

Queen of Tarts – Montmorency Tart Cherries Pack a Healthful Punch

by Jeanne Ringe

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Europeans kept a “confection box” of home remedies. The box contained seeds, spices, herbs and cherry pits, which contain prussic acid, considered a volatile poison. In small doses, the cherry seeds were used to relieve chest pains, stomach spasms, even labor pains. Through the ages, cherries have had many applications for healers and physicians—as tonics, antiseptics and even as anthelmintics, which could rid the body of intestinal worms and parasites.

Science has advanced considerably since the days when people were crunching cherry pits and, while we can't recommend any of the early cherry healing practices, the latest research on the health benefits of cherries, particularly tart cherries, shows that they may be one of nature's most abundant sources of protective antioxidants.

Consider this:

- A 2003 study done at Michigan State University suggests that cyanidin and anthocyanins found in tart cherries may reduce the risk of colon cancer.
- “Extremely significant quantities” of another antioxidant, melatonin, were found in a study of Montmorency tart cherries. Melatonin is probably best known as a sleep cycle regulator, but as an antioxidant it can help the body destroy free radicals, which cause the death of cells.

“Cherry juice concentrate, which involves greatly reducing the water content, has ten times the melatonin of raw fruit,” according to Dr. Russell Reiter of the University of

IT WAS 1931. THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

If you weren't broke, you were dirt poor, and if you had a little money, you were hanging on to what you had.

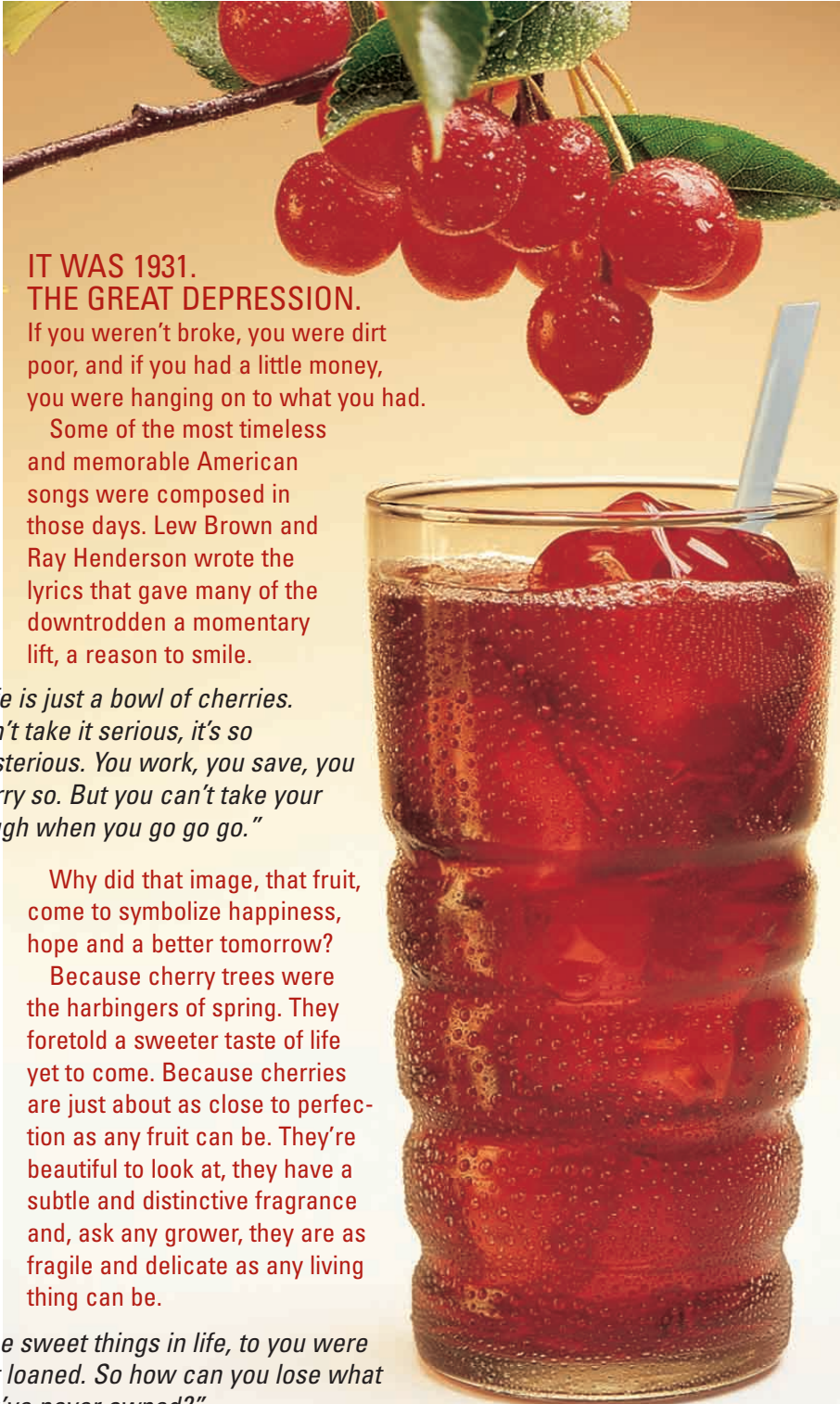
Some of the most timeless and memorable American songs were composed in those days. Lew Brown and Ray Henderson wrote the lyrics that gave many of the downtrodden a momentary lift, a reason to smile.

