steve Wynn's (Chairman of the Board, Mirage Resorts) latest venture may be considered a gamble to some, but having experienced the amenities



Barry Shier, CEO

The Lobby



personally, I'd say it was a safe bet. Mr Wynn is the man behind the highly successful Las Vegas resort/casinos Mirage, Treasure Island, Golden Nugget (also in Atlantic City,) and the new Bellagio. Barry Shier, Chairman of the

throughout, especially the design of the casino itself. However, Beau Rivage has incorporated a Southern motif as well to tie into its Biloxi location which is heavy on its old southern traditions.

Biloxi already has its share of casinos, but with the addition of Beau Rivage, it now has a true luxury resort. Featuring twelve elegant restaurants, a state-of-the-art spa, a 31-slip marina that can accommodate yachts up to 200 feet, a 72,000 square foot casino, fine retail shops, and the fabulous Cirque du Soleil show "Alegria," guests never have to leave the resort to fulfil all their needs. However, if they DO leave, they will find Biloxi has a charm of its own.

Biloxi was founded in 1699, and its close proximity to

New Orleans has made it a favorite summer resort for many years. The city was devastated by hurricane Camille in 1969, but has since rebuilt, maintaining its antebellum ambience. Within a short distance of Beau Rivage are plenty of things to see and do.

A drive along the coast takes you past the landmark 1848 Lighthouse and a myriad of antebellum style homes, to Beauvoir, the last residence of Jefferson Davis. Public tours of the home are available, as well as a museum on



Deluxe Guest Room

Board and CEO of Beau Rivage, is credited with being the extraordinary visionary of the project from the beginning, and a very hands-on executive, along with the president of the resort, Douglas Pool.

If you have seen the classical Northern Italian architecture of Bellagio, you will have a slight sense of dejavú at Beau Rivage, as there are similarities



The Spa

property. The Magnolia Hotel — the only antebellum hotel remaining on the coast — also houses the Biloxi Mardi Gras Museum. Within walking distance of the Beau Rivage is the must-see and must-dine-at Mary Mahoney's Old French House Restaurant. It is one of the oldest homes in America, built in 1737 during the French occupation of the Coast. The current owner, Bob Mahoney, (Mary's son,) is a colorful character (and a dead ringer for James Carville) who will regale you with stories of the past plus a few "modern" jokes. Another stop would have to be the George Ohr Museum, which contains some priceless works of the world-class "mad" potter.

But I digress — let's get back to the resort itself.

In the magnificent lobby guests are greeted by 12 full size real magnolia trees surrounded by seasonal flowering plants which overwhelm one with their fragrance. An impressive tidbit for the consciousness of detail by the resort is the fact that all the paintings are originals — no prints throughout the hotel, including all the rooms. Granted, some are of the cookie cutter variety, but the effort is appreciated.

The guest rooms are handsomely appointed and either overlook the gulf or the city. Go for the extra \$\$ for the gulf view, which is truly magnificent — and if you ask for the pool AND gulf view, even better. In addition to spacious marble bathrooms and luxurious beds, the guest rooms also come equipped with data ports and multiple telephone lines if you just can't get away from business.

The dining experience is quite varied in cuisine, from casual BBQ to fine classic French, and everything in-between. One

particular restaurant of note is the Coral, which serves indigenous and exotic seafood amid fantastic full 4-wall aquariums. Sorry to say, I do not eat seafood, but thoroughly enjoyed my aged beef dinner while my companions raved about their various seafood dinners. The artistic

presentation of food in each restaurant is another testament to the resort's eye for detail.

Guests can indulge themselves at the Spa & Salon with body treatments including massage, facials, hydrotherapy tub treatments, a Vichy shower, a Swiss shower, spa pedicure, stylists, makeup, etc., etc. The fitness facility features top-of-the-line equipment, and a fabulous view while working out.

In addition to the world-famous Cirque du Soleil (see following article for more on that,) entertainment abounds at the resort with periodic appearances by headline performers such as Harry Connick, Jr., Paul Anka, and Alabama in the Magnolia Ballroom, and the Little River Band, and Three Dog Night in the Coast Brewing Company.

Of course the casino itself is one of the nicest you will see anywhere. Yellow hued canopies over the gaming tables warm the large room, creating a cozy ambience, and there are many different kinds of gaming machines to please the "slot" crowd.

Being located right on the gulf provides Beau Rivage guests the opportunity for some great boating experiences — from a shrimping trip to deep-sea fishing to a relaxing afternoon aboard an 80 foot sailboat, any of which can be arranged by

the hotel's concierge. Scheduled to open in 2000 is a championship 18-hole golf course created by Tom Fazio. Presently there are more than 20 courses in close proximity to the resort.

If you're planning to visit Biloxi, you may want to tie your trip into one of the events the city has going on in celebration of its 300th Anniversary:

June 18-20: Juneteenth Celebration with arts, crafts and entertainment overlooking the sandy beaches.

July 17-18: Christmas in July Arts and Craft Show at the Coast Coliseum.

August 6-8: Mississippi Coast Pro Rodeo Show at the Convention Center.

September 10-11: Mississippi Gulf Coast Blues Festival at the Coast Coliseum.

September 17-19: Biloxi Seafood Festival at Point Cadet Plaza.

October 2-3: Biloxi Highlands Scottish Games and Celtic Festival at Harrison County Fairgrounds.

October 7-10: Cruisin' the Coast attracts hundreds of automobile enthusiasts for a fabulous '50s event.

October 16-17: Beauvoir Fall Muster, an event that features camp demonstrations and skirmishes at 2244 Beach Blvd.

October 23-24: The George Ohr Fall Festival of Arts including an art exhibit, entertainment and food.



The Pool

There are currently some great air/hotel packages from Tampa via AirTran starting at \$214 for two nights mid-week to \$303 for 3 nights weekend. The flight is only a little over an hour, and the transfer to hotel is less than 1/2 hour. Considering the luxury of the hotel, the package prices are extremely reasonable. Call Mirage Vacation Packages at 800-360-7111 for more information.

Go. Enjoy.