

The big SCOOP

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST – THERE'S A NEW ICE-CREAM MAESTRO IN TOWN. LUCAS HOLLWEG CHILLS OUT WITH GELUPO'S **JACOB KENEDY**, WHO SHARES HIS FAVOURITE FLAVOURS EXCLUSIVELY WITH STYLE

PHOTOGRAPHS WILLIAM LINGWOOD

It's a steaming hot day in London's Soho and the queue at Gelupo has spilt out onto the pavement. Inside, at the marble-fronted counter, customers try tiny sample spoonfuls of Italian ices, scooped from deep metal canisters. Some flavours are gelateria classics – pistachio, hazelnut, stracciatella – others less familiar: pine nut and fennel seed, ricotta, coffee and honey, and bonet (a blend of chocolate, amaretti, coffee and rum). Then there are the sorbets – yoghurt, espresso, coconut, chocolate, melon, peach, strawberry, blackberry, avocado and honey – and intense, thirst-quenching granitas, icy slushes flavoured with watermelon, sour cherry, blood orange, coffee and burnt almond.

The opportunity to try before you buy doesn't make choosing any easier. Every lick and nibble sends you into a swirl of indecision.

The only way out of the dilemma is to have at least four different flavours, so you don't feel you're missing anything.

Gelupo opened a few weeks back, an icy offshoot of the restaurant Bocca di Lupo across the road, which scored an instant hit with its Italian regional cooking when it launched at the end of 2008. Before the opening, its head chef, Jacob Kennedy spent a year travelling around Italy with his partner, uncovering edible gems across the country. "It started out being about having a nice time, but it ended up as the best research," he says. "We wanted to find what was enjoyable in life. Now we're trying to create it here."

What Bocca started, Gelupo continues. It's everything that's best about an Italian gelateria,

with a dash of contemporary London cool thrown in. "For me, food is an emotional thing and I take a childish delight in everything we do," Kennedy tells me, as he pummels a watermelon in preparation for the next batch of granita. "I'm eating between 5 and 10 ice creams a day and enjoying every one. I bought myself the biggest toy shop in the world."

What is it about gelato that Kennedy finds so exciting? "It's not just Italian ice cream. Yes, it's a frozen milk product, but it's made in a very different way. British and American ice cream is based on fat. It's strawberries or chocolate with cream. Gelato is based on sugar syrup, so it's a clean vehicle for other flavours. Everything tastes much purer."

Kennedy says he likes "things that are rooted somewhere in history", and flavours like bonet, based on a popular Piedmontese dessert, put a new spin on tradition. But the gelateria has already asserted its British side. Ask for sour-cherry granita mixed half and half with blond almond, and they'll give you what has been christened "the bakewell tart".

You will need an ice-cream maker for Jacob Kennedy's recipes

RICOTTA, COFFEE AND HONEY GELATO

This has fast become a signature gelato at Gelupo, and is based on the *crema del pastore* that my tutor, Gianni at Il Gelatauro in Bologna, made so beautifully. It is ethereal and earthy, the complex, almost autumnal flavours not even threatening to mar the lightness of a fine gelato.

Serves 3-4

