

PS 53: Tribal Casinos Overview | Puerto Rico and Rhode Island Slots in 2019

Opening

Hello! Today's episode #53 of the Professor Slots podcast is a tribal gaming overview. Plus, in this episode I'll be covering the current state of slot machine casino gambling in the great U.S. territory of Puerto Rico and the great U.S. state of Rhode Island.

Thank you for joining me for the Professor Slots podcast show. I'm Jon Friedl and this is the podcast about slot machine casino gambling. It is where I provide knowledge, insights, and tools for helping you improve your slot machine gambling performance.

On Last Week's Episode...

In case you missed it, on my last episode I went over what I learned when playing slots at Miami Valley Gaming in southeast Ohio perhaps 30 miles north of Cincinnati on the I-75 interstate.

Further, I reviewed Oklahoma, Oregon, and Pennsylvania slot machine casino gambling 2019.

I hope you enjoyed listening to my last episode as much as I enjoyed making it for you.

Call to Action #1 (add sound effect afterward)

Remember to visit professorslots.com/subscribe to get my Free Report Revealing ... The top 7 online resources for improving your gambling performance, including the one I've used as a top-tier slot machine casino gambler.

Introduction to Tribal Casinos Overview

Let's start with the first segment of the show: 11 Things You Need to Know about American Indian Tribal Casinos.

Thirty U.S. states offer tribal casinos. That number is climbing. To better understand them, here are eleven things you need to know about American Indian tribal casinos.

Further, tribal casinos in another two U.S. states are currently pending. Whether your state has tribal gaming or not, you've likely already had the opportunity to visit a tribal casino somewhere.

This segment has the following sections:

- An Introduction
 1. Which States have Tribal Gaming?
 2. The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act
 3. Why Federal Recognition Matters
 4. Tribal-State Gaming Compacts
 5. Who Operates a Tribal Casino?
 6. Don't Cheat at a Tribal Casino
 7. Tribal Use of Gaming Profits
 8. Tribal Casinos Players Clubs
 9. Class II vs. Class III Tribal Gaming
 10. East Coast Versus West Coast
 11. The Future of Tribal Gaming
- A Summary

I'd like to mention that I've kept each section short. Here, I'm attempting to provide an overview of each tribal gaming topic so both you and I have a better understanding of that mystery which is tribal casinos.

Further, grouping all 11 topics into a single long article shows how all the topics connect to one another. Each topic builds on an earlier topic. By the time we get to topic #11: The Future of Tribal Gaming, it should be clear why I hold the opinion I present there. No spoilers!

However, just about every one of these topics deserves something more. Each topic can be expanded into a full article. And, they deserve to be. So, I've added these topics to my Ideas folder for new articles.

But, don't worry that my next 11 podcast episodes will be entirely on these topics. They deserve to be explored further, but not at the expense of casino reviews and other topics I have already committed to covering for you. I'll just intersperse them over time. Deal?

1. Which States Have Tribal Gaming?

I've reviewed tribal gaming in each state as part of my Online Resource, an ongoing weekly series. Out of 52 states, only 30 U.S. states currently have tribal casinos. Another two states have pending tribal casinos.

If you read my website article on which this segment is based, I list those 30 states with tribal gaming along with their number of tribal casinos. A link to that article, called 11 Things You Need To Know About American Indian Tribal Casinos, is available in the show notes for this podcast episode available at ProfessorSlots.com/e53.

Oklahoma has the highest number of tribal casinos. In my state-by-state article on Oklahoma slots, I list the 108 largest tribal casinos. Oklahoma has many other convenience stores and truck stops which identify themselves as casinos.

With 66 sites, California has the second highest number of tribal casinos of any U.S. state. It has only tribal casinos and no non-tribal commercial casinos.

Massachusetts and Virginia both have their first tribal casino pending for various reasons, either legal issues or searching for a suitable site. Alaska and Maine have only tribal bingo halls.

2. The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act

In 1988, the U.S. Congress established the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA). This federal law provides tribes and states with a legal framework to develop tribal gaming. It is the reason the U.S. has tribal casinos with Class III games.

American Indian cultures have always included gambling. Before the IGRA, and a driving force behind establishing it, tribes began to generate gaming revenue and profit. This tribal gaming mostly began with tribes opening bingo halls.

