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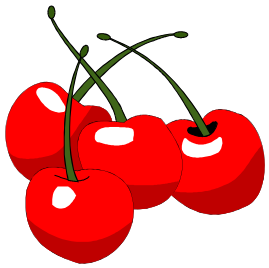

Utah Tart Cherries

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FN 224

Utah tart cherries offer distinct and varied eating goodness. The delicious tart flavor provides the zing to accompany a main course or the right finish to a memorable dining experience. The harvest is in mid to late July, but canned or frozen tart cherries provide year-round enjoyment.

Selection

- Good cherries have bright, glossy, plump looking surfaces and fresh-looking stems.
- Sour cherries should be uniformly bright red.
- Avoid shriveled cherries with dried stems.

Varieties to Look For

Montmorency is the most popular tart cherry in America. These cherries are medium size, bright red, and tart.

Care and Handling

Cherries are highly perishable and should be refrigerated as soon as possible. Sort them carefully and place loosely in a shallow container so that air can circulate and the weight of the cherries on top does not crush those on the bottom. Wash cherries **just before** using. Fresh cherries should be stored only one or two days for highest quality; home canned or frozen cherries will keep up to one year.

On Nutrition

One-half cup canned tart cherries in light syrup pack contain 914 IU of vitamin A which is 20-25 percent of the Recommended Dietary Allowance. Tart cherries also contain smaller amounts of ascorbic acid, potassium, and other vitamins and minerals.

Serve Cherries Often

- on ice cream or cake
- in a fruit cup
- as cobbler

- as pie
- with salad combination
- as sauce over meat
- as glaze on poultry
- as tarts
- as crown for cheesecake

Directions for Freezing

Select bright-red, tree-ripened cherries. Stem, sort and wash thoroughly. Drain and pit. Use syrup pack if cherries are to be served uncooked, sugar pack for cooked cherry dishes.

Syrup pack: Pack cherries in 60% syrup (7 cups sugar to 4 cups water). Seal and freeze.

Sugar pack: To one quart of pitted cherries, add 3/4 cup sugar. Mix gently until sugar is dissolved. Pack into containers. Seal and freeze.

Or cherries may be tray frozen and then packed into containers as soon as frozen solid.

Directions for Canning

Wash, stem and pit cherries. Pack into jars to within ½ inch of top. Cover with hot syrup, sweetened to preference (2–4 cups sugar per quart of water), or water to within ½ inch of top. Adjust lids and process in boiling water bath according to the following chart.

	Pints	**Quarts**
3000 – 6000 ft altitude	35 min	35 min

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