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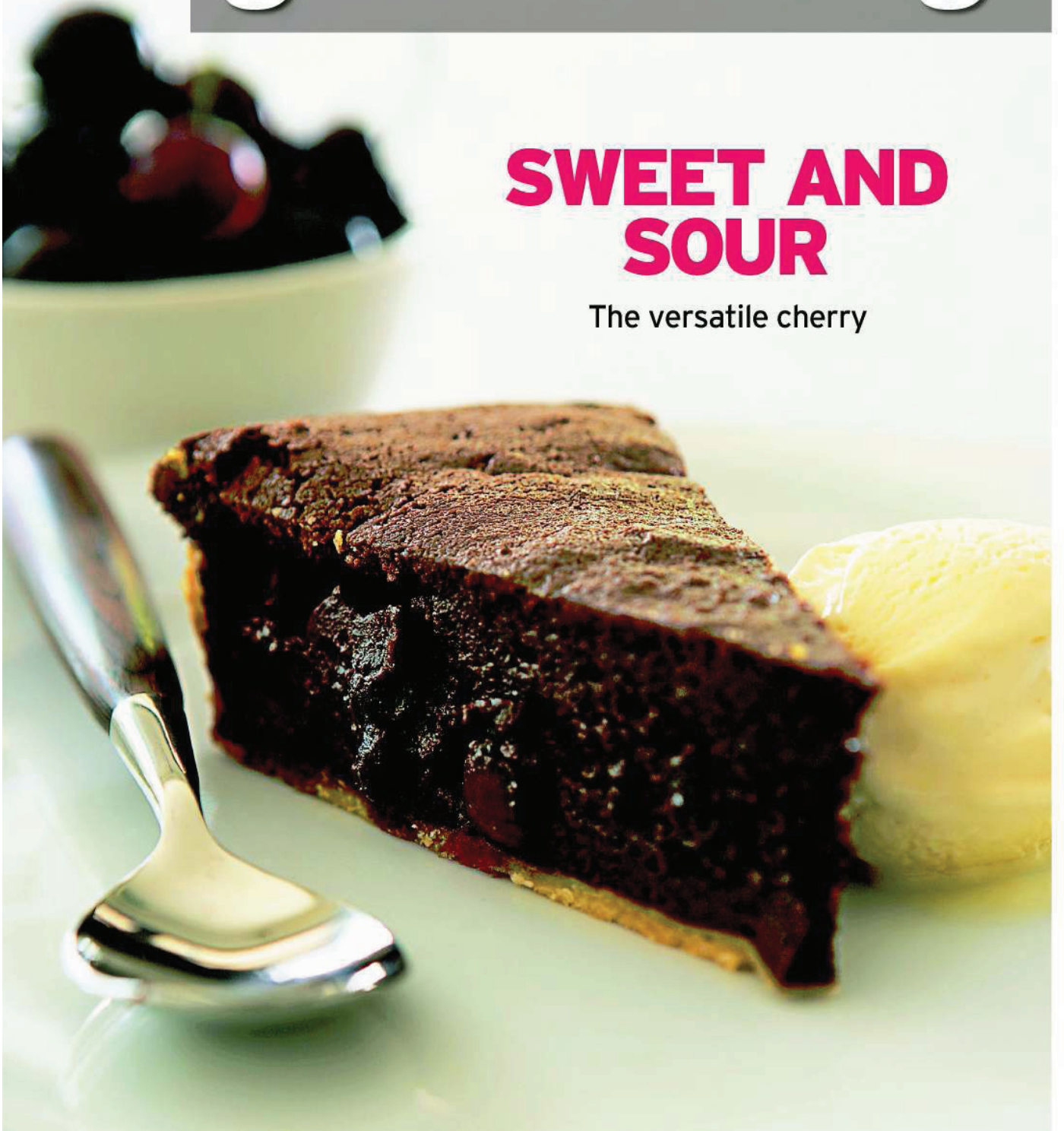
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good living

SWEET AND SOUR

The versatile cherry





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good living eating in



JEREMY AND JANE STRODE RECIPES

My cherry amour

Few ingredients herald the start of a long, hot summer more clearly than cherries.

A bowl of cherries on the dining room table or in the kitchen not only looks beautiful, it makes a wonderful snack.

The fruit originated in western Asia and south-eastern Europe. There are three main groups: sweet cherries, sour cherries and a combination of both. Sweet varieties are the most common; sour cherries are superior to cook with if you can find them.

