

what you do to finish it off that justifies the price," he says. "It's about sauces, berries, powders, crumbles and nuts. You've got to give them more."

The problem with giving more is that the restaurant takes less. Although Shire does buy ready-made desserts, such as cheesecakes, lemon tarts and tarte tatin, from Beckleberry's in the north-east and Manchester-based Cream Patisserie in Manchester, it has also started buying more pastry cases and biscuit bases from its suppliers to boost margins.

"You won't be able to buy a finished dessert from a supplier for under a pound. If you want to charge £6 and get a 70% margin, you're left with 50p to

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add some value," he says. "Fifty pence doesn't go very far when you're adding cream, berries and crushed pistachios. But with pastry cases you are paying more like 30p to 40p and you can do the rest yourself."

Margins on ice cream can be just as slippery, whether you buy it in or make your own. Pubs in the ETM group have their own Taylor and Pacojet machines for making ice cream and sorbets, which can lead to some incredible results, but their price tags of anywhere between £3,500 and £4,500 means that they are not suitable for everyone.

Tom Kerridge, chef patron at The Hand & Flowers in Marlow, is another advocate of the Pacojet for making ice creams. Dishes on his menu include chocolate and ale cake with salted caramel and muscovado ice cream and banana soufflé with gingerbread custard and yoghurt ice cream, made with the aid of Pacojet2. "We haven't got room for



Seasonal: Giraffe has launched a summer sundae menu



Co-er: The Carry on Caramel cheesecake is the latest from the English Cheesecake Co

an ice cream churner but the Pacojet is a small bit of kit," says Kerridge. There are never any ice crystals when you use it and no problems. And you only need to churn the amount you need."

At Cambridge gastropub the Plough Cotton, head chef Ed Barker has considered investing in an ice cream machine, but says he can't justify the outlay. He buys his from Mövenpick instead at a cost of around 70p a scoop [Mövenpick's scoops start at 45p], serving three scoops for £5.95. "It's not the 80% [GP] we aim for, but there are no labour costs or extra overheads, so it's worth it," he says. The Swiss ice cream supplier also provides menus and branded dishes, which helps the bottom line.

Nick Rochford, executive chef at the Real Pubs group, uses Bermondsey-based The Ice Cream Union and achieves similar margins of around 65%. He says it would be difficult for the pubs' kitchens to match the company's consistency, range of flavour and quality.

The ice cream is used in dishes such as chocolate brownie glory, made with warm brownie and layers of white chocolate, dark chocolate and dulce de leche ice cream. "I tell the waiters to take the long route to the table. When people see it, they order it," he says.

This kind of old school dish continues to get diners all misty eyed, judging by the dessert menus of today, which continue to list knickerbocker glories, sundaes and jellies. National chain Giraffe, for example, has launched a seasonal summer sundae menu with options such as Smarty Pants (topped with Smarties, Jelly Tots, mini marshmallows and flakes), while the Mercure is developing a nostalgic Battenberg and Earl Grey ice cream dessert.

Back at The Parlour, Canary Wharf, who want more than a tub can order an ice cream trifle of elderflower jelly with clotted cream and strawberry ice cream. "People like to be reminded of what they ate as a kid," says Muzaffer. "You didn't worry about your waistline back then." ■

Cool new products

To mark its 30th anniversary **New Forest Ice Cream** has unveiled Peach Bellini flavour ice cream, made with champagne, peach purée and sparkling sugar pearls.



Peach Bellini contains champagne

It's made with a cookie base, profiteroles and a caramel topping. The company has also launched peach melba tart - a biscuit shell filled with peaches, raspberries and demerara crumble.

Chocolate malt and key lime are the latest flavours from ice cream producer **Yummy Yorkshire**. The company has even created a black garlic and dark chocolate flavour, made using fermented black garlic, which has an aniseedy, molasses-like taste.

Swiss ice-cream brand **Mövenpick's** new lemon and lime sorbet can be used as the base for smoothies and cocktails. It has also

launched macadamia dulce de leche ice cream.

Pidy's new brightly coloured, fruit-flavoured Fruity Cups can be used to make sweet canapés or petits fours. In addition the pastry case specialist has developed a range of sweet crumbles with flavours such as cookie, gingersnap and strawberry meringue.

Distributor **Cheese Cellar's** new range of dessert products includes Fresh As freeze-dried fruits, flakes and powders that add intense flavour and texture to dishes. Other products in the range are fruit purées from Ponthier and President cheesecakes and crème brûlée.

