



## DORY'S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART FLESHMAN

## Dory bids farewell to her readers

You and I have known that the day would come when I would have wandered through my memories, sharing them and then securing them in the pages of Dory's Diary.

We've also known that the day would come when I should fasten the lock on the leaves of such little books and store them on the shelf away from public view.

Tomorrow is a big day for me, it being the first day of the rest of my life and I must put closure on some things in order to open new doors to further experiences in my 93rd year of life, new memories that beckon in their making.

My column will no longer be found in these pages but that's no reason to be sad, for it opens the opportunity to newness and change of subjects and other writers to use this space.

Oh, yes, I'll miss the association and the coming up with a new column each week, but maybe I'll make some progress with work at home and even put some finishing touches on things that have long-awaited my return.

Lots of folks serve their jobs for far many more years than I — 30, 40, even more, but my 10 years were those that I never dreamed I would have. The job as a columnist came unexpectedly when I was finally old enough to have plenty of memories about which to write.

The ride was a happy one through, not one, but two newspapers, meeting a variety of new editors, new associates, and new ways of doing things.

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## BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

## A pickle that's worth getting into

Cucumbers are a member of the Cucurbitaceae family. The gourd family as seen in western gardens consists of annual vines with yellow or white flowers and large, fleshy, seedy fruits — cucumbers, gourds, melons, pumpkins and squash.

Cucumbers grow in all zones, in conditions noted below. Vines need at least 25 square feet per hill, but you can grow them on a fence or trellis to conserve space. Cucumbers are a warm weather, sun-requiring vegetable needing warm soil to sprout seeds and warmth for pollination. Principal types are long, smooth green, slicing cucumbers; numerous small pickling cucumbers; and roundish, yellow, mild-flavored lemon cucumbers. Novelties include Oriental varieties (long, slim, very mild), Armenian cucumber (actually long, curving, pale green, ribbed melon with cucumber look and mild cucumber flavor), and English greenhouse cucumber. The latter must be grown in greenhouse to avoid pollination by bees, with subsequent loss of form and flavor; when well-grown, they are mildest of all cucumbers.

Bush cucumbers (*Cucumis sativus*) — varieties with compact vines — take up little garden space. Burpless varieties resemble hothouse cucumbers in shape and mild flavor, but can be grown outdoors. Pickling cucumbers should be picked as soon as they have reached the proper size — tiny for sweet pickles (gherkins), larger for dills or pickle slices.

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## Homemade Ice Cream

# A SWEET FINISH TO THE SUMMER

By Daniel Neman  
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

The guy broke my heart.

I was calling a local kitchen goods store, looking for an ice-cream maker. I had made a batch of ice cream in my old maker, and it took so long to get cold that part of the ice cream literally turned to butter from being churned without freezing.

It was then I remembered that the last time I had used the ice cream maker I realized that I needed a new one.

So, with a small dinner party the next day and no ice cream to serve, I called the local kitchen goods store and asked if they carried ice cream makers.

"No," said the guy with a distinct sense of resignation in his voice. "Nobody asks for them anymore."

And my heart cracked right in two. Nobody makes ice cream anymore?

Ice cream makers used to be my go-to gift for weddings. Everybody loves ice cream, right? I have it on good authority that we all even scream for it.

But apparently ice cream makers don't sell like they used to. Perhaps we have access to too much great ice cream now. Why make our own when we can easily pick up the best from Messrs. Drewes and Wizard, from Fritz or Jeni or Annie or Bobby or Clementine.

Still, there is no ice cream like homemade ice cream.

I found an ice cream maker at another store and made a batch of salty caramel ice cream (this time without creating butter). I used the recipe from "Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams at Home," the first and best cookbook from the goddess of ice cream, Jeni Britton Bauer.

The next week, my wife happened to find herself at the local Jeni's ice cream parlor, and she ordered the salty caramel ice cream.

Mine was better, she said. And that's the difference between homemade and store-bought.

Whoever makes it, Jeni's salty caramel is one of my very favorite ice creams, so I decided to make it again for this story. I also made two of my other absolute favorites: lemon lotus ice cream and superb Italian chocolate ice cream.

And if you're one of those people who, heartbreakingly, does not have an ice cream maker — if I didn't know you when you got married, for instance — I also made a tremendously satisfying batch that does not need a maker. It's called magic vanilla ice cream.

