



## Penn Quarter Museums are the Hit of the Season!

*DC's Spy, Crime & Punishment, and Wax Museums Experience High Holiday Attendance*

---

Washington, DC – 12 January 2009— DC's Penn Quarter Museums are the hit of the holiday season! Madame Tussauds Wax Museum saw an attendance increase of 5.43% between the Christmas and New Year holidays in 2008 and at The National Museum of Crime & Punishment attendance tripled the previous three week's attendance. The International Spy Museum sold more admission tickets that same week than in any prior year, including the opening year in 2002!

At The National Museum of Crime & Punishment officials were thrilled with the high end-of-year attendance. “Although we do not have year over year data since we have only been open six months, we were pleasantly surprised to finish the year on such a high note” stated Chief Operating Officer, Janine Vaccarello. “The last week of the year tripled the previous weeks in December.”

In just one week, over 17,600 guests purchased admission tickets, packing exhibit halls and surpassing the International Spy Museum’s previous 2004 record. Museum officials were extremely pleased to have found that the Museum delivered this incredible achievement in the current downturn economy. Like most museums in the city, the Spy Museum anticipated little, if any, growth from previous years. “I think this speaks volumes about the strength of the International Spy Museum’s brand” stated Karen Corbin, the Museum’s Chief Operating Officer. “We did see increased visitation from the surrounding counties, which, coupled with continued robust business from the tourism market, created the strong showing. Our 2008 push for

- more -

greater brand awareness and recognition in the DC metro area and its surrounding counties is ensuring a meaningful and long life for our ground-breaking cultural institution.”

The Spy Museum continues to be one of the top destinations of visitors to DC, averaging #2 on their list of attractions to see in the nation’s capital. The Museum is also doing increasingly well in the local market, with 38% of guests this holiday season visiting from the District, Maryland and Virginia. Previous years saw local DC metro area visitation closer to 20%.

The popularity of the International Spy Museum’s interactive special experience, Operation Spy, contributed to the increased visitation as well—the exhibition was sold out through much of the week. Operation Spy allows guests to take on the role of a spy on an international mission to save the world from nuclear destruction.

As a result of the unprecedented popularity of the award winning Operation Spy, the Museum is creating a new offering, Spy at Night, which launches 9 January 2009. Spy at Night will offer exclusive evening access to Operation Spy, programmed to include a variety of specially tailored spy skill challenges, including secret message deciphering contests and spy trivia competitions. Spies at Night will also be able to enjoy cool cocktails and a mouthwatering bar menu. Spy at Night will extend Museum Complex hours on Friday and Saturday nights until 10pm making the most of all the Museum has to offer. For more information on Spy at Night visit [www.spymuseum.org](http://www.spymuseum.org).

### **Operation Spy**

A new and groundbreaking immersive adventure that takes the interactive concept to a higher level, Operation Spy provides guests with the chance to adopt the role of an intelligence officer in the field. In an action-packed hour, participants engage in an international mission to locate a missing nuclear device before it falls into the wrong hands. This intense experience combines live-action, video characters, themed environments, special effects, and hands-on activities. Participants take part in an intrigue-filled adventure based on actual cases drawn from intelligence files. Challenged to “feel, think, and act” like real intelligence officers, they uncover layers of deception to reveal a world of double agents and corrupt officials. Operation Spy is a small group experience available to guests ages 12+. For more information visit [OpSpy.com](http://OpSpy.com).

### **The International Spy Museum**

Featuring the largest permanent collection of international spy-related artifacts on public display, the International Spy Museum is the only public museum in the United States solely dedicated to espionage and the only one in the world to provide a global perspective on this profession. The Museum is located at 800 F Street, NW in Washington, DC's historic Penn Quarter, within 4 blocks of the National Mall and within one block of the Gallery Place/Chinatown Metrorail station serviced by the red, yellow and green lines.

The Museum is open daily except Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Hours are subject to change; for the most up-to-date information visit [spymuseum.org](http://spymuseum.org) or call 202.393.7798. Advance Tickets are recommended and available online at [www.spymuseum.org/plan/ticketing.php](http://www.spymuseum.org/plan/ticketing.php)

### **CSI Lab:**

The National Museum of Crime and Punishment also offers interactive programs to patrons on the practices and techniques of CSI investigators. The popular **CSI Workshop** launched last fall, and starting this Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, the museum will introduce **CSI Adventure**. Just like on popular television shows, visitors will have the opportunity to learn about techniques used in crime scene investigation (CSI), including reading clues, identification of victims, fingerprinting, footprints, evidence collection, criminal identification, and DNA interpretation. Workshops fill up quickly! For information about upcoming CSI Workshops and CSI Adventure, please visit [www.crimemuseum.org](http://www.crimemuseum.org).

### **About the National Museum of Crime & Punishment**

NMCP's mission is to provide guests of all ages with a memorable insight into the issues of crime, crime fighting, and the consequences of committing a crime in America through a captivating interactive, entertaining and educational experience. The museum is located on 7th Street NW between E and F Streets in downtown Washington, D.C. For more information call 202-393-1099 or visit us at [www.crimemuseum.org](http://www.crimemuseum.org).