

# West Side Informer

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## Are You Hungry Yet?

July is National Ice Cream Month. Ice cream sales traditionally pick up as the weather gets warmer. With a mild winter and a warm spring people may have been indulging more than usual this year. Total sales for the year ending March 17 were more than \$3.8 billion, 4.4% more than sales from the previous year. Trends focus on healthier options like low-fat, low-sugar desserts made with natural flavors. Fruit bars and ice cream novelties sell well because they have individual servings that are easy to control.

Consumer Reports recently ranked several of these novelty treats by taste and texture. The better strawberry fruit bars have natural fruit flavors; 365 Everyday Value bars have pieces of real fruit in them and get the highest rating. The top ranked ice cream bars are Haagen-Dazs and Dove due to their rich taste of both ice cream and dark chocolate. Ice cream sandwiches did not fare as well, with the top ranked Walgreens Old Fashioned only getting a 'very good' instead of 'excellent,' and with most other options having gummy textures and artificial flavors. Sadly for people who are lactose intolerant, the dairy-free options evaluated did poorly.

Consumer Reports also provides information about the cost and calories per serving, so you can choose amongst the best tasting treats that fit your budget and nutritional needs.

Dudlicek, J. (2012). Hot Time for Cool Treats. *Progressive Grocer*, 91(5), 62-66.

Just desserts: Best frozen treats. (2012). *Consumer Reports*, 77(7), 8.

## It's Extreme!

The opposite of boring is EXCITING, and there's nothing as exciting as Extreme Sports. From sky diving to adventure racing to scuba diving; you can get extreme at any altitude and it is BIG business.

Retail sales of action and extreme sports equipment were \$2.4 billion in 2010, an increase of over 8% from the previous year. Snow sports are still the largest action and extreme sport segment with more than 32.2 million participants in 2009. But recreational kayaking saw the largest one-year gain in 2010 climbing 27.3% to 8.2 million participants.

Participation rates are the highest for adults aged 18-24.

Extreme sports have also become BIG entertainment starting with the X Games and the success of those competitions helped introduce new events in the Olympics. Big entertainment also brings BIG advertising with brands like Mountain Dew, Red Bull, Monster Drinks, Rock Star, AMP, Vans and many more.

Mintel. (2011). *Action and Extreme Sports - US - March 2011*. Retrieved from the Mintel Reports database.

Ryan, Thomas J. (2012, May 7). Outdoor Participation Hits Five-Year High in 2011. *SGB Weekly*. Retrieved from the SBRnet database.

