

# Modern Luxury

ORANGE COUNTY



A TOUR DE FORK  
OF AMERICA'S BEST  
NEW EATERIES

A MUST-SEE  
NEWPORT COAST  
MANSE

LOUIS VUITTON  
GETS A MAKEOVER  
AT SOUTH  
COAST PLAZA



*The feast issue*

PREPARE YOUR PALATE O.C.—IT'S TIME FOR A FINE DINE



1. Guests can pair a trio of sauces with Bourbon Steak's elegant cuts. Here, the 8-ounce black angus filet mignon 2. A variety of tacos are on offer at Oak, including octopus with avocado mousse, Sriracha aioli and lime crema. 3. A look at Habana's Cuban-driven bar and waitstaff attire.



6  
most exciting  
new restaurants

### 1 BOURBON STEAK

It's sheer showmanship at this Monarch Beach Resort newbie from storied chef Michael Mina, where plates arrive with magicianlike presentation. The cast-iron broiled shellfish platter bathed in miso butter is carted out and finished with a sizzle of lemon grass tea while the hay-smoked Snake River Farms ribeye cap arrives under a smoke-filled dome and is sliced tableside. Cocktails are shaken and stirred from the mobile bourbon cart, and a martini version just launched. (Or order a glass of Mina's namesake bubbly and dig into his epic caviar parfait.) Also new: the Caviar and Cadillac Experience, where you'll be toted to and from the restaurant in a Cadillac Escalade as you enjoy caviar amuse-bouche upon arrival and a custom prix fixe menu. Ahh, the good life. [monarchbeachresort.com/bourbon-steak](http://monarchbeachresort.com/bourbon-steak)

### 2 OAK

Perched above the bustling beachgoers sits this splendid spot that's coastal-chic from start to finish. Nestled in Laguna's HIP District, at the intersection of Pacific Coast Highway and Oak Street, the neighborhood venue is marked by a wraparound patio and second-floor views, where executive chef Chris Tzorin is pleasing palates with an eclectic mix of modern California comfort food like Nana's Fried Chicken (buttermilk fried chicken breast with mashed potatoes, thyme gravy and sauteed spinach) and Brooks Street classic meatballs that swim in a bath of marinara and mozzarella with broche crostini for sopping. Stop by Mondays for all-day happy hour (The Rose Gold cocktail remains a favorite), and its weekend brunch menu is best enjoyed alfresco to the tune of live music. [oak-lagunabeach.com](http://oak-lagunabeach.com)

### 3 HABANA

Habana ooh na-na! Can you say the name of this restaurant without hearing that festive tune? It's fitting, as the Irvine Spectrum Center locale of this Cuban eatery tantalizes with an explosion of Caribbean flavors, Spanish zest and African ingredients. You can feel the vibrant pulse of Cuban music, taste the sweetness of the tropical fruit and savor the appreciation for a well-made cafe con leche. The ropa vieja (shredded beef braised with sweet peppers, onions, garlic and tomato served with white rice, roasted plantain and sofrito black beans) takes top marks, but chef Alex Moreno also advises trying the Cubano sandwich with a house-pressed juice to sip. Also tasteworthy: its potent rum flight with which Habana's deft bartenders will lead you on an educational (and tasty) journey. [restauranthabana.com](http://restauranthabana.com)



4. **Marché Moderne's** succulent wild Monterey Bay calamari gets an added punch of fresh sweetness from tomatoes on the vine and a lemon-basil emulsion.

5. **Pacific Hideaway's** amberjack crudo with aji amarillo reduction, quick pickles and avocado puree.

6. Pull up a seat at Olea's sprawling bar

MARCHÉ MODERNE PHOTO BY DYLAN + JENI; OLEA AND PACIFIC HIDEAWAY PHOTOS BY TIRTHELOGO

#### 4 MARCHÉ MODERNE

O.C. gourmands were filled with delight when news came that husband-and-wife duo Florent and Amelia Marneau were bringing their storied Parisian-chic dining concept to the glitzy Crystal Cove Shopping Center in Newport Beach. Luxe locois fill the sophisticated dining room by the masses each week to indulge in Florent's heavenly foie gras and chestnut ravioles, and are sure to hold out for Amelia's exquisite napoleon that's oozing with Tahitian vanilla ice cream. Another reason to make a res ASAP? The recently launched spontan  menu has returned on Mondays only, a three-course prix fixe menu that's been 11 years in the making and changes weekly. Think endive salad followed by braised Colorado lamb shank with Reggiano-scented creamy polenta and Amelia's coconut panna cotta to finish. [marchemoderne.net](http://marchemoderne.net)

#### 5 PACIFIC HIDEAWAY

Surf City is home to this gastronomic paradise that's nestled in the swanky, boutiquey Kimpton Shorebreak Hotel. And with a new executive chef—Wyatt Lash, who hails from The Commoner at Hotel Monaco in Pittsburgh, Penn.—the robust mix of Latin and Asian flavors continues to take on new life. The Laos sausage lettuce wraps arrive with crispy coconut rice and a bright fish sauce-based drizzle that bites back, while hungry patrons must indulge in the large-format Tai snapper that punches the palate with a lime-salt rub. For good libations, The Dazed and Confused promises to leave you feeling all right, all right, all right. *Word to the wise:* Ask about Bodhi's Secret Stash, an off-the-menu black book of cocktails that runs the gamut from original creations to seasonal fan favorites. [pacifichideawayhb.com](http://pacifichideawayhb.com)

#### 6 OLEA

When it comes to visiting this Newport Beach stunner, take owner Russ Bendef's advice: "Come early and sit at the bar because we built it to create energy, be comfortable and inviting, and for every single seat to be a great one." It's there you'll chat with top-notch mixologists and sip vinos from an expansive global wine list, or indulge in the Rich Girl—a refreshing blend of high-quality ros , New Amsterdam vodka, lime, yuzu and fresh basil. Then, make your way to your table to enjoy chef Jared Cook's seasonally minded dishes, including herb-roasted prime beef cheek stroganoff, and the scrumptious blue crab baked oysters with Champagne tarragon butter, melted garlic, Nueske bacon and creamy watercress. Whatever your pick, you'll know it's fresh as a bevy of ingredients are grown on-site. [oleanewportbeach.com](http://oleanewportbeach.com)