

ICE CREAM BASE

MAKES ABOUT

3

CUPS

The perfect scoop of ice cream begins here. In minutes you have the foundation for practically every creamy frozen treat in this book—plus an infinite number you can create yourself. Make it, store it, flavor it, and churn away. That's all you *need* to know.

For the curious, however, there's more going on in each base than meets the eye. What might read like an arbitrary list of ingredients is in fact a formula that yields a carefully calibrated ratio of ice cream's main components. (For ice cream nerds, it's approximately 58% water, 17% fat, 11% milk solids, and 14% sugar, by weight.) That's not to say that a final product with these ratios is necessarily the goal. In some cases, I want an ice cream that has, say, a lower fat percentage—remember, less fat means a denser texture and flavor that hits your palate more quickly—so I might ultimately dilute the base when I add a flavoring before churning. For us at Salt & Straw, the base is the way we keep track of our starting point, which makes manipulating the finished product much easier.

For the home cook, carving out a separate recipe for the base has a different purpose. It's practical and makes home ice cream making that much easier: This way, you can make it in advance—in big storable batches, even—so each recipe in this book is that much easier to execute.

- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons dry milk powder
- 1/4 teaspoon xanthan gum (Yes, I'm easy to find! See page 33.)
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 1 1/3 cups whole milk
- 1 1/3 cups heavy cream

Combine the sugar, dry milk, and xanthan gum in a small bowl and stir well.

Pour the corn syrup into a medium pot and stir in the whole milk. Add the sugar mixture and immediately whisk vigorously until smooth. Set the pot over medium heat and cook, stirring often and adjusting the heat if necessary to prevent a simmer, until the sugar has fully dissolved, about 3 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat.

Add the cream and whisk until fully combined. Transfer the mixture to an airtight container and refrigerate until well chilled, at least 6 hours, or for even better texture and flavor, 24 hours. Stir the base back together if it separates during the resting time. The base can be further stored in the fridge for up to 1 week or in the freezer for up to 3 months. (Just be sure to fully thaw the frozen base before using it.)

Following the instructions for the bases will yield a few more tablespoons than the amount called for in the recipes. This is intentional—so you're sure to have enough base, even when a bit inevitably gets left behind here and there in the pan, in the storage container, and the like.

SORBET (OR GELATO) BASE

MAKES ABOUT

2

CUPS

This base is designed to make sorbet, gelato, and everything in between. For sorbets, you essentially just add flavor—say, a puree of roasted strawberries (see page 89) or even roasted banana and parsnips (see page 157). For the rest, you add flavor *and* fat—a little cream to reach sherbet status, or a bit more to achieve a gelato-grade treat.

1 cup granulated
sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon xanthan
gum (Yes, I'm
easy to find! See
page 33.)

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup light
corn syrup

Stir together the sugar and xanthan gum in a small bowl. Combine $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups water and the corn syrup in a small saucepan. Add the sugar mixture and immediately whisk vigorously until smooth (but don't fret over a few lumps). Set the pan over medium heat and cook, stirring often and adjusting the heat if necessary to prevent a simmer, until the sugar has fully dissolved, about 3 minutes. Take the pan off the heat and let the mixture cool completely.

Transfer the mixture to an airtight container and store in the fridge until cold, at least 4 hours, or up to 2 weeks, or in the freezer for up to 1 year. (Just be sure to fully thaw it and stir well before using it.)

COCONUT ICE CREAM BASE (DAIRY FREE!)

MAKES ABOUT

4

CUPS

Gregory Gourdet, the chef at Departure and a rockstar of Portland's food scene, turned us on to this incredible base for dairy-free ice cream. Coconut cream provides both fat and flavor, which is boosted by an infusion of the fruit's toasted shredded flesh.

1/2 cup unsweetened shredded coconut

1/2 cup (lightly packed) light brown sugar

1/4 cup granulated sugar

1/2 teaspoon xanthan gum (Yes, I'm easy to find! See page 33.)

3/4 cup light corn syrup

2 1/2 cups unsweetened coconut cream (preferably Aroy-D and boxed, not canned)

Heat the oven to 300°F.

Sprinkle the shredded coconut in an even layer on a sheet pan and bake, shaking the pan occasionally, until the coconut is an even dark amber color, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir together the brown sugar, granulated sugar, and xanthan gum.

Combine the toasted coconut, corn syrup, and 1 cup water in a small saucepan. Add the sugar mixture and whisk vigorously until smooth. Set the pan over medium heat and cook, stirring often and adjusting the heat if necessary to prevent a simmer, until the sugar has fully dissolved, about 3 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the coconut cream.

Let the base cool. Transfer the mixture to an airtight container and refrigerate until well chilled, at least 6 hours, or for even better texture and flavor, 24 hours. The base can be further stored in the fridge for up to 2 weeks or in the freezer for up to 3 months. (Just be sure to fully thaw the frozen base before using it.) Strain it before using.

ICE CREAM BASE

2X / 6 CUPS

1 cup granulated sugar
1/4 cup dry milk powder
1/2 teaspoon xanthan gum
1/4 cup light corn syrup
2²/₃ cups whole milk
2²/₃ cups heavy cream

3X / 9 CUPS

1¹/₂ cups granulated sugar
6 tablespoons dry milk powder
3/4 teaspoon xanthan gum
6 tablespoons light corn syrup
4 cups whole milk
4 cups heavy cream

4X / 12 CUPS

2 cups granulated sugar
1/2 cup dry milk powder
1 teaspoon xanthan gum
1/2 cup light corn syrup
5¹/₃ cups whole milk
5¹/₃ cups heavy cream

SORBET (OR GELATO) BASE

2X / 4 CUPS

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon xanthan gum
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup light corn syrup

3X / 6 CUPS

- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons xanthan gum
- 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups water
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup light corn syrup

4X / 8 CUPS

- 4 cups granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons xanthan gum
- 5 cups water
- 1 cup light corn syrup

COCONUT ICE CREAM BASE

2X / 8 CUPS

- 1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 cup (lightly packed) light brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon xanthan gum
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups light corn syrup
- 2 cups water
- 5 cups unsweetened coconut cream (preferably Aroy-D and boxed, not canned)

3X / 12 CUPS

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (lightly packed) light brown sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons xanthan gum
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups light corn syrup
- 3 cups water
- 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups unsweetened coconut cream (preferably Aroy-D and boxed, not canned)