Let's start with that one. The magic part of magic vanilla ice cream is the way it creates that unmistakable ice-cream texture without doing what a maker does: constantly stirring the mix while simultaneously freezing it.

There are a couple of secrets behind the magic. One is that you use softly whipped cream, which makes it creamy and light. The whipped cream is folded into a mixture of condensed milk (another secret) and melted white chocolate.

The melted white chocolate is the biggest secret of all. It creates a depth to the flavor not provided by the other handful of ingredients and makes it taste just like high-quality vanilla ice cream. Some of our taste testers even said it was their favorite.

If the magic vanilla was the easiest of the ice creams to make, the salty caramel is the hardest. I made it next.

The trickiest part of making salty caramel (Bauer calls it "salty," not "salted," and I am not about to argue with her) is the caramel. First, you put sugar in a pot over medium-high heat and let it sit without touching it until a good-sized ring of amber-colored melted sugar surrounds a shrinking island of white sugar.

Then you push and pull the melted part into the unmelted, mixing the two until it is all melted. And then you keep stirring until the color is a dark copper and little bubbles are popping on the surface. It doesn't take long in the grand scheme of things, but patience is required for this step.



Hillary Levin/St. Louis Post-Dispatch-TNS

A double-scoop of Homemade lemon lotus ice cream in a cone with sprinkles.

Three more secrets make the salty caramel ice cream so exceptional. One is that you continue to make the caramel by pouring in not just cream but a mixture of cream and corn syrup. Another is that you thicken the base slightly with a slurry of milk and cornstarch.

And the third is that you whisk the still-hot base into a small amount of cream cheese and salt before freezing it.

It takes effort, but like a lot of things that take effort, the results are out of this world: rich, creamy and velvety, with an impeccable balance of caramel and salt.

While the salty caramel ice cream is substantial in nature, lemon lotus is light and refreshing. It is what I serve after a heavy dinner for a pleasing, elegant dessert. Cookies are often involved, too.

The secret to lemon lotus ice cream is that the almost effervescently light ice cream is counterbalanced by pieces of flavorful lemon peel. The peel is sliced thin so it is perfectly edible — think of it as being like large pieces of zest — and it adds just the right touch of bitterness to the dessert.

The last version I made, superb Italian chocolate ice cream, is probably my favorite chocolate ice cream anywhere. It is more of a gelato than an ice cream, so it has a softer texture than the others. Its secret is the six egg yolks and the stick of butter that go into the mixture, making the end product almost ridiculously smooth and rich.

Its other secret is that it uses two types of chocolate, semisweet and unsweetened, which makes the flavor more complex. Its other other secret is the use of coffee, which generates low bass notes to complement the sweeter highs. Its other other other secret is the way it employs three different forms of dairy — whipping cream, light cream and condensed milk — to lend additional intrigue.

And its other other other other secret is good old-fashioned booze: a hit of dark rum and a splash of creme de cacao to add allure and a hint of mystery. They also help to keep it soft and creamy.

Put it all together in an ice cream maker, freeze it, and it is better than ice cream has any right to be.

But don't tell anyone. It will be our secret.

## MAGIC VANILLA ICE CREAM

Yield: 1 quart

**½ cup sweetened condensed milk**  
**1 ounce white chocolate chips**  
**¼ cup sour cream**  
**1 tablespoon vanilla extract**  
**Pinch of salt**  
**1¼ cups heavy cream, chilled**

1. Microwave sweetened condensed milk and white chocolate in large bowl until chocolate melts, stirring halfway, about 30 seconds. Let cool. Stir in sour cream, vanilla and salt.

2. Using stand mixer fitted with whisk, whip cream on medium-speed to soft peaks. Whisk 1/3 of whipped cream into white chocolate mixture. Fold remaining whipped cream into mixture until incorporated.

3. Place in an airtight container and freeze until firm, at least 6 hours or up to 2 weeks.

Per serving (based on 8): 226 calories; 18 g fat; 11 g saturated fat; 54 mg cholesterol; 3 g protein; 14 g carbohydrate; 14 g sugar; no fiber; 331 mg sodium; 94 mg calcium

— Recipe from "Kitchen Hacks," by Cook's Illustrated

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