

The Only Ice Cream Recipe You'll Ever Need

By Melissa Clark

YIELD About 1 1/2 pints

TIME 20 minutes plus several hours' cooling, chilling and freezing

This silky, luscious and very classic custard can be used as the base for any ice cream flavor you can dream up. These particular proportions of milk and cream to egg yolk will give you a thick but not sticky ice cream that feels decadent but not heavy. For something a little lighter, use more milk and less cream, as long as the dairy adds up to 3 cups. You can also cut down on egg yolks for a thinner base, but don't go below three.

Then flavor it any way you like. See the chart here (<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/07/01/dining/the-master-ice-cream-recipe.html>) for more than 16 flavor ideas. Or invent your own.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 6 large egg yolks
- Your choice of flavoring (see note)

PREPARATION

Step 1

In a small pot, simmer heavy cream, milk, sugar and salt until sugar completely dissolves, about 5 minutes. Remove pot from heat. In a separate bowl, whisk yolks. Whisking constantly, slowly whisk about a third of the hot cream into the yolks, then whisk the yolk mixture back into the pot with the cream. Return pot to medium-low heat and gently cook until mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon (about 170 degrees on an instant-read thermometer).

Step 2

Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl. Cool mixture to room temperature. Cover and chill at least 4 hours or overnight. Churn in an ice cream machine according to manufacturers' instructions. Serve directly from the machine for soft serve, or store in freezer until needed.

Tip

This recipe for ice cream base may be churned on its own, but it is meant to have flavors added. See the chart here (<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/07/01/dining/the-master-ice-cream-recipe.html>) for flavor options and directions for incorporating them into the base recipe.



Your Tracker Settings

We use cookies and similar methods to recognize visitors and enhance our services. We also use them to measure effectiveness, target ads and analyze site traffic. To learn more about these methods, including how to disable them, [view our Cookie Policy \(https://nytimes.com/cookie-policy\)](https://nytimes.com/cookie-policy).

By clicking 'accept,' you consent to the processing of your data by us and third parties using the above methods. You can always change your tracker preferences by visiting our Cookie Policy. Get recipes, tips and special offers in your inbox.

Accept and Close

HUNGRY FOR MORE RECIPES?

Opt out or [contact us](#)

(<http://www.nytimes.com/help/index.html>)

Manage Trackers (<https://nytimes.com/cookie-policy>) anytime.

PRIVATE NOTES

Leave a Private Note on this recipe and see it here.

Your Tracker Settings

We use cookies and similar methods to recognize visitors and remember their preferences. We also use them to measure ad campaign effectiveness, target ads and analyze site traffic. To learn more about these methods, including how to disable them, [view our Cookie Policy \(https://nytimes.com/cookie-policy\)](https://nytimes.com/cookie-policy).

By clicking 'accept,' you consent to the processing of your data by us and third parties using the above methods. You can always change your tracker preferences by visiting our Cookie Policy.

Accept and Close

Manage Trackers (<https://nytimes.com/cookie-policy>)