



**Traverse Bay Farms**

**Fruit for a Healthy You**



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Fruit for a Healthy You



# Tart Cherry Report

How to Maintain Healthy Joints\* and a Healthy Cardiovascular System\*



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We would like to thank CMI as the source for the recipes in this special tart cherry report.

This is Version 1 of Tart Cherry Report by Traverse Bay Farms:

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### **Introduction: The Tart Cherry**



The tart cherry has a long history of offering natural health benefits. The tart cherry has traveled the world from Asia to Europe and finally to the new world. The cherry has pleased the palates of food lovers for centuries. Its ruby-red color and tangy taste won cherries a place on the tables of Roman conquerors, Greek citizens and Chinese noblemen. Cherries were ultimately, brought to America aboard ships by early settlers in the 1600s.

After the cherry arrived in the new world it spread across the country and several states boast commercial cherry crops including New York, Wisconsin, Utah, Washington and Michigan. In fact, Northwestern Lower Michigan is known as the “Cherry Capital of the World”. This section of Michigan produces approximately 60% of U.S. tart cherry production.

In 1852, Mr. Dougherty, a Presbyterian missionary living in Northern Michigan, planted the first tart cherry tree on Old Mission Peninsula

Much to the surprise of the other farmers and Indians who



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Area

lived in the area, Dougherty's tart cherry farm and trees flourished and soon other residents of the area started their very own cherry farms. The area proved to be ideal for growing cherries because Lake Michigan tempers Arctic winds in winter and cools the orchards in summer.

The first official commercial tart cherry orchards in Michigan were planted in 1893 on Ridgewood Farm near the site of Dougherty's original plantings. By the early 1900s, the tart cherry industry was firmly established in the state with orchards not only in the Traverse City area, but all along Lake Michigan from Benton Harbor to Elk Rapids. Soon production surpassed other major crops. The first cherry processing facility, Traverse City Canning Company, was built just south of Traverse City, and the tart cherry fruit was soon shipped to Chicago, Detroit and Milwaukee.

### **The Natural Health Benefits of the Tart Cherry**

The tart cherry offers a number natural nutrients and health benefits. For decades the tart cherry has been to subject of folklore and legend. The amazing stories of it natural health benefits being passed down from generation to generation, from grandfather to grandson and from mother to daughter.

In addition, many of the world's leading research organizations are studying this ruby red fruit with amazing results. These studies are being funded by research universities, USDA grants, private companies and public grants. So thanks to an ever increasing number of published research papers and published studies, all of those the legends and folklores now seem to have a large amount of fact.

This special report will introduce you to the antioxidant properties and health benefits of the tart cherry. Ongoing research from medical universities suggests tart cherries may...

- Provide the body with high levels of ORAC units
- Helps maintain healthy joint function\*
- Helps maintain a healthy cardiovascular system\*
- Helps maintain healthy sleep patterns\*

Like many foods, tart cherries are a natural source of a broad range of antioxidants. However, the unique makeup and combination of the antioxidants in tart cherries are what make this tiny fruit so special. Tart cherries are a source of fiber, potassium, beta carotene, melatonin, flavonoids, anthocyanins and more.

In addition, when comparing tart cherries to other types of fruit, the tart cherry offers outstanding nutrient values. For example, frozen tart cherries are higher in beta carotene and thiamin than frozen blueberries and strawberries. The levels of vitamin A and beta carotene are 19 times higher than these same two frozen fruits. (I have included a complete chart below for your review)

But before we go any further, let's take a closer look at the nutritional information for several different types of tart cherry products:

### **Nutritional Information on Select Tart Cherry Products**

**A daily serving (1/4 cup – 45g) of dried tart cherries provides the following:**

- 138 Calories
- 4.55 g protein
- 28.9g Carbohydrates
- .23g Fat

**A daily serving (1 oz. – 28.3g) of tart cherry juice concentrate**



- 74 Calories
- .92 g protein
- 17.5g Carbohydrates
- 0g Fat



**A daily serving (1/2 cup – 67g) of frozen tart cherries**

- 28 Calories
- .65 g protein
- 6.35g Carbohydrates
- .4g Fat

**A daily serving (1/2 oz. – 121g) of canned tart cherries**

- 37 Calories
- .90 g protein
- 8.13g Carbohydrates
- .07g Fat

\* Nutritional analysis conducted by the American Analytical Chemistry Laboratories Corporation

**Selected Nutrients in Tart Cherries Compared to Other Fruits**

Select Fruit Vitamin A Beta Carotene Vitamin B6 Thiamin Iron Potassium (100 grams) IU MCG MG MG MG Tart Cherries 870 522 .067 .044 .53 124

**Frozen**

**Watermelon** 569 303 .045 .033 .24 112 **Raw**

**Peaches** 326 162 .025 .024 .25 190 **Raw**

**Blueberries** 46 28 .059 .032 .18 54 **Frozen**

**Strawberries** 45 27 .028 .022 .75 148 **Frozen**

**Raspberries** 33 12 .055 .032 .69 151 **Raw**

**Oranges** 225 71 .060 .087 .10 181 **Raw**

Source: USDA National Nutrient Database



### **What is an Antioxidant?**

An antioxidant is defined as “various substances (as beta-carotene, vitamin C, and alpha-tocopherol) that may inhibit oxidation promoted by oxygen and peroxides and may help to protect the body from the effects of free radicals.”

In other words, antioxidants may deactivate free radicals in the body. Thousands of studies have repeatedly shown that maintaining high levels of antioxidants helps to maintain a healthy body and a healthy lifestyle. So what is a free radical?

Free radicals are unstable molecules that have lost an oxygen molecule. These unstable molecules steal oxygen molecules from healthy cells. One example of the affects of free radicals on healthy cells is the browning of a freshly cut apple or potato.

If you have ever cut an apple or a potato and let it set on the counter for 20 minutes you have witnessed the affects of free radicals on healthy cells. The browning of the exposed fruit is what is called “cellular rust” and this is similar to what occurs in the body. Antioxidants fight these free radicals. That is why it is vital to eat a healthy diet and food that is high in ORAC value.

ORAC or Oxygen Radical Absorption Capability measures the total antioxidant value of different foods. ORAC values indicate how many free radicals a specific food can absorb and deactivate. The more free radicals a food can absorb the higher its ORAC value score. Thus, the higher the score, the better the food is in helping the body to stay healthy.

Nutrition experts estimate that the body needs a daily consumption of 3,000 to 5,000 ORAC units to reach significant oxygen capacity in the blood and realize the health benefits of ORAC in food.

### **What are Anthocyanins?**

Anthocyanins are responsible for giving nature its vibrant colors. Anthocyanins are present in every

fruit and vegetable that has color. You can see the overwhelming presence of this pigment when you visit an orchard or the fresh produce section of your local grocery store. Anthocyanins are present in blueberries, cherries, strawberries, apples, and red raspberries to name a few. In addition, anthocyanins are the phytochemicals responsible for changing the colors of the leaves during the Autumn months from green to fiery red, orange, purple, yellow and more.

Anthocyanins have long been the study of botanists due to their phytoprotective capabilities. To date, over 300 distinct types of Anthocyanins have been identified. Based upon research, Anthocyanins belong to one class of flavonoids. Flavonoids include a number of different classes including flavones, flavonones, flavon-3-ols and flavonols to name a few. Different classes of flavonoids have different oxidation states. Thus, from an oxidative standpoint, different fruits and vegetables offer different oxidative degrees or ORAC values.



### **Tart Cherries Offer a Number of Antioxidant Compounds**

The good news about tart cherries and their natural healing benefits just keeps coming. Medical schools and research universities continue to publish more evidence showing the amazing health benefits of this tiny red fruit.

Research shows tart cherries have at least 17 naturally occurring compounds that offer an entire range of healthy benefits. According to an article published in 2006 in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* the tart cherry ranked 14 of the top 50 foods in a study for total ORAC content per serving – the ORAC value of the tart cherry surpassed red wine, orange juice, prune and even dark chocolate.

Cherry Product ORAC (units per serving)

Frozen Cherries – ½ cup 1,362

Dried Cherries – ¼ cup 3,060

Cherry Juice Concentrate – 1 oz. 3,622

\*Research conducted at Jean Mayer USDA Human Research Center on Aging and Brunswick Laboratory

### **Quantity of Melatonin Identified in Cherries**

The University of Texas Health Science Center recently began to quantify the availability and activity of the melatonin in cherry products. Melatonin is a potent antioxidant for which there is extensive evidence showing it to be significant in improving the body's circadian rhythms and natural sleep patterns.

In their preliminary work, Dr. Russel Reiter and Dr. Dun-xian Tan used radioimmunoassay (RIA) and high performance liquid chromatography with electrochemical detection (HPLC-EC) to identify

substantial levels of melatonin in tart cherry juice concentrate. The amount of melatonin found, says Dr. Reiter, "is extremely significant." Although melatonin is found in the body in extremely small quantities, slight increases in melatonin levels can produce very positive results.

