

Mudslinger's Palooka Dairy-Free "Ice Cream" Cake (Vegan) **Top Pick**

~~ 5 Star Selection from Go Dairy Free ~~This product was chosen by our staff as a top pick for quality and taste.

Apparently the people at Maggie Mudd understand that peanut butter and chocolate are without a doubt one of the most popular flavor combinations. They have created not one, but two dairy-free "ice cream" cakes revolving around this dynamic duo. First, we had the sheer bliss of trialing their new Tarmack version, a rich chocolate experience infused with the creamy enhancement of peanut butter. Now, with that cake thoroughly polished off, it was time to tackle the Palooka.

This equally impressive looking cake approaches flavor from the peanut butter angle first. The majority of the cake is peanut butter "ice cream." Typically I would think of peanut butter ice cream as very rich and dense. Though this one holds its own in the creamy and decadent fields, we actually found it quite refreshing. Rather than an overpowering backdrop of processed peanut butter, this ice cream was enlightened with the taste of fresh raw peanuts. Yes, it is topped with a plethora of fresh peanuts (my grandmother was busted on numerous occasions sneaking these from atop the cake). Yet even the ice cream itself has this wonderfully natural essence.

Of course, those Mudslingers couldn't settle with delicious and refreshing, their desserts must stand out for true indulgence. This is where the chocolate comes into play. With every third or fourth bite, I was surprised by enormous chunks of peanut spiked chocolate. Though it was quite contrasting to the smooth ice cream texture, none of us were complaining.

Now chocolate treats throughout are great, but a little more chocolate wouldn't hurt, right? At least not when it comes in the form of Mudslinger's addictive icing. My grandmother was equally in love with my favorite Maggie Mudd feature, the rim of decorative chocolate frosting. In fact, everyone was pleased with the attractive swishes of rich and creamy, milk chocolate-like décor. It was a definite ten steps up from the sickeningly sweet shortening loaded frostings used in most bakeries.

The final chocolate nuance was the brownie foundation, that we will call, the crust. You can't see it from the outside, as noted in these pictures, but a relatively thick (one to two inch) chocolate base lies within. Though I really liked this crust in the Tarmack Cake, it somehow wasn't fitting for me with the Palooka. However, it did taste good, and everyone else was indulging with smiles from ear to ear, so a complaint of such a small magnitude seemed insignificant.

Chocolate addicts and decadence seekers will revel in the Tarmack Cake. Yet, for those of us who long for the sins of Reese's Peanut Butter cups, but would like a refreshing summertime indulgence, the Palooka should not be missed.

My Extra Notes & Tips

- We love the Mudslinger Cakes for their awesome packaging. They are neatly fitted into a very durable square box. They easily fit into a cooler for transporting to a birthday or dinner party, and can be wedged into those freezer nooks without fear of damage.
- These cakes are semi-petite in diameter, but are as tall as they are wide. Maggie Mudd estimates 10 servings per cake, and I would say this is a generously safe estimate. The cakes are fairly rich, so a little satisfies.
- Consider this cake for birthday parties with kids when milk and egg allergies may be a concern. Obviously the peanut loading makes it unsuitable for tree nut (potential cross contamination) and peanut allergies.
- I would have loved a few slice pictures to show off the inside of this fabulous "ice cream" cake, however, when not prepared, as we weren't, cutting this cake can be a messy situation. Make sure you have a sharp and sturdy knife prepared, and warm it briefly under hot water before slicing. We did this with great success on the Tarmack Cake.
- Yes, it really is vegan AND all natural. Of course, at 350 calories per slice, this is no low cal treat. Yet, both the calories and fat are very moderate when compared with other ice cream treats.

Where to Purchase: The bad news is, the Mudslinger cakes are currently only available in natural food stores within the San Francisco Bay Area. The good news is, the folks at Maggie Mudd are trying their darndest to expand distribution. If you want to see their products in your local area, give them a call, send them an email, or ask your local grocer directly (and tell him their website is www.mudslingersdairyfree.com)