

A delicious and dramatic dessert that will follow any entrée.

Yield 4 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 4 servings of angel food cake, OR
4 servings of pound cake, OR
12 crêpes (3 per person)
- 1 pint vanilla ice cream (optional) OR
4 servings of whipped cream (optional)
- 1 pound fresh, ripe sweet cherries, such as Bing
(out of season, can use frozen cherries)
- 1/2 cup sugar, (plus 2 tsp for lemon zest)
- 1 lemon and/or 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/3 cup high-proof rum OR kirsch or other liquor.
(It must be over 80 proof to flame.)

ADVANCE PREP

1. Gather your Mise en Place for this recipe
2. Evenly scoop the ice cream into 4 dishes or decorative glasses and put in the freezer until ready to serve (this can be done up to 4 hours ahead) OR... slice up the cake and arrange on plates. OR prepare crêpes and set aside.

INSTRUCTIONS

If using fresh cherries, wash and pit the cherries.
If using frozen, simply open the bag, do not rinse.
You can cook directly from frozen.

Put the cherries and sugar in a large skillet.

Remove 1" strips of zest from 1/2 of lemon with a zester or grater. Rub with 2 tsp of sugar. Set aside.

Zest the rest of the lemon with the zester/grater.
Finely chop (or use a microplane). Set aside.

Cover and cook the cherries over medium-low heat until the sugar dissolves, about 4 minutes.

Squeeze juice from half the lemon over the cherries. Add vanilla if using. Stir cherries to combine evenly. Uncover and cook over medium-high until cherries get juicy and thickened about 5 minutes more. Taste, and add additional zest if you want more lemon flavor.

To flambé the rum, be very careful!

- Keep full bottle of liquor away from open flames while pouring into the pan.
- Push up sleeves, tie up hair, and hold pan away from face while lighting the alcohol.

If cooking over gas:

Pull the pan off the heat and add the rum. Ignite the alcohol with a long match, or one held with tongs, or a long-handled lighter. Swirl the pan slightly until the flames subside, about 30 seconds.

If cooking over an electric stove:

Put the rum in a small sauce pan. Warm it over medium-low heat and carefully light it with a long match or one held with tongs. Pour the lit rum over the cherries, and swirl the pan lightly until the flames subside, about 30 seconds.

Use a pan lid to extinguish flames before serving.
DON'T ATTEMPT TO BLOW OUT FLAME

Ladle the cherries and their juices over prepared ice cream scoops or cake, or crêpes folded in quarters. Garnish with lemon zest and serve immediately.

Chef's note: While some of the alcohol burns away, not all of it does! If anyone you're serving shouldn't consume alcohol, reserve some of the cherries & syrup for those guests, before doing the flambé.

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