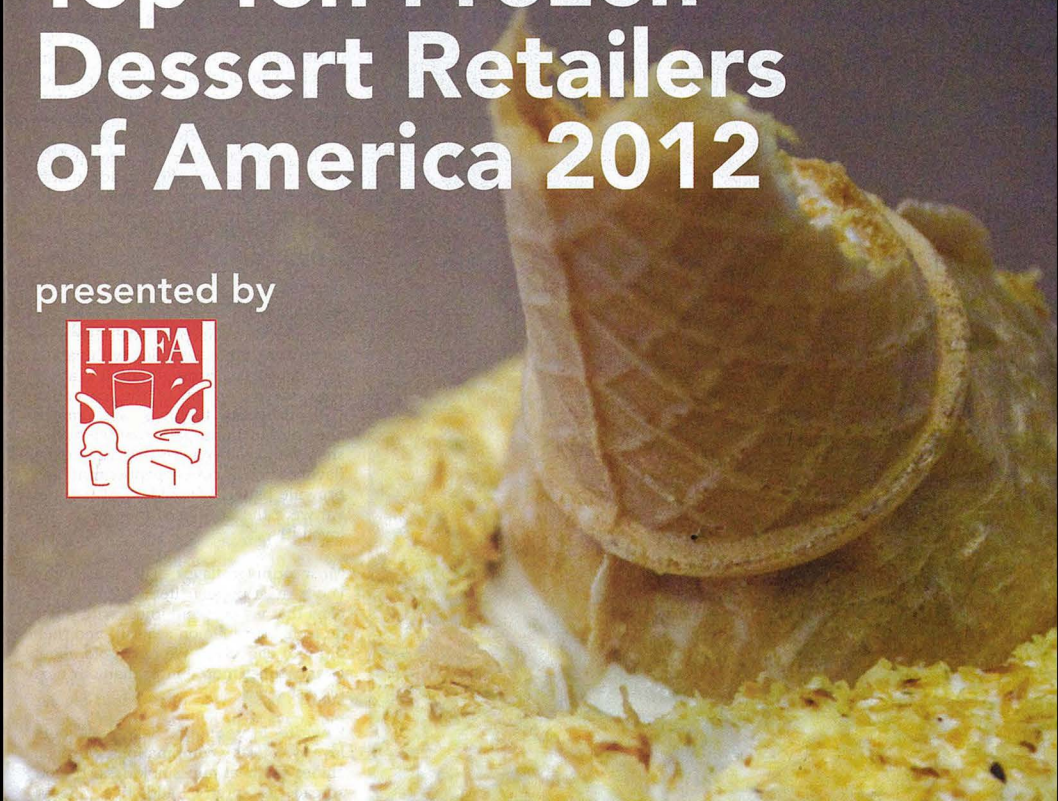


Dessert PROFESSIONAL

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Dessert Professional's Top Ten Frozen Dessert Retailers of America 2012

presented by



With this feature, the editors of *Dessert Professional* magazine are proud to honor the Top Ten Frozen Dessert Retailers of America 2012. This award is presented to businesses that offer exceptional frozen desserts served in a unique, memorable environment, including walk-in shops, stands, and even trucks. The enjoyment of a frozen dessert, whether it's ice cream, gelato, frozen pops or custard, is a special experience that involves more than just the product. Frozen desserts are best eaten when they are served, so the shop's ambiance and service are almost as important as the product itself. We have taken this into account in choosing our list of ten.

This year's honorees include six ice cream shops (one of which specializes in organic ice cream combined with homemade cookie dough), two gelato shops, one slushie truck (forget everything you thought you knew about slushies), and one shop that serves vanilla frozen custard, it all its glorious permutations. Some companies are large, some tiny, but all are devoted to making exceptional frozen desserts, and serving them with pride.

We also include a Q&A with our honoree for the 2012 Frozen Dessert Retailers Hall of Fame, Andrew Seabury of GTI Designs. GTI is a consulting and design service for food service operations, and Andrew has worked with some of the best-known ice cream and gelato retailers in the world.

Congratulations to this year's Top Ten retailers and our Hall of Fame honoree.