4X / 16 CUPS

- 2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut
- 2 cups (lightly packed) light brown sugar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons xanthan gum
- 3 cups light corn syrup
- 4 cups water
- 10 cups unsweetened coconut cream (preferably Aroy-D and boxed, not canned)

STUMPTOWN COFFEE & BURNSIDE BOURBON

MAKES ABOUT

2½

PINTS

Portland is a coffee town, so we couldn't make just *any* coffee ice cream; we designed one to show off top-quality beans. Chocolate enhances coffee's roasty, caramely qualities and a healthy dose of whiskey adds depth and a boozy wallop. Our original version of this ice cream features a trio of local legends: single-origin coffee from Stumptown, cocoa powder from Holy Kakow, and Eastside Distilling's exceptional barrel-aged Burnside bourbon. Not to worry, non-Portlanders: Any high-quality substitutes will work.

WHAT WE LEARN: *Alcohol (in the bourbon) plays a cool role in this recipe. Because it shares the freezing-depressant properties of sugar, the addition lets us dial down the sweetness of the cream without sacrificing the velvety consistency. And that allows the nuances of that great coffee to shine.*

1 cup coarsely ground coffee (see Note)

½ cup Burnside bourbon or your favorite bourbon

1 cup heavy cream

1 tablespoon granulated sugar

2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder (preferably natural)

3 cups Ice Cream Base (page 34), very cold

Combine ¾ cup of the coffee grounds, ½ cup cold water, and the bourbon in a glass jar. Cover it tightly and shake lightly. Let it sit, covered, at room temperature for at least 24 hours (or up to 3 days with little impact on the flavor).

Using a fine-mesh strainer, strain the mixture into a container, pressing the grounds to extract as much liquid as you can. Discard the grounds. If you spot any stray coffee grounds in the mixture, strain it once more. Store it in a sealed container in the fridge for up to 2 weeks.

Combine the cream and sugar in a small saucepan and cook, stirring, over medium-high heat until the cream gives off steam but isn't yet bubbling, about 3 minutes. Reduce the heat to low, add the remaining ¼ cup coffee grounds and the cocoa powder, and whisk for a minute or so to dissolve the cocoa powder. Remove the pan from the heat and let the cream and coffee hang out together for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to achieve maximum flavor extraction (a.k.a. coffee yumminess).

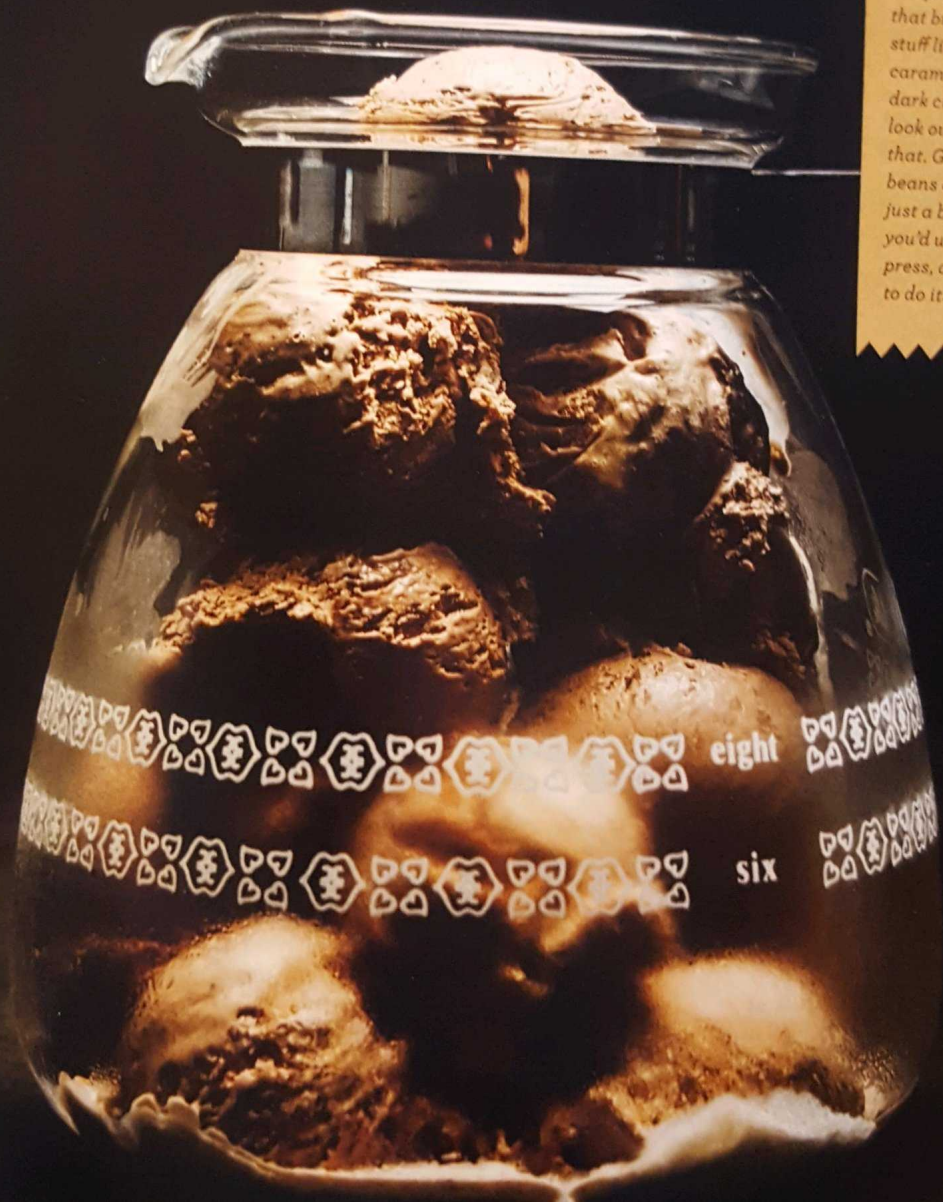
Pour the mixture through a fine-mesh strainer into a container, pressing the grounds to extract as much liquid as you can; then discard them. Let the coffee cream cool to room temperature, then stir in the cold brew-bourbon mixture. Transfer it to the fridge to chill until cold if you're using a pre-frozen bowl type of machine; otherwise, use it now or refrigerate it for up to 3 days.