Researchers are now working to determine the amount of active melatonin available to the human body after the consumption of tart cherry juice or other cherry products. Once identified, researchers will be able to calculate the optimum level of cherries that should be consumed to achieve the greatest health benefit. Dr. Reiter points out, "as we age, the human body's ability to produce melatonin decreases," so it may be beneficial to find a way to increase melatonin levels, particularly for the elderly. Including cherries as part of a healthy diet could be a way to do this.

### **Cherries: The Healthy Fruit**

The good news about the health benefits of cherries continues to increase. According to ongoing research, Montmorency tart cherries are a rich source of antioxidants. In addition, there are beneficial compounds in Montmorency tart cherries that may help maintain healthy joint function.

Other fruits and vegetable do not have the unique anthocyanin and antioxidant makeup similar to those of tart cherries.

While the research on the exact mechanisms that give cherries their unique ability to maintain healthy joint function, many consumers are discovering that tart cherry juice and other cherry products can help maintain an active lifestyle.



Research also shows that tart cherries are a rich source of powerful antioxidants, including kaempferol, quercetin and melatonin. Melatonin is a powerful antioxidant considered more potent than vitamins C, E, and A, because it is soluble both in fat and water.

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#### **Cherries and a Healthy Cardiovascular System\***

Cherries are packed with powerful health-promoting properties. Research indicates tart cherries contain at least 17 natural compounds including beta carotene, vitamin A, Melatonin and phenol compounds known as flavonoids.

Studies suggest flavonoids help promote cardiovascular health\*. Some of the specific flavonoids in cherries include anthocyanins, proanthocyanins and anthocyanidins. Anthocyanins are naturally occurring compounds that give fruits, vegetables and plants their vibrant color. Tart cherries are a good source of these vital flavonoids.

Brunswick Labs located in Wareham, MA discovered that tart cherries also contain a class of compounds called SOD (super oxide dismutase), which act as super scavengers of dangerous free radicals throughout the body. Very few foods contain SOD and the human body is often lacking in SOD

#### **New Research Shows the Power of Cherries**

Recently published research conducted at Michigan State University (1) investigated a range of fruits and berries for the level and activity of anthocyanins found in each.

Researchers analyzed the ability of the fruits to help maintain a healthy body and act as antioxidants to destroy free radicals. The researchers then quantified the anthocyanin levels of tart and sweet cherries, raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, blueberries, cranberries, elderberries and bilberries.

Researchers discovered that the antioxidant activity of anthocyanins from cherries was superior to vitamin E at a test concentration of 125 g/ml.

Anthocyanins 1 and 2 are present in both cherries and raspberries. The yields of pure anthocyanins 1 and 2 in 100 g in cherries and raspberries were the highest of the fruits tested at 26.5 and 24 mg, respectively. Fresh blackberries and strawberries contained only anthocyanin 2 at a total level of 22.5 and 18.2 mg/100 g, respectively; whereas anthocyanins 1 and 2 were not found in bilberries, blueberries, cranberries or elderberries.



#### **The "Dean of Melatonin Research" Gives Tart Cherries High Marks**

Dr. Russel Reiter never envisioned that he'd become a hero to U. S. tart cherry growers, but then again,



he never imagined that melatonin, the simple, natural hormone he'd been studying for years would be found in such significant quantities in tart cherries.

"We were surprised at how much melatonin was in cherries, specifically the Montmorency variety," says Reiter. The only other fruits that have been examined to date are bananas and pineapples, and both have comparatively low melatonin levels. "Cherry juice concentrate, which involves greatly reducing the water content, has ten times the melatonin of the raw fruit." (1)

Produced in the pineal gland at the base of the brain, melatonin controls sleepiness at night, wakefulness in daytime and functions as an antioxidant to help the body destroy free radicals.(2) Recent research conducted by Dr. Reiter at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, Texas, quantified the availability and activity of melatonin found in cherry products. The results were astonishing. Cherries contain an extremely significant quantity of melatonin, enough to produce positive results in the body.

Montmorency cherries, which account for the majority of tart cherries produced in the United States, contain up to 13.5 nanograms (ng) of melatonin per gram of cherries, more than is normally found in the blood.(3)

Dr. Russel Reiter began his distinguished career more than 30 years ago in neuroendocrinology, the study of the glands and hormones of the brain. A year earlier, in 1958, a dermatologist named Aaron Lerner at Yale University discovered the existence of melatonin. (4) Today, Dr. Reiter is the preeminent scientist on melatonin and the advantageous effects it has on human health and well-being. Dr. Reiter has authored or co-authored more than 700 papers in his field, trained over 130 doctorates, and is the author of the book *Melatonin*, published by Bantam Books. His peers consider him the "dean of melatonin research".

One of the main areas on which Dr. Reiter focused in his recent work addresses a common consumer concern, which is, "will the melatonin present in cherries actually increase melatonin levels in the body favorably?" Melatonin is by far the most potent of the antioxidants, much more so than vitamins C, E and A. The reason: melatonin is soluble both in fat and water and can therefore enter some cells that vitamins cannot. For example, vitamin E is soluble in the lipid part of the cell only and vitamin C in the aqueous part. Melatonin is soluble in both. For this reason, Dr. Reiter says, eating cherries with high melatonin concentrations will increase the antioxidant capacity in the body.

Although melatonin is available as a supplement and can be purchased without a prescription, Dr. Reiter and other health experts extol the benefits of consuming melatonin through food consumption. Not only do many foods provide beneficial antioxidants and similar compounds, they are often found in foods that provide a variety of health benefits. Cherries may, one day, be classified as a functional food, but they also offer consumers great flavor, versatility and nutrition.

### **Melatonin Levels in Different Tart Cherry Products:**

Fresh Tart Cherries: Melatonin per gram Up to 13.5 nanograms (ng) of



Tart Cherry Juice

Concentrate: Has up to 10 times more the Melatonin per gram when compared to the raw fruit.

Tart Cherry Powder: 137+ ng per gram (Cherry powder is used to make tart cherry capsules)

Thanks to advances in food science technology, different production methods are able to extract different levels of this naturally occurring compound and deliver them to you.

### **What is Melatonin?**

Melatonin is produced in the pineal gland, which is located at the base of the brain. In addition to controlling the body's rhythmic clock, melatonin also acts as an antioxidant. It helps to combat free radicals in the body. Additional research from the University of Texas indicates melatonin is both

soluble in both fat and water. This helps this compound to penetrate some cells that vitamins cannot enter, thus melatonin is more potent than vitamins A, C, and E. Although melatonin is available without a prescription, food experts recommend consuming this beneficial compound through whole food consumption like tart cherries.

### **Tart Cherries May Help to Soothe Muscle Soreness to Physical Exercise\***

Another benefit of the tart cherry is it may help to soothe muscle soreness due to physical exercise\*. Much research has been conducted on the benefits of tart cherries regarding healthy joint function\* and cardiovascular health\* issues. The University of Vermont and colleagues at New York's Nicholas Institute of Sports Medicine and Athletic Trauma and Cornell University conducted a study on a fresh, highly-concentrated tart cherry juice blend in preventing the symptoms of muscle pain and damage on 14 male college students. This was a placebo-controlled study by the researchers.



The study had the participants either drink a placebo or a bottle of a cherry juice blend twice a day for three days before exercising. The 12-ounce bottle of juice contained the liquid equivalent of 50 to 60 tart cherries. During the study the participants were asked to perform exercises including contractions in the muscle. The participants were asked to tense and flex one arm 20 times.

The study rated the muscle soreness on a scale of one to ten. According to the study, there was a significant difference in the degree of muscle strength between the tart cherry juice product and the placebo. Those drinking the placebo, muscle strength fell by 22 percent while those drinking the cherry juice product fell by only 4 percent. In addition, the average pain score between the placebo and the

cherry drink was 3.2 compared to only 2.4. The results indicated muscle pain was less with those that drink the cherry juice.

So no matter your age, if you have sore muscles consider adding tart cherry juice to your daily diet.

### **Ten Ways to Incorporate Tart Cherries into Your Daily Route**



quick healthy snack. Due to today's active and hectic lifestyles, incorporating cherries into your daily diet may seem difficult. However, here are a ten simple ways to enjoy the natural health benefits of cherries everyday:

1. **Straight from the Bag** – Buy single serve dried cherries or 8 oz. dried cherry bags and keep them in your office drawer or purse for a
2. **Cherries on the Run** – Add an ounce of tart cherry juice concentrate to your water bottle and shake. This will make a 100% pure and refreshing cherry drink to enjoy while biking, driving or walking. It may even reduce muscle soreness about a busy day.
3. **A Fruity Parfait** – Mix some granola and yogurt with frozen cherries for tasty snack.
4. **Blend It** – Add some ice, wheat germ, a banana, cherry juice concentrate and a dash of low-fat milk and start the day off right with a cool, anti-oxidant rich smoothie.
5. **Breakfast Additions** – Add a handful of dried or frozen cherries to your favorite cereal or oatmeal.
6. **Tart Cherry Capsules**- Tart cherry capsules are a great way to get to the anti-oxidant benefits of this superfruit. They are convenient, easy-to-travel and they don't need refrigeration. Two tart cherry capsules equal the anti-oxidant equivalent of 5 glasses of tart cherry juice without the sugar.
7. **Make a Cherry Salad** – Add some tasty dried cherries to your favorite salad and taste the cherry difference.
8. **Dinner Additions** – Dried cherries make a great addition to couscous, rice pilaf and pasta.
9. **Cookies and Desserts** – Chop up some dried cherries and add them to muffins or cookies.
10. **Sprinkle Away** – Sprinkle tart cherry powder on all types of food for both a yummy cherry taste and a meal rich in anti-oxidants. Tart cherry powder is very versatile.