However, such swift growth led to abuses. When states began lobbying the U.S. Congress to regulate tribal gaming, after more than a few compromises the IRGA was born. President Ronald Reagan signed it into law on October 18, 1988.

This federal law intends to:

- Regulate tribal gaming
- Protect tribal gaming as a means of generating revenue
- Encourage economic development of the tribes
- Protect against negative influences such as organized crime

3. Why Federal Recognition Matters

The U.S. Constitution gives the federal government the right to interact with American Indian tribes. However, 1913 U.S. Supreme Court and 1988 U.S. Supreme Court decisions provided additional clarity, which also helped lead to the establishment of the IGRA.

However, what establishes that a tribal community is, in fact, an American Indian tribe? Who decides? How do they choose? Perhaps more importantly, how can this process be consistent? Even today, this decision-making is fraught with difficulties.

Federal recognition of an American Indian tribe is a process owned by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) within the U.S. Department of the Interior. The BIA sets the criteria

for federal recognition of tribes. Tribal communities petition for federal recognition through the BIA's Office of Federal Acknowledgment (OFA) which carefully researches each request for a recommendation.

Once federally recognized, the federal government acknowledges a tribe's right of self-government while supporting its tribal sovereignty and self-determination. Limitations on these rights are the same as those for states.

There are currently 573 bands and tribes recognized by the federal government as American Indian. The last increase in the number of tribes occurred in early 2018 when six new tribes received federal recognition. Only federally-recognized tribes may use the IGRA to negotiate a tribal-state gaming compact with their state.

4. Tribal-State Gaming Compacts

A compact is a negotiated agreement between two legal entities. In this case, a federally-recognized tribe and the state in which it resides negotiate a tribal-state gaming compact. Once settled, the U.S. Department of the Interior must approve all compacts.

However, thanks to the IGRA, not all tribal casinos need a gaming compact. Why? Because it depends on the type of gaming offered. Or, more accurately, its classification.

The IGRA defined gaming classifications which, as a federal law, makes these commonly held definitions for all U.S. states. For more on gaming classifications, see [Getting to Know Legal Gaming Classifications](#). In brief,

- Class I: Tribal ceremonies
- Class II: Competition-based gaming such as bingo
- Class III: Slot machines and table games

Class III tribal gaming requires a tribal-state gaming compact. Class I tribal ceremonies do not. But, Class II games may require a gaming compact, depending on the state. Tribal compacts are the result of often lengthy negotiations, after all.

The negotiations include whether non-tribal gaming exists in the state. If not, compact talks can be an uphill battle. It's a lot more work to introduce gaming to a state.

If non-tribal gaming exists, tribes may only negotiate for those Class III games already approved by the state at non-tribal casinos. Overcoming this limitation can be lots of work. Overcoming it isn't common.

If tribal gaming is coming to your state, and you're wondering what kind of games you'll find, consider what other gaming already exists in your state. That's most likely what you'll get.

In part, compact negotiations include a desire by the state to protect the income of existing non-tribal casinos. These can be lobbying efforts by those casinos or just protecting state income taxes from gaming revenue.

As with Virginia tribal gaming efforts, for example, out-of-state lobbying efforts have so far prevented Virginia's first tribal casino. MGM Resorts International is making every effort to protect the gaming income of MGM National Harbor, just across the state line in Maryland.

5. Who Operates a Tribal Casino?

The owner of each tribal casino is one or more federally-recognized American Indian tribe, band, or pueblo. But, that's the owner. Who operates the casino?

Sometimes, a tribe decides to let a professional casino operator run their tribal casino. There are solid business reasons to take this approach. While the casino operator takes a cut of revenue, a professionally run casino can generate quite a bit more profit to share.

For instance, Harrah's operates both tribal casinos in North Carolina. The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians owns both tribal casinos. But, the tribe has contracted Harrah's, a division of Caesars Entertainment, to operate it for them.

Part of that agreement between the tribe and Caesars included allowing Harrah's to have its name included in the name of the casinos:

- Harrah's Cherokee in Cherokee situated 50 miles west of Ashville
- Harrah's Cherokee Valley River in Murphy situated 109 miles southwest of Ashville

Caesars Entertainment is one of the largest casino operator conglomerates in the world, along with MGM Resorts International. For instance, they own and operate most casinos on the Las Vegas strip.

