

Making Ripples

DIY Pocky Snack

by Amanda Bancroft

If you love munching on Pocky (a popular snack that originated in Japan) but wish it was a healthier, sustainable snack option, look no further – there are convenient ways to put together a delicious pocky snack kit or even make it yourself at home! Making your own Pocky is better for the environment, and is a great alternative for vegans or kids with food allergies who see their friends at school eating Pocky and wish they could, too.

Pocky (sounds like “rocky” in English or “pokey” in Japanese) is a chocolate-covered biscuit stick that was first sold in Japan in 1966. Pocky is extremely popular especially among Japanese teenagers and is found throughout the world in a seemingly infinite variety of flavors such as chocolate, strawberry, almond, honey, kiwi mango, grape, berry, banana, coffee, caramel, milk, sweet potato, pineapple, blueberry, hazelnut, green tea, coconut, pumpkin, apple yogurt, tiramisu, orange, chestnut, and more. There are special bittersweet chocolate “Pocky for Men,” Giant Pocky, Pocky with decorated icing, extra-thick mousse, or a fortune-telling variety with a fortune wrapped around every stick.

A similar snack, Yan Yan, separates the biscuit sticks from the flavored frosting and combines both into one package for dipping. This can easily be replicated at home (although you may have a tough time printing words on the biscuits like Yan Yan does in unorthodox English: “Whale: Biggesy Mammal,” [sic] “Balloon: Goes Pop,” or “Chick: Lucky Color Yellow”)

To make gluten-free vegan Pocky or Yan Yan, first you’ll need a hard pencil case to transport the biscuit sticks without breaking them. Add a handful of Schär brand “Italian Breadsticks” to your pencil case. Then fill a small container with an earth-friendly chocolate spread like Endangered Species brand “Cocoa Spread.” Ten percent of sales are donated to protect wildlife, and you’ll have a healthier snack!

Samantha Seneviratne of Food52.com posted a homemade Pocky recipe and says she’s “been known to inhale them, one after another, like a woodchipper taking down miniature logs.” Try out her addicting recipe for yourself:

Homemade Pocky (Chocolate-Dipped Cookie Sticks)

Makes about 90 cookie sticks

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature

1/4 cup sugar

1 large egg

1/4 teaspoon almond extract or 1/2 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 cup bread flour

1/2 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon kosher salt

4 teaspoons water, at room temperature

9 ounces bittersweet or semisweet chocolate, chopped

Cream together butter and sugar. Add the egg and extract until combined. Add the flour, baking powder, and salt. Add the water last, and stir until smooth. Using a pastry bag with a #7 plain round tip, pipe the batter in straight lines onto parchment-lined baking sheets. Bake in the oven about fifteen minutes at 300 degrees until golden brown. Let cool on a cooling rack for five minutes. Melt the chocolate in the microwave or on the stovetop, and dip each stick into the melted chocolate. Put the sticks in the refrigerator to set the chocolate. Enjoy!

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