### **Tart Cherry Supplements and Tart Cherry Products**

The tart cherry offers a number of different ways to enjoy its health benefits including dried tart cherries, tart cherry juice concentrate, tart cherry capsules and more. Below are the many different types of tart cherry products available.

- **Fresh Tart Cherries:** When in season, you can get fresh cherries straight from the farmers market or the produce section of your local store. Unfortunately, fresh tart cherries are only in season for a few short weeks during the summer months. Thus, finding fresh cherries may be very difficult. However, only a few farms ship cherries while they are in season. [Traverse Bay Farms](http://www.traversebayfarms.com) <http://www.traversebayfarms.com> ships fresh tart cherry during the summer harvest months.
- **Frozen Tart Cherries:** Enjoy a few thawed cherries in your pancakes or muffins. To get your hands on frozen cherries visit the refrigeration section of your local grocery store. However, it may be difficult to find frozen tart cherries due to the fact they are not a widely popular product for grocery and gourmet stores.
- **Canned Tart Cherries:** Canned cherries can be found in your local grocery store. They usually most popular during the holiday season. Check with your local grocery store for availability.



- **Dried Tart Cherries:** A handful of dried cherries make a great healthy snack or an



addition to your morning cereal. They also make a good alternative to the candy in the candy jar next to your computer. Remember a ¼ cup of dried cherries delivers 3,060 ORAC units and 15% of the recommended daily allowance of fiber. Dried cherries make a great choice since they are available year round. Get your dried cherries from Traverse Bay Farms [www.traversebayfarms.com](http://www.traversebayfarms.com) . If you are looking for larger bulk sizes of tart cherries, you can also get 25 lb. bulk boxes of dried cherries.

- **Tart Cherry Juice Concentrate:** It takes approximately 100 tart cherries to make one ounce of tart cherry juice. According to recently published in Nutritional Practitioner headed up by Dr. Robert Verkerk 25ml of cherry juice concentrate has an ORAC value of 8,290. The research study compared the ORAC value (Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity) of 25ml of diluted tart cherry juice concentrate with a number of different foods and vegetables.

What is amazing is the ORAC level of cherry juice was 8,260 compared to 1,790 of the various fruits and vegetables used in the study. The study was conducted on the Montmorency tart cherry grown from the USA. Although many types of cherries



exist, the Montmorency tart cherry type is the first choice for many. Each of tart cherry juice concentrate delivers 3,622 ORAC units. This is well within the daily recommended range of 3,000 – 5,000 ORAC units recommended. Remember research indicates ORAC helps the body to fight free radicals. Tart cherry juice concentrate is a concentrated way to get the natural health benefits of this ruby red fruit. Traverse Bay Farms [www.traversebayfarms.com](http://www.traversebayfarms.com) is also a good source for tart cherry juice concentrate.

- **Tart Cherry Capsules:** Tart cherry capsules are the most convenient and easiest way to



get the natural health benefits of the tart cherry. When buying tart cherry capsules make sure they are a whole cherry supplements. A whole cherry supplement uses the entire tart cherry, excluding the pit and the stem, is used to produce the tart cherry capsules. Every part of the tart cherry is used, including the skin and the pulp of the fruit. By using the whole cherry you are getting the synergistic benefits of the whole tart cherry. You can order tart cherry capsules from Traverse Bay Farms at [www.traversebayfarms.com/cherryjuice.htm](http://www.traversebayfarms.com/cherryjuice.htm) You also get free shipping on Fruit Advantage Tart Cherry Joint Formula.

• **Tart Cherry PLUS Glucosamine and Chondroitin:** In addition to offering Fruit Advantage Tart Cherry Joint Formula, Traverse Bay Farms also offer Fruit Advantage Cherry Prime. Fruit Advantage Cherry Prime is the next generation of super fruit products for maintain healthy joint.\* Cherry Prime is a patent-pending formula designed to promote flexibility\*, range of motion\* and comfort\*. By combining these three ingredients into a



patent-pending formula, Cherry Prime is truly raising the bar within the super fruit category for value-added products. You will also receive free shipping on Fruit Advantage Cherry Prime. [www.traversebayfarms.com/cherryprime.htm](http://www.traversebayfarms.com/cherryprime.htm)

• **Tart Cherry Powder:** Tart cherry powder has received a lot of interest and media attention lately. In fact, Arthritis Today has published information on the joint health benefits of tart cherry powder. Tart cherry powder is a very interesting product since it offers the natural benefits of tart cherries year round. In addition, the tart cherry powder used to produce the Fruit Advantage tart cherry capsules, every daily serving delivers the specific antioxidant benefits of over 5 glasses of cherry juice. With Fruit Advantage Tart Cherry Joint Formula, you receive the entire cherry including the skin and the pulp. Learn more about tart cherry powder and tart cherry capsules at [www.traversebayfarms.com/tartcherry.htm](http://www.traversebayfarms.com/tartcherry.htm)

### **Delicious Cherry Recipes**

#### *Sensational Stuffed Mushrooms*

Hot out of the oven, mushroom caps are an elegant appetizer.

- 30 large mushrooms (about 1 pound)
- 1/2 pound bulk pork sausage

- 1 cup chopped dried tart cherries
- 2 green onions, sliced
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened

Pull stems from mushrooms and discard (or save for another use). Rinse mushroom caps; drain well. Set aside.

Cook sausage in a large skillet 5 minutes, or until sausage is done. Stir occasionally to break up meat. Remove from heat. Add dried cherries, green onions and cream cheese; mix well. Fill each mushroom cap with a heaping teaspoon of sausage mixture. Place filled mushrooms on a lightly greased baking sheet. Bake in a preheated 425-degree oven 6 to 8 minutes. Serve immediately.

Makes 30.

### *Cherry Salsa*

Served with grilled poultry, roast pork or tortilla chips, this spicy mixture wows traditional salsa lovers.

- 1 1/3 cups frozen unsweetened tart cherries
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped dried tart cherries
- 1/4 cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh or canned jalapeno peppers, or to taste
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro or 1/2 teaspoon dried cilantro
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch

Coarsely chop frozen tart cherries. Let cherries thaw and drain, reserving 1 tablespoon cherry juice. When cherries are thawed, put drained cherries, dried cherries, onion, jalapenos, garlic and cilantro in a medium saucepan; mix well. In a small container, combine reserved cherry juice and cornstarch; mix until smooth, then stir into cherry mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, over medium-high heat until mixture is thickened. Let cool. Serve with tortilla chips and/or cooked chicken or pork.

Makes about 1 cup.

### *Cherry Delicious Couscous Salad*

The perfect accompaniment for meat or poultry.

- 1 cup water or chicken broth
- 3/4 cup quick-cooking couscous, uncooked
- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped carrots
- 1/2 cup chopped unpeeled cucumber
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup toasted pine nuts or slivered almonds (optional)
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Dijon-style mustard
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Bring water or broth to a boil in a medium saucepan; stir in couscous. Remove from heat; let stand, covered, 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Uncover; let cool 10 minutes.

Combine cooked couscous, dried cherries, carrots, cucumber, green onions and pine nuts in a large bowl. Combine vinegar, olive oil and mustard; mix well. Pour vinegar mixture over couscous mixture; mix well. Season with salt and pepper. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Makes 4 cups; about 6 servings.

### *Cherry Chewbibles*

Beyond ordinary, try these cookies made with extraordinary dried cherries!

- 1 cup margarine, softened
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 package (10 ounces) vanilla-flavored morsels or 1 cup coarsely chopped white chocolate
- 1 1/2 cups dried tart cherries
- 1 cup coarsely chopped cashews

Put margarine, granulated sugar, brown sugar, eggs and vanilla in a large mixing bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until well mixed. Combine flour and baking soda. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture; mix well. Stir in vanilla flavored morsels, dried cherries and cashews. Drop by rounded tablespoons onto ungreased baking sheets.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 10 to 12 minutes, or until light golden brown. Do not overbake. Transfer to wire racks to cool. Store in a tightly covered container.

These cookies freeze well.

Makes 4 to 5 dozen.



*Cherry Tiramisu*

Smooth and easy describe this layered cherry dessert that is a variation of an Italian classic.

- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup coffee liqueur
- 30 (2-inch) shortbread cookies (such as Lorna Doones)
- 1 can (21 ounces) cherry filling and topping

- Grated chocolate, for garnish (optional)
- Fresh mint leaves, for garnish (optional)

Put ricotta cheese, confectioners' sugar, sour cream and coffee liqueur in a large mixing bowl; stir to mix well. Set aside.

Put cookies, a few at a time, in an electric blender or food processor container. Process until finely crushed. You should have about 1 1/2 cups of cookie crumbs.

Remove 6 cherries from cherry filling; reserve for garnish.

