

Ample Hills Creamery's
Salted Crack Caramel



CREAM OF THE CROP

Artisanal this. Home-brewed that. From coast to coast, local food producers are whipping up some tasty grub. So just in time for warmer days, we're bringing you our favorite craft ice cream from around the country.

"While we take our craft very seriously, we never make serious ice cream," says Brian Smith, co-owner of Brooklyn, New York's, **Ample Hills Creamery**, which just opened its first store in Manhattan. Smith makes everything from scratch, churning out flavors like Salted Crack Caramel — burnt caramel ice cream with bits of saltine crackers basted in butter and sugar and covered in chocolate. Amplehills.com

Founded in Columbus, Ohio, **Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams** are made from grass-grazed-cow milk and no chemicals. "Knowing where something comes from inspires our customers to slow down, live in the moment and savor the ice cream a little more." She makes innovative treats, like the hot toddy sorbet, with Maker's Mark, pectin, orange and lemon juices, cayenne and ginger. Jenis.com

Phoenix's and Scottsdale's **Sweet Republic** takes visitors on a global journey with newfangled flavors that rotate throughout the year like Sweet Corn, Blue Cheese and Sichuan Chocolate. Almost everything is made in-house, and many things in their shop are made with recycled materials like the reclaimed wood walls. Sweetrepublic.com

—LISA LUBIN

LUCY SCHAEFFER