

# Cherry

## Fact Sheet



It's hard to resist ripe, red, sweet and juicy cherries. Packed with nutrients, cherries make the perfect healthy summer snack!

### Seasonal availability

- The Australian cherry season lasts only 100 days.
- The Victorian cherry season begins in most areas about the first or second week of November and continues through until early February.
- Cherry prices vary according to the time of the season, size and quality of fruit.

### Cherry varieties

Different varieties of cherries are harvested at different times. What we see in the shops in November will be different to what we see in January. Some varieties are rich and sweet and others are mild, but they are all delicious!

The main cherry varieties grown in Victoria are • Merchant • Bing • Stella • Regina • Lapin • Sweet Georgia • Sweetheart and • Van.

### Selecting cherries

- Choose cherries with stems attached.
- Look for plump, firm, bright and shiny cherries with fresh green stems.
- The colour of cherries will vary according to variety.
- Avoid cherries that are soft, squashed or bruised.

### Storing cherries

- Once picked, cherries cease to ripen, so should be consumed within four days of purchase.
- Store cherries loosely packed in an airtight container or plastic bag in the fridge.
- Cherries can also be frozen (remove stones first) for up to six months.

### Preparing cherries

- Only wash cherries immediately before consuming.
- Fresh cherries can be served intact with stones. However, the stones should be removed before use in cooking to help prevent a broken tooth when chomped on by an unsuspecting diner!
- To remove the stones use a cherry pitter. Or use a small sharp knife to cut a slit in one side of the cherry then remove the stone.
- Most cherries are very juicy, so try pitting them inside a plastic bag or large bowl to avoid stains.

### Uses and recipes

- Fresh sweet and juicy cherries are irresistible eaten just as they are. But don't forget their versatility - they are superb in summer fruit salads, drinks, salads, salsas, sauces, dressings and desserts.
- Cherries add richness, colour and flavour to our cooking including both sweet and savoury recipes from sauces, chutneys and relishes to cakes, muffins, pies and tarts.
- Cherries make summer fruit platters special with no fuss at all.
- Scatter pitted cherries over breakfast yogurt, cereal or pancakes - pit the cherries the night before to save time in the morning.
- Whiz pitted cherries up with a handful of almonds, a dollop of yogurt, a little honey or maple syrup and your choice of milk for a yummy quick breakfast.
- Add cherries to your cheese platter for the perfect edible garnish not to mention a wonderful taste and texture contrast to your favourite cheeses.
- Check out the delicious cherry recipes at [www.australiancherries.com.au](http://www.australiancherries.com.au).

### Health & Wellbeing

- Sweet cherries are rich in flavour and are a wonderful source of fibre, potassium and vitamin C, which are essential for good health.
- Did you know that just one serve of cherries (150g) provides more than 60% of our daily needs of Vitamin C?
- However, cherries really begin to shine with their antioxidant content.
- What a delicious way to help build health and wellbeing! Find out more in the Cherry Health Report.

### Victorian Cherry Trail

- The Victorian Cherry Trail includes 13 cherry orchards and businesses located in four cherry growing regions in Victoria: Upper Goulburn Valley, Yarra Valley & Ranges, Macedon Ranges and Mornington Peninsula.
- Pop into one of the cherry orchards or farm shops on the Victorian Cherry Trail to meet the growers and treat yourself to the freshest cherries you have ever tasted!

