

March – Hanami Cherry Blossom Festival

Japan is famous for its cherry trees and their abundant delicate pink blossoms. Legend tells how Ko-no-Hana (*KOH-noh-HAN-nah*) goddess of the flowering trees was very beautiful with long glossy black hair, fair complexion, dark almond eyes and rosebud lips. Her sister, the goddess of long life was very jealous and cursed Ko-no-Hana. Ever since then Ko-no-Hana's sacred tree, the flowering cherry, has a very short blossoming season - the petals fall like pale pink snow almost as soon as they appear!

In Japan people gather to admire the beautiful blossoms and enjoy outdoor picnics! Why not have a Colony 'pink' picnic - it might have to be held indoors as our springtime weather can be inclement!

The Beavers could decorate paper plates and cups with flowers cut from pink paper or use pink disposable tableware. Spread a pink table cloth on the floor and place a delicious array of pink treats on it. Pink wafer biscuits, pink marshmallows, pink fondant fancies, pink iced fairy cakes and pink lemonade or raspberry 'crusha' in milk! Make a frieze of pink cherry blossoms by printing flowers onto a large sheet of card or wallpaper using potatoes cut in half and dipped in various shades of pink paint! Add a drawing or picture from a travel brochure of Mount Fuji, the famous Japanese snow-capped mountain! Display the finished frieze near the picnic area and the Beavers can try to imagine they are in Japan!

Fresh cherries are delicious to eat but glacé cherries are great in cakes and biscuits!

Cherry Treats

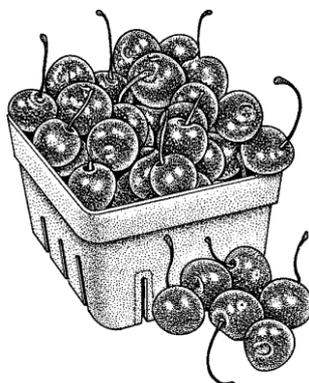
Ingredients (makes 24 cookies)

150g plain flour

50g caster sugar

100g butter or margarine

12 glacé cherries



Equipment

Large bowl

Weighing scales

Baking tray

Baking parchment/pen

Kitchen scissors

Fish slice/wire cooling rack

Method

- Place the flour, sugar and butter into the mixing bowl.
- Rub the mixture together until it resembles large breadcrumbs. A Leader can do this or allow all the Beavers to take turns - clean hands are essential!
- The mixture should look crumbly; squeeze it together to make a ball of dough.
- Divide the mixture into about 24 pieces - give a piece to each Beaver and allow them to roll it into a ball - about the size of a ping-pong ball.
- Cut each cherry in half - Beavers can flatten their biscuit and push the cherry gently into the centre.
- As each Beaver places their biscuit onto the baking parchment on the baking tray write their name beside it!
- Cook at 170°C/325°F/Gas mark 3 for 15-20 mins. Allow to cool on rack.