

AFTERTASTE



ICE CREAM NATION MEETS GELATO

Manhattan might have Il Laboratorio del Gelato, but Greenport has D'Latte. The shop has become a favorite breakfast, brunch, lunch, dinner, snack and hangout spot for North Forkers craving everything from good coffee to good pastries and good paninis. But the made-from-scratch specialty is a case crammed with 22 flavors of gelato. This could be ground zero of a swell of East End interest in this Italian version of ice cream which has less fat and less air than American ice cream, resulting in a creamier consistency and more intense flavor. Which means that “you have to use the best of the best ingredients,” according to Marinette Chouhy, who makes the gelato by hand every morning. Chouhy grew up on a farm in Patagonia alongside her grandmother who made ice cream in a freezer. She graduated to making the ice cream, sorbet, and gelato for a five-star Buenos Aires hotel, and was later scooped up by Italy’s largest gelato machine company to design mixtures.

Her own case offers traditional flavors like amaretto and coffee, but also innovative concoctions like basil, beet, and rhubarb (each made from local produce), and decadent recipes like hazelnut and almond nougat with chocolate or Gorgonzola and fresh fig. Several flavors pay homage to traditional American ice cream flavors, like the eight different coffee flavors they’ve tried, assorted

chocolate flavors, strawberries and cream, and pistachio made from only Sicilian nuts. She has also purchased goat milk ricotta from Catapano Dairy in Peconic and turned that into an addictive substance that cries for more collaboration with the farm. And the owner, Frank Purita, who has a small vineyard, is planning cabernet gelato with some of his “not so nice grapes.”

At \$3 a scoop, \$5 a double scoop, and \$7 a pint, something seems to be working. On a busy day in August, the shop sold a record 1700 gelatos. D'Latte, on Main Street, just north of Front Street, is already looking for additional freezer space and is thinking about selling the treat beyond its store and even opening a storefront in New York City. “All over America, there is a tradition of very good artisanal ice cream,” said Chouhy. “The best ones taste just like gelato.” □