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Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams At Home



Synopsis

“Ice cream perfection in a word: Jeni.” —*Washington Post*
James Beard Award Winner: Best Baking and Dessert Book of 2011! At last, addictive flavors, and a breakthrough method for making creamy, scoopable ice cream at home, from the proprietor of Jeni’s Splendid Ice Creams, whose artisanal scooperies in Ohio are nationally acclaimed. Now, with her debut cookbook, Jeni Britton Bauer is on a mission to help foodies create perfect ice creams, yogurts, and sorbets — cones that are every bit as perfect as hers in their own kitchens. Frustrated by icy and crumbly homemade ice cream, Bauer invested in a \$50 ice cream maker and proceeded to test and retest recipes until she devised a formula to make creamy, sturdy, lickable ice cream at home. Filled with irresistible color photographs, this delightful cookbook contains 100 of Jeni’s jaw-droppingly delicious signature recipes — from her Goat Cheese with Roasted Cherries to her Queen City Cayenne to her Bourbon with Toasted Buttered Pecans. Fans of easy-to-prepare desserts with star quality will scoop this book up. How cool is that?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Ice cream perfection in a word: Jeni.” —*Washington Post*

“[An] ingenious homemade-ice-cream bible.” —*Wall Street Journal*

“Achieves some of the creamiest, most saturated-in-flavor ice cream that I’ve ever tasted. . . . Her basic formula is foolproof, and applies to all flavors, from nutty praline to good

old-fashioned chocolate. No matter what kind of ice cream maker you use, it turns out smooth, rich results. • Saveur • “Try not to lick the pages. . . . A charming confection of dairy and sorbet desserts. • More • “Ice cream perfection in a word: Jeni’s. Washington Post (Washington Post)

Jeni Britton Bauer started making ice cream in 1996 and now perfects her crafts at Jeni’s, Splendid Ice Creams. She has a growing number of stores (15 and counting) in and out of Ohio, more than 1,000 retail partners throughout the country, and a thriving mail-order business. Devotees nationwide scan Jeni’s website and social media feeds daily, causing a veritable run on new flavors. Her debut cookbook, Jeni’s Splendid Ice Creams at Home, is a New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestseller and winner of the 2012 James Beard Award for best book in the dessert category. The book appeared on Good Morning America and NPR’s The Splendid Table, and in USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Food & Wine, Better Homes & Gardens, Elle Decor, and more. Her latest cookbook is Jeni’s Splendid Ice Cream Desserts.

I don’t live anywhere near Jeni’s shops, so I’ve never bought her ice cream and cannot comment on whether these recipes really taste like what she sells at her shop. Other reviewers seem to say it does, so if you already love her ice cream, you might be very pleased with the book. I, on the other hand, found these recipes disappointing. I got the book about a year ago, and have been experimenting with the recipes ever since. I was excited to learn of a technique for making egg free ice cream with a super smooth texture that will stay smooth even after freezer storage for days. Many ice cream recipes call for eggs, and cooking the egg/cream/milk/sugar mixture into a custard. These custard based ice creams do stay nice and smooth in the freezer for a long time, but I was interested in learning about Jeni’s egg free technique, for when I have no eggs or for when I’ll be serving it to someone who cannot eat eggs. All the recipes use an interesting strategy for binding the water, which helps prevent ice crystals from forming (ice crystals give ice cream a gritty texture). The milk/cream is boiled for 4 minutes to denature the proteins, then a corn starch slurry is added and it’s cooked for another minute to thicken it. Some corn syrup is used because it is high in glucose, which binds water better than table sugar. Finally, cream cheese is added (or evaporated milk, in the case of one of the chocolate recipes), for “body”. I’ve made many batches with this technique, usually experimenting with either vanilla or chocolate, since we eat a lot of that, but I tried about 10 different flavors in all. Flavor and texture are good (I mean how can you go wrong with

cream and sugar), but I have to say that there is not a single flavor using Jeni's technique that I prefer over the same flavor made with a custard base, or over uncooked ice cream. Every flavor tastes a little like cheese cake and cooked milk, and it melts into a paste in the warmth of my mouth, leaving a pasty after-feel. Some people I served it to found the thick texture to be sumptuously pleasant, but some of us (myself included) find it pasty and unpleasant. And I do like cheese cake, but do not want all of my ice cream flavors to taste like cheese cake. I tried many different things to try to improve the flavor and reduce the pastiness, but nothing really resulted in an improved final product. In the end I decided that Jeni had pretty much optimized the technique, which, again, makes some pretty good, but not out of this world ice cream. And if I'm going to spend a lot of time and calories, and dirty so many dishes in the process, I want the result to be outrageously delicious. Here is a summary of what I tried, FYI:

