

Out of Bounds

■ SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

ice cream

We certainly liked our ice cream at the annual family summer picnics.

We had all the trappings of the traditional Midwestern family gatherings — burgers and dogs, corn on the cob, baked beans and grape soda for the kids. The adults sipped their Coors and the children ran after lightning bugs, played tag and skipped flat rocks across the serene lake.

But it wasn't until later in the evening that the *real* magic happened. It was always near dusk when the White Mountain ice cream machine came out. The adults fiddled with the rock salt and ice. Great Grandma Vera haphazardly poured her creamy mix into the weathered tub and say simply, "If you want eat, you have to crank."

And crank we kids did, taking turns until it felt like our tiny arms fell off. But after 10 minutes, the kids tired and the adults took over the second, more difficult half of the mixing.

Grandma would appear with fresh peaches, or strawberries or just-picked mulberries, and we would end our days with that most simple and tasty of treats — homemade vanilla ice cream.

In our culture of convenience, the hand-crank ice cream maker has been replaced by the whirl of an electric motor and, in some cases, automatic indoor ice cream, custard and yogurt

HAND-CRANKING

THE HOMEMADE TREAT

BEATS BEN AND JERRY'S

ANY DAY OF THE WEEK

BY MARK LUCE

makers. They look spiffy on the counters of pricey kitchens, but require no elbow grease.

You see, there's an ethic in spinning that crank for 20 minutes. It's not a question of nostalgia, but one of reward for hard work. Sure, your raspberry yogurt sorbet tastes scrumptious from your countertop maker, but it will never carry the satisfaction that comes with delayed gratification.

White Mountain, bless it, still produces a wonderful 6-quart hand-crank machine priced between \$130 and \$150. It will stir up enough frozen pleasure to feed a passel of kids and adults. The machine has a homey look and feel. It almost looks like a smaller version of an old-fashioned washing machine.

Preparation is paramount. To whip up a 6-quart batch of vanilla ice cream, you need to heat 4 cups of milk until it starts to bubble. Remove from the stove and add 2 3/4 cups of sugar and three-fourths teaspoon of salt. Stir until



DAN BEEDY

dissolved. Mix in 5 cups of whipping cream, 3 cups of half and half, two tablespoons of vanilla extract. Cover it and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. If you feel flavorful, mix minced fruit into the concoction.

You'll need a bag or two of ice, which needs to be thoroughly smashed, and another bag of rock salt, which works to lower the melting temperature of the cream. The ice and rock salt are added to the machine in a 5 to 1 ratio. All that's left is the cranking, which usually takes between 20 and 25 minutes.

That shoulder-aching spinning, though, brings bountiful rewards — since hand-twirled homemade ice cream beats the swirls of Ben and Jerry's any day of the week.

Mark Luce is a free-lance writer in Lawrence, Kan, who prefers vanilla ice cream with strawberries.

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