A substantial business advantage with hiring such a major casino operator isn't just their knowledge, experience, and professionalism. These operators also have assets to share.

All casinos have a players' reward club. It may be small or large, but they all have one. But, guests of tribal casinos operated by Harrah's get to join the Caesars Rewards players' club. American Indian tribal casinos operated by MGM get to join M life rewards.

A Caesars Reward club card holder gets more and more interesting complimentary gifts than a tribal casino could provide alone. Put another way, that widely available players' club program is of value to guests at tribal casinos.

It's a win-win scenario for both the tribe and the casino operator. With it, the tribe gains credibility and gives value to their guests. For the casino operator, it's an inexpensive perk. Why?

Because a significant casino operator does not have to go through the expense of setting up a rewards club program. For example, there's hardly any additional cost to adding a few thousand members through a casino or two in North Carolina. After all, their rewards program already has millions of members.

A significant casino operator need not be a non-tribal organization. Mohegan Gaming and Entertainment is a fast-growing U.S. and international casino operator managed by the Mohegan Tribe. The eight casinos MGE operates are:

- Casino Niagara in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada
- Ilani in Ridgefield, Washington
- Inspire Entertainment Resort in Incheon, South Korea
- Mohegan Sun in Uncasville, Connecticut
- Mohegan Sun Pocono in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
- Paragon Casino Resort in Marksville, Louisiana
- Fallsview Casino Resort in Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada
- Resorts Casino Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey

6. Don't Cheat at a Tribal Casino

As already mentioned, federally-recognized American Indian tribes have:

- The right of self-determination
- Tribal sovereignty supported by the federal government

In general, this means they have tribal laws, courts, and police. If caught cheating at a tribal casino, you would expect to go to jail. But, would you expect tribal jail? Further, what are your expectations regarding tribal courts?

Robert Nersesian has written an excellent book, *The Law for Gamblers: A Legal Guide to the Casino Environment*. I recommend to you his excellent Chapter 8 entitled *Indian Gaming: OMG, WTF*. It's a real eye-opener.

If you get in legal trouble at a tribal casino, reach out to Robert Nersesian for legal help. I fully disclose that I am an Amazon Affiliate. Meaning, using the link above means I earn a bit of income. However, Mr. Nersesian has not paid me to promote him. I just like his work.

What might happen if someone cheats at a tribal casino? Naturally, the tribal police will take you to tribal jail. If you are not a member of the tribe, you next discover you have no constitutional rights to due process or other protections.

Perhaps you leisurely read through the above section on the IGRA and the rights given to federally-recognized tribes. If you gamble at tribal casinos, maybe you should reread those a little more closely. Just sayin'.

My best advice is this: Don't cheat at a tribal casino. Don't even give the appearance of cheating at a tribal casino. If you do either, it won't go well for you.

7. Tribal Use of Gaming Profits

In 1988, the U.S. Congress enacted the IGRA to support tribal economic development including:

- Tribal government operations
- Infrastructure
- Social services and financial programs
- Tribal enterprises
- Charitable causes
- Contract local government services, if desired

To understand actual use of tribal gaming profits, consider each state having a non-tribal gaming industry. How well do those states use their non-tribal gaming profits? Well, it depends on the state.

Not all states are doing particularly well with their use of non-tribal gaming revenue. Some are an excellent example to other states. Others, not so much. The care and quality of state gaming regulations, or lack of care and quality, determines their success.

There are only 56 U.S. states, territories, and the federal district, each of which is a U.S. gaming jurisdiction. In my non-legal opinion, even Utah is a U.S. gaming jurisdiction. Why? Because Utah has at least one state gaming regulation: All forms of gambling are illegal.

When it comes to using gaming profits, American Indian tribes are like U.S. states. It depends. However, there are ten times more federally recognized tribes than U.S. states.

Under the IGRA, 573 bands and tribes with federal recognition unite at a national level. This federal law is common amongst all of them in terms of supporting tribal economic development. There is no such common law for state gaming regulations.

Because of common federal law, perhaps there is more abuse among the states than across ten times as many tribes. Perhaps. The difficulty is the considerable investment needed to know the differences.

