

cherry cola dump cake

Published: September 27, 2026 | Index ID: #-

When dessert cravings strike, you often find yourself juggling ingredients, measuring cups, and the clock. What if you could satisfy that sweet tooth with a single, no fuss recipe that delivers a burst of flavor with minimal prep? Enter the **cherry cola dump cake**. This delightful treat combines the nostalgic taste of cola, the sweet pop of cherries, and the comforting rise of cake batter, all in one easy to make dessert. Whether you're a novice baker or a seasoned pro, the cherry cola dump cake is a guaranteed crowd pleaser that will have guests asking for the recipe long after the last bite.

What Is a Cherry Cola Dump Cake?

A **dump cake** is a simple, “dump and bake” dessert that requires little more than a bowl, a handful of ingredients, and a generous scoop of batter. The cherry cola version marries the fizzy sweetness of cola with the tartness of cherries, creating a layered flavor profile that's both refreshing and comforting. The batter typically contains flour, sugar, baking powder, and a fat source like butter or oil, while the liquid component—cola—acts as both a sweetener and a leavening agent. The cherries add a juicy burst and a pop of color, turning the cake into a visual and gustatory treat.

Why It's a Go To Dessert

- Minimal Prep Time: Most recipes take less than 10 minutes to assemble.
- Low Ingredient Count: You'll usually need just a few pantry staples.
- Versatile Flavor: Swap in different fruit or soda varieties to suit your taste.
- Family Friendly: Kids love the bright colors and sweet flavors.
- Great for Leftovers: Any excess batter can be refrigerated and baked later.

History and Origins

Dump cakes trace their roots back to the early 20th century, when home bakers sought quick ways to make a dessert without the fuss of mixing and whisking. The concept of “dumping” ingredients into a pan and letting the oven do the rest became popular during the Great Depression, when time and resources were scarce. The cherry cola variant emerged in the 1990s, inspired by the rising popularity of soda-flavored desserts and the nostalgic appeal of cherry-flavored candies. Today, it's a staple at family gatherings, potlucks, and casual get togethers.

Ingredients Breakdown

Below is a classic ingredient list for a 9 inch round cherry cola dump cake. Feel free to adjust the quantities or swap out items to suit dietary preferences or flavor experiments.

- 1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter (softened) or 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup cola (regular or diet, depending on preference)
- 1 cup fresh or frozen cherries, pitted (or 1 1/2 cups cherry pie filling)

- Optional: ½ /cup chocolate chips or crushed nuts for added texture

Ingredient Variations

To keep things exciting, consider these swaps:

- Cola Alternatives: Root beer, ginger ale, or even sparkling water for a lighter version.
- Fruit Swaps: Blueberries, strawberries, or sliced bananas work wonderfully.
- Sweetener Choices: Replace sugar with honey, maple syrup, or coconut sugar for a healthier twist.
- Dietary Adjustments: Use gluten free flour blends, dairy free butter, or a plant based milk for a vegan-friendly cake.

Step by Step Preparation Guide

Step 1: Preheat & Prepare

Preheat your oven to 350 °F (175 °C). Grease a 9 inch round cake pan or line it with parchment paper to prevent sticking.

Step 2: Combine Dry Ingredients

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. This ensures even distribution of leavening agents and prevents clumps.

Step 3: Add Fat

Incorporate the softened butter (or oil) into the dry mix. Use a fork or pastry cutter to blend until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. This step creates a tender crumb structure.

Step 4: Pour in Cola

Slowly pour the cola over the crumb mixture. Stir gently until the batter is smooth and the liquid is fully absorbed. The soda's carbonation helps the cake rise and adds a subtle effervescence to the flavor.

Step 5: Layer Cherries

Spread the cherries evenly across the batter in the pan. If using frozen cherries, thaw them first and pat dry to avoid excess moisture.

Step 6: Bake

Bake for 30–35 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. The top should be golden brown and slightly crisp.

