



Eating Local and Seasonal: Cherries

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Cherries are no strangers to Canadians. Many of us buy or pick them at local farms and enjoy them during the months of June and July. Would you like some inspiration on new ways to enjoy the abundance of cherries available this month? Read on for more.

Did you know? Cherries are native to Asia, but with widespread cultivation, cherry trees can now be found throughout the world in many countries. In Canada, 95% of cherries are grown in British Columbia across over 3500 acres of land. Much of this is also exported to many Asian countries including China, Japan and Thailand.

Buying & Storing - In Canada, we have sweet and sour cherries available. Both need to be refrigerated when storing, with the sweet types being more durable.

Pick Your Own - Cherries are best picked early in the morning during cooler temperatures. Refrigerate as soon as possible after picking while loosely covered. Here are a couple of nearby farms with cherry picking available:

Cherry Avenue Farm

403 Cherry Avenue, Vineland, ON. 905-562-5481

Bucci Family Cherry Farm

170 Cokers Lane, Stoney Creek, ON. 905-643-0288

Using Cherries - A quick internet search on cherry recipes will show that they are a popular ingredient in desserts. Both sweet and sour cherries can be used in making jams and preserves. Sour cherries are often used for making pies, fruit compotes, flans, souffles and other desserts.

Below are some ideas on different ways to enjoy cherries:

- Fruit Salsa - see recipe on next page
- Chutney - Various recipes combine cherries with other produce like rhubarb, apples, onions, and/or sweet peppers, cooked down and seasoned with herbs and spices.
- Salads - Add fresh sweet cherries into a green salad or Waldorf salad for a twist.
- Sauce for Savory Dishes - Sweet cherries can be cooked down with wine, sugar or salt, vinegar and butter to top chicken or pork dishes.
- Sauce for Sweet Dishes - Use alone or combine with other fruits like berries and peaches and cook down with sugar to create a sauce to drizzle on ice-cream, pancakes, yogurt and more.

Sources: 1. Foodland Ontario, Cherries. Retrieved from <https://www.ontario.ca/foodland/food/cherries>.
2. BC Cherry Association, FAQs. Retrieved from <https://www.bccherry.com/faq/#:~:text=95%25%20of%20the%20cherries%20grown,Valley%2C%20and%20the%20Creston%20Valley>. 3. Pick Your Own. Retrieved from <https://www.pickyourown.org/>



Fruit Salsa with Vanilla Cream and Cinnamon Wedges

Recipe from Foodland Ontario (ontario.ca/foodland/)

Photo by Lisa from Pexels

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 cup Chopped Ontario strawberries
- 1 cup Ontario blueberries
- 1 cup Ontario raspberries
- 1 cup Chopped pitted Ontario sweet cherries
- 1 tsp Grated orange rind
- 3/4 cup Light sour cream
- 1 1/2 tbsp Packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp Vanilla
- 1 Whole wheat tortilla (small)
- Cinnamon
- 4 Stemmed Ontario sweet cherries

Directions:

1. In a small bowl, combine strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, cherries and orange rind.
2. In a small bowl, stir together sour cream, brown sugar and vanilla until sugar dissolves.
3. Lightly brush one side of tortilla with water, sprinkle with cinnamon to taste. Cut into eight wedges. Place on paper towel lined microwavable plate; microwave on high for 1 minute and 30 seconds or until crisp.
4. In 4 dessert glasses, layer fruit salsa and vanilla cream, repeating once. Serve with cinnamon wedges and garnish with stemmed cherry.

Variation option: Add 1 tbsp toasted coconut to the vanilla cream.