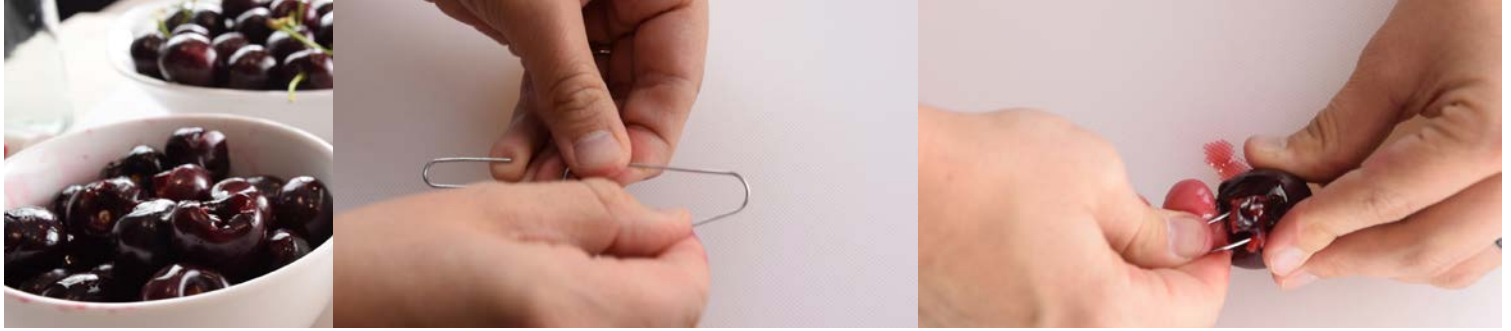


Cherry Picked

A Complete Guide to Enjoying Fresh Cherries in New Ways



How To Pit Cherries



Method #1: Pitting a Cherry with a Paperclip

This method proves you don't need fancy kitchen gadgets to pit a cherry. To get started, locate a large metal paperclip. Then, open the paperclip up by gently pulling the clip part outward. If the cherries you have are large in size, pull the end of the paperclip slightly in order to make a wider scoop for your paperclip. Next, remove the stem of the cherry. Then, puncture the curved end of the paperclip into the stem bowl of the cherry. Push it down to locate the pit and then move the paperclip around the pit in a circular motion. Pop the cherry pit out, and you have a pitted cherry.

Note: This is not the cleanest or quickest method for pitting cherries. You might want to wear gloves in order to prevent red-stained hands!



Method #2: Pitting a Cherry with a Chopstick and Bottle

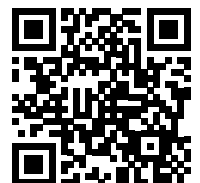
For a quicker method to pit cherries, try using a chopstick and empty glass water bottle. Place the cherry sideways on the opening of the water bottle. Remove the stem by twisting it off. Then, take the pointy end of the chopstick and push the cherry pit through the other side, and down into the bottom of the bottle. You might need to put a little oomph into it to get the pit out!

Note: If you don't have a chopstick handy, a sturdy straw also works well with this cherry pitting method.



Method #3: Pitting a Cherry with a Cherry Pitter

If you intend to pit quite a few cherries, and do so year-after-year, you might consider investing in a handheld cherry pitter. The actual use of this inexpensive kitchen tool will vary by the cherry pitter you own, but in general, the steps are the same. First, remove the stem of the cherry by twisting it off. Then, place the cherry on its side into the open part of the pitter. Press the clamp and then quickly release to remove the pit.



How To Freeze Cherries



Step 1: Wash Your Cherries

A cold water rinse works well, or you can choose to use a fruit/vegetable wash as well.



Step 2: Remove The Stems

It's important to wait to remove the stems until you are ready to use/freeze cherries, as the stem helps maintain the fruit's freshness.



Step 3: Pit The Cherries

You can opt to freeze cherries whole, pit and all, but if you want to use them right out of the bag, you should pit them. Use a cherry pitter, paperclip, or chopstick and empty glass bottle to do this with ease.



Step 4: Spread Them Out

Spread pitted cherries in a single layer on a cookie sheet lined with wax paper.



Step 5: Cherries into Freezer

The time for freezing cherries will vary based on your freezer settings. However, two cookie sheets of halved cherries will take around 6 hours to freeze thoroughly.



Step 6: Remove from Freezer and Place in Bags

Be sure to seal and date the bag so you know when to use them up by.



Step 7: Place Cherries Back into Freezer

The frozen cherries go back into the freezer until it is time to use them.



Enjoy For Months

Cherries will keep in the freezer for 6 months, or up to a year in a deep freezer.

