

RIVIERA

Lifestyle Guide



Clockwise from top left: The vacherin dessert at Marché Moderne; the caramel dessert at Knife Pleat; goat cheesecake at Scarlet Kitchen & Lounge; tiramisu at AVEO Table + Bar.

DESSERTS

4
ARTFUL
SWEETS

We've got a sugar crush on these creative confections.

BY ALLISON MITCHELL



1. Tiramisu at AVEO Table + Bar

Tiramisu gets an artful upgrade at AVEO Table + Bar at Waldorf Astoria Monarch Beach Resort & Club thanks to pastry chef Nikki Sutter. Her take on the classic dish features cold-brew espresso and Mount Gay Black Barrel rum-soaked ladyfingers with alaea salted caramel set atop a pistachio biscotti. 23K gold leaf gilds the top for a decadent finish. If you're looking for a meal to go with your sweets, try chef Greg Noble's Sunday Supper series, which includes a three-course menu of seasonal flavors and farm-fresh ingredients. 1 Monarch Beach Resort N, Dana Point, 949.234.3915, monarchbeachresort.com

2. Caramel at Knife Pleat

If there was a culinary dream team in Orange County, Michelin-starred executive chef Tony Esnault and pastry chef Germain Biotteau just might be it. Since the pandemic hit, Esnault has been presenting six-course French dinners on Friday nights that are illuminated by his deft culinary techniques. Biotteau follows with gorgeous desserts like his photoworthy caramel creation. A translucent layer of caramel sugar is topped with gold leaf and VSOP cognac mousse, while the bowl below holds almond cake, almond crumble, caramel cream and ice cream. 3333 S. Bristol St., Costa Mesa, 714.366.3388, knifepleat.com

3. Vacherin at Marché Moderne

The French fanfare continues in Newport Beach at fellow Michelin star favorite Marché Moderne. Executive chef Florent Marneau handles the restaurant's savory offerings while his wife, Amelia, wows as the resident pastry chef. When she's not whipping up flaky breakfast pastries, she's composing artfully plated desserts full of innovative flavors. Her take on the classic French vacherin includes toasted swirls of meringue atop a Grand Marnier genoise cake with lemongrass gelato, grapefruit compote and gelée. 7862 Pacific Coast Highway, Newport Beach, 714.434.7900, marchemoderne.net

4. Goat Cheesecake at Scarlet Kitchen & Lounge

Ladera Ranch locals have a winner in Scarlet Kitchen & Lounge, a family-owned concept helmed by executive chef Paige Riordan. After diving fork-first into favorites like the Liquid Gold pasta—a Riordan family recipe featuring pork and lamb ragout, pappardelle and shaved Parmesan—order a slice of goat cheesecake. Pastry chef Jasmine Barajas' sweet and tangy confection is topped with house-made lemon curd glaze and bejeweled with California-grown strawberries, figs and edible flowers. 3086 Gateway Place, Ladera Ranch, 949.503.3086, scarletkl.com