

AMPLIFYING LGBTQ+ VOICES SINCE 1978

Q VEGAS

NOVEMBER 27-DECEMBER 3 2024



MISS
INTERNATIONAL

Queen

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Miss International Queen USA
Finals in December at UNLV



Photos courtesy MIQ-USA

Whether you're a local or tourist, we always feature our favorite spots along with all the new and exciting things our city has to offer.

This week, we feature Miss International Queen – USA 2024, celebrating transgender beauty and resilience. Hosted in Las Vegas from December 8-12, the competition showcases 26 contestants. We spotlight five contestants ahead of this empowering event, which highlights talent, creativity, and advocacy, culminating in a crowning finale. This prestigious platform champions representation, inspires progress, and advocates for equality nationwide.

The National LGBTQ Task Force announces award-winning journalist and advocate Tre'Vell Anderson (they/them) as emcee for the 2025 Creating Change Conference, promising an inspiring event celebrating resistance, power, and love.



Russ White & Garrett Pattiani
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CAPRICORN

NOVEMBER 2024



Let me tell you, honey, the stars are about to strut their stuff and serve up some realness just for you. It's a time to sashay away from the drama and catwalk into your Power Moment, hunty! The universe is your runway, and it's screaming for a fierce comeback. So, put on those stilettos of ambition and werk it out because prosperity and a touch of love from Venus herself are in the spotlight. Remember, though, keep those eyes sharp like your contour because Mercury's retrograde strut could throw a little shade your way. But don't you worry, boo, because with your natural Capricorn resilience and a little extra glitter, you'll be shining brighter than ever. Now, go on and show them how it's done!



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A portrait of Tre'Vell Anderson, a Black woman with short, curly grey hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a grey off-the-shoulder top. She is smiling broadly, showing her teeth, and has her right hand raised near her face with her index finger pointing up. The background is a plain, light grey.

Tre'Vell Anderson to Emcee the 2025 Creating Change Conference in Las Vegas

The National LGBTQ Task Force has announced an exciting development for the 2025 Creating Change Conference: award-winning journalist, podcaster, and cultural advocate Tre'Vell Anderson (they/them) will take center stage as the event's official emcee. Known for their sharp insight, authentic storytelling, and unapologetic advocacy, Anderson's involvement sets the stage for a dynamic and inspiring event.

About Tre'Vell Anderson

Tre'Vell Anderson is a highly respected voice within journalism and advocacy, widely celebrated for their work elevating stories from historically underrepresented communities. As the co-host of the critically acclaimed podcasts "FANTI" and "What A Day," they've earned a reputation for their incisive commentary and thoughtful discussions on culture, identity, and politics.

In addition to their podcasting work, Anderson is the author of "We See Each Other: A Black, Trans Journey Through TV and Film," a groundbreaking book that explores representation and identity in media. Their thought leadership has earned them accolades and a devoted following, making them a perfect fit for the Creating Change Conference, where their advocacy for equity and justice will undoubtedly resonate with attendees.

Creating Change 2025: "Rooted in Resistance, Power & Love"

The 2025 Creating Change Conference will take place from January 22 to 26 at the Rio Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. As the largest annual gathering of LGBTQ activists, advocates, and allies, the conference serves as a hub for education, collaboration, and celebration. This year's theme, "Rooted in Resistance, Power & Love," reflects the community's resilience and determination to achieve justice and liberation for all.

The conference offers a wide array of programming, including workshops, panels, and plenary sessions designed to inspire action and foster connection. Attendees can expect to engage with topics ranging from policy and activism to arts and culture, all grounded in the shared commitment to equity.

With Tre'Vell Anderson at the helm, the 2025 conference promises to be both impactful and unforgettable. Their unique ability to blend gravitas with joy will set the tone for an event that is as empowering as it is celebratory.

Why Tre'Vell Anderson's Role Matters

Having Tre'Vell Anderson as the emcee underscores the conference's dedication to amplifying voices from the intersections of identity. As a Black, trans, and nonbinary individual, Anderson embodies the diversity and complexity of the LGBTQ

community. Their work has consistently highlighted the importance of inclusive representation, and their presence at Creating Change sends a powerful message about the value of centering marginalized voices in the fight for equality.

