



# FOODS FROM *Spain*



## In season: Picota cherries

**Product:** Picota cherries

**Season:** Spanish Picota cherries are in season from **mid-June to the end of July**. The average season lasts five to six weeks.

**Origin:** Picota cherries grown on the terraced slopes of the Valle del Jerte (Jerte Valley), which lies south west of Madrid in the Cáceres region of Extremadura. The valley stretches over 70 km and covers approximately 10,000 hectares

**What it is:** Picota cherries are sold without a stalk. The cherries mature for up to twice as long as other varieties in the microclimate of the Jerte Valley. During this process, a protective skin forms between the fruit and its stalk, which then detaches naturally during harvesting

**How to eat it:** The long ripening process gives Picota cherries their dark colour and rich flavour. They are excellent to eat fresh from the bowl, with a little vanilla ice cream, or used in simple recipes

**Availability:** During their season, Picota cherries will be available in most of the UK's major supermarkets

**More:** Picota cherries are grown by around 5,000 local producers, who farm small areas of land - an average six acres for each. It is common to find three generations of the same family working on a Picota cherry farm

Picota cherries are unique to the Jerte Valley, and protected by a denomination of origin (DO) certificate, which verifies the fruit has been grown, harvested and packed under rigorous quality control procedures

- Ends -

For **information, photography** or **recipes**, featuring Picota cherries please contact:



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## Picota Cherries: health and nutrition

### Health benefits

- Sweet cherries like the Picota are an excellent source of boron and calcium – so the fruit is thought to promote healthy bones
- Anthocyanins found in cherries help the body provide natural pain relief by blocking inflammatory enzymes, reducing pain, especially in arthritis and headaches
- Vitamin B17 found in cherries is thought to help the body fight cancerous cells
- Cherries have been linked to the treatment and prevention of gout. The flavonoids in cherries contain enzymes that neutralise excessive uric acid, which helps to prevent the occurrence of gout. Gout occurs when excessive uric acid (a natural substance which is made as a by product from the body breaking down old cells) in the blood crystallises and then deposits itself in joints and tissues in the body. This then results in swelling of the joint.

### Nutrition

- 1 handful of cherries (around 10 cherries) gives you (approximate value):
  - More than a quarter of your recommended daily allowance of vitamin C
  - The cherries' 1.5g of fibre helps to prevent the inflammation of gout
  - 140mg potassium
  - Fewer than 50 calories
  - Good source of potassium
  - Less than 10g carbohydrate
  - One of your 5-a-day
  - No fat

Source: *The Composition of Foods*, sixth summary edition, by McCance and Widdowson

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