



## Diva Las Vegas

➔ **CÉLINE DION HITS  
THE HIGH NOTES AGAIN**

Just when we thought that French-Canadian chanteuse Céline Dion had permanently traded in the limelight for motherhood, the pitch-perfect voice on the title tracks of *Beauty and the Beast*, *Sleepless in Seattle* and *Titanic* will open at Las Vegas' **Caesars Palace** this month (March 25) with her much-touted \$100 million stage production, *A New Day*, named after her latest album, *A New Day Has Come*. But the credit, some say, belongs to Franco Dragone, the driving force behind Cirque du Soleil, who inspired the world's best-selling contemporary artist to sign up for the three-year, 600-show engagement. (For tickets, call Ticketmaster at 702-474-4000, or visit [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).)

"I always felt that it would take something very special to drive me back on-stage," says Dion, who ends a three-year hiatus that began in 1999 when her husband, René Angéllil, was treated for throat cancer, and continued with the birth of their son René-Charles a year later. "And when my husband and I saw one of Franco's productions, I knew that I had found what I was looking for."

To accommodate Dion's immense musical and theatrical range, Dragone

created a **dazzling 90-minute set** that fuses song, performance art and high-tech theater, in which Dion headlines a cast of 70 dancers, musicians and character actors who perform in a specially built 4,000-seat venue that resembles the Roman Colosseum.

"Sure, this could be an overwhelming commitment, especially now that I can't stand being away from my son," says Dion, whose meteoric rise kept her on the fast track throughout the 1990s, earning her six Grammy awards, three American Music awards and two Academy Awards for her recordings, and more than \$150 million in music sales.

"But this is a remarkable opportunity to perform without being on the road all of the time, and the **best of all worlds** because I can give my very best as a performer without compromising myself as a mother," she smiles. "I'll just take it one show at a time and be sure to enjoy every single minute of it."

—Judy Alexandra DiEdwardo



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