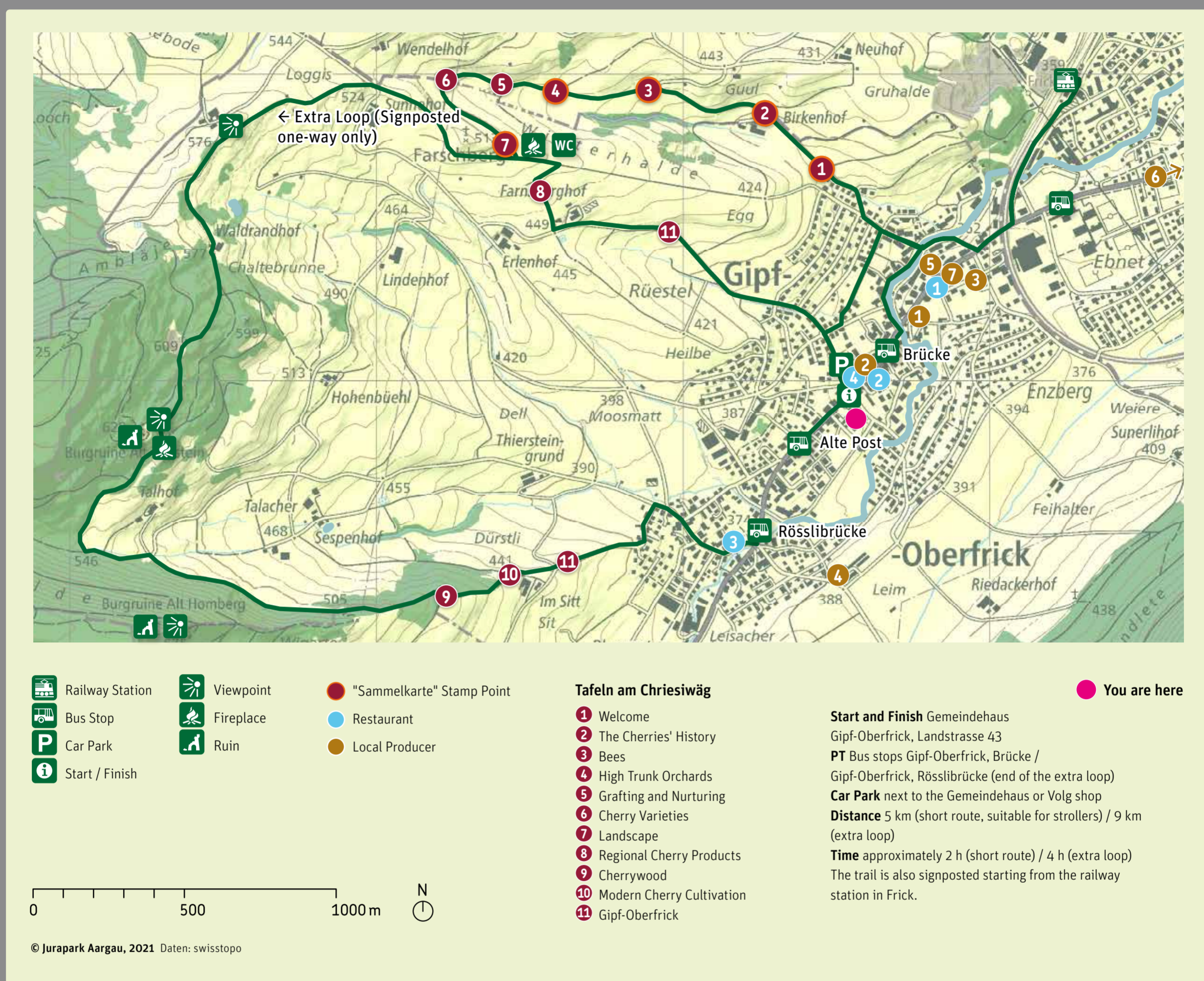




# "Chriesiwäg" Cherry Trail

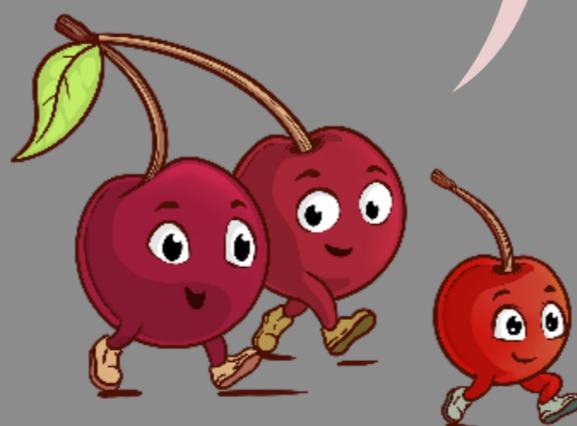


Here is where you start your cherry adventure. You are about to experience a stunning landscape full of cherries. The loop trail is signed throughout with cherry family-signposts and will lead you past different information stops. For sporty visitors we recommend taking the extra loop on which you can hike up to the Tierstein Ruin.

