

# 2010 Frozen Dessert Retailers' Hall of Fame Honoree: Malcolm Stogo



Tell us a little about your background and how you first got involved in the frozen desserts business:

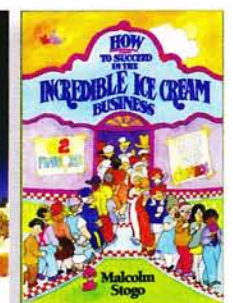
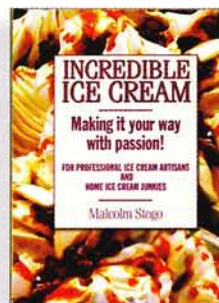
It all started with my mom, that wonderful Jewish cook who taught me how to make breaded veal chops when I was eight. From that day forward I loved cooking and I started on my exciting journey with food and ice cream.

Then, some 40 years ago, I opened two restaurants—Someplace Different and Another Someplace Different in Philadelphia, PA. It was pure luck and being in the right place at the right time. An ice cream shop next to Someplace Different went out of business, so we decided to make ice cream in our restaurant, cooking the custard base on the stove and using a White Mountain rock salt and ice cream maker. I had absolutely no idea how to make ice cream, so I went to a bookstore, bought a book on making ice cream, and took it from there. My daughter, who was three years old, got placed on top of an ice machine and separated 13 dozen eggs at a time to get the yolk. That story is folklore in our family today. Next, I went to the supermarket and got my favorite candies and cookies, cut them up into small pieces and used them to make my ice cream. I was astonished that you could actually get the taste of the candy in the ice cream. From that day forward, I rely on taste as it hits my tongue as my parameter of how a flavor should taste. And that is how I invented four great flavors – Cookies & Cream, Coconut Almond Joy, Milky Way, and Snickers Ice Cream.

Today, I am president of Ice Cream University, the educational arm of Malcolm Stogo Associates, my ice cream consulting firm located in West Orange, New Jersey. I am the author of six professional ice cream books, including my newest book, *Incredible Ice Cream: Making it your way with passion!* Through Ice Cream University, I publish a quarterly newsletter, *Ice Cream University News*. For the past 20 years, I have

**M**alcolm Stogo is the first honoree entered into Dessert Professional's Hall of Fame for Frozen Dessert Retailers. He is the President of Ice Cream University, the educational arm of Malcolm Stogo Associates, an ice cream consulting firm in West Orange, N.J. For the past 20 years, Stogo has helped leading ice cream chains to develop, market and merchandize new products. He is a consultant for clients in Saudi Arabia, Korea, Puerto Rico, Tunisia, as well as domestic companies such as Haagen-Dazs, Carvel, Colombo, Sloan's and Shrivvers. For the last ten years Stogo has conducted his Gelato Tour of Italy, bringing hundreds of people through Italy to learn the finer points of gelato making.

During the early years of the super premium ice cream boom (1978-1980), Stogo developed many of the most famous ice cream flavors ever created—Cookies & Cream, Coconut Almond Joy, Milky Way, and Snickers ice cream. He is also the author of many books on frozen desserts, including *Incredible Ice Cream: Making It Your Way With Passion!* (Ice Cream University Press, 2009); *How to Succeed in the Incredible Ice Cream Business* (Malcolm Stogo Associates, 2001), *Ice Cream and Frozen Desserts* (Wiley, 1997), *Ice Cream Cakes* (with Lisa Tanner, Malcolm Stogo Associates, 2002) and *Frozen Desserts, A Complete Retailer's Guide* (Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1991). Following is an interview with Malcolm Stogo on his distinguished career in the field of frozen desserts.



helped leading ice cream chains such as The Haagen-Dazs Company, develop, market, and merchandise exciting new products. In 1983, I created the highly successful Ice Cream Extravaganza at the South Street Seaport in New York City where I invented the Chocolate Dipped Waffle Cone. Over the years I have consulted for clients in Saudi Arabia, Korea, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, Thailand, Tunisia, as well as U.S. clients including large chains such as Haagen-Dazs, Carvel, Colombo and small entrepreneurs such as Sloan's in West Palm Beach, Florida, Shrivvers in Ocean City, NJ, and Stogo in Manhattan.

