

Foodservice equipment & supplies.

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Hall of Fame Winner

Richard Eisenbarth, FCSI

Cini•Little International

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Topsy Scoop combines wine and cookies for a boozy ice cream option.

and now has four locations, offers traditional ice cream as well as flavors with alcohol.

Because the ice cream is classified as a food and not a beverage, it does not adhere to age restrictions due to the alcohol content. Clementine's chooses to card all customers for age verification with both purchases and sampling, though. "Our process to infuse alcohol into ice cream is a trade secret," says owner Tamara Keefe. The shop offers "nice" non-boozy ice creams, such as Italian Butter Cookie and "naughty" selections like the Manhattan, made with whiskey.

Keefe explains that while grocery store ice cream has 100% overrun, which signifies the amount of air whipped into the ice cream, Clementine's contains less than 30% overrun. "Our pints weigh more because our ice cream is so dense," she says.

Butterfat also plays into the equation. While traditional ice cream has between 10% and 12% butterfat, Clementine's is between 16% and 18%. "It coats the tongue and has a great mouthfeel," Keefe says. "The flavor stays with you, so you don't need a lot of it."

Clementine's most popular flavors include Goey Butter Cake, Salted Cracker Caramel and Italian Butter Cookie.

The creamery has also expanded its offerings to include a vegan product. Clementine's Midnight Pleasures vegan ice cream includes chocolate coconut fudge with a coconut milk base. "We recognized early on that there is growth in vegan ice cream," Keefe says. "There also is a growing segment of the population with special dietary needs seeking high-end frozen desserts who can't have dairy."

Clementine's creates all its ingredients in-house, including chocolate and caramel sauces. Products come from Clementine's 5,000-square-foot central kitchen off-site. This includes areas for baking as well as research and development. Clementine's freezer truck delivers product to its locations every day from that central kitchen.

"We also have a mix production area with five 20-quart ice cream machines and one 40-quart ice cream machine, and many walk-in freezers and coolers, a big back-of-house area for dishwashing and two big warehouses for storage," Keefe says. "We're in the middle of doing a complete kitchen infrastructure expansion, building 2,000 square feet of frozen storage."

This expansion comes in preparation for ramping up Clementine's wholesale business. "During the pandemic, our pint production went through the roof," Keefe says. "Before we expand into grocery stores, we want to make sure we have the frozen capacity."

In addition to boozy ice cream, Keefe notes nondairy is a big trend. "This is the fastest-growing segment in the super-premium frozen dessert space right now," she says. "We're also seeing an influx of tea-based ice cream, which we offer, as well as savory flavors." Some of Clementine's offerings in these spaces include chai and black tea variations, manchego cheese with truffles and honey, and a barbecue flavor that incorporates candied meat.

Another alcoholic ice cream concept, New York's Topsy Scoop, also created in 2015, got its start in wholesale before opening a brick-and-mortar store in 2017. Its second location in Brooklyn opened in 2019. "This past year, we've kept



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