Hi! We're the cherry family and we're very excited to join you on your «Chriesiwäg» adventure. Just follow the signs with our picture and whenever you pass an information board scan the QR-Code. All QR-Codes lead you to this summary. Okay, so let's get started and discover Fricktal Valley's famous cherries.

**Our Tipp:** With the «Sammelkarte» cards available at the start of the Cherry Trail you are able to buy local cherry products with a discount or you can take part in our annual lottery. Just stamp the cards at the marked information boards.

**"Chriesi":** The Swiss word «Chriesi» means cherry in English, there is a good chance you will come to hear this word during your time in Fricktal Valley.



Please,

- take your garbage with you
  - don't step into the high grass next to the trail
  - don't take any cherries from the trees - they belong to the farmers!
- Fresh cherries can be bought in the village of Gipf-Oberfrick during the season (june, start of July).

## "Chriesiwäg" Cherry Trail

The Cherry Trail is a joint project of the municipality of Gipf-Oberfrick, the "Verband Aargauer Obstproduzenten" (Aargau fruit association) and the Jurapark Aargau.

## Tragen Sie Sorge zum Jurapark-Reich!

The Jurapark Aargau is home to people, animals and plants. We kindly ask you to treat their homeland with respect.



# The Cherries' History



Foto: visualmoment.ch

## Origin and Development

Already Charlemagne loved the typical aroma of cherries, which found their way from Asia Minor (today's territories of Turkey) to Western Europe in the year 70 AD.

Cherry cultivation developed especially in Fricktal Valley and the Baselbiet area due to the calcareous, loose and permeable marl soil.

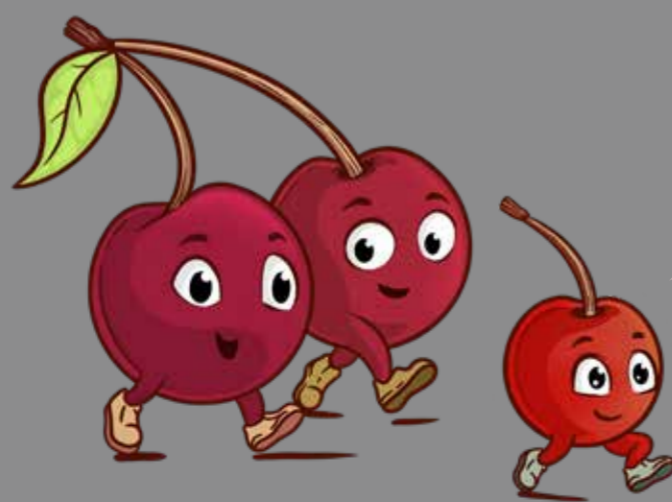
At the beginning of the 20th century the spread of cherry trees in Fricktal Valley reached its peak. 6'771 cherry trees were counted in the village of Gipf-Oberfrick, 60'000 in the whole district of Laufenburg.

Nowadays, the cherry is the second most cultivated fruit species in Switzerland with a share of 17%.

## Early Cultivation

In past times, Fricktal Valley was home to many small farmers with 2-8 cows and 100-300 high trunk trees. Cherry growing was an important part of the farmer's incomes, so frost years meant lean years.

During the cherry harvesting in July, the whole family, extended family and neighbours from all over the rural areas would come to help picking the precious red fruit. Cherry-Plucking became a thrilling event: The work was accompanied by singing and many a cheer went round.



Follow the former labourers' example and sing a song while wandering the Cherry Trail. It's the most exciting experience! A typical Swiss Cherry Song is called « Chum mir wei go Chriesli gönne...» meaning "let's go cherry picking...". Do you know a song related to cherries too?

# Bees



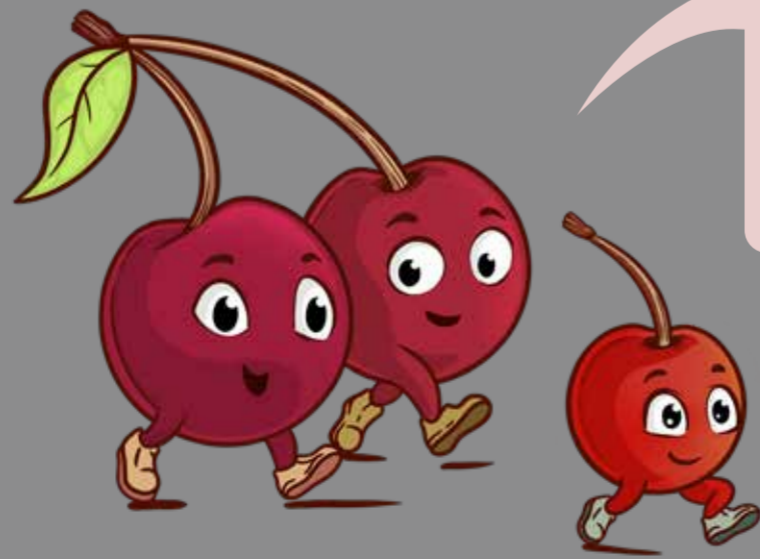
Bees and other insects that pollinate blossoms are highly important to all cherry farmers. They are the ones ensuring that the pretty blossoms will later become delicate fruit.

