

Source A: adapted from *The Observer: 16<sup>th</sup> July 2023, by Jay Rayner*

## **‘It feels sinless’: Jay Rayner on why Britain’s ice-cream business is booming**

*An uncomplicated, comforting pleasure that harks back to childhood – post-Covid, it’s no surprise that ice-cream parlours are coming in from the cold*

One lunchtime, a few weeks into the first lockdown of 2020, a customer came into Caliendo’s Gelato in London’s Kentish Town, bubbling with excitement. “I asked her how long she’d been waiting,” says Michelina Caliendo-Sear who, with her partner, Fiona Bell, had opened the ice-cream parlour in December of 2019.

5 “She said over half an hour. I went to the back door and looked out.” Customers were queueing right round the corner and far up the sidestreet. They were clearly prepared to wait a very long time indeed for scoops of blackcurrant and liquorice or fig and walnut. “We were their treat at the end of their lockdown walk. That was when I knew the business was going to be OK,” Caliendo-Sear says.

10 In May, Caliendo’s was named the first ice-cream parlour of the year, in a competition run by the Ice Cream Alliance, which represents hundreds of parlours and producers. The fact is that ice-cream – a broad term that can cover everything from hard scoop to gelato, soft serve to kulfi, dondurma to sorbet, frozen yoghurt and so much more – is having a moment. You could say that right  
15 now, ice-cream is hot. In 2022, the value of the UK sector rose by 6% to £1.7bn.

Katy Alston, president of the Ice Cream Alliance, believes its surging popularity is directly born of Covid trauma. “After everything we’ve been through,” she says, “we’re all looking at what’s really important to us, rather than what we think should be important. I can watch everyone from two-year-olds to 100-year-olds  
20 fall silent with one of my ice-creams in their hand.” Alston got into the business 20 years ago when her partner bought her a vintage ice-cream van. They renovated it and took it out to weddings and corporate events to dish out soft-serve cones. But the ice-cream van business is in decline. In the 1950s there were about 20,000. Now it has stabilised at about 4,000.

## Ice cream: GCSE English Language, AQA Paper 2

### Source A

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



25 Instead, in 2015, Alston set up Pink’s Parlour, offering a range including cherry delight, honeycomb and a vivid DayGlo concoction involving blue and pink candy floss, called unicorn. “The growth now is in parlours, places which have a story and a personality,” she says.

On weekends in central London, nights out now end with young crowds  
30 descending on hip, glossy new arrivals such as Anita Gelato, famed for its clean-tasting chocolate sorbet, or Milk Train with its candy floss cones, and its cups filled with soft serve, spiked with candy carrots and squares of fudge. On the high street, dessert bar brands such as Kaspas and Creams are booming. Both now have more than 100 branches each across the UK selling a mixture of cakes,  
35 crepes and yes, gelato. Creams will open another 20 branches in the coming year.

For teens needing a place to gather independently, ice-cream parlours are a godsend. For communities and cultures that swear off alcohol, the ice-cream parlour is a third space, much as the pub is for the drinkers. Ice-cream has become the great social unifier. It’s profoundly democratic. It’s an uncomplicated  
40 pleasure, one that calls back to childhood, when contentment was more easily obtained. As Fiona Bell of Caliendo’s says: “We’re in the happiness business. No one comes to an ice-cream parlour to be miserable.”