“Life is just a bowl of cherries. Don't take it serious, it's so mysterious. You work, you save, you worry so. But you can't take your dough when you go go go.”

Why did that image, that fruit, come to symbolize happiness, hope and a better tomorrow?

Because cherry trees were the harbingers of spring. They foretold a sweeter taste of life yet to come. Because cherries are just about as close to perfection as any fruit can be. They're beautiful to look at, they have a subtle and distinctive fragrance and, ask any grower, they are as fragile and delicate as any living thing can be.

“The sweet things in life, to you were just loaned. So how can you lose what you've never owned?”



Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, the melatonin expert who conducted the study.

- Perrilyl alcohol, also found in tart cherries, “works on every kind of cancer we’ve tested it against,” says Raymond Holm of the University of Iowa, who conducted experiments using perillyl alcohol to shrink tumors.

THE CHERRY CHALLENGE

The American Institute of Cancer Research recommends a plant-based diet of fruits (including cherries) vegetables and legumes. A low-fat diet that includes at least five servings of fruits and vegetables daily can decrease the overall incidence of cancer by 20 percent, according to the AICR. Are you getting enough in your diet? Have you looked in your produce drawer lately? Are you tossing out more than you eat?

Who wouldn’t love to have a beautiful bowl of ruby red tart cherries sitting on the counter, ready to be eaten any time of day? The trouble is, it’s just not practical. Anyone who’s rushed home from the health food store with a beautiful basket of ripe, tart cherries knows they’re nearly as fragile as bananas...and they are virtually inedible in a few days.

Who has time to run back to the store every couple of days to replenish the supply?

The next time you’re in the health food store, take a trip down another aisle and check out the number-one concentrated

cherry juice on the market today: Pharma-Cherry. From Pure Planet/Organic By Nature, the company who brought you Green Kamut and Just Barley™, Pharma-Cherry is the real deal. And it is absolutely delicious.

There is nothing else in Pharma-Cherry but pure, concentrated Montmorency tart cherries. It comes in a can that can sit on your shelf for ten months, or in the refriger-

“Life is just a bowl of cherries, so live and laugh at it all.”

ator even longer. But the truth is, the hardest thing about having Pharma-Cherry in your refrigerator is resisting the temptation to drink it all day long. It’s that good.

Ronald Prior, who helped devise the ORAC test (measuring the free-radical scavenging ability of different fruits and vegetables), recommends consuming at least 3,500 ORAC units a day. Pharma-Cherry offers a whopping 5,286 ORAC units per serving.

Whether you mix it with water, juice, or hot or cold tea, put it in a shake, pour it over ice cream or lick it off the spoon, Pharma-Cherry is one of those natural health products you don’t have to learn to love. One taste, and it’s all over. You’re hooked. ■



The *Healthy Living* taste testers are a discerning bunch. They have been known to turn their noses up at a product and refuse to participate.

But when offered a sample of Pharma-Cherry, mixed with plain water, these were some of the reactions: **“Mmmmmmm!”** **“Tastes as good as it looks,”** and **“The tartness is very refreshing; it’s a good alternative to lemon and water. After a big meal it would be nice with ice.”** And **“Fantastic. Outrageous. Tastes like real cherries.”**



Resources

If you need help finding Pharma-Cherry in your area, contact Pure Planet-Organic By Nature toll-free at (800) 695-2017, or visit their website at www.pureplanet.com.

Consumers Are Singing About Cherry Juice

“I have been singing the praises of eating tart cherries and drinking cherry juice. My heel gave me such pain, but then I tried cherries—what a relief. When the pain comes back I reach for cherry juice or cherries and the next day I’m on my feet again.”

—Ann from Virginia

“In August, I started taking tart cherry juice for the few aches I have and I wanted to tell you how great it is. I had read about a study a couple of years ago, but didn’t do anything about it until recently. I decided to try it and I’m so glad I did.”

—Barbara from Ohio

SOURCE: *Cherry Advantage*, the newsletter of the Cherry Marketing Institute.