For example, it took me just over a year to write my state-by-state online resource for slots players. Each week, I wrote an article about one U.S. state, territory, or the federal district. For the complete set, it took me 56 weeks to write 56 articles.

Imagine how long it would take an individual to research and write 573 articles on each federally recognized tribe. At a rate of one piece per week, such a project would take ten years. The start of the series would be ten years out of date once completed.

However, larger organizations or federal and state governments have the resources, personnel, and funding to take on such a project. For example, the American Gaming Association (AGA) contracted an economic study of tribal gaming. See *The Economic Impact of Tribal Gaming: A State-by-State Analysis* from September 2017.

This 21-page report is well worth reading. It also makes several interesting observations. Here are just a few:

- Tribal gaming has grown 300x since the passing of the IGRA in 1988
- Tribal gaming generates over 44% of all U.S. gaming revenue
- Seven of the top 10 state gaming revenues include tribal gaming

8. Tribal Casinos Players Clubs

Have you identified your gambling goal as earning complimentary gifts? It's one possible gambling goal for slot machine players. Almost entirely, players receive comps through casino rewards programs.

By necessity, a small tribal casino has a small casino rewards program. However, an American Indian tribal casino operated by a significant corporation often comes with its own players' club. Depending on the comps you are looking to earn, either scenario has its pros and cons.

A small casino rewards program at your local tribal casino focuses on the local area. The local audience is well known. That knowledge is its strength. To them, it's personal.

An extensive casino rewards program of a major casino operator has difficulty being personal. However, you can potentially earn travel comps from them to any of their other properties. For example, they may operate half the casinos on the Las Vegas strip.

Casino rewards programs are about establishing and maintain customer loyalty. A small casino rewards program tries to partner with other casinos, perhaps offering a bus trip across the state to a nearby casino.

A national rewards program tries to take away the competitive advantage of small rewards programs. One way to do this is to establish a team of hosts at each casino where they operate. These hosts learn what the patrons of that casino want.

Both size rewards programs do these things with somewhat limited success. Isolated reservations are where most American Indian tribal casinos are located. Being remote makes it difficult to work with other casinos as none are nearby.

On the other hand, the host of a casino operated by a major corporation can have 900 patrons they're trying to get to know on a personal level. That's a lot of people to get to know. These hosts take a lot of detailed notes.

Earning complimentary gifts is what happens when you play at a casino when using their rewards program card. Anyone can earn a comp, sometimes by merely signing up for the program.

But, some slot machine players have identified earning complimentary gifts as their primary gambling goal. For them, it's not about money or entertainment. It's about earning comps, which means players need a rewards program with which they can work.

The loyalty programs at tribal casinos vary in size and what they have to offer. Bigger is not always better. If you want to earn comps, what comps do you want to receive?

At American Indian tribal casinos, the player desirability of small or large rewards programs depends on you. It depends on what you want.

Do you want a new outdoor grill? Sure, either size club will provide one if you earn it. How about earning travel comps? Well, that depends on where they can send you as well as if you care to go there. Don't even get me started on winning a car at a casino.

Yes, I've done that, although it wasn't at a tribal casino. I cover what it's like to win a car at a casino in [podcast episode #19](#).

9. Class II vs. Class III Tribal Gaming

The IGRA is a federal law. It defined gaming classifications for all U.S. states, territories, and the federal district. Therefore, these classifications are legal definitions. Few other legal gambling terms are standard across the U.S.

As a reminder, Class I gaming is tribal ceremonies. Class II gaming is competition-style games. Class III gaming is everything else.

If you are visiting a tribal casino, you'll want to know in advance if they are offering Class II or Class III gaming. Why? Because it can be difficult to tell which is which when sitting down at a slot machine.

For a Class II slot machine, the spinning reels are often for entertainment purposes only. This feature means it can be difficult to distinguish from a Class III slot machine. Some tribal casinos have both types.

But, does it matter if you're playing a Class II or Class III slot machine? Here's why it matters: the gaming regulations are different. For instance, the Class III machine might have a minimum payout return limit defined in the tribal compact. The Class II machine next to it usually doesn't.

Another difference is more practical. Class II machines are competition-based. One way a slot machine becomes competitive is by including a gameplay decision for the player.

