

Turks are famous for their love of sweets, and baklava and lokum are two of the most popular desserts in the country. But did you know that Turkish ice cream has also been gaining popularity in recent years? In fact, it's now famous all over the world!

But what is the reason behind its popularity? Let's find out!

What is Turkish Ice Cream?

Turkish ice cream also known as Dondurma is a special kind of dessert. It is not a simple typical ice cream that you can find on the corner of the street. What sets it apart from all the others is its texture: chewy, stretchy and how yummy it is – creamy! You can get it in many outlets and it is something which you will find is worth trying especially if you are a consumer of ice cream or if you happen to be in Turkey.

Which Qualities Make Turkish Ice Cream Unique?

Unlike western-style ice cream which people are more likely familiar with, Turkish dondurma has a slightly different texture and taste.

What do you think makes it so special? It all begins with a starchy root known as salep. Salep is a powdered orchid bulb which originates from Turkey with special production in Kahramanmaraş. This ingredient is used to make Turkish ice cream to be stretchy and chewy in nature.

However, salep is not the only ingredient that contributes to the rich flavor of Turkish ice cream. The traditional recipe also consists of goat's milk and sugar to make the soup thick and creamy. In some parts of Turkey, there could be ice cream with gum mastic which is a resin from trees grown in the Aegean region.

What Does Turkish Ice Cream Taste Like?

As for the flavors, Turkish ice cream is a quite diverse, there are so many of them. Popular flavors that can be used include; vanilla, chocolate and pistachio among others. However, if you are ready to look in other niches, you will find more exotic ones such as rose, saffron, and even hazelnut. This has however changed with the expansion of the Turkish ice cream market where there is consideration of different flavors.

What is the Texture of Turkish Ice Cream?

Now let's talk about its texture. It's not like the ice cream you might be used to. Turkish ice cream is chewy and stretchy because of the salep and mastic. When you eat it, you have to be patient because it doesn't melt as fast as regular ice cream. It stretches and pulls, and you might even find it a bit tricky to eat, but that's part of the fun!

How is Turkish Ice Cream Served?

Turkish ice cream is also famous for the way it's served. Street vendors, often dressed in colorful costumes, entertain customers with playful tricks. They scoop the ice cream with long metal paddles and tease customers by passing the cone from hand to hand. It's a fun and interactive experience that makes eating Turkish ice cream even more enjoyable.

Where Can I Find Turkish Ice Cream?

You can find Turkish ice cream all over Turkey, from bustling cities like Istanbul to small towns. And it's not just limited to Turkey. Turkish ice cream has become so popular that it's now available in many countries around the world, including Germany, Japan, and the United States. So whether you're visiting Turkey or simply looking for a unique treat, Turkish ice cream is definitely worth trying!

History of Turkish Ice Cream

Turkish ice cream has a long history. It all started in the 16th century, during the time of the Ottoman Empire. Some people think that Persian merchants brought the idea of ice cream to Turkey. Over time, Turkish people changed the recipe for ice cream and made it their own. By the 19th century, dondurma was a very popular treat in Turkey. Today, people all over the world enjoy eating this yummy ice cream.

How to Make Turkish Ice Cream

Turkish ice cream, known for its chewy texture and unique flavor, is a delightful treat that can be easily made at home. While it requires a bit of patience and planning, the final product is well worth the effort.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 5 cups whole milk
- 1 teaspoon salep

Instructions:

1. **Prepare the Salep:** One of the most important ingredients of Turkish ice cream is Salep which its presence gives the ice cream its unique characteristic. In a separate small bowl mix the salep with few spoons of cold water and make a fine paste. This is instrumental in preventing lumps formation at some later point in time.
2. **Heat the Milk and Sugar:** Add the milk into a medium saucepan over medium heat let the mixture boil. Put the sugar in and stir until they are incorporated into the broth.
3. **Incorporate the Salep:** Gradually pour the salep paste into the boiling milk constantly stirring it to allow an even distribution. This should not be allowed to boil over.
4. **Cool and Freeze:** Turn of the heat and allow the mixture in the saucepan to cool for sometime. After that transfer it to a freezer safe container.
5. **Stir Regularly:** After every 15–20 minutes, take the containing out of the freezer and mix the ice cream with a metal spoon. This keeps the ice cream from developing large ice crystal formation and plays a role in the texture of the ice cream being chewy.
6. **Enjoy:** Keep stirring the ice cream until its texture becomes elastic and similar to the one of a gum. This may take several hours. When well prepared, take it out of the freezer and consume it right away.

Tip: To enrich the flavor further, sprinkle saffron to the hot milk and sugar, after that add salep into it.

Turkish Ice Cream Nutrition

Turkish ice cream is not just a sweet treat; it also has some nutritional content that you should be aware of. A typical serving of Turkish ice cream (about 100 grams) contains:

Traditional Turkish Ice Cream: What Makes It Unique?

- **Total Fat:** 9g (12% of the recommended daily intake)
 - **Saturated Fat:** 5g (25% of the recommended daily intake)
- **Total Carbohydrates:** 17g (6% of the recommended daily intake)
 - **Net Carbs:** 17g
 - **Dietary Fiber:** 0g
- **Total Sugars:** 17g

This means that while Turkish ice cream is high in sugar and fat, it's also a rich source of calcium and protein, which are beneficial for your body. The fat content, especially the saturated fat, can contribute to your daily energy needs, but it's important to enjoy it in moderation. With zero dietary fiber, it's purely an indulgent dessert rather than a source of nutrition.

Last Words

I would also like to add that Turkish ice cream is a very popular tourist attraction in Turkey. Many tourists visit Turkey specifically to try Turkish ice cream. If you are planning a trip to Turkey, be sure to add Turkish ice cream to your itinerary.

I hope this blog has helped you to learn more about Turkish ice cream. If you have any questions, please feel free to leave a comment below.

Thank you for reading!