

scoopdujour

Ivan The Wonderful

BY ALMA CIANELLI

HAVE YOU SEEN Gherardini's gelato in modest white pint containers popping up in the freezer sections of Foods of All Nations, Heritage Health Foods and the Farm Fresh on Great Neck Road in Virginia Beach? Don't be deceived by the plain Jane packaging, rather vanilla if you will, for chilling within is a world of intensely passionate flavors. Pistachio, peach, hazelnut and O.K., vanilla. Only silkier, and more liquor-ish than what we usually a la mode with.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg. Ivan Gherardini, their creator, has concocted more flavors than the 31 Baskin & Robbins boasts and promises more to come. He's only been in full-scale gelato production at his Oceanfront "laboratory," a space on Atlantic Avenue near 16th Street, since June.

Pronounce his semi-frozen Italian treat *jel-lot-toe*, with a long, slow lick on the second syllable, but don't call it ice cream. Well, maybe extreme ice cream. On the SATs, you could use it to complete *espresso is to coffee as _____ is to ice cream*. More concentrated, potent, tightly wound. It's even scooped into scaled down balls, just as espresso is poured into demitasse. For while gelato shares ingredients with ice cream — fresh milk, fresh cream, sugar and natural flavorings — it has half the air content, producing a dense, smooth consistency and heightening flavor. Zestier

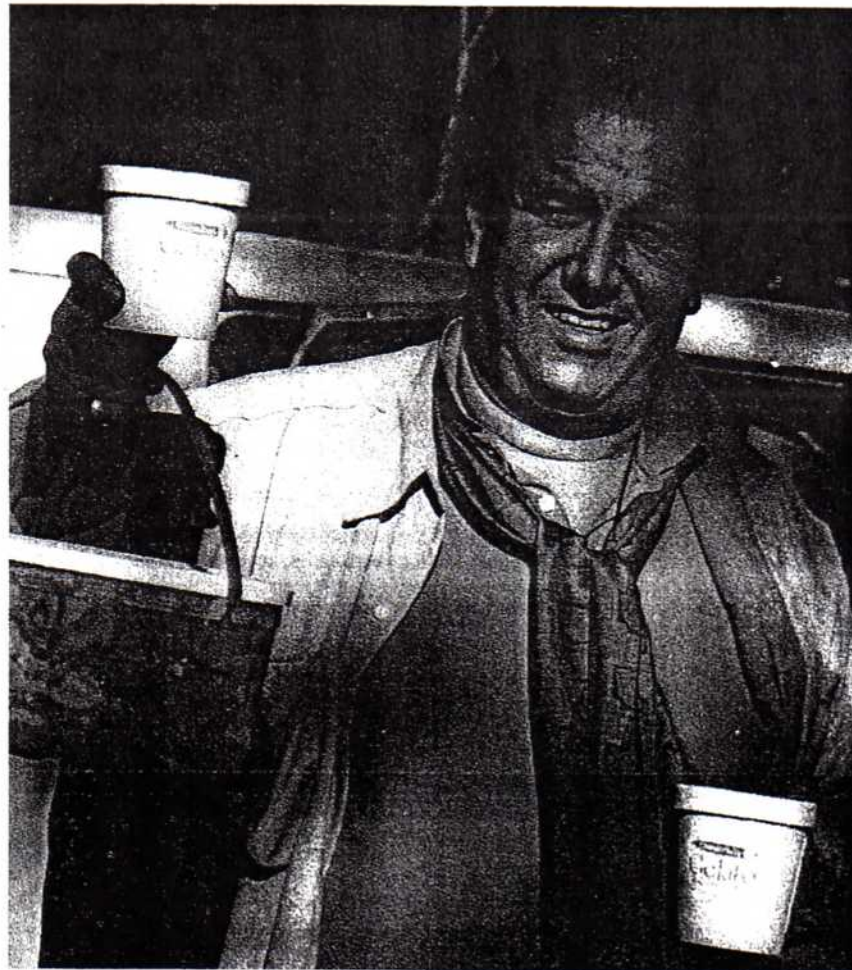


Photo by: Kathy Keeney

Ivan Gherardini warms you with a chilly treat.

lemon. Juicier raspberry. More explosive mango. It turns your mouth into a powerful microscope, magnifying the essence of each fruit and nut. Yet for all its muscle, gelato is delicate, because it contains less butterfat.

"Ice cream is ice cream," says Gherardini. "Gelato is dessert." A lot of local restaurants agree. Steinhilber's, Il Giardino, Federico's, Le Chambord, Brutti's, Havana, Taboo, and Dough Boys

