

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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Marché Moderne in Newport Beach has been designated a Four Diamonds restaurant by AAA and the Auto Club



Marché Moderne in Newport Beach has been elevated to the ranks of restaurants that have been designated Four Diamonds by AAA and the Auto Club. The awards go to hotels and restaurants which rank at the top of those inspected. Florent, left, and Amelia Marneau, owners of Marché Moderne restaurant in Newport Beach. (Register file photo)

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The inspection reports from 2019 are in and [Marché Moderne](#) in Newport Beach has been elevated to the ranks of restaurants that have been designated with Four Diamonds by AAA and the Auto Club.

There are only 62 Four Diamond restaurants added to the 2020 list and only 67 have been added to the Five Diamonds list. There are no Five Diamond restaurants in Orange County yet. The awards go to hotels and restaurants which rank at the top of those inspected. [Pasea Hotel & Spa](#) in Huntington Beach was added to the Four Diamonds hotel list this year.



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Marché Moderne in Newport Beach has been elevated to the ranks of restaurants that have been designated Four Diamonds by AAA and the Auto Club. The awards go to hotels and restaurants which rank at the top of those inspected. Seen here, Napoleon dessert. (Register file photo)





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Marché Moderne in Newport Beach has been elevated to the ranks of restaurants that have been designated Four Diamonds by AAA and the Auto Club. The awards go to hotels and restaurants which rank at the top of those inspected. Jeremy Correia preps in Marche Moderne's glass enclosed kitchen. (Register file photo)



"To maintain the exceptional standards required for this designation is an outstanding achievement," said the Auto Club's Approved Accommodations Supervisor Patricia Marengo. "Those at the Four Diamond level are just 6.3 percent of AAA designated hotels. AAA Four Diamond hotels are noted for upscale style and amenities and the restaurants must feature distinctive fine dining," she said.

AAA's Diamond Program uses specially trained full-time field representatives who visit more than 1,200 hotels and restaurants every week. As part of AAA's national network, the Auto Club has its own inspectors who arrive at Southern California establishments unannounced.

Four Diamond restaurants offer "distinctive fine dining, well-served amid upscale ambience," according to the AAA website. The description certainly fits Marché Moderne which opened in 2007 in South Coast Plaza and moved to Newport Coast in 2017. French classic dishes such as coq au vin and flawless pastries such as kouign-amanns sit side-by-side on a menu with contemporary fare.

"The hits are nonstop. Steak au poivre. Moules frites. Hamachi crudo with yuzu-jalapeño sorbet. Charred octopus with chorizo emulsion," wrote Register restaurant critic Brad A. Johnson in a [2017 review](#). "Green-tea panna cotta with a coconut madeleine pulled straight from the oven. A beautiful macaron that smells and tastes like roses. The kitchen doesn't miss a beat."

The setting [radiates elegance](#) as Register restaurant reporter Nancy Luna wrote the week it opened in Newport. "Natural light and cool ocean breezes flood through bi-folding windows into a spacious dining room accented with velvet and leather upholstered banquettes, walnut floors, European-inspired white stone walls and designer chairs resembling those found at the Eiffel Tower's famed Jules Verne restaurant. ... Wait staff will glide across the floor as if on stage — each step a carefully choreographed ballet for seamless, no-chaos service."

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With chef-owner power couple Florent and Amelia Marneau — she's the pastry chef — the cuisine is always in sync. But it's also about the flawless service as Florent Marneau told the Register in a [2015 interview](#). "I tell the guys on the line, 'Treat everyone well who comes through that door. They're spending \$100 or \$200, and they came here.' I feel humbled by that."