An ice cream scoop package includes one or more recesses in a bottom portion of the package for holding a respective scoop of ice cream. A package can include several scoops of ice cream of different flavors for extremely quick and easy serving in a bowl or in a cone, for example.
ICE CREAM PACKAGE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention generally relates to retail food packaging. The invention more particularly relates to an ice cream package for individual scoops of ice cream.

[0002] Retail packaging of ice cream as one would find in a grocery store is usually in the form of a rectangular or cylindrical cardboard or plastic container in which the ice cream is in mass form. A person must spoon or scoop the ice cream from the container to make individual servings. If the ice cream is very hard, it can be very difficult to scoop the ice cream from the container. Furthermore, as the person digs further down into the ice cream, their scooping hand usually comes into contact with the ice cream resulting in sticky hands which must be washed. Also, since there is a large amount of ice cream in the container (e.g., quart, 1/2 gallon or gallon sizes), left over ice cream is put back in the freezer and many times becomes “freezer burned” which occurs when ice crystals form on the remaining ice cream in the container and which many find objectionable. Upon finding freezer burned ice cream in the freezer, many people simply throw away the ice cream which of course is wasteful and expensive.

[0003] At celebratory events such as birthday and anniversary parties, ice cream is many times served alongside cake on a plate, in a bowl or in an ice cream cone. The host usually likes to offer their guests a variety of ice cream flavors from which their guests may choose (e.g., chocolate, strawberry and vanilla). This requires multiple individual containers of ice cream flavors, or a single container of ice cream with the three flavors in the same container in side-by-side fashion (typically called “neapolitan”). Again, the host must scoop the individual ice cream servings from the package which can become time consuming and messy as explained above. For containers having multiple flavors, the different ice cream flavors typically run together so a person wanting just chocolate might also get ice cream of the flavor next to the chocolate in the container. Lastly, any left over ice cream is either thrown away or put back in the freezer with the likely result of it eventually becoming freezer burned and thrown away anyway.

[0004] Single serving, prepackaged ice cream is also known in the form of a small (e.g., 1/2 pint) plastic, cylindrical container where the person eats the ice cream directly from the container with a small spoon (the containers sometimes come with their own small wooden spoon in the shape of a flat tongue depressor). Many such containers (usually all of the same flavor) are provided in a large plastic bag for retail purchase. While this type of packaging offers single serving ice cream, it is strictly meant to be eaten directly from the container and is thus difficult to remove in one mass from the container. It is thus not meant to be scooped from the container into ball form for placing beside cake on a plate, in a bowl or in an ice cream cone. There are also prepackaged ice cream novelties such as ice cream cones and bars, yet these are priced higher than regular container ice cream and do not offer the choice of the ice cream in scoop form for eating either out of a bowl or cone.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] There thus remains a need for an ice cream package which overcomes the above drawbacks of present day ice cream packages.

[0006] The present invention offers an ice cream package that overcomes the drawbacks of present day ice cream packaging. The invention provides an ice cream package for individual scoops of ice cream that may be very easily and individually removed from its packaging. The package may be formed to removably hold one or more than one scoop of ice cream therein. The package includes a bottom having one or more rounded recesses formed therein and wherein a respective ice cream scoop is held. The package further includes a top portion which is fit to the bottom portion to enclose the ice cream in the package. The top may also include one or more rounded recesses formed therein which align with a respective recess in the bottom portion of the package such that the ice cream scoop is held between a respective top and bottom recesses in the package. A consumer opens the package by lifting the top away from the bottom thereby exposing the ice cream scoop or scoops. The consumer may use a spoon, ice cream scoop or other utensil to easily lift the ice cream scoop from the recess in which it sits. In one possible embodiment, a sheet of paper, plastic, ribbon or the like may be placed beneath the scoop in the recess with a part of the sheet or ribbon extending outwardly of either side of the recess. As such, a consumer can grasp the paper or ribbon and pull up which facilitates removing the scoop from the recess. The paper or ribbon may also assist in preventing the ice cream from sticking to the recess. The recess may also be treated with a non-stick coating if desired prior to packaging the ice cream at the time of manufacture.

[0007] In one embodiment, the package includes multiple recesses in the bottom portion to hold multiple ice cream flavors (e.g., chocolate, strawberry and vanilla). The ice cream scoops can be made of any size and calorie count (e.g., 100 calories per scoop). This type of packaging is very helpful to those wishing to strictly monitor their caloric intake. The ice cream scoops may be of any flavor and may also be coated with a hard shell or sprinkles, for example. Other frozen, spoon-type desserts such as frozen custard, Italian ice, sherbert and sorbet may be packaged alone or along with ice cream scoops to offer more variety to the consumer, if desired. In yet another embodiment, frozen cake squares may be placed in a square recess formed beside a respective round recess and scoop of ice cream which provides a single package for quickly serving many guests at parties. The cake may be taken from the package prior to the ice cream scoops and allowed to thaw on plates prior to serving with the ice cream.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

[0008] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the invention; and

[0009] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0010] Referring to FIG. 1, the invention provides an ice cream package indicated generally at 10 for holding individual scoops of ice cream 12 therein. The package includes a bottom portion 14 having a generally planar bottom wall 16 with one or more rounded recesses 18 formed therein. An ice
A cream scoop 12 is removable placed and held in a respective recess 16. The recess diameter is slightly larger than the diameter of the scoop to be held therein. The depth of the recess is preferably between about ¼ to ½ the diameter of the scoop to be placed therein. This ensures the scoop will not easily roll out of its recess during shipping and handling while at the same time not causing the scoop to become stuck therein.