To assemble dessert, spoon 2 tablespoons ricotta cheese mixture into each of six (8-ounce) parfait glasses. Add 2 tablespoons cookie crumbs to each glass; top each with 2 tablespoons cherry filling. Repeat ricotta, crumb and cherry layers. Finish each serving with an equal portion of the remaining ricotta cheese mixture.

Garnish with reserved cherries, grated chocolate and mint leaves, if desired. Let chill 2 to 3 hours before serving.

Makes 6 servings.

### *Cherry Peanut Pizzaz*

This is an easy-to-prepare snack, perfect for holiday parties or gift giving.

- 2 cup lightly salted peanuts
- 1 cup dried tart cherries
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon seasoned salt, or to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper (cayenne pepper), or to taste
- Vegetable oil

Combine peanuts and cherries in a medium bowl. In a small bowl, combine Worcestershire sauce, garlic powder, seasoned salt, cumin and red pepper; mix well. Pour over peanut mixture; stir to coat.

Heat 1 or 2 teaspoons of oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add peanut mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, 3 to 4 minutes, or until peanuts are light brown. Do not allow mixture to burn. Add more oil, if needed. Remove from heat. Spread on waxed paper or aluminum foil to cool. Store in a tightly covered container.

Makes 3 cups.

### *Cherry Almond Clusters*

A sweet treat for any gathering.

- 1 (8-ounce) package semisweet baking chocolate
- 1 cup slivered almonds, toasted
- 1 cup dried tart cherries





Put chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on High (100%) power 2 minutes, stirring halfway through the heating time. Stir until chocolate is completely melted. Add almonds and dried cherries; mix until completely coated with chocolate. Drop by teaspoons onto waxed paper. Refrigerate until firm.

To toast almonds: Spread almonds on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 5 to 7 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Makes 2 dozen.

### **National Cherry Month Recipes**

#### ***Traditional Cherry Pie***

George Washington's favorite dessert can be yours, too.

- 2 (16-ounce) cans unsweetened tart cherries or 4 cups frozen unsweetened tart cherries
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- Pastry for 2-crust, 9-inch pie
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine

If using canned cherries, drain them well. Discard the juice or save for another use. If using frozen cherries, it is not necessary to thaw them. Combine well drained canned cherries or frozen cherries, granulated sugar, tapioca and almond extract in a large mixing bowl; mix well. Let stand 15 minutes.

Line a 9-inch pie plate with pastry; fill with cherry mixture. Dot with butter. Adjust top crust, cutting slits for steam to escape, or cut top crust into strips and make a lattice-top pie.

Bake in a preheated 400-degree oven 50 to 55 minutes, or until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly.

Makes 8 servings.

#### ***Cherry Blossoms***

Prepared the night before, breakfast rolls have never been easier.

- 2/3 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 cup dried tart cherries, divided
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped pecans
- 1 loaf (14 to 16 ounces) frozen white bread dough, thawed

- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon in a deep-dish pie pan. Sprinkle 1/2 cup of the cherries and pecans evenly over sugar mixture.

On a lightly floured surface, roll bread dough into a 12x8-inch rectangle; brush with melted butter. In a small mixing bowl, combine brown sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over dough. Top with remaining 1/2 cup cherries. Roll up rectangle, jelly-roll style, starting from a long side; pinch to seal edges. With a sharp knife, cut roll into 12 slices.

Place slices, cut-side down, on top of mixture in pan. Let rise, covered, in a warm place 30 minutes, or until nearly double. (Or, cover with waxed paper, then with plastic wrap. Refrigerate 2 to 24 hours. Before baking, let chilled rolls stand, covered, 20 minutes at room temperature.)

Bake, uncovered, in a preheated 375-degree oven 20 to 25 minutes for unchilled rolls and 25 to 30 minutes for chilled rolls, or until golden brown. If necessary, cover rolls with foil the last 10 minutes to prevent overbrowning. Let cool in pan 1 to 2 minutes. Invert onto a serving platter. Serve warm.

Makes 12 rolls.

### *Cherry-Chocolate Heart*

Taste tempting flavors of hot fudge sauce and whipped cream pair up with cherries for a Valentine's Day dessert that is guaranteed to melt hearts.

- 1 (15-ounce) package refrigerated pie crusts
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/2 cup whipping cream
- 2/3 cup hot fudge ice cream topping
- 1 (21-ounce) can cherry filling and topping

Allow both crust pouches to stand at room temperature 15 to 20 minutes. Remove one crust from pouch; unfold. Press out fold lines. If crust cracks, wet fingers and push edges together. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon flour over crust. Turn crust, floured side down, on ungreased cookie sheet. Using paper pattern as guide, cut crust into heart shape.\* Generously prick heart crust with fork. Bake in a preheated 450-degree oven 9 to 11 minutes, or until lightly browned. Let cool. Repeat with the remaining crust.

Combine cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and almond extract in a small bowl; beat until smooth. Add whipping cream and beat until thickened.



To assemble, place one heart-shaped pie crust on serving plate; spread with 1/3 cup of the hot fudge. Carefully spread half of cream cheese mixture over hot fudge. Spoon 2/3 of the cherry filling over cream cheese. Spread second crust with remaining hot fudge and place over filling. Carefully spread with remaining cream cheese mixture. Spoon remaining cherry filling about 1 inch from edge. Refrigerate until serving time. Store any remaining torte in refrigerator.

Makes 8 to 10 servings.

\* To make pattern, cut a piece of paper into a heart shape about 10 1/2 inches high and 10 inches wide.

### *Sweetheart Puff*

Heart's will throb when they see and taste this delightful dessert.

- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry (1/2 of a 17 1/4-ounce package), thawed
- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate
- 1/4 cup margarine
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 (21-ounce) can cherry pie filling and topping
- 1 cup whipped topping

Unfold pastry on lightly floured surface; roll out to smooth folds. Cut out a large heart shape (approximately 9 x 8-inches). Put on baking sheet. Wet edge of pastry with water; fold in edge toward center about 1/2-inch. Press down edges with fork tines. Prink center area of pastry with fork tines several times.

Place a piece of foil cut to fit the center of the heart; top with pie weights, dry beans or uncooked rice to prevent puffing. Bake in a preheated 400-degree oven 8 minutes. Remove foil with rice or beans. Bake 4 to 7 minutes longer, or until golden brown. Carefully remove heart to a wire rack; let cool completely. Melt chocolate, margarine and heavy cream in a medium saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly. Stir in vanilla. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Place heart on serving plate. Spread chocolate mixture over center of heart. Refrigerate 30 minutes. Spoon cherry pie filling over chocolate layer. Pipe or spoon whipped topping around edge of tart. Refrigerate until serving time.

Makes 6 servings.

### *Black Forest Upside-Down Sundae*

This easy-to-prepare dessert is a crowd pleaser.



- 1 (10-ounce) jar maraschino cherries, drained
- 1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened
- 1/2 cup hot fudge topping
- 10 cream-filled chocolate cookies (such as Oreos), crushed
- Maraschino cherries with stems, for garnish

Line a 5-cup gelatin mold or bowl with aluminum foil. Arrange 12 whole cherries on the bottom of the foil. Chop remaining cherries; fold into softened ice cream. Spoon half of the ice cream mixture into bottom of mold. Spoon fudge topping over ice cream; spread remaining ice cream over the fudge topping. Sprinkle cookie crumbs over top of ice cream; press lightly. Freeze 4 to 6 hours or until firm. Carefully pull foil out of mold and unmold with cookie crumbs on bottom on a chilled plate. Garnish with maraschino cherries with stems, if desired.

Makes 8 servings.

Note: This dessert can be made up to one week ahead; cover with foil.

### *Chocolate Angel Cake*

This dessert is perfect for Valentine's Day or any special occasion

- 1 (16-ounce) package angel food cake mix
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1-1/2 cups plus 2 tablespoons hot fudge topping, divided
- 2 cups whipped topping, divided
- 1 (21-ounce) can cherry pie filling, divided

Prepare cake mix according to package directions, mixing cocoa with dry ingredients. Spoon batter evenly into an ungreased 10-inch tube pan. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven as directed on the package. Let cool as package directs.

When cake is completely cooled, carefully remove from pan. Cut horizontally in half. Place one half, cut side up, on serving plate. Spread with 3/4 cup fudge topping. (Do not heat topping.) Cover with 1 cup whipped topping, then half of the cherry pie filling. Place the other half of the cake over cherries, cut side down. Spread with 3/4 cup fudge topping. Cover with remaining 1 cup whipped topping and remaining cherry pie filling. Refrigerate 1 hour. Just before serving, drizzle remaining 2 tablespoons fudge topping over cherry pie filling.

Makes 12 servings.

### **Maraschino Cherry Recipes**

#### *Cherry Flyers*

This refreshing drink is a great mid-day pick-me-up.

1/2 cup (about 14) maraschino cherries, drained

1 cup orange juice

1 (8-ounce) container cherry yogurt

1-3/4 cup whipped topping (about 1/2 of an 8-ounce container), thawed

3/4 cup pineapple juice

Maraschino cherries and fresh pineapple, for garnish

Put cherries, orange juice, yogurt, whipped topping and pineapple juice in an electric blender. Blend 1 to 2 minutes, or until smooth. Serve over ice.



