

FRANK AND BARBRA

TOGETHER AGAIN, FOR THE FIRST TIME

By Charles Tatum

They never worked together, exactly, except when they taped a duet in separate recording sessions, but it's tantalizing to think of what it would have been like had Barbra Streisand and Frank Sinatra teamed up for a concert tour.

Just imagine the possibilities. Would one have outshone the other? Would their onstage banter have been friendly or snippy? And how awesome would those duets have been? Oh, the possibilities!

Well, the answers to these questions are revealed nightly at the Tuscany Hotel & Casino, just a little off the Strip on E. Flamingo Road, in the exciting new show "Performing As...Live." It's a Las Vegas spinoff of the "Performing As" celebrity impersonator contest that aired last year on the FOX-TV network.

"Performing As...Live" features only two characters, Frank and Babe, as it should be. Any additional characters in this show would just get in the way.

The roles were perfectly cast with Sharon Owens of St. Petersburg, Fla., as Streisand and Sebastian Anzaldo portraying Sinatra.

Owens was runner-up in the FOX impersonator search. The Sinatra impersonator on the TV show was unavailable for the Las Vegas booking, so the producer of "Performing As...Live" cast the very capable Anzaldo, who grew up in an Italian neighborhood of Omaha, Neb., listening to his grandparents' Sinatra records night and day.

The show begins with Streisand and Sinatra singing "I've Got A Crush On You," the song they recorded for Sinatra's Grammy-winning 1993 "Duets" album. The tribute artists sing it beautifully, which leaves the audience wondering whether the real stars could have done an even better job on their "Duets" duet had they been in the same studio at the same time—something Streisand reportedly wanted, but couldn't get Sinatra to agree to (in fact each singer on "Duets," including Carly Simon, Celine Dion and Bono, taped their vocals separately).

"Performing As...Live" includes segments in which Streisand and Sinatra are onstage alone singing solo accompanied on piano by Rob Hyatt, who also uses taped orchestra tracks at times to provide a lush full sound. During most of the show, however, the stars are onstage together.

They do masterful duets of "Somewhere" from *West Side Story*, "Theme from New York, New York" and "Somethin' Stupid," the



tune Nancy Sinatra sang with her Dad in 1967. Another highlight is a delicate blending of two of their signature songs as Sinatra croons verses from "It Was A Very Good Year" intertwined with Streisand singing "The Way We Were."

As good as the music is, the banter between the stars is equally memorable. There's a lot of good-natured teasing back and forth, but occasionally Streisand bristles at Sinatra's chauvinistic remarks.

Near the end of the show, the tuxedoed Sinatra turns to Streisand, who is attired in a stunning full-length black and white evening gown, and says dismissively, "Why don't you go on back[stage], take a little rest, and I'll close the show."

A moment of silence is followed by Streisand saying, in that trademark Brooklyn accent, "Excuse me?"

Don't miss it, the best concert that never was: Sinatra and Streisand together at the Tuscany.

SHOW TIME: 7:30 & 9:30 p.m., Tue.-Sat. (dark Sun.-Mon.)

SHOWROOM: Tuscany's Stars Lounge

SHOW PRICE: \$84.95 (see coupon on page 101), 866-830-0250