



A Discourse On Frozen Yogurt

Understanding ourselves through the lens of L.A.'s vast FroYo landscape

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Full article <http://www.lamag.com/howlaareyou/discourse-frozen-yogurt/>

I like dessert a lot. I blame (but really am grateful to) my mother, a woman who craved sugar so often during her pregnancy that she nearly gave herself gestational diabetes. Am I saying the sugar cravings of the mother are the sugar cravings of the unborn child? It's a gray area, but yes.

Cake is the dessert I remember loving first. As a kid, I would demand a corner piece on birthdays, Father's Days, the day Mr. Clancy retired from Butler Jr. High, et al. for what I assume are obvious reasons, but maybe middle school you didn't think about cake as much as middle school me (corner pieces have three times as much frosting as any other piece. Over the years, my dessert palate has, of course, expanded—cookies now reign supreme in my personal hierarchy, but one particular dessert I've come to love, appreciate, and rank just below cookies and cake is frozen yogurt. And it's all thanks to L.A.

FroYo's notoriety in Los Angeles is comparable to the idea of celebrity: Everyone's heard of it; it's everywhere, but sometimes you have to look really hard for the good ones; Paparazzi often photograph real celebrities holding it.

Pinkberry set off a FroYo blitzkrieg, paving the way for chains like Yogurtland (whose first store opened in Fullerton in 2006), Tutti Frutti (started in SoCal in 2008), and Menchie's (whose first store opened in the San Fernando Valley in 2010). And while those chains have some redeeming qualities, the fact is there are a few old stalwarts and newer single-store operations that contribute to L.A.'s overall FroYo landscape, which is just one of many lenses through which you can become intimate with our vast metropolis. So how well do you know this town based on its pumpable frozen offerings? Let's go down the FroYo rabbit hole.

LEVEL 4: OG VETERANS

Humphrey Yogart: If you've heard of this one-off spot, you either were born in/live in the Valley or are pretty passionate about FroYo. Humphrey Yogart has been in business since 1984, riding the first wave of the FroYo boom. There was a brief interruption of service earlier this year following a disagreement with their landlord, but the business is back in, well, business, operating out of the Gelson's on Van Nuys Boulevard. Don't expect a pump-it-yourself concept; they're known for mixing your choice of toppings into your choice of base flavor using a FroYo drill. (A *drill!*)