



THIS WAY

WHERE TO GO,
WHAT TO DO

Rick Sebak has been lapping up ice cream since his dad worked at Isaly's, a long-gone Pennsylvania-Ohio chain "where they made a tall, thin cone called the Skyscraper." Now a TV documentary producer, the Pittsburgher nobly gained 30 pounds in one summer researching PBS' *An Ice Cream Show*. We're not talking supermarket stuff; Sebak's cone jones is for the handmade treat, full of butterfat ("that's what makes it taste so good") and usually made on-site in small batches.

Prime territory: the Northeast. Pennsylvania is the nation's second largest producer of ice cream, he says, after California ("but they're primarily big-time, huge places"). Here are Sebak's picks for cup and cone connoisseurs.

10

great places to ... get the scoop

Tom's Ice Cream Bowl, Zanesville, Ohio

1 Right off Interstate 70 in an unassuming residential area, Tom's "looks untouched since the '50s," with 10 counter stools and 12 "little tables that might have been in grandma's kitchen." Owner Bill Sullivan and his manager make all the ice cream — about 600 gallons a week — and serve it in soup bowls. "It often runs over, and the caramel sauce overflows. . . . A great stop for lunch on the way to Columbus."

Herrell's, Northampton, Mass.

2 First came Steve's — the Somerville, Mass., ice-cream place that inspired Ben & Jerry's — then Steve Herrell started this much-lauded scooper. Often credited with starting the premium-ice-cream craze, he helped popularize a product with lower air content, which Herrell says stands up better to hot fudge or soda water and makes a thicker shake. The flavor maven (about 85 are made at the five Herrell's shops) also invented fold-ins: bits of candy or cookie mushed in scoop by scoop, which Herrell's calls Smoosh-Ins. "My most memorable ice cream of last summer."

Bassett's, Philadelphia

3 This family-run landmark, one of the original vendors in Reading Terminal Market, is "just a counter, but it overflows with flavors and life and excitement." Amid shoppers buying cheeses and sausages, "you're eating ice cream where people have for 100 years." Using a paddle rather than a scoop, Bassett's servers hand over slabs of ice cream, including hard-to-find Butter Almond.

The Creamery, Pennsylvania State University, State College, Pa.

4 The retail outlet of Penn State's world-famous ice-cream school sells up to 8,000 cones a day in football season — including Peachy Paterno, named after the legendary coach. Lines are so long that customers are allowed only one scoop. "They have Teaberry ice cream, a root beer flavor — that's pretty unusual — and a coffee flavor named WPSX, for the local public radio station." Half the milk used comes from Penn State's 175-cow herd. The reason the ice cream tastes so good, Creamery manager Tom Palchak likes to say, is that it was milk yesterday.

Dave and Andy's, Pittsburgh

5 Innovative owner Andy Hardy uses local breweries' leftover malt to make beer-based flavors Vanilla Bean Golden Ale, Chocolate Bell Tower Malt and Cinammon Snaz Brown Ale. You can watch these and other flavors being made right in the awning-covered window. "Most of these places make waffle cones, but Dave and An-

dy's are the best." Servers use M&M candy to stop up the hole: "It's so great when you get to the bottom and there's that touch of chocolate."



Handel's, Youngstown, Ohio

6 Begun in 1945 by Alice Handel, who used fresh fruit from her yard and set up a single machine in her husband's gas station, Handel's now has six locations — all walk-up only — in Ohio and Pennsylvania. The smooth, creamy ice cream is made fresh daily, and the original store scoops 12,000-15,000 portions a week (most popular: Chocolate Pecan). "I love an ice-cream place (whose flavor board) says 'Peach — In Season.'"

Four Seas Ice Cream, Centerville, Mass.

7 A Cape Cod fixture since 1934, the Four Seas features unique flavors, such as Penu-

che Pecan, inspired by the brown-sugar-based fudge "that the grandmas in New England used to make." The building, once a garage and blacksmith shop, "is sort of an old wooden rattletrap, but that adds to its charm. (Owner Dick) Warren's personality and the (hired high school) kids' exuberance make it the place everyone in the Hyannis Port area goes to." Indeed, Warren provided the peach ice cream at Caroline Kennedy's rehearsal dinner. "The best total experience of all (ice-cream places) I've visited . . . and he makes a dynamite lobster sandwich."

Robin Rose Ice Cream & Chocolate, Venice, Calif.

8 Rose began her business 17 years ago making high-quality chocolates based on her previous work with liqueurs. But when she couldn't sell some truffles because the still-good chocolate got that "pale, powdery look, she invented Raspberry Chocolate Truffle ice cream." Another notable flavor is her Rose Petal, made with crystallized French rose petals from a Swiss importer. Rose's contains less sugar than commercial ice creams — just



By George M. Duke, above; Janet Cobb for USA TODAY, right; Bob Riba Jr., USA TODAY

Ideal ice cream: Carl's in Fredericksburg, Va., above, uses a rare 1940s machine to make its daily output of frozen custard. Latoya Askew, right, prepares a banana split at Handel's in Youngstown, Ohio. Jeff Campbell, his girlfriend, Eva Kildmaa, and his granddaughter, Maggie, enjoy ice cream at Robin Rose Ice Cream & Chocolate in Venice, Calif.



enough to keep it scoopable and provide a light sweetness. "She has a personal passion for making it taste the absolute best."

Carl's, Fredericksburg, Va.

9 Frozen-custard fans, this one's for you. Using a rare, 1940s machine to make its daily output — 120 gallons of vanilla, chocolate and strawberry — Carl's "has that roadside look and huge lines. The first time I went, I didn't get any because they ran out." Custard contains more eggs than ice cream (though not all ice cream has eggs in it). "Any place that has an Electro-Freeze machine makes great custard. . . . It doesn't ooze out, but is scooped, and it's much softer and



smoother than ice cream. Going either way on I-95, it's worth the detour to Fredericksburg."

Matsumoto's Grocery, Oahu, Hawaii

10 In Haleiwa, a surf town on the island's north shore, this modest little place is famous for its "shave ice" cones: ice cream on the bottom, then little red azuki beans — cooked with sugar to an almost ice-cream consistency — then mounds of flavored ice. Shave ice, originally brought from Japan, is finer than the crushed ice of a snow cone. "Different from anything I ever tasted but I loved it."

By Anne Goodfriend