



Carefree Cherry French Toast in a Mug

By Jacy Shoener

Prep Time 5 / Cook Time 2 / Serves 1 - 2

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

chop: to cut something into small, rough pieces using a blade.

coat: to apply a covering of flour, breadcrumbs, oil, sauce, or batter to food before baking or frying.

knife skills: Bear Claw (growl), Pinch, Plank, and Bridge (look out for trolls).

melt: to heat a solid food so it becomes liquid, like butter or chocolate.

microwave: to heat or cook food or liquid quickly in a microwave oven, which uses high-frequency electromagnetic waves to generate heat in the food's water molecules.

soak: to immerse a hard food for a certain amount of time in a liquid to soften it.

tear: to pull or rip apart a food, like basil leaves, into pieces instead of cutting with a knife; cutting breaks cell walls more, so herbs can discolor faster.

thaw: to gradually warm frozen food, melting ice crystals until it is ready to eat or cook.

Equipment

- Microwave
- Microwave-safe mug
- Potheader
- Paper towel
- Cutting board
- Kid-safe knife
- Pastry brush

- Small bowl
- Measuring spoons
- Whisk
- Spoon for stirring

Ingredients

Carefree Cherry French Toast in a Mug

- 1 tsp butter ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free butter, like Earth Balance)******
- 7 frozen cherries, thawed
- 1 egg ******(for EGG ALLERGY sub 1/4 C applesauce)******
- 1/4 tsp pure vanilla extract ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor—check label)******
- 1 T milk ******(for DAIRY ALLERGY sub dairy-free/nut-free milk)******
- 1 slice of bread—stale bread is best! ******(for GLUTEN ALLERGY sub gluten-free/nut-free bread)******

Food Allergen Substitutions

Carefree Cherry French Toast in a Mug

Dairy: Substitute dairy-free/nut-free butter, like Earth Balance. Substitute dairy-free/nut-free milk.

Egg: For 1 egg, substitute 1/4 C applesauce.

Gluten/Wheat: Use certified gluten-free pure vanilla extract, not imitation vanilla flavor. Substitute gluten-free/nut-free bread.

Instructions

Carefree Cherry French Toast in a Mug

microwave + thaw

Put **7 frozen cherries** into a microwave-safe mug. Cover with a wet paper towel and defrost on high for 15 to 30 seconds to thaw them.

chop

Chop the thawed cherries into small pieces and set them aside.

measure + melt + coat

Measure **1 tablespoon butter** and place it into a clean microwave-safe mug. Cover with a damp paper towel and microwave on high for 30 seconds. Carefully remove with a potholder and use a pastry brush to coat the sides of the mug with the melted butter.

crack + measure + whisk

Crack **1 egg** into a small bowl. Measure and add **1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract**, and **1 tablespoon milk**. Whisk to combine.

tear + soak

Tear **1 bread slice** into small pieces and add them to the egg mixture. Stir and allow the liquids to soak into the bread while you make the Cool Cherry Single-Serve Whipped Cream and Hot Chocolate Cherry Steamer for One (if making).

add + stir + transfer

Add the chopped cherries to the egg and bread mixture. Stir to combine. Transfer the contents of the bowl to the microwave-safe mug coated with butter.

microwave + top + serve

Microwave on high for 90 seconds to 2 minutes, until the egg is completely cooked. (If you are substituting applesauce for the egg, reduce time to 1 minute.) The French toast might expand above the top of the mug, but it should not overflow. Top with a dollop of **Cool Cherry Single-Serve Whipped Cream** and serve.

Featured Ingredient: Cherry!

Hi! I'm Cherry!

"My name is a tree, a fruit, a wood, a color, and a female name! My skin is often a rich, dark red color, and when you bite into me, my flesh is the same color! You can eat around the pit in my center and spit it out (or remove it with your fingers). If you want to remove the pit first, pull out my stem and insert the narrow end of a chopstick (or similar tool) into the hole left by the stem. Then push the pit out through the other end, or use a cherry pitter if you have one!"

History & Etymology

The cherry is a stone fruit or drupe. People have been eating cherries for thousands of years.

Archaeological evidence of wild (sweet) cherries has been found in Europe from the Early Bronze Age, about 2077 BCE. They were probably being domesticated and grown by 800 BCE.

Turkey produces the most sweet variety of cherries, followed by the United States. Russia is the largest

producer of sour cherries. Washington, California, and Oregon grow the most sweet cherries in the US, and Michigan grows the most sour cherries.

