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#11182

**A Grassy Point Oyster cooked on a bed of hot coals ~ Part of an amazing tasting menu from Casey Overton at The Loft featuring courses of Caledonia prawns with compressed cantaloupe, swordfish, and Wagyu Ribeye!**

We've tried some of their [cocktails](#). We've walked through their gardens while snacking on [crispy potato pillows topped in bacon dust](#). We have even tasted our way through their [massive cheese and honey selection](#). To finish we'll share our dinner at [The Loft](#) which was wonderful and the cornerstone to another amazing trip down the coast to [Montage Laguna Beach](#).



We started off with some pyrotechnics! The Loft's Chef de Cuisine Casey Overton raked out some coals from their wood burning rotisserie.



They burn American oak, which makes for some very hot coals. The heat was so intense I worried about melting... both my camera and myself! The oyster started bubbling in almost no time at all.



After Chef Overton was done he transformed the oyster into this: An amuse-bouche of grilled Grassy Point oyster, lemon basil butter and a Gloria Farms tomato. Resting on a beautiful bed of salt and spices this oyster preparation was amazing. Its time on the coals left it barely cooked and its flavor was not masked but intensified by the butter and the tomato. Even the straight brine was delicious!



The oyster was followed by a great little fruit salad. Comprised of fruit from Fitzgerald farms, up in Fresno county, some crispy prosciutto and baby mache, this salad was dressed in a Madras curry vinaigrette. The curry's spice and gentle heat contrast well with the sweetness of the fruit.



These Caledonia prawns were incredible. Taken from crystal clear bright blue waters their taste is amazingly sweet and clean. Chef Overton served them with a slice of compressed cantaloupe. Taking a page from molecular gastronomy, he slices cantaloupe and puts it in a cryovac bag like you would for sous vide. Instead of cooking it though, it simply compressed and the mechanical force exerted on it intensifies its flavors.



They finished a local line-caught swordfish from the Catalina Channel with a smoked corn broth. Pouring the broth table-side filled the air with a wonderful smoky perfume and kept the texture of the fish intact. It was beautifully cooked and the padron peppers gave it a delightful touch of heat which complimented the smoked corn well.



The courses kept coming as the sun began to set over the beautiful Montage Laguna Beach resort.



Darkness brought out both a beautiful blue glow and the main course of sautéed sweetbreads, beets and Wagyu rib eye. The addition of fresh summer truffles gave this dish a great earthiness and really put it over the top.



We finished with a dessert of peaches, both chilled and poached, around a microwaved cake topped with a combination of Robiola cheese and a Thai basil ice cream. The cake was reminiscent of the mug cakes that we've seen before, but dressing it up for fine dining makes it seem entirely new. The slightly spongy texture somehow really works in this preparation which includes a wide variety of textures. Chef Casey Overton, an Orange County native who has been cooking since he was 7, has filled the menu with both a lifetime of experience and the playful wonder of a child eager to see just what sort of magic a kitchen can produce. Talking to him was a delight. His enthusiasm for the ingredients is infectious and his food at The Loft in Montage Laguna Beach is delicious.