The bees take on quite a big part of the pollination work. Which means that in an area as rich in cherry trees as Fricktal Valley there have to be multiple bee colonies as well. Other busy insects supporting the bees are bumblebees and butterflies.

Whenever a farmer uses phytosanitary products, meaning insecticides and herbicides, he makes sure not to harm too many buzzing helpers. He carries out the work in the early morning or after sunset, when insects are the least active and therefore not disturbed in their work.



- 10 bees together weigh 1 g
- a bee flies a distance of 1 km in 2 min
- the Swiss eat 1.4 kg of honey per year and person
- a summer bee lives for only 6 weeks
- bees fly only by daylight and when the air temperature's 15°C or more
- for producing 1 kg of honey, 3 kg of nectar or 100'000 flown km are required



# High Trunk Orchards



High Trunk Orchards like the ones situated all along the Cherry Trail are immensely important to both animals and plants. About 1000 species call them their home, including countless insects and around 40 types of breeding birds such as the red-backed shrike, green woodpecker and redstart. They need strong branches or tree hollows to use as nesting sites. The trees are not only used for breeding but also as a food source. With their branches, leaves and fruit they offer a wide range of food options to the animals nearby.

The flower-rich meadows surrounding the orchards attract insects, which are important for the pollination.

The bushes, stone and branch piles around also provide a diverse habitat to many species such as the weasel.

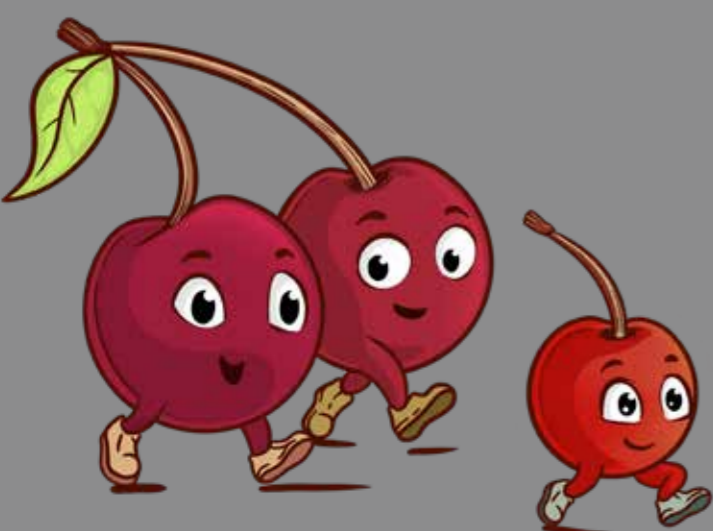


Redstart



Greater Mouse-Eared Bat

Help us out protecting these precious habitats by adopting one of our high trunk trees. The adoption also makes a special and meaningful present to your loved ones. Contact us for more information.





# Grafting and Nurturing



## Bark Grafting

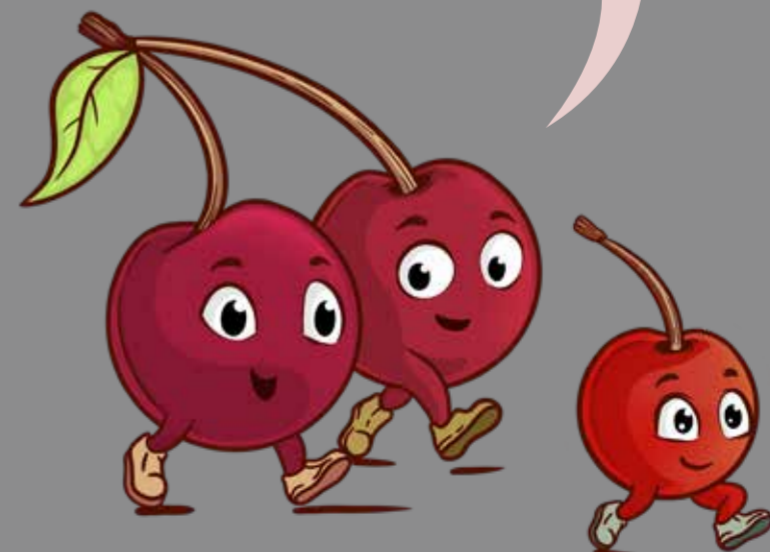
There are varieties of cherries that grow better and faster and others that deliver more tasteful and nobler fruit. In order to combine these two qualities farmers developed certain techniques. One of them is called bark grafting. A well-growing type builds the root and a type with tasteful fruit is combined with it to build the branches and cherries.

