

taste buds  
chef Larry  
Janes

## Pick a rib that suits you best

With the summertime barbecue season in full swing, now is the time to enjoy barbecue ribs on the backyard grill.

Spareribs can be a source of confusion for the backyard barbecuer. Regular spareribs are from the front of the rib cage and are held together by the sternum bone. In most of the time they are difficult to cut and eat. A trip to the local meat market will find an assortment of ribs, ranging from babybacks, barbecue-style ribs and country ribs. What's the difference you ask?

Babyback ribs are cut from the rib side of the loin, are about two inches wide, and have more meat on them per pound than the barbecue-style and country ribs.

Country ribs are really not ribs at all but are mainly the meaty section of the rib and that is split in half and then cut into chop-like strips. Barbecue ribs, the least expensive and most popular of the lot, are regular spareribs with the sternum sections of bone removed.

All the above-mentioned ribs are delicious, especially when finished with a lip-tangy sauce on the grill or barbecue. The lighter-weight ribs cut from smaller hogs have a tendency to be a bit more flavorful and tender than the larger ribs.

FOR AVERAGE appetites, allow at least four ribs per person, with heartier appetites being allowed almost a full slab. Generally speaking, two full racks of ribs should be enough for five to six people. Especially when there is an abundance of salads and starches to pass along with the ribs.

Many people parboil ribs to pre-cook them. This procedure makes them more tender and mouth-watering but, unfortunately, has a tendency to boil away a great deal of flavor. Yours truly personally thinks that a simple pre-roasting in a moderate (350-degree) oven for about 45 minutes is all that is needed to help leech out the flavor from the bones.

After the pre-baking, a healthy slathering of sauce and an additional 20 minutes or so on a slow grill will produce ribs that are all that is needed for a great entree.

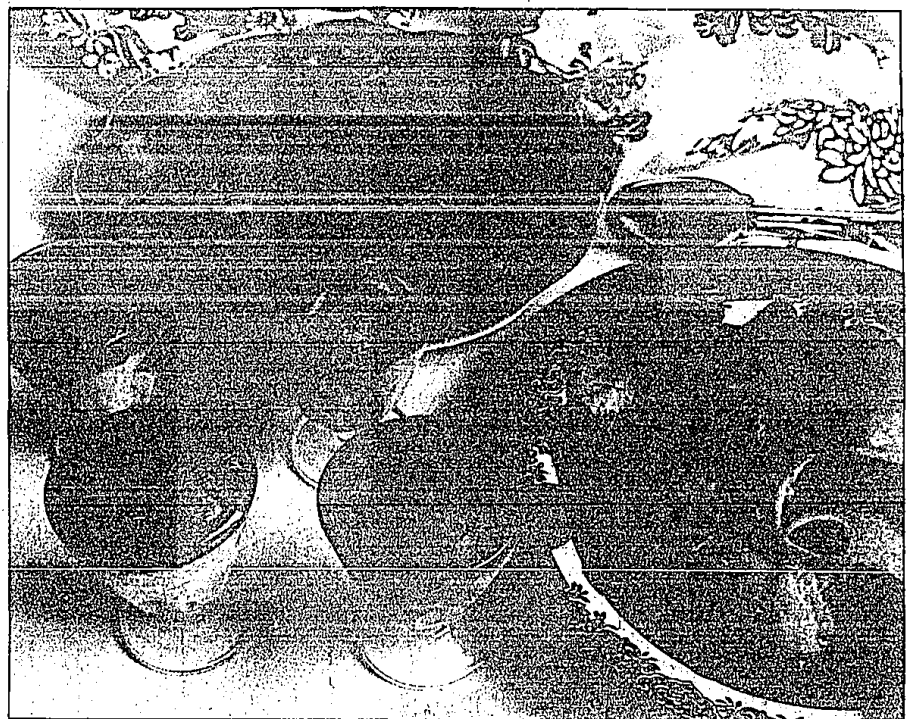
I have heard of many folks who prefer to skin their ribs prior to cooking. Removal of the tough layer of skin that can usually be found on the outside of the rib bones themselves is an easy procedure. It is accomplished by using a good, sharp knife. When skinning this skin, you will find that it is so often called "the fat" where the entire section of meat adheres to this skin in one file.

Another cooking practice widely used when preparing ribs is the pre-soaking in a vinegar-water bath. Advocates of this procedure say that pre-soaking with vinegar helps break down the skin and tenderize the meat. Accepted ratios of vinegar-to-water should be about one cup of vinegar to each quart of water, but the choice to pre-soak is entirely optional.

BECAUSE RIBS have a tendency to be fatty and can cause flare-ups easily on the grill, make sure you use only white-ash, well-heated coals. I keep a clean spray bottle filled with water, bourbon or cheap wine within arm's reach to immediately snuff out any flare-ups, which not only singe the ribs but impart a burnt taste when left uncontrolled.

Cooking ribs on the barbecue can be an exciting and tasty experience. Try some today for a mouth-watering entree.

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GUY WARREN

Strawberry sorbet garnished with Johnny-jump-ups (miniature pansies) is served with a fresh fruit plate of blueberries, strawberries and kiwi garnished with basil leaves.

# SORBET-nice ice

## Fresh, flavorful, low-cal

By Geri Rinachlor  
special writer

THE ITALIANS call it granita, the French, sorbet, and some of us just call it flavored ice. No matter what you call it, these frozen delights never go out of style and, lucky for us, these low-calorie desserts are trendy again.

Most food historians tell us the Chinese are responsible for first having flavored ice. It is believed the first Italian ice was made at the court of the Roman Emperor, Nero. He demanded that snow be brought down from the mountain and then flavored it with fruit juice and honey. By the 16th century, ices and sherbets (which is a fruit ice with milk added) were popular in Italy and Spain.

