

# High-tech, sphere-shaped arena coming to Las Vegas Strip

May 19 2018, by Regina Garcia Cano

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This conceptual rendering released by Madison Square Garden shows a transparent look theme exterior of the MSG Sphere Las Vegas arena. An 18,000-seat, sphere-shaped venue that will host concerts and other entertainment events on the Las Vegas Strip will break ground this summer. The Madison Square Garden Company on Friday, May 18, 2018, revealed details of the project it is developing in partnership with Las Vegas Sands, which operates two casino-resorts adjacent to the planned arena. (Madison Square Garden via AP)

A massive high-tech, sphere-shaped venue that will host concerts and other events while engaging multiple senses will break ground this summer in Las Vegas, officials announced Friday.

The New York-based Madison Square Garden Company revealed details of the 18,000-seat, futuristic-looking facility it is developing in partnership with Las Vegas Sands, which operates two casino-resorts on the Las Vegas Strip adjacent to the planned arena.

The MSG Sphere Las Vegas, where a massive exterior LED will be capable of making it appear as if is transforming into a globe or a tennis ball or project the event happening inside, is expected to open on New Year's Eve 2020.

"Just sitting there, what would it take to convince you that instead of sitting here in an airplane hangar in Las Vegas, you are sitting in your chair in the polar ice cap or an Amazon rainforest?" said Jim Dolan, executive chairman and CEO of Madison Square Garden Company. "Obviously if you are in the [polar ice cap](#), you have to feel cold; you have to see the glacier. That is essentially what we are building: an attempt to convince you that you are somewhere else."

The 170,000-square-foot LED screen will wrap around its interior bowl. The average movie theater screen is 1,000 square feet and an IMAX screen is about 4,000 square feet.



This conceptual rendering released by Madison Square Garden shows a ship battle inside the MSG Sphere Las Vegas arena. An 18,000-seat, sphere-shaped venue that will host concerts and other entertainment events on the Las Vegas Strip will break ground this summer. The Madison Square Garden Company on Friday, May 18, 2018, revealed details of the project it is developing in partnership with Las Vegas Sands, which operates two casino-resorts adjacent to the planned arena. (Madison Square Garden via AP)

It will also have an adaptive acoustics system that will enable audio to be directed to specific locations at a near-constant volume. Patrons will be able to smell different scents and feel certain movements, depending on the experience.

"We are going to employ a haptic flooring system that will create vibrations that when you are riding atop a Harley, you'll feel the pistons pumping," Dolan said.

Dolan said they have nothing for the sense of taste, "other than popcorn."

The venue comes as Las Vegas visitors continue to cut their gambling budgets but spend more on entertainment and dining.



This conceptual rendering released by Madison Square Garden shows a watch projection inside the MSG Sphere Las Vegas arena. An 18,000-seat, sphere-shaped venue that will host concerts and other entertainment events on the Las Vegas Strip will break ground this summer. The Madison Square Garden Company on Friday, May 18, 2018, revealed details of the project it is developing in partnership with Las Vegas Sands, which operates two casino-resorts adjacent to the planned arena. (Madison Square Garden via AP)

An annual report from the agency responsible from promoting Las Vegas shows says nearly six in 10 visitors last year attended a show during their trip, an increase from the previous year.

The report from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority also showed that more than one in four people saw a Broadway or production-style show and more than one in five saw big-name headliner shows.

Dolan said the company is soliciting storytellers, artists and performers to create content.

In addition to concerts, the venue will be capable of hosting events like product launches, educational demonstrations and e-sports tournaments, in which all patrons could potentially participate thanks to the planned connectivity system.



In this conceptual rendering released by Madison Square Garden shows a car launch event inside the MSG Sphere Las Vegas arena. An 18,000-seat, sphere-shaped venue that will host concerts and other entertainment events on the Las Vegas Strip will break ground this summer. The Madison Square Garden Company on Friday, May 18, 2018, revealed details of the project it is developing in partnership with Las Vegas Sands, which operates two casino-resorts adjacent to the planned arena. (Madison Square Garden via AP)

"Imagine instead of having five players play five players, we can have 9,000 versus 9,000 or 1 versus 17,999," said Dolan.

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