

RESTAURANTS / BARS

Carousel Creamery Puts the Fun Back in Ice Cream, with Flavors like Beer-Chicharon and Cow Label

August 9, 2020 • ice cream | greenhills | lincoln cheong

Miguel Ortega words / Pam Santos PHOTOGRAPHER

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The ice cream parlor is a combination of different things. There's the ice cream, of course, all lined up behind the glass. Then, there's that moment of pure joy in window shopping for the right flavor, followed by delightful anticipation as the person with the glorified scooper gently rolls the chosen ice cream into a dome. There's always something special about an ice cream shop, and Carousel Creamery is no different, but on top of that, it has set out to be different.

Lincoln Cheong is the man behind Carousel Creamery. His family is in the ice cream business, though mostly wholesale, and the idea of starting their own Wonka-like establishment came from his brother. The store, which opened just last December, gained notoriety from their unusual ice cream, specifically the Beer and Chicharon option. Cheong, the one responsible for coming up with these unique flavors, explains his thought process behind it. "So all our flavors have a story. A lot of people, they connect food and emotion, which is why an ice cream parlor is special."



The story of Beer and Chicharon revolves around a classmate of Cheong whose grandmother turned 101 years old. The grandmother, despite her age, is a huge fan of chicharon and ice cream. "So I said, you know when the store opens I'll have to have an ice cream flavor for her. And she can eat ice cream for free because we have 101 flavors and she's 101 years old." Pork skin alone was to obscure a flavor, so the initial decision was to mix it with the unofficial national drink—Coke. But because of the soda's high sugar content, the flavor couldn't freeze properly. Fortunately they were also playing around with beer at that time, which led to a frozen rendition of an otherwise drunken duo. Sadly, the grandmother of Cheong's friend passed away a month before Carousel Creamery opened, but the flavor still remains on the menu, as a small gesture towards the old lady who could have had all the chicharon and ice cream she wanted.

There is something uniquely childlike about Cheong. Upon careful examination of their wares, you can see references fresh off the recent *Star Wars* movie—it's him drawing from his childhood. There's *Kylo Ren*, a mixture of Kit Kat and Milo, and *Java the Hott*, a coffee flavored ice cream with a little heat. And, of course, my personal favorite, the *Chewie Baka*, a Cow Label-inspired ice cream playing on star anise with generous portions of the brand's beef jerky. While the parlor carries classics like chocolate and strawberry, it's these crazy ones that Cheong seems to have more fun with. To achieve the ones you see in the display case, they go through roughly 200 to 300 flavors, most of which are horribly bad. He cites their honey mustard ice cream as an example but then takes it back. "I'm waiting on that because I think all it needs is pepperoni and it might work." Unadulterated creativity.

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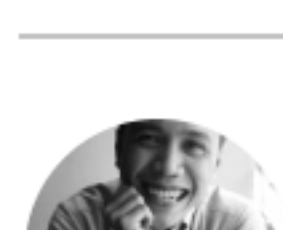
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