

Secrets of confident cooking ICE CREAM

Perfection
every time

Follow Barney Desmazery's guide to making the perfect
prepare-ahead dessert for summer – ice cream

Photographs DAVID MUNNS



Homemade and natural



GOLDEN RULES

- When making homemade custard, you need to cook it as slowly as possible and it must never boil. You are trying to cook the eggs without scrambling them, so put them on the lowest heat possible.
- You must also stir your custard continuously, making sure the wooden spoon comes into contact with the bottom and all corners of the pan. The custard is ready when it is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. Another test is to draw a finger through custard over the back of the spoon – the mark left behind should last for a few moments.
- It isn't essential, but if you have a kitchen thermometer, this is a good time to use it – the custard should not go above 90C.

OTHER TIPS

- As the custard needs to cook as slowly as possible, a good heavy-based pan will insulate the heat and distribute it evenly. This helps to ensure that the eggs don't become lumpy.
- For the best flavour, infuse the vanilla in the milk and cream for a few hours if possible.
- It is important to cool down the custard quickly, as the eggs will carry on cooking. Chilling the custard over ice stops it cooking just at the point when you have taken it off the heat.
- When rippling or adding chunks to the ice cream, you get a better finished scoop by 'layering up' the flavour into the ice cream, rather than folding or stirring it through.

Classic vanilla ice cream

SERVES 6 • PREP 10 mins, plus cooling, churning and freezing • COOK 20 mins
Moderately Easy 🌡️

Good vanilla ice cream is smooth and creamy. Everyone will be very impressed when you tell them that you made it from scratch. Each of these recipes makes about 500g/1lb 2oz – the size of the average luxury-brand tub.

1 plump vanilla pod
300ml/½pt full-fat milk
300ml/½pt double cream
100g/4oz golden caster sugar
4 egg yolks

1 Place a container in the freezer. Split the vanilla pod lengthways, scrape the seeds out with the point of the knife and tip into a pan with the milk, cream and pod. Bring to the boil, then remove from

the heat and leave to infuse for at least 20 mins. For the best flavour, this can be done a few hours beforehand and left to go cold (see tips, above).

2 In a large bowl, whisk the sugar and egg yolks together for a few mins until they turn pale and fluffy. Put the vanilla cream back on the heat until it's just about to boil, then carefully sieve the liquid onto the yolks, beating with the whisk until completely mixed.

CHURNING METHODS

Once you have made your custard base, there are three different methods for turning it into ice cream.

- **MACHINE** The easiest way to achieve the velvety texture you get in a shop-bought ice cream. There are huge varieties of make, model and price. Some require the bowl to be pre-frozen; others you can just switch on and go. Whichever machine you use, once set up you simply pour in the cooled custard and churn the custard until it's frozen, then transfer it to a chilled container.
- **BY HAND** Very good ice cream can be made without a machine. Put your cooled mix in a metal bowl in the freezer and when it becomes slushy, whisk it hard. Place back in the freezer and repeat the process two more times, then leave to freeze until scoopable. Finally, transfer to a smaller container, adding chunks or ripples if you want.
- **HAND BLENDER** This is the method I usually use at home – a combination of hand and machine. Place the chilled custard in a plastic jug or tall freezer-proof container and put it in the freezer. When it's slushy, blitz it with a hand blender. Repeat the process two more times and leave to freeze until scoopable.

3 At this point, get a large bowl of iced water and sit a smaller bowl in it. Pour the custard back into the pan and cook on the lowest heat, stirring slowly and continuously, making sure the spoon touches the bottom of the pan, for about 10 mins until thickened (see rules, above). Strain the custard into the bowl sitting in the iced water and leave to cool, then churn until scoopable (see methods, above). Transfer to the cold container and freeze.

PER SERVING 396 kcalories, protein 5g, carbohydrate 21g, fat 33g, saturated fat 18g, fibre none, sugar 21g, salt 0.10g

Now try these...

You've learnt the secrets, now try these three easy, delicious recipes



Chunky fudge and coffee ripple ice cream

SERVES 6 • PREP 15 mins plus cooling, churning and freezing • COOK 20 mins
Moderately Easy 🌡️

1 quantity Vanilla ice cream (see below left)
3 tbsp instant coffee granules
210g pot coffee sauce
8 pieces of dairy fudge, squashed into smaller chunks

Make the custard as described in the vanilla recipe, then, just before sieving the hot custard into the cold bowl, stir through the coffee granules. Chill and churn as stated, then layer the cold container with ice cream and spoonfuls of coffee sauce and fudge pieces. Freeze overnight and serve.

PER SERVING 603 kcalories, protein 7g, carbohydrate 46g, fat 45g, saturated fat 25g, fibre 1g, sugar 42g, salt 0.17g

👉 **No matter how luxurious or natural your favourite brand of ice cream, nothing beats homemade. Making your own ice cream is really two lessons in one. First, you create the basic mixture by making custard, then you churn it to turn it into ice cream. It's that simple** 🍦



Blackcurrant cheesecake ice cream

SERVES 6 • PREP 15 mins, plus cooling, churning and freezing • COOK 20 mins
Moderately Easy ❄️

You can change the fruit in this ice cream to suit your favourite flavour of cheesecake.

1 quantity Vanilla ice cream (on page 55)
150g tub cream cheese, beaten
100g/4oz blackcurrant conserve
5-6 shortbread biscuits, crumbled into chunks

Make the custard as described in the vanilla recipe and, before straining into the cold bowl, stir in the cream cheese. Churn as stated, then sandwich layers of the ice cream in the container with large dollops of blackcurrant conserve and chunks of biscuit. Freeze until solid.

PER SERVING 587 calories, protein 8g, carbohydrate 44g, fat 44g, saturated fat 24g, fibre none, sugar 36g, salt 0.48g

Better than shop-bought



Cookies and cream ice cream

SERVES 6 • PREP 15 mins, plus cooling, churning and freezing • COOK 20 mins
Moderately Easy ❄️

I've used just cream to make this into a richer, American-style ice cream.

600ml/1pt double cream
1 plump vanilla pod
100g/4oz golden caster sugar
4 egg yolks
300g pack chocolate chip cookie dough

Make custard as described in the vanilla mix, but using just cream, not milk and cream. Cool and churn as stated. Roll pieces of cookie dough into balls or thin snakes, flatten them with your hands and layer through the ice cream. Freeze until solid.

PER SERVING 836 calories, protein 7g, carbohydrate 52g, fat 68g, saturated fat 37g, fibre 2g, sugar 41g, salt 0.46g