

A cool treat to beat the summer heat



Oreo Cookie Frozen Yogurt

Photo Susie Iventosch

By Susie Iventosch

It's really hard to pass by a gelato shop without at least sampling a taste! The display cases are beautifully designed in a rainbow of pastels with pieces of fruit or candy on top to depict each flavor. They are so inviting and irresistible. And, they give you a teeny tiny little plastic spoon so what's the harm really? I had an urge to try making my own frozen yogurt this summer, so we bought a Cuisinart ice cream/frozen yogurt machine and started testing our skills and sampling different flavors. The first one I tried, I used a vanilla nonfat yogurt, but it was too sweet. Then, I

bought plain nonfat Greek yogurt and it was ever so much better. That is definitely the way to go. So far, I've made four different flavors — mocha, maple-pecan, huckleberry (it was a bumper crop this year ... be on the lookout for a huckleberry jam recipe soon) and finally Oreo cookie! All were delicious, and this is the easiest recipe ever. You simply take Greek style plain nonfat yogurt, strain it a little to eliminate some of the liquid and then mix it with sweetener and flavoring and turn on the machine. We haven't made ice cream yet, but with the yogurt, we find that it's best to start it just a few minutes before you want

to serve it, because it can get too hard to serve pretty quickly in these little machines. If you don't have time,

and want to make it ahead, just remember to take it out of the freezer for about 10-15 minutes before serving in or-

der to allow it to soften to a serving consistency!

Oreo Cookie Euro Tart Frozen Yogurt

(Serves 4-6)

INGREDIENTS

2 cups plain nonfat Greek yogurt
1/4 cup agave syrup (use the light colored one and not the amber one)
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
6-8 Oreo cookies crushed

DIRECTIONS

Ice Cream Machine:

Prepare your ice cream machine by putting the freezer bowl in the freezer for two days ahead of time, so it is nice and cold. This will come into play when making the frozen yogurt. When you are ready to make your frozen yogurt, have the machine all set up and ready to go.

Yogurt:

Line a strainer with cheesecloth and place it over a bowl. Spoon two cups of yogurt into the cheesecloth and allow it to strain for about 30 minutes. Discard any liquid in the bottom of the bowl and remove the yogurt to a larger bowl. Add agave and vanilla to the yogurt and stir well. (Here is where you could add different flavorings if you prefer, like Kahlua, coffee, or Bailey's Irish Cream, or maple syrup in place of the agave, which is delicious if you're making maple-pecan or maple walnut yogurt.)

Place the freezer bowl onto your machine, place the paddle inside the freezer bowl and put the lid on the machine. (Do not pour the yogurt into the machine until everything is in place. I made this mistake and it was a frozen mess!) Turn on the machine and pour the yogurt mixture into the freezer bowl through the hole in the lid. (You may have a different kind of ice cream machine, and if so, just follow those instructions.) The yogurt will start freezing almost immediately, (mine only takes about 5 minutes to get to the consistency we like). Stir with a wooden spoon or a rubber spatula every so often to keep the yogurt from freezing to the sides of the bowl. When the yogurt reaches the consistency you like, sprinkle the Oreo cookie pieces into the bowl and allow to churn for a minute or two more.

Remove the yogurt from the freezer bowl and place it in another container to keep it from freezing too firm. Serve immediately with your favorite chocolate sauce, or store in the freezer until ready to serve. Remember to allow 10-15 minutes for the frozen yogurt to soften up if you have frozen it ahead of time.



Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977. Or visit <https://treksandbites.com>



Family Focus

Practicing civility

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

We need Miss Manners more than ever now. All around us are more and more instances of people treating each other rudely, dismissively, or even hostilely. Some of our local Nextdoor postings got so nasty that the leader needed to remind participants of the rules of conduct for using the site.

Society had already slipped in decorum before COVID came along. The example from certain leaders of our government has been one of hurling insults and inflammatory remarks at people too many times to even count. I was already concerned about the message this crude conduct sent to our children, grandchildren, and impressionable youth in general. But now, frustration with so many parts of our society has seeped down to us average citizens and some people are not holding back.

Disagreeing respectfully seems to have lost its allure.

One controversial subject surrounding us at this time is how to keep safe during COVID or whether to even try very hard. Some are strictly observing recommendations for wearing masks and keeping distance, while others are not. Some in each contingent are denigrating those who are behaving differently. One family I see on Zoom

is so divided on this issue that they couldn't remain sheltered in place together. They live in another county, and I've changed their names so they won't be identifiable in this column. "Aaron" and "Leah" are a couple in their 50s. Leah had cancer and chemo three years ago and is in the high-risk group for the coronavirus. They have three children in their teens and early 20s.

