



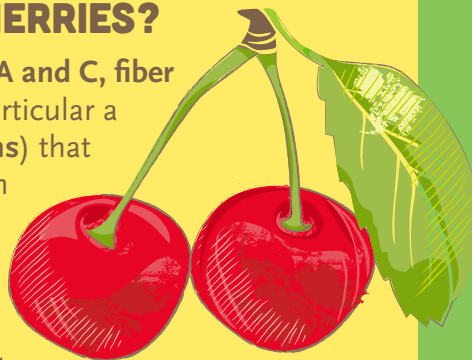
COLOR YOUR PLATE WITH CHERRIES!

Available sweet or tart and in shades ranging from bold crimson to sunset orange, fresh cherries pack serious flavor and essential nutrients too.

WHY CHOOSE CHERRIES?

They provide **vitamins A and C**, **fiber** and **antioxidants** (in particular a type called **anthocyanins**) that can support the body in many ways.

Another thing that makes cherries special is **limited availability**. The growing season is short, from May to July, and these juicy fruits have a relatively short shelf life. So get fresh cherries every summer while you can—and freeze extra to enjoy them year round!



FAST FACTS

- Cherry varieties are divided into two main categories: sweet (Bing, Lambert, Rainier, Royal Anne) and tart (Montmorency, Morello).
- Tart cherries typically have higher levels of certain antioxidants.
- Cherries are classified in the same fruit family as peaches, plums, apricots and almonds.
- Most U.S. grown cherries come from Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah.

Rainier Bing

Lambert

Royal Anne

Montmorency

Morello

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY **Homemade Cherry Vanilla Pops**

What you'll need: blender or food processor, popsicle molds or ice trays, popsicle/craft sticks or toothpicks

Ingredients

1 cup fresh cherries, pitted
(or thawed frozen cherries)

2 cups vanilla yogurt
(or plain yogurt plus 1
teaspoon vanilla extract)

honey to taste (optional)

Step 1: Rinse the cherries and remove the stems and pits.

Step 2: Place all ingredients in a food processor or blender and blend until smooth. If using tart cherries, add honey 1 teaspoon at a time after blending, until desired sweetness is reached.

Step 3: Transfer mixture to molds or freezer-safe cups and insert handles/sticks in the center of each popsicle. To make mini popsicles, use ice cube trays and insert toothpicks for handles.

Step 4: Place in freezer for several hours or overnight, until frozen firm.

Step 5: Gently remove popsicles from molds and enjoy!

Tip: If popsicle removal is difficult, place the mold in a bowl of hot water for a few seconds to slightly thaw/loosen the popsicles so they slide out of the molds more easily.



NEXT STEPS

Think Outside the Dessert Box

Cherries are widely associated with pies, banana splits and other high-calorie desserts, but they can make an even bigger statement as a flavor accent for healthier savory recipes. Add them to fresh veggie salads, pilafs and other grains, chicken or beef recipes, or make cherry salsa to serve with pita chips as a snack.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Buy cherries during peak season for the best value, and freeze extra (remove pits first) for year-round use.
- Invest in an inexpensive cherry pitter to make quick work of recipes and to make cherry snacking fun and easy for kids.
- Add cherries to pancakes, waffles and quick breads, which also can be frozen and quickly defrosted on busy mornings.



RECIPES

Let kids help with the simple steps in **bold**!

BREAKFAST

Cherry Almond Smoothie

2 cups unsweetened milk (almond, coconut, soy, cow, etc.)
1/4 cup creamy almond butter (or peanut butter)
10 oz frozen cherries

Place all ingredients in a blender and purée until smooth. Pour into glasses and serve.

LUNCH

“Lunch in a Jar” Cherry & Grain Salad

2 cups cooked brown rice (or other cooked grain)
1/2 cup chopped red onion
1/4 cup fresh cherries
1/4 cup of your favorite salad dressing (or lemon juice)
1/4 cup roughly chopped toasted pecans
2 cups packed fresh salad greens (spinach or arugula work well)
2 tablespoons blue cheese crumbles

Step 1: In a small bowl, combine grains with dressing and stir well. **Step 2:** Layer dressed grains and remaining ingredients in two wide-mouth jars (approximately pint sized). **Step 3:** Top with tight-fitting lids and keep chilled until ready to serve. Use a fork to mix and eat it straight from the jar. Great for the lunchbox!

SNACK

Cherry Salsa & Chips

2 cups fresh cherries, pitted (or frozen cherries, thawed and drained)
4 green onions, minced
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 cup fresh cilantro
1-2 tablespoons lemon juice (to taste)
1 teaspoon minced jalapeño or a dash of hot pepper sauce (optional)
pita chips

Step 1: Combine cherries, onions, garlic and cilantro in a bowl. **Step 2:** Add lemon juice and spice it up to taste, then serve with pita chips.

DINNER

Cherry Rice Pilaf

1 cup brown basmati rice (or any type of long grain brown rice)
2 1/2 cups vegetable or chicken stock
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
2 large carrots, cut into small cubes or matchsticks
3/4 cups fresh cherries, pitted and chopped
1/3 cup slivered almonds
1/4 cup fresh flat-leaf parsley (optional)
salt and pepper to taste

Step 1: Put rice in a large bowl, rinse it thoroughly, leave it in the bowl and fill with enough water to cover rice, then set aside to soak for approx. 30 minutes while preparing the other ingredients. **Step 2:** Warm oil in a medium stock pot, then add onions and carrots and sauté 3-5 minutes until they begin to soften. **Step 3:** Drain rice and add it to the pot along with the vegetables. Add the stock to the pot. Stir, cover and bring to a simmer for about 40 minutes until rice is tender and all water is absorbed. **Step 4:** Stir in cherries, almonds, parsley, salt and pepper to taste, and serve hot.