


Hello Visitor LOGIN OR REGISTER

JOB | CARS | REAL ESTATE | APARTMENTS & RENTALS | FORECLOSURES | MARKETPLACE | MORE

HOME LOCAL WEATHER SPORTS MONEY ENTERTAINMENT LIFE & FAMILY HEALTH TRAVEL OPINIONS Search Go!


FAMILY MOMS AT WORK SCHOOLS FOOD & RECIPES HOME & GARDEN FASHION LAW PETS CELEBRATIONS TECHNOLOGY TECHNOLOGY TIPS

TODAY'S HOT TOPICS | Disney World Monorail Accident | Michael Jackson Remembered | Orlando Magic Free Agency | Coke Zero 400 In Daytona | Caylee & Casey Anthony



DOUBLE your points,  
DOUBLE your value,  
Earn free nights faster.

**BOOK NOW**



**Book Now**  
**Hotel Locator**  
**Choice Privileges®**

Terms & Conditions Apply

Home > Life & Family

Text size ▲ ▼

# Roy's maintains its status as a Sand Lake tradition worth revisiting

Sentinel Staff

E-mail Print Vote



**OrlandoSentinel.com**  
50% off Golf Deals

Roy's was one of the first to take up residence on Restaurant Row. In fact, in early 2001, there were so few dining establishments open on Sand Lake Road that we hadn't started calling it Restaurant Row.

Timpano was serving, but many others that now line that stretch of highway -- and many that have come and gone -- wouldn't start serving until later that year or the next.

So, back then, Roy's was hot. It was new, it was splashy, it was sexy. And it was different, coming out of Hawaii with a fusion cuisine influenced by Asian ingredients and European techniques, a style created by Roy Yamaguchi, who opened his first Roy's in **Honolulu** in 1988. It didn't seem to matter that by the time Roy's had crossed the Pacific and the continental United States, it had become a chain owned by Florida-based **Outback Steakhouse Inc.** The crowds flocked.

They're still flocking. On my two recent visits, Roy's was bustling as if it was still the new kid in town. Actually, the new kid in town is Ryan Leto, the chef and managing partner at the Sand Lake Road

restaurant. Leto took over for Greg Richie, who opened the restaurant. Richie's contract expired this year, and he opted to move on. Leto moved to the Orlando shop from the Las Vegas Roy's.

The chef/managing partners are given a certain leeway to make changes to the menu, although some items are

## Check This Out



**Your Guide to Orlando**  
Find concerts, events, bars and restaurants in your area.



**Need a Bigger Paycheck?**  
Click here for the best education programs to advance your career.

## Life & Family Blogs

The latest posts from our Life & Family blogs ...

**Fleet Peoples Park beach back open [Animal Crazy]**

**[Fashion Focus]**

**Will iPhone users pay for pets' horoscopes? [Animal Crazy]**

**Save \$143.86 with coupons in this week's Sunday Sentinel [Frugal Force]**

**Brighton jewelry drive supports Feed Our Friends [Fashion Focus]**

**Dog Days of Summer at Seven Sisters Coffee [Animal Crazy]**

**Pet Rescue by Judy holds net food and supply drive**

Feedback

Ads by Google

#### Free Govt Cell Phone

Free Minutes, Free voice mail, See if you're eligible! SafeLink  
[www.SafeLinkWireless.com](http://www.SafeLinkWireless.com)

#### Compare Auto Warranties

Use our Pre-Screened Network Of Warranty Specialists, 800-281-2029  
[www.USWarrantyCenter.com](http://www.USWarrantyCenter.com)

#### Prepare to be Shocked

Millions have already taken this amazing test. What's your RealAge?  
[RealAge.com](http://RealAge.com)

#### Going to Sanibel Island?

Get the Scoop from Travelers Who Know Sanibel Island!  
[www.TripAdvisor.com](http://www.TripAdvisor.com)

#### Shocking Joint Pain News

Brand New Discovery for Joint Pain Prepare to be shocked!  
[www.TheJointPainReview.com](http://www.TheJointPainReview.com)

constant and can be found at any of the 33 Roy's restaurants. These dishes, "Roy's classics," were among the best things I sampled on my recent visits.

