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Graeter's Makes a Sweet Texas Debut

By Katharine Shilcutt in [Sweets](#)



Graeter's ice cream -- the only delicious food to come out of Cincinnati (we're looking at you and your abominable bastardization of a perfectly good dish, [Cincinnati "chili"](#)) -- has been a favorite among dessert fans since its creation in the 1920s.

Spanning four generations, the family-run business has been creating their ice cream in individual two-gallon batches since Regina Graeter opened her first ice cream shop after her husband's death in 1919 as a way to provide for her family.

Their ice cream is still made the same way today, using high-quality all-natural ingredients like fresh cream and pure cane sugar. Each pint of ice cream is still packed by hand and their famous chocolate chips are still made fresh with each batch of ice cream. But until recently, Graeter's ice cream was only available north of the Mason-Dixon line.

As of April, Graeter's ice cream can now be purchased in Kroger stores throughout Houston (and Dallas). Not all of their flavors are available here yet, but their most popular flavors have already hit freezer shelves: vanilla chocolate chip, mint chocolate chip, mocha chocolate chip, butter pecan, blueberry pie and their signature black raspberry chocolate chip.

We passed around a few pints at the office recently for a taste test.

Despite nearly every Houstonian's preference for Blue Bell, we're certainly willing to give other frozen treats a chance. One verdict was clear: Graeter's was at least as good as the Brenham favorite. The ice cream was as thick and creamy as advertised; indeed, that's what they're known for.

The mocha chocolate chip was a divisive flavor. People either loved the strong coffee flavor or hated it. There was certainly no mistaking that it was mocha ice cream either way. Despite the strong flavor and thickness of the ice cream, it still came away as surprisingly light on the tongue, which gave it bonus points.

Graeter's signature flavor, the black raspberry ice cream, surprised us. It wasn't the favorite that everyone expected. Instead, the consistency was closer to that of sorbet with an unappealingly gritty texture. The bright raspberry flavor was marred by a cloying, syrupy sweetness and we quickly moved on.

The favorite seemed to be Graeter's blueberry pie, which tasted almost exactly like someone had shoved a slice of rich pie into the pint. Buttery chunks of pie crust scattered throughout the sweetly tart ice cream only added to the effect. One staffer noted existentially that it reminded him of the first time he heard The Beatles.

If that's not praise, I don't know what is.