Step 7: Cool & Serve

Allow the cake to cool in the pan for 10 minutes before transferring it to a wire rack. Serve warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, whipped cream, or a drizzle of caramel sauce.

Tips & Tricks for Perfection

- Don't Overmix: Once the cola is added, mix just until combined to avoid a dense crumb.
- Use Room Temperature Ingredients: This helps the batter spread evenly.
- Check the Cola: A fresh, fizzy cola gives a lighter texture; a flat soda may result in a denser cake.
- Watch the Baking Time: Overbaking can dry out the cake, while underbaking may leave a wet center.
- Keep It Moist: If the cake seems dry, top it with a light glaze made from powdered sugar and a splash of cola.

Creative Variations to Try

Cherry Cola Chocolate Dump Cake

For chocolate lovers, fold in ½ cup of chocolate chips into the batter before baking. The chocolate melts into a gooey center, creating a rich, decadent dessert.

Cherry Cola Peanut Butter Dump Cake

Swirl in 3 Tbsp of peanut butter into the batter after the cola is added. The nutty flavor pairs beautifully with the sweetness of the cherries and soda.

Cherry Cola Gluten Free Version

Replace all purpose flour with a 1:1 gluten free blend. Use a gluten free baking powder and ensure all other ingredients are certified gluten free.

Cherry Cola Vegan Edition

Use plant based butter or coconut oil, and substitute dairy milk with almond or oat milk. Keep the rest of the ingredients unchanged.

Nutritional Snapshot

Below is an approximate nutritional profile for a single slice (1/8 of a 9 inch cake). Values may vary based on ingredient brands and substitutions.

- Calories: 250–300 kcal
- Fat: 10–12 /g (mostly from butter or oil)
- Carbohydrates: 40–45 /g (sugar and flour)
- Protein: 3–4 /g
- Fiber: 1–2 /g (from cherries)
- Sodium: 200–300 /mg

Serving Suggestions & Pairings

While the cherry cola dump cake shines on its own, pairing it with complementary flavors can elevate the experience.

- Ice Cream: Vanilla or chocolate ice cream adds creaminess and counterbalances the soda sweetness.
- Whipped Cream: Light, airy whipped cream with a touch of vanilla extract offers a fresh contrast.
- Caramel Sauce: Drizzle a warm caramel sauce for a buttery, sweet finish.
- Espresso: A shot of espresso or a coffee based dessert sauce can introduce a bitter counterpoint.

Storage & Leftovers

Store any leftover cake in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days. For longer freshness, refrigerate for up to a week or freeze for up to 3 months. Reheat slices in a microwave for 15–20 seconds or bake in a preheated oven at 300 /°F (150 /°C) for 10 minutes to restore warmth.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I use diet cola?

Yes, diet cola works well, but the cake will be less sweet. Consider adding a tablespoon of honey or maple syrup to balance the flavor.

What if I don't have cherries?

Any fruit that retains its shape after baking—blueberries, strawberries, or sliced apples—can replace cherries. Adjust the quantity accordingly.

Is the cake safe for kids?

Absolutely. The ingredients are simple, and the cake is free from artificial additives. Just watch out for the high sugar content if you're serving it to very young children.

How long does the batter stay fresh?

The batter can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours before baking. Stir it gently before use to redistribute the liquid.

Can I use a different type of flour?

Whole wheat or oat flour can be used, but the texture may be denser. Adjust the baking time slightly if necessary.

Conclusion

The cherry cola dump cake is more than just a dessert; it's a testament to culinary simplicity and flavor harmony. With its effortless preparation, comforting sweetness, and versatile nature, it fits seamlessly into any menu—from a quick weekday treat to a show-stopping centerpiece at a holiday gathering. Whether you stick to the classic recipe or experiment with variations, this cake promises to deliver a delightful experience that's both nostalgic and fresh. Grab your ingredients, preheat the oven, and let the sweet symphony of cola and cherries unfold—one delicious bite at a time.

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