

Cherry Chenin Soup

By Lydia Constantini

Makes 5 cups (Four 1 1/4 C. servings)

Ingredients:

- 2 lb. Bing cherries, fresh or canned in juice, pitted
- 2 cups cold water
- 2 cups Dry Creek Chenin Blanc
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 T. plus 1 tsp. cornstarch
- 1 tsp. grated orange zest
- 2 T. fresh orange juice
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 1/2 tsp. almond extract (optional)
- sour cream

Stem and pit cherries (should be about 4 cups of fruit). Discard all but 1 T. pits. (If using canned cherries, disregard this process and add almond extract at end.) Crush the pits with a mallet and tie securely in cheesecloth. Place bag of cherry pits, 2 cups cherries, water, and Chenin Blanc in heavy pan; heat to boiling. Reduce to low; simmer covered until fruit is soft (about 15 minutes).

Pour through sieve into bowl, saving liquid. Purée the fruit only in a food processor; return purée to pan.

Combine sugar and cornstarch in a bowl; stir this mixture into cherry purée. Slowly add the reserved liquid, 2 cups raw cherries, orange zest and bag of cherry pits. Heat on medium, stirring constantly, until liquid thickens and begins to boil. Remove from heat, stir in orange and lemon juices. Add the almond extract at this time if you haven't used the cherry pits. Transfer soup to bowl; refrigerate covered until very cold (at least 3 hours). Ladle soup into chilled bowls and garnish with sour cream.

Note: if you're using canned cherries with syrup, reduce the sugar to 1/4 Cup.

Delicious as a dessert or light first course. Serve with Dry Creek Vineyard Chenin Blanc.