

# San Diego

MAGAZINE

## BEST

# Desserts



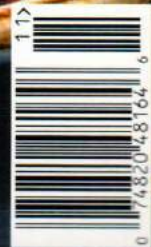
**IN THEIR WORDS  
THE WOMEN WHO  
REVOLUTIONIZED  
OUR CITY'S  
RESTAURANT SCENE**

**73** must-try sweets,  
exclusive recipes,  
a cookie showdown,  
and the secret scoop  
behind San Diego's  
most popular treats

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Warm Chocolate  
Brownie at  
Bankers Hill  
Bar + Restaurant

\$5.95

# Desserts

'Tis the season for cakes, cookies, pastries, pies, profiteroles, and other sweet treats. Here are San Diego's 73 most coveted desserts in time for the holidays—just don't tell your dentist to send us the bill.

BY ARCHANA RAM

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN MCCHESENEY-WACHS, PAULA WATTS, + MADISON PARKER

## WARM CHOCOLATE BROWNIE

Bankers Hill Bar + Restaurant

It's a cardinal sin to serve a cold brownie à la mode. Thankfully, this restaurant always plates a soft, warm chocolate brownie topped with their signature espresso-Bailey's ice cream. And thanks to Chef de Cuisine Tyler Nollenberger's love for chocolate pretzels, the most recent iteration includes pretzel crumbles with a drizzle of chocolate sauce. "This dish really takes me back to my childhood," says Nollenberger. "When you're 10 years old, what's better than a brownie and ice cream? And making the ice cream with Bailey's? Well, that appeals to my adult side."

2202 Fourth Avenue, Bankers Hill; [bankershillsd.com](http://bankershillsd.com)



## DIVINA CAKE

Azúcar

"I love the idea of a toasted frosting where you dig in to discover what's inside," says Vivian Hernandez-Jackson, owner and chef of the Ocean Beach dessert shop that combines her Cuban background with French pastry training. At the center of this white chocolate soufflé cake—served in individual portions—is a tart passion fruit cream, and on the outside are raspberries and a glossy vanilla bean cooked meringue icing. "Passion fruit tastes like a tropical vacation—it really transports people and has such a unique taste. I use it anywhere I see lemon in recipes."

4820 Newport Avenue, Ocean Beach; [iloveazucar.com](http://iloveazucar.com)



## CHEESE PLATTER

Venissimo

Cheese as dessert? "Leave it to the French to propose such a thing!" says Gina Freize, co-owner of Venissimo Cheese. "But cheese is like *crème brûlée* for those who prefer savory to sweet, since cheese is essentially creamy milk with salt. And creamy things are a wonderful digestive." She suggests a blue cheese to cleanse and a Brie to soothe the palette, and an aged gouda, which is naturally sweet and texturally crunchy. Her picks? Bayley Hazen Blue cheese served with fresh figs, chocolate, and balsamic; the hard cow's milk Appenzeller from Switzerland paired with apple slices and caramel sauce; and ginger snaps and sour cherries with Ewephoria, a sweet sheep's milk gouda out of the Netherlands. Locations in Del Mar, Liberty Station, Mission Hills, and North Park; [venissimo.com](http://venissimo.com)

## SEASONAL CREAM BUN

Wayfarer Bread

Owner Crystal White honed her skills at San Francisco's famed Tartine Bakery before opening Proof Bakery in LA, then launching a series of pop-ups. Thanks to a successful Kickstarter campaign, she now has her own brick-and-mortar—which recently got a write-up in the *New York Times*—where she slings loaves, tarts, morning buns, and more. The cream bun is our favorite, a croissant bun filled with pastry cream and a seasonal component. "It's a way to showcase San Diego's incredible produce in a morning pastry," she says. "The outside of the croissant can expand as it bakes, which makes the outer texture flaky, crispy, and crunchy. But the inner and bottom of the bun are confined in a muffin tin, so they remain soft, chewy and buttery." Future flavors for fall include apple butter with honey, pear vanilla, and maple date. 5525 La Jolla Boulevard, Bird Rock; [wayfarerbread.com](http://wayfarerbread.com)



## HALF BAKED CHOCOLATE CAKE

Nine-Ten Restaurant and Bar

The La Jolla restaurant has served more than 50,000 of these cakes since its opening—that's 2,375 pounds of dark chocolate, 20,000 eggs, another 20,000 egg yolks, 1,250 pounds of sugar, and 172 pounds of flour. Crafted by Nine-Ten's first pastry chef, Jack Fisher, who wanted to create his own version of the famous molten chocolate cake made by acclaimed chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten, the cake comes with a housemade vanilla bean ice cream and caramel sauce. The secret to its success is ensuring the sides are fully baked, so it holds its form while the middle remains melted. 910 Prospect Street, La Jolla; [nine-ten.com](http://nine-ten.com)



## COCONUT CREAM PIE

Pop Pie Co.

They may have just opened an ice cream shop next door (Stella Jean's), but we're still suckers for the original concept, an ode to sweet and savory pies of all shapes and sizes. For dinner, the five-inch steak and ale pie and roasted veggies with curry pie are popular, but we don't leave without the 3.5-inch coconut cream pie. The best-seller combines tender young coconut from Thailand with a coconut-milk-based pastry cream that's topped with fresh whipped cream and toasted coconut flakes.

4404 Park Boulevard, University Heights; [poppieco.com](http://poppieco.com)

## CHURROS

Churros el Tigre

You don't have to cross the border to get piping-hot, sugar-dusted churros. Just visit this small kiosk inside Las Americas Premium Outlets in San Ysidro. The churro masters make

sundae and ice cream sandwich spins on the namesake, but we prefer them *clásico*. Served in six- and nine-piece batches or a fun 20-piece mini option, you can dip the churros in chocolate or cajeta (caramel) sauce. For an extra \$1.50, add Bavarian cream, strawberry preserves, or lechera, a sweetened condensed milk.

211 Camino de la Plaza, San Ysidro; [churroseltigre.com](http://churroseltigre.com)

