

March

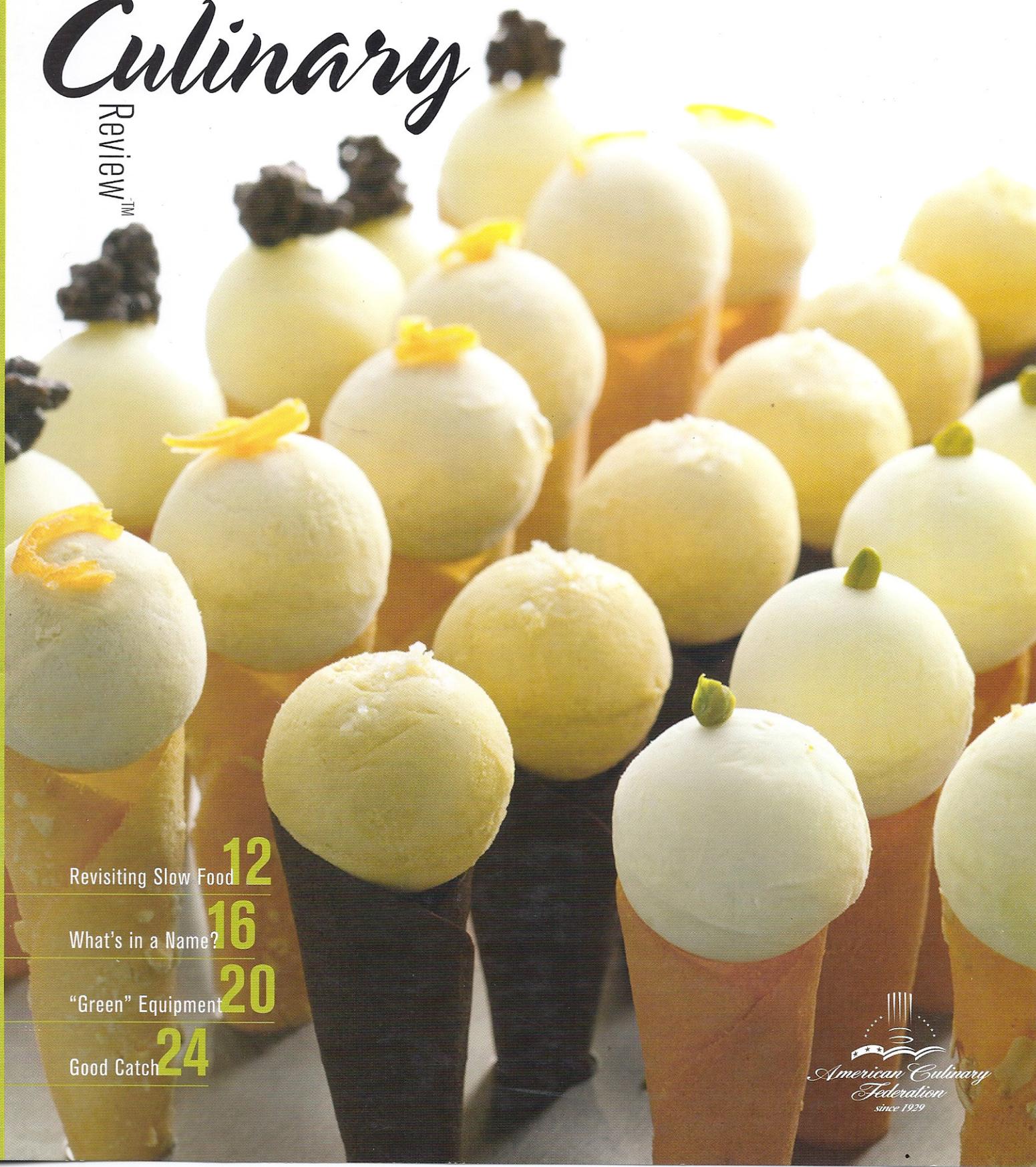
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09

The
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Revisiting Slow Food **12**

What's in a Name? **16**

"Green" Equipment **20**

Good Catch **24**


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Cold Creativity

Frozen Desserts (John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2008) by Francisco J. Migoya

Visual appeal is important, but not as important as flavor, as in this sorbet with cotton candy and black sesame seeds.

Frozen sweets add another dimension to the dessert menu.