Makes 4 (6-ounce) servings.

### *Maraschino Thumbprint Cookies*

These rich chocolate cookies are pretty as well as delicious.

- 2 (10-ounce) jars maraschino cherries
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 2 tablespoons milk

Drain maraschino cherries, reserving 1 teaspoon juice. Put butter and sugar in medium bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until well blended. Add egg and vanilla; mix well. Combine flour, cocoa, salt and baking powder; add flour mixture to butter mixture. Beat until well mixed.

Put chocolate chips and milk in a small saucepan. Heat, stirring constantly, over low heat until chocolate melts. Stir in reserved maraschino cherry juice. Let cool slightly.

Shape dough into 1-inch balls. Place on an ungreased baking pan. Push in center with your thumb; spoon 1 teaspoon chocolate mixture into each thumbprint and top with a cherry.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 10 to 12 minutes, or until cookies are firm. Remove to wire racks.

Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container.

Makes about 3 dozen.

### *Frozen Fruit Salad*

This salad is so good you could serve it for dessert.

- 1 (16-ounce) jar maraschino cherries
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin oranges, drained
- 2-1/2 cups miniature marshmallows (1/2 of a 10-1/2-ounce bag)
- 1 (8-ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed
- Lettuce leaves
- Fresh mint

Drain cherries, reserving 1/4 cup juice. Set aside. Put cream cheese and pineapple with juice in a medium mixing bowl; beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until combined.

Stir in mandarin oranges and cherries with 1/4 cup cherry juice. Gently fold in marshmallows and whipped topping. Spread evenly in a 13x9x2-inch baking pan. Freeze 4-6 hours, or overnight. Serve on a lettuce leaf; garnish with fresh mint.

Makes 12 to 15 servings.

### *Banana Split French Toast*

Surprise your family with this wonderful brunch entree.

- 1 (10-ounce) jar maraschino cherries
- 1 (16-ounce) loaf French bread
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 (8-ounce) can crushed pineapple, drained
- 1/3 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips
- 4 eggs
- 1/3 cup milk
- 4 small ripe bananas, halved lengthwise
- 2 cups frozen whipped topping (about 2/3 of an 8-ounce container), thawed
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- Maple syrup, warmed

Cut 4 maraschino cherries in half; set aside for garnish. Chop remaining cherries. Cut off and discard ends of bread loaf. Slice remaining loaf into 16 (1/2-inch to 3/4-inch) slices.

Combine cream cheese, sugar and vanilla in a medium mixing bowl; beat with an electric mixer at medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until creamy. By hand, stir in pineapple, chocolate chips and chopped cherries; mix well.

Spray a 15x10x1-inch baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. Combine eggs and milk in a shallow bowl or pie plate. Dip one side of 1 bread slice into egg mixture. Place on baking pan, dipped side down. Gently spread with 1/8 of cream cheese mixture; top with a banana half. Repeat with 7 more slices.

Dip one side of each of the remaining 8 bread slices in egg mixture. Place, dipped side up, on top of banana. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 35 to 40 minutes, or until tops are light golden brown and centers are set.

To serve, top each serving with 1/4 cup whipped topping, 1-1/2 teaspoons chopped pecans and 1 reserved cherry half. Serve with maple syrup.

Makes 8 servings.

### *Cherry-rific Shake*

Kids--and adults--will like this fun beverage.

- 3/4 cup cherry yogurt
- 2/3 cup (about 18) maraschino cherries, drained
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1-1/2 cups chocolate frozen yogurt or chocolate ice cream, softened
- Maraschino cherries, whipped topping and chocolate shavings, for garnish

Put cherry yogurt, cherries and milk in an electric blender; blend well. Add frozen yogurt; blend until smooth. Pour into chilled glasses. Garnish with whipped topping, chocolate shavings and cherries.



Makes 2 (8-ounce) servings.

### *Caramel-Cherry Sticky Buns*

Treat your family to this easy-to-prepare breakfast roll.

- 12 bite-size caramel candies
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 1/2 cup (about 14) well-drained maraschino cherries, halved
- 1/4 cup pecans, chopped
- 1 (12-ounce) package refrigerated buttermilk biscuits (10 biscuits per package)

Melt caramels and milk in a small heavy saucepan over low heat, stirring constantly until smooth. Pour caramel mixture into a well-greased 9-inch glass pie plate.

Place cherries, rounded sides down, over caramel mixture; sprinkle with pecans. Separate biscuits and place snugly in pan.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 22 to 25 minutes, or until golden brown. Invert immediately onto serving plate, scraping any remaining caramel over biscuits.

Serve warm. Makes 10 buns.

### *Cherry S'more Brownies*

A campfire favorite has a new twist.

- 1 (10-ounce) jar maraschino cherries
- 1 (19.5-ounce) package fudge brownie mix (for 13x9-inch pan)
- 1/2 cup oil
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 8 whole graham crackers
- 1/2 cup milk chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup miniature marshmallows

Drain maraschino cherries on paper towels; cut in half. Set aside.

Prepare brownie mix according to package directions, using oil, water and eggs.

Spread melted butter in a 13x9x2-inch pan. Cover bottom of pan with a layer of graham crackers. (If necessary, cut crackers with serrated knife to make them fit pan.) Spread brownie batter over crackers.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 5 minutes less than directed on the package. Sprinkle chocolate chips, pecans, cherries and marshmallows over the top. Return to oven; bake an additional 5 to 8 minutes, or until toothpick inserted in center comes out almost clean. Let cool. Cut into squares.

Makes 24 squares.

Third prize winner from TerryAnn Moore, Haddon Township, NJ

### *Low-Fat Cherry Recipes*

#### *Cherry Oatmeal Muffins*

Perfect for breakfast-on-the-run or lunchbox treats.

Makes 12 muffins

Calories per muffin: 159 calories

Total fat per muffin: 5.2 grams; 18 mg cholesterol Percent fat from calories: 29%

- 1 cup old-fashioned or quick-cooking oats, uncooked
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 cup frozen tart cherries, coarsely chopped

Put oats, flour, brown sugar, baking powder and nutmeg in a large mixing bowl; mix well. Combine buttermilk, egg, oil and almond extract in a small bowl. Pour buttermilk mixture into oats mixture; stir just to moisten ingredients. Quickly stir in cherries (it is not necessary to thaw cherries before chopping and adding to batter).

cheries before chopping and adding to batter). degree oven 15 to 20 minutes.

Note: 1 cup canned tart cherries, drained and coarsely chopped, may be substituted for 1 cup frozen tart cherries.

#### *Cherry Rice Pilaf*

This flavorful combination proves that nutritious eating doesn't need to be bland and boring.

Makes 8 servings

Calories per serving: 189

Total fat per serving: 6.4 grams; 0 mg. cholesterol Percent calories from fat: 29%

- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh marjoram (or 1 teaspoon dried)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 tablespoon margarine
- 3 cups cooked rice

Put onion, celery, cherries, walnuts, thyme, marjoram, pepper and margarine in a large non-stick skillet. Cook, uncovered, over medium heat 10 minutes, or until vegetables are tender; stir occasionally. Add rice; mix well. Cook 3 to 4 minutes, or until thoroughly heated.

#### *Cherry Dream*

This easy-to-prepare dessert is perfect for family get-togethers.

Makes 8 servings

Calories per serving: 218 calories

Total fat per serving: 3.4 grams; 0 mg cholesterol Percent calories from fat: 14%

- 5 cups loosely packed angel food cake cubes (about 10 ounces or 1/2 of large angel food cake)

- 1 (21-ounce) can cherry filling and topping
- 1 3/4 cups (4 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- Fresh mint, for garnish

Sprinkle cake cubes in bottom of 9x9x2-inch baking pan. Fold whipped topping into cherry filling in medium bowl. Spoon cherry mixture evenly over cake cubes. Let chill, covered, several hours or overnight. Garnish each serving with a sprig of mint.

### *Cherry Good Cobbler*

This is a great tasting dessert with less than 1 gram of fat per serving.

Makes 8 servings

Calories per serving: 260

Total fat per serving: 1 gram; 0 mg cholesterol Percent calories from fat: 3%

- 2 (21-ounce) cans cherry filling and topping
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 cup orange juice

Topping:

- 1 tablespoon slivered almonds, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Combine cherry filling and almond extract in an ungreased 8x8x2-inch baking pan.

Combine flour, sugar and baking powder in a large mixing bowl; mix well. Add orange juice, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened. Drop batter by tablespoonfuls over cherry filling, making at least 8 dumplings.

For topping: Combine almonds, sugar, orange peel and cinnamon in a small bowl; mix well. Sprinkle over dumplings. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 30 to 35 minutes, or until filling is bubbly and dumplings are brown.

### *Maple Cherry Sauce*

Cherries team up with maple syrup for a flavorful sauce that's terrific with roasted or grilled meats or poultry.