Authors of the Better Homes and Gardens "Heritage Cookbook" (Meredith Corp., 1976) tell us that American Indian women scooped up balls of snow and covered them with maple syrup long before the Mayflower landed.

But the one who gave international fame to ices or granitas and sorbets was a Sicilian nobleman, Procopio dei Colicelli. He went to Paris and opened a Venetian coffee shop and sold ices and sherbets. His Cafe Procope was extolled for its excellent frozen desserts.

GRANITAS AND sorbets are the simplest of frozen desserts. They usually consist of frozen fruit juice or fruit puree, a sugar syrup and other flavorings such as vanilla, spices or liqueurs.

Some restaurants around town offer sorbets made with smoked tea, wine or champagne as a palate cleanser after the entree is served. The technique used to prepare these more aromatic ices is the same as those used to make a fruit sorbet or ice.

Almost any fruit or juice can be used to make a summer ice. Favorites are strawberry, raspberry, lemon, orange and grapefruit. When I was a young girl living in the New York metropolitan area, summer

wasn't summer without a weekly visit to a local Italian pastry shop for a chocolate or lemon granita.

To make the best Italian ice or sorbet, it's not necessary to use an ice cream maker. Actually, the Italian granita makers believe the best ices are made by hand, removing the ice from the freezer every hour and breaking up the crystals with a spoon, then returning the ice to the freezer and repeating this process three times before allowing the final freezing.

Whichever fruits you choose for your ice, make sure they are ripe. Making a simple sugar syrup is often the first step in the recipe. I prefer using a super fine sugar. It dissolves quickly and easily. If you can't find super fine sugar, traditional granulated cane sugar will be all right.

WHAT MAKES a sorbet or granita special? Most connoisseurs will tell you it must have a slightly grainy texture. Best way to achieve this is to first freeze the mixture without stirring. Then remove the ice when it

becomes firm and break up the ice crystals. This can be accomplished in one of many ways — either by hand with a spoon or fork, using an electric mixer or by tossing it in a food processor or blender.

If you are making large amounts, it will be easier and quicker to use the food processor. Placing the ingredients into an ice cream maker will result in a very smooth ice, which is not typical of granita but very suitable for a sorbet. All the recipes accompanying this article may be used with any ice cream maker. Just follow the manufacturer's instruction.

Serving any fruit ice should be done simply. The French love to serve their sorbets in a hollowed-out fruit shell such as oranges, lemons, limes or grapefruit. For a larger serving bowl, hollowed-out pineapples and melons are fun.

To prepare lemons and oranges, cut off the top 1/4 of the fruit and scoop out the fruit. Chill until ready to fill with the fruit ice. After filling re-freeze before serving and then garnish with a sprig of mint. Small bunches of mint and groups of fresh berries make an attractive garnish when serving individual scoops on a dessert plate.

## Lighten up with ice cream

By Arlene Funke  
special writer

Are you a guilt-ridden ice cream freak who agonizes over each mouthful of the rich, fatty treat?

Well, dry those tears. There is no reason to deny yourself. Low-fat "light" ice creams and sweet, no-cholesterol sorbets are as close as your supermarket freezer.

"It was brought about by customer demand," said Ron Larkin, 51, a sales manager for Stroh's Ice Cream in Detroit. "That seems to be the wave of the future."

This summer, Stroh's introduced several flavors of light, reduced-fat ice cream. The Farmington Hills-based Melody Farms has been marketing its "lite" line for about three years.

NEW LIGHT FLAVORS include the usual vanilla and neapolitan. But more voluptuous flavors are showing up too — peach almondine and chocolate raspberry. If you absolutely hate cholesterol, you might opt for a cherry sorbet from Savino Sorbet. The fruit, refreshing sorbet is totally fat-free.

Although there are slightly fewer calories in light ice creams, "the big difference is butterfat," said Stephen George, vice president of product development for the family-owned Melody Farms.

"The benefits will come from the lowered fat intake," said George, 40, a West Bloomfield resident. "There is a substantial difference in the fat, so cholesterol and fat would be lowered."

Regular ice cream contains hefty portions of cream, or half-and-half, along with sugar and flavorings or nuts. U.S. government

standards stipulate that ice cream must contain at least 10 percent butterfat. Rich, premium ice creams, such as Haagen Dazs, may contain up to 16 percent butterfat.

There are no specific government definitions of light ice cream, according to George. However, industry standards place light ice cream in the "ice milk" category, at around six percent butterfat or less.

"Light is nothing more than ice milk," George said.

ACCORDING to books in local county extension services, one cup (eight ounces) of vanilla ice cream contains 290 calories and 16 grams of fat. It also contains 30 grams of carbohydrates and almost six grams of protein.

Larkin said a four-ounce scoop of light ice cream contains from 100 to 130 calories, compared to 140 to 180 calories or more for regular ice cream. Stroh's offers eight flavors of light and Melody Farms has six.

Low-fat purists who turned up their noses at ice milk might be pleasantly surprised with the new light ice creams. Improvements have enhanced the flavor and texture, according to George. For example, non-fat dry milk is added to give the texture "chow," more closely resembling regular ice cream.

"Good quality ice cream has less air," George said. "They (ice milks) are formulated so there is less air, and it doesn't get so granulated. Nowadays people want exotic flavors, with less fat."

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DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Sharon Frye of Birmingham enjoys Stroh's new light ice cream at Stroh's Ice Cream Parlor, 3559 W. Maple, in Bloomfield Township.