

NEW FROZEN FRONTIERS:

DELICIOUS ICE CREAM



by Karen Plourde,
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AT ONE TIME, “VARIETY” IN A STORE’S ICE-CREAM freezer referred only to the number of flavors in there. Everything was made from cow’s milk. Everything except sherbet and ice milk contained a similar amount of fat. The arrival of frozen yogurt in the 1980s changed the mix, but only a little.

Fast-forward to the present, in which most grocery stores, including Weavers Way, have to juggle space for traditional ice cream with dairy-free options. And sorbet. And gelato. And frozen yogurt (still). And, of late, low-sugar, low-calorie and high-protein choices. Is it any wonder why stores keep adding freezers?

With less space than many, and a need to fill more niches,

Co-op grocery staffers have their gloved hands full trying to respond to shoppers’ frozen-treat requests and requirements.

Here’s the scoop on this summer’s scoopables. (Bars, sandwiches and pops would take up a whole other story — but don’t hesitate to try them on your own.)

TRADITIONAL & THEN SOME

Mass-market ice cream is represented at the Co-op by Breyer’s (vanilla only, in both stores) and Ben & Jerry’s in Chestnut Hill. Then there’s Bassett’s, born in Salem, NJ, and a mainstay of the Reading Terminal Market. Before the arrival of Erdenheim-based Zsa’s, Bassett’s had the most extensive selection of flavors in our freezers, but that distinction now goes to the locals. Mt. Airy’s own Chilly Philly Ice Cream (kosher and made without eggs), stocks out three flavors, in both stores, as does Trickling Springs Creamery of Chambersburg, PA, but only in Chestnut Hill.

The remaining “regular” ice cream comes from west of here. Jeni’s of Columbus, OH, has two flavors in Chestnut Hill. Alden’s Organic, from Eugene, OR, is the only ice cream other than Breyer’s that comes in a 1.5 quart size. It’s stocked in both stores in several flavors. Three Twins, also organic and based in Petaluma, CA, is available in Mt. Airy.

THE NON-DAIRY ROSTER

Dairy-free ice cream made from soy has been sold commercially since the 1930s. But the current crop of non-dairy choices at Weavers Way are made from almond milk and coconut milk.

Both stores carry So Delicious and Coconut Bliss coconut milk ice creams. The latter, also from Eugene, comes in an assortment of flavors. So Delicious choices are limited to chocolate and vanilla. In addition, Chestnut Hill stocks Almond Dream almond milk frozen dessert in vanilla.

FROYO, GELATO & THE REST

Frozen-yogurt fans can enjoy up to four flavors of Stonyfield at both stores. We offer three flavors of New York’s Ciao Bella sorbetto, also at both stores. The gelato faithful have several choices of Talenti at both locations.

There are also two healthier frozen treat options: Halo Top (two flavors in Mt. Airy, only chocolate in Chestnut Hill) and Arctic Zero, which is fat-, lactose- and gluten free, contains no GMOs and is low glycemic and kosher (and only in the Hill, in two flavors).

I tried both, and found Halo Top much tastier. It’s less creamy than the real stuff, but can pass. Arctic Zero, by contrast, tasted neither sweet nor creamy enough. A treat, after all, should taste like one.

There’s still a lot of summer left and a lot of frozen delectables to try. So spoon up, friends — and maybe get in some extra steps before you shop.

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