

just a taste

Contact Lynn Ogryzlo at ogryzlo@lynnogryzlo.com

SHOP. BID. BUY.

www.niagarathisweekauction.com

VendoLicious
CATERING

905.518.8288

catering@vendolicious.ca
www.vendolicious.ca
fax 905.945.2278

Niagara's seasons are so delicious — and short! Blink and you've missed it. We've already gone through asparagus season, strawberries and rhubarb are winding down and now it's cherry season!

I love to drive by a farmer's stand and pick up a huge basket of big, rich, sweet just picked cherries. Once home, all I do is rinse and those sweet cherries live up to their name. They're devoured, one by one, serving as dessert-on-the-stem for an after dinner treat.

Duffin Appleworks on Rice Road in Fonthill grow many different varieties of cherries including the big, plump ultra sweet cherries we all love so much. The orchards are cared for with natural methods, reducing concerns about the use of fruit sprays.

At Duffin Appleworks, you can buy fresh orchard cherries or you can pick them yourself. There's nothing better than a family experience in the orchard surrounded by trees so laden with ripe fruit. Their branches literally reach down to hand it to you.

In the Appleworks market, you can buy fresh cherry pies or tarts and every weekend in July cherry cooking demonstrations are given by resident chef, Greg Willis. Yes, this progressive farm has its own on-site bakery and resident chef.

If you're near Barton Street in Winona, the Niagara Fruit Education Centre is another place to pick your own cherries. The Centre is packed full of agricultural

information the entire family will enjoy browsing through including the undisputed health benefits of cherries.

The best way to enjoy cherry season is to pick up a copy of the Niagara Culinary Trail map or go to their website www.NiagaraCulinaryTrail.com and find a cherry farm near you.

The map also identifies Cherry Lane on Victoria Avenue in Vineland. This large cherry farm not only sells fresh cherries in season, but pits them and packages them in different size buckets so you can buy fresh Niagara cherries year round!

At Inn the Pines market on Seventh Avenue, you can find quarts of freshly picked cherries and if you're a lover of salads, they'll pick you a fresh head from the garden behind the stand.

Look for Niagara's sweet cherries at farmers markets and market stores throughout the region.

Once ripe, cherries mature all too quickly. They can't be left on the tree for more than a week or they perish. Worse yet, the birds will get them. This year, there was an unpredictable hailstorm and the cherries may look a bit marred, but they're every bit as delicious as ever.

Sweet cherries are best eaten out of hand or dipped into a pot of melted chocolate. You can cook with sweet cherries but very minimally. Soak pitted sweet cherries in kirsch or in sugar, lemon juice and balsamic vinegar for



Lynn Ogryzlo



ON THE MENU

Brownies with icewined cherries

- 5 oz (125 g) semisweet or bittersweet chocolate
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) unsalted butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup (250 mL) sugar
- 1 tsp (5 mL) pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) all purpose flour
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) Vintage cabernet flour
- 1/2 teaspoon (2.5 mL) baking powder
- salt
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) dark chocolate chips
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) chopped pecans
- 1 lb (454 gr) ripe cherries, pitted
- 1/4 cup (60 mL) cabernet sauvignon wine
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) cabernet franc icewine

Preheat the oven to 350 F (180 C). Lightly grease an 8- or 9-inch square baking pan. Set aside. In a small pan over a pot of simmering water, melt chocolate and butter, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat and set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk the eggs with sugar and vanilla. Slowly whisk in cooled chocolate. Stir the flours together with baking powder and a pinch of salt. Add to the chocolate mixture and stir in chocolate chips and pecans. Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake for 30 minutes. Cool. Do not worry if sides are slightly higher than the middle. Press sides down as brownie cools.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine cherries and both wines. Simmer until the fruit is soft, about 8-10 minutes. Remove the sauce from the heat and let it cool.

Slice brownie horizontally. Spread icewined cherries over the brownie bottom and top with brownie top. Return to the baking pan refrigerate for an hour. When ready to serve, remove from refrigerator, cut into 2-inch squares and top with a fresh cherry. Makes 16 squares.

a rich sauce to spoon over French toast or vanilla ice cream.

Cherry season is so short, blink and it's gone so get out there and get them while they're at their peak.

Lynn Ogryzlo is food and wine writer for Niagara This Week and Niagara Life Magazine

Short, but sweet

Take advantage of Niagara's cherry harvest — before it's too late