Another way to make a slot machine competitive doesn't involve a gameplay decision. Instead, all the Class II slot machines on the casino floor may be playing a form of bingo. It is not at all evident if this is happening.

If you're playing slots at American Indian tribal casinos, in my opinion, you need to know what game you're playing. In terms of card table games, do you know how to win if you're holding cards? No.

To win at table card games, you also need the game rules. You need to know what card game you're playing.

The same is true with slot machines at American Indian tribal casinos. Perhaps you're enjoying an excellent game of Class II bingo on an electronic gaming machine.

Or, maybe you have more legal protections on the Class III machine next to a bingo machine. Know that there's a difference in ways that likely matter to you.

10. East Coast Versus West Coast

Is there a difference between American Indian tribal casinos based on where they are in the U.S.? Because the IGRA is a federal law, there are fewer differences from coast-to-coast than you might expect.

However, there's still a substantial difference. This is history-based. Many of the tribes found in Oklahoma did not originate in that state or even that region of the country.

The ancestral home of many tribes currently federally recognized as tribal communities in Oklahoma was much nearer to the east coast of the U.S. There's no way not to recognize that eastern tribes moved west, often forcibly. Or, through famine or otherwise, the tribes died out literally or figuratively.

Today, there are few American Indian tribes near the east coast of the U.S. Those that remain are, shall we say, durable. And, that durability includes tribal gaming.

Mohegan Gaming & Entertainment (MGE) is a significant casino operator operated by the Mohegan Tribe of Connecticut. As a demonstration of its success, MGE recently won a contract with the gaming jurisdiction crown agency of Ontario. Besides its other casino properties, MGE now operates the two Canadian casinos near Niagara Falls.

On the other hand, California has the second most casinos in the U.S. Further, California has tribal casinos only.

Near the middle of the continental U.S. is Oklahoma. Not only does it have the largest population of American Indians when compared to any other U.S. state, but it also has the highest number of casinos. Like California, Oklahoma has tribal casinos only.

11. The Future of Tribal Gaming

As of September 2017, tribal gaming revenue accounts for over 44% of all gaming revenue in the U.S. It's grown 300x since 1988. In early 2018, six more tribes became federally recognized.

All signs seem to indicate that the future of tribal gaming is bright. Tribal casinos are opening in many states right alongside non-tribal casinos during the last few years. As I have mentioned elsewhere, it is a dynamic time of change in the U.S. gaming industry.

There's also a bit of synergy worth mentioning regarding a sort of tension within a state's gaming industry. The IGRA is a federal law designed to support tribes. If a state allows casino gambling and has a federally recognized tribe, the tribe will most likely attempt to negotiate a tribal-state compact.

It is nearly impossible to prevent tribal casinos if a state does not entirely prohibit gambling, perhaps by the state constitution. If bingo is legal, for example, then tribal casinos can offer Class II competition slot machines without a tribal-state compact.

The state may object. There may be court injunctions filed based on pertinent legal precedents, as Texas did for years. But, it is possible because the IGRA legally provides tribes that opportunity.

My points here are this: As non-tribal gaming grows within a state, so will tribal gaming if that state has a federally recognized tribe. And, if the tribe opens a Class II tribal casino or negotiates a Class III tribal-state compact, then non-tribal casinos will want to open.

Why? Because it's all about market share. If tribal casinos become the go-to place for the state's gamblers, the market can quickly become saturated. Other casinos might not survive if they try to open in a state with a mature gaming industry. Iowa is an excellent example of this scenario in action.

Summary of *Tribal Casinos Overview*

In summary, tribal gaming is involved, even sophisticated, in terms of legal, regulatory, political, and economic factors. Consequently, it is one of the least understood segments of the U.S. gaming industry.

I hope that this summary article on *American Indian tribal casinos* will help slot machine casino gamblers better understand the tribal casinos they visit.

Call to Action #2 (add sound effect afterward)

Remember to visit professorslots.com/subscribe to get my Free Report Revealing ... The top 7 online resources for improving your gambling performance, including the one I've used as a top-tier slot machine casino gambler.

Introduction

Up next is the second segment of the show on slot machine casino gambling. Here, I provide a brief overview of the current state of gambling in two U.S. states, territories, or federal district emphasizing, by far, anything of interest to slot machine casino gamblers.

