

Raspberries

Raspberries turned my father, an otherwise saintly man, into a subversive thief. His favorite dessert was fresh raspberries on vanilla ice cream. I can see him grinning, sitting at the breakfast nook, his white shirt sleeves rolled up, shirt unbuttoned so I could glimpse a bit of blond chest hair, the hair on his head graying and cut so short as to be almost invisible. His light blue eyes crinkled, and he said to my mother “We have quite the crop this year.”

I was silent one day when I saw him leaning into the straggly raspberry patch along the length of our garage. From my supine position on the green and white striped canvas swing I saw the bowl beside his feet was empty. He seemed to be on his own private feeding frenzy, only picking berries for immediate consumption. Presently, apparently temporarily satisfied, I saw him stroll into the lane where he stalled in front of our own spreading raspberry canes which had crammed their way through our tall cream painted fence. Then I saw his head drift slowly east, past the next-door neighbor’s spreading fruit and I wondered if Mrs. McCauley could see him from her kitchen window. Then his head re-appeared, paused at our property, our gate clicked open and shut and he carried a full bowl of perfect specimens to the kitchen as an offering to my mother who also had a fondness for his favorite fruit.

Part of the success in life is to eat what you like and let the food fight it out inside.

Mark Twain 1835 - 1910

Do not wash raspberries, just pick out any stem ends, bugs or cobwebs. To freeze, do the same.

Slut red Raspberries in Chardonnay Jelly (thanks to Nigella Lawson)

1 bottle good Chardonnay wine
1 ½ c. raspberries
1 vanilla pod, split lengthwise
3 gelatin leaves
9 oz. Berry sugar
cereal or whipping cream to serve

Steep wine and berries in bowl for ½ hour. Strain wine into saucepan. Put raspberries to one side. Heat wine with vanilla pod. Steep off heat for 15 minutes

Soak gelatin leaves in cold water 5 minutes.

After removing vanilla pod from wine, reheat and stir in sugar. Boil only if you want to lose the alcohol. Add 1/3 of hot wine to wrung-out gelatin leaves in a pitcher and stir to dissolve, then add this mixture back into the rest of the wine and stir well. Strain into large jug.

Place raspberries equally, into 6 clear glass serving bowls and pour strained wine over the top.

Set in fridge at least 3 hours or a day ahead. Take out of fridge 15 minutes before serving.

Serve with cream in a jug and let people pour this into the fruit-jewelled jelly as they eat.

Serves 6

Raspberry Cream Brule (thanks to Judy Schultz)

serves 2

2 c. ripe raspberries
½ c sour cream or yogurt
2 tsp. white sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
2 tsp. brown sugar

Put berries in 2 heat proof dishes

Sweeten sour cream or yogurt with white sugar and stir in vanilla

Put in dishes on top of berries

Sprinkle with brown sugar and broil till sugar melts

Serve immediately, or sprinkle with brown sugar at last minute and don't broil.

Summer drink

Put a few drops of framboise (raspberry) liqueur in white wine or wine spritzer. Drop in a few fresh raspberries.