

## Serious Eats: Recipes

# Cook the Book: Black Cherry and Raspberry Kuchen

Posted by Caroline Russock, February 11, 2010



[Photograph: Caroline Russock]

I like featuring recipes on *Cook the Book* that take advantage of ingredients that are in season since, as a rule, they taste better, are more readily available, and are generally less expensive. But every once in a while I come across a recipe that needs to be shared even if it isn't the most seasonal. This **Black Cherry and Raspberry Kuchen** from *The Grand Central Baking Book* by Piper Davis and Ellen Jackson is one of those recipes.

Sure, it's the middle of February and the entire Northeast is blanketed in a layer of snow so deep that many of us are homebound and cherries and raspberries are certainly not at the height of their season. Regardless of these factors, I needed to make this lemon-glazed fruit-studded kuchen.

Instead of spending way too much on the subpar berries of uncertain provenance I saw in the produce section, I headed to the freezer aisle and bought bags of **flash frozen cherries and raspberries**. I figured that they would be my best bet for this unseasonal baking venture.

"Kuchen" is the German word for "cake" and comes in many different forms. This one is similar to a coffee cake, made with yeasted batter, topped with melted butter and fruit, and finished with a sweet glaze, in this case either lemon or vanilla.

The batter is made by warming butter, milk, and brown sugar, and dissolving yeast into the mix. The mixture is combined with flour and eggs and left to proof in the baking pan until it has doubled in size. The yeast gives the cake a wonderfully light texture that makes this a **great breakfast cake**.

This came out of the oven looking like a dream come true and tasted even better. The raspberries and cherries had bled into the cake, streaking it with sweet-tart dark red juices and keeping it nice and moist. The frozen fruit worked perfectly in this recipe, possibly even better than fresh ones. Make this if you want delicious summer

flavors in the dead of winter mixed into a perfectly textured coffee cake.

## Win *The Grand Central Baking Book*

As always with our Cook the Book feature, we have five (5) copies of *The Grand Central Baking Book* to give away this week. [Enter to win here »](#)

## Black Cherry and Raspberry Kuchen

- serves 12 -

Adapted from [The Grand Central Baking Book](#) by Piper Davis and Ellen Jackson.

### Ingredients

#### Batter

1 1/2 cups (12 fluid ounces) whole milk  
1/2 cup (3.5 ounces) packed light brown sugar  
10 tablespoons (5 ounces, or 3/4 stick) unsalted butter  
1 tablespoon active dry yeast  
3 eggs  
3 1/2 cups (1 pound, 1.5 ounces) all-purpose flour  
1 1/2 teaspoons salt

#### Topping

1 cup pitted black cherries, fresh or frozen  
2 cups raspberries, fresh or frozen  
1/4 cup (1.75 ounces) turbinado or brown sugar  
4 tablespoons (2 ounces, or 1/2 stick) unsalted butter

#### Lemon Glaze

1 cup (4 ounces) confectioners' sugar, sifted  
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

#### Vanilla Glaze

1 cup (4 ounces) confectioners' sugar, sifted  
2 tablespoons heavy cream or half-and-half  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Procedure

1. Prepare the pan: Lightly grease and flour a 9 x 13-inch baking pan.
2. Proof the yeast: Gently heat the milk, brown sugar, and 10 tablespoons of the butter in a small saucepan; it should feel warm to the touch. When the butter has almost melted, add the yeast and let the mixture stand. The yeast should produce bubbles and give the appearance of expanding; both are signs that sufficient fermentation has taken place to proceed with the recipe.
3. Make the batter: Whisk the eggs lightly to break them up. Measure the flour and salt into a bowl with high sides and whisk to combine. Pour the eggs and the milk mixture over the flour and gently stir with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula, mixing just until the wet ingredients are incorporated. Spread the batter in the prepared pan and

cover with plastic wrap.

- 4.** Let the batter rise: If you want to bake the kuchen right away, put the dough in a warm spot (80°F to 90°F); it will be ready in about 1 hour. (I like to turn my oven on to preheat and leave the kuchen to rise on the top of the stove.) If you'll be baking the kuchen later, put the dough in a cool spot, or refrigerate it for up to 8 hours.
- 5.** Bake: Preheat the oven to 350°F. When the dough has doubled in height, evenly distribute the fruit over it, then sprinkle with the turbinado sugar. Melt the 4 tablespoons butter and drizzle it over the top. Bake the kuchen for 30 minutes, then rotate the pan and lower the temperature to 325°F and bake for 10 to 15 minutes more. The top should be golden brown and the cake should begin to pull away from the sides of the pan.
- 6.** Make the glaze: While the kuchen is baking, make the glaze of your choice by whisking all of the ingredients together until smooth. Drizzle the glaze over the warm kuchen and serve immediately.

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