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FOOD

# Brad A. Johnson: Best Orange County restaurants 2015

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## PASTRY CHEF OF THE YEAR David Rossi, The Ranch, Anaheim

Rossi has been on the (very) short list for this prize for the past three years. It's time to stop denying it. Desserts at The Ranch in Anaheim are outrageously good.

Funny thing is, it would be very easy to skip dessert altogether at The Ranch because portions are so large and everything that comes before – including Rossi's fresh-from-the oven popovers served with house-made jam and that famous tomahawk rib-eye the size of a caveman's club – is too delicious not to eat in its entirety.

But if ever there was a time and place to muster every last ounce of energy that remains within you so that you can stuff your belly with a few more morsels – diabetes be damned – this is the place.

Rossi's brilliance lies in his ability to weave between genres. On one side of the dessert menu are the classics like chocolate tart, pecan pie, creme brulee or sticky toffee pudding, all exactly what you would expect them to be, only 10 times better. Meanwhile, the other side of the dessert menu showcases Rossi's wild streak, offering visually stunning twists (sometimes literally) on familiar-sounding flavors like s'mores, Milky Way chocolate bars or peanut butter and jelly. Chocolate panna cotta surely won't be what you're expecting, and I pity the poor pastry chef whose panna cotta you eat elsewhere after this one.

Most importantly, don't overlook the ice cream. Where else will you have the chance to eat ice cream that tastes like buttered popcorn, curry, candied ginger or caramelized banana?

1025 E. Ball Road, Anaheim  
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theranch.com



*PASTRY CHEF OF THE YEAR: Pastry Chef David Rossi of The Ranch Restaurant and Saloon is known for putting his own spin on well known flavors. "He is thoughtful in how he presents his desserts in considering the mouthfeel. Does it have crunch, is it balanced?," according to Melissa Cunningham, the restaurant's marketing specialist. He flours a Republica del Cacao Chocolate Tart with Gianduja moussé, hazelnut brittle and salted caramel ice cream at the Anaheim Restaurant.*

Cindy Yamanaka, Staff Photographer

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