The package 10 further includes a top portion 20 which removably fits to the bottom portion 12 to enclose the ice cream scoops 12 in the package. The top 20 may also include one or more rounded recesses 22 formed therein which align with a respective recess 16 in the bottom portion of the package such that the ice cream scoops are held between the top and bottom recesses when the package is closed. A consumer opens the package by lifting the top portion 20 away from the bottom portion 14 thereby exposing the ice cream scoops 12. The top portion 20 may be connected to the bottom portion by a hinge 22, for example.

Once the package has been opened, the consumer may use a spoon 24, ice cream scoop or other utensil to easily lift an ice cream scoop 14 from the recess 16 in which it sits. In one possible embodiment, a sheet or strip of paper 28 or the like may be placed beneath the scoop in the recess with part of the sheet 28 extending outwardly of either side of the recess. As such, a consumer can grasp the paper 28 and pull up which lifts the scoop from the recess, thereby facilitating removing the scoop from its recess. The paper 28 may also assist in preventing the ice cream from sticking to the recess. The paper and/or recess may also be treated with a non-stick coating if desired prior to packaging the ice cream at the time of manufacture.

The package 10 may include multiple recesses in the bottom portion to hold multiple ice cream flavors (e.g., chocolate, strawberry and vanilla). The ice cream scoops 14 can be made of any size and calorie count (e.g., 100 calories per scoop). This type of packaging is very helpful to those wishing to strictly monitor their caloric intake. The ice cream scoops 14 may be of any flavor and may also be coated with a hard shell or sprinkles, for example. Other frozen, spoon-eaten desserts such as frozen custard, Italian ice, sherbert and sorbet may be packaged alone or along with ice cream scoops 14 to offer more variety to the consumer, if desired. In yet another embodiment seen in FIG. 2, frozen cake squares 30 may be placed in a respective square recess formed beside a respective round recess and scoop of ice cream 12 which provides a single package for quickly serving many guests at parties. The cake may be taken from the package prior to the ice cream scoops and allowed to thaw on plates prior to serving with the ice cream.

While the invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments thereof, it will be appreciated that many variations in design are possible and the invention is not to be limited thereby, but rather the full scope and spirit of the invention are to be defined by the claims which follow.

What is claimed is:

1. An ice cream scoop package comprising a bottom portion and a top portion configured to be removably attached to said bottom portion to close the package, said bottom portion having at least one rounded recess formed therein for removably holding a respective ice cream scoop therein.

2. The ice cream scoop package of claim 1, and further comprising at least one rounded recess formed in said top portion in alignment with a respective said recess in said bottom portion, said ice cream scoop located and held between said bottom and top recesses when the package is closed.

3. The ice cream scoop package of claim 1 wherein said recess has a diameter slightly larger than the diameter of the ice cream scoop to be held therein.

4. The ice cream scoop package of claim 1 wherein said recess has a depth of between about ¼ to ½ the diameter of the ice cream scoop to be held therein.

5. The ice cream package of claim 1 and further including a sheet or strip of material positioned between the ice cream scoop and its respective recess in the bottom portion of the package, said material including portions extending outwardly of said recess for grasping by a consumer as an aid to lifting the scoop of ice cream from its respective recess.

6. The ice cream package of claim 1 wherein said recess is treated with an anti-stick coating prior to placement of an ice cream scoop therein.

7. The ice cream package of claim 1 and further comprising ice cream scoops of different flavors in said package.

8. The ice cream package of claim 1 wherein said ice cream scoops have a coating.

9. The ice cream package of claim 1 and further including one or more square or rectangular recesses formed in said bottom portion for removably holding a respective single serving piece of cake therein.

10. The ice cream package of claim 9 wherein there is an even number of ice cream scoops and pieces of cake.

11. The ice cream package of claim 1 wherein one or more types of spoon-type frozen desserts are packaged in scoop form in a respective recess in said package.

12. The ice cream scoop package of claim 11 wherein said desserts include one or more or frozen custard, sorbet, sherbert and Italian ice.

13. The ice cream package of claim 1 wherein said ice cream scoops each have a predetermined number of calories.

14. An ice cream scoop package comprising:

a) a bottom portion and a top portion configured to be removably attached to said bottom portion to close the package, said bottom portion having at least one rounded recess formed therein for removably holding a respective ice cream scoop therein; and

b) at least one rounded recess formed in said top portion in alignment with a respective said recess in said bottom portion, said ice cream scoop located and held between said bottom and top recesses when the package is closed, and wherein said recess has a diameter slightly larger than the diameter of the ice cream scoop to be held therein.

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