

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

The Venetian circumnavigates globe in weekend-long culinary journey

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The Venetian Las Vegas

By JEN KING

Tapping into the experiential dining trend popular among affluent consumers, The Venetian Las Vegas hotel is taking guests on a grand culinary voyage led by internationally renowned chefs.

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The hospitality brand has planned a decadent weekend-long experience for its high-tier guests, filled with grand tasting menus, libations and one-off experiences. Now in its fourth year, The Venetian's "Ultimo – A Week of Excellence" Dec. 9-11, brings together the hotel's exceptional service, in-house gastronomy and, for the first time, the greater Las Vegas valley.

"Las Vegas is the culinary capital of the world and it makes sense for this type of event place at The Venetian," said Sebastien Silvestri, vice president of food & beverage for [The Venetian and The Palazzo](#).

"Every year, Ultimo has produced the most spectacular gathering of world-renowned chefs in Las Vegas," he said. "For the culinary enthusiast, this is always a weekend to remember."

Weekend getaways

This year's theme of Ultimo – A Week of Excellence is "Le Grand Voyage." Jointly hosted by The Venetian Hotel and The Palazzo Las Vegas, the weekend consists of lavish culinary experiences, a prime sector in regard to experiential travel.

Le Grand Voyage includes several unique experiences such as a Rolls-Royce driving experience and a hot air balloon ride over the Las Vegas valley, offering breathtaking views of the illuminated city below.

Guests will also enjoy a Dom Prignon Champagne picnic at nearby Red Rock Canyon National Recreation Area. Located just 20 miles from the Las Vegas strip, the park is well-known for its natural rock formations and concert venue.

Back on the strip, guests will enjoy a Louis Vuitton fashion experience at the brand's newly opened boutique within the Grand Canal Shoppes.

The main attraction of the weekend is rooted in the culinary excellence Las Vegas has to offer. The Grand Banquet, organized by The Venetian, brings together several of the world's best chefs for a once-in-a-lifetime dining experience.



Ultimo – Weekend of Excellence's Grand Banquet

Launched for the first time in 2013, the signature event of the Ultimo – Weekend of Excellence, brings together culinary luminaries such as Thomas Keller, Jerome Bocuse, Emma Bengtsson, Curtis Stone, Ming Tsai, Vikram Vij, Pierre Thiam, Paul Bartolotta and Shaun Hergatt.

Held at a table that spans The Venetian's Grand Colonnade, this year's table will be set with tableware by French lifestyle brand Lalique, an expert in glassmaking.

Keeping the theme of Le Grand Voyage in mind, the participating chefs have designed an international menu to take guests around the world without leaving Las Vegas. Each dish will celebrate the chef's country of origin with plates inspired by French, Australian, Indian, African, Italian and Swedish gastronomy.

The meal will be paired with fine wines from Dom Prignon, DAOU Vineyards, Marques de Murrieta, Momento Mori and Pio Cesare. Also during the dinner, Dom Prignon will share P2 Vintage 1998, the second plentitude of Dom Prignon ([see story](#)).



Dom Preignon's P2 Vintage 1998

Guests can book the Luxury Suite package at The Venetian for \$4,551 per couple. This includes a weekend stay at the hotel's luxury suite, airport transfers, a Belvedere and caviar welcome reception at the Paiza Club and a choice between the hot air balloon trip or Rolls-Royce driving experience.

The package includes the Dom Prignon picnic, the Louis Vuitton fashion experience and the Grand Banquet and the Lalique after party. The weekend concludes with a farewell brunch at Hacienda Patron.

The Venetian also offers a Renaissance Suite package for \$5,751 per couple. The only difference is the type of suite

guests will stay in over the weekend.

A portion of the proceeds generated by the Ultimo – Weekend of Excellence will be donated to Ment'or BKB Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to culinary excellence in young chefs and preserving culinary traditions and quality in the United States.

Much more than dinner and a show

An extravagant shared meal on vacation draws affluent guests because of the intimacy related to dining and the excitement of being only one of a few to enjoy such an experience. Additional add-on perks and one-off elements work to make the experience that more attractive.

For example, in Singapore, \$2 million can buy a Rolls-Royce Phantom, a penthouse or in the case of C La Vi, a venue atop the Marina Bay Sands Hotel, an experiential dinner for two.

Together with Russia's World of Diamonds Group, the venue has organized the world's most expensive and exclusive culinary experience, for a pair of affluent diners to enjoy. The concept of experiential programs have grown in popularity recently as consumer mindset has shifted from materialism to once-in-a-lifetime experiences that money cannot typically buy.

For the world's most expensive and exclusive culinary experience, being able to afford the staggering asking price is not enough. The purchaser must be considered qualified, at the discretion of the World of Diamonds Group and C La Vi ([see story](#)).

Above all, the draw of experiential events are defined by the calibre of experience curated for guests. For Ultimo's Grand Banquet many affluent consumers will be attracted to the chance to sample dishes prepared by industry leaders.

"Every celebrity chef is preparing a dish that represents their country of origin," Mr. Silvestri said. "That is why the theme of this year's Ultimo is called Le Grand Voyage.

"People are going to feel like they have traveled to Australia, France, Italy, India, Asia and America to taste the dishes in one magnificent meal at The Venetian Las Vegas," he said.

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