

Jewel-Like Fruits Sparkle In Cooking

Poet Robert Frost referred to blueberries as “a vision of thieves.” This blue jewel need not be stolen to be enjoyed. Wild blueberries abound in hills and old pasture lands around the Monadnock Region, in markets and at pick-your-own farms which offer easy access to cultivated berries.

“Long live the sun which gives us such beautiful color,” painter Paul Cezanne once said. Certainly Cezanne would have acknowledged the red raspberry as one of nature’s most beautifully colored fruits. It is also one of the tastiest. Very fragile, these delicate berries are best used the same day they are picked; or refrigerate and use the next day.

Best Raspberry Pie

This pie is the taste of pure summer sunshine! A hubby favorite, I always try and make at least one of these during fresh raspberry season.

- Ingredients:**
 4 cups raspberries
 1 cup sugar
 1/2 cup water
 2 heaping tablespoons cornstarch
 1 teaspoon concentrated raspberry syrup or liqueur (optional)
 1 (9-inch) baked pie shell

Pick over raspberries, but don’t wash. Combine 1 cup of the berries with sugar, water, and cornstarch; cook until mixture thickens, stirring frequently. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Add raspberry syrup, if used, and combine mixture gently with the remaining 3 cups of raspberries. Pour into pie shell and chill at least 4 hours. Serve with whipped cream.

Red, White & Blue Frozen Delight

A quick dessert that will make 12 servings; nice on a hot summer day after a barbecue.

- Ingredients:**
 1 can (14 oz.) low-fat or regular sweetened condensed milk
 1/3 cup lemon juice
 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
 2 cups (16 oz.) plain yogurt
 2 cups miniature marshmallows
 1/2 cup chopped pecans
 1 cup fresh raspberries
 1 cup fresh blueberries

In a bowl, combine condensed milk, and lemon juice and peel. Stir in yogurt, marshmallows, and pecans. Spread half into an ungreased 11x7x2-inch dish. Sprinkle with half of the raspberries and blueberries. Cover with remaining yogurt mixture; top with remaining berries. Cover and freeze. Remove from freezer 15-20 minutes before serving.

Banana Blueberry Dessert

A hot-from-the oven dessert to serve when you want something a little different. Makes 4-6 servings.

- Ingredients:**
 4 bananas
 1/2 cup fresh blueberries
 1/4 cup brown sugar
 1/2 cup orange juice
 1 tablespoon butter
 2 tablespoons light, semi-sweet white wine

Peel bananas and slice in half, lengthwise; arrange in buttered baking dish. Sprinkle with blueberries and brown sugar. Pour orange juice carefully around sides, using care not to disturb brown sugar; use enough to cover bottom of dish. Dot with butter. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Pour in white wine and bake another 5 minutes, until bubbly and brown. Serve hot from baking dish, with sour cream combined with 1 tablespoon sugar and a dash of vanilla, or vanilla ice cream.

Berries Brûlée

A lovely company dessert. You can make the brûlée part under your kitchen broiler or use a small hand-torch if you have one. 6 servings.

- Ingredients:**
 1 pint mixed berries such as raspberries, blueberries, chopped peaches, blackberries
 1 pint sour cream or creme fraiche
 1 cup dark brown sugar

Heat broiler. Arrange berries in a shallow baking dish. Stir sour cream or creme fraiche until smooth and spread over berries. Place brown sugar in small sieve and press through to cover sour cream in a light, even layer. Broil until sugar begins to bubble and lightly caramelize; watch closely and do not allow to burn. Serve at once.

Raspberry Buttermilk Ice Cream

Cool, refreshing, and easily prepared in advance; ice cream maker is required. Makes about 1-1/2 quarts.

- Ingredients:**
 3 eggs
 1-3/4 cup sugar, divided
 3 cups buttermilk
 1 cup whipping cream
 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice, strained
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 2 pint baskets fresh raspberries

In bowl, beat eggs until creamy and yellow. Whisk in 1-1/4 cups of the sugar; whisk in buttermilk, whipping cream, lemon juice, and vanilla. Cover and chill mixture 5 hours, or until very cold. In bowl, roughly crush raspberries; stir in rest of sugar and let stand 15 minutes. Stir raspberry mixture into buttermilk mixture and churn in ice cream maker according to manufacturer’s instructions. Store ice cream in freezer. (Can be prepared up to 2 days in advance.) Soften slightly in refrigerator before serving.

Nancy Adams is a native of Peterborough and resides in Hancock. She and her husband, Bud, have raised four sons. She has been featured as one of Yankee Magazine’s great New England cooks.

Raspberry Tossed Salad

This recipe pairs well with grilled meats and seafoods. Serves 6-8.

- Ingredients:**
 6 cups torn mixed salad greens or mesclun mix
 1 bunch watercress, optional
 1-1/2 cups fresh or frozen raspberries
 2 tablespoons olive oil or canola oil
 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
 2-3 teaspoons sugar
 1 tablespoon cream salt and pepper
 1 cup slivered almonds, lightly toasted
 1/2 cup fresh raspberries

Put salad greens into a large bowl; add watercress, if using, and set bowl aside. Mash the 1-1/2 cups fresh or frozen raspberries; strain through a sieve, reserving the juice, and discarding seeds. In a small bowl, whisk the raspberry juice, oil, vinegar, sugar, cream, salt, and pepper. Drizzle over salad and toss gently to coat all leaves. Top salad with 1/2 cup fresh raspberries and toasted almonds; toss gently.

Raspberry Lemon Muffins

Use fresh raspberries when in season or frozen ones other times of year for these tasty muffins. Makes 1 dozen.

- Ingredients:**
 2 cups flour
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 teaspoon each baking powder and baking soda
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 2 eggs, lightly beaten
 1 cup (8 oz.) lemon yogurt
 1/4 cup butter, melted and cooled
 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1-1/2 cups fresh or frozen raspberries (no need to thaw)

In a bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In another bowl, combine eggs, yogurt, butter, lemon peel, and vanilla; mix well. Stir liquid ingredients into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in raspberries. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin tins three-quarters full. Bake at 400 degrees for 18-20 minutes or until test-done.

Blueberry-Lemon Glaze

Use this glaze to brush on chicken, duck, or Cornish game hens during final minutes of roasting or grilling. It’s also delicious brushed on grilled fresh salmon. Serve additional sauce on the side, if desired.

- Ingredients:**
 4 lemons, sliced thinly and seeded
 1-1/4 cups sugar
 2 cups white wine (or white grape juice)
 2 cups fresh blueberries

Roast poultry according to your favorite method. Combine lemon slices, sugar, and wine in a saucepan; simmer until reduced by one-third and lemons are soft. Add blueberries and simmer 5-7 minutes. Glaze poultry during last 15 minutes of cooking; for salmon, brush on last 6-8 minutes of grilling. Serve with additional sauce.

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