

## RANDOM SAMPLES

# ELECTION-THEMED TREATS WERE IN GOOD TASTE

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BY RYAN E. SMITH  
BLADE STAFF WRITER

Feel free to exhale. It's OK, the election is finally over.

I know it's been a long, brutal campaign season, and I'm elated that it's ended. No more nasty campaign ads interrupting my attempts to watch *The Office*. No more bitter arguments that aren't sports related.

There is one thing I will miss, though: The food.

America's entrepreneurial spirit has a way of making the most of any situation and this presidential race was no different. There were Sarah Palin action figures and Obama-logo pajamas (called Ojamas, the company Web site proclaims: "sleep soundly and awake to a brand new day for America"). There were even Cabbage Patch Kids and teddy bears in the candidates' likenesses.

As someone who usually votes with his gut, I was more attracted to the delectable election edibles. Sure, I wanted to know more about Barack Obama's position on health care, but I also needed a scoop of his Whirl of Change ice cream at Baskin-Robbins.

Featuring chunks of chocolate-covered peanut brittle and created especially for the election season, that ice cream is good. Real good. So good that Jim Foust, a Republican who manages the chain's Secor Road store, crossed party lines to endorse it to me.

It will be available for another week or two, as will Straight Talk Crunch, the company's John McCain-themed flavor peppered with candy "red states." It suffered the same fate as its namesake, finishing second in the popular vote of customers. Even in defeat, though, it still tasted sweet.

Other companies stepped up to the (dinner) plate too. McSteven's Inc., for example, came out with coffee drink mixes - Obamaccino and McCain Mocha - that promised "spirited debate over drinks" and still can be found locally at The Andersons.

### VIDEO

[See a taste test of some of these foods](#)

At Haas Bakery in Oregon, customers could choose between iced sugar cookies decorated for either presidential candidate as part of the Retail Bakers of America election cookie poll. (Obama rolled to victory with 59 percent of the sweet tooth vote nationally.)

I tried all of these, even though it seemed entirely random which food products jumped onto this political bandwagon. Was I missing the message behind Kai's Candy Company's ([www.kaiscandy.com](http://www.kaiscandy.com)) lollipops and hard candies featuring cartoon images of the candidates on them? At least Dave's Gourmet ([www.davesgourmet.com](http://www.davesgourmet.com)), which served up election hot sauces for the candidates, offered disaffected voters the choice of Nunov Deabove.

Now, I realize that this was about marketing more than anything else, that the only difference between Jones Soda Co.'s Pure McCain Cola and Yes We Can Cola is the label. And yet, I was unable to resist them.

Consider it a personal weakness. I've always been a sucker for novelty treats. I still have a box of Buckeye Heroes cereal at home, in tribute to the Ohio State football team, and I'm actively on the hunt for some of LeBron James'



Lightning Lemonade Bubblicious gum.

It seems to me that the value of these foods goes far beyond nutrition. They reflect our passions and inject a little fun and light-heartedness - as well as sugar - into a time often filled with uncertainty and anger.

Ultimately, they're much more than edible kitsch; they're a kind of historical record. Long after their contents have filled my belly, the empty pop bottles and coffee cans that I keep will continue to remind me of this historic time.

I just wish there was more of it to sink my teeth into. From that perspective, it's too bad the election is over. Politics never tasted so good.

Contact Ryan E. Smith at: [ryansmith@theblade.com](mailto:ryansmith@theblade.com) or 419-724-6103.

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