One was the surfah combo (\$26), which combined a macadamia nut-crusted mahi mahi with a serving of seared golden sea bass. The mahi mahi was the better of the two, a beautiful fillet, thick and moist, served with a rich lobster butter sauce. The seabass, a little hard-crusted, was paired with a truffled herb pistou, which, my server volunteered without being asked, means pesto.

I also liked the chive-seared U-10 sea scallops (\$26), sufficiently large, as the U-10 designation would suggest (10 per pound), but soft and buttery with a velvety texture. The scallops were well-complemented with a Thai chili vinaigrette, but the wedge of fried tofu was rather superfluous and looked silly on the plate.

The prosciutto-wrapped ono (\$26), also known as wahoo -- and caught, the menu wants you to know, on a long line -- was dry and disappointing. But not as much as the garlic honey-mustard grilled short ribs of beef (\$23). Instead of the richness of fat, the short ribs were tough and chewy. Longer, slower cooking might have saved them.

Appetizers were largely satisfying. I especially liked the crispy garlic calamari (\$7), which weren't all that crispy but had jackets of delicious batter, and were served with Roma tomatoes and spicy chilies.

Roy's canoe appetizer for two (\$26; paddles extra) offered a sampling of coconut shrimp sticks, spring rolls, ravioli and tortellini with a few mushy edamame thrown in. The shrimp sticks were good, as were the spring rolls, stuffed with chicken, and the beef tortellini.

Lemongrass-seared tiger prawn pad Thai (\$8) had large shrimp served with noodles tossed with a curry sauce and peanuts. The firm and fresh-tasting prawns were the rightful stars of the dish.

Pineapple upside-down cake (\$7.50) was the standout dessert by a long shot. The cake was moist and sweet with a wonderful toasty note, and the fruit added just the right bit of tartness. A macadamia nut tart (\$7.50) paled next to the pineapple.

Staff are well-trained, almost to a fault. You will probably never have the opportunity to open the front door yourself -- one of the hostesses will likely leap ahead to do that for you. Servers have excellent menu knowledge (see pistou/pesto above) but insist on walking diners through the menu. On one visit, my guests and I had decided what we wanted for our appetizers before our server came to greet us. He started into his spiel and, seeing no end to it soon, I stopped him and gave him our appetizer order. As he walked away, he turned and said, "They make us go through the whole thing." The guest should have the right to make them stop.

Roy's is unapologetically noisy, whether you sit at the counter overlooking the open kitchen, as I did on one visit, or in the dining room. Get your important conversation out of the way before you get there.

The dining room is nicely decorated with walls of smooth black stones accented by moody lighting. But the kitchen noise and lighting overwhelm, keeping this from being a romantic destination.

Roy's has a great sense of community, and unlike many other restaurants near the tourist area -- and with a name that will draw them in -- this restaurant caters to the local trade.

Copyright © 2009, **Orlando Sentinel**

[\[Animal Crazy\]](#)

[Who knew dolphins ate Jell-O? Zoo Camp: Day 3 \[Animal Crazy\]](#)

[When lightning strikes \[Beach Blog\]](#)

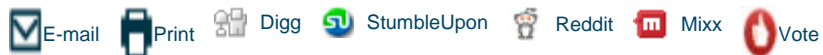
[Roller skating babies rock YouTube \[Moms At Work\]](#)

[... more Orlando Sentinel blogs](#)

### Most Popular



- [NTSB: Monorail pilot who died tried to back away from oncoming train](#)
- [Family, friends remember Austin Wuennenberg as more than a Disney monorail pilot](#)
- [Magic sign Turkoglu . . . then trade him to Toronto getting a trade exception in process](#)
- [Lightning kills man, injures 4 in Central Florida](#)
- [Man sentenced to life for 2006 fatal shooting](#)



COMMENTS (0) | [Add Comment](#)

