



James Carrier

Fresh fruit pops are one easy step beyond homemade juice bars.

whip up at home.

PREP TIME: 10 to 20 minutes, plus at least 3 hours to freeze

NOTES: The paletas that contain milk are slightly creamy; the others are icy. Use frozen fruit bar molds with a 1/4- to 1/3-cup capacity; they're sold in many cookware and hardware stores and through some cookware catalogs.

MAKES: 6 paletas

1. Pour **paletas mixture** (choices follow) equally into 6 juice bar molds (see notes above). Attach covers. Insert sticks, leaving 1 1/2 to 2 inches of each exposed. Freeze paletas upright until firm, at least 3 hours or up to 2 weeks.

2. Hold each mold up to the rim under warm running water just until paletas are released from sides of molds, 5 to 15 seconds. Remove covers and pull out paletas.

Banana paletas

In a 2-cup glass measure, combine 1 cup **milk**, 3/4 cup smoothly mashed **ripe banana**, 1 teaspoon **vanilla**, and 1/4 cup **sugar**; stir until sugar is dissolved (mixture is no longer grainy to taste).

Per paleta: 85 cal., 16% (14 cal.) from fat; 1.6 g protein; 1.5 g fat (0.9 g sat.); 17 g carbo (0.5 g fiber); 20 mg sodium; 5.7 mg chol.

Blackberry paletas

THE LOW-FAT COOK

Popsicles, Mexican style

By Elaine Johnson

At Mexican markets throughout the West, freezer cases full of familiar shapes but not-so-familiar flavors tempt young (and young-at-heart) shoppers. They're *paletas* (little shovels, in Spanish), frozen treats that take ordinary juice bars to imaginative heights. Some are creamy, made with sweet tropical fruits and berries. Others are icy, flavored with tart fruits or even cucumber and chili (watch out — the latter pack some heat). All are refreshingly low-fat and a cinch to

In a blender, whirl 2 1/2 cups rinsed, drained **blackberries** until smooth. Push through a strainer into a 2-cup glass measure; discard residue. Add 1 cup **milk** and 6 tablespoons **sugar** to berry purée; stir until sugar is dissolved.

Per paleta: 104 cal., 13% (14 cal.) from fat; 1.8 g protein; 1.6 g fat (0.8 g sat.); 22 g carbo (0 g fiber); 20 mg sodium; 5.7 mg chol.

Cucumber-chili paletas

In a blender, combine 3 cups 1-inch chunks peeled, seeded **cucumber** (1 1/2 lb.); 2/3 cup **sugar**; 1/3 cup **lemon juice**; and 1 rinsed, stemmed **jalapeño chili** (1 to 1 1/2 oz.; remove seeds and veins for less heat). Whirl until smooth. Push mixture through a fine strainer set over a 2-cup glass measure; discard residue.

Per paleta: 100 cal., 0.9% (0.9 cal.) from fat; 0.5 g protein; 0.1 g fat (0 g sat.); 26 g carbo (0.4 g fiber); 7.5 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

Mango paletas

In a blender, combine 2 1/2 cups 1-inch chunks **mangoes** (from 1 1/2 lb. fruit), 1/4 cup **sugar**, and 3 tablespoons **lime juice**; whirl until smooth.

Per paleta: 85 cal., 2.1% (1.8 cal.) from fat; 0.4 g protein; 0.2 g fat (0.1 g sat.); 22 g carbo (0.8 g fiber); 2.9 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

Piña colada paletas

In a blender, combine 1 cup **milk**, 1/2 cup 1-inch chunks **fresh** or canned **pineapple**, 1/3 cup **sugar**, 1 teaspoon **vanilla**, and 1/2 teaspoon **coconut extract**; whirl until smooth.

Per paleta: 76 cal., 17% (13 cal.) from fat; 1.4 g protein; 1.4 g fat (0.8 g sat.); 15 g carbo (0.2 g fiber); 20 mg sodium; 5.7 mg chol.

Sour orange paletas

In a 2-cup glass measure, combine 1 1/3 cups **orange juice**, 1/3 cup **lime juice**, and 1/4 cup **sugar**; stir until sugar is dissolved.

Per paleta: 60 cal., 1.5% (0.9 cal.) from fat; 0.4 g protein; 0.1 g fat (0 g sat.); 15 g carbo (0.1 g fiber); 2.8 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

Strawberry paletas

In a blender, whirl 3 3/4 cups rinsed, hulled **strawberries** until smooth. Push through a fine strainer into a 2-cup glass measure; discard residue. Add 1/3 cup **sugar** and 1 tablespoon **lemon juice** to berry purée; stir until sugar is dissolved.

Per paleta: 72 cal., 5% (3.6 cal.) from fat; 0.6 g protein; 0.4 g fat (0 g sat.); 18 g carbo (2.5 g fiber); 1.6 mg sodium; 0 mg chol.

FOOD STYLING: DIANE SCOTT GSELL

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