By stepping into this prominent role, Anderson will undoubtedly inspire attendees to embrace their power and continue the collective work toward justice. Their voice, humor, and deep understanding of the issues facing the LGBTQ community will bring the theme of resistance, power, and love to life, reminding all present of the strength found in solidarity.

Join the Movement

The Creating Change Conference is a must-attend event for anyone invested in the advancement of LGBTQ rights. Don't miss the chance to join thousands of advocates in Las Vegas for this transformative gathering.

With Tre'Vell Anderson as emcee, the 2025 Creating Change Conference is poised to inspire a new wave of activists and allies, united in their commitment to building a more equitable future. Mark your calendar, and prepare to be part of something truly extraordinary.

Registration is now open, with more information available at thetaskforce.org/creating-change.



Registration is open!

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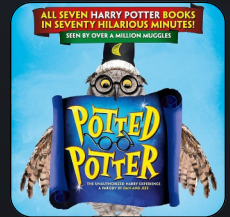
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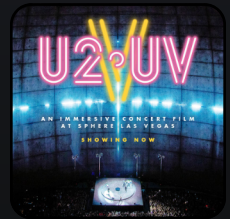
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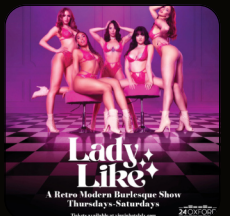
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See all 26 Miss International Queen USA contestants compete in Las Vegas!

The Crown Awaits: Miss International Queen USA 2024 Shines a Spotlight on Transgender Empowerment and Beauty in Las Vegas

Las Vegas is preparing to host one of the most empowering and glamorous events of the year: the Miss International Queen – USA (MIQ-USA) competition. Set to take place from December 8th to December 12th, 2024, this five-day event celebrates the resilience, talent, and beauty of transgender women from across the United States. Organized by the non-profit Be The Transformational Change Fund, MIQ-USA offers a platform for contestants to amplify their voices and showcase their individuality. With 26 extraordinary contestants vying for the crown, the competition promises to be an inspiring testament to diversity, inclusion, and determination.

This year's pageant is more than just a contest—it's a movement. It highlights the strides the transgender community has made while addressing the challenges still faced by many. Contestants will participate in various events, from the National Costume and Talent Show to workshops and galas, culminating in the grand finale where the reigning queen, Kataluna Enriquez, will crown her successor.

Among the contestants, five extraordinary women have captured the spotlight with their inspiring journeys, advocacy, and dedication to making a difference. Let's meet them.

Olivia Lourn: A Beacon of Resilience and Inspiration

Representing Orlando, Florida, Olivia Lourn brings a heartfelt story of perseverance and hope. Born in Havana, Cuba, Olivia migrated to the U.S. in 2003 and has since embraced every opportunity to inspire others. Her fascination with pageants

began as a young girl, watching queens overcome hardships to embody "beauty with a purpose."

For Olivia, the MIQ-USA stage is a platform to influence and uplift. Her favorite part of the pageant is finding ways to inspire "the little me" in others—helping them feel seen, confident, and motivated to embrace their true selves. Olivia describes herself as resilient, intelligent, and beautiful inside and out, qualities that resonate in her advocacy for safe transitioning practices. A liaison for surgeons in Colombia, Olivia ensures that transgender individuals have access to informed, safe healthcare options.

As a nod to her Cuban heritage and immigrant journey, Olivia promises a talent portion that will resonate with audiences nationwide. With her classic beauty icons—Sophia Loren and Audrey Hepburn—guiding her timeless style, Olivia hopes to channel grace, poise, and purpose to leave a lasting impact on both the judges and the audience.

Anne Santiago: From Adversity to Advocacy

Born in Los Angeles but raised in the Philippines, Anne Santiago represents New York City. Her journey has been one of overcoming adversity with determination and grit. Separated from her parents as a child, Anne returned to the Philippines, where she completed her education and earned a bachelor's degree in medical laboratory science. Her success in a field where trans women are often underestimated is a testament to her resilience and ambition.