Handel's Homemade Ice Cream and Yogurt

Owner: Leonard Fisher
3830 Starr Centre Drive, Canfield, OH 44406
330-702-8270 • www.handelsicecream.com

Questions answered by Leonard Fisher

Business profile: Ice cream is a smile business! Our customers come to Handel's to enjoy their favorite ice cream and always walk away with a smile. We are a family friendly ice cream shop. Our entire staff works extremely hard to treat everyone like family. Our goal is to make every experience at Handel's fun and to exceed all expectations.

How it all began: In 1984, I was reading a magazine called *Frozen Foods International*, and there was an article on premium ice cream sales in the United States. At that time, Haagen Dazs was the only premium ice cream readily available in supermarkets. I thought to myself that Handel's should be selling their ice cream the same way. I approached Alice Handel with a marketing plan in hand, only to find out that she made her ice cream one batch at a time. It would be impossible for her to fulfill any orders of great quantity. After numerous discussions, she decided to sell me her business with the condition that I would not change any of the formulas. I agreed, and now I am in the ice cream business.

What you're trying to do differently: Instead of doing things differently, we are making ice cream using the time-honored tradition of one batch at a time. This ensures quality and consistency. This is the same way it was done in 1945. In addition, we hold an annual dollar cone day to thank our customers for helping us grow our business into what it is today. This year we will be giving away cones to veterans on Veterans Day as a thank you for their service to our country. Also, we hold an annual campaign to benefit Akron's Children's Hospital Mahoning Valley. We have raised over \$80,000 in the past three years. Last but not least, we are creating a flavor for Breast Cancer Awareness Month with proceeds going to cancer research.

Flavors: We have 48 flavors of ice cream, yogurt, ices, sherbets and sorbets on a daily basis. Our complete flavor catalog exceeds well over 150 flavors.

Most popular flavors: Our seasonal favorites include Fresh Peach with locally grown peaches, Pumpkin Ripple, Thin Mint, Cherry Cordial and Strawberry Cheesecake. Year-round favorites include Chocolate Pecan, Butter Pecan, Cherry Vanilla, Chocolate Raspberry Truffle, Banana, Grape, Chocoholic Chunk, Vanilla, Spouse



Like a House and Deep-Dish Apple Pie.

Favorite ingredients: Pecans (buttered, roasted and salted), whole red and black cherries, truffle pieces, Buckeye candies and chocolate-covered peanut butter pretzels. We only use the best tasting ingredients we can find, period. From specially roasted nuts to creamy butterscotch caramel, from imported chocolates to international flavorings, from specially designed machines to our designer ice cream mix, our ingredients and our methods help us create the best ice cream on the planet.

Favorite flavor to eat: Chocolate Pecan, Chocoholic Chunk, Butter Pecan, Banana and Pineapple Sherbet.

Favorite flavor to serve: Chocolate Pecan, Cotton Candy and Spouse Like a House.

How often do you change flavors? We change flavors on a daily basis with specials and flavors of the month.

Weirdest flavor you ever made: Raspberry Jalapeno served with Tortilla Chips, and yes, we did serve it to customers.

How much ice cream do you eat per week? Hard to say, we are always testing new flavors and new inclusions every week. When I was making ice cream on a daily basis, I would taste each batch (about 75 batches a day).

Signature products: Chocolate Pecan is by far the flavor Handel's is known for. Locally we served approximately 200 gallons a day.

Display case: We do not have display cases. All of our locations are walk-up.

Best compliment you've ever gotten about your ice cream: When a customer tells me "When I come home to Youngstown, I stop and get ice cream before I visit my mother."

Best part of the business: Being a part of family celebrations, whether it's weddings, anniversaries, birthdays, graduations or a baby's first cone, we're glad to be included. You just can't help but smile when you are included in special family gatherings or events.

If you weren't making frozen desserts, what would you be doing? Coming up with new ideas for ice cream desserts while lying on a beach sipping a cold vodka.

Philosophy: We only use the finest ingredients and we never skimp on anything. We make every batch of ice cream as if you were going to serve it to your mother. Several of our mottos: "It's worth the drive," "Ice Cream Like No Udder," and "#1 in the World!"

What's next: It's a secret, but it will change the frozen dessert retail market.

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