

Cherries — Enjoy Whilst in Season

By Dr Karin Elgar, Nutritional Therapist

Cherries are a particularly delicious summer fruit. Unlike most other summer fruits which are on the supermarket shelves all year round they are only available for a couple of months. Of course all fruit and vegetables taste best and are the most nutritious when they are in season and fresh rather than after having been shipped around the world.

Cherries are a rich source of anthocyanidins, antioxidants which give them their characteristic dark red colour. Antioxidants are important to protect us from free radicals, aggressive molecules which cause damage that can lead to heart disease, cancer and other chronic diseases.

Cherries have long been used to ease the inflammation in gout, a form of arthritis which is due to an accumulation of uric acid crystals in the affected joints. Cherries appear to lower uric acid levels thus relieving symptoms of gout.

Cherries are also one of a few foods which contain melatonin. Melatonin is made by our pineal gland and is a potent antioxidant and helps us sleep.

Enjoy cherries fresh whilst they are in season, on their own as a snack, in a fruit salad, with a breakfast cereal or chopped into a yoghurt. Out of season you can get cherries frozen and in jars. See overleaf for a dessert idea.



Recipes

Blinis with cherry compote

These Russian style pancakes are very versatile and can be served with sweet and savoury foods.

Serves 4-6

For the blinis

50g buckwheat flour

50g rice flour

1 tsp baking powder

1 tbsp olive oil

2 eggs, beaten

100ml water

Oil for frying

For the cherry compote

500g cherries, pitted

Juice and finely grated zest of an unwaxed orange

1 cinnamon stick

1-2 tbsp honey or agave syrup

For the blinis mix the flours with the baking powder. Gradually stir in the eggs, oil and water until you get a smooth pancake batter, adding a little more water if it is too thick. Leave to stand for 15-30 minutes.

Bring all ingredients for the cherry compote to the boil and simmer for about 8 minutes. Remove cinnamon stick and keep warm until the blinis are ready.

Heat a little oil in a pan and pour in a small ladle of batter. Once the blini starts to get firm on top turn it over and cook the other side. Keep warm until they are all ready.

Serve blinis with cherry compote and yoghurt or vanilla ice-cream.