

Cripple Creek's Wildwood Casino claims it's highest in world

Written by Administrator

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Everybody's a high roller at the Wildwood Casino. In fact, the highest in the world, according to the Cripple Creek business.

Wildwood says a professional survey puts its gaming floor at 9,593 feet above sea level, making it "the highest casino in the world." Owner Joseph Canfora said Wednesday that the casino did extensive research and concluded Wildwood sits at a higher elevation than any other casino anywhere.

Wildwood figured the list of contenders for the top-of-the-world gambling spot would be short because of restrictions on casino-style gambling in certain countries, states and towns. In Colorado, Wildwood even towers over casinos in Blackhawk, Central City and its neighbors in Cripple Creek, Canfora said.

"It was a fun discovery," Canfora said.

It was one that grew out of marketing discussions and how to get attention for the casino and the Cripple Creek community, a historic mining town that runs on tourism.

"We're always looking for the uniqueness. We're the only single-floor casino," Canfora said. "Along the way, how could you not talk about elevation?"

Surveyor Roland G. Obering, P.E. & P.L.S., from Obering, Wurth & Associates, LLP said in a statement that the elevation at the entrance to the gaming floor on the north side of the casino is 9,593. The surveyors followed industry standards, Obering said.

The Wildwood team then began looking around the state, the country and the world to see if any other gambling casino is higher. Their research didn't find any. Now, Canfora has a U.S. Trademark inquiry pending to claim the title.

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The roll-out of the new brand as the highest casino in the world comes as Wildwood is marking its 11th anniversary and starting construction of a \$14 million, 104-room hotel next to the casino. It's expected to open in the spring or summer of 2020.

The casino is also celebrating its new status with three cash giveaways of \$9,593 over the next three months and a chance for players to win a \$1 million prize.

"We promote several things because we are a higher-elevation city," said Steve Kitzman, the town's marketing and events director. "Our rodeo is the highest-elevation rodeo in the world."

Wildwood's proclamation adds to the town's tall tales, Kitzman added.

Kitzman said he's not worried about the public confusing elevation with marijuana-induced highs; Cripple Creek has no pot shops.

And Canfora said he's not concerned about losing the top spot to another Cripple Creek casino because Wildwood had to get a variance from the town to build as high as it did.

People travel to Cripple Creek for a number of reasons, Canfora said: the casinos, the history, the mountains, fishing and hiking. He hopes the desire to gamble in the world's highest casino will be a big draw, too.

"The town is really working hard at putting Cripple Creek on the map as a tourist designation," Canfora said. "Who wouldn't want to stop and visit the highest casino in the world?"

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