Makes 1 1/2 cups; about 6 servings

Calories per serving: 196

Total fat per serving: 6.4 grams; 0 mg cholesterol Percent calories from fat: 28%

- 1/3 cup cherry juice blend
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 cup frozen unsweetened tart cherries, thawed and well drained
- 3/4 cup real maple or maple-flavored syrup
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel

Put cherry juice blend and cornstarch in a small saucepan; mix well. Cook over medium heat until thickened. Add cherries, maple-flavored syrup, walnuts and orange peel; mix well. Cook, stirring frequently, over low heat until all ingredients are hot. Serve over roast turkey, pork or ham.

### *Dried Cherry Relish*

Serve warm with grilled or blackened fish.

Makes about 2 cups; 12 servings as a relish Calories per serving: 60



Total fat per serving: 1.2 grams; 0.2 mg cholesterol Percent calories from fat: 14%

- 1 1/2 cups dried tart cherries
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large red onion, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

Combine dried cherries, red wine vinegar and balsamic vinegar in a medium mixing bowl. Let soak 30 minutes.

Heat olive oil in a large skillet. Add onion; cook 5 minutes, or until onion is soft. Add sugar; mix well. Cook, stirring occasionally, over low heat 10 minutes.

Add cherries with soaking liquid to onion mixture. Simmer, uncovered, 10 to 15 minutes, or until almost all the liquid is evaporated. Season with salt and pepper. Serve warm.

Note: Relish may be prepared ahead of time and refrigerated; reheat before serving.

### *Low-Fat Cherry Smoothie*

A quick, easy breakfast treat.

Makes 2 servings (about 1 cup each)

Calories per serving: 125

Total fat per serving: 0.7 grams; 2.2 mg cholesterol Percent calories from fat: 5%

- 1 very ripe banana, peeled
- 1 cup frozen unsweetened tart cherries
- 1 cup skim milk

Put banana, frozen cherries and milk in the container of an electric blender; purée until smooth. Serve immediately.

### *Power Bars*

A great pick-me-up any time of day.

Makes 32 bars

Calories per bar: 145

Total fat per bar: 4.7 grams; 0 mg cholesterol Percent calories from fat: 29%

- 3/4 cup margarine
- 2 cups firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups old-fashioned or quick-cooking oats, uncooked
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 can (21 ounces) cherry filling and topping
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract

Put butter and brown sugar in a large mixing bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until well mixed. Combine flour, oats and baking soda. Add flour mixture to sugar mixture; beat on low speed until crumbly.

Spread two-thirds of the oats mixture into the bottom of an un-greased 13x9x2-inch baking pan. Press down to make a firm layer.

Put cherry filling in an electric blender or food processor container; purée until smooth. Pour puréed cherry filling into a medium saucepan. Combine granulated sugar and cornstarch; stir into cherry filling.

Cook, stirring constantly, over low heat until mixture is thick and bubbly. Stir in almond extract. Pour cherry mixture over oats layer; spread evenly. Top with remaining oats mixture.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 30 to 35 minutes, or until golden brown. Let cool before cutting into bars.

## **Kid Recipes**

### **Cherry S'mores**

- 1/2 cup marshmallow creme
- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 1/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 12 graham cracker squares (2\* inches each)

1. Put marshmallow creme, cherries and chocolate chips in a medium bowl; mix well.
2. Place 6 of the graham crackers on a microwave-safe plate. Spoon a heaping tablespoon of marshmallow mixture on each cracker. Top with remaining crackers.
3. Microwave, uncovered, on High (100% power) 30 to 45 seconds, or until marshmallow mixture is soft and warm. Carefully remove plate from the microwave and set on a hot pad. Let S'mores cool slightly before eating them.

Makes 6 servings.

Note: To prepare in a conventional oven, place 6 of the graham crackers in an ovenproof baking dish. Proceed as above. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 2 to 3 minutes, or until marshmallow mixture is soft and warm. Remove baking dish from the oven with hot pads and set on a hot pad on the counter. Let S'mores cool slightly before eating them.

### **Dessert To Go**

Ice cream cones never tasted so good.

- 1 (10-ounce) jar maraschino cherries
- 3 cups whipped topping
- 1 (4-serving-size) package any flavor instant pudding (chocolate is good!)
- 1-3/4 cups cold milk
- 6 flat-bottom ice cream cones
- Colored sprinkles and/or maraschino cherries, for garnish

1. Put a colander or strainer in a bowl. Pour cherries into the strainer, draining the juice into the bowl. Save the juice to add to orange juice or other drinks; you do not need the juice for this recipe.
2. Put the drained cherries on a cutting board. With a sharp knife, carefully cut each cherry in half. Have an adult show you how to use the knife. Set aside.
3. Prepare pudding according to package directions using 1-3/4 cups cold milk. Refrigerate pudding 10 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, put cherry halves in a large mixing bowl. With a rubber spatula, scoop whipped topping into the bowl. Stir gently until cherries are mixed with whipped topping.
5. Fill each cone with 1/4 cup pudding. Top each with 1/2 cup cherry mixture. Decorate with colored sprinkles or a maraschino cherry. Serve immediately. This dessert is best eaten with a spoon.

Makes 6 servings.

### **Critter Munch**

Delight your friends with this fun snack.

- 1-1/2 cups animal cracker cookies
- 1/2 (6-ounce) package cheddar or original flavor goldfish crackers (1-1/2 cups)
- 1 cup dried tart cherries
- 1 cup M & M's plain candy
- 1 cup honey roasted peanuts



1. Put animal crackers, goldfish crackers, dried cherries, M& Ms and peanuts in a large mixing bowl.
2. Carefully stir with a spoon.
3. Store in a tightly covered container at room temperature.

Makes 6 cups.

### *Party Cheese Ball*

Save time by preparing this appetizer in advance.

- 1/2 cup (about 14) maraschino cherries
- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 (8-ounce) can crushed pineapple, well drained
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped
- Crackers or cut-up vegetables

Drain maraschino cherries on paper towels. Chop cherries and drain again.

Beat cream cheese with electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until cream cheese is smooth. Stir in pineapple and cherries. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

Shape cheese mixture into two (4-inch) balls. Roll cheese balls in walnuts, pressing nuts into surface to adhere. Refrigerate about 1 hour or until chilled.

Serve as a spread with crackers or vegetables. Makes 2 (4-inch) cheese balls.

Tip: You can prepare this appetizer in advance, then freeze it for later use. Allow cheese balls to thaw in refrigerator before serving.

### *Pretty in Pink Pie*

This dessert looks great and tastes even better.

- 1 (16-ounce) jar red maraschino cherries
- 4 cups miniature marshmallows
- 1 (8-ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 1 (6-ounce) graham cracker crust

Drain maraschino cherries, saving the juice. Put marshmallows and maraschino juice in a large saucepan; heat over low heat, stirring constantly, until marshmallows are melted and smooth. Let cool completely, stirring occasionally to prevent a skin forming on mixture.

Reserve 6 to 8 cherries for garnish; quarter remaining cherries. Fold 2 cups whipped topping and quartered cherries into marshmallow mixture; spread into graham cracker crust. Refrigerate at least 2 hours or until firm.

Garnish with reserved maraschino cherries and remaining whipped topping.

Makes 6 to 8 servings

### *Maraschino Cherry Shake*

This cool combo will please family and friends.

- 1 (10-ounce) jar maraschino cherries
- 3 tablespoons maraschino cherry juice
- 3 cups vanilla ice cream
- Whipped topping
- Whole maraschino cherries, for garnish

1. Put a colander or strainer in a bowl. Pour cherries into the strainer. Measure out 3 tablespoons of juice and put it in a small container. You will use these 3 tablespoons of juice to prepare this recipe. You can either discard the remaining juice or save it for another use.

2. Put cherries from the strainer onto a cutting board. With a sharp knife, carefully cut cherries into small pieces. Have an adult show you how to use the knife.

3. Put chopped cherries, 3 tablespoons juice and ice cream in the container of an electric blender or food processor; cover blender. Process or blend until smooth. Do not put a spoon or spatula in the blender

while it is running and keep your hands clear of the working parts.

4. Pour into 2 (12-ounce) glasses. Top with whipped topping; garnish with whole maraschino cherries. Makes 2 (12-ounce) servings.

### *Kid's Cherry Smoothie*

This is a refreshing pick-me-up any time of day.

- 2 cups frozen tart or sweet cherries
- 1 ripe banana, peeled
- 1 cup cherry juice blend (or other juice)
- Maraschino cherries, for garnish

1. Put frozen cherries, banana and cherry juice blend in container of electric blender or food processor. Cover container. Process or blend until smooth. Do not put a spoon or spatula in the blender while it is running and keep your hands clear of the working parts. If necessary, turn blender off; remove cover. Scrape sides of container with a spatula. Cover and puree until smooth.

2. Pour into individual serving glasses. Garnish with maraschino cherries, if desired. Serve immediately. Makes 4 (8-ounce) servings.

### *Maraschino Lemonade Pops*

This treat is delicious; share it with your friends.

- 1 (10-ounce) jar maraschino cherries
- 1 (12-ounce) can frozen pink lemonade concentrate, partly thawed
- 1/4 cup water
- 8 (3-ounce) paper cups
- 8 popsicle sticks

1. Put a colander or strainer in a bowl. Pour cherries into the strainer, saving the juice in the bowl.

2. Put one whole cherry in each paper cup. Put the remaining cherries on a cutting board. With a sharp knife, carefully cut cherries into small pieces. Have an adult show you how to use the knife.

