



# FROZEN THERE IS A CURE FOR TREATS THE SUMMERTIME BLUES!

By Kenny Spahn

The Dog Days of summer are upon us, and it's sure gettin' hot. But with all due respect to The Who, "there is a cure for the Summertime Blues" — frozen treats! There's just something magical about ice cream (and its frozen cousins), that's sure to put a smile on any face. From the franchised chains, to the roving ice cream truck, to the thousands of grocery store offerings, a cool treat is never far away.

So, here's the scoop on the coolest licks in town.

**ICE CREAM** Sadly, there aren't many real ice cream parlors left, but Sloan's is a throwback to the good ol' days. Owner Sloan Kamenstein still cranks out his namesake homemade ice cream in small batches, using all natural basic ingredients (plus some wacky add-ins). This is real ice cream, the way it should be — rich & creamy, with the velvety texture and pure goodness that mass-produced commercial products just can't touch. Sloan's is famous for its creative flavors (Coffee & Donuts, Mom's Apple Pie, Blue Circus), outrageous sundaes (the Kilimanjaro, Kitchen Sink), festive setting — and the coolest bathroom in town! (561-338-9887 or sloansonline.com)

A hot trend is the 'marble slab' concept — brought to the mainstream by the nationwide chain Cold Stone Creamery — where the server smashes various add-ins (fruit, candies, cookies, etc.) into the ice cream on a cold marble slab counter. We like Marble Slab Creamery on S.W. 18th Street (561-750-3710). On a softer note, Carvel (multiple locations throughout South Florida) still serves real soft-serve ice cream — not the 'ice milk' coming from most other soft serve machines.

**GELATO** Think of Gelato as ice cream's chic Italian cousin. Gelato is made fresh, does not incorporate the



forced air of commercial ice cream, and employs superior freezing and holding methods. The result is a sensory sensation, with a soft, semi-freddo body, creamier texture, and a more intense, distinctive flavor. Gelato tastes richer than ice cream, but it uses less (or no) cream, so it's actually less fattening (0-8 percent butterfat, vs. 14-26 percent)!

Sonny Lombardo introduced gelato to Boca in 2002, and his eponymous Sonny's Gelato has since become Boca's own "Little Italy." The outdoor patio is a popular gathering point for folks seeking a taste of the Old World, with live Italian music, homemade cannoli, and of course, Sonny's famous gelato. Sonny now makes about 300 flavors, and features 40 each day. Sure bets include traditional Stracciatella, Zabaione, Cassata (with dried fruits), Hazelnut, Amaretto, and Fruits of the Forest. (561-362-0447).

Meanwhile, The Gelato Shoppe Petrini conveys the warmth and charm of an authentic Italian gelateria. The quaint "Italian bar" setting is complete with furnishings, equipment, and music straight from Italy. Owners Mauro and Dawn Petrini make gelato the authentic artisan way — hand-crafted in-house, in small batches using all-natural ingredients. Mauro is literally a Gelato Chef, having earned formal gelato making certification in Italy. No standard bases or pre-made mixes here — Chef Mauro custom-crafts each flavor separately, deftly balancing components like a master chef creating a new sauce.

The Petrinis source the finest ingredients (Madagascar vanilla beans, Sicilian pistachios, Belgian cocoa, even double-filtered water), and team with gelato experts to produce a superior product. Each day sees about 24 flavors (dairy and non-dairy) from a repertoire of 120 (and growing).

Traditional favorites include Pistachio, Nutella, Cappuccino, and Vanilla. But try some exciting alternatives, like Mango, Pomegranate, Cantaloupe, Apple Pie, Pumpkin, and even Kiwi. And here's the really cool part — The Gelato Shoppe is completely Kosher! (561-488-3070.)

**FROZEN YOGURT** Most frozen yogurt shops start with the same basic product, but what differentiates them is their freshness, and purity of preparation. That's why Yogurt Emporium on S.W. 18th Street in Boca Raton is the best, and by far the most popular in town. Owners Marty, Randy, and Luz Marks keep their Emporium (including the kitchen!) sparkling clean. As Marty notes, "We make it fresh daily, we clean and sanitize the machines every night, and we don't re-use product the next day." (How many places can say that?). Marty, Randy, and/or Luz are always on hand, schmoozing with their loyal patrons. They features 16 ever-changing flavors daily, including many fat-free, sugar-free, and even lactose-free options (the Peanut Butter and Coffee are awesome!); plus 40 toppings, from crushed cookies and gummy bears, to sugar-free, fat-free hot fudge! (561-347-1140).

**ITALIAN ICE** As the name implies, Italian Ice is primarily frozen, flavored water. You're probably familiar with the "Italian lemon ice" from sidewalk vending carts. But now, Barry Labell's innovative Mootz' Italian Ice (at Boca Greens on State Road 7) elevates the familiar favorite to a whole

new level, with over 65 flavors! Traditional water-based ices (including sugar-free flavors) are light, refreshing, and generally fat-free, ranging from the obligatory Lemon and Cherry, to the likes of Mango, Cotton Candy, Pomegranate, Root Beer, Red Bull, Tangerine, and even Chocolate-Raspberry. But what makes Mootz's really special are the dairy-based flavors, which boast rich, creamy textures — more reminiscent of ice cream, but much lighter and healthier. So appease your inner child with the frozen delight of Chocolate Brownie, Vanilla Oreo, Peanut Butter Chip, Rice Pudding, Bananas Foster, or Chocolate Cheesecake! (561-487-2822).

I set out to find the best tasting treats in town, but soon discovered these places share a more profound commonality — their personal touch. These little shops hearken back to the old neighborhood ice cream parlors of our youth. They don't rely mainly on transient tourist or captive movie theatre traffic. Instead, they've become neighborhood hangouts, owned and operated by local proprietors, who come to know their customers like old friends. We come (often out of our way) to these special places to enjoy our frozen delights — but more importantly, for the chance to relax, socialize on the patio amongst friends, and take a few minutes to treat ourselves to pure, simple, smile-evoking pleasure.

So enjoy your frozen treat, and — no matter what month it is — find your cure for the Summertime Blues! [stb](#)



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