For Anne, the MIQ-USA stage is about

representation and empowerment. She aims to inspire others to see that transgender women belong in every professional space. Describing herself as bubbly, outgoing, and fun, Anne draws fashion inspiration from Heart Evangelista, a Filipina fashion icon known for her impeccable style.

Balancing her career in healthcare with her passion for social media content creation, Anne's ultimate goal is to expand her influence and inspire the next generation of transgender individuals to break barriers. Her warm, approachable demeanor and drive to create a better future make her a standout in this year's competition.

Gia: A Voice for Healthcare Equality

Chicago-based showgirl Gia is stepping onto the MIQ-USA stage with a mission to advocate for healthcare access for all transgender individuals. Originally from Florida, Gia faced the reality of losing healthcare coverage in her home state, prompting her move to Chicago in search of better opportunities. Her experience has fueled her desire to ensure that no trans person has to relocate to access essential care.

Describing herself as sensitive, ambitious, and kind, Gia credits her role models—Mimi Marks, Melony Munro, and Shantell DeMarco—with inspiring her to use her platform for more than just entertainment. A dancer by trade, Gia is venturing into advocacy to make a tangible difference in the lives of others.

Gia's humility and humor shine through in her acknowledgment of the challenges of standing out among 26 "pretty girls." Despite the pressure, she remains



*2023 Competitors with winner
Kataluna Enriquez*

committed to celebrating individuality and building connections. With her focus on healthcare reform, Gia is determined to amplify her voice and spark meaningful change.

Vanessa Nagru: Championing Mental Health Awareness

Representing Dallas, Texas, Vanessa Nagru is a health advocate whose passion lies in promoting mental health awareness. Her journey to MIQ-USA is inspired by her mother, a single immigrant who instilled in Vanessa the values of perseverance and hard work. Fluent in English, Shona, and Zulu, Vanessa's multicultural background adds a unique perspective to the competition.

Vanessa's platform centers on the importance of mental health, particularly within the transgender community. She highlights the need for love, support, and spaces for open dialogue, especially during challenging political times. Her style icons—Rihanna and Zendaya—reflect her bold yet effortless approach to fashion and beauty.

Describing herself as confident, unique, and kind, Vanessa hopes to inspire others to embrace their authenticity and pursue their dreams. Her excitement to connect with fellow contestants and share stories underscores her belief in the power of community and representation.

Franz Charmaine Montecarlo: From Philanthropist to Pageant Queen

Las Vegas's own Franz Charmaine Montecarlo is no stranger to pageantry, having competed since the age of 16. As the founder of the Heart Project, Franz has dedicated her life to community service,

organizing medical missions, providing school supplies to children in the Philippines, and volunteering for Homeless Nevada.

Franz's journey is deeply rooted in her cultural background and commitment to helping others. She sees MIQ-USA as an opportunity to amplify her advocacy for underprivileged children and families. Her optimistic, hardworking, and innovative spirit shines through in her approach to the competition.

Franz's fun-loving side is evident in her love for food and her plans to introduce contestants to Las Vegas's vibrant dining scene. Inspired by Audrey Hepburn's timeless elegance, Franz embodies classic beauty and grace while using her platform to champion equality and human rights.

What to Expect at Miss International Queen – USA 2024

The five-day extravaganza is packed with events that celebrate the contestants' talent, creativity, and advocacy:

- December 8: The pageant kicks off with a press conference and the Sashing Ceremony, where contestants are introduced to the public.
- December 9: Contestants participate in a holiday-themed community service project and walk the red carpet at the MIQ-USA Gala Event.
- December 10: The National Costume and Talent Show showcases creativity and skill, with contestants presenting costumes that represent their home states and performing unique talents.
- December 11: Workshops focus on advocacy, leadership, and personal growth,

followed by Preliminary Night, where contestants compete in swimsuit and evening gown rounds.

- December 12: The grand finale features live performances, a question-and-answer session, and the crowning of the 2024 Miss International Queen – USA.

