

EATER

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LAS VEGAS

Behold! The 27,000-Square-Foot Carmine's Is Open

By: Susan Stapleton



Carmine's

Address: Forum Shops at Caesars, 3500 Las Vegas Blvd. S.

Phone: 702-473-9700

Status: Opened Tuesday night

Behold the monster-sized meals at **Carmine's**, the New York City import now serving at the Forum Shops at Caesars. The massive 27,000-square-foot Italian eatery encompasses two levels and tables and tables and tables that seem to go on and on and on. Walk down the Forum Shops and catch the smell of garlic wafting from the restaurant that seats 700.

If the sheer size of the place doesn't impress, perhaps the mammoth portions will. Carmine's serves up family-style dishes such as a nine-inch high stack of eggplant parmigiana on a platter that requires a staff of 200 with meaty muscles just to bring to the table.

Leftovers are guaranteed, even for huge parties such as the unexpected 17-top that walked in on opening night, were seated and fed within 45 minutes. Those leftovers can be bagged up and valet checked so guests can go about their day and return to pick them up, refrigerated in the meantime.

More intimate spaces within the many rooms here can tackle smaller groups, including wedding rehearsal dinners, bachelorette parties and more, who land a green room with a private bathroom and a balcony overlooking the Strip. Carmine's takes over the former Planet Hollywood space. The opening, originally scheduled for spring, was delayed after management found they had to demolish pretty much the entire space, ceiling included, and start from scratch. A 25-year lease on the space allowed them to take their time to get the look and feel right.

Look above to find myriad mismatched chandeliers. A behemoth of a bar required bucket lifts just to place all of the bottles on the back bar. No menus here. Giant TVs sporting the entire menu sit around the restaurant with daily specials and more.

The 20-year old chain originally opened in Manhattan and spread to Washington, D.C., Atlantic City, the Bahamas and Times Square.

The restaurant is open Sunday through Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Friday and Saturday until midnight.