1. Substituted tapioca starch for corn starch (Jeni says she uses tapioca starch in her shop) - no difference.
2. Substituted tapioca syrup for corn syrup (Jeni uses the former in her shop) - no difference.
3. Reduced amount of corn/tapioca starch - pastiness reduced, but texture less smooth.
4. Reduced cream cheese - tasted less like cheese cake, but then the unpleasant cooked flavor of the milk/cream is more prominent. So I came to the conclusion that the most important role of the cream cheese was to mask the cooked flavor, not to give the ice cream "body", and these recipes really do need the cream cheese to make the final product taste good. (Oh, just remembered: Jeni's suggestion of using organic valley cream cheese is right on. I tried Philadelphia, and it doesn't mix in as well into the ice cream base: the final product has annoying little tiny lumps of cream cheese throughout it.) I highly recommend warming the cream cheese before mixing it with the base, but the way, as this helps reduce clumping.
5. Reduced cooking time to 3 minutes: tastes better, but then final product not as smooth. I found it interesting that Jeni says milk proteins bind water better than egg proteins do. That's right, but only if you boil the bejesus out of the milk, making it taste funny. You have to cook it that much to denature the proteins so they will bind the water. Eggs, on the other hand, produce a delicious flavor and velvety texture just by cooking the mixture to 170 degrees to form a custard. That doesn't destroy the fresh flavor of the milk and cream, and the final product stays just as smooth after days of freezer storage. So that's about it. It does dirty a lot of dishes: the saucepan for the milk/cream, a bowl for the corn starch slurry, and a bowl for the cream cheese. The 3 stars are for the beauty and engaging nature of the book, the novel technique, and the interesting flavor combinations. But the upshot is that I won't use Jeni's recipes very often, as it is a time consuming method that dirties lots of dishes, and the ice cream is just good, not great. Flavor and texture are just not quite right. I would suggest trying out one of her recipes available online to see if you like this type of ice cream, before

buying the book. Really it's a question of taste. Obviously the positive reviews say that a lot of people like this ice cream. Maybe it depends on what you are used to. And maybe Jeni's ice cream, with its corn syrup and pasty cornstarch base, approximates supermarket brands better than other home made ice creams do, which I wouldn't know, since I haven't had supermarket ice cream in many years.

This book is great, but I was concerned when I saw mention of errors in recipes. Since the ingredient ratio in ice cream recipes is critical for proper freezing, I looked high and low and located the errata list that has since been removed from the website. Hope this helps everyone enjoy their Jeni's Ice Cream at home experience more.
p. 10 Following "Cook" under bottom two photos, third sentence changed from "Turn off the heat and add the cornstarch slurry to the ice cream base in the pan" to "Turn off the heat and whisk in the cornstarch slurry." Sentence added:

"Return to a boil to slightly thicken." *** AND Jeni answers this question: "Am I supposed to stir the milk mixture during the 4-minute boil, or am I to leave it to boil without stirring?" ANSWER: Keep agitating/stirring the mixture while you incorporate. If you don't stir briskly, you will get a film on the bottom of the pan and the slurry may get clumpy. If you just added the cornstarch without making a slurry, then it will form blobs as noted above. Just take it off the heat, drizzle the slurry in while whisking, then return to heat (stirring) and bring to a boil. Let it roll for about one minute.
p. 11 First line under top row of photos, following "Chill": "Incorporate the hot cream" changed to "Whisk the hot milk"

p. 17 First column, line 26: "dry it," added after "wash the canister" ("immediately wash the canister, dry it, and stick it back into the freezer")
p. 103 Following run-in head "Chill": "Add the vanilla and whisk." added after first sentence ("Gradually whisk the hot milk mixture into the cream cheese until smooth. Add the vanilla and whisk. Pour the mixture into a 1-gallon Ziploc freezer bag and submerge the sealed bag in the ice bath.")
p. 156 Ingredients list: "1 1/2 cups heavy cream" changed to "1 1/4 cups heavy cream"
p. 158 Ingredients list: "1 1/2 cups heavy cream" changed to "1 1/4 cups heavy cream"
p. 197 Vanilla Bean Marshmallows, ingredients list:

1 cup cold water
 changed to 1 cup cold water
 first step: 1 cup of the water
 changed to 1 cup of the water
 step two:
 1 cup water
 changed to 1 cup water
 Caramelized White Chocolate Bombe Shell, ingredients list:
 1/3 cup refined coconut oil
 changed to 1/3 cup refined coconut oil
 201 Praline Sauce, ingredients list:
 1 cup heavy cream
 to be changed to 2 cups heavy cream

Five stars for Jeni and her wonderful recipes that give home made ice cream that ice cream parlor texture and for her unusual flavors. She deserves 500 stars for that. HOWEVER, the person who designed the book is either an imbecile or hates people who cook. The ingredient lists are in low contrast, pastel colors that can barely be read against the shiny white paper. All the text is in a sans serif font, which is more difficult to read than a font with serifs. And much of the text is in grey instead of black, that also makes the text difficult to read. And tiny. Really tiny. Does the person who designed the book realize people who cook like to keep cookbooks a distance from what they are cooking to prevent damage to the pages? Such distance requires large, legible text that is easy to read instead of pale, thin colored letters that require one to hold a book with sticky hands and squint. Such a pity. Kudos to Jeni for her fine work, but I hope the book designer gets fired for not understanding that the minimum requirement of book design is to make the text legible.

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