

Susan
Nye

Around
the Table



For the Love of Ice Cream and the Perfect Chocolate Chip

Summer 2007/volume 45

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July & August

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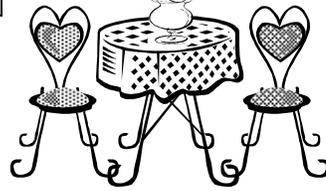
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Visit the web at www.susannye.com

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603/526 7319



Does the very thought of ice cream fill you with delight? After all what's not to like about ice cream? It's cold and refreshing, rich and creamy, in a word absolutely wonderful, ok 2 words.

New England has long been a center of ice cream enthusiasts. While it is not undisputed, there is a popular belief that New England is the ice cream eating capitol of the United States. Americans lead the world in ice cream consumption which makes New Englanders **The Ice Cream Eating Champions of the Planet**. It's hard work but I'm doing my part.

Howard Johnson's, Friendly's and Ben & Jerry's all started in New England. They began life as drug store soda fountains, small storefront ice cream parlors and in renovated gas stations. Before long they blanketed the country. But the jewels of New England's collection of ice cream emporiums are the small, family run stands. Many are open only in the summer and board up their windows by mid-October.

I learned to love ice cream early. Whenever we visited my Mother's parents, we could always count on two things; a warm welcome and Howard Johnson's ice cream. My Grandmother went to school with Howard and her freezer was always stocked with pints of pistachio, chocolate chip and maybe vanilla ice cream. My favorite was chocolate chip. Not really chips, Howard Johnson's ice cream was loaded with miniscule specs of chocolate.

Our local Friendly's was strategically placed around the corner from my middle school. Once I hit the 7th grade, it was a favorite detour before heading home. Compared to Howard Johnson's, Friendly's ice cream was creamier and the chocolate chips were great big flakes of chocolate. Friendly's was also a family favorite. Our freezer frequently housed a half-gallon or two and a special after-dinner treat was a trip to Friendly's for Swiss Chocolate Almond Sundaes.



Once we began spending summers on Pleasant Lake we discovered real ice cream. Mass market and chain restaurant ice cream paled in comparison to the homemade delights at the Grey House. There was no gum, no Arabic, no stabilizers or fillers. And unlike Howard's little chocolate specs or Friendly's flakes, the Grey House had fun chippies. Fun chippies were teeny, tiny versions of the chips used to make Toll House cookies. I'm not sure who in the family coined the name; I think that it might have been my sister, Brenda. They were thrown into a variety of Grey House ice creams, not just vanilla. Those little chippies could be found in black raspberry, mint, coffee and chocolate ice creams. We thought the nickname was terribly clever. However we never succeeded in incorporating it into popular New Hampshire culture; or into any culture for that matter. Alas, fun chippies never appeared on the Grey House's or any other menu.

My Mother was always watching her waistline and had to be cajoled into taking us out for ice cream. However, my Dad took personal pride in New England's claim as The Ice Cream Eating Champions of the Planet. On hot summer nights he would shout out to anyone who would listen, "Who wants fun chippies?" Feet pounded and doors slammed and in a matter of seconds kids and dogs were packed into the back seat of the station wagon and ready to go. Fun chippies were always a great way to end an already perfect day in paradise.

The Grey House and its ice cream window closed several years ago, but if you search there are still a few old-fashion, homemade ice cream stands scattered across New England. Enjoy all that summer has to offer and,

Bon appétit! - Susan



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Fun Chippie Ice Cream

Want to get the good old fashion taste of a New England ice cream stand, try making your own.

4 cups whole milk
4 cups heavy cream
6 large egg yolks
1 cup sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon cinnamon
6 tablespoons pure vanilla extract
½ mini chocolate chips

1. Place the eggs, sugar, salt and cinnamon in a medium saucepan, whisk to combine. Whisk in the milk and cream. Whisk until well combined and frothy. Put over medium heat and bring the mixture to 170 to 175 degrees stirring frequently.
2. Remove from the heat. Pour the mixture into a bowl in an ice and water bath and allow it to sit until it reaches room temperature. Stir in the vanilla extract. Put the mixture into the refrigerator covered and cool to at least 40 degrees, from 4 to 8 hours, up to overnight.
3. Pour into an ice cream maker and process according to the manufacturer's directions. This should take 30 to 40 minutes. In the last few minutes of processing, slowly add the chips to the ice cream. Freeze for 3 to 4 hours to allow the ice cream to harden and serve.