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65 Years of Old-School Ice Cream at Loard's

By A.K. Carroll



Photo A.K. Carroll

In a society that's obsessed with the newest and latest in trends and innovation, it's rare to find a formula that stands the test of time, even when it comes to eating. In such a world, Loard's old-fashioned ice cream is a rebel - revolutionary in the very fact that it isn't.

Since 1950, the folks at Loard's have had one mission: to bring the very best in creamy confection to the Bay Area. They've been using the same tried and true recipe since opening their doors in 1950, and after 65 years have no plans of changing it.

"The recipe is the same," says Claudina Ovenden, who along with her husband David owns the Loard's in Moraga. "What you got the first day, you'll get 10 years from now."

There's no liquid nitrogen or organic hemp milk to be found. The key to Loard's ice cream is the whole milk and premium ingredients that go into each of their 50-plus flavors. "It's really rich," says Ovenden. "Even if it gets soft it freezes back up without getting icy."

"It's a treat," echoes Tyler Morris, manager of the Loard's in Orinda. "The fat content is high, but that's what makes it so good. All of the flavors are

really consistent."

A Lamorinda local and graduate of Miramonte High School, Morris has been a member of the Loard's team for five years. "I always went to Loard's as a kid," says Morris, who recalls getting milkshakes after school and going out for sundaes with his friends. "I think a lot of the people who end up working here talk about coming [to Loard's] as a kid, knowing all the flavors, and always wanting to work here."

Russ Salyards opened the first Loard's Ice Cream in Oakland, June of 1950. One of the five original shops, the Orinda location opened shortly thereafter. Following the store's 50-year anniversary, it was purchased by Lamorinda locals Brooks and Brad Stubblefield, high school sweethearts who oversaw both the Orinda and Moraga locations for over a decade, before selling the Moraga shop to the Ovendens.

"They're the best owners I've ever worked for," Morris says of the Stubblefields. Though his own taste for ice cream has diminished over the years, Morris is still eager to make recommendations. "I'll occasionally have a sample now and then, but I can't really have a scoop to myself anymore."

According to Morris, the top sellers in Orinda are chocolate mint and mocha almond fudge. Rainbow sherbet is another big seller.

"We tried doing crazy sundaes for a while to see if they'd take off," Morris remarks, "but the original is really what people are looking for."

The same goes for many of the customers in Moraga, where the most popular flavors are chocolate mint, vanilla and cookies and cream. Both stores can carry up to 50 flavors, which they do nearly all year round, with the exception of a few seasonals, like avocado and pumpkin. Loard's also offers milkshakes, sundaes, soda freezes and ice cream cakes.

"I love making the cakes, and seeing people's faces light up," says Ovenden. "I always wanted to do something where I could work with kids and people and put smiles on their faces. Ice cream was a good [choice]."

The Ovendens have owned the Moraga Loard's for two and a half years. "It's a nice family business," she says. "Not something you can get rich from, but you can make people happy. The staff is amazing, always smiling. I want everybody who works here to have a smile on their face."

A Few Favorite Flavors:

Claudina Ovenden - Coconut pineapple

David Ovenden - Lemon sorbet and Double Dutch

Tyler Morris - Almond Joy

Amanda Carroll - Cookies 'N Cream

Loard's locations:

230 Brookwood Rd, Orinda (925) 254-3434

Moraga Shopping Center, 1480 Moraga Rd, Moraga (925) 388-0695

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