

I Scream, You Scream

National Ice Cream Month is celebrated in July, but it's always summer at Beachy Cream ice cream.



Beachy Cream

Started from scratch, and now she's here ... to make a name in the ice cream industry.

Ann Ryan, founder and president of Beachy Cream ice cream, began her adventure creating one of America's favorite desserts from a small kitchen in her Malibu home.

From the beginning of the company's inception, Ryan's vision was clear — providing a quality product with fresh, quality ingredients.

"My original idea when I started fooling around with all of this was I wanted to open a little ice cream shop like a Wil Wright's, but in Malibu," Ryan said. "After talking to the City and Coastal Commission, I didn't have the resources to develop a thing like that. That's why I bought a cart and started doing farmers markets and events."

With only her grandmother's molasses spice cookie recipe, local and organic ingredients, and a newly purchased mobile ice cream cart, Ryan enlisted the help of her friends and family to kickstart the brand.

Soon, Ryan began selling ice cream sandwiches to tourists and locals on the Malibu Pier and at the Malibu Farmers Market.

It was only a matter of time before Ryan's true vision became a reality. "I always knew in the back of mind, once the concept was fully realized ... I didn't want to have just a mom-and — pop ice cream shop," Ryan said. "I really wanted to create a national brand and make a kind of ice cream that was different than what everyone else was doing and tasted the way I thought ice cream should taste and that was also all organic. That's a big part of it."

Another big part of building her brand was having an actual store front where customers could enjoy their ice cream in a truly vintage-styled ice cream parlor, just like how she fondly remembered as a kid at Wil Wright's Ice Cream Parlors.

In 2012, she found an old, quaint Hallmark Store for sale in Santa Monica and jumped at the opportunity to purchase.

Today, from her 500 square-foot Wilshire Boulevard store, Ryan and her close-knit team of employees make and distribute Beachy Cream ice cream flavors from scratch to more than 70 retailers, including Pacific Coast Greens and Vintage Grocers in Malibu, and Whole Foods.

“I like to work with other people whose passion for food is the same as mine and collaborate with them,” Ryan said. “We make everything here from scratch — all of the flavorings for our ice creams.”

As her brand grew, so did the need for more space. After looking through seemingly every location in Los Angeles, Ryan found a 13,000-square-foot plant in Long Beach, which will help distribute the Beachy Cream brand even further while maintaining the high level of quality expected now.

If you thought Ryan was slowing down in between — you’re wrong.

What started as an outlet for her to decompress from long days in the kitchen, Ryan wrote a book about her childhood, growing up as the daughter of Jack Ryan, the man who created Barbie.

“We grew up in this very, kind of unusual situation, sort of a larger-than-life situation,” Ryan said. “His second wife was Zsa Zsa Gabor, and it wasn’t your typical childhood. While things appeared one way on the surface, underneath there’s a completely different story. It’s my journey of going through all of that and coming through all of that and it ends before any of this was started.”

In addition to the ice cream, one of Ryan’s favorite conceptions was formed during a long drive down Pacific Coast Highway — Beachy Cream Girls. “I had already had that vintage, pinup theme that I wanted to use for the company and then I thought, ‘I need real Beachy Cream Girls that can serve at parties and things like that.’”

The girls and company have been hired for major celebrity events including Elton John’s Oscar party and specially requested for Katy Perry events.

“In a way, they’re sort of like my own Barbie dolls,” Ryan said.

The book is with her editor and waiting to be released, but in the meantime, she’s following her heart, her ice cream and the unwavering desire to make Beachy Cream ice cream the biggest and best adventure of her life.

“You know, if you’re not passionate about it — you can’t possibly do it,” Ryan said. “It is very difficult and there are times when you come up against a brick wall and you think, ‘Oh, my God what am I going to do about this? How am I going to figure this out?’ But it all works out, and we just keep going.”

With continued support from family (daughter Beth Stockwell handles the majority of sales and marketing, her ex-husband’s famous chili is a big seller on the menu and her son frequently gets behind the counter to serve customers) and friends, Ryan is constantly in awe of the incredible life she gets to live.

“Sometimes I have to go through all of this to remind myself of how lucky I am,” Ryan said.