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<<http://gizmodo.com/#!5628834/the-ugly-carpets-of-vegas-are-hideously-clever-social-engineering-at-work>>

## **The Ugly Carpets of Vegas are Hideously Clever Social Engineering at Work**

[Sam Biddle](#) — Something this horrific can't possibly be an accident. I mean, it takes *genius* to come up with something so offensive to the eye. Sure enough, the crazily appalling carpets that adorn Vegas casinos are designed to keep you gambling.



Like some sort of vile afterbirth after a meeting of the 1990s and an insane asylum patient, casino carpets seem to violate every design rule established over, say, the past several thousand years. An art student would probably burst into flames the moment they walked in. But intrepid photographer Chris Maluszynski somehow managed to stare (and wonderfully photograph) a series of shocking casino floors without giving himself a brain hemorrhage, and is showing off his results in a new exhibition, *Las Vegas Carpets*. Maluszynski concludes that the carpeting isn't

just aesthetic torture, but, just like the lack of windows and clocks (and the constant barrage of free booze), is a canny design choice—part of what "defines Vegas as a gambling city."



Dave Schwartz, Director of the Center for Gaming Research (!) at the University of Nevada Las Vegas echoes this observation, claiming that "casino carpet is known as an exercise in deliberate bad taste that somehow encourages people to gamble." Schwartz considers the possibility that the symbolism incorporated into every ghastly square foot encourages us to piss away money on a subconscious level, but really, the trick doesn't seem anywhere so subtle to us. With floors that look like that, who would ever want to let their eyes wander off the games?



**UPDATE:** Reader Steven Chan contacted me with the following fascinating golden nugget:

I have a friend who teaches at Cornell's famous School of Hotel Administration; she has a lot of casino designer contacts. According to her, the carpets are deliberately designed to obscure and camouflage gambling chips that have fallen onto the floor. The casinos sweep up a huge number of these every night. So the carpets are just another source of revenue.