For ten years I have conducted a Gelato Tour of Italy, introducing people from all over the world to the amazing gelato, pastry and chocolate fair known as SIGEP Italy that takes place every January in Rimini, Italy.



eat dessert and still feel confident when it comes time for the annual physical. By offering ice cream lovers a chance to eat a remarkably delicious, low-calorie and low-cholesterol dessert that is free from dairy and refined sugar and filled with only natural ingredients, it is filling that niche market. It also is popular with people who are lactose intolerant.

It is the first organic, homemade vegan ice cream store to offer health and taste in one delicious package, featuring a proprietary line of soy, hemp and coconut-based ice creams. In addition, Stogo offers a full line of baked goods and beverages that complement the vision for a healthy dessert paradise.

Stogo is also about kindness to animals; it's about health; it's about taste; and it's about style. Our first store in the East Village, designed to be as green as possible, is a testament to a coolness matched only by our ice cream itself.

Stogo came into being when one of Stogo's founders, restaurateur and health enthusiast Steve Horn, was having dinner with his friend Rob Sedgwick and said, "I have a great idea for an ice cream store — vegan ice cream." Rob agreed that it was a great idea, and immediately Steve did some research and found me.

Steve and Rob enrolled in Malcolm's Ice Cream University, where entrepreneurs learn the fundamentals of running an ice cream business. At the time, I wondered why anyone would want to make vegan ice cream. Why remove all the fat from an amazing ice cream product? I didn't look at Steve for the rest of the class. Meanwhile Steve and Rob set about learning the business, and I finally said, "Call me if you need help." Steve did call, over and over, sending me articles about vegan and health. Meanwhile, my own health needed a little improvement, and the more I thought about it, the more I began to get it. One day I called Steve and said, "Healthy ice cream! Yes! I see!"

### What makes a successful ice cream shop?

There are five essential elements that make an ice cream shop successful:

- **Capitalization**- having enough cash flow reserves to survive two selling seasons in this business, equal to 35% of your original investment;
- **Location**- if the location you find isn't the best there is,

or

doesn't make you incredibly excited, then you have found the wrong location. It's all about location, location, location;

- **Product**- very important, but without money and location it doesn't matter how good your product is;
- **Common sense**- making decisions that your gut tells

you

to make, that you know in your heart is right;

- **Passion**- passion is what drives you to accomplish all of the above. Without it, you are doomed to failure.

### How important are formulas in this business?

Formulas and recipes are very important because whatever product or flavor you create, it must be consistent. But the beauty of this business is the opportunity to turn your ideas into flavors creating a product that you alone own, that no one else has.

### What's your favorite ice cream and gelato flavor?

Any kind of chocolate ice cream—I love a very dark bittersweet flavor that melts on your tongue. I also like pistachio gelato, because I like to create flavors from scratch, and pistachio is a flavor that has a distinct flavor profile like no other. I also use lemon juice instead of citric acid because it is natural as a booster of flavor.

### Tell us about STOGO, which is a big hit in New York City:

Stogo was created to become the most premium organic vegan ice cream found in the United States. The goal from day one was to be twice the quality of any other vegan ice creams around, and from the rave acceptance by the public it has succeeded. By creating delicious, non-dairy ice cream that uses healthy and organic ingredients, Stogo has capitalized on an explosive growth area in the gourmet food market. Americans have always loved ice cream, but because they are becoming increasingly health conscious, they are wondering if they can

### What are the latest trends in the frozen dessert business?

The latest trends in the frozen dessert business are non-dairy and low-fat ice cream products using no refined sugars like agave and brown rice syrup. Over the years there have been many fads which I call gimmicks like the mix-in craze and the many variations of soft serve frozen products. They come and go. They become a fad and fade in about three to four years. Ice cream is not a fad. It will always be here followed by a slow increase in the popularity of sorbets and gelato in the U.S.

### How has the business changed in the past 20 years?

There has been a resurgence in the individual ice cream shop or gelateria, because the franchise ice cream shops have become too generic, and have shown very little product and flavor innovation. While it has taken a long time to occur, the rise in quality, popularity and acceptance of low-fat and non-fat products has finally reached the marketplace in a big way.

### What's your biggest tip for novice frozen dessert retailers?

Have passion for your idea and enough money to carry it out. Passion can carry your idea but without money, you can't do very much. You need both to succeed.