

Ice cream production tops 1.6-billion gallons

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I don't know when Neapolitan came around and I don't much care.

Once upon a time, they made ice cream because they had to — the grass was high, the cows were in milk and the orchards were full of fruit. Today, it's because we're hot and it's cold.

Ice cream headaches, by the way, originate in the roof of your

mouth, according to www.howstuffworks.com

"When something cold touches the roof of your mouth on a hot day, it triggers a cold headache," according to the site.

"The cause is a dilation of the blood vessels in the head. The dilation may be caused by a nerve centre located above the roof of your mouth; when this nerve centre gets cold, it seems to over-react and tries to heat your brain."

According to the ice cream association, plain old vanilla, at 29 per cent of the 1.6 billion gallons produced each year in the U.S. is by far the top-selling flavour, followed by chocolate at 8.9 per cent and a tie between strawberry and the relatively new-fangled butter pecan at 5.3 per cent.

The dreaded Neapolitan, is next at 4.2 per cent.

At the Laura Secord outlet in Hillcrest Mall, youngsters Katy

(peach yogurt) and Michael (bubblegum swirl) are miles away from vanilla.

Phyllis Mahon, who is minding the children for a friend, settles for a sherbet and says Katy's peach yogurt is "more sophisticated" than Michael's selection. But he says "bubblegum's better."

At Baskin-Robbins on McCowan Road in Markham, the top seller among more than 40 flavours is the same as in Richmond Hill, jamoca

almond fudge, according to Lindsay Stratt.

"We sell between 200 and 300 cones a day, and none of the flavours is what I'd call a slow-mover," she says.

"They all sell well. But none as well, apparently as jamoca almond fudge."

"Maybe we can convince B-R to place that one in its regional flavours division and change the name to jamYorka fudge almond?"

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Moo shu pork hands-down favourite

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Although the appetizers come with their own distinct dipping sauces, there is a nice assortment of Asian condiments on each table, including chili oil, soy sauce and rice vinegar.

Sad as it was to leave the appetizer section with its 26 selections, we had to move on to the main course. Here we could choose from an extensive array of foo yong, chop suey, seafood dishes, chicken, beef, pork, vegetarian offerings, bean curd, rice and noodles. Knowing portion sizes are very generous didn't stop us from having several dishes.

The hands-down favourite at the table was the moo shu pork (\$8.99). For those uninitiated in the art of moo shu, it is the Chinese version of a fajita — a plate loaded with shredded pork and sliced vegetables arrives piping hot along with five thin, crepe-like pancakes and a sweet hoisin sauce.

Assembly is done individually and usually a second plate of pancakes is required to finish off

the generous helping of meat and sauce. For those who prefer, the moo shu experience is also available with chicken, shrimp or beef, but pork is the traditional favourite.

The spice levels at Asia Hut are variable and the kitchen is only too happy to accommodate. My dining companions and I all like our food to hurt, so we so we didn't make any adjustments, except to add chili oil to some of the milder dishes.

One of my favourites is the hot and spicy peanut chicken (\$8.99). Nothing breaded and deep-fried here, just juicy chunks of chicken, roasted peanuts and peppers in a tasty sauce that bites back.

The only dish that was a disappointment was the General Tso chicken (\$9.99), which, again not deep-fried as it is usually prepared, tasted similar to steamed chicken topped with watery ketchup.

If you are a fan of shrimp in lobster sauce (\$10.99), Asia Hut prepares a delicious version with a nice helping of plump shrimp.

There are no less than 18 noo-

dle dishes to tempt you, including spicy curry Singapore noodles (\$7.99), fried rice noodles with beef in black bean sauce (\$7.99), Cantonese lo mein (\$8.49) and the more exotic Kuala Lumpur fried noodle (\$7.99) featuring vermicelli, shrimp, ham and an assortment of vegetables.

If rice is your starch of choice, there are 11 varieties featuring seafood, meat and vegetarian choices.

Asia Hut is also unique in that it has a dessert menu that is worth saving room for — if you want to try some authentic Asian treats. Don't let the odd-sounding names or descriptions deter you — red bean pastry cake (\$4.79 for six pieces) is really quite good.

We invite you to share your favourite restaurants and tell other readers what it is about these establishments that keeps you going back for more. Send your suggestions, tips and restaurant picks to York Region's Newspaper Group editor Tracy Kibble at tkibble@yrng.com, attention Diversion. We'll publish as many as we can in the Diversion section, which runs the third weekend of each month.

Reader's restaurant recommendation

Mr. Hungarian
sure to satisfy

I enjoyed reading the Notes on a Napkin review of The Indian Kitchen in your May 18 edition. My family and I have eaten there and we have always been very satisfied with the food, service

and value.

I would like to recommend another restaurant, Mr. Hungarian at 144 Main Street N., Markham (905-201-9902). I have eaten there several times and I have enjoyed it each time.

As the name suggests, the menu is Hungarian, but there is also a wide choice of other foods

on the menu.

The food is delicious, the service is professional and the surroundings are comfortable and relaxing. The prices are moderate and the portions are generous. I am sure your readers will find it very satisfying.

STEPHEN PAPERICK

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