business

A scoop of nostalgia

Ice cream sold out of an oversize milk can is being churned up for the Highland neighborhood.

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Little Man Ice Cream owner Paul Tamburello compares the real thing to his oversize project. He hopes to have the ice cream parlor, which will have no inside seating, open on Father's Day. Tamburello says he's aiming for the "wow" factor. The shop's "lid" is under construction. (Hyoung Chang, The Denver Post)

A giant milk can being built in Denver's Highland

neighborhood will serve up nostalgia, as well as ice cream.

"It's roadside vernacular-type architecture," said Paul Tamburello, who is developing the project designed by architect Ted Schultz. "It's like eating a hot dog inside of a big Coney Island hot dog."

Western Steel and Boiler Co. made the can, now on site at 2620 16th St., west of the LoHi Marketplace. The company is working on the lid for the store, to be called Little Man Ice Cream.

"There are very few shops in town that can bend half-inch or three-quarter-inch steel," Tamburello said.

Little Man Ice Cream will serve fresh ice cream created in its commissary at 3216 Tejon St. Barstool seating will surround the 180-square-foot can, and its patio will seat 75 people. There will be no indoor seating at the store, which Tamburello hopes to open on Father's Day.

"It's sort of like the Highlands version of the blue bear or the big red chair with the pony," Tamburello said, referring to two of the city's well-known pieces of public art. "Our goal is to put the wow back into the experience."

Tamburello, who will not operate the store himself, is considering serving soup and toasted cheese sandwiches in the winter. If he does so, he would remove the lid and install a ladle in the can, he said.

He's also planning to show old movies once a week and host a Saturday morning concert series.

"We're really hoping to make it a community destination."

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