

# Homemade Popsicles Can Be A Good Treat For Grownups, Too

**BY LISA ABRAHAM**

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(MCT)

If you are going to all the trouble to make ice pops at home, what's the point of making them in orange, grape and cherry?

You can find those flavors in any grocery store freezer case. Depending on where you shop and what brand you buy, you'll probably get them for a lot less money than you would spend to make them from scratch.

If all you want to do is satisfy the summer cravings of a 5-year-old, homemade ice pops may not be worth the effort. But if you want to make the most of your investment of time and ingredients and create an ice pop that is bigger, better and bold enough to satisfy even an adult craving for an icy summer treat, read on.

We've created ice pops that will showcase classic flavor combinations without being cloyingly sweet. Some offer a little bit of surprise.

Lemon-basil and grapefruit-mint pops take advantage of fresh summer herbs, with infused syrups and fresh juices. Raspberry-jalapeno offers a peppery heat along with the sweet for an enjoyable fire-and-ice combination.

For a truly unique taste, freeze pureed gazpacho into an ice pop and serve as a fun, interactive appetizer for summer parties. It's also a great way to get kids to eat their vegetables.

Finally, frozen sangria makes for a delightfully fruity adult treat — an over-21 version of a grape ice pop.

When making alcoholic ice pops, make drinks with a lighter hand, because too much alcohol won't freeze well and you could be left with pops that fall apart. Wine coolers work well for this because they typically have a lower alcohol content by volume (3 to 5 percent) than wine (12 to 14 percent).

Ice pop molds are easy to find. We used Tovolo brand molds purchased at TJ Maxx for just \$6.99 a set. The molds are 4 ounces each and make for easy measuring. But molds aren't a requirement. You can freeze ice pops in small plastic or paper cups or even cupcake tins, using inexpensive wooden sticks available at most craft stores for handles.

If you need more inspiration, there are new books out this summer to help:

— Irresistible Ice Pops: Treats on Sticks by Sunil Vijayakar (Food Love/Parragon Books, \$7.99), which offers lots of color photography and recipes for pops from fruity and creamy to over-21-only cocktail pops.

— Pops! Icy Treats for Everyone by Krystina Castella, is available at Kohl's stores for \$5, as part of the Kohl's Cares product line to benefit children's health and education causes.

**RASPBERRY-JALAPENO ICE POPS**

- 12 oz. fresh raspberries, washed
- 3 tbsp. freshly squeezed lime juice
- 1/2 cup simple syrup (see instructions)
- 1 jalapeno pepper
- 1/2 cup cold water
- Puree raspberries in a food processor. Strain to remove all seeds, pressing through a fine mesh to get all of the puree out. Measure out 1 cup of the puree, stir in the lime juice and set aside. Save extra puree for another recipe.

Make simple syrup by combining 1/2 cup of granulated sugar and 1/2 cup of water in a small sauce pan. Stir over medium heat until all of the sugar is dissolved. Cool.

Cut stem off pepper and slice in half. Remove seeds and membranes and discard.

Mince half of the pepper into a food processor. Add 1/2 cup of the cooled simple syrup and pulse until pepper is pulverized. (Use entire pepper for a spicier pop.)

Mix pepper syrup with raspberry-lime puree. Stir in water to make 2 cups, and stir well to combine.

Pour mixture into ice pop molds and freeze at least four hours or until solid.

Makes 4 pops, 4 ounces each. —Lisa Abraham

**LEMON-BASIL ICE POPS**

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup cold water
- 1/4 cup fresh basil leaves
- 1 1/4 cups cold water
- 1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice

In a small saucepan, combine sugar and 1 cup cold water. Stir over medium heat until all of the sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat. Tear basil leaves, stir into syrup and allow to steep in syrup for two hours.

Strain cooled syrup to remove basil leaves. Measure out 3/4 cup of the basil syrup and combine with lemon juice and 1 1/4 cups

cold water. Pour into ice pop molds and freeze for at least 4 hours or until solid.

Makes 5 pops, 4 ounces each. —Lisa Abraham

**GRAPEFRUIT-MINT ICE POPS**

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup cold water
- 1/4 cup fresh mint leaves
- 2 cups unsweetened grapefruit juice

In a small saucepan, combine sugar and 1 cup cold water. Stir over medium heat until all of the sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat. Tear mint leaves, stir into

syrup and allow to steep in syrup for two hours.

Strain cooled syrup to remove mint leaves. Measure out 1 cup of the mint syrup and combine with grapefruit juice.

Pour into ice pop molds and freeze for at least 4 hours or until solid.

Makes 6 pops, 4 ounces each. —Lisa Abraham

**GAZPACHO ICE POPS**

- 2 cups gazpacho (recipe follows)
- Place soup in blender or food processor and puree.
- Pour pureed soup into ice pop

molds and freeze for at least 4 hours or until solid.

Makes 4 pops, 4 ounces each. —Lisa Abraham

**GAZPACHO**

- 3 large ripe tomatoes (about 1 1/2 lbs.) cored and quartered
- 2 red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded and chopped coarse
- 2 cucumbers, peeled, halved, seeded and chopped coarse
- 5 cups tomato juice
- 1 onion, minced
- 1/3 cup white wine vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 tsp. Tabasco sauce

Salt and pepper  
1/4 cup minced fresh parsley or cilantro

Pulse tomatoes in food processor until finely chopped, about 12 pulses. Transfer to a large bowl. Pulse the bell peppers and peeled cucumber until finely chopped, about 15 pulses. Add to the bowl with the tomatoes. Stir in the tomato juice, onion, vinegar, garlic, Tabasco, 1 teaspoon salt, pepper to taste and parsley.

Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours.  
Note: For eating as a soup,

process the vegetables so that they are 1/8- to 1/4-inch in size; any finer and the soup will resemble tomato slush. Gazpacho can be covered and refrigerated for up to 2 days.

Makes 8 servings.  
— Adapted from America's Test Kitchen Family Cookbook

**SANGRIA POPS**

- 2 cups sangria-flavored wine cooler
- Pour into ice pop molds and freeze until solid.
- Makes 4 pops, 4 ounces each. —Lisa Abraham

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