

RANTS and RAVES

By Kelly Melang



Want to give the gift of family activity with YUMMY results?

Enter the Mega Ball Ice Cream Maker! This novelty is designed for a family to make ice cream without an ice cream maker! The way the ball works is pretty simple—fill the outside with ice and rock salt, fill the inside container with cream, sugar, a little vanilla, then roll and play with the ball and enjoy ice cream for the family! Simple, right? Sure, after a few tips!

Read the directions. Just like any Type B personality, Rants and Raves figured, "I know how to make ice cream.

Simple." Well, after overstuffing it the first time (we really like ice cream), using the wrong kind of cream (I thought fat-free would be healthier) and using too large chocolate chips (more chocolate is better than less, right?), we ended with a mess, including a lid that was refusing to come off! We sat down, read the directions and did it right the second time around.

On our second pass, we learned that the wrench is not used to tighten the lid (as it will take Hercules to get it back off) and to use the correct measurements. After 15 minutes of playing with the ball (according to the directions), we went back in and scraped the inside, moving the cream that was already frozen to the middle and giving the still soupy middle a chance to freeze. We then played with it again for 15 more minutes. The result: ice cream!

Rants and Raves gives this nifty little gadget 2 RANTS BEFORE reading the directions, then 4 RAVES after reading the directions. Here's why: with the help of the directions we learned that using a thicker cream like half 'n' half or whipping cream made the ice cream taste much

creamier. Using the wrench that came with it to take the lid OFF, rather than screwing it ON, helped when we couldn't get the lid off for 15 minutes the first time around. Also, using the smallest chocolate chips helped keep them together after all of our "play."



Did it make Ben and Jerry's ice cream? No, but it made ice cream and the children LOVED that they could play with the ball AND make ice cream at the same time. RANTS and RAVES loves this product because it's a fun novelty item that doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out (just someone smart enough to read directions). It doesn't require much, unlike all the new toys of today (all 1,657 pieces to the transformer sitting in the junk closet); all the Mega Ice Cream Ball needs is cream, vanilla, sugar, ice and rock salt. Included with the item is a recipe booklet when kids get adventurous and want to branch beyond vanilla.

This is a product for a family, and it makes enough ice cream for a family. Expect 1-3 servings from each "play time," making this perfect for creating enough ice cream for a small scoop on that Christmas Pumpkin Pie. The Ice Cream Ball will satisfy an ice cream craving and create fun for the family, as they are finally allowed to "play for their food."

This Christmas and you're strapped for something to keep the kids occupied while you try to get dinner on the table? Buy a few Ice Cream Balls and let them play, then enjoy dessert just for them and made by them after the big dinner. Send some of your guests home with their own Ice Cream Ball!

The Ice Cream Ball is priced at \$16 for the small (1 pint size) and \$31 for a large (1 quart size) and can be found at all online retailers, such as Amazon.com/, REI.com/, and Walmart.com/.