

Culinary Outlook

Ice-cream cones get a lick of flavor

FOOD



AILEEN CLAIRE

By Aileen Claire
NEA Food Editor

A young businesswoman in Connecticut is putting the old saw about building a better mousetrap to the test. But Arlene B. Scanlan's mousetrap is a palatable treat for young and old.

She created and is marketing flavored ice-cream cones, a first in a



ARLENE B. SCANLAN has pioneered the development of the exotically flavored ice-cream cone.

staid industry that began when Italo Marchiony produced the first ice-cream cone in 1896 in New York City.

Now her baby, The Cone Collection, is available in more than 200 outlets. It all began about seven years ago. She had previously worked in the merchandise marketing department of Columbia Pictures and on licensing Marvel Comics Superheroes. Then she joined United Media where she helped to develop a licensing program for Garfield the cat. But, restless for a new challenge, Scanlan began to doodle in her home kitchen with the cones.

"I used the basic ice-cream cone batter of sugar, water, shortening and flour and experimented with 20 to 25 cone flavors," she says. "These I made with a hand cone machine."

There were always hundreds of little bags of samples for friends and neighbors to taste. Finally, she settled

on six flavors: Amaretto Mi Amore, Forbidden Apple Cinnamon, Cappuccino Mocha Madness, Peanut Butter Passion, Raspberry Romance and Chocolate Obsession.

Since you can't patent an ice-cream cone recipe, Scanlan did trademark and copyright her logo and packaging. The containers are designed to interlock and use up less space on store shelves.

Essentially, The Cone Collection is a one-woman show run out of Scanlan's home in Westport, Conn. A cone company in Pennsylvania makes the product.

As she prepared to launch her venture, Scanlan learned that ice cream is a seasonal business. "Sales almost seem to be affected by daylight savings," she says. "People don't eat ice cream much in January or February, but sales pick up in March."

While promoting the cones at food trade shows, she often got an icy reaction. She says, "There is a psychological association with the basic ice-cream sugar-cone. One man even said to me, 'Why the hell do we need a new cone? We're getting along very well with what we have.'"

According to Scanlan, no one had produced a new type of cone for a long while because the same equipment had been used for years, and most manufacturers weren't interested in product development.

Scanlan hopes to get the flavored cones into ice cream stores, but many chain owners feel customers already have too many choices to make when they buy an ice-cream cone. Scanlan counters that mixing the flavor of cones and ice cream can lure new customers.

For example, she suggests filling an apple cinnamon cone with frozen yogurt or fresh strawberries, or putting chocolate ice cream in a peanut butter cone.

Her daughter, Leah, 4, insists on taking her own cone to the store to fill with ice cream. Scanlan's son is only 1 but probably will follow suit when he's old enough.

Her children are another reason Scanlan decided to give up a full-time job that included a long commute each day.

"I wanted them to remember mother as something more than a businesswoman," she says. Here's one possible filling for a flavored or traditional cone:



MICHEL BOURDEAUX, a chef from France's Burgundy region, is executive chef of World Yacht in New York.

FRESH FRUIT ICE CREAM

- 3 cups (1½ pints) half-and-half
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk (not evaporated milk)
- 1 cup pureed or mashed fresh fruit (raspberries, strawberries, bananas, peaches, etc.)
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 food coloring, optional

Combine all ingredients in a container of an ice cream maker. Mix well. Freeze according to manufacturer's instructions.

Keep leftovers in freezer. This kitchen-tested recipe makes 1½ quarts.

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Honey is a new twist in an old sweet

By Aileen Claire
NEA Food Editor

Honey has been used as a food and a sweetener since pre-Christian days. It's the product of the hardworking and very social honeybee and is found throughout the world.

The high fructose content in honey makes it sweeter than sugar, and many use it daily to sweeten their tea and coffee. The color and flavor of honey varies depending upon the nectar source, or blossoms, visited by the honeybees.

There are more than 300 types of honey, each coming from a different floral source. The flavor can be mild or bold, depending upon where the honeybees buzzed. Just as there are scores of flavored vinegars or mustards lining supermarket and specialty store shelves, so there is an exotic sampling available of nature's sweetest gift. All varieties offer a range of vitamins and minerals, such as calcium, iron, copper, magnesium, phosphorus and zinc.

When cooking with honey, select one with a strong flavor for spreads and recipes where a distinct honey flavor is desired. Mildly flavored honeys are best when a delicate flavor is desired.

For those who would like to widen their honey palate, there are many exciting varieties. Try the buckwheat honey of Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin for a full-bodied taste. The strongly flavored eucalyptus honey from Australia

and the delicate acacia from China are now produced in California. Not to be outdone, Southeastern beekeepers and producers market tupelo, highly regarded for its mild, distinctive flavor.

HONEY PINEAPPLE TOPPING

- 1 can (15¼ ounces) pineapple tidbits
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup melted butter
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- dash ground nutmeg
- ½ cup water
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch

Drain pineapple, reserving syrup; set aside. Combine reserved syrup, honey, butter, lemon juice, lemon peel and nutmeg in saucepan. Heat to a boil.

Combine water and cornstarch. Stir into honey mixture and cook 1 minute longer. Stir in drained pineapple. Serve over ice cream, pancakes, biscuits or French toast.

This kitchen-tested recipe makes about 2½ cups.

Microwave Method: Blend all ingredients except drained pineapple in microwave-safe 4-cup measure. Microwave at HIGH 4 to 5 minutes, or until mixture boils and thickens. Stir in drained pineapple.

Tip: Reduce the liquid in your favorite pancake or waffle mix by ¼ cup, and add ¼ cup honey for a breakfast that will sweeten your day.

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