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I know this sounds odd, but trust me – it's one of my favourite ever ice creams. I first had this at the wonderful Amsterdam restaurant, De Kas. There they use Sweet Genovese basil, but I've been making this with Mrs Burns' Lemon basil. I also make a delicious frozen yoghurt version – here are both recipes for you to choose from.

For both recipes, if you don't have an ice cream maker you can put the mixture in the freezer and fork through every couple of hours.

BASIL ICE CREAM

Makes about 4 litres

- 2 large bunches of fresh basil, leaves picked and stems discarded
- 1kg caster sugar
- 600g mascarpone cheese
- 2.5 litres natural yoghurt

Blend the basil leaves with the sugar in a food processor, then combine with the other ingredients. Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and churn for about 20 minutes. Either serve immediately or pack into plastic containers for the freezer (allow the ice cream to sit for 15 minutes in the fridge before serving).

This has a wonderful flavour if it is eaten as fresh as possible – don't store it for too long in the freezer.

FROZEN BASIL AND RICOTTA YOGHURT

Serves 8-10

- 250g ricotta
- 1kg natural yoghurt
- 100g bunch of basil, leaves picked and stems discarded, plus extra for decoration
- 150g honey
- Juice of one lemon

In a bowl, combine the ricotta and yoghurt with a fork until lump-free.

Blitz the basil leaves with a couple of tablespoons of the ricotta and yoghurt mix in a blender or food processor. Add this vivid green purée to the rest of the yoghurt and ricotta. Mix in the lemon juice and honey.

Pour the mixture into an ice-cream maker if you have one. Freeze/churn for about 20 minutes, then pack into a plastic container and freeze for 2 hours.

If you don't have an ice-cream maker, place the mixture in a shallow plastic container and freeze for 1 hour. Remove and fork through, mixing the frozen edge into the middle to break up the ice crystals. Repeat twice.

Before serving, allow the frozen yoghurt to soften in the fridge for 15 minutes. Divide between individual plates and decorate with basil leaves.

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