



NICE CONES: Rebecca Jordan and friend pig out at the Blue Pig in Brooklyn.



COOL CUSTOMERS: Kateri Healy (left) and Danielle Dorn dip into icy goodness from Il Laboratorio del Gelato.

Photos: Zandy Margolis

Ice, ice, baby

ICE CREAM from Page 23

wasn't bad. I've done blue potatoes, those long stringy coconuts from the Philippines, and I made a mango and sticky rice ice cream too," he says.

Stogo's frozen fetish started 40 years ago in Philadelphia, when the ice cream store next to his restaurant closed down. Instead of finding another store, he bought some books and decided to make the sweet stuff himself.

After his flavors were a hit with his customers he moved to New York and opened up Ice Cream Extravaganza — where he claims to have invented the chocolate-dipped waffle cone and the flavor cookies-and-cream.

He shuttered the store in 1989, and the plump Stogo spends most of his time teaching seminars to people interested in opening up their own dessert shops.

"A good ice cream is all about texture and flavor," he says. "If it tastes icy, it's old. The texture should be smooth."

He would know — Stogo eats a 4-ounce cup of ice cream, every night, in bed (his wife eats ice cream in bed, too). And his freezer is always stocked with at least 15 different flavors, most of which he's made himself.

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We hit the streets with Stogo and ate our way through New York looking for the sweetest scoops and coolest cones. Here's the best of what we tasted:

QUALITY MEATS

Executive pastry chef Corey Colton makes all the ice cream at this restaurant himself. We especially loved the coffee-and-

doughnuts and cinnamon bun flavors, served at the table in pints. Stogo singles out the fresh peach cobbler gelato.

OTTO

Meredith Kurtzman, the magician behind Otto's cool flavors, uses locally grown fruits and vegetables. Stogo says their coffee gelato is the way to go — the Puerto Rican beans are infused in a way that retains maximum flavor.

IL LABORATORIO del GELATO

Owner Jon Snyder (creator of the original Ciao Bella) supplies his gelato to some of the city's top restaurants, like Butter and Pastis. We loved the intense fruits flavors — like lemon basil and black grape — that tasted so fresh you'd think gelato grew on trees.

Snyder only uses fresh fruit and fruit juice in his desserts and says he goes through 40 cases of mangoes every two weeks.

THE BLUE PIG

Owner and ice cream maker Julia Horowitz opened the Brooklyn branch of her Westchester dessert shop three weeks ago. She serves more than 20 flavors of ice cream and sorbets. Stogo says to stop here for the vanilla ice cream — it's clean, fresh and yummy.

CRISPINO'S

This family-run ice paradise, owned by Gidon Pessio, serves a combination of ice cream, gelato and ices. The friendly neighborhood atmosphere and the cookies-and-cream cream ice impressed Stogo — he had to go back for seconds.

VINEGAR FACTORY

Stogo loves this bakery because they turn their excess baked goods into de-lish flavors like Southern pecan pie and cheesecake flavored ice cream

MANGANARO'S

It's not what's inside that counts at this restaurant. Their refreshing ices, sold outside from a cart, are made with fresh fruits and fruit juice.

CHA CHA'S

Stogo says the gelato here is as good as what you get in Rome. He would know — he runs a gelato tour of Italy every January. He suggests sampling the hazelnut

flavor, his favorite.

BROOKLYN'S ICE CREAM FACTORY

He says this is the spot for good all American flavors like chocolate, vanilla, strawberry and butter pecan. It also gets his vote for the best cookies and cream in the city.



THE ICE CREAM MAN COMETH: Malcolm Stogo likes what he sees at the Blue Pig.

The scoop

Can't tell an ice cream from a cream ice? Here's what makes them different:

■ **ICE CREAM:** Ice cream has at least 10 percent butterfat and is meant to be served hard. It's kept in ice cream cabinets to keep it cold and preserve consistency.

■ **GELATO:** Gelato contains anywhere from 6 to 10 percent butterfat and is served soft, usually out of an open dipping cabinet. Also, gelato is more intensely flavored than ice cream.

■ **SORBET:** Sorbets contain sugar, water and fresh or frozen fruit. This is a dairy-less formula.

■ **CREAM ICE:** This water-based dairy product, like sorbet, has 2 percent butterfat.

- 1 **Vinegar Factory**
429 E. 91st St.
- 2 **Quality Meats**
57 West 58th St.
- 3 **Manganaro's**
429 Ninth Ave.
- 4 **Otto Enoteca Pizzeria**
1 Fifth Ave.
- 5 **Il Laboratorio del Gelato**
95 Orchard St.
- 6 **Cha Cha's in Bocca al Lupo**
113 Mulberry St.
- 7 **Brooklyn Ice Cream Factory**
1 Water St.
- 8 **The Blue Pig**
60 Henry St.
- 9 **Crispino's**
203-20 35th St.;
Bayside, Queens



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