The Young and Orange districts of NSW produce most of the state's cherries and about half the national crop. The season runs from October until February, peaking in mid-summer. Select fruit with stalks intact and shiny

skins. Cherries with dull skin are overripe.

Cherries are exciting for cooks due to their versatility. They are great eaten raw, they make wonderful preserves, are lovely with duck and game and perfect pickled and served with pate and rillette.

For the parfait recipe here, if you pickle the cherries now, they should be ready to serve at Christmas. They make a tasty edible Christmas present and are also good with cold and warm meats, terrines and cheese.

Lightly poached with a little sugar and spice, cherries brighten myriad desserts. They are one of my favourite fruits at a favourite time of year.

Jeremy Strode

Spiced cherries and brioche toastie

- 300g cherries, pitted
- 2 star anise
- 4 cloves
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- 1 tbsp castor sugar
- 3 tbsp water
- 8 slices brioche
- 200g Nutella

Place cherries, star anise, cloves, peppercorns, sugar and water in a saucepan. Cover with a lid and cook

on a medium heat for five minutes. Remove from heat and, with lid on, swirl saucepan gently to coat cherries in the syrup. Stand for 10 minutes. Pre-heat a sandwich press. Spread four slices of brioche with Nutella, top with remaining brioche and toast in sandwich press until golden. If you don't have a press, toast brioche and spread with Nutella before pressing together. Cut in half on an angle and serve with warm cherries and their syrup.

Serves 4



Photos Jennifer Soo



Chocolate and cherry tart

This tart will last for three to four days out of the fridge in a cool spot but is incredible served warm from the oven.

300g savoury shortcrust pastry
420g dark chocolate
280g butter
3 eggs
5 egg yolks
90g castor sugar
200g cherries, pitted

Roll pastry to 1/2-centimetre thickness and line a 23-centimetre tart shell.

Rest overnight in the fridge or for at least 1 hour. Preheat oven to 160C. Blind bake tart shell until pastry is cooked through, about 25 minutes. Turn oven down to 140C. Gently melt chocolate and butter and stir to combine well. Place eggs, yolks and sugar in a mixer and whisk on high until light and fluffy. Fold through chocolate until well combined. Place cherries in bottom of tart shell, pour over chocolate mix and bake until risen in the centre, about 45 minutes. Remove to a cooling rack and serve warm or at room temperature with cream or ice-cream.

Serves 8



Chicken liver parfait and pickled cherries

Choosing cherries with the stalks intact indicates quality and they look great when served.

400g castor sugar
450ml white wine vinegar
12 black peppercorns
6 cloves
4 bay leaves
500g cherries, washed
450g chicken livers, trimmed
1 tbsp brandy
1 tbsp port
150g butter
150g pork fat
480ml cream
Salt
White pepper, finely ground
100ml brandy
400ml veal stock
2 egg whites
1/2 tsp powdered gelatine
1 tbsp warm water

To pickle cherries, place sugar, vinegar, peppercorns, cloves and bay leaves in a saucepan, bring to the boil, then simmer for five minutes. Allow liquid to cool. Pack sterilised preserving jars with cherries and cover with pickling liquid. Seal jars and refrigerate for a month before using.

For the parfait, marinate the livers

in brandy and port overnight. Preheat oven to 140C. Melt the butter and pork fat in a saucepan then allow to cool until warm but not hot. Warm cream to same temperature. Blend livers in a blender, add pork fat mixture with blender going. Add cream and season with salt and pepper with blender going. Pass through a fine strainer and pour into a 1/2-litre capacity terrine mould or six 200-millilitre ramekins and place in a baking tray. Fill tray with hot water from the tap so the water comes halfway up the mould and cover tray with foil. Bake in the oven for 20 minutes for large parfait, eight minutes for individual, or until just set. Parfaits should still be wobbly in the centre. Refrigerate.

To make the jelly, reduce brandy by half in a saucepan. Add stock and reduce to 250 millilitres. Allow to cool, then chill. Lightly whisk egg whites and stir through chilled stock. Bring to the boil in a saucepan, stirring occasionally. Once stock has just boiled, do not stir again. Reduce heat to a very slow simmer for 10 minutes. Strain clear jelly carefully through a fine strainer. Dissolve gelatine in warm water and stir through jelly while still hot. Cool and pour a thin layer on top of parfait. Set in fridge. Serve with crusty bread or toast.

Serves 6

