



Palms

*Veteran Las Vegas entertainer Skye Dee Miles showcases her talents at The Composers Room inside the Historic Commercial Center District every other Sunday with the popular Carmen's Love Brunch.*

# Skye's the limit

The healing power  
of comfort food  
and soulful sounds

By Sarah Bun

**S**KYE DEE Miles strides onstage, ready to fill The Composers Room with her powerhouse vocals. The applause is thunderous, the energy undeniable. With a glance to her group of 10 gospel singers, Miles launches into “I’ll Take You There” by the Staple Singers.

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I'm not a doctor. I'm not a nurse.  
But we heal some; we heal a moment.  
You can save a life in a five-minute  
moment with the right song.

**Skyc Dee Miles**

***"I know a place / Ain't nobody cryin', ain't nobody worried"***

The acclaimed singer and entertainer headlines Carmen's Love Brunch every other Sunday at the vintage lounge in the Historic Commercial Center District.

The idea for this show came to Miles about two years after her mother, Carmen, died unexpectedly in 2021. Shortly after her mother's death, Rose. Rabbit. Lie supper club inside The Cosmopolitan closed and Miles lost her gig. She also lost her place to live.

"It's a very tough business to put your eyelashes on when you've been crying because you don't know where your career is going," Miles says. "It's a tough career. People think you're everywhere, because they see your picture, but they don't know you just had six rejections from jobs."

Despite the ebb and flow of the entertainment business, Miles finds ways to be grateful. "You got to sift through it," she says. "Say, 'Oh, let me stop. Let me be grateful and find my gratitude through the brokenness.'"

With music as her guiding light, Miles extends that gratitude to others. Going to her show is like being invited into her home. She'll take care of you, she says, like her mother would.

Miles' mother, she notes, "loved people through food." The entertainer makes that connection through music. Carmen's Love Brunch brings together both with a dash of wellness.

***"Somebody help me now"***

The only problem was finding a home for this celebration of love and gospel music, of soul food and memories of her late mother.

In November, opportunity knocked. Damian Costa, president of Pompey Entertainment — which operates The Venue at The Orleans, Jimmy Kimmel's Comedy Club at the Linq Promenade and The Duomo at the Rio — approached Miles, offering to show her around The Composers Room.

They had known each other for more than 14 years and had always wanted to work together, but the timing hadn't been right. But now, the passing of Miles' mother gave her a deeper purpose and compelled her to do something more.

Miles toured the new venue with Costa, a meeting that melded two keen talents: Costa's entertainment management savvy and Miles' showbiz skills. Both wanted to present the best of Las Vegas entertainment at a time of so much "negativity in the world," he says.

While Miles wanted to celebrate her mother, Costa's lounge honors his grandparents and his wife's grandparents, who were Las Vegas composers, conductors and performers.

"Her heart's in the right place," he says of Miles. "Her attention to detail is fantastic. That's important when you put your brand out there."

***"Oh, let me take you there!"***

This intimate showroom, which seats 150 and can hold up to 300 guests, provides a warm atmosphere where the multigenre singer can hug, carry on conversations and connect



*With Skyc Dee Miles' message of love, fried chicken, mac and cheese and fruits-and-cheese plates are served up at Carmen's Love Brunch.*





*Skye Dee Miles  
spreads the love  
during Carmen's  
Love Brunch.  
The Composers Room*

*Opposite page: Photos by  
Ballawo Riley & Da'Kise Boyd*





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The Vox Agency

Gospel singers perform with Skye Dee Miles during Carmen's Love Brunch.

with people. "It's a couple of hours where people felt they belong," Miles says.

The veteran Strip performer, who starred in "Menopause the Musical" when she first moved to Las Vegas from Oakland, California, in 2006, debuted Carmen's Love Brunch at The Composers Room in January.

Four or five months into performing, she realized that her nonreligious gospel brunch was more than entertainment — it's a "movement about love," Miles says.

Mikalah Gordon, a fellow Las Vegas entertainer and former "American Idol" contestant, asked Miles — whom she calls "Mom": "Do you realize this is really about grief and finding joy?"

Miles didn't at first, then it dawned on her: Love and music have the power to heal.

"I'm not a doctor," Miles says. "I'm not a nurse. But we heal some; we heal a moment. You can save a life in a five-minute moment with the

right song.

"If you're not getting people to cry, dance, laugh and remember, you didn't do anything," she adds. "The music didn't do any better. It should do all four."

For two hours after her guests feast on crispy fried chicken and catfish, spicy gumbo, grits, mac and cheese, collard greens and more — a rotating menu that Miles selects herself — that void is filled.

Her music reverberates in each soul, soothing any wounds or pain, emptiness or sorrow that it touches, uplifting and energizing as she sings.

**"I know a place, y'all"**

Miles, who has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and worked in social services for about 20 years before becoming a singing sensation, says it doesn't matter what walk of life you come from.

"We don't care about all that," she says. "We care about your heart — my mom used to say, 'It's a heart thang'



The Composers Room

Toward the end of Carmen's Love Brunch at The Composers Room, a screen flashes photos of entertainer Skye Dee Miles and her mother.

"It's a responsibility, not to solve problems, because we can't," Miles says, "but you can listen to somebody for a few minutes. You can give somebody a hug. You can wipe a tear. I don't take my job of singing, performing, directing, whatever role I'm in, lightly.

"What I do at Carmen's Love Brunch, I've actually always been doing it in all my shows, and that's touching people."

During a brief intermission, Miles calls up a few audience members to stand near the stage with her and offers them the spotlight. Some come to celebrate a birthday, while others want to meet Miles, who aspires to be known as the "Oprah of Las Vegas entertainment," for bringing people together, for changing the game

here, as a Black woman.

**"Oh, I wanna take you there!"**

Miles' friend Seth Yudof, a veteran show producer, who has worked with her on productions including "Midnight Skye" at the Palms and Planet Hollywood Resort, calls her "a hidden gem" in Las Vegas.

"She can dominate a tiny lounge or onstage in an arena," he says. "She has a magnetic and sexy persona."

Miles is not the stereotypical Las Vegas singer, he says, adding that she brings original ideas and can bulldoze through with tenacity.

Carmen's Love Brunch offers a familiar comfort. It's a show with an all-embracing appeal. "It's not just for one culture, one group of

people," Miles says. "It comes from a cultural place, but it's universal."

It's also an avenue for Miles to turn pain into love. Though she won't ever get to taste her mother's fried chicken or be in her presence again, on Sundays, as she shimmies onto The Composers Room stage, Miles keeps the memories alive.

Toward the end of Carmen's Love Brunch, the screen flashes photos of Miles and her mother. As the audience files out the door, Miles looks on. She hopes they're leaving with a "small dose of oxygen."

In her realm, that means love, joy, laughter, hope.

"It's to keep someone going for the day," she says. "With that, it gives them some purpose to help somebody else out." ♦