

Cherimoya Recipes

When you hold this ancient fruit, you see one of the earliest recorded New World fruits. Cherimoya belongs to the custard-apple (Annonaceae) family and is related to the native American paw paw. Fruit connoisseurs highly value the cherimoya's cream-colored pulp.



Purchase unripe, hard fruit and ripen at room temperature for 3-5 days before refrigerating. They should not be stacked while ripening. Ripen at room temperature, NOT in the refrigerator. Although the skin may darken, the pulp is not affected. When ripe, the cherimoya yields to GENTLE pressure. It will then keep for several days in the refrigerator. When ready to eat, cut the fruit in two from top to bottom, through the stem. The skin can be quite tough, so you will need a sharp knife. If the cherimoya is ripe, the pulp inside will be soft and easily scooped with a spoon. Pulp that is hard to scoop with a spoon means an under-ripe cherimoya, mushy pulp means an over-ripe one.

Use it in fruit salad, smoothies, sorbet, sherbet, salad dressing, and dessert sauce. This fruit is wonderful to eat out-of-hand, but don't eat the watermelon-like seeds which are toxic.

Sorbet Tips

By adding milk or yogurt, a sorbet becomes a sherbet. Sorbet resembles a fruit ice or fruitsicle. For a smooth product, process the sorbet mixture once during the freezing process and refreeze. This technique breaks up ice crystals. Sorbet melts quickly at room temperature.

Because cherimoya has a lovely, delicate flavor, adding another fruit or fruit juice to the sorbet mixture may dilute the cherimoya flavor. A few blueberries, strawberries, or raspberries, could be used for garnish. Adding a liqueur into the sorbet mixture can hamper the freezing process. If desired, add liqueur, such as kirsch, as a topping before serving.

Cherimoya Sorbet (4 servings)

4 cups cherimoya pulp, seeds removed
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
1 tablespoon honey

Puree the cherimoya pulp with the knife blade in a food processor or blender. Add lime juice and honey and thoroughly mix. Pour mixture into divided ice-cube trays or into an 8-inch square pan. Freeze until almost firm. Place cubes or large pieces into processor bowl and use knife blade until the mixture is fluffy, but not completely thawed. Pour mixture into ice cube trays or individual serving dishes and freeze to firm.

To serve: Allow the sorbet to soften a minute or two in the serving dishes, or place four or five sorbet cubes into each serving dish and gently break them.

Cherimoya Sherbet (4 servings)

3 cups cherimoya pulp, seeds removed
1 (8-ounce) carton plain low-fat yogurt
1 tablespoon fresh lime or lemon juice
1 tablespoon honey

Puree the cherimoya pulp with the knife blade in a food processor or blender. Add remaining ingredients and mix thoroughly. Pour mixture into divided ice-cube trays or into an 8-inch square pan. Freeze until almost firm. Place cubes or large pieces into processor bowl and use knife blade until the mixture is fluffy, but not completely thawed. Pour mixture into ice cube trays or serving dishes and freeze to firm.

To serve: Allow sorbet to soften a minute or two in the serving dishes, or place four or five sorbet cubes into each serving dish and gently break them.

Cherimoya Tropical Dessert Sauce (Approximately 4 cups)

This exotic sauce complements angel food, pound, or chiffon cake. It can be used on ice cream, frozen yogurt, or crepes and served warm or chilled. Can be made ahead and refrigerated 4-6 hours but not frozen.

2 cups cherimoya pulp, seeds removed
1 cup 1/2-inch banana chunks
1 (6-ounce) can crushed pineapple with juice
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg

Puree the cherimoya pulp with a knife blade in food processor or blender. Stir in remaining ingredients. Warm sauce on medium setting in microwave or chill thoroughly before serving.

Cherimoya Salad Dressing

For a taste treat, try this fast, easy-to-prepare salad dressing on either fruit or green salads. Mix equal proportions pureed cherimoya pulp and prepared salad dressing in a food processor or blender. Blend and chill at least one hour before serving. Ranch, green goddess, French, or Russian salad dressings are good combinations with Cherimoya.

Cherimoya Tropical Fruit Salad (4-6 servings)

Refrigerate salad 2-4 hours to blend flavors prior to serving.

1 cup cherimoya chunks, seeds removed
1 cup fresh pineapple chunks
1 cup mango or papaya chunks
1 cup canned lychee or firm, ripe avocado chunks
1 head trimmed and washed romaine lettuce

Dressing: 1/2 cup low-fat fruit flavored yogurt, i.e., pineapple, lemon, pina colada

Optional garnish: 1/4 cup pomegranate seeds, nuts, or fresh mint.

Place fruit chunks in bowl, cover, and refrigerate. To serve: Line serving bowl with romaine lettuce. Mix the yogurt dressing with the fruit and spoon salad into serving bowl.

Cherimoya Smoothie (2 servings)

For a thick smoothie, use frozen fruit and chill all ingredients as well as the serving container. Drink immediately.

2 cups frozen cherimoya pulp, seeds removed
2 cups frozen banana chunks
1 cup skim milk
1 (8-ounce) carton strawberry or plain non-fat yogurt

Optional: 1/2 teaspoon flavoring extract, i.e., coconut, almond, vanilla, or strawberry

Combine all ingredients using a knife blade in food processor or blender and mix to a slushy consistency. Serve immediately.



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