

UNIQUE SWEET TREATS

The Hyppo is changing the way the world eats ice pops.

By KAYLA LOKEINSKY

Avocados and coconuts. Honeydew and basil. Pears, Prosecco and mascarpone. These are not ingredients you would expect to find together, especially frozen and served on a stick. But somehow, The Hyppo has found a way to make these seemingly odd pairings and turn them into tasty, unique ice pops.

The St. Augustine-based gourmet ice pop company is known for making crazy frozen combinations of flavors. They're taking everything you thought you knew about ice pops and throwing it out the window. From peanut butter pie to blueberry-lavender lemonade, there's no telling what flavors they'll come up with next.

Their Story

Born and raised in St. Augustine, Stephen DiMare had dreamed of starting his own business in his hometown. In 2010 while on a plane from Montana to St. Augustine, he pitched his idea of opening a coffee shop to the woman sitting next to him. She told him what he needed in his coffee shop were gourmet ice pops in the Mexican style.

When he returned to Montana, he went out and bought a cheap set of plastic ice pop molds and began experimenting with different flavors. In June 2010, he opened his first The Hyppo store in St. Augustine and from there his hobby has turned into a mini ice pop empire.

"My primary motivation was I wanted to start a business, do something creative and work in food," DiMare said. "This was never on the horizon. I never saw this coming."

The Hyppo now has nine shops and nearly 70 "Pop Peddlers," including Fifth Generation Farms in Lake City. They also sell their ice pops all throughout St. Augustine, Jacksonville, Gainesville and other parts of Florida.



Their Ice Pops

With over 450 flavors and counting, The Hyppo creates one-of-a-kind ice pops full of fresh ingredients and unique flavor profiles. Their ice pop bases are pure fruit, and they're flash frozen to lock in those fresh flavors.

"We are just obsessed with authentic flavors so we constrain ourselves to only using fresh ingredients," DiMare said.

The Hyppo will have 250 flavors through the course of a year, with 35-50 flavors out in their flagship stores or retailers at any given time. These flavors aren't ones that you'll find on a shelf at a supermarket. They're each unique and most of them are unlike anything else out there.

"We think that's really fun and something you won't get at a grocery store," DiMare said about having so many different flavored ice pops. "We want to have fun and we translate that into our food and we want our guests to experience that."

When creating their flavors, The Hyppo goes off of what's in season. Living in a state that has an abundance of fresh fruit year around, the company is able to change its menu with the seasons. They recently launched a new ice pop they're calling "America's Pop." Made with coconut milk, a strawberry swirl and whole, fresh blueberries, this patriotic pop is perfect for summer.

Although the business started off with DiMare creating flavor combinations in plastic ice pop molds, The Hyppo now has a team of ice pop experts that works to come up with the best flavors. DiMare was very active in the creation of the first few hundred flavors, but now mainly consults the team on their creations.

"I love that aspect of it," DiMare said of creating the ice pops.

DiMare's personal favorite flavors are Pineapple Cilantro, made with fresh pineapple, evaporated cane juice, fresh cilantro, sea salt and water, and the Blackberry Jasmine made with a blackberry puree and jasmine tea.

No matter which ice pop you choose, whether it be a simple fruit pop like a Straight Up Strawberry or Peachy Peach, or maybe a more unique flavor like Peanut Butter Pie or Champaign Mango, you can't go wrong with a fresh, homemade ice pop on a hot summer day.

For The Hyppo locations and store hours, visit www.thehyppo.com.

