

Ultimate Dining

Sin City restaurants serve up a variety of VIP meals

Ten years ago, tourists would flock to Las Vegas to check into a beautiful room, try their luck at the tables, gambling away most of their hard earned money, and then go to the in-house buffet for \$11.99. You know, the all-you-can-eat buffet with a heaping hill of shrimp and the vat of cocktail sauce beside it.

The times, they are a changin'. This isn't your parents' Las Vegas anymore. Sin City now rivals any city in America in the number and quality of its fine dining establishments and a select group of them have now become destination spots all by themselves. No longer do people come just to gamble and eat when they're hungry. Now, dining stands as a separate but equal co-star to clanking slot machines and blackjack tables.

Recently, a new era of high-end dining has infiltrated the Strip in the form of private dining rooms within restaurants. For high-rollers, celebrities, and VIPs, the main dining room doesn't cut it anymore. Now, people want to dine on truffles and foie gras in their own, exclusive room.

Being a town centered on hospitality, Las Vegas restaurants obliged, adding in chef's tables, private dining rooms and wine room tables to give the guests a little something extra, an exclusivity to the already exclusive fine dining experience.

Here are a few of the crème de la crème, where you can easily spend thousands of dollars on the ultimate dining experience – no pair of threes needed.

Please note, the prices quoted for these meals are estimates and do not include tax or gratuity. Unless specified, the prices also do not include the cost of wine or other beverages.



Courtesy of Caesars Palace
Crispy Veal Sweetbreads with Petite Potato and Black Truffle.

Restaurant Guy Savoy, Caesars Palace

At Restaurant Guy Savoy, located in the Spa Tower at Caesars Palace, the staff is trained to anticipate what the guest wants before they even know they want it.

When you think "fancy French restaurant" the word "simple" is not the first thing that jumps into your head. But at Restaurant Guy Savoy, simplicity is key. French Chef extraordinaire Savoy has created a truly exceptional dining experience that is surprisingly warm, welcoming and throws the stereotype right out the window.

Largely due to General Manager (and Guy's son) Franck Savoy, the service flows effortlessly through the dining room and is consistently on point. The charismatic younger Savoy radiates warmth and humor in his dining room, while still maintaining the formality and outstanding quality of service.

The restaurant boasts two semi-private dining rooms (Elliott and Axelle), a chef's table, and a large, fully private dining room, Leah.

"The three private dining rooms are named after the children of my sister: Axelle, Elliott, and Leah. Leah is the biggest and can seat up to thirty-four people," says Franck Savoy. Axelle seats eight to 10 people and Elliott seats 12 to 14 people.

Savoy's menu includes simple yet creative and flavorful dishes like the signature artichoke and black truffle soup. The soup is absolute perfection with simple flavors that create a harmonious duet, topped with shavings of reggiano parmigiano cheese.

Private Dining Room: Leah (seats 34).
Minimum: \$120 per person / More than \$4,000 total.
Big Night Out: \$270 per person / More than \$9,180 total.

Ritz Carlton, Lake Las Vegas

Lake Las Vegas' Ritz-Carlton caters to your every need. If you're having a special event such as a wedding or engagement party, the extraordinary chefs at the Ritz-Carlton are more than happy to oblige. Working hand in hand with catering sales and Executive Chef Stephen Marshall, they can create a menu or an entire event from scratch.

"In the presidential suite, you have your own personal chef, something very unique to Las Vegas," says Marshall.

Make the event extra special with the artistic works of Executive Pastry Chef Chris Hanmer. Hanmer creates sculptural showpieces for special events and dinners in the presidential suite.

"Whatever you desire, we can make it happen at a moment's notice. As long as the guest is willing to incur what something like that would cost, the sky is the limit," says Hanmer.

In addition to showpieces, Hanmer can also create pastries and desserts based on the theme of your party.

"We had one of the owners for one of the local night clubs get married and the reception in the presidential [suite] was essentially a Candyland. I made Snowballs from scratch, I made Rice Krispie treats and Coco Krispie treats from scratch – Ding Dongs, Ho-Hos, Twinkies, homemade cotton candy – everything was made from scratch," says Hanmer.

Past luxurious dinners in the presidential suite have included a Japanese Kobe beef tasting, at \$350 per person.

