



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

ALWAYS ON SUNDAY

By Charles Apple | THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

There are so many things over which regional rivalries are fought: Where residents are satisfied with their quality of life. Where traffic jams and construction delays are fewer. Which areas have better tourist attractions or better vacation opportunities. Whose college sports teams win more games.

And, of course, who can claim to be the home of the ice cream sundae. Which, according to one city, was invented on July 8, 1881 — 145 years ago.

LET'S HEAR IT, EVERYBODY, FOR THE PLACE THE SUNDAE WAS INVENTED!

... TWO RIVERS, WISCONSIN!

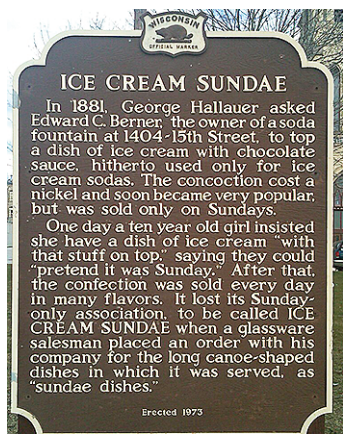
George Hallauer was a native of Two Rivers, Wisconsin, who had moved to Illinois but had come back to town for a visit. On July 8, 1881, Hallauer stopped by Edward Berners' soda fountain at 1404 15th St. in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, and ordered some vanilla ice cream.

While waiting for Berners to dish out his ice cream, Hallauer spotted a bottle of chocolate syrup — normally used to make ice cream sodas — on the counter. He asked Berners to pour some atop his dessert. Berners protested, saying the chocolate would ruin the flavor of the ice cream. But Hallauer was insistent.

Hallauer loved the result. As did Berners. As did other customers, who heard about the twist and who flocked into the joint to give it a try. Local ordinances prevented Berners from selling ice cream on Sundays, but he realized this new treat skirted those laws. So he began offering chocolate-topped ice cream on Sundays, charging a nickel for them.

One day, a 10-year-old girl stepped up to Berners' counter and ordered an ice cream "with that stuff on top." When Berners pointed out it wasn't Sunday, the girl suggested he pretend it's a Sunday.

After that, Berners began offering the creation every day of the week. He also began experimenting with other toppings, calling his creations things like Flora Dora, Mudscow and Jennie Flip.



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Berners closed his ice cream parlor in 1927. In 1973, the Wisconsin State Historical Society posted a historical marker declaring Two Rivers the birthplace of the sundae. Today, the Washington House Hotel and Museum in Two Rivers features a working replica of Berners' soda fountain.

... ITHACA, NEW YORK!

After Sunday services at the First Unitarian Church on April 3, 1892, Chester C. Platt — owner of the Platt & Colt Pharmacy in downtown Ithaca, New York, dropped by his store with his friend, the Rev. John M. Scott. They would often sit down and discuss that morning's sermon.

This particular day, Platt decided to order up a treat for himself and his guest. He turned to his fountain clerk, DeForest Christiance, and requested two bowls of vanilla ice cream. But before he and Scott began eating, Platt was suddenly inspired to pour cherry syrup on both bowls and then top each with a candied cherry.

Platt and Scott loved their desserts. They decided the concoction should become a regular offering and began discussing possible names for the treats. Scott finally suggested they name it for the day it was created. They called their dish a cherry sunday, which the pharmacy would sell for 10 cents.



Within days, Platt had bought advertisements in the Ithaca Daily Journal advertising the new treat. Students from Cornell University, there in Ithaca, lined up for cherry sundays and spread the idea to soda fountains in their home towns.

By 1894, Platt had begun selling chocolate sundays and strawberry sundays. He also realized other stores in other cities were selling sundays. He attempted to trademark his invention, but the U.S. Patent Office informed him he could obtain a trademark for the word "Sunday" only if the product was used in foreign trade.

"There is no Federal protection that can be obtained so as to give you the exclusive right to use the word 'Sunday' in connection with your ice cream and syrup novelties," the office wrote.

