



Mount Ararat seen from Yerevan

SHANGRI-LA YEREVAN

ARMENIA'S ELEGANT INTERNATIONAL CASINO

Text: Roberto Granda
Photos: EUROPEAN CASINOS-The Elite



Armenia is located between the Black and Caspian Seas. The country is bordered on the north and east by Georgia and Azerbaijan, and on the south and west by Iran and Turkey

Culturally, historically, politically, Armenia is considered part of Europe, although its location in the southern Caucasus situates it on the arbitrary frontier between Europe and Asia.

A former republic of the Soviet Union, Armenia boasts a history rooted in one of the world's oldest civilisations. Ancient monasteries, located in some of the country's most breathtaking natural beauty spots, are a reminder of the country's convoluted history; Armenia is proud of its rich cultural heritage and was the first state to adopt Christianity as its official religion, in the early years of the 4th century. Major changes are currently underway, making Armenia a prosperous, modern nation, though the almost four million inhabitants still extend warmth and hospitality to visitors.



Yerevan, the capital, at the foot of the biblical Mount Ararat, is just a few miles from the Turkish border. A modern, vibrant city, Yerevan has a long history dating back to 782 BC. With large squares, wide avenues, green parks, cathedrals, theatres and museums, Yerevan offers a surprisingly European atmosphere. It is also the perfect base from which to explore this small country that for years has struggled to coexist alongside its powerful neighbours.

The elegant and modern Casino Shangri-La Yerevan is located just a few minutes outside the city.



Michael Boettcher, Storm International Chairman

Owned by Storm International and Multi Group, a company owned by Gagik Tsarukyan, it is considered one of the best and most modern in Armenia, and has set the bar very high for gaming establishments in the country. It is located in a majestic building standing on 2400 square metres, soon to be extended to 3200 square metres. *"Our company and our partners believe strongly in the future of Armenia and we stand by this faith by creating an establishment that lives up to international standards and offers visitors a complete leisure offer, with nothing to envy the world's best Casinos"*, commented Storm International Chairman Michael Boettcher.





The Casino opened its doors on 2 May last, with a spectacular inauguration ceremony which brought together big names from Armenia's social, business and cultural life. Entertainment was provided by Tuto Cutugno, Blestyashie and humourist Maxim Galkin, among others.

The Casino has since become a popular venue for big shows and concerts by Armenian and international stars.

The Casino's gaming offer consists of 85 state-of-the-art slots, all from major international manufacturers, with big jackpots. There is also a live gaming room with 12 tables and a special poker room. The X.O. club is an exclusive VIP area for high rollers.

The Casino is decorated in the Art Deco style, using a range of expensive imported woods, fine Armenian mosaic work, stained glass and incredible carpets. There is also a large car park, for guests' convenience.

The complex operates under the "Responsible Gaming" program, as implemented several years ago by Storm in all its gaming premises. The program's actions include distributing literature on gambling-related problems, barring psychologically unstable people from playing games of chance and offering special entertainment for Casino employees. The Casino is open only to the over 21s.



As with all Storm establishments, one of the identifying marks of the Casino is its select, internationally acclaimed cuisine. Shangri-La Erevan has three bars and a restaurant, offering guests exquisite national and European dishes.

Since gambling was prohibited in Moscow, Shangri-La Yerevan has become a favourite destination for Russian gamers. Many take advantage of trips to visit family or friends to take a trip to the Casino.

Storm International also organises tours from Moscow to Yerevan, including a Casino visit, so visitors can enjoy its pleasant atmosphere and extensive gaming offer.

Bob Sweeney, General Manager of Casino Shangri-La Yerevan, spoke to this magazine: *"Without a doubt, the competitive advantages of the Shangri-La are based on our top quality, innovative design, personal service and the security we offer our guests"*.



In view of the closure of gaming establishments in Moscow, where Storm owns some of the biggest Casinos, the company has undertaken a policy of international expansion, opening gaming venues throughout Europe and Latin America. Storm currently has centres in Armenia and Mexico, and will shortly be present in more countries. Projects currently under development include three in Egypt (including a Casino in the Cairo Four Seasons hotel) and a spa standing on 420 acres on the Cambodian coast, with two Casinos.

"Storm International is looking to the future and we will continue to develop and grow in the world gaming industry, offering our customers personalised professional service and all the best new products from the international gaming market. In short, we will remain in the international vanguard, so our guests enjoy each visit to the limit and feel right at home. This is and will continue to be our philosophy", declared Boettcher.