Private Dining Room: The Presidential Suite (seats 12).
Minimum: \$100 per person / \$1,200 total.
Big Night Out: If you can dream it, it can happen (with a price tag to go with it).

Joël Robuchon, MGM Grand

It's okay to get dressed up and look nice for this meal. In fact, it's required. In an age where blue jeans are now acceptable in the theater and most fine dining establishments, it's good to see people that are going to a nice meal dressed accordingly.

At Joël Robuchon inside the MGM Grand, it's about the whole dining experience. Joël Robuchon is the only Three Michelin star-rated restaurant on the Strip. The restaurant's commitment to excellence in service, cuisine and opulent décor are all outstanding. The restaurant boasts a dining experience unique to Las Vegas. The experience is over-the-top luxury, with a few special surprises throughout the meal.

Salon Privé is the private dining room that seats up to 12 people and is lavishly decorated with rich aubergine velvets, an ostentatious chandelier and truly fabulous ornaments.

Private Dining Room: Salon Privé (seats 12).
Minimum: \$420 per person / \$5,000 total.
Stipulation: Salon Privé is reserved strictly for Joël Robuchon's finest customers, celebrities and casino VIPs.
Big Night Out: This is why you have the American Express (black) Centurion card.



The opulent private dining room at Joël Robuchon inside MGM Grand.

Courtesy of MGM Mirage

Alex, Wynn Las Vegas

Sit amongst rust orange-colored silk drapes and chairs with rich pistachio tapestry in a Belle Epoque-like, truly elegant setting. At Alex, the décor doesn't overpower the food, it just makes it taste a little better.

Opulence is a theme that carries on to the cuisine. Feast on Chef Alessandro Stratta's masterful creations like Napoléon of blue fin tuna, kanpachi and osetra caviar, or pancetta wrapped quail with poached figs, rhubarb and celery root puree.

"At Alex we have created a rarity—a truly luxe restaurant that not only strives but succeeds in offering an extraordinary menu, faultless service and genuine hospitality," says Stratta.

Private Dining Room: Small PDR (seats 10).
Minimum: \$200 per person / \$2,000 total (for 2 ½ hours).
Big Night Out: \$3,750 total for a tasting that serves 10 with wines.



Courtesy of Wynn
Private dining room at Alex inside Wynn Las Vegas.

Okada at Wynn Las Vegas

Overlooking beautiful waterfalls, Okada at Wynn Las Vegas features modern Japanese cuisine in an atmospheric setting. Chef Masa Ishizawa transforms fresh ingredients into sumptuous dishes like Alaskan king crab and asparagus in a yuzu butter sauce. A full sushi and sashimi menu is available, as well as items from the robata charcoal grill.

The private dining room comes in the form of a secluded outdoor Pagoda table adjacent to the waterfall. The table sits on an extended dock, right on the water for a truly peaceful, out-of-Vegas experience.

"You feel very calm and secluded, especially at the Pagoda table, with the waterfall. You feel like you're somewhere else, not in Vegas," says Chiachi Kuo, general manager.

Private Dining Room: The Pagoda Table (seats 12).
Minimum: \$170 per person / \$2,000 total.
Big Night Out: Upwards of \$2,000.



Courtesy of Wynn Las Vegas
Okada's Pagoda table.

Pearl, MGM Grand

Pearl is a Chinese-contemporary restaurant that caters to guests' spontaneous side with a menu that changes daily.

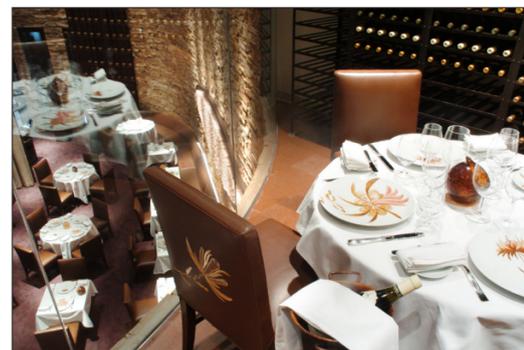
Featured are the four Asian cooking staples: steamed, braised, baked and fried. Using these four cooking methods, Pearl creates mouthwatering delicacies including their signature spider prawn dumplings, Dungeness crab spring rolls and steamed Maine and Australian lobster tasting. A full tea trolley is rolled around and distributed tableside.

