



The Scoop

A day in the life of High Point Creamery as it swirls, shakes, and spoons up delight.

At 11 a.m., just an hour before High Point Creamery opens, 38-year-old Erika Thomas (*pictured at right*) coasts through the aisles of the wholesale Restaurant Depot. Chef's clogs bring her to a skidding stop in front of sugar, cream, and waffle-cone mix, provisions she will unload into the back of her Hilltop ice cream shop just 40 minutes later.

Inside, a staffer readies the store: Lights and music are flipped on, the cash drawer and "dipping cabinet" tubs get freshened, and the sauces are heated. "We'll open up in about three minutes," Thomas says, leaning out the front door—15 minutes early and good news for the family waiting on the patio.

Thomas and her husband, Chad Stutz, opened the sweet spot in 2014. A pending location in RiNo—not to mention High Point's pink truck, which commands a line wherever it goes—is testimony to the shop's foothold in Denver's growing independent ice cream market. 215 S. Holly St., 720-420-9137, highpointcreamery.com —BILL GIEBLER



High Point Creamery's ice cream flight puts a sophisticated spin on the frozen treat.

1:10 p.m. Thomas sells the day's first flight: five individually dished scoops and one sauce, all served on a tray and garnished with two waffle crisps.

1:45 p.m. Thomas empties the hardening freezer of yesterday's double batch of salted caramel, the shop's best-selling pint. After sanitizing the batch freezer, she pours in the first bucket of Corvus Coffee ice cream base, three days in



the making. (Two days ago, cream, milk, sugar, and a hefty dose of freshly ground Corvus espresso were carefully cooked and cold-steeped overnight. Yesterday, the grounds were removed through a fine-mesh strainer.)

2:10 p.m. She pulls a lever and catches the ice cream in a bucket. Then she pours in a second liquid batch. It's a race now as she "pints up" ice cream and loads it into the hardening freezer before the next round is ready. She does this for 30 pints and a trio of three-gallon tubs.

3:30 p.m. A birthday party fills the shop. Dozens of tastes and several double scoops cross the counter. The birthday boy gets a cone with Darkest Chocolate and Cherry Miso With Chocolate Freckles. The latter flavor (and others, such as Banana Peanut Crème Brûlée) was a collaboration between Thomas and Root Down chef-owner Justin Cucci.

5:00 p.m. The dinner hour is notoriously slow: time to "flip the tubs," stock the pint freezer, and wipe down the glass, the counter, and the tables to prep for the evening rush. "If you're not stocked up and prepared," Thomas says, "you'll get crushed."

6:30 p.m. The shop gets hit with a steady flow of customers that lasts until 9 p.m. Four staffers scramble to keep up with a line that extends well beyond the door.

7:30 p.m. Thomas blends 18 milkshakes in 15 minutes. Each week this summer, the creamery will move about 96 shakes, malts, and floats alongside 3,276 scoops. To keep up with demand, Thomas and crew regularly cook 10 pounds of fresh blackberries to be swirled into ice cream flavored with five pounds of fresh basil and prepare six pounds of fresh spearmint to accompany a hand-chipped 11-pound bar of Callebaut milk chocolate.

9:30 p.m. Thomas locks the door, counts out the tips and the cash drawer, covers and refrigerates the sauces, and sweeps and mops while staffer Sarah Minor removes tubs from one of the dipping cabinets for a once-a-week defrost. After a final look,



Minor and Thomas snap off the lights, take out the trash, and head home to rest before tomorrow.