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Rat Pack Confidential: Frank, Dean, Sammy, Peter, Joey And The Last Great Show Biz Party



Synopsis

For the first time, the full story of what happened when Frank Sinatra brought his best pals to party in a land called Vegas. January 1960. Las Vegas is at its smooth, cool peak. The Strip is a jet-age theme park, and the greatest singer in the history of American popular music summons a group of friends there to make a movie. One is an insouciant singer of Italian songs, ex-partner to the most popular film comedian of the day. One is a short, black, Jewish, one-eyed, singing, dancing wonder. One is an upper-crust British pretty boy turned degenerate B-movie actor, brother-in-law to an ascendant politician. And one is a stiff-shouldered comic with the quintessential Borscht Belt emcee's knack for needling one-liners. The architectonically sleek marquee of the Sands Hotel announces their presence simply by listing their names: FRANK SINATRA. DEAN MARTIN. SAMMY DAVIS, JR. PETER LAWFORD. JOEY BISHOP. Around them an entire cast gathers: actors, comics, singers, songwriters, gangsters, politicians, and women, as well as thousands of starstruck everyday folks who fork over pocketfuls of money for the privilege of basking in their presence. They call themselves The Clan. But to an awed world, they are known as The Rat Pack. They had it all. Fame. Gorgeous women. A fabulous playground of a city and all the money in the world. The backing of fearsome crime lords and the blessing of the President of the United States. But the dark side--over the thin line between pleasure and debauchery, between swinging self-confidence and brutal arrogance--took its toll. In four years, their great ride was over, and showbiz was never the same. Acclaimed Jerry Lewis biographer Shawn Levy has written a dazzling portrait of a time when neon brightness cast sordid shadows. It was Frank's World, and we just lived in it. From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

File Size: 8303 KB

Print Length: 368 pages

Publisher: Broadway Books (September 17, 1999)

Publication Date: September 17, 1999

Sold by: Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B000FC1K5M

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #47,732 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #5 in Books > Arts & Photography > Performing Arts > Reference #39 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Popular Culture #60 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > Arts & Literature > Actors & Entertainers > Actors & Actresses

Customer Reviews

It's January 1960, a time of shiny suits and narrow ties, the space race, JFK and rumbles in the jungle. Gray clouds may be gathering ninety miles off the coast of Florida but a full blown storm is already roaring through the City of Las Vegas, way out West. Frank Sinatra has swept into the neon playground to make a movie called 'Ocean's Eleven' and to do more than his fair share of hell raising while he's at it. Joined by his Hollywood pals Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr, Peter Lawford and Joey Bishop, the glamorous quintet of singers, dancers and comics are officially known as 'The Clan' and somewhat less respectfully as 'The Rat Pack'. Just for laughs, the boys have also decided to treat the guests of the Sands Casino to a series of adlib stage shows. With the playful celebs filming by day and clowning in the Sands 'Copa Room' by night, the whole crazy get-together is being referred to as 'The Summit' by members of the international media who simply can't get enough of the eminently newsworthy goings-on. And it's into this heady mix of thundering showbands, cigar smoke, tuxedos and riotous laughter that author Shawn Levy takes us on a personally guided tour. Not only do we get to enjoy the legendary club act but we also get to take a peek behind the big velvet curtain to catch a glimpse of the private partying that went on after hours. And boy, oh boy ... if only those red, blue and yellow 'feature walls' of the Sands were still standing, what a story they could tell. But we do have an excellent substitute in the form of Mr Levy who, provides a whiz-bang recap of the Rat Pack's life and times over the 300 plus pages that follow.

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