By Jody Shee

As he did his annual menu contemplation, one chef dared to consider shaking up the desserts.

The chocolate lava cake was safe, but was it always necessary to have a cheesecake and a cobbler on the menu?

After he looked at dessert trends and discovered a clamoring on the frozen front, last fall, Russell Skall, corporate executive chef for Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar, owned by OSI Restaurant Partners, LLC, with headquarters in Tampa, Fla., developed a new dessert: frozen lemon gingersnap pie—frozen custard with vanilla and fresh ginger with a raspberry/lemon foam sauce. It's selling

well, Skall says. He puts it in the "compelling and fun" category—just what guests are looking for.

Francisco Migoya, an assistant professor at The Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y., is also convinced of the potential for frozen desserts—so much so that he wrote a 440-page book on the subject, *Frozen Desserts* (John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2008).

While possibilities and opportunities for cold creativity are endless, Migoya separates frozen treats into three categories: dairy-based (ice cream, custard, gelato, sherbet, yogurt); ice-based (sorbets, granités, shaved ice, frappés); and aerated still-frozen (parfaits, bombes, soufflés, mousses, foams).

It's this last category that may hold the most intrigue for customers. "They can't buy these in the store, and they can't make them at home," Migoya says. "Still-frozen is a way to have something frozen that will be different. And ultimately, it's easy to serve, ready-made and you don't have to churn or scoop."

Migoya notes that in the dairy-based frozen-dessert category, one of the biggest restaurant trends is sourcing the dairy products from local farms, which fits with growing social consciousness. And it results in higher-quality, better-tasting desserts, he says, though it might be a bit more expensive.

In the world of ice, Migoya observes more frozen cocktails in the form of ice pops (such as wine popsicles) or in plastic tubes. The alcohol content must be lower to get it to freeze, he says.

Screams for ice cream

Last fall, Kevin Settles, owner of the three Bardenay Restaurant and Distillery units with headquarters in Boise, Idaho, asked his managers, "If someone opens a restaurant next door, what will they do that we're not doing that will hurt our business?" They concluded that they needed ice cream on the menu. But not ice

cream sourced from someone else; they needed their own. Yet, Settles didn't feel they had the time, space or staff to handle the necessary thawing and scooping. Then came an idea: Make ice cream based on the restaurants' cocktail program.

It made sense, since Bardenay calls itself the nation's first distillery restaurant. Plus, Settles' wife occasionally made Scotch ice cream at home, so he knew it was possible. "We thought that if we made it ourselves, we could pre-portion it and do interesting things and make people talk," he says.

He enlisted his distiller to make suitable recipes, and in January, the restaurants introduced the first three ice cream flavors. The Scotch ice cream combines vanilla custard and Scotch, among other things. "It doesn't come out really 'Scotchy.' Those who don't drink will pick up on it right away, but those who do drink, won't," Settles says.

The ginger rum ice cream is modeled after the restaurant's flagship drink (rum infused with ginger with added sweet and sour). The ice cream features the restaurant's own version of ginger ice cream blended with rum.

The third is hot buttered rum ice cream, after a winter drink created by the restaurant's

former bartender. The cocktail has won cocktail contests, and the ice cream version combines the restaurant's own custard with butter, cream, nutmeg and cinnamon.

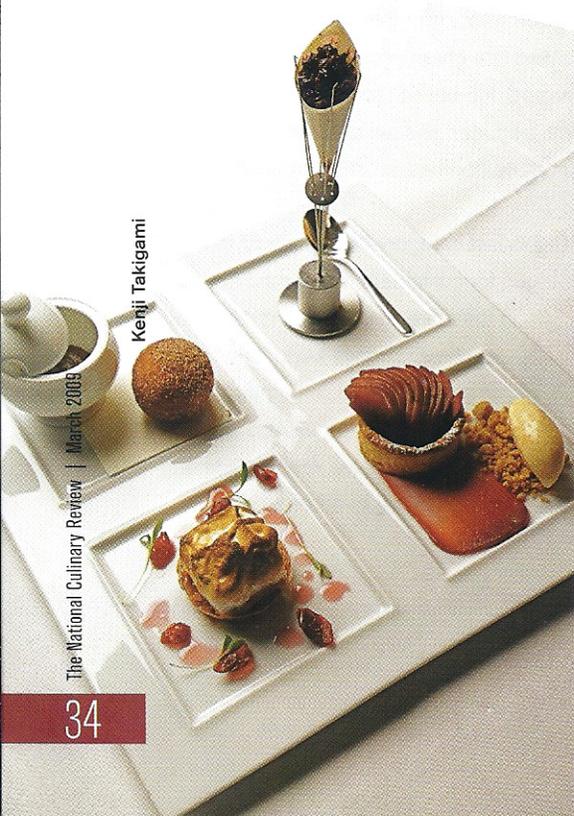
Two days after introducing the ice cream to guests, the restaurant captured national media attention.