3. Put chopped cherries, lemonade concentrate, water and the juice you saved from the jar of cherries in the container of an electric blender or food processor. Cover blender or processor. Puree or blend until smooth. Do not put a spoon or spatula in the blender while it is running and keep your hands clear of the working parts.

4. Fill paper cups with equal amounts of cherry mixture. Freeze 30 to 40 minutes, or until very slushy.

5. Place popsicle sticks in the center of each cup. Freeze 1 hour longer, or until firm. To serve, peel off paper cups.

Makes 8 servings.

### *Cherry Mallow Cake*

You'll like this cake -- the marshmallows melt and rise to the top for a glaze.

- 4 cups miniature marshmallows (about 3/4 of a 10-1/2-ounce package)
- 1 (18-1/4-ounce) package yellow cake mix
- 1 (21-ounce) can cherry pie filling

1. If you have not cooked before, ask an adult to help you with this recipe. It's an easy recipe, but you may not be familiar with using a mixer or the oven. 2. Spray a 13x9x2-inch baking pan with vegetable cooking spray. Put marshmallows evenly in the bottom of the pan.

3. Prepare cake mix according to package directions. Pour batter over marshmallows. Spoon cherry filling evenly over cake batter.

4. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 45 to 50 minutes. The top of the cake will be bubbly and the marshmallows will be sticky on top of the cake. Carefully remove pan from oven with hot pads. Set cake pan on hot pads on counter. Don't forget to turn off the oven.

5. Let cake cool in pan, then cut into squares with a sharp knife.

Makes about 15 servings.

## *Dried Cherry Recipes*

### *Spiced Cherry Salad*

Dried cherries add tangy flavor to this colorful salad.

- 1 cup dried tart cherries
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin orange sections, drained
- 2 kiwi, peeled and sliced
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup sifted confectioners sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 cup slivered almonds, toasted

Put dried cherries, mandarin orange sections and kiwi slices in a salad bowl. Combine orange juice, confectioners sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl; mix well. Pour orange juice mixture over fruit mixture; mix gently. Refrigerate, covered, 1 to 2 hours, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle with toasted almonds just before serving. Makes 6 servings.

### *Carrots with Character*

Plain carrots become an elegant side dish with cherries, nutmeg and ginger.

- 1 pound carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 3 tablespoons maple-flavored syrup
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

Cook carrots in water in a covered 2-quart saucepan 8 to 10 minutes, or until tender. Drain well. Add dried cherries, maple syrup, butter, nutmeg and ginger to cooked carrots; mix to combine ingredients. Cook, stirring occasionally, over medium heat, 3 to 4 minutes, or until sauce is bubbly. makes 6 (1/2 cup) servings

#### TIPS

- Bread stuffing tastes better with the addition of dried tart cherries.
- Dried tart cherries make good additions to rice pilaf or rice pudding.
- Liven up green salads by sprinkling dried tart cherries over them.
- Add dried cherries to oatmeal or other cereals for a breakfast treat.

### *Oatmeal Cherry Cookies*

This favorite cookie recipe gets a new taste with dried cherries.

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter or margarine, softened
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)
- 2 cups quick-cooking or old-fashioned oats, uncooked
- 1-1/2 cups dried tart cherries
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

Put margarine, brown sugar and granulated sugar in a large mixing bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until creamy. Add eggs and vanilla; beat well. Combine flour, baking

powder and salt, if desired; add to egg mixture. Stir in oats, cherries and chocolate chips; mix well. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 10 to 12 minutes, or until golden brown. Let cool 1 minute on cookie sheet; remove to wire rack to cool completely. Store in a tightly covered container. Makes about 4 dozen.

### *Acorn Squash Bake*

Dried cherries bring out the flavor of this easy-to-prepare side dish.

- 2 acorn squash
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted
- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 3 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Cut each acorn squash in half. Remove seeds and fiber. Place cut side down in baking pan with small amount of water in bottom. Bake in a 350-degree oven 45 to 50 minutes or until squash is tender and can be pierced with a fork. (Or place squash cut side down in a microwave-safe container. Add a little water. Microwave on High (100% power) 5 to 7 minutes, turning dish once. Continue cooking, if necessary, until squash is tender.)

Meanwhile, combine butter, cherries, pecans, brown sugar and cinnamon. Heat on top of stove or in microwave oven until butter melts. Fill center of each squash half with one-quarter of the cherry mixture. Mix some of the cooked squash with the cherry filling. Serve immediately. makes 4 servings

TIP - Give trail mixes new flavor with the addition of dried tart cherries. A combination of cherries, banana chips, chocolate chips and peanuts is particularly good.

### *Brie Torte*

This tasty appetizer is easy to transport to parties and makes a great hostess gift.

- 1 (15- to 16-ounce) wheel Brie cheese
- 1/3 cup butter, softened
- 1/3 cup chopped dried tart cherries
- 1/4 cup finely chopped pecans
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme (or 2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme)
- Crackers

Refrigerate Brie until chilled and firm; or freeze 30 minutes, or until firm. Cut Brie in half horizontally. Combine butter, cherries, pecans and thyme in a small bowl; mix well. Evenly spread mixture on cut-side of one piece of the Brie. Top with the other piece, cut-side down. Lightly press together. Wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate 1 to 2 hours. To serve, cut into serving size wedges and bring to room temperature. Serve with crackers. makes about 20 appetizer servings

Note: If wrapped securely in plastic wrap, this appetizer will keep in the refrigerator for at least a week. TIP - Melt semisweet chocolate or white chocolate chips over low heat. Stir in dried cherries. Add toasted almonds, if desired. Mix until coated with chocolate. Spoon into waxed paper for a candy treat that kids and adults will love.

### *Firecracker Salsa*

This spicy mixture wows traditional salsa lovers.

- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 1/2 cup cherry preserves
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup chopped red onion
- 1/2 chopped yellow bell pepper
- 1/4 chopped jalapeno peppers, or to taste

- 1 to 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon lime or lemon juice

Combine dried cherries, cherry preserves and vinegar in a small microwave-safe bowl; mix well. Microwave on High (100% power) 1 to 1-1/2 minutes, or until hot. Let stand 5 minutes.

Stir in red onion, yellow bell pepper, jalapeno peppers, cilantro and lime juice. Refrigerate, covered, 3 to 4 hours or overnight. Serve with grilled swordfish or tuna. Its also excellent as a topping for hamburgers. |makes about 1-1/2 cups; enough for 6 to 8 servings with a main course|

TIP - Add 1 cup of dried cherries to traditional cherry pie ã it increases the cherry flavor. Or add about 1/2 cup dried tart cherries to your favorite apple or peach pie recipe. The cherries complement the other fruit in the pie while adding flavor and color.

### *Cherry Orange Poppy Seed Muffins*

These tasty muffins complement any meal.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 3 tablespoons grated orange peel

Combine flour, sugar, poppy seeds, baking powder and salt in a large mixing bowl. Add milk, melted butter and egg, stirring just until dry ingredients are moistened. Gently stir in cherries and orange peel.

Fill paper-lined muffin cups 3/4 full.

Bake in a preheated 400-degree oven 18 to 22 minutes, or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Let cool in pan 5 minutes. Remove from pan and serve warm or let cool completely. makes 12 muffins

TIP - Tuck packages of dried tart cherries into lunch boxes. They make a great low-fat snack for kids and adults.

### *Holiday Recipes*

#### *Cherry Spiced Cider*

This tasty beverage is a treat for youngsters.

- 1 quart apple cider
- 3/4 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup maraschino cherry juice
- 1 (3-inch) stick cinnamon
- 1 strip (1/2x3-inches) orange peel
- 3 whole cloves
- 3 whole allspice
- 16 maraschino cherries
- 8 orange slice halves

Put apple cider, orange juice, maraschino cherry juice, cinnamon sticks, orange peel, cloves and allspice in a large saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer 15 minutes. Strain out cinnamon sticks, orange peel, cloves and allspice. Place 2 maraschino cherries and 1 orange slice half in each of six mugs. Pour about 2/3 cup spiced cider over cherries. Serve warm.

Makes 8 servings.

Note: Spiced cider can be prepared in advance and reheated just before serving.

### *Dried Cherry Relish for Turkey*

This tangy combo is great with roasted turkey.

- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 1/2 cup cherry preserves
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup chopped red onion
- 1/4 chopped yellow bell pepper
- 1/4 chopped green bell pepper
- 1tablespoons finely chopped fresh thyme (or 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme)

Combine dried cherries, preserves and vinegar in a small microwave-safe bowl; mix well. Microwave on High (100% power) 1 to 1-1/2 minutes, or until hot. Let stand 5 minutes.

Stir in red onion, yellow and green bell pepper and thyme; mix well. Refrigerate, covered, 3 to 4 hours or overnight. Serve as a sauce with roast turkey or chicken. This relish is also good with grilled hamburgers.

Makes about 1-1/2 cups.

### *Cherry Cinnamon Rolls*

These are wonderful for a holiday breakfast or brunch.

