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Sin City chefs dish on the best eats - On and off the Strip, the pros know where to go

The celebrated Keller frequents a choice few at Mandalay or nearby. "I really don't drive down the Strip to eat somewhere," he says. "When my wife flies in sometimes over the weekend, then we go out, but when we go out, that's when we go visit our friends. When it's later in the evening, then I go anywhere from Tabu to the Lounge, or I go up to Mix because we know the chef there. It's the best view probably on the entire Strip. Or I'll go to Picasso and have a drink at the bar."

But most often, he admits, he's eating at his own restaurants. "Two weeks ago, we finished my show, and that night I went to Burger Bar. Honestly, when I sit there, I don't feel like I'm at work. Usually if I get a seat, because it's always so crowded, I'll sit at the bar and have a beer and order a burger and just watch. The other day, I went there at 8:30, and I was still there at 2 o'clock in the morning. ... Right now my favorite burger is the buffalo burger."

Francois Payard, owner of Payard at Caesars Palace

Pastry chefs don't have the luxury of eating dinner at their own restaurants. So Francois Payard can often be found dining at the newest restaurants. "I never leave the Strip. ... I'm doing pretty much like every chef: Every time there is a new restaurant open, I'm going to check it out." As for pastries, "If I have to go somewhere else than Payard," he says, "the only place I'm going is to the Bellagio, to Jean-Philippe Patisserie. It's beautiful and elegant."

It's tempting to believe that world-famous chefs never stop eating, but Payard says he'll occasionally relax by the pool at Caesars. "I always try to take a break and go to the pool and just lay for an hour," he says. In the evenings, if he has the time, he'll attend a show. His favorites? "I know it's not there anymore, but I love Celine Dion. It looks silly for a chef to like the hot music, but I went to see Celine before she left Caesars," he says. "I went to see Cirque du Soleil because only in Vegas can you see things like that. ... and Bette Midler. It was very, very good."

Chef Carla Pelligrino, owner Rao's at Caesars Palace

Chef Carla Pelligrino lives with her husband, Frank Pelligrino, in Las Vegas full time. Their restaurant is a re-creation of the legendary and intimate original in Harlem, New York, which opened in 1896, and remains one of the toughest reservations in town. Whether it's being a permanent resident or being Italian (or both), Pelligrino says she often stays off the Strip and eats in.

"Usually when I'm not in the kitchen, I cook at home a lot," she says. "And If I have to go somewhere, we have Marche Bacchus. It's a little place off the Strip on Desert Shore. If I want French, I'll just go upstairs - Guy Savoy is great. If I want Italian, I usually I eat in my own restaurant."