One daughter, age 22, a recent college graduate, had to remain at home when she had been planning on finding a job and living with roommates. "Anna" became very willful about getting together with friends whether or not she was following safe protocol. Both parents pleaded with her to take more precautions and to think about protecting them, especially her mother. But things deteriorated as Anna continued to indulge in risky behavior by going to parties and group gatherings. Aaron was furious and the household was full of conflict and screaming for months. The final straw was when Aaron, who had never acted out in anger before, threw a vase at the family room wall. It shattered and so did this family's living arrangements.

Aaron and Leah decided that Anna could no longer live with them, and they rented a guest cottage for her from some neighbors. This was an

expensive solution, but one that brought more comfort to Aaron and Leah. Anna has refused to see them at present, and they are hoping to repair the relationship soon. They are still giving Anna money to live on because they know she can't easily find work during this pandemic.

Aaron's loss of control was out of character for him, and he was very concerned. It is much easier to lose one's temper when there is underlying fear involved. When there is a threat to our safety (one of our most basic needs, according to Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs), we often have a fight or flight response.

If we understand how easily we can be provoked when we're more frustrated and fearful, maybe we can avoid controversy with others. I think just about all of us are feeling less in control (i.e., more helpless) and more anxious these days. Worry, stress and isolation can affect levels of brain serotonin and cortisol, which can then have a negative impact on our mood.

With so many challenges facing us, it is especially important to try to conduct ourselves reasonably, even if other people we may encounter occasionally are not. It is enervating to battle with others when we need to preserve our strength and determination to be safe from the

virus, healthy in general and economically secure, to function at work and keep our jobs, and to help our children navigate their current school and social situations, and so much more.

How can we be good role models for our children and others and not allow ourselves to be negatively triggered? Some of the techniques for anger management can be quite useful in these times.

First, recognize that you have the right to think and feel any way you want; it's what you do with your thoughts and feelings that makes a difference. Then, take time and think before you speak or sound off in person or on social media, texts, or emails. It's helpful to first write down some iterations of what you want to say and then decide how you want to phrase your thoughts.

Once you're calm, if you want to express your anger use "I-statements." An I-statement starts with expressing a feeling, then what caused you to feel this way, then what you would like to see happen. An example could be, "I'm worried about getting takeout at this restaurant when I see you're not wearing a mask. Could you please put one on?" Or, "I'm upset that you called me _____ (insert derogatory name or curse word). I don't think I deserve to be treated this way and

hope you won't do this again."

If you're highly upset, take a time out if you can. Find calming techniques for yourself, such as slow, deep breathing, yoga, music, writing in a journal, or talking things out with a trusted person. Identify possible solutions instead of focusing on what made you angry. These steps will help you feel more in control and less at the mercy of your emotions.

Some may feel better unleashing their anger, but that is usually only a short-term payoff. Long-term positive feelings about ourselves come from either exercising restraint in certain situations or speaking up without blame or judgment — in other words, with civility.



Margie Ryerson, MFT, is a local marriage and family therapist. She is the author of "Appetite for Life: Inspiring Stories of Recovery from Anorexia, Bulimia and Compulsive Overeating" and "Treat Your Partner Like a Dog: How to Breed a Better Relationship." Contact her at (925) 376-9323 or margierye@yahoo.com.

Summer virtual tour of 'Dark and Light, A Delicate Balance' exhibit offered



Photos provided by Mary Leigh Miller, Two Masks, ceramic



Irene Needoba, Jungle Talk, oil, resin and mixed media

Submitted by Carla Gelbaum

The Moraga Art Gallery is offering a "Summer Virtual Tour" of the exhibit

"Dark and Light, A Delicate Balance," which features the work of member artists Irene Needoba and Mary Leigh Miller and is available to view through Oct. 10 on the Moraga Art Gallery website.

Irene Needoba, works with oils, resin and mixed media. In this series of paintings, she seeks to bring attention to the role we have in our environment. Her paintings reflect climate change, pollution within the ocean and fires that result from extreme changes in weather.

Mary Leigh Miller works in clay. Her work in this exhibit explores our inner selves through a series of masks and everyday objects, and the outer reality of our intimate surroundings captured in a grouping of garden totems.

In addition the gallery is featuring the jewelry and encaustic paintings of guest artist, Claudette McDermott.

Moraga Art Gallery is a cooperative featuring the work of 19 established local artists and artisans whose work includes painting, sculpture, jewelry, print media, ceramics, pho-

tography and woodworking.

The gallery is located at 432 Center Street, Rheem Shopping Center, in Moraga. The gallery hours are Saturday and Sunday from noon to 3 p.m. Because of the need to change hours if there are new health directives, please call first to confirm the gallery is open.

Everyone visiting the gallery must wear a face mask and maintain social distancing by keeping at least six feet apart. The gallery has hand sanitizer for guests to use when entering the gallery and gloves will also be available at the front desk for handling prints and ceramics. The gallery limits the number of customers to four people at a time.

For more information, visit the gallery's website: <https://moragaart-gallery.com>, call (925) 376-5407 or email moragaartgallery@gmail.com.