Sweet Cherry Pie In A Jar



Servings:
4 jar pies

Prep Time:
1 hour

Total Time:
2 hours

Cherry pie is always a great treat, and these little pies are perfect for those times that you only want a small serving of pie. They also make a great presentation piece and are the perfect homemade gift to share with friends and family.

Ingredients

For The Filling:

- 1 ½ pounds fresh Stemilt cherries, stemmed, pitted, halved (about 5 cups halved)
- ½ cup water
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 4 tablespoons cornstarch

For The Pie Crust

- 2¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 8 ounces (2 sticks) salted butter (or vegan buttery sticks)
- 1 to 2 teaspoons granulated sugar, as preferred (I used 1 teaspoon), plus additional for dusting pies
- ¼ cup ice water
- 1 teaspoon melted butter/vegan buttery stick (approximate), for brushing crusts

Special Materials

- 4 glass, home-canning jars with lids (approximate 8 to 8.5 ounce size with straight sides)
- Fabric, ribbon, scissors, stickers, tags for packaging (optional)
- Cherry pitter (a great, time-saving gadget to add to your kitchen tools set)

Directions On Next Page

Sweet Cherry Pie In A Jar

continued from previous page



Place a sheet of wax paper over prep board, to cover, and top with a couple layers of paper towel. Place halved cherries in a pot set over medium heat. Add water, lemon juice and sugar; stir to combine. Bring to a simmer and let cook for about 3 minutes, until cherries have softened a bit and sugar has melted. Add cornstarch and bring mixture to a boil; reduce heat and simmer for about 3 to 5 minutes, until thickened. Remove from heat and set aside.

Now, you'll make the crust. Combine flour, butter and sugar in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse a few times to combine. Add water and pulse a few more times, until mixture begins to hold together.

Transfer dough to a lightly floured work surface and shape into a large round, then roughly divide round into quarters. Shape each quarter into a round disk and wrap each in plastic wrap (or plastic baggies). Dividing the dough into quarters just allows you to better apportion it among the 4 jars. Refrigerate dough for at least 30 minutes before using.

Once chilled, place one disk of dough onto a lightly floured work surface and roll out to an approximate 1/8" to 3/16" thickness. From this first round of dough you will cut 4 "base rounds" of dough to be used in the bottoms of each of your jars, and 4 "cap rounds" to be used as the top crusts for your "pies."

Start by placing a "base round" in each of your 4 jars. Then working with one jar at a time, cut a manageable piece of dough from what you have left over from what you've rolled out and start lining your jar. (Tip: begin working from the base upward and make sure that the first pieces of dough you place to line the "walls" of your jar overlap the base round just a bit so that you can seal this seam.

Line your jars to just past what would be considered the top fill line so that you can more easily seal this edge to the top crust.

Using a teaspoon, fill each jar with your cherry filling to just about 1/2" below that top fill line mentioned above. You want to leave a little of the pie dough peeking up from your filling (to seal with your top crust).

Then, top each of your pies with one "cap round" of dough (cut earlier and set aside). Working with one jar at a time, carefully nestle round of dough down into the mouth of the jar, pushing the center down gently and easing sides down to meet your "liner" dough (the outer edges of this "cap round" of dough will fan up a bit as you nestle it into your jar). With your fingers, press this "cap round" to "seam" with the top edge of dough that lines your jar. This will help to seal in your filling. Then press down the excess dough that might still be fanning up from this top round, to create a little edge to your crust. Once completed, use a fork to press and pattern this outer edge and make a few "steam" cuts in top crust. Brush lightly with melted butter and sprinkle with granulated sugar.

Preheat oven to 275 degrees F. Place jars on a baking sheet. Bake for 5 minutes, then increase heat to 375 degrees F. and continue baking for another 35 to 40 minutes, until top crusts are golden. If tops begin to brown too quickly, simply cover lightly with a small square of aluminum foil.

Serve warm, or cap with lids and keep for later. Enjoy!

Nutritional Information

(one serving; assumes 8 serving size; use of vegan buttery sticks):

Calories: 459 (43.5% from fat); Fat 22.2g (sat 8.0g, poly 5.0g, mono 9.0g); Protein 4.4g; Carbohydrates 62.5g ; Fiber 3.1g; Sugar 31.0g; Cholesterol 0.0mg; Potassium 251.0mg; Sodium 240.4mg.

Red, White & Blue Sweet Cherry Bites



Servings:
12

Prep Time:
45 min

Cook Time:
None

Patriotic sweet cherry bites that are easy to prep and perfect for July 4th celebrations.

