French Vanilla & White Pepper Ice Cream, is based on one of the paintings in the French Gallery - Vernet's Seaport at Sunset. The French vanilla and white pepper elevate a traditional dessert while paying homage to the history of spice trades in Mediterranean seaports such as the one idealized in Vernet's painting.
FRENCH VANILLA & WHITE PEPPER ICE CREAM
SERVES 6 (1 1/2 QUARTS)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 3/4 cup sugar, divided in half
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground white pepper, finely ground
- 1 tablespoon French vanilla extract or paste
- 8 large egg yolks
- Fresh berries for garnish

DIRECTIONS

In a saucepan, combine milk, cream, half the sugar, pepper & salt. Bring to a gentle simmer over medium heat (about 3-5 mins dissolving the sugar), whisking frequently to prevent the milk from scorching on the bottom of the pan. Remove from heat and set aside to infuse the mixture with peppery spice, approximately 15 minutes. In a medium bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and remaining half of sugar until thick and smooth.

While whisking, slowly pour half of the hot cream mixture into the yolk mixture to temper the yolks. Whisk vigorously to keep the egg yolks from curdling. Stir tempered yolk mixture into remaining cream mixture in saucepan. Return saucepan to the burner and bring to a gentle simmer over low heat.

Cook, stirring constantly with a whisk, until mixture thickens to a custard-like consistency, coats the back of a spoon, and reaches 180°F, approximately 6-12 minutes. Immediately transfer custard to a bowl and cover with plastic wrap, pressing it directly against the surface of the custard to keep a skin from forming. Chill mixture completely.

Once custard is cooled, pour into ice cream maker & process according to the manufacturer's instructions until custard is churned and thick. Transfer ice cream to an airtight storage container and freeze until completely set, at least 4 hours.

Ice cream is best enjoyed with ripe berries such as blackberries or strawberries.