Put the ice cream base and 1 cup of the coffee-cream mixture into a bowl and whisk to combine. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until it has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Quickly transfer the ice cream, scraping every last delicious drop from the machine, into freezer-friendly containers. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

NOTE

To make awesome coffee ice cream, you need awesome cold brew. So buy high-quality beans, freshly roasted. For this recipe, I like coffees that bring to mind stuff like tobacco, caramel, maple, and dark chocolate, so look out for beans like that. Grind the coffee beans coarsely but just a bit finer than you'd use for French press, or ask a barista to do it.



CHOCOLATE GOOEY BROWNIE

MAKES ABOUT

2½

PINTS

Our version of this modern classic combines super-delicious chocolate ice cream made with fair-trade Holy Kakow cocoa and brownies designed to stay ooey-goey when frozen. Visitors to our kitchen will be hard-pressed not to spot the secret to our brownie magic: giant buckets of homemade marshmallow fluff!

¼ cup granulated sugar

¼ cup unsweetened natural cocoa powder, preferably from Holy Kakow

3 cups Ice Cream Base (page 34), very cold

1 cup Goey Brownie pieces (recipe follows)

Combine the sugar and ¼ cup water in a small saucepan, set it over medium heat, and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat and whisk in the cocoa powder until the mixture is smooth and glossy, about 15 seconds. Let it cool to room temperature. Put the ice cream base and the chocolate mixture into a bowl and whisk to combine. Transfer it to the fridge to chill until cold if you're using a pre-frozen bowl type of machine.

Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until it has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Quickly transfer the mixture to freezer-friendly containers: Spoon in a layer of ice cream, sprinkle on some brownies, and use a spoon to press them in gently. Repeat. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

GOOEY BROWNIES

MAKES ABOUT 5 CUPS OF BROWNIE PIECES

- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into 1-inch chunks
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (5 ounces) chocolate chips
- 2 large eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder (any kind, but Dutch-processed is especially great here)
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream
- 1 cup marshmallow fluff (store-bought or make the Lemon Marshmallow Fluff, page 124, without the lemon zest)

Homemade marshmallow fluff is the secret ingredient in our ice cream-friendly brownies. The addition prevents the brownies from soaking up cream (and getting icy when frozen), so they stay as gooey-soft in each scoop as a perfectly undercooked brownie is straight from the baking pan. They're so soft, it's best to store them in the freezer until you're ready to use them.

Heat the oven to 350°F. Line a 9 × 9-inch baking dish with parchment paper and spray it with nonstick spray.

Pour an inch or so of water into a small saucepan and bring it to a simmer. Put the butter in a heatproof bowl that'll sit on top of the saucepan without touching the water. Set the bowl on the saucepan, reduce the heat to low, and let the butter melt completely, stirring it occasionally. Add the chocolate chips and stir until the chocolate is completely melted. As soon as it's fully melted, remove the pan and bowl from the heat but keep the bowl over the warm water.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat the eggs and sugar until the eggs look lighter in color and slightly frothy, about 3 minutes. Reduce the speed to low, add the chocolate mixture to the eggs, then increase the speed to medium-high and mix until completely combined.

In a separate mixing bowl, lightly whisk together the flour, cocoa powder, and salt to break up any clumps. Turn off the stand mixer, add the flour mixture, and mix on medium speed until the ingredients are just combined. Reduce the mixer speed to low, slowly drizzle in the heavy cream, and continue to mix until just combined, scraping down the sides as necessary. Use a large spoon to fold the marshmallow fluff into the batter, mixing just enough to get most of the fluff incorporated with just a few streaks remaining.

Pour the batter into the prepared baking dish and spread it out to make an even layer. Bake until a butter knife inserted into the center comes out clean and the top is crackly but the brownies are sticky and ooey-gooey, about 30 minutes. Let them cool completely, then cut them into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces. Freeze them in sealed freezer bags until cold before using; they will keep for up to 2 months.

CINNAMON SNICKERDOODLE

MAKES ABOUT

2½

PINTS

An unassuming triumph like the snickerdoodle cookie deserves an ice cream that celebrates its simplicity. We churn our famously high-fat ice cream with cinnamon, plus a little salt and fruity ancho chile powder to help tame all that sweetness.

What makes our version so yummy is the top-notch cinnamon we get from Red Ape—an outfit in Eugene, Oregon, that grinds spices in small batches, though as long as you ditch the dusty jar on your shelf for something fresh, you'll get the idea—and the crumbles of buttery, cinnamon cookies that we design specifically to be frozen in ice cream without losing their chewy texture.

WHAT WE LEARN: *Mixing delicious things into ice cream isn't always as simple as it sounds. Take the cookies in this flavor. We need to anticipate how they'll be after freezing. Regular cookies would end up unpleasantly hard, so we make ours with extra cream of tartar and baking soda, which helps the cookies puff up more; the extra-light texture makes it so the cookies soak up just the right amount of cream. When they're frozen, they have the same tender, moist texture they did when you pulled them from the oven. Keep that in mind when you're baking for your own batch of cookie ice cream!*

3 cups Ice Cream Base (page 34), very cold

4 teaspoons ground cinnamon

Pinch kosher salt

Pinch ancho chile powder

1 cup crumbled Snickerdoodle Cookies (recipe follows)

In a bowl, combine the ice cream base, cinnamon, salt, and ancho chile powder and whisk until the spices are well combined with the base. Let the mixture sit for 10 to 15 minutes in the refrigerator to let the spices fully saturate.

Whisk the mixture briefly again, then pour it into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until it has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Quickly transfer the ice cream, scraping every last delicious drop from the machine, into freezer-friendly containers: Spoon in a layer of ice cream, sprinkle on some snickerdoodle crumbles, and use a spoon to press them in gently. Repeat. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

SNICKERDOODLE COOKIES

MAKES ABOUT 7 CUPS OF COOKIE CRUMBLES

- 8 tablespoons
(1 stick) unsalted
butter, at room
temperature
- 1 cup plus
3 tablespoons
granulated sugar
- 1 large egg, at room
temperature
- 1½ cups all-purpose
flour
- 2 teaspoons cream
of tartar
- 1 teaspoon baking
soda
- 1 teaspoon kosher
salt
- 1½ teaspoons ground
cinnamon

Combine the butter and the 1 cup sugar in a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, and mix on high speed, scraping down the sides as necessary, until it becomes slightly airy and turns a shade lighter, about 3 minutes. Add the egg and mix until completely combined.

