

Views of Vegas

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Jim Caruso's Cast Party Returns to LV Sept 21 & 22

What a great night I had at the very first Cast Party in Las Vegas in August. Jim Caruso invited me to attend and I'm delighted that I was there for the first of what will hopefully be a monthly event in Las Vegas.

It's called Jim Caruso's Cast Party and it includes cast members from some of Las Vegas's best shows in a setting meant to be more like a party in someone's living room. You know - the kind where the talented party-goers get up and stand by the piano and sing or tell jokes.



Dezmond Meeks, Jim Caruso & Frankie Moreno

This is a party you'll want to be a part of, a chance for locals and visitors to catch some of the best entertainers in town doing what they do best - and loving it. Jim Caruso is bringing his famous Cast Party back to town for two great nights, Wednesday, September 21 and Thursday, September 22. You don't have to fight strip traffic as the party happens at the Alexis Park All-Suite Resort. Doors open at 9 p.m. and the show starts at 10 p.m. Why so late? So these great performers can finish their shows and hop on over for some fun at the party.

Piano player extraordinaire Billy Stritch will be back to accompany the performers. Jim Caruso will be doing his magic at the mic. This is a time for cast members and musicians from Las Vegas to hang out, meet each other, and share social time before and after the show, which is what makes it a Cast Party. And the audience reaps the reward - great performances.

Thank you Jim - and thanks to Tiger Martina (Director and Choreographer of Vegas! The Show), I can say I was there at the beginning of a new Vegas tradition. Wow! What a line up it was.

Entertainers included familiar name entertainers and cast members from Vegas! The Show, Jersey Boys,

and The Lion King. Let's name a few that were there those two first nights: Reva Rice, Eric Jordan Young, Deven May, Clint Holmes, Mimi Hines, Frankie Moreno, Kelly Clinton Holmes. There were many whose names were not familiar to me - yet. I know I'll be seeing them under the lights with their names in lights in the future. This show will soon have a waiting list of performers who want to be part of the party - The Cast Party.

Jim Caruso's Cast Party in New York has been dubbed "an extreme open mic" by ABC-TV, "the gold standard of open mics" by The Wall Street Journal, and "the place to be for those with songs on their lips" by The New York Times. Now in its 8th year, and selling out every Monday night at Birdland in Manhattan, Cast Party participants represent all aspects of the entertainment industry. Singers from the Las Vegas strip, Broadway, the concert stage, TV and recordings are most prevalent, but there are also magicians, comedians and instrumentalists taking the stage.

Jim Caruso is a delight playing host to the entertainers, sharing light-hearted patter with Billy and creating that fun-in-the-living-room feeling. Jim made his Broadway debut in the Tony-winning *Liza's At The Palace*. Musical director/accompanist Billy Stritch is a Grammy-winning composer who can play a tune and carry a tune as well.

Talented locals are encouraged to come down to the Alexis and perform. To participate in Cast Party, plan on arriving at 9 pm to sign-up and bring along sheet music for upbeat songs in the correct key. The Alexis Park All-Suite Resort is offering food and beverage table service as well. The Alexis Park Master Chef, Joseph Rawls, has created a late-supper menu especially for Cast Party, serving from 9:00 pm until 2:00 am. Tickets are available at www.brownpapertickets.com, or by calling 1-800-838-3006 anytime, 24/7. All major credit cards and debit cards are accepted. Tickets are \$35 in advance and \$40 at the door. Doors open at 9 pm, Cast Party starts at 10 pm until 1:00 am, and guests are welcome to continue partying until 2:00 am. Jim Caruso's Cast Party is a Dennis Ritz Presents entertainment event. So whether you are a performer or a spectator, plan to come on down and join the party. You never know who'll show up!