

Himalayan Blackberry

Rubus armeniacus

Region of Origin: Western Europe
Habitat: Perennial shrub
Current Range: Most of the temperate world
Life Span: Summer



Although Himalayan blackberry (now called Armenian blackberry) is one of the most delicious fruits around, it is also one of the most destructive invaders in the Pacific Northwest. First appearing in Oregon in 1922, this prickly shrub aggressively ousts native plants, especially in riparian environments. Control of infestations has taken a significant toll on road, park and agricultural maintenance budgets. The berry reproduces through arching canes and seed. It ripens in late summer-early fall, turning to a deep purple blue. Not only do humans enjoy their lovely sweet-tart taste, but birds love them too – unwittingly helping the plant's invasion by spreading the seed after feeding.

A special thank you to author and ecologist Corinne Duncan for her content contributions to the Himalayan Blackberry Introduction.

Blackberry Panna Cotta

Recipe by [Wild Man Steve Brill](#)

2 cups	Cream	6 tsp	Cold Water
1/3 cup	Sugar	2 Tbsp	Cooking Oil of Choice
2 cups	Wild Blackberries	4 ea	Dessert Ramekins
1 tsp	Knox Gelatin		

- Mix the blackberries with the sugar and let sit for 30 minutes.
- Meanwhile, oil the ramekins with the grapeseed, or any neutral-tasting oil.
- You can skip this if you are planning to serve the panna cotta as a parfait, and not pop it out of the container.
- Heat the blackberries-sugar mixture with the cream and bring it to a steam, about 170 degrees.
- Don't let it simmer.
- Turn off the heat and let this steep 30 minutes.
- When the 30 minutes is about done, mix the gelatin with the cold water in a container you can pour from, like a large measuring cup or a bowl with a pouring spout.
- Heat the cream mixture again, just back to the steaming point.
- Don't simmer it.



Photo courtesy of Wild Man Steve Brill

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- Set up a fine-meshed strainer over the container that has the gelatin in it. Pour the hot cream through the strainer into the container so you leave the blackberries behind.
- Now, pick up the strainer and shake it gently over the cream to release some extra blackberry goodness. This is important, as this last bit of juice and cream in the blackberries is concentrated and can give you a lot more flavor and color in your panna cotta.
- Stir the panna cotta mixture a few times to incorporate the gelatin, then pour it into your ramekins.
- Put in the fridge for a few hours to set. Panna cotta can be made up to a day ahead, just cover the ramekins once they've set.