

## ROUTE TOKENS - WHY COLLECT THEM?

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In 1988, at Jean's insistence we started collecting Nevada route tokens. Don felt they were a waste of time and would not last. After all, they had appeared in 1986 and probably were a passing fad. We started collecting these slowly and with caution, and one day realized a great area of collecting was passing us by. The race was on to catch up and obtain early tokens, only to find some difficult to obtain. If you as a collector want a real challenge, may we suggest "Nevada Route Gaming Tokens". This is still a hobby that can be interesting and fast paced. You won't have to mortgage the house in order to be involved, as most tokens are still available from dealers at a very reasonable price, and current tokens are available where used.

There are currently 1,809 restricted licensees in Nevada. All are potential route token users. Compare this number to the 396 nonrestricted and nonrestricted slots only licensees within the state, and it doesn't take a genius to figure the potential growth of route token collecting.

What's the difference between route tokens and casino tokens? The type of gaming license held and the special requirements attached to each. We've heard it said, "I just want to collect tokens. I don't need to be bothered with all that garbage about regulations and licenses." Yes, this is true if you're an accumulator. However, we can't see how a collector can have very many tokens, not notice a great percentage of these are different, and not ask some questions. There are many situations in token collecting which will create questions. That's where a collector turns to the club newsletter, other publications, and knowledgeable collectors. These resources become valuable and should be used for reference.

Route tokens, for the most part, are used by Nevada bars, small clubs, stores, and restaurants. Businesses with restricted licenses, 15 machines or less. Don often says, "All 'crows' are black birds, but not all black birds are 'crows'". Likewise, all locations with dollar slot machines may use tokens, but not all locations with dollar machines may use route tokens. Sounds complicated, confusing, frustrating, bewildering? Not really. It's easy, once you understand and know what to look for. It depends on the gaming license held and the regulations established for each type of license.

Simply explained, there are two types of slot tokens. All Nevada restricted licensed locations must be serviced by a route company in order to use tokens. The reverse of these tokens will always have a route company's name, logo and address on them. All other tokens are in the nonrestricted license categories. (A complete explanation of all licenses, their development and requirements are covered in the "Handbook for Gaming Token Collectors", pages 29 through 44, for those interested.)

## ROUTE TOKENS - WHY COLLECT THEM Cont.

The Nevada Gaming Control Board's position, is that there are two classes of gaming tokens, route tokens and casino tokens. One class has gaming as an auxiliary revenue (restricted licensees, their tokens will have the route company's name on the reverse), and one class that has gaming as a principal income (nonrestricted licensees, their tokens will have an establishment's name on both sides). We believe collectors should keep it simple and concur with the authorities. We should also remember, tokens follow different rules and regulations than gaming chips and coins.

Start by checking the reverse of your tokens. If there is the name and address of a route company on the reverse, bingo, you have a route token from a restricted location. If the reverse has the same name on it as the obverse, you have a casino token from a nonrestricted location.

For convenience, we strongly urge token collectors to separate their collection. Place route tokens in a separate binder from your casino tokens, and remember, not all bars, clubs, restaurants and stores are route users. Some use "Ikes", and some have their own tokens.

Since 1986, there have been over 600 route tokens issued. Over 30 route companies using over 80 logo or die changes. Users come and go overnight or change route companies. Couple this with usual business name, location, and regulation changes, include the number of potential users, and there is no end to how many tokens will ultimately exist in this facet of collecting. Who knows, as gaming spreads into other areas the restricted license and route company concept may also spread. We are already seeing this potential in some states.

Nevada route token collecting is the fastest growing area of gaming token collecting. Some obsolete tokens are becoming difficult to obtain, and their value is starting to increase on a daily basis.

If you wish a collecting challenge, one with unlimited opportunities and great potential, try Nevada route tokens.

Happy Collecting!