In a large bowl, whisk the flour, cream of tartar, baking soda, and salt to combine and make sure there aren't any lumps. Add the flour mixture to the stand mixer and mix on medium-low speed until the flour is incorporated and you have a crumbly dough. Press the dough together to form a disk, wrap it in plastic wrap, and refrigerate it until chilled, at least 2 hours or ideally overnight.

Heat the oven to 375°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment and spray it with nonstick spray.

Mix the remaining 3 tablespoons sugar and the cinnamon in a wide bowl until thoroughly combined. Roll the cold cookie dough into golf-ball-size pieces. One by one, add them to the sugar mixture, toss to coat them, and transfer them to the prepared sheet pan, leaving about an inch of space between them. Bake, rotating the sheet pan halfway through, until the cookies are golden around the edges and the tops crack, about 20 minutes. Use a spatula to transfer them to a cooling rack and let them cool completely.

Crumble the cookies into ¼- to ½-inch pieces. The cookies will keep in an airtight container at room temperature for 1 week.

SEA SALT WITH CARAMEL RIBBONS

MAKES ABOUT

2

PINTS

Salted caramel has become the kale salad of ice cream flavors—every scoop shop has its version. I'm certainly not immune to the sweet-salty pleasures (I like kale salad, too!), but I decided to reimagine the classic. Instead of merging salted caramel with the ice cream, I spike top-quality dairy with just enough salt to bring out its nuances and make it the star of the show. Then I drizzle in luscious ribbons of caramel.

Thanks to Mark Bitterman of *The Meadow*—my salt Yoda (see page 8) and the guy who, literally, wrote the book on the subject—I learned that the type of salt you use has a major impact on the finished product. I use his own *fleur de sel*, which is made in Guatemala from the same salt plains famed for supplying the Mayan empire at the height of its power. I suggest you nerd out like I did, investing in a variety of sea salts from different places and sampling each one mixed with cream.

1¹/₄ teaspoons fleur de sel

3 cups Ice Cream Base (page 34), very cold

1/2 cup Perfect Ice Cream Caramel (recipe follows)

Combine 1/4 cup water and the fleur de sel in a small saucepan, set it over medium heat, and cook, stirring, just until the salt has completely dissolved, less than 1 minute. Let it cool to room temperature.

Put the ice cream base and the salt mixture into a bowl and whisk to combine. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until the mixture has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Put the caramel in a warm place or warm it in a small saucepan over very low heat just until it's drizzleable, but not so warm that it'll melt the ice cream.

Quickly alternate spooning layers of the ice cream and drizzling on a generous spiral of caramel in freezer-friendly containers.

Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.



PERFECT ICE CREAM CARAMEL

MAKES ABOUT 1½ CUPS

- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- ¼ cup light corn syrup
- 1¼ cups heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into several pieces
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt

Making delicious caramel sauce is easy. But making caramel that will remain chewy, sticky, and liquidy when suspended in ice cream? Well, it turns out that's easy, too! It just takes a little extra simmering. I owe this revelation to chocolatier, candy maker, and all-around cool guy David Briggs of Portland's Xocolatl de David. When my caramel began mysteriously sinking to the bottom of the ice cream I made, it was David who saved the day.

The first step is to create flavor by cooking the sugar, melting and busting apart the sweet but flavor-free sucrose molecules into bits that bounce around and create tinier, tastier compounds. The result is much less sweet and much more yummy from toasty, acidic, and bitter flavors. Before, I would add cream and call it a day. But now I know to continue cooking, to evaporate some of the water in the cream, to achieve the right density, so the caramel stays put as it freezes and retains its magical texture.

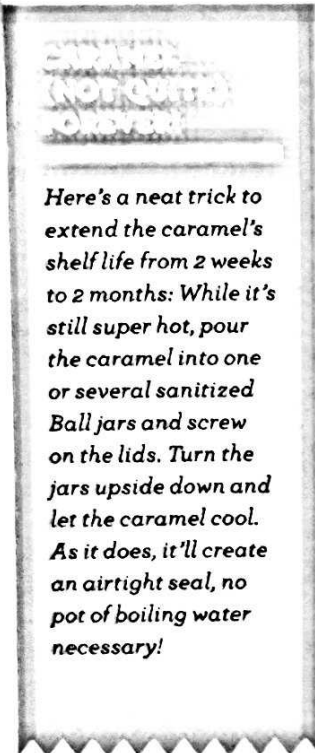
Combine the sugar, corn syrup, and ¼ cup water in a medium saucepan, and stir until all of the sugar looks wet. Cover, set the pan over medium-high heat, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the sugar has completely melted, about 3 minutes.

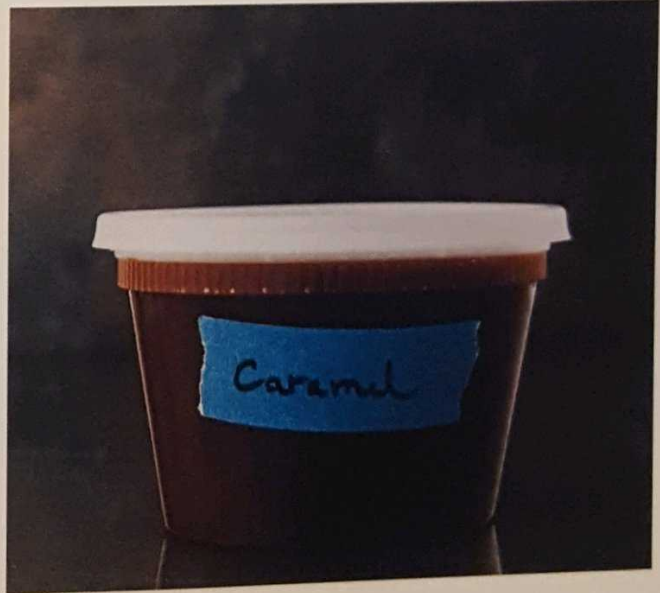
Continue to cook, covered but this time without stirring, until the mixture has thickened slightly, about 3 minutes. Remove the lid and continue cooking, without stirring but paying close attention, until the mixture turns the color of dark maple syrup, about 5 minutes more.

