

# Hard Rock's 'Real World' suite available for tourists

At first glance, Suite 1168 in [Hard Rock's](#) Casino Tower looks like any other Las Vegas high roller suite. There are flat-screen TVs, a full-size bar and a hot tub large enough for whatever party might wander back to your room at the end of the night.

Just five months ago, however, the suite was transformed into a TV set where seven 20-somethings on MTV's "[Real World](#)" served up drama to the max, complete with shattered glass from the occasional physical altercation.

But with taping wrapped up and the drama over, Hard Rock has opened the 4,400-square-foot suite to guests.

The resort hosted the 25th season of the reality show, in which MTV hoped to recreate the ratings gold mine of its first Las Vegas season in 2002, one of the highest-rated in the show's history.

With one cast member kicked off the property by Hard Rock security and the discovery of another as a small-time porn star, MTV may have achieved its ratings goal just halfway through the season.

The suite required a complete redesign to make it functional for the TV crew while maintaining the hotel's standard of luxury for future guests.

The production company recruited Los Angeles-based designer Matt Tognacci, who had two days to come up with a design and theme for the suite, a process he said usually takes up to a month.

"It was really different from what I was accustomed to building. Normally, I design something with the mind-set that it's going to be torn down afterward. We needed to use more high-end materials. Hard Rock said if it's going to be a high roller suite, it can't be low-rent materials," Tognacci said.

The redesign included major structural changes, including turning the butler pantry, which was in a room attached to the main suite, into an open, full-service kitchen. An aquarium was also a necessity, because one has appeared in every "Real World" house since Season 1. Luckily for Tognacci, the six-person hot tub and bowling alley were already there.

Between decorating and construction, the redesign cost about \$180,000, Tognacci said.

Tognacci incorporated hints of Las Vegas throughout the suite as a reminder to viewers of the season's location and as an homage to the city's history. The designer said he walked through other hotels for inspiration.

A wall covering made from a photo of the bright lights of Binion's in downtown Las Vegas covers a shelving unit behind the bar, where a bust of Elvis sits. In one of the suite's three bedrooms, a mural of the Strip lines the wall and images of playing cards adorn closest doors.

Double doors in each bedroom overlook the Hard Rock's weekend pool party, Rehab, adding to the party vibe of the suite.

In keeping with the Hard Rock's rock 'n' roll roots, Tognacci added portraits of artists such as Freddy Mercury and KISS by longtime celebrity and concert photographer Neal Preston and hand-painted guitars from other artists.

For the billiards room, Tognacci commissioned Orlando, Fla.-based street artist Andrew Spear for a graphic mural, which turned out to be the most dynamic element in the suite.

"It was kind of a deal with any artists that they were going to get a lot of exposure. They typically don't get paid as much as they do when getting a custom home, but the exposure is well worth it," Tognacci said.

And for about \$3,500 a night, guests who want the "Real World" experience can party like reality stars, too.