The Rainier cherry was named for Mount Rainier in Washington State and was developed in 1952 at Washington State University by crossing a Bing cherry with a Van cherry.

Maraschino cherries are sweetened, preserved sour cherries originally made with Marasca cherries from the Dalmatia region on the Croatian coast. They were preserved with Maraschino liqueur made from cherries and their pits, stems, and leaves. However, the maraschino cherries we use now are made with Queen (Royal) Anne cherries soaked in a sweetened, non-alcoholic syrup with artificial red food coloring added and are really imitation maraschino cherries.

Ornamental cherry trees are grown for their beauty when they flower. They grow naturally in Japan and other countries. Large displays of cherry tree blossoms attract tourists in springtime to places in Japan, the US (especially Washington DC), and other countries.

Cherry trees produce a reddish-brown hardwood used to make furniture, cabinets, and musical instruments. You can also smoke meat using cherry wood chips.

The world record for cherry-pit spitting is over 93 feet! Brian Krause, part of the Krause family cherry-pit spitting dynasty, set the record at an annual contest in Eau Claire, Michigan, in 2004.

The cherry is the state fruit of Utah.

The English word "cherry" comes from the Old Northern French "cherise," from the Latin "cerasum," based on the Greek "kerasos."

Anatomy

The average life for a cherry tree is 15 to 30 years, although black cherry trees can live up to 250 years. However, the oldest cherry blossom tree in Japan, the "Jindai Zakura," is about 2,000 years old!

Cherry fruit grows on a flowering tree from the *Prunus* genus, which belongs to the Rosaceae (rose) family. The two main species used commercially are the sweet cherry (*Prunus avium*) and the sour cherry (*Prunus cerasus*). There are over 1,000 varieties; however, we will highlight only four common ones:

Bings are sweet red cherries and dark red when ripe. They taste sweet with just a bit of tartness and are suitable for snacking, salads, ice cream, or baked goods.

Rainiers are sweet cherries that are yellow and reddish-pink. They are good in salads and for snacking.

Queen (Royal) Anne cherries are sweet and look like Rainiers but are more tart. They are often covered in chocolate for candies, used in baking, and to make modern maraschino cherries.

Montmorency cherries are sour cherries primarily grown in the state of Michigan. They are light red, tart, and can be used year-round because they are often canned, dried, or frozen. They are used in pies, cobblers, and, if dried, in trail mix or salads.

Fruit from the Black cherry tree (*Prunus serotina*) can be eaten raw, and the cherries are also added to baked goods, jelly, wine, and yogurt. They are sweet cherries and are dark red to almost black when ripe. In addition, black cherry wood is used in cabinet and furniture-making.

How to Pick, Buy, & Eat

When picking cherries, make sure they are firm, plump, and shiny, with attached green stems. There should be no bruises, cracks, holes, or wrinkles. Bing cherries should be dark red and Rainier cherries bright yellow and red.

Store unwashed cherries immediately in a plastic bag in the refrigerator with their stems attached. Try to eat or cook them within seven days. Rinse in a colander before using, and then pat them dry with a kitchen or paper towel.

Cherry cake, pie, cobblers, crisps, and tarts are popular desserts. Cherries are also made into jelly or preserves, ice cream, milkshakes, syrups, and sauces to accompany grilled or roasted meat. Raw cherries are great for a snack, but they can also be sliced or chopped to add to salads.

Maraschino cherries are sour cherries soaked in sweet syrup. They are used to garnish ice cream, gelatin desserts, pudding, milkshakes, cocktails, and soft drinks (especially cherry sodas).

It takes about 80 cherries to make a homemade cherry pie!

Nutrition

Cherries have a moderate amount of vitamin C and fiber, and sour cherries have about 50 percent more vitamin C than sweet cherries.

Some studies indicate that cherries, which have antioxidants, help repair damage to the cells of our bodies and aid our muscles in their recovery after a strenuous workout. They also may help prevent gout or ease its pain and can be used as a sleep aid.

Some of these purported health benefits require eating a lot of cherries, so it may be beneficial to drink a concentrated cherry juice instead.

As their names imply, sweet cherries contain more sugar than the sour varieties, but you would not want to eat the sour type raw.

A cherry pit is inedible, and the kernel inside it is toxic if ingested in large amounts.