The MoMo room, a modern private dining room, is decorated with rich reds and golds. MoMo features the largest lazy Susan in Las Vegas, so you don't actually have to pass your food, you can just wheel it around to the guest on your left.

Private Dining Room: MoMo Room (seats 24).
Stipulation: You have to be a VIP casino guest or a celebrity. Few exceptions are made.
Big Night Out: Money won't get you in this room, you're going to have to earn it.



Courtesy of MGM Mirage
MoMo room at Pearl.



Courtesy of MGM Mirage
The cellar master's table at Fleur de Lys inside Mandalay Bay.

Fleur de Lys, Mandalay Bay

The glass-enclosed cellar master's table that serves as a private dining room overlooking the restaurant for a truly see-and-be-seen atmosphere. It softly says, "We're up here and you're down there, but don't be jealous."

The \$20,000-per-person Chef Hubert Keller's Extravagance menu at Fleur de Lys inside Mandalay Bay is definitely a force to be reckoned with. The menu features osetra caviar, foie gras, slow butter-poached lobster, filet Rossini, fresh fruit minestrone with basil sorbet and a decadent chocolate feast and is paired with the likes of a 1989 Krug Champagne Les Menils, 1982 Chateau Petrus and topped off with Louis XIII cognac.

Private Dining Room: Cabana Room.
Minimum: If you have to ask ...
Big Night Out: \$20,000 per person with beverages listed above.

Valentino, The Venetian

With more than 3,400 bottles of wine on hand, Valentino Las Vegas offers one of the largest and most impressive wine lists in Las Vegas.

The Barolo Room, Valentino's private dining room, is attached to the small wine cellar that can seat four comfortably. The Barolo room is a unique experience that caters to the wine enthusiast. Surrounded by bottles of Barolo, dining in the Barolo room makes food taste better and wine within reach, without ever leaving the table.

The ultimate meal in the Barolo room includes Beluga caviar, lobster salad, foie gras, a selection of pastas, Kobe beef steak and three or four desserts and paired with the over-the-top Appellation Romanée Conti Controlée 1996. The bottle of wine is valued at \$19,000 and kept under lock and key. The meal's total price resides somewhere in the neighborhood of \$26,500, plus tax and gratuity.

"You get the best of the best that comes out of the kitchen," says Executive Chef Lucciano Pellegrini.

Private Dining Room: Barolo Room.
Minimum: \$250 per person / \$1,000 total.
Big Night Out: \$26,500 for four, with beverages listed above.



Courtesy of Valentino Las Vegas
Bottle of Appellation Romanée Conti Controlée 1996.

Private dining is quickly spreading throughout Las Vegas as the hot new must-do for anyone with a little extra cash and a hearty appetite. There is nothing more fulfilling than great food, great ambiance and great service in an intimate setting. If you want to do Las Vegas in style, these fine dining establishments are the only way to go. So, grab a bunch of your friends and try these rooms out – that is, after you take out that second mortgage on your house.

-- Written by Nikki Neu



Private dining room at Bradley Ogden.

Bradley Ogden, Caesars Palace

Bradley Ogden has a unique water theme throughout the restaurant with LCD monitors displaying scenic seascapes and a fountain toward the front of the restaurant. The décor is simple, but upscale and clearly lets the food do the talking.

The food is fresh and Chef Bryan Ogden is taking a direction similar to his father's as a breakout star chef.

"I like to refer to [our food] as market cuisine because we use everything that's fresh, in season, in the market," says Ogden.

This dedication to using fresh ingredients means there are no signature dishes on the menu. Instead, look for specialties dictated by seasonal produce.

As for the private dining room, the modern décor gives high-rolling diners a comfortable, fun alternative to the busy restaurant dining room. The private room features suede walls, red pottery, a fireplace, funky lighting and a very special painting.

"We commissioned the 'Chiefs with the tomato balloons' painting especially for the room," says Ogden.

With an inspiring atmosphere, the market cuisine that flows to the chef's table dining area is equally impressive.

Private Dining Room: The Chef's Table.
Minimum: \$210 per person / \$2,500 total.
Big Night Out: Begin at \$2,500 and start counting.

Nikki Neu