Beyond the Competition

MIQ-USA is more than a pageant; it's a celebration of the transgender community's beauty, strength, and resilience. By providing a platform for contestants to share their stories and advocate for important causes, MIQ-USA fosters a sense of unity and empowerment. The event also serves as a reminder of the progress made and the work still needed to achieve true equality.

As the competition approaches, the spotlight shines brightly on the 26 contestants, each bringing her unique story and perspective to the stage. With their passion, determination, and grace, these women are redefining beauty and breaking barriers—one step at a time.

The anticipation for Miss International Queen – USA 2024 is palpable, and the city of Las Vegas is ready to roll out the red carpet. As the contestants prepare to dazzle audiences and judges alike, one thing is certain: this year's competition will be a celebration of authenticity, resilience, and empowerment. Who will take home the crown? Stay tuned for an unforgettable journey!

A Very Vegas Christmas Music, Magic, and Holiday Cheer



Las Vegas is a city synonymous with world-class entertainment, but during the holidays, it transforms into something even more enchanting. At the heart of this season's celebrations is *A Very Vegas Christmas*, a spectacular production featuring some of the city's brightest stars. Ahead of the performance, QVegas caught up with conductor George Daugherty and vocalists Michelle Johnson and Clint Holmes. The show, featuring nine performers along with the Las Vegas Philharmonic (and a few other surprises) create a holiday event that promises to be unforgettable—a blend of musical brilliance, heartfelt storytelling, and community spirit.

A Shared Vision: George Daugherty's Extravaganza

George Daugherty, the creator and conductor of *A Very Vegas Christmas*, has been dreaming of this show for years. "We wanted this to be a true extravaganza," Daugherty explains, his enthusiasm palpable. "Las Vegas is filled with extraordinary talent, and this concert is our chance to celebrate that while creating a magical holiday experience."

As the visionary behind the event, Daugherty's passion for the season is evident. From classic Christmas tunes to innovative reinterpretations, the show is designed to evoke nostalgia while offering something fresh. "This concert is about touching hearts and rekindling memories," he says. "We've chosen music that people hold dear, but we're also putting a unique Las Vegas spin on it."

That unique spin includes everything from a reimagined *Nutcracker* performance to orchestral arrangements from iconic albums like *The Glorious Sounds of Christmas*. Add in animation from *A Charlie*

Brown Christmas and performances by legendary Las Vegas showgirls, and you have a production that truly lives up to the term "extravaganza."

Michelle Johnson: Jazz Meets the Holidays

Michelle Johnson, affectionately dubbed "Las Vegas' First Lady of Jazz" by her fans, brings her signature style to the production. Known for her soulful voice and love of jazz legends like Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday, Johnson sees the holidays as the perfect time to connect with audiences on a deeper level.

"Jazz and Christmas music actually blend beautifully," Johnson shares. "This concert lets me take classic holiday songs and add a jazzy twist to them. For example, I'm performing an Ella Fitzgerald arrangement of 'What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?' It's a holiday song that's timeless, romantic, and deeply personal."

Johnson is also excited about a duet she'll perform with fellow jazz singer Naomi Mauro. "We're adding a little something special to a Christmas classic," she teases. "It's moments like these—collaborating with other incredible artists—that make this concert so special."

For Johnson, performing with the Las Vegas Philharmonic is a dream come true. "Any singer who's worth their salt dreams of singing with an orchestra," she says. "It's elegant, it's glamorous, and it elevates you to your highest level as a performer."

Clint Holmes: A Voice That Defines the Season

Few performers embody Las Vegas like Clint Holmes. A legendary vocalist known for his charisma and emotional depth, Holmes brings a personal connection to his performance in *A Very Vegas Christmas*. The song he'll be singing, "The Christmas

Song (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire)," holds a special place in his heart.

"It's the first Christmas song my dad introduced me to, sung by Nat King Cole," Holmes recalls. "I've performed it many times over the years, but never with an orchestra. That's going to be a real treat."

