



merry cherry

Have yourself a very cherry Christmas – they're in season and utterly delicious

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Cherries, like plums, peaches and almonds, are part of the rose family. The fruit is believed to have originated in western Asia, and has been grown in Australia since the late 1800s. The Australian cherry season is short, and the fruit best between November and January. Cherries available at other times of the year are usually grown overseas.

Buying

Choose cherries with stems attached, as they deteriorate faster once the stems are removed. Buy ripe cherries, as they don't ripen after picking. Look for plump and shiny fruit and avoid hard, dull or bruised cherries.

Storing

Eat cherries within two to three days of purchase. Store in a plastic bag in the crisper compartment of the fridge.

Nutrition

Although they're stonefruit, cherries share the rich colour and high phytochemical content of berries. They are also high in vitamin C and contain soluble dietary fibre. Cherries have a low glycemic index (GI) for longer-lasting energy.

Choc-cherry cheesecake

Serves 8
 250g plain chocolate biscuits
 125g butter, melted
 500g cream cheese, softened
 ¾ cup caster sugar
 2 eggs
 2 tablespoons cocoa powder, sifted
 300g sour cream
 300g cherries, pitted, halved
 cherries and icing sugar,
 to serve

1 Preheat oven to 160°C/140°C fan-forced. Grease a 5.5cm-deep, 24cm (base) springform pan. Process

biscuits until mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add butter. Process to combine. Press mixture over base of prepared pan. Cover. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

2 Using an electric mixer, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating to combine. Beat in cocoa and sour cream until just combined. Fold in cherries. Spread over biscuit mixture.

3 Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until centre is just firm. Turn off oven. Cool in oven for 3 hours with door slightly ajar. Refrigerate overnight. Top with cherries. Dust with icing sugar. Serve. >



Choc-cherry cheesecake

\$2.27 per serve



Cherry almond tart

Cherry almond tart

Serves 8

- 125g butter, softened
- ¼ cup caster sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup almond meal (ground almonds)
- ¼ cup plain flour
- 400g cherries, pitted
- icing sugar mixture, to serve

Pastry

- 1¼ cups plain flour
- ½ cup icing sugar mixture
- ¼ cup almond meal (ground almonds)
- 125g butter, chilled, chopped
- 1 egg yolk

1 Make pastry Process flour, icing sugar, almond meal and butter until mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Add egg yolk. Process until dough just comes together. Turn out onto a lightly-floured

surface. Knead until just smooth. Shape into a disc. Cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
2 Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Grease a 3cm-deep, 24cm (base) round, fluted loose-based flan tin. Roll out pastry between 2 sheets of baking paper to form a 32cm circle. Line base and side of prepared tin with pastry. Trim excess. Refrigerate for 10 minutes.
3 Place tin on a baking tray. Line pastry with baking paper. Fill with ceramic pie weights or uncooked rice. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove weights or rice and paper. Bake for 10 minutes or until light golden. Cool.
4 Reduce oven temperature to 160°C/140°C fan-forced. Using an electric mixer, beat butter, sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating after each addition. Add almond meal. Beat until just combined. Stir in flour.



**LOW KILOJOULE
 LOW SATURATED FAT**
 Turkey steaks
 with cherry sauce

\$4.57
 per serve

Spread mixture into pastry case. Arrange cherries over mixture.

5 Bake for 40 minutes or until golden and firm. Cool in pan. Dust with icing sugar. Serve.

Turkey steaks with cherry sauce

Serves 4

- 300g cherries, pitted, halved
- 2 tablespoons redcurrant jelly
- 2 tablespoons dry red wine
- 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 (150g each) turkey breast steaks
- steamed vegetables, to serve

1 Combine cherries, jelly, wine, vinegar and 1 tablespoon cold water in a saucepan over low heat. Cook, stirring, for 2 to 3 minutes or until jelly has melted. Bring to the boil. Simmer, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until slightly thickened.

2 Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Cook turkey, in batches, for 3 minutes each side or until browned and cooked through. Transfer to a plate. Cover to keep warm.

3 Process half the cherry mixture until smooth. Return to pan over low heat. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes or until heated through. Divide vegetables and turkey between plates. Top with cherry sauce. Serve. ■