Take the pan off the heat and immediately and *gradually* pour in the cream, going slowly at first and then speeding up to a nice steady stream, whisking as you pour.

Put the pan over medium-high heat again. Attach a candy thermometer to the side of the pan. Let the mixture simmer away, stirring it occasionally, until it registers 230°F on the thermometer, about 3 minutes. Take the pan off the heat and add the butter and salt, stirring slowly but constantly until the butter has completely melted.

Let the caramel cool to room temperature, then use it right away or transfer it to an airtight container and refrigerate it for up to 2 weeks. Separation is totally normal; just make sure to stir the caramel well before using it.





STRAWBERRY HONEY BALSAMIC WITH BLACK PEPPER

MAKES ABOUT

2

PINTS

A scoop of strawberry ice cream doesn't taste much like strawberry, does it? Don't get me wrong, the classic flavor has its place, but once you've added enough fat to make ice cream properly creamy, you've obscured the bright qualities that makes the berry so loveable. In my world, evading the Strawberry Problem is a fun challenge, one that has spurred all sorts of solutions during the life of Salt & Straw. Perhaps our favorite is inspired by the Italian way of enjoying the fruit. By adding balsamic to reclaim its acidity and black pepper to play up its fruitiness, we recreate the texture and richness of the classic, just with more strawberry oomph.

WHAT WE LEARN: *Mixing in jams after churning is a great way to incorporate fruity flavors into ice cream. Jams are cool because they're cooked to make a concentrated version of the fruit and because their high sugar content means they never freeze, so each swirl delivers its flavor immediately—before the rich ice cream registers.*

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Strawberry Puree (recipe follows), very cold
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey balsamic vinegar, like Honey Ridge Farms or Olive Oil
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon freshly (and very finely) ground black pepper
- 3 cups Ice Cream Base (page 34), very cold
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup your favorite strawberry jam

In a bowl, combine the strawberry puree, vinegar, and black pepper with the ice cream base. Whisk as needed to get everything completely incorporated into the base. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until it has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Stir the jam with a fork to loosen it. Quickly alternate spooning layers of the mixture and dollops of the jam in freezer-friendly containers.

Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

STRAWBERRY PUREE

MAKES ABOUT $\frac{1}{4}$ CUP

10 ounces (about
1 pint) ripe
strawberries,
hulled and halved
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup honey

Heat the oven to 300°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper.

Spread the strawberries out evenly on the lined sheet pan and drizzle them with the honey. Bake for 15 minutes. Stir the berries and continue baking until they just barely begin to caramelize and get a little bit of roasted color to them, about 20 minutes more. Remove the sheet pan from the oven and let them sit until they're cool enough to handle. Transfer the berries to a blender along with the yummy sticky stuff on the parchment paper and puree to make a smooth sauce. Chill in the fridge until cold.

Store the puree in the fridge for up to 2 weeks or in the freezer for up to 3 months.



INDIA PALE ALE

MAKES ABOUT

2½

PINTS

When I had the chance to shadow Ben Edmunds at Breakside Brewery, I did what I do best: asked a thousand questions. And he did what he does best: demonstrated his mastery of the subject of beer. I was particularly interested in IPAs, or India Pale Ales, so named because they were created some three centuries ago to survive the trip from England to colonizers in India. As a way of preventing spoilage, brewers added hops, a family of flowers that also imparts distinct flavors. Hops are used in many beers now, but their bitterness and aromatic qualities have come to define this particular style. Ben patiently took me through the varieties and taught me how to steep them to activate their best qualities. With his guidance, a scoop of this ice cream manages to capture the citrusy, tropical-fruit aromas of Citra, Chinook, and Falconer's Flight hops that are so pleasant in a pint glass.

WHAT WE LEARN: *Thanks to Ben, I learned that I could apply the nifty brewmaster's trick called dry hopping—basically, steeping hops in beer before bottling—to ice cream. If you let hops steep in water or cream, you won't get much flavor—a good extraction requires heat, which dulls their brightness and aromatic character. But when you steep hops in alcohol, whether it's the beer in traditional dry hopping or the vodka we use here, you can harness their fragrance. It's a neat trick that works any time you're trying to capture a fragrant ingredient in a scoop, be it vanilla or coffee. And leftover hop-infused vodka makes a great cocktail mixer, especially when combined with honey and citrus.*

¼ cup 100-proof unflavored alcohol, such as high-proof vodka

1 teaspoon Citra hop pellets

3 tablespoons golden light liquid malt extract

¼ cup caramel 40L malt, milled by a home brew shop

¼ cup caramel 20L malt, milled by a home brew shop

1 teaspoon Columbus hop pellets

At least one day in advance, combine the vodka and the Citra hops in a small glass jar, and cover it with an airtight lid. Steep for at least 24 and up to 36 hours.

Pour the vodka mixture through a fine-mesh strainer into a small bowl, pressing the solids lightly to extract as much liquid as possible. Reserve 1 tablespoon of the liquid for this recipe. The rest will keep in the fridge for up to 3 days.

In a small pot, bring 2 cups water to a rolling boil. Reduce the heat as low as it can go, then stir in the liquid malt extract, caramel 40L malt, caramel 20L malt, and Columbus hops. Cover and cook at a bare simmer, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes. Then stir in the Falconer's Flight hops and cook for 15 minutes more. Finally add the Chinook hops and cook for 10 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat and pour the mixture through a fine-mesh strainer into a small heatproof bowl, pressing the solids lightly to extract as much liquid as possible.

(recipe continues)

- 1 teaspoon
Falconer's Flight
hop pellets
- 1 teaspoon Chinook
hop pellets
- 3 cups Ice Cream
Base (page 34),
very cold
- 1/2 cup Breakside IPA
or your favorite
balanced, fruity-
hopped IPA, cold

Fill another small mixing bowl with ice, then fill it halfway with water. Set the bowl containing the infused liquid into the ice water and stir to quickly cool the liquid. When it's cold, stir in the reserved 1 tablespoon infused vodka and use the syrup within 1 week.