Holmes' participation in the show is a testament to the tight-knit community of Las Vegas performers. Despite having his own holiday concert the same evening, he's making time to cross the alley from Myron's Cabaret to Reynolds Hall to share the stage with his peers. "It's a challenge, but it's worth it," Holmes says. "Being part of this production, surrounded by friends and incredible talent, is something I wouldn't miss."

A Celebration of Community

One of the defining features of *A Very Vegas Christmas* is its emphasis on the Las Vegas arts community. Daugherty, Johnson, and Holmes are joined by a stellar lineup of local talent, including Naomi Mauro, Jonathan Karrant, and the legendary showgirls who shaped the city's entertainment history. Each performance highlights the incredible diversity and camaraderie of Las Vegas' artistic scene.

"This city is full of world-class artists who genuinely support each other," Daugherty notes. "Michelle sang at Clint's last concert, Naomi performed at Michelle's, and Jonathan has worked with both of them. It's a community of mutual respect and admiration, and you can feel that energy on stage."

Johnson agrees, adding, "Las Vegas has so much more to offer than people realize. This concert is a chance for locals and visitors alike to see the depth of talent we have here. It's a celebration of everything that makes our city special."

The Magic of Reynolds Hall

Reynolds Hall at The Smith Center serves as the perfect backdrop for this holiday spectacular. Known for its stunning architecture and impeccable acoustics, the venue elevates every performance.

"Reynolds is heaven for a performer," Johnson says. "The sound, the atmosphere—it's just magical."

For Daugherty, the hall adds an extra layer of elegance to the production. "There's something about performing in a space like Reynolds that makes everything feel elevated," he says. "When you combine that with the Las Vegas Philharmonic, it's pure magic."

Behind the Scenes: The Creative Process

Pulling off a production of this scale is no small feat. The team spent months planning every detail, from selecting the repertoire to coordinating schedules for the star-studded cast. "We actually don't rehearse with the Philharmonic until the week of the concert," Johnson reveals. "Before that, it's a lot of individual practice and back-and-forth emails about arrangements and logistics."

Holmes echoes the sentiment, noting that the tight timeline adds an element of excitement. "It keeps you on your toes," he says. "You have to be prepared to bring your A-game."

Daugherty credits the dedication of the performers and the Philharmonic for making the process seamless. "Everyone involved is at the top of their game," he says. "It's a privilege to work with such talented professionals who are as passionate about this project as I am."

More Than Just a Concert

While A Very Vegas Christmas is undoubtedly a musical feast, it's also a deeply emotional experience. Each performer brings their own personal connection to the season, creating moments that resonate with audiences on a profound level.

For Johnson, it's about finding joy and connection. "The holidays can be hectic, especially for artists," she says. "This year, I've made a point to slow down and focus on what really matters—calling friends and loved ones—and Netflix and chill in my downtime."

Holmes, too, sees the concert as an opportunity to spread love and gratitude. "Christmas is a time to reflect on what's truly important," he says. "Through music, we can remind people of the beauty and joy that comes with the season."

Daugherty sums it up best: "This concert is about bringing people together—whether it's through music, memories, or the shared experience of sitting in a beautiful hall and feeling the magic of the holidays. That's what Christmas is all about."

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holiday tunes, A Very Vegas Christmas offers something for everyone.

The show also includes unique elements like a reimagined Nutcracker performance and appearances by iconic Las Vegas showgirls, including 98-year-old Anna Bailey, who broke racial barriers as the city's first African American showgirl.

"There's truly something for everyone," Daugherty says. "If you don't leave this concert feeling the holiday spirit, I'm not sure you like Christmas very much."

Three Words to Define the Show

When asked to describe the show in three words, the stars offer heartfelt responses.

"Joy, family, renewal," says Johnson.

"Gratitude, love, anticipation," adds Daugherty.

Holmes sums it up simply: "A holiday treat."

Don't Miss It

A Very Vegas Christmas is more than just a concert—it's a celebration of community, artistry, and the magic of the season. Whether you're a local looking to support Las Vegas talent or a visitor seeking an unforgettable holiday experience, this is one event you won't want to miss.

Performances take place at Reynolds Hall, and tickets are available through The Smith Center's website. Gather your loved ones, and make this holiday season truly special with a night of music, joy, and Vegas magic.

