

## CELEBRATE SUMMER WITH A ROCKIN' ICE



L.A. is a bit more tropical now, thanks to the arrival of A Rockin' Ice. A gourmet food truck, A Rockin' Ice serves Hawaiian-style shave ice. For those unfamiliar with shave ice, think snow cones but more exotic. These shave ices are modeled after Matsumoto's, a famous shave ice stand on the North Shore of Oahu, Hawaii.

"We copy from them shamelessly," reports owner Thom Uber, who got the idea while he and partner Bill Hacket were on vacation and saw lines at Matsumoto going around the block at all hours. "Everybody in L.A. eats frozen yogurt, so why not shave ice?"

In the two and a half months since their 18-foot-long purple food truck—decorated with bamboo and surf boards—has been hitting the streets, L.A. has begun to fall in love with shave ice. Particularly popular stops have been Melrose Avenue (at Stanley), Los Feliz and Studio City. They'll be coming to Boystown as soon as their WeHo business license comes through.

While restaurants don't want most gourmet food trucks anywhere near, restaurants actually invite A Rockin' Ice to come park in front of their buildings. "We're not selling the same thing they sell. We're not competing with them," Uber says. "We compliment what they do."

The homemade flavoring syrups are what make the shave ices so exotic. They come in a variety of colors and flavors, all prepared with real cane sugar. "If you want a rainbow-colored shave ice, we've got it," says Uber. "We've got raspberry, mango, pineapple, orange, banana, black-

berry, strawberry and lots of other flavors."

All the syrups also come in zero-calorie versions, sweetened with sucralose (Splenda). Uber says it's impossible to tell the difference between the zero-calorie syrup and the cane-sugar ones. "We'll make it half sugar, half non-sugar, you won't be able to tell which one's which."

Even better, the zero-calorie shave ices actually have negative calories because your body has to burn calories to bring your core temperatures up.

To make the shave ices a bit more unique, they'll pour sweetened condensed milk on top and put a scoop of vanilla ice cream at the bottom of the cone, if desired. By the time you've dug down to the ice cream, the melting ice has flavored it. "It's like the surprise treat inside a Tootsie Pop," Russell Werth, a customer from Sherman Oaks, said when he stumbled upon the ice cream in his cone.

Their espresso coffee shave ice is proving popular, much to the delight of Uber, who spent six weeks perfecting the right formula. "I love iced coffee and wanted to do it as a flavor," he says. "But everytime we tried, it came out tasting like watered down coffee. Finally, we did it with espresso and got it right."

Later this summer, they'll be pairing up with area bars for late-night stops. They'll sell customers a shave ice and the bartenders inside will pour shots of rum, tequila or kahlua on top.

A Rockin' Ice notifies followers where they'll be each day via Twitter and Facebook.