

'LET'S YOGURT'

G.S. Gelato breaks into the frozen yogurt business

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Northwest Florida Daily News
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FORT WALTON BEACH — Guido and Simona Tremolini from Italy started G.S. Gelato 14 years ago to bring upscale Italian ice cream to American customers.

Now they are taking the same concept to break into the frozen yogurt industry.

G.S. Gelato earlier this month announced its new liquid frozen yogurt division called Yogurtiamo, which means "let's yogurt" in Italian.

"We saw a need in the market to provide a quality product, something that was all natural," said Alana Allen, the yogurt division manager at G.S. Gelato. "The same principals that we have for our gelato and sorbet we wanted to take into the yogurt industry because we felt there was really a need for it there. We were also approached by several companies who were wanting to partner with us that we currently work with now."

Yogurtiamo currently has 17 flavors, including Tiamo Tart Blueberry Pomegranate, Cookies and Crème and Blood Orange.

G.S. Gelato has been working its yogurt concept for about eight months. The company started selling the product to clients in March, although it officially launched the division this month.

G.S. Gelato has four corporately owned San Gelato Cafés in the area. Some of the stores have non-compete agreements and will not be able to see the yogurt.

However, Allen said the company is considering adding it to its locations at The Boardwalk on Okaloosa Island and on Destin Harbor.

Allen said there are two main types of self-serve frozen yogurt in restaurants and specialty stores today. One is a powder mix that the employees must mix in the restaurant themselves.

Yogurtiamo is made with fresh fruit and other natural ingredients, and then sent to clients ready to pour into soft-serve yogurt machines.

"All of the guesswork is taken out," Allen said. "There's no measuring, there's no overhead, there's no labor that goes into it. They just shake the gallon and pour it



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Simona Tremolini, left, co-owner of G.S. Gelato, and Alana Allen, yogurt division manager, hold up the blood orange frozen yogurt recently in their Fort Walton Beach offices. G.S. Gelato is currently producing 17 flavors in their Yogurtiamo frozen yogurt brand.

right into the machine. That's what we're offering."

Yogurtiamo is being supplied to chains throughout the country. G.S. Gelato cannot release its clients' names because of non-disclosure agreements.

Allen said the frozen yogurt has been a big hit with customers where it is available, and that most stores are going through 160 to 200 gallons a week.

In addition to opening the San Gelato Cafés and the Yogurtiamo division, G.S. Gelato also formed a wholesale distribution business to have its Italian ice creams put in local and national restaurants and grocery stores. The company produces more than 100 different flavors of gelato and sorbet throughout the year.

Northwest Florida
Daily News

May 22, 2011