



ICE CREAM OR GELATO?

TASTE TEST So what exactly is the difference? We recently sampled dozens of the nation's best artisanal gelati and ice creams to find out. Here's what we discovered. You might be surprised.

ICE CREAM GELATO

THE SPECS

The technical differences between ice cream and gelato come down to the amount of fat and air, and ice cream tends to have more of each. Ice cream contains at least 10 percent butterfat and is then aerated by revolving blades that add 10 to 25 percent volume to the mix.

Instead of milk and cream, traditional Italian gelato typically begins as a custard base of eggs and milk or cream. These days, though, many gelaterias use stabilizers to mimic that custardy texture. Gelato contains anywhere from 3 to 10 percent butterfat and very little air, making it denser.

OUR FAVORITES

New Jersey's **The Bent Spoon** cranks out a standout Madagascar vanilla ice cream that derives from a crème anglaise base. **Spotted Dog Creamery** in Salt Lake City revisits a childhood classic with the ultra-creamy Almond Joy ice cream. **Scoops** in Los Angeles is as much science lab as ice cream parlor. Fresh local ingredients are used for unusual and satisfying combinations like bacon-caramel, Pabst Blue Ribbon-avocado, and dill-mascarpone.

Pazzo Gelato in Los Angeles serves an awesome vanilla spiked with Jack Daniel's. For a rich and sophisticated spin, try the mascarpone-cinnamon basil at Newport, Rhode Island's **Cold Fusion Gelato**. Italy-based **Grom** takes Manhattan with traditional flavors like *fiordilatte* and *stracciatella*. Also in New York, **Il Laboratorio del Gelato** continues to innovate with styles like Mexican cinnamon basil and Corbezzolo honey.

THE CONCLUSION

Since traditional standards no longer apply, it's tough to tell which is which in a blind tasting. There are ice creams made gelato style and gelati made ice cream style. Which means, happily, that you actually have to taste it all to find out what suits you best. Now here's an easier question: Cup or cone? —D.C.

AUGUST 2007

