

DARK CHERRY CLAFOUTI

A great reason to go cherry picking!

by Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski

Featured Food: Dark Sweet Cherries

Yield: Serves 4

Ingredients

1 Vanilla Bean (or increase vanilla extract)	1 c. Milk
2 c. Fresh Dark Cherries	1 t. Vanilla Extract (increase to 1 T. if not using vanilla bean)
¼ c. Sliced Toasted Almonds	¼ t. Salt
4 Eggs	2 T. Butter
½ c. White Sugar	Powdered Sugar
½ c. + 2 T. Brown Sugar	Whipped Cream or Vanilla Yogurt
⅔ c. All-purpose Flour	

Preparation

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a 9" nonstick ovenproof skillet or similar sized dish with vegetable spray. Scrape seeds out of the vanilla bean and set seeds aside. (You can place the pod in some sugar and let it sit to season your sugar for future use). Wash the cherries and then remove the stems and pits. If the cherries are large, chop them into quarters.

Lightly toast the sliced almonds in a nonstick sauté pan for two or three minutes over medium heat, making sure not to burn them. Reserve for later. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, with a hand whisk or electric mixer, whip eggs, white sugar, ½ cup brown sugar, flour, milk, vanilla extract, vanilla beans and salt together until batter is smooth and then let rest while you prepare the fruit.

In a large, nonstick, ovenproof skillet, melt the butter over medium heat and then cook the cherries until they have softened a little and are coated with the butter. Toss 2 Tablespoons brown sugar into the skillet and cook for an additional one to two minutes, add almonds and remove from heat.

Pour reserved batter gently over the cherries and almonds, being careful not to disturb fruit, and bake for 25 minutes or until clafouti is golden brown around the edges and slightly puffed. Do not open oven door until the end of the baking time, or the clafouti may collapse.

Cool on a wire rack for 10 to 15 minutes. Expect the clafouti to settle. Cut into pie-shaped pieces, dust with powdered sugar and serve warm with fresh whipped cream or vanilla yogurt.