

LIGHTS. **VEGAS** ACTION.



Q & A

with David Spade

Interviewed by Kristine McKenzie

David Spade has been entertaining audiences for more than 15 years. He got his start appearing in clubs and on college campuses across the country.

In 1990, Spade found the national spotlight as a regular cast member and writer on the famed comedy show "Saturday Night Live." During his tenure on the show he developed a number of recognizable characters and catch phrases including the airline steward who bid every passenger a sarcastic "buh-bye" as they left the plane and the irritating receptionist who greeted celebrities with an unknowing "And you are . . . ?"

Spade also became known for the recurring sketch, "The Hollywood Minute," in which he took on some of Hollywood's biggest stars with his biting comments. Saturday Night Live helped launch Spade's movie career, which includes comedies like "Tommy Boy," "Joe Dirt," "Black Sheep," "Benchwarmers" and "Dickie Roberts: Former Child Star."

Spade has found the most success in television, earning an Emmy nomination in 1999 for his portrayal of Dennis Finch, the wise-cracking assistant on the long-running hit series "Just Shoot Me!"

In 2005 he starred in the Comedy Central show "The Showbiz Show with David Spade" and he can currently be seen on the CBS sitcom "Rules of Engagement."



Q: Are you excited about having so many shows in Vegas this year? Is Vegas a place you like to visit?

A: It is a place I like to visit. I used to play the Riviera right before I got to "Saturday Night Live." I wasn't really making any money and I couldn't spend any, so it was tougher. But now it's more fun and there's clearly more to do and some of my friends are out there. I'm just not a super late-nighter and that's what kind of hurts my coolness out there.

I used to make \$500 for the week at the Riviera. I did the Mirage for a long time and I had a good time with that and now I'm over at Planet Hollywood and that's even more exciting because I have more shows and it's a new vibe and a new hotel.

What do you do when you're in Vegas? Do you have any favorite spots to hang out while you're in town?

I do golf when I'm there. That's really my trick. I get a few buddies and sometimes the hotel will put them up there and then we go over to Shadow Creek and we go to Bali Hai or try to find golf places to go to and have a good time.

Are you good at it?

I'm not bad. I'm actually good enough to where I can play and not look like an idiot, but to get a full game that's very good is a tough time – there's a lot of ways to mess that up.

I eat at Koi there, which is actually in the hotel (Planet Hollywood)... Stack at the Mirage I like and I've been to Nove at the Palms – that was pretty good. It's kind of a good vibe, a good view.

Are Vegas audiences different that your typical audience? Do you tailor your jokes to add in Vegas jokes?

The difference between colleges and Vegas is that the audience is a little different – these people are like professional 'going-to-show' people. They expect a lot and tickets are more than at a college ... You get a higher-end crowd and I do tailor jokes to Vegas. It's really the most fun because being there for awhile now, I can kind of make up stuff about the different hotels and about the people that I see out there, and just little things you can make fun of that are kind of common even if you don't live there and you just see and you go 'yeah, I've noticed that.'

Any future plans for Vegas? Could you see yourself having a permanent show here like Rita Rudner or George Wallace?

I don't know – a permanent show – those seem tough for me. I would never say never, but it's tough to do the same act every night because I'd start to get frustrated with it, you know? Even night to night I change some stuff and to do it every night, I would be scared that it would get into a groove and I wouldn't give it everything... It's hard to keep yourself ramped up.

Do you prefer working on a television series or stand-up comedy?

A TV series is a good solid job. It's very fun and gives me some structure in my life, which I like and stand up is more terrifying, but it wakes you up a little bit. It's good to get out there and do that. I do it for fun and to see if I can still handle it.

What's the biggest lesson you learned from working on Saturday Night Live?

The biggest lesson was trying to get it right on the first take... 'Saturday Night Live' would be so much better even if you had two tries at it. Like when you do a movie you do a few takes and it turns into the best of all of them. Sometimes you can start a sketch and go, 'oh I started this wrong,' but you're in it – and great sketches during the week can fall apart.

Where do you get the inspiration for your comedy?

Life... what I do every day. There's always a way to go 'okay, I can use this, oh, this is a good story.' I kind of exaggerate reality. A lot of the stuff has really happened – or a version of it – and I just kind of give it a little extra to make it funny.

What was your favorite role out of all the television and film work you've done?

I've liked a lot of what I've done. I would probably say I'd slow down on playing 'womanizer guy' in the future, but I like doing it and it's always hard to change what you've done on TV and movies. I think 'Tommy Boy' was my favorite movie and I hear the most about. I think that's one we got close to getting it right. 'Joe Dirt' I really liked for myself because it had a different vibe to it than being just the sarcastic guy sniping at people. And I hear a lot of good stuff about 'Just Shoot Me.' The Finch thing was super fun, obviously. That was kind of a good reason to go into 'Rules of Engagement' just to kind of do that thing you did before. It's fun to work on a show with people – I like that.

There have been a lot of actors taking roles in animated films lately. You've done that in the past with "The Emperor's New Groove." Is animation something you'd like to do again?

I loved 'Emperor's New Groove.' That was the best reviewed movie I ever had. Everyone universally liked that – as far as critics – and it made a ton of money, so I was happy to do something like that and I thought it was very funny even for adults. I have to admit that I laughed during it. I would do more of that – yeah, for sure.

We hear that you have a tattoo of Calvin from Calvin and Hobbes that was given to you by Sean Penn. How is he as a tattoo artist?

Sean Penn was great. He was a little buzzed. It was real – I couldn't drink because it makes your blood thin. I didn't really know him – he just did it as a favor and was cool about it ...

Don't you have to have a license to do that?

I think he did it on a potato once or something, so I was like, 'perfect.' Just because it sounded funny – it was less about my health and more about it sounding funny. I was allergic to the ink, which I didn't know, so it bled and tore and was horrible for months and I just thought that was how it was when you get a tattoo.

Actually, he was going to do another one and he couldn't. I would never have gotten Calvin and Hobbes – it's just dumb – but he couldn't do it – the hard one I had – so we had to just pick one right then and I picked a dumb one.

Are you saying you regret it?

No, It's not to have just because it's from him and it's a funny little piece, but yeah, I'll probably get another one, but I'll get a different one. Maybe I'll have him do it – who knows?