

FOOD SCENE

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Summer Scoops

San Ramon's Salt and Straw serves up fun flavors and stays open late.

BY LEEANNE JONES

A global pandemic couldn't keep ice cream lovers from lining up for the new Salt and Straw at San Ramon's City Center Bishop Ranch, from its opening in April well into summer. Thankfully, the sweet scent of freshly made waffle cones could find its way through a mask.

Born 10 years ago in Portland, Oregon, Salt and Straw now boasts scoop shops with waffle-cone wallpaper up and down the West Coast. City Center is its 26th location and the first in the East Bay. "Opening up in San Ramon is a dream come true," says cofounder Tyler Malek. "We love being part of a strong food community."

Known for its support of regional ingredients and producers, Salt and Straw serves Freckled Mint Tcho-colate Chip, a vegan and slightly floral take on classic mint chip that highlights Berkeley's Tcho Chocolate alongside coconut cream and oil from Oregon's Seely Mint. Another excellent option is the Salted, Malted, Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough, which is delightfully salty and laced with ribbons of fudge. For something even more unusual, try herbaceous honey lavender, bold pear and blue cheese, or a flavor from the monthly rotating specials. (At press time, that included several flavors inspired by favorite children's books, such as R.L. Stine's *Goosebumps*, the namesake of a gooey treat featuring green "monster blood.")

If you can't make up your mind, there are split scoops, double scoops, and flights of four flavors. Or just stay for seconds; the shop closes at 11 p.m. saltandstraw.com.



Salt and Straw features inventive flavors such as Mathilde's Hibiscus and Coconut Sherbet, jasmine milk tea and chocolate, and more.