Put the ice cream base, the cold beer, and 3/4 cup of the cold IPA syrup into a bowl and whisk to combine. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until the mixture has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Transfer the ice cream, scraping every last delicious drop from the machine, into freezer-friendly containers. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

SMOKED HEFEWEIZEN

MAKES ABOUT

2½

PINTS

Our spin on Widmer Brothers' world-famous wheat ale employs their flavor-extraction techniques, so the sweet, malty flavors that I love about the beer are what hit you at first lick. We use smoked malts to balance the sugar and add a subtle, lingering, drinking-by-the-campfire quality that'll keep you hooked.

¼ cup wheat liquid
malt extract

2 tablespoons
caramel 40L malt,
milled by a home
brew shop

¼ cup Briess
Cherrywood Smoked
Malt, milled by a
home brew shop

3 cups Ice Cream
Base (page 34),
very cold

½ cup Widmer
Hefeweizen or your
favorite balanced,
fruity-hopped
Hefeweizen, cold

In a small pot, bring 1 cup water to a boil. Reduce the heat to a lazy simmer and stir in the wheat liquid malt extract, caramel 40L malt, and cherrywood-smoked malt. Cover tightly and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally and making sure the liquid isn't boiling off.

Remove the pot from the heat and pour the syrup through a fine-mesh strainer into a small mixing bowl, pressing the hops and malt lightly to get most of the liquid out. Fill another small mixing bowl with ice, then fill it halfway with water. Set the bowl containing the syrup into the ice water and stir to quickly cool the liquid. Once the syrup is cold to the touch, use it immediately.

Put ¾ cup of the syrup, the ice cream base, and the cold beer into a bowl and whisk to combine. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until the mixture has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Transfer the ice cream, scraping every last delicious drop from the machine, into freezer-friendly containers. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

HOPPED FARMHOUSE ALE

MAKES ABOUT

2

PINTS

Long ago, farmers in northern Belgium lacked potable water to give their workers, so they brewed beer in the name of safe hydration. One of the resulting styles of these farmhouse ales is a fruity, crisp concoction with refreshing bitterness from hops and tartness from lactobacillus yeasts. Our attempt to channel these flavors brought us to The Commons Brewery in southeast Portland, makers of the exquisite Myrtle farmhouse ale, and led somehow to us making 200 gallons of malt concentrate. This recipe calls for making your own yeasted syrup, but thank goodness, just a coffee-mug's worth. Any skeptics of scoops flavored with yeasts and hops should note that the end result kinda tastes like a more sophisticated version of old-school orange sherbet. For this recipe, you'll need an insulated coffee mug with a lid, and it would be very handy to have an instant-read thermometer.

WHAT WE LEARN: *To re-create the fermented tang of the ale, we set up a little science project. We heat a mixture of malt extract and corn syrup so it's in the right temperature range to keep lactobacillus yeast happy, eating, and replicating until we have a super-sour syrup. It starts out too sweet and over-fermented for beer but tastes like saison heaven once you churn it into ice cream. The leftover syrup keeps in the fridge for up to 1 week and makes for a funky mix for bourbon sours.*

1/4 cup golden light
liquid malt extract

1 tablespoon light
corn syrup

2 teaspoons freshly
squeezed lemon
juice

2 tablespoons
Omega Yeast
Lactobacillus
Blend

1/4 cup granulated
sugar

At least one day before you plan to make the ice cream, bring 1 cup water to a boil in a small saucepan, then reduce the heat to maintain a lazy simmer. Stir in the malt extract, corn syrup, and lemon juice, and keep on a low simmer. Cover tightly and cook, stirring often, for 3 minutes to fully dissolve the malt extract. Pour the mixture into a bowl. Cover the bowl with a plate and let the syrup cool until it registers 100°F to 105°F on an instant-read thermometer.

Meanwhile, clean and dry an insulated coffee mug with a tight-fitting lid. When the malt mixture reaches the right temperature, pour it into the mug, stir in the Lactobacillus Blend, and screw the lid on tight. Store the mug in a warm spot in the kitchen (like on top of the fridge) for at least 24 and up to 36 hours, occasionally giving the liquid a light swirling in the closed mug.

While waiting for the lacto syrup to ferment, we need to make a hop syrup for flavoring: Mix the sugar and 1/2 cup water in a small saucepan and cook over medium heat until it begins to steam. Add the hops, remove the pan from the heat, and let it sit for 20 minutes. Pour the syrup through a fine-mesh strainer (lined with a coffee filter, if using pellets) into a container and store it in the fridge until ready to use.

(recipe continues)

- 1 tablespoon
Meridian,
Centennial,
or other sweet,
citrus-forward
whole hops
(or 1 teaspoon
pellets)
- 3 cups Ice Cream
Base (page 34),
very cold
- 2 teaspoons finely
grated grapefruit
zest (use a
Microplane)

Measure out $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of the lacto syrup. Chill it until it is cold, and use it within a few hours or store it in the fridge for up to 12 hours.

Put the chilled lacto syrup, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the hop syrup, the ice cream base, and the grapefruit zest into a bowl and whisk to combine. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until the mixture has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Transfer the ice cream, scraping every last delicious drop from the machine, into freezer-friendly containers. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

IMPERIAL STOUT MILK SORBET WITH BLACKBERRY-FIG JAM

MAKES ABOUT

2½

PINTS

Ever since I took my first cold sip of Midnight Flight stout from Three Weavers Brewing Company, in Inglewood, California, I knew I had to try to churn my version of the creamy, dense brew with its lovely frothy head and hints of chocolate, coffee, and caramel. To help, I did something unusual: I added skim milk to a sorbet. It's a cool way to add a little body—in this case, to recoup some of the mouthfeel lost when we boil the stout—without overwhelming the delicate flavors with fat. Once it's ready, I layer in blackberry-fig jam to play up its dark, fruity notes.

WHAT WE LEARN: *Let me begin by apologizing to the fine folks at Three Weavers. After much experimenting, I decided I had to break one of my cardinal rules: I'd have to adulterate the product in order to properly feature it. So I poured their perfect stout into a pot and brought it to a boil. The step is important: For one, cooking off some of the alcohol (this stout clocks in at 9.5%) helps the ice cream freeze the way I want it to. And second, the bubbling in the pot gets rid of some of the carbon dioxide that is so welcome in the glass but would create excessive froth during the churning.*

- 1 bottle (330 ml) Three Weavers Imperial Stout or your favorite super-dark and malty stout
- 1 cup skim milk, cold
- 2 cups Sorbet Base (page 36), very cold
- ½ cup Blackberry-Fig Jam (recipe follows)

In a small pot, bring the stout to a rolling boil over medium-high heat. Then immediately remove the pot from the heat and add the milk and the sorbet base. Use a stick blender to briefly blend until well combined. Refrigerate until the mixture is cold to the touch, or up to 12 hours.

