

Carol Kicinski's Simply Gluten Free™

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Article Title: **Beat the heat with gluten-free cherry almond ricotta ice cream!**

Article Text

I grew up in a military family, which meant my childhood was spent in various cities and towns around the world, never more than three years in any one given place at a time. There were new schools, new friends, and new cultures. The main constant in my life was change.

Regardless of where we lived, come summertime, there was another constant in my life – ice cream! Whether we lived in Okinawa, the Philippines or Fayetteville, North Carolina, we had homemade ice cream in the summer.

My father had a hand crank ice cream machine that he would fill with whatever delicious concoction he whipped up and surround it with ice and rock salt. Of course, hand cranking the machine for what seemed like hours quickly lost its appeal and Dad would always end up doing most of the work while we escaped to more pressing matters. Miraculously, the instant the ice cream was done, my sisters and I would re-appear with nothing else in the world to do but eat ice cream.

With the long tradition of ice cream making in my family, I could hardly let a summer go by without posting an ice cream recipe! This recipe is simple, egg and refined sugar free, has only a few ingredients, and is a bit more sophisticated than the flavors we grew up with. Don't get me wrong, I have nothing against chocolate, strawberry and my personal favorite, vanilla, but every once in a while, something with a little panache is OK too. Or in this case, more than OK!

I started with whole milk ricotta cheese, half and half, Bing cherries bursting with juicy goodness, sweetened it up with some organic honey and then, for some crunch, tossed in slivered almonds that were quickly toasted and sweetened with a tad more honey. The result kind of reminds me of a cannoli.

If this ice cream gets too hard in the freezer, just let it sit out for about 10 minutes and it will soften up perfectly.

Photo Credit: Carol Kicinski

Photo Caption: This chilled gluten-free treat is the perfect remedy to a hot summer's day!

Article Photo 1 (link):

<http://simplygluten-free.com/articles/files/2016/05/gluten-free-cherry-almond-ricotta-ice-cream.jpg>

Article Photo 2 (link)

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Recipe

Recipe Title: Cherry Almond Ricotta Ice Cream

Recipe Ingredients:

2½ cups whole milk ricotta cheese
1 cup half and half
¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon organic honey
¼ teaspoon kosher or sea salt
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
½ cup sliced almonds
2 cups cherries, pitted

Recipe Directions:

Combine the ricotta, half and half, ¾ cup honey, salt and vanilla in a blender and blend until smooth and all the ingredients are combined. (You may need to scrape down the sides of the blender jar a couple times.) Pour the mixture into an ice cream maker and process for 20-25 minutes or according to your manufacturer's instructions.

While the ice cream is churning, place the almonds in a small, dry skillet over medium-high heat and toast until golden brown and fragrant, about 3 minutes. Add the remaining tablespoon of honey and stir to coat the almonds. Remove from the heat and pour the almonds onto a plate or piece of waxed or parchment paper to cool. Cut the cherries into quarters. When the almonds are cool, crumble them into little clumps. They may be a little sticky; this is okay.

During the last minute or two of churning the ice cream, add the cherries and the almonds and continue to churn until they are incorporated throughout the ice cream. Transfer to a flat, shallow container (like a baking pan) and freeze until firm in the freezer, about 2 hours.

Recipe Servings: 8 servings

Enjoy!