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National Ice Cream Month: 5 Worth Screaming For!

by Winnie McCroy
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Steve's Ice Cream

July is National Ice Cream Month, and as things heat up outside, they're sure to cool down just as quickly when you indulge in a scoop (or pint) of artisanal ice cream from our top five favorite summer finds.

Steve's Ice Cream

Since 1973 -- way before anyone else ever even thought of the concept of "small batch" or "farm raised" -- Steve's Ice Cream was churning out amazing treats. They were one of the first-ever companies to use 'mix-ins' like Heath Bar Crunch.

Four decades later, current owner David Stein has relocated to Brooklyn and is serving up flavors like Mexican Chili Chocolate, Bklyn Blackout, Salted Caramel and his truly amazing Bourbon Vanilla. The recipe is simple: whole milk, cream, organic sugar, skim milk, Kentucky bourbon, all-natural flavors and guar gum. But this gluten-free, nut-free treat will blow your mind.

Best of all, the current 'mix-ins' are locally sourced from other Brooklyn hotspots. Try the Blue Bottle Coffee ice cream, Ovenly

cookie and cake mix-ins, the Pies 'n' Thighs donuts, the Salvatore Brooklyn Ricotta and the Taza Chocolate.

They all benefit from heavenly Hudson Valley Fresh milk and cream used in production. Sure, it's a little pricey at \$10 a pint. But for a scoop you won't forget, turn to Steve's.



Ample Hills Creamery

Ample Hills Creamery

Also located in Brooklyn is a newcomer who is taking the borough by storm, Ample Hills Creamery. They are known for their Salted Crack Caramel, a sweet and salty flavor that melds salted butter caramel ice cream with "crack cookies," made with chocolate, butter, sugar and saltine crackers.

Other popular flavors include Peppermint Pattie and Sweet As Honey, which uses homemade honeycomb candy in a sweet cream base. They pasteurize the milk, cream, sugar and eggs together on site, making them a registered dairy plant and very unique. It's the first ice cream dhow to pasteurize on site in New York City. The name was even inspired by a poem from Walt Whitman, the bard of Brooklyn.

But lucky for you, their flavors are available for order nationwide, at \$89 for a six-pack of their bestselling flavors, sent out every Wednesday. Down the gullet, past the gums, watch out hips, here it comes!

Silver Moon

The only thing better than ice cream is booze. So why not mix the two together? The experts at Silver Moon are making dessert epic by blending some unusual combinations artisan liqueur with ice cream and sorbets, like their Lavender Limoncello and Orange Dream, which has Cointreau in it.



Silver Moon

Keep your figure and your buzz going strong with a dish of Pomegranate Martini, a sorbet infused with pomegranate liqueur and vodka. For your country cousins, there's Bourbon Vanilla Bean. And for dear old mom, how about Coffee with Brownie Bits... pure coffee liqueur with a generous helping of chewy brownies? Put down that White Russian, old woman, it's time for dessert!



Jeni's Splendid Ice Cream

Jeni's Splendid Ice Cream

If you're gonna splurge, you might as well go for a sweet treat made by James Beard Award-winning cookbook author Jeni Britton Bauer. For the past two decades, she's been making ice cream in flavors like Mango Lassi Frozen Yogurt, Sweet Potato with Torch Marshmallows and Middle West Whiskey Eggnog.

Her milk is from happy cows that graze grass on a small family farm, and her mix-in ingredients are grown in fields dedicated just to her, and picked fresh. At \$12 a pint, they're pricey, but if you're looking for the best pairing for Wildberry Lavender, Jeni's website will let you know: it's Red Raspberry Sorbet. Look who just won dessert!



Talenti Gelato

Talenti Gelato


Leave the sticky popsicles to the kids! Sophisticated palates indulge in Talenti Gelato, the delicious treat found in flavors like Sicilian Pistachio, Blood Orange, Sea Salt Caramel, Pumpkin Pie, Double Dark Chocolate, Old World Eggnog, Mediterranean Mint and Banana Chocolate Swirl, to name but a few.

You'll recognize the odd packaging in your frozen aisle; it's the cold treat that looks like it comes in a tub of hair gel, complete with a twist-off cap. Folks will love that most Talenti gelatos are gluten-free. Their sorbetos are sans dairy, and all products are kosher.

Technically, gelato contains less air and has more solids than ice cream, making it more intense in flavor and smoother than ice cream. It's also got less fat, since there's less cream and more milk. But we're willing to bet that after one spoonful, you won't be interested in squabbling over minor details.



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Winnie McCroy is the Women on the EDGE Editor, HIV/Health Editor, and Assistant Entertainment Editor for EDGE Media Network, handling all women's news, HIV health stories and theater reviews throughout the U.S. She has contributed to other publications, including The Village Voice, Gay City News, Chelsea Now and The Advocate, and lives in Brooklyn, New York, where she writes about local restaurants in her food blog, <http://brooklyniscookin.blogspot.com/>


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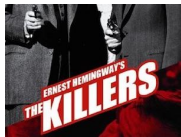
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