Pour the cold mixture into an ice cream maker and turn it on. Churn just until the mixture has the texture of a pourable frozen smoothie (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Stir the jam with a fork to loosen it a bit. Alternate spooning layers of the mixture and dolloping the blackberry-fig jam over each spoonful in freezer-friendly containers.

Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the sorbet so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

BLACKBERRY-FIG JAM

MAKES 2½ CUPS

- ⅓ cup granulated sugar
- 12 ounces dried Mission figs
- ½ cup fresh blackberries
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch kosher salt
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter

In a medium saucepan, combine the sugar and 2 tablespoons water. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until the sugar dissolves completely, about 2 minutes. Then, without stirring, bring the mixture to a boil and cook, swirling the pan gently if needed, until the sugar turns a light amber color. Add 1½ cups water, the dried figs, and the blackberries; the mix may sizzle and solidify. Continue to cook over medium heat until the caramel dissolves again. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and cook until the fruit is soft and the liquid has reduced slightly, about 30 minutes.

Add the vanilla, salt, and butter. Transfer the jam to a food processor or blender and blend until smooth (and very thick). Let it cool to room temperature, then store in an airtight container in the fridge until cold or for up to 3 months.

HONEY LAVENDER

MAKES ABOUT

2

PINTS

This might be our most divisive flavor—and for a shop that makes a flavor called Salted Caramel Thanksgiving Turkey, that’s saying something. While some lavender ice creams feature the flower’s brilliant purple color and a mere whiff of its bouquet, this one wallops you with it. A lick is less like strolling in a field in Provence than it is like log-rolling down a hill. For lavender lovers, this is bliss, a fragrant deep-tissue massage that culminates in a honey reiki. Use a honey that’s particularly floral in flavor. We use the good stuff from Bee Local, for which honey is harvested from urban hives around Portland, and today many cities have an equivalent. Unless you’re currently drying lavender at your cottage in Avignon, consider buying a bunch at the farmer’s market (ask if it’s pesticide-free for culinary use) or a jar at the spice shop.

1/4 cup wildflower
honey

1/2 cup dried
lavender (buds
only)

3 cups Ice Cream
Base (page 34),
very cold

10 drops natural
purple food
coloring,
preferably India
Tree brand
(optional)

In a small saucepan, combine 3/4 cup water and the honey. Bring the mixture to a boil, stirring occasionally, then take it off the heat. Stir in the lavender, cover the saucepan, and let steep at room temperature for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Pour the syrup through a fine-mesh strainer into a container, pressing on the flower buds to extract as much liquid as possible. Chill until cold and use it right away, or refrigerate it in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

Put the lavender syrup, ice cream base, and food coloring (if you’re using it) into a bowl and whisk to combine. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until the mixture has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Transfer the ice cream, scraping every last delicious drop from the machine, into freezer-friendly containers. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It’s okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

LEMON MARSHMALLOW FLUFF

MAKES ABOUT 6 CUPS

- 3 large egg whites
(without even a speck of yolk!)
- ½ teaspoon cream of tartar
- ⅔ cup light corn syrup
- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest
(use a Microplane)

In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the egg whites on medium-high speed just until they look frothy. Add the cream of tartar and continue to beat until the whites reach soft peak stage, 2 to 3 minutes. Reduce the mixer speed to the lowest setting and let that run while you make the sugar syrup.

Mix the corn syrup, sugar, and ¼ cup water in a medium saucepan and attach the candy thermometer to the pan. Cook on medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until the syrup goes from cloudy to clear. Stop stirring and continue heating on medium-high until the syrup reaches 238°F. Immediately remove the pan from the heat, raise the mixer speed to medium-low, and drizzle the hot sugar syrup into the mixer in a thin, steady stream, aiming for the hot sugar to hit only the egg whites and not the bowl.

Once the syrup is well combined, raise the speed to medium-high and beat until the mixture looks glossy and has cooled until it is warm to the touch, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the lemon zest and beat just until the zest is well combined, about 1 minute. Transfer the fluff to a container and then use it immediately or cover and refrigerate it for up to 1 week.

BLUEBERRY JAM

MAKES ABOUT 2 CUPS

- 1 pint fresh blueberries
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon pectin
- 1 cup granulated sugar

In a food processor, puree the blueberries. In a medium pot, heat the blueberry puree, lemon juice, and pectin over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until it reaches a boil. Stir in the sugar and continue to cook over medium-high heat until the mixture comes back to a boil. Immediately remove the pot from the heat and let the jam cool to room temperature. Chill the jam thoroughly before using. It can be stored in the fridge for up to 3 months.

BROWN SUGAR PECAN PRALINE

MAKES ABOUT 1 CUP

- 1/2 cup whole milk
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons (lightly packed) light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

Line a sheet pan with parchment paper and coat the paper lightly with nonstick cooking spray.

In a medium saucepan, combine the milk, granulated sugar, brown sugar, butter, and vanilla, stir well, and attach a candy thermometer. Set the pan over medium heat and cook, stirring often, until the mixture registers 238°F on the thermometer. (It's okay if it starts to crystallize.) Immediately stir in the pecans so they're completely coated. Keep stirring until the sugar begins to crystallize and become crumbly, about 20 seconds more.

Remove the pan from the heat and let the mixture cool until it's as thick as warm caramel, 5 to 10 minutes. Stir again, then scrape the mixture onto the prepared sheet pan, spreading it out to get the pecans in a more or less single layer. Let the praline cool to room temperature.

Remove the praline from the sheet pan, peel off the parchment, and crumble the praline into approximately 1/4-inch pieces. Freeze them until cold and then use in the ice cream or transfer to freezer bags and freeze for up to 2 months.

