

A Cherry Jubilee

Cherry blossoms are one of the most celebrated signs of spring. Although we must wait until summer for fresh cherry season, this month's recipes call for jarred or canned. While the cherry is the star of this menu, the main course features trout in honor of Pennsylvania trout season's opening day on April 14th. Happy Spring!

Foie Gras Sautéed with Cherries

Ingredients:

- 4 foie gras slices (D'Artagnan are the best and come in convenient packages of two)
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 15 ounce can Oregon Fruit Pitted Dark Sweet Cherries, including half their juice
- 2 tablespoons cranberry vinegar
- 1/4 cup Riesling

Sprinkle both sides of each foie gras slice lightly with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Melt 1 tablespoon of butter in a non-stick pan over medium-high heat. Stir in the cherries, cherry juice, vinegar, and Riesling. Add pepper to taste. Cook, stirring frequently, until thickened. Reduce to simmer while you prepare the foie gras.

Melt 2 tablespoons of butter in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the foie gras and sauté until golden brown on both sides. Place each slice on an appetizer plate, drizzle with the cherry sauce, and serve immediately. Serves four.

Cherry Custard

Ingredients:

- 2 cups whole milk
- 3 jumbo eggs
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup Oregon Fruit Pitted Red Tart Cherries, drained
- 1/4 cup Oregon Royal Ann Pitted Cherries, drained
- Unsalted butter for greasing
- Tillen Farms Bada Bing cherries

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Heat the milk in a saucepan until it is warm (do not bring it to a boil). Whisk the eggs, sugar, and vanilla in a large mixing bowl. Pour the warm milk into the mixing bowl, whisking gently while pouring. Then stir in the cherries.

Pour the custard mixture into lightly buttered ramekins. Then, place the ramekins in a large Pyrex baking dish. Create a water bath by pouring enough hot water into the baking dish to come halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Loosely cover the entire baking dish with aluminum foil. Bake for 50 minutes or until you can insert a toothpick and it comes out clean.

This custard is at its best if you allow it to set for several hours in the refrigerator before serving. When ready to plate, top each ramekin with a Tillen Farms Bada Bing cherry. These are my favorite jarred cherries and free of artificial flavors, colors and preservatives.

Trout with Cherry Compote

Ingredients:

- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 15 ounce can Oregon Fruit Pitted Dark Sweet Cherries, including juice
- 1/3 cup Marcona almonds, toasted and coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon honey
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 fresh brook trout (about 1.5 pounds each, boned and filleted, with heads and tails removed)
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- Lemon, cut into wedges

Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat. Add garlic and cook for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in cherries, Marcona almonds, and thyme. Cook for another 2 minutes. Stir in one tablespoon of honey, and bring to a simmer. Cook for several minutes until thickened, and add salt and pepper to taste. Reduce to simmer while cooking the trout.

Season the trout with salt and pepper. Add 2 tablespoons of butter and 1 tablespoon of olive oil to each of two large non-stick pans. When the oil and butter combination is bubbling, place one trout, skin side down, in each pan. Sauté for 3 minutes until skin is browned. Then, using two wooden spatulas, turn each fillet to brown slightly on the flesh side. This only takes about 2 minutes. Carefully remove each fillet to a plate using the wooden spatulas, and top with the cherry compote. Serve four.

Bitter Cherry Blossom Cocktail

Ingredients:

- 1 part gin (Damrak preferred)
- 1 part Lillet Blanc
- 1 part Campari
- Splash of Suze
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- Splash of juice from Tillen Farms Fire & Spice Maraschino Cherries
- 1 Tillen Farms Fire & Spice Maraschino Cherry

Combine all ingredients in a cocktail shaker and add ice. Shake and pour into a coupe. Add a cherry. Serves one. 🍹



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