- 1 (10-ounce) jar red or green maraschino cherries
- 1/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 (8-ounce) package crescent rolls
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted

Drain maraschino cherries; discard juice or save for another use. Chop cherries, then drain on paper towels. Combine brown sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl. Unroll crescent rolls; divide into triangles. Brush with butter. Sprinkle each triangle with about 1-1/2 teaspoons cinnamonsugar mixture; top with 1 tablespoon cherries. Roll up dough toward pointed end of triangle. Place on lightly greased baking sheet. Brush with butter and sprinkle with remaining cinnamonsugar mixture.

Bake in a 375-degree oven 12 to 15 minutes, or until golden brown.

Serve warm. Makes 8 servings.

### *Christmas Bread*

Maraschino cherries, bananas and macadamia nuts are a perfect trio in this holiday quick bread.

- 1 (10-ounce) jar maraschino cherries
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 2/3 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup mashed ripe bananas
- 1/2 cup chopped macadamia nuts or walnuts

Drain maraschino cherries, reserving 2 tablespoons juice. Coarsely chop cherries; set aside. Put butter, brown sugar, eggs and reserved cherry juice in a large mixing bowl. Mix with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until well mixed. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; add to butter mixture alternately with mashed bananas, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Stir in cherries and nuts. Lightly spray a 9x5x3-inch baking pan with non-stick cooking spray. Spread batter evenly in pan. Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 1 hour, or until golden brown and wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean. Remove from pan; let cool on wire rack. Wrap in plastic wrap or store in a



tightly covered container.

Makes 1 loaf, about 16 slices.

### *Double Cherry Pie*

The holidays would not be complete without at least one cherry pie.

- 4 cups frozen unsweetened tart cherries
- 1 cup dried tart cherries
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca or cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- Pastry for 2-crust, 9-inch pie
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon butter

Combine frozen cherries, dried cherries, granulated sugar, tapioca and almond extract in a large mixing bowl; mix well. (It is not necessary to thaw cherries before using.) Let cherry mixture stand 15 minutes. Line a 9-inch pie plate with pastry; fill with cherry mixture. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Dot with butter. Make a lattice top out of the remaining pastry. Seal and flute edge. Bake in a preheated 375-degree oven about 1 hour, or until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly. If necessary, cover edge of crust with aluminum foil to prevent overbrowning.

Makes 8 servings.

Note: 2 (16-ounce) cans unsweetened tart cherries, well drained, can be substituted for frozen tart cherries. Dried cherries are available at selected supermarkets and gourmet and specialty food stores.

### *Ho Ho Surprises*

Delight family and friends with these tasty cookies.

- 48 red or green maraschino cherries (about one 16-ounce jar)
- 1 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans
- Confectioners' sugar

Drain maraschino cherries thoroughly on paper towels; set aside. Put butter and 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar in a large mixing bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until well mixed. Stir in almond extract. Add flour and salt; mix well. Stir in pecans.

Shape about 2 teaspoons dough around each cherry. Place on an ungreased cookie sheet about 1 inch apart. Bake in a preheated 375-degree oven 12 to 15 minutes, or until set but not brown. Roll in confectioners' sugar while still warm. Let cool. If desired, roll in confectioners' sugar again.

Makes 4 dozen.

### *Ribbon of Cherry Cheesecake*

Swirls of cherry make this cheesecake better than "visions of sugarplums."

- 1 cup sliced almonds
- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1/3 cup butter or margarine, melted
- 1 (21-ounce) can cherry filling and topping
- 3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons granulated sugar, divided
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract

- 4 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 3 tablespoons amaretto liqueur
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 eggs, slightly beaten

Toast almonds in a skillet over medium heat. Remove from heat; finely chop almonds. Combine almonds, graham cracker crumbs and butter in a medium bowl; mix well. Press crumb mixture evenly over the bottom and 2 inches up the sides of a 10-inch springform pan. Set aside.

Purée cherry filling in an electric blender or food processor until smooth. Pour puréed cherry filling into a medium saucepan. Combine 2 tablespoons granulated sugar and cornstarch; stir into cherry filling. Cook, stirring constantly, over low heat until mixture is thick and bubbly. Stir in almond extract. Set aside to cool.

Put cream cheese, remaining 3/4 cup sugar, amaretto, lemon juice and vanilla in a large mixing bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until well mixed. Add eggs all at once; beat on low just until mixed.

To assemble the cheesecake, pour one-third of the cream cheese mixture into prepared crust. Top with about 1/3 cup cherry purée. Swirl cherry mixture into cream cheese mixture, using a knife or spatula. Repeat layers twice, ending with cherry purée. Reserve remaining purée.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 60 to 65 minutes, or until the center appears nearly set when gently shaken. Cool on a wire rack. Refrigerate until ready to serve. To serve, spoon a generous tablespoon of purée on serving plate. Place cheesecake wedge on top of the purée.

Makes 16 servings.

### *Danish Butter Cookies*

These make a pretty addition to holiday cookie trays.

- 3/4 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 21 red or green glacé (candied) cherries, cut in half

Put butter and sugar in a large mixing bowl. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed 3 to 4 minutes, or until well mixed. Add eggs, one at a time, beating after every addition. Add lemon juice and vanilla; mix well. Add flour; mix well. Using a pastry bag with a star tip, squeeze dough (1-1/2 inches in diameter) onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Place a glacé cherry half in center of each.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 12 to 15 minutes, or until light brown.

Makes 3-1/2 dozen.

### *Cherry Cheese Brownies*

Cherries and cream cheese make these brownies festive.

- 1 (16-ounce) can dark sweet cherries
- 1 (15-ounce) brownie mix (8x8 pan size)
- 2 eggs, divided
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 (3-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup flaked coconut
- 1 teaspoon almond extract



Drain cherries; reserve 1/4 cup cherry juice. Put brownie mix in a large bowl. Add 1 egg, oil and reserved cherry juice; mix well. Gently stir in cherries. Set aside.

Put cream cheese and sugar in a medium mixing bowl. Beat with an electric mixer 3 to 4 minutes, or until well mixed. Add remaining egg; mix well. Stir in coconut and almond extract.

Lightly grease an 83832-inch baking pan. Spoon brownie mixture evenly into pan. Spoon cream cheese mixture over brownie mixture. Use a knife to swirl cream cheese mixture into brownie mixture.

Bake in a preheated 350-degree oven 35 to 40 minutes, or until wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean. Let cool. Cut into squares or bars.

Makes 9 squares; 18 bars.

Note: 1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts can be substituted for coconut.

### *Cherry Blossoms*

Bake these breakfast rolls as a holiday treat for family or neighbors.

- 2/3 cup sifted confectioners' sugar
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 cup dried tart cherries, divided
- 1/4 cup coarsely chopped pecans
- 1 (14- to 16-ounce) loaf frozen white bread dough, thawed
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon inch deep-dish pie pan. Sprinkle 1/2 cup of the cherries and pecans evenly over sugar mixture.

On a lightly floured surface, roll bread dough into a 12x8-inch rectangle; brush with melted butter. Combine brown sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over dough. Top with remaining 1/2 cup cherries. Roll up rectangle, jelly-roll style, starting from a long side; pinch to seal edges. Cut roll into 12 slices.

Place slices, cut-side down, on top of mixture in pan. Let rise, covered, in a warm place 30 minutes, or until nearly double. (Or, cover with waxed paper, then with plastic wrap. Refrigerate 2 to 24 hours. Before baking, let chilled rolls stand, covered, 20 minutes at room temperature.)

Bake, uncovered, in a preheated 375-degree oven 20 to 25 minutes for unchilled rolls and 25 to 30 minutes for chilled rolls, or until golden brown. If necessary, cover rolls with foil the last 10 minutes to prevent overbrowning. Let cool in pan 1 to 2 minutes. Invert onto a serving platter. Serve warm.

Makes 12 rolls. Traverse Bay Farms offers a complete line of tart cherry products including dried tart cherries, cherry juice concentrate and tart cherry super fruit supplements.

In addition to offering a complete line of cherry products, Traverse Bay Farms also offers a complete line of award winning gourmet and fruit salsa. In fact, Traverse Bay Farms was voted America's #1 Salsa in 2007 and 2008 at America's Best National Food Competition.

America's Best™ Professional Food Competition™ is the largest professional food show and was held in Anaheim, California, August 15-17 2008. The America's Best™ Professional Food Competition is the most prestigious and most recognized gourmet product competition in the industry.

Here is an overview of the 2008 awards won by Traverse Bay Farms at Americas Best™ Professional Food Competition:

#### **Salsa General - All Category:**

**1st PLACE:** Traverse Bay Farms - Peach Salsa

#### **Salsa - Fruit Category:**

**3rd PLACE:** Traverse Bay Farms - Peach Salsa

In addition to winning in 2008, Traverse Bay Farms was also voted America #1 salsa in 2007. Here is an overview of the 2007 awards.

**Salsa - Fruit Category:**

**1st PLACE:** Traverse Bay Farms - Pineapple Salsa

**3rd PLACE:** Traverse Bay Farms - Raspberry Salsa

**Salsa - Bean Category:**

**1st PLACE:** Traverse Bay Farms - Bean Salsa

**Salsa General - All Category:**

**2nd PLACE:** Traverse Bay Farms - Corn Salsa