Up first is Puerto Rico slot machine casino gambling 2019. Here goes!

Puerto Rico slot machine casino gambling consists of sixteen casinos as well as casinos on visiting cruise ships. In late September 2017, Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, but this U.S. territory has slowly been making physical and economic recoveries.

Puerto Rico has set a minimum payout return for their slot machines. No up-to-date statistics for actual payout return percentages are available online.

Relevant Legal Statutes on Gambling in Puerto Rico

The minimum legal gambling age in Puerto Rico does not depend upon the gambling activity:

- Land-Based Casinos: 18
- Poker Rooms: 18
- Bingo: 18
- Lottery: 18
- Pari-Mutuel Wagering: 18

The maximum denomination for a slot machine in Puerto Rico is \$25.

Slot Machine Private Ownership in Puerto Rico

Next up is a usually short statement about slot machine private ownership, which I have included in case you live in this U.S. territory and are considering owning a slot machine. Here it is:

In Puerto Rico, the legal status for privately owning a slot machine in this island territory is unknown.

Gaming Control Board in Puerto Rico

The Gaming Division of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company regulates gaming in Puerto Rico.

Casinos in Puerto Rico

In this section, I'll discuss Puerto Rico gambling establishments.

There are thirteen non-tribal casinos as well as visiting cruise ships in Puerto Rico. San Juan has eight casinos including 92 table games and nearly 2,000 gaming machines.

The largest casino in Puerto Rico is Caguas Real Hotel & Casino in Caguas having 570 gaming machines and 10 table games.

Non-Tribal Casinos in Puerto Rico

There were sixteen casinos listed as being available in Puerto Rico. Most connect to well-known hotel chains such as Embassy Suites, Hilton, Holiday Inn, Hyatt, Marriott, Radisson, Ritz-Carlton, Westin, and Wyndham.

As usual when there are too many specific lodging and casino combinations to mention here, a complete list along with links to their websites, assuming they've set one up, is available on my website blog article for this state at professorslots.com/PR.

American Indian Casinos in Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico has no federally-recognized American Indian tribes and, therefore, has no tribal casinos.

Other Gambling Establishments

As an alternative to enjoying Puerto Rico slot machine casino gambling, consider exploring casino options in a nearby state. Bordering Puerto Rico is:

- North: Atlantic Ocean
- Northwest: Florida
- East: U.S. Virgin Islands
- South: Caribbean Sea
- West: Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and Cuba

To visit any of my articles on these U.S. states, simply visit ProfessorSlots.com followed by its two-letter designation. For example, my Florida slots article is available at ProfessorSlots.com/FL.

Payout Returns in Puerto Rico

Per Puerto Rico's territorial gaming regulations, the minimum payout return for slot machines in Puerto Rico is 83%.

The Puerto Rico Tourism Company has slots revenue reports at Statistics under the Slot Machines heading. Unfortunately, the revenue reporting shown there is over ten years old.

Summary of Puerto Rico Slots 2019

In summary, Puerto Rico slot machine casino gambling consists of sixteen casinos as well as casinos on visiting cruise ships. This U.S. territory has slowly been making physical and economic recoveries since Hurricane Maria in 2017.

Puerto Rico has set an 83% minimum payout return for their slot machines. No up-to-date statistics for actual payout return percentages are available online.

Annual Progress in Puerto Rico Slot Machine Casino Gambling

Over the last year, Puerto Rico has recovered from much of the widespread devastation caused by Hurricane Maria.

I've found all the U.S. territories to be interesting when it comes to the gaming industry. There are only five U.S. territories including American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In many ways, each of these U.S. gaming jurisdictions is perhaps at the greatest risk of setting up their gaming regulations wrong.

Just look at what's happen this year in the Northern Mariana Islands. China is basically subduing the territorial government through economic means. These territories have their own challenges when it comes to being economically viable, so a so-called simple solution of adding gambling options is very tempting.

Puerto Rico is being careful with their gaming industry. I can appreciate why they'd want to. Sure, the midwestern states want to also be careful setting up their gaming industry. But if, say, Nebraska messes it up it's not likely a Chinese company will effectively take it over.

Another way territorial gaming jurisdictions are interesting is really all about tourism. Tourists visit. With money. While on vacation. That's a potent combination. Another potent combination is having American service men and women readily looking for ways to spend their hard-won money without leaving the island they're stationed on.