Ingredients

- 1 pound fresh Stemilt cherries, pitted
- 6 ounces mini white chocolate baking chips (about 1 cup)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable shortening
- 1/3 cup dark blue sanding sugar (candy sprinkles, nonpareil candy, crystal sugar all work)

Procedure:

Heat white chocolate and vegetable shortening in a double boiler over medium high heat. (Create a double boiler by placing a glass bowl over a pot filled with 1 to 2 inches of water. The water, once boiling, should not touch the bottom of the glass bowl.) Using a wooden spoon, stir chocolate and shortening intermittently, until chocolate melts completely and is fully incorporated with shortening. Set aside to cool to room temp.

Meanwhile, pit cherries (if preferred). Pour blue sugar crystal candy into a low rimmed bowl. Working with one cherry at a time, hold cherry by the stem and dip into white chocolate, covering 3/4 of the fruit. Lift from chocolate and dip a second time. Hold fruit up over bowl for a few seconds to allow excess chocolate to drip away. Transfer fruit to sugar crystals and tip bottom of cherry a few times, until nicely coated. Place on a wax paper- or parchment-lined baking sheet to set. Continue with remaining cherries. Serve immediately. (Pitted cherries should be served once prepped; non-pitted cherries will keep nicely in the fridge for a few hours.)

Note: Recipe assumes approximately 40 cherries in one pound (whole, unpitted)

Nutrition Information:

Per Serving: Calories 133.3 (40.5% from fat); Fat 6g (sat 3g, poly 0g, mono 0g); Protein 0.5g; Carbohydrates 12.0g; Fiber 0.5g; Sugar 18.2g; Cholesterol 0mg; Potassium 35.0mg; Sodium 10.0mg.

Fresh Cherry Cobbler



Servings:
8

Prep Time:
15 min

Cook Time:
40-45 min

This classic cherry cobbler recipe combines fresh Stemilt dark-sweet cherries and Rainier cherries with a light flour topping and hints of cinnamon. Best served with ice cream!

Ingredients

For the Filling:

- 1 pound of Stemilt's Rainier cherries, pitted*
- 1 pound of Stemilt's dark-sweet cherries, pitted*
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon all purpose flour

*If you prefer, you can use all Rainier cherries, or all dark-sweet cherries in this recipe.

For the Topping:

- 1 ½ cup all purpose flour
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into cubes
- 2/3 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon turbinado sugar

Directions:

Butter the bottom and sides of a 9 or 10 inch baking dish.

In a medium bowl, combine the cherries with the sugar, lemon juice and flour.

Pour into the baking dish and bake for 10 minutes.

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon.

Add the butter cubes and using a pastry cutter or a hand mixer, blend until the mixture forms small crumbs. Add the buttermilk and the vanilla.

Beat with a whisk or on low speed of a mixer just until combined. The dough will be soft and sticky.

Remove the cherries from the oven and drop the dough onto the fruit, evenly covering the top surface. You do not need to cover the cherries completely, the topping will spread. Sprinkle with the coarse sugar.

Return the cobbler to the oven and bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until golden and bubbly.

Remove and cool on a wire rack for at least 15 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature with a scoop of vanilla ice cream or a dollop of whipped cream.



Nutrition Information:

Per Serving: Calories 232; Fat 10g; Protein 4g; Carbohydrates 33g; Sugar 16g; Sodium 94g

Fresh Cherry Turnovers



Servings:
9 turnovers

Prep Time:
15 min

Cook Time:
20-25 min

Cherry turnovers are the perfect dessert or summer brunch recipes. Use fresh, sweet cherries in the summer to make this recipe even more delicious!

Ingredients

For the Topping:

- 2 cups of Stemilt's dark-sweet cherries, pitted and halved
- 3 tablespoons of granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 pound purchased puff pastry dough, thawed
- All-purpose flour for rolling
- 1 egg yolk mixed with ½ teaspoon water
- Turbinado sugar

Directions:

In a medium saucepan, bring the cherries, sugar, lemon juice, cinnamon and cornstarch to a boil over medium-high heat. Continue to boil for 1 to 2 minutes.

Remove from heat and allow to cool to room temperature. Refrigerate to cool completely.

On a heavily floured surface, roll out the puff pastry into a 15 inch square. Using a pastry wheel, pizza cutter or very sharp knife, cut the square into 9 five inch squares.

Place about 2 tablespoons of the cooled filling just off center of each square. Fold the squares over corner-to-corner to form a triangle. Seal the edges by pressing around the turnover with a fork. Carefully place each turnover on to a parchment lined baking sheet. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat your oven to 375.

Brush the tops of each turnover with the egg wash and sprinkle with a bit of turbinado sugar. Bake the turnovers for 20 to 25 minutes or until they are puffed and golden.

Remove and cool on a wire rack for at least 15 minutes. Serve warm.

Nutrition Information:

Per Serving: Calories 339; Fat 13g; Protein 5g; Carbohydrates 47g; Sugar 31g; Sodium 188g