PUMPKIN CUSTARD & SPICED GOAT CHEESE

MAKES ABOUT

2½

PINTS

If you're wise, you've ended many a Thanksgiving dinner with pumpkin pie topped with vanilla ice cream. I know I have, though I've always wished the sugar-on-sugar action had a little more balance. So after experimenting with many iterations of pumpkin ice cream, we decided to go a different, and I think more delicious, route. We swirled a silky-smooth custard—like liquid pumpkin pie filling!—into goat cheese ice cream, as tangy as it is sweet and infused with warming spices like all-spice and nutmeg. Now you can end Thanksgiving dinner on a sophisticated note. Just kidding—you should definitely use this ice cream to top pumpkin pie!

- 1 large egg yolk
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- ⅓ cup heavy cream
- ⅓ cup fresh goat cheese (I use chevre from Portland Creamery), at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon Pie Spices (recipe follows)
- 3 cups Ice Cream Base (page 34), very cold
- 1 teaspoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 cup Pumpkin Pie Custard (recipe follows)

In a large bowl, whisk the egg yolk and sugar together until the yolk begins to turn a lighter color. Heat the cream in a small saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring it constantly, until it is near a boil, about 1 minute. Very slowly drizzle the cream into the egg yolk, whisking constantly.

While the cream-egg mixture is still warm, add the goat cheese and pie spices and use a stick blender to incorporate them.

While the spiced goat cheese is still slightly warm, add the ice cream base and lemon juice, and blend thoroughly with the stick blender. Chill until cold.

Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until it has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Alternate spooning layers of the ice cream and a dollop of the pumpkin pie custard in freezer-friendly containers.

Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

PUMPKIN PIE CUSTARD

MAKES ABOUT 1½ CUPS

- 2 large egg yolks
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ¼ cup light corn syrup
- ¾ cup Libby's pumpkin puree
- 1 teaspoon Pie Spices (recipe follows)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

In a small saucepan, whisk together the egg yolks and sugar until the eggs turn a lighter color, about 1 minute. Add the corn syrup, pumpkin puree, pie spices, and vanilla and stir until completely combined. Cook the mixture over medium heat, stirring it constantly to prevent burning, until the custard has the consistency of pudding and turns a golden orange, 6 to 10 minutes. We're aiming for the color and mouthfeel of a standard pumpkin pie but with a slightly looser texture. It's important to cook this all the way through, both so that most of the water cooks off and so that the pumpkin gets a nice flavor.

Transfer to a container and cover the custard with plastic wrap directly on the surface so a skin doesn't form. Cool it in the fridge until it is cold to the touch before using it in the ice cream. Leftovers make a great pumpkin butter to slather on French toast . . . just sayin'!

PIE SPICES

MAKES ABOUT ¼ CUP

- 4 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander

Put all the ingredients in a small bowl and whisk to combine. Store in an airtight container in a cool, dark place for up to 6 weeks.

PEPPERMINT COCOA

WITH HOMEMADE PEPPERMINT PATTIES

MAKES ABOUT

2½

PINTS

Imagine Santa sitting by the fire and stirring a steaming mug of hot cocoa with a peppermint stick, the astringent freshness infusing the cozy chocolate delight. Then picture him blowing out frosty breath, turning the whole thing cold and creamy. This is what happens in our version of that fantasy: folding in homemade peppermint patties that stud the cocoa scoop like Christmas lights. And even if you don't believe in Santa, you'll believe in magic when you taste what a few drops of peppermint oil can do.

¼ cup granulated sugar

¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder (preferably Guittard's Cocoa Rouge)

1 drop peppermint oil (Seely Farm's peppermint oil is our favorite!)

3 cups Ice Cream Base (page 34), very cold

½ cup chopped Homemade Peppermint Patties (recipe follows)

Bring the sugar and ¼ cup water to a boil in a small saucepan and immediately take it off the heat, whisk in the cocoa powder, and keep at it until you have a smooth, sticky paste. Let it cool until it's just slightly warmer than room temperature. Add the peppermint oil and stir really well. Chill until cold; it will keep in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 3 days.

Put the cold peppermint-cocoa mixture and the ice cream base into a bowl and whisk to combine. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and turn on the machine. Churn just until the mixture has the texture of soft-serve (see pages 23 to 24 for timing ranges, depending on the machine).

Quickly transfer the ice cream into freezer-friendly containers: Spoon in a layer of ice cream, sprinkle on some of the peppermint patty pieces, and use a spoon to press them in gently. Repeat. Cover with parchment paper, pressing it to the surface of the ice cream so it adheres, then cover with a lid. It's okay if the parchment hangs over the rim. Store it in the coldest part of your freezer (farthest from the door) until firm, at least 6 hours. It will keep for up to 3 months.

HOMEMADE PEPPERMINT PATTIES

MAKES ABOUT 3 CUPS OF CHOPPED PIECES

- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons evaporated milk
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 drops peppermint oil (Seely's peppermint oil is our favorite!)
- 6 drops red or green food coloring (optional, depending on how festive you're feeling)

Line a sheet pan with parchment or wax paper.

Bring an inch or so of water to a simmer in a small saucepan. Put the chocolate chips in a heatproof bowl that will sit on the pan without touching the water. Set the bowl on the pan and heat the chocolate, stirring it occasionally, until it has completely melted. Take the pan off the heat but leave the bowl above the water so the chocolate stays melted.

Spoon about half of the chocolate onto the lined sheet pan. Use a regular or a pastry spatula to spread it out to form a round as thin as you can (about 1/16 inch thick). Let it cool until the chocolate has completely hardened, a few minutes.

In a separate small saucepan, combine the butter, evaporated milk, and corn syrup. Warm the mixture over low heat, stirring it occasionally, until it's warm to the touch and the butter is completely melted. Remove the pan from the heat and add about half of the confectioners' sugar. Stir with a sturdy spoon until smooth. Add the peppermint oil, food coloring (if using), and remaining confectioners' sugar and mix until you have a thick, smooth paste, about 3 minutes. Let it cool to room temperature.

You've got your cooled layer of chocolate. You've got your remaining melted chocolate. And you've got your peppermint paste. Now, you just assemble: Evenly spread the peppermint paste over the chocolate layer, smoothing out any peaks and valleys. Pour the remaining melted chocolate over the peppermint and spread it out in an even layer. Put the peppermint sandwich (still on the sheet pan) into the freezer and chill it for about 1 hour.

Cut the chilled sandwich into irregularly shaped bite-size (1/4- to 1/2-inch) pieces. Use the candy immediately or save it in an airtight container in the freezer for up to 3 months.