For territories, setting up a gaming industry is both tempting and risky. With only five U.S. territories, we have a wide spread response. Some are competent, like Puerto Rico. Some avoid the whole gaming issue entirely, like American Samoa. Another mentioned earlier is incompetent or possibly even corrupt.

I've seen a spread out response with the U.S. states and federal district, but the upper and lower limits of this spread are more extreme for the territories than the states. Maybe. Maybe states are better at hiding corruption, but I don't think that's been true for decades.

The states seem better protected, somehow. Is it due to more attention from the federal government? If so, why would the federal government pay more attention to states? Is it due to something internal with the island territories?

Perhaps economic conditions there are just so very different from what states experience that Nevada's gaming experts, those that lead the world in how to set up a working gaming regulatory framework, simply don't know how to help an island territory. If so, I'm a little surprised by that. Isn't Las Vegas just an island in the middle of a desert? You'd think they'd be able to relate.

So, again, I've found my research on the gaming industry in the U.S. territories to be interesting. They have such a great need for income. Some choose to add a gaming option for their tourism sector.

Of those that do so to help their island economy, some get it very right. Others get it very wrong. What isn't in doubt, though, is that somebody is making a lot on money from it. I'm rooting for the people of our U.S. territories. All five territories. Good going, Puerto Rico. Keep up the good work. As for you, Northern Mariana Islands, get your act together. Please.

Call to Action #3 (add sound effect afterward)

Remember to visit professorslots.com/subscribe to get my Free Report Revealing ... The top 7 online resources for improving your gambling performance, including the one I've used as a top-tier slot machine casino gambler.

Introduction

Up next is the second state comprising this episode segment: Rhode Island Slot Machine Casino Gambling 2019. Here goes!

Rhode Island slot machine casino gambling consists of two casinos having video lottery terminal (VLT) style slot machines regulated by the state lottery. All VLTs offer six or more games including slots, blackjack, keno, and three versions of poker.

Minimum and maximum theoretical payout return limits have not been legally set. However, monthly payout return statistics for each casino are available online.

Relevant Legal Statutes on Gambling in Rhode Island

The minimum legal gambling age in Rhode Island does not depend upon the gambling activity:

- Land-Based Casinos: 18
- Poker Rooms: 18
- Bingo: 18
- Lottery: 18
- Pari-Mutuel Wagering: 18

In November 1973, a constitutional amendment approved by voters allowed the state to begin regulating lotteries in Rhode Island. Under this gaming regulation, the first drawing was in May 1974.

In 1992, video lottery terminals became available at the state's two pari-mutuel facilities. Table games became available at first one facility in 2013 and the other in late 2018.

Slot Machine Private Ownership in Rhode Island

Regarding slot machine private ownership, it is legal to privately own a slot machine in the state of Rhode Island.

Gaming Control Boards in Rhode Island

A 1973 constitutional amendment created the Rhode Island Lottery Commission to regulate the lottery but disbanded in 2005. By mid-2006, the gaming commission became the State Lottery Division of the State of Rhode Island Department of Revenue.

Rather than this state government website, Rhode Island gaming history, regulations, and financial statistics are at the Rhode Island Lottery website.

Casinos in Rhode Island

There are two non-tribal casinos in Rhode Island. These casinos offer video lottery terminal (VLT) gaming machines, table games, sports betting, and pari-mutuel wagering despite not having racetracks. All VLTs offer six or more games, including slots, blackjack, keno, and three versions of poker.

The largest casino in Rhode Island is Twin River Casino Hotel having 4,200 gaming machines and over 100 table games.

The second largest and only other casino in Rhode Island is Tiverton Casino Hotel having over 1,000 gaming machines and over 30 table games.

Non-Tribal Casinos in Rhode Island

The two pari-mutuel wagering facilities in Rhode Island with VLT slot machines are:

1. Tiverton Casino Hotel in Tiverton located 22 miles southeast of Providence about 500 feet from the Massachusetts border.
2. Twin River Casino Hotel in Lincoln located 7 miles north-northwest of Providence.

American Indian Casinos in Rhode Island

Rhode Island has a single federally-recognized American Indian tribe, the Narragansett Indian Tribe. However, there are no tribal casinos in Rhode Island.