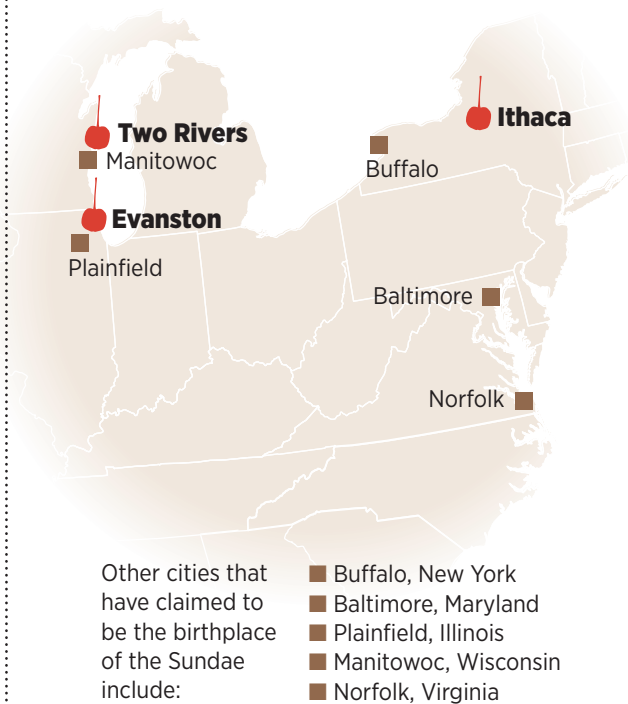
... EVANSTON, ILLINOIS!

The city of Evanston, Illinois — just north of Chicago and the home of Northwestern University — was a strict Methodist town. Residents said they lived in "Heavenston" and were strict in their observation of the Sabbath.

In 1890, Evanston passed a law to fight what was called the "Sunday Soda Menace" by prohibiting the sales of ice cream sodas on Sunday.

In 1890, soda fountain clerks at Garwoods' Drug Store in Evanston found a way around the law by selling ice cream sodas without the soda. They called it a "Sunday soda." The city's Women's Christian Temperance Union hailed the ice cream treats as a pleasant alternative to alcoholic beverages. The only objection was to the use of the word "Sunday." So the owner of the store changed the spelling to "sundae."

The Evanston Review newspaper once wrote: "While Ithaca may have had the sundae as early as 1897, as the chamber of commerce there claims, it obviously got there by two means. Either some Northwestern student brought it home with him for a Cornell student from Evanston took it there."



Other cities that have claimed to be the birthplace of the Sundae include:

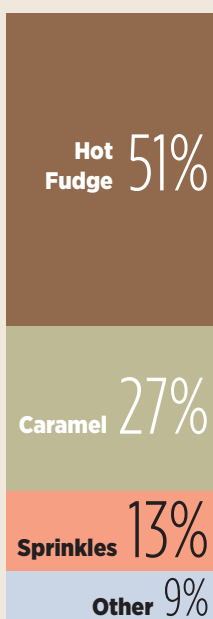
- Buffalo, New York
- Baltimore, Maryland
- Plainfield, Illinois
- Maniwoc, Wisconsin
- Norfolk, Virginia

HOW DO YOU PREFER YOUR SUNDAE?

If you think it's weird so many U.S. cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of the sundae, try asking folks what kind of sundae they prefer.

In 2021, foodie website Mashed asked readers their preferences for frozen treats and found that "Ice cream is undeniably one of the most popular frozen treats," the site reported. "It's enjoyed in standard cereal bowls, scooped into cones, as part of mile-high sundaes with all the fixins, or straight out of the carton — no judgment here."

The site asked readers what toppings they preferred for their ice cream. The results:



"Participants also had the option to select 'Other' and write in their beloved contenders. Answers for this miscellaneous option included fruit, chocolate chips, whipped cream, candies, chopped nuts ... the list goes on."

In 2023, Mashed's sister site, Tasting-Table.com, listed what it called the 24 best toppings for your ice cream treats.

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| 1. Cookie dough | 13. Sprinkles |
| 2. Wet nuts | 14. Fresh fruit |
| 3. Butterscotch sauce | 15. Whipped cream |
| 4. Peanut butter | 16. M&Ms |
| 5. Strawberry syrup | 17. Mini marshmallows |
| 6. Crushed Oreo cookies | 18. Chocolate sauce |
| 7. Chopped nuts | 19. Strawberry sauce |
| 8. Peanut butter cups | 20. Maraschino cherries |
| 9. Cereal | 21. Chocolate chips |
| 10. Marshmallow spread | 22. Caramel sauce |
| 11. Magic shell | 23. Hot fudge |
| 12. Heath bars | 24. Gummy Bears |



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"No Crumbs Left" cookbook author, blogger and podcast host Teri Turner writes that when building a home sundae bar, "the sky is the limit, and you are truly only limited by your imagination. "... As a chocolate lover," she adds, "I love the idea of Snickers bars, chocolate-covered pretzels, caramel sauce, peanuts, and whipped cream."