

# Dining at SLS: Bazaar Meat, Ku Noodle, Cleo, Katsuya, 800 Degrees, Griddle Cafe and more

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Executives at the new SLS Las Vegas haven't stopped [since last weekend's epic opening](#), and, as its first full week goes into the accounting books, they're firing up on all cylinders for Labor Day Weekend. The new nightclubs will be officially opened, and a lineup of taste treats await with powerhouse chefs at the SLS restaurants.



This is unequivocally a restaurant-, bar- and nightclub-themed hotel, although the 74 casino tables and 790 slots are seeing lots of action. Food, drink and parties are the big draw, but take time to peek into the glass video booths for a burlesque show on your way to dining.

There are nine restaurants, two pool playgrounds and three nightlife zones. All are first-timers to the Strip but familiar to [SLS and SBE guests in Los Angeles and Miami](#). Today, we'll tour the dazzling portfolio of dining venues led by the culinary director, celebrity chef Jose Andres, who we already know from his hit and hot hangouts at the Cosmopolitan. On Thursday, we'll run down the pools and nightclub action.

"I'm one very lucky guy," Jose told me over champagne and caviar at his new Bazaar Meat steakhouse at SLS. "I have restaurants in the two coolest casinos in Las Vegas. I feel right at home here in Las Vegas, but this is a unique new restaurant that tells a story that starts a new adventure. It's unlike anything else anywhere."

It's a large 335-seat restaurant with show-stopping, 800-degree, revolving wood- and charcoal-fired grills and ovens. The silver crocodile heads on mirrors and columns have people buzzing. If you're a meat lover, this becomes your permanent hangout with a tartar bar, whole suckling pigs, exquisite cuts of beef, pork, wild game, offal, poultry, fish and even 60-day-old baby lamb.

Jose's private hideaway corner features a bountiful raw seafood bar for just 50 seats where you'll find everything from six caviars to geoduck and scallops of sensational sizes! Another private dining, with is metallic decor, is deemed the Silver Room.

Bazaar Meat is probably the only restaurant in the world with an adjoining casino branded by a James Beard Award -winning chef. Guests can play at blackjack and roulette tables in Bazaar Casino and enjoy Jose's taste treats and cocktails.

Jose offers more than 600 wines, plus, possibly the world's longest table running the entire length of its dining room atop a carpet emblazoned with an image of a butcher's diagram of a cow.

Spain's best pig chef (an asador), 22-year-old Gemma Garcia, who started cooking at age 16 with her grandmother and mother, flew over from the family restaurant Mannix in Campaspero to train Jose's chefs led by executive chef David Thomas in the art of pig butchery and cooking. "Pin Up" at the Stratosphere stars Claire Sinclair and Sabina Kelley watched in amazement as she kept the first-night kitchen operating at full speed for hundreds of curious food fanatics.

Gemma told me: "The pig is in the oven for four hours and then another 15 minutes to crisp it. The baby lambs cook for three hours, then 15 minutes for the outside." It's Gemma's second trip to Las Vegas.

"I came on vacation two years ago and stayed at Planet Hollywood. I never dreamed I would return to teach chefs on the Strip the best way to prepare and cook pork. We have a small restaurant in Spain, but we're known for being the best and No. 1 there. We named it after our favorite American television series."

Jose also operates the 103-seat Ku Noodle as his homage to Asian cuisine. You can look from the casino through a window to watch the chefs make magic with generations-old methods of noodle making. It's an artistry of hand-pulled and cut noodles.

The 182-seat contemporary Mediterranean restaurant Cleo by chef Danny Elmaleh, [a guest columnist last Thursday](#), is drawing attention with its striking pyramid-shaped entrance and a 14-foot image of Cleopatra. The kitchen is open, and shared plates of tagines, flatbreads and mezze pour from the brick-covered wood-burning oven.

Another standout is its neighbor, Katsuya. The 175-seat restaurant collaboration of master sushi chef Katsuya Uechi and design impresario Philippe Starck is planned almost akin to a bento box with geisha imagery, natural Japanese ash wood and oversized images of samurai helmets. It is so good that I'm going to have my birthday dinner there with fellow Virgos Vince Neil and Michael Boychuck.

On opening night, I was still missing the joys of my July vacation in Italy, so I made a beeline for 800 Degrees Neapolitan Pizzeria where chef Anthony Carron has authentic chefs from Naples and the incredible flour of ancient Molino San Felice and even the San Marzano tomatoes that make the Old World tradition of Neapolitan pizzas so famous worldwide.

I counted 20 pizzas on the menu all made fresh to order and baked in less than 90 seconds in the wood-burning ovens. I was back in Tuscany for a moment! Delicious with a capital D. The 72-seat casual space is decorated with graffiti-type chalk art and paparazzi images circling red high-heeled shoes.

The fun of fine food continues at chef Jodi Ortze's Griddle Cafe often described as "The Disneyland of Breakfast" at its Los Angeles flagship. This is where breakfast is served around the clock from an open kitchen and its horse-shaped bar. This is the best spot to find the already notorious scratch-and-sniff wallpaper, and French kissing is boldly prescribed to go with the French toast no matter whether your partner is opposite or same sex.

Other venues for eating and drinking include the standout Umami Burger, Beer Garden and Sports Book with 281 seats, 35 craft beers and a 120-foot-high definition video wall with British bookies William Hill ensuring that nobody misses a game with the 50 TVs, one in each booth. The outdoor beer garden is open until 2 a.m. daily Strip side.

The Perq is a European cafe alongside guest registration, and SLS Buffet with chef Luke Forzano has a showcase of global cuisine in a sports-lodge setting under antler chandeliers on the mezzanine level. For relaxing over drinks from all the action, there's the lobby Monkey Bar and the 24-hour Center Bar right in the

heart of the casino floor.

We'll be back Thursday with a look at Foxtail Pool Club and Nightclub celebrating its opening weekend with Nico & Vinz, The Sayers Club grand opening with Swedish pop artist Tove Lo and Life Nightclub with Dirty South and Laidback Luke.

Robin Leach has been a journalist for more than 50 years and has spent the past decade giving readers the inside scoop on Las Vegas, the world's premier platinum playground.

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