Other Gambling Establishments

As an alternative to enjoying Rhode Island slot machine casino gambling, consider exploring casino options in a nearby state. Bordering Rhode Island is:

- North and East: Massachusetts
- South: Atlantic Ocean
- West: Connecticut

To visit any of my articles on these U.S. states, simply visit ProfessorSlots.com followed by its two-letter designation. For example, my Massachusetts slots article is available at ProfessorSlots.com/MA.

Rhode Island slots really is an excellent alternative to anyone living in southern or just south of the New England region. I just said that there are alternatives to Rhode Island slots but, in many ways, Rhode Island is the alternative to Massachusetts and Connecticut. Heck, Tiverton Casino Hotel is only 500 feet from the Massachusetts border.

But, Rhode Island is also an alternative gambling option to other nearby if not neighboring states like New York, New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, and more.

Remember, Rhode Island is a relatively small state surrounded by other small states. You can easily fly into Warwick, Rhode Island's T. F. Green International Airport a few miles south of Providence and easily take an Uber over to Connecticut's Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods casinos. It's only 41 to 51 miles away from either tribal casino.

Payout Returns in Rhode Island

Rhode Island has not established minimum or maximum theoretical payout return limits on its video lottery terminals.

Rhode Island's actual payout return statistics by month and casino for video lottery terminals shows both casino hold percentage and player win percentage. For March 2019, player win% for Rhode Island's casinos were:

- Twin River: 92.20%
- Tiverton: 92.19%

Summary to Rhode Island Slots 2019

In summary, Rhode Island slot machine casino gambling consists of two casinos having video lottery terminal (VLT) style slot machines regulated by the state lottery. All VLTs offer six or more games including slots, blackjack, keno, and three versions of poker.

Minimum and maximum theoretical payout return limits have not been legally set. Each month, for each of Rhode Island's two casinos, actual payout return statistics are publicly available.

Annual Progress in Rhode Island Slot Machine Casino Gambling

Over the last year, on October 28, 2018, the Newport Grand Casino closed. Using the same gambling license, and with the same number of gaming machines, the newly constructed Tiverton Casino Hotel opened the following day.

Call to Action #4 (add sound effect afterward)

Remember to visit professorslots.com/subscribe to get my Free Report Revealing ... The top 7 online resources for improving your gambling performance, including the one I've used as a top-tier slot machine casino gambler.

Podcast Reviews

Next up is a 5-star review provided by Jackpot John from the USA version of iTunes on June 7, 2019:

- Title: Just found this
- Review: *"I love slots and this info is very interesting."*

Thanks, John. I appreciate that. I love slots, too.

If you'd like to provide a rating and review for this podcast, which will may well help other slots enthusiasts decide to take a listen to one or more of my episodes, simply visit ProfessorSlots.com/ApplePodcasts to find my show on Apple to leave a review:

On the Next Episode of Professor Slots

Part I of the next episode of the Professor Slots podcast is on one of several possible topics. I'm hoping to be able to make it a casino review.

To make a suggestion or ask a question which might end up as a blog article or on a podcast episode, email it to jon@professorslots.com where Jon is spelled J-O-N or by calling 702-90-SLOTS to leave a voicemail.

Part II of the next episode of the Professor Slots podcast are more brief overviews of the current state of gambling in two U.S. states, territories, or federal district. Next time, I'll be talking to you about the great U.S. states of South Carolina and South Dakota.

Closing (closing music)

That's the end of another great episode of the Professor Slots podcast. Thanks so much for listening!

Show notes for this episode are now available within most podcast Apps, but are also available on my website at professorslots.com/e53.

I plan to have the next episode come out very soon for you, where I'll have more amazing content for the show.

Until the next episode: Have fun, be safe, and make good choices! Bye.

320-character description:

My tribal gaming overview covers of legal, regulatory, political, and economic factors. It's one of the least understood segments of the U.S. gaming industry. This episode on tribal casinos helps slot machine casino gamblers better understand the tribal casinos they visit. Plus, Puerto Rico and Rhode Island slots in 2019.

156-character description:

My American Indian tribal casinos overview of complex legal, regulatory, political, and economic issues. Plus, Puerto Rico and Rhode Island slots in 2019.