Lou Lambert, chef/owner of Lamberts Downtown Barbecue in Austin, Texas, and Lambert's Steak, Seafood, & Whiskey in Fort Worth, Texas, has his own brandy/peach ice cream as a tip of the hat to his grandmother, who used to grow and can peaches, putting up some in brandy.

Years of experience blending fruit in ice cream has taught Lambert to add the fruit in two forms at separate times. To make the brandy/peach ice cream, he stews the peaches down and purées them for the nice peach color and flavor as part of the ice cream base. He quickly sautés the other half of the peaches in a bit of butter and brandy, keeping the texture intact. He churns the peach base with the other ice cream ingredients until it is three-fourths of the way done. Then he adds the sautéed peaches. Adding all the peaches at the beginning makes the ice cream too hard and icy, and doesn't yield a smooth texture.

Lambert teaches consumer cooking classes at Austin-based Central Market, and recently gave a class on how to make ice cream or frozen yogurt using agave as the sweetener. He frequently experiments with ways to substitute more wholesome ice cream ingredients, which includes using

Johnny Iuzzini loves the texture of granités and snow cones. He made this concord-grape snow cone, top, with a commercial ice shaver. The dessert at bottom is cranberry parfait with crispy salted walnut nougatine, rehydrated cranberries, micro cilantro and a caramelized meringue.



Kenji Takigami

Classic sorbet

Though sorbet is simple to make, it is highly susceptible to damage and decay during service. The syrup easily can separate in bases with few solids, or large ice crystals can form in bases that contain little sugar. Sorbet recipes that use savory

items have a lower sugar content, which affects freezing temperatures and ice-crystal formulation. Using a Pacojet can help minimize these problems, as it allows small amounts to be churned during service.

Follow these ingredient guidelines for classic-method sorbets:

Ingredient	Minimum	Maximum
Fruit purée (sweet fruit)	40% total weight	60% total weight
Fruit purée or juice (acidic fruit)	25% total weight	40% total weight
Dry extracts (fruit solids plus sugar and powdered glucose)	31%	36%
Stabilizer (if used)	0%	1% total weight
Percentage of sugar (or Brix)	25% (or 25° Brix)	32% (or 32° Brix)

Source: *Frozen Desserts* (John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2008) by Francisco Migoya

molasses or berry reductions. "When you take out fat or sugar, you have to replace it with great flavor," he says. Other examples include infusing coffee with ginger, or steeping a little rosemary in low-fat milk and using it with blackberries as the sweetening agent in blackberry sherbet.

Johnny luzzini, executive pastry chef at Restaurant Jean Georges and Nougatine in New York, says he looks at ice cream and other frozen desserts as building blocks to create contrast in textures, temperatures and flavors.

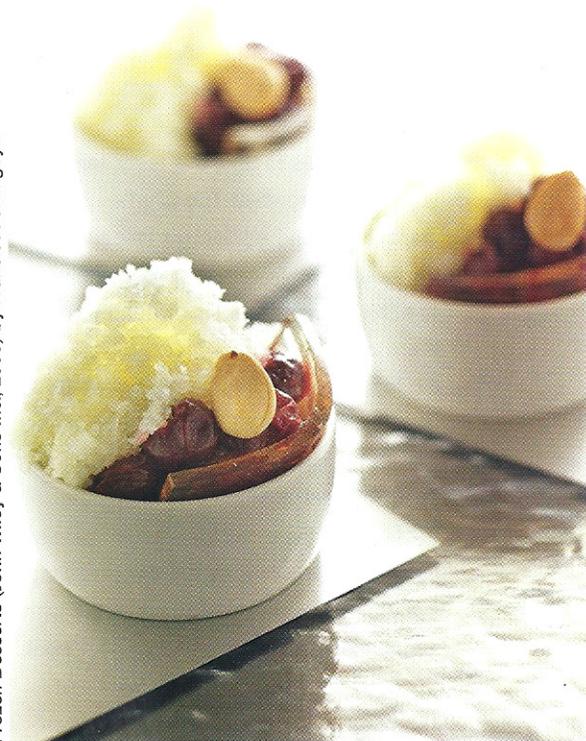
In January, he favored cranberry parfait, which combined the textures of a walnut nougatine shell and frozen cranberry parfait dipped in Italian meringue and torched. "It has vibrant, acidic flavors