Tickets for matinee and evening performances available at lvphil.org.



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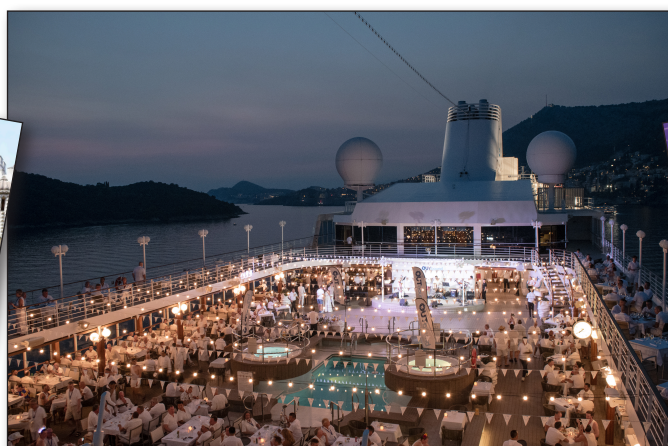


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alcoholicstogetherlasvegas.com

BEARS LAS VEGAS

bears.lv.org

COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER OF SOUTHERN NEVADA

cccfsn.org

HENDERSON PRIDE

hhendersonpride.org

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

hrc.org

IMPERIAL ROYALE SOVEREIGN COURT OF THE DESERT EMPIRE

desertempire.org

LAMBDA BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

lambdalv.com

LAS VEGAS MEN'S CHORUS

lvmenschorus.org

LAS VEGAS PRIME TIMERS

lasvegasprimetimers.com

LEATHER UNIFORM CLUB OF LAS VEGAS (LUC OF LV)

lucoflv.com

LEGACY COUNSELING

legacycounselingandworkforceconnections.com

MAMA DRAGONS

mamadragons.org

NEVADA GAY RODEO ASSOCIATION

ngra.com

THE PRIDE TREE

thepridetree.lv.com

SILVER STATE EQUALITY

silverstateequality.org

SOUTHERN NEVADA ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER QUEER SOCIETY

snapiqs.org

YOUNG: EQUAL

youngequal.org



HIV Resources

AID FOR AIDS OF NEVADA (AFAN)

afanlv.org

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF)

aidshealth.org

FARABI WELLNESS CENTER

hplv.com

GOLDEN RAINBOW

goldenrainbow.org

HORIZON RIDGE WELLNESS CLINIC

hrc.lv.org

SIN SITY SISTERS OF PERPETUAL INDULGENCE

sinsitysisters.org



STI Testing

THE ARLENE COOPER COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

thecenterlv.org

AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION (AHF)

aidshealth.org

HUNTRIDGE FAMILY CLINIC

huntridgefamilyclinic.org

SOUTHERN NEVADA HEALTH DISTRICT

southernnevadahealthdistrict.org

UMC

umcsn.com

Email info@qvegas.com to add your organization to our directory.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

DAVID HERNANDEZ

BRETT PRUNEAU

ESTEVAN VELASCO

CIERRA BLISS

EDIE

AFAN & U=U PRESENT

Blue CHRISTMAS AT HOUSE OF BLUES

HOLIDAY CAROLS & CUISINE

DECEMBER 8TH - 1:00 PM

GET TICKETS AT AFANLV.ORG

LIVE U=U.

HOUSE OF BLUES

afan
Aid for AIDS of Nevada

Join The Center on Friday, November 22nd from 6-9pm as we gather in solidarity to honor the lives of our #trans siblings lost to violence and hate. The evening will be a time for reflection, healing, and community connection.

Enjoy food, entertainment, and an open forum to share your thoughts, stories, and support. Let's uplift each other in a space of love, remembrance, and resilience.

Come as you are. No RSVP is needed for this event.

getting old ain't is for sissies, too

you deserve a voice in healthy aging research

share your story

833-966-6974

rainbowsfaging.org

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Q VEGAS BAR & NIGHTCLUB GUIDE

Download on the App Store