### Take A Look



#### The Frugal Force

The Frugal Force protects your pocketbook with consumer news and advice



#### Education Programs

Click here for the best education programs to advance your career

[Click here to check out pictures of the American Idol auditions in Orlando.](#)

### In Sports...

- **Magic sign Turkoglu . . . then trade him to Toronto getting a trade exception in process**
- **Open Mike: Here's hoping former UF linebacker Scot Brantley recovers from a stroke**
- **New acquisition Ryan Anderson knows his role with the Magic**
- **Marcin Gortat signs 5-year, \$34-million offer sheet from Dallas, Magic have seven days to match**

### In Entertainment...

- **Close to 10,000 come out for 'American Idol' auditions in Orlando**
- **Movie review: Bruno -- 3 out of 5 stars**
- **An independent streak in downtown Sanford eateries**
- **Arts center names stage for Steinmetzes**

### In News...

- **NTSB: Monorail pilot tried to back away from oncoming train**
- **Family, friends remember Disney monorail pilot Austin Wuennenberg**
- **Turkoglu gone but Magic get trade exception in four-team deal**
- **Lightning kills man, injures 4 in Central Florida**

### Sun & Sand



[Florida Beach Guide](#)

### Cool Off



[Florida Springs Guide](#)

### Dive In



[View our pool guide](#)

### Smile



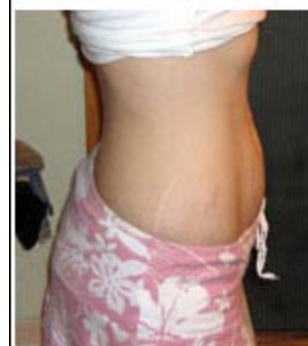
[Mugshots of the rich and famous](#)

### Save Money



[Free grocery coupons. Click. Print. Save.](#)

**1 Flat Stomach**  
**Rule: obey**



**I lost 21 pounds**  
**in 3 weeks!**

**I did it with**  
**1 simple rule...**

[Read My Story](#)  
[karenweightstruggle.com](http://karenweightstruggle.com)



### Just For You



#### Pool guide

Award-winning swimming pools make a make a splash with a variety of styles.

#### Homes of the stars

Take a photographic tour of hot Hollywood homes and



celebrity properties.





**Notable deaths**

Don't forget the famous people who have died this year.




**Food and Wine**

Eat, drink and be merry at Epcot's annual Food and Wine Festival.

Get over 100 channels of **FREE TV** for the rest of the year with EMBARQ® Triple Play. Order online and get a \$25 gift card.



**services**

- Site Index
- Advertise With Us
- Customer Service
- Home Delivery
- Buy our Photo Gifts
- 50% Off Dining Deals
- Newspaper Back Issues
- Sports Fan Shop
- Sweepstakes

**news**

- El Sentinel (En Español)
- Lottery Results
- Public Records
- Space & Science
- Neighborhoods

**money**

- Progressions
- Investing Tips
- Technology Tips
- PR Newswire Releases

**weather**

- Hurricane HQ
- Pollen Forecast
- Marine / Beach

**sports**

- Scores / Stats
- 50% off Golf Deals

**entertainment**

- Find Restaurants
- Find Bars & Clubs
- Find Concerts & Events
- Movie Times
- TV Listings
- Things to Do
- Books

**stay in touch**

- Send a News Tip
- Get Alerts
- Get Alerts On Phone
- Get Us on Kindle
- Get Newsletters
- Our Twitter feeds

**classified**

- Place an Ad
- Apartments & Rentals
- Cars
- Foreclosures
- Furniture
- Garage sales
- Items For Sale
- Jobs
- Pets
- Real Estate



Baltimore Sun Chicago Tribune Daily Press Hartford Courant LA Times Orlando Sentinel Sun Sentinel The Morning Call  
 The Virginia Gazette  
 Privacy Policy Work For Us Contact Us Terms of Service  
 Orlando Sentinel, 633 N. Orange Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801

A Tribune Web site