versus sweet, and the textures of the parfait, the crispy meringue and the nougatine with salt on it," he says.

Coffee/cardamom ice cream makes up part of one of luzzini's desserts that begins with a tempered-chocolate-bonbon shell layered with soft, salty caramel in the bottom topped with cacao nibs, followed by crunchy pearls of chocolate-covered wheat balls and finished with the ice cream. The thimble-size shells are sealed with a popsicle stick inside, and stored in the freezer until service. The caramel doesn't freeze, so when customers bite into it, they get several texture and flavor experiences.

Modern marvels

Migoya says two pieces of equipment have helped move the frozen-dessert



Frozen Desserts (John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2008) by Francisco J. Migoya

Almond-milk granité with manzanilla sherry gelee, bing-cherry compote and toasted marcona almonds makes for a small, yet fulfilling, dessert.

category forward: the Pacojet and the Anti-Griddle. They have helped with speed and consistency.

The Pacojet churns ice cream to order. Its spiral blade shaves the frozen base into thin sheets. It drills down into the frozen dessert and comes back up bringing the designated amount of dessert with it, offering ease and consistency.

With a surface temperature of -30°F, the Anti-Griddle allows for instant freezing of items such as foam, soufflé, mousse and purée. It's a favorite of Johannes Klapdohr, executive chef at the Culinary

Vegetable Institute, Milan, Ohio, which is part of The Chef's Garden operation.

Klapdohr likes to take the tasty, tender vegetables grown at The Chef's Garden—often heirloom varieties, and always grown sustainably, which helps to achieve maximum flavor—and turn them into purées prime for the Anti-Griddle. It results in smooth, sweet, frozen vegetable lollipops, complete with sticks.

To make beet lollipops, he steams the beets, cools them quickly in an ice bath and peels them. Meanwhile, he makes a simple syrup of half water/half sugar boiled with added cinnamon stick, a little ginger peel, fresh vanilla bean and the vanilla bean stems for a bit more flavor. He simmers for 15 to 20 minutes, then combines the peeled beets with the infused syrup in a Vita-Mix blender and makes a purée. He cools it down, and puts it in a squeeze bottle to pipe into half-dollar-size circles-

Solid tips

As you plan new frozen desserts, Francisco Migoya, an assistant professor at The Culinary Institute of America, Hyde Park, N.Y., and author of *Frozen Desserts* (John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2008), offers these five points:

1. Aim for flavor first, followed by visual appeal. The two must go hand-in-hand, but taste is more important.
2. Know the ingredients and how they interact with each other. Chocolate and water are not friends. If you add

too much fat to your ice-cream base, you will have churned butter when you put it through the machine. Too much sugar, and you'll have syrupy sorbet; too little, and you'll have icy sorbet.

3. Aim for small portions. Make it short, sweet and memorable.
4. Offer a variety of frozen options. Don't just stick with ice cream or sorbet.
5. Include up to three flavors, four maximum, in one dessert. You don't want to confuse the tongue.

turned-discs on the Anti-Griddle. Before one side freezes in 1½ minutes, he places the stick on it to freeze into it, and flips the half-frozen disc with a plastic spatula.

Other vegetables with a sweetness level appropriate for a frozen lollipop are English peas, Jerusalem artichokes and parsnips. Sweet corn and bell peppers

also make tasty, beautiful lollipops, Klapdohr says, and they work together well in making multicolored lollipops.

No matter the vegetable, the principle is the same, he says. Infuse a simple syrup with herb or spice flavors and add to the vegetable purée. Ginger and beets work well together, as do tomatoes and basil.

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There can be as much intrigue with the cones as with the filling, as with the burnt-sugar and oatmeal varieties among these ice cream cones.