## Pruning

For ensuring regular harvest, fruit trees need to be pruned. So as to allow more air and light to reach the tree and also to remove diseased and dead parts. Additionally, pruning stimulates the tree's growth, which leads to an extended life expectancy and higher fruit quality.



Did you know that a cherry pit sprouts to become a wild cherry tree? Wild cherries are surely edible, but they are much smaller than the cultivated ones and the tree is less fruitful. That's why today all cherry trees being harvested are grafted.



# Cherry Varieties



Rote Lauber



Regina



Langstieler



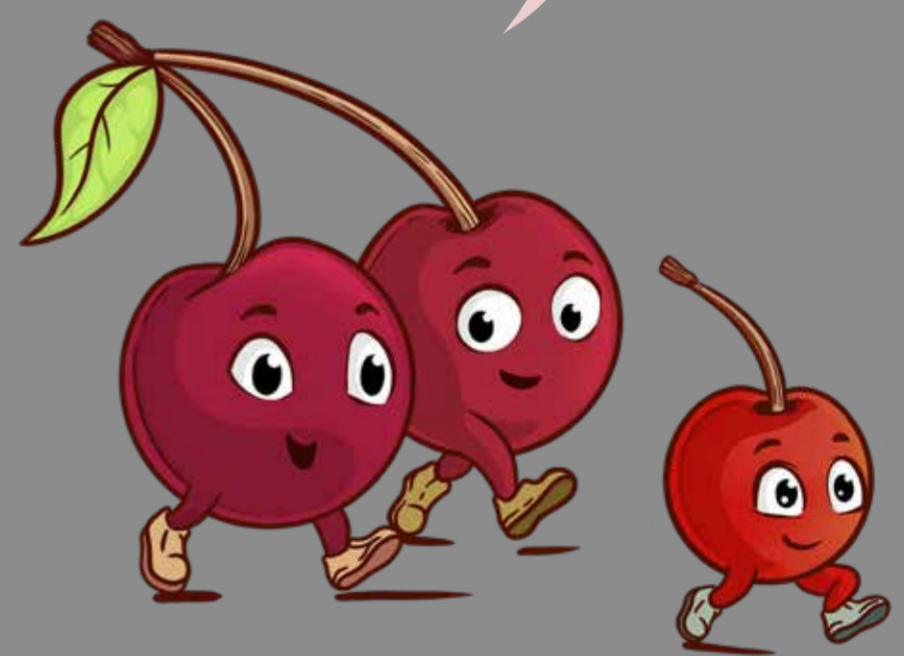
Kordia

Overall there are more than 400 cherry varieties. They differ in size, colour, consistency and taste. The most common are the dark cherry varieties. Further there are red, yellow-red and very rarely pure yellow cherries.

In the past, «Basler Adler» and «Schumacher» were the classic varieties for fresh consumption. Today Kordia and Regina are among the most popular table fruit.

For producing liquor and jam, «Langstieler» and «Rote Lauber» cherries have been harvested past and present.

Different cherry types are used differently: Cherries can be enjoyed freshly or be processed to liquor, jam, juice or pastry. How do you like your cherries best ?





# Landscape



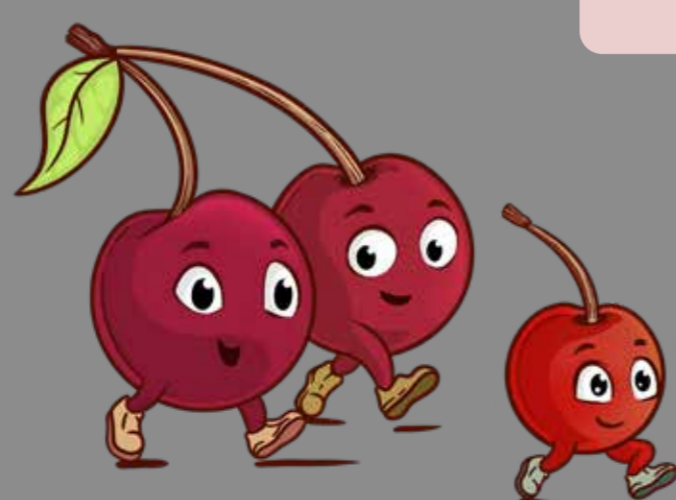
Fricktal Valley's countryside is full of precious habitats : forests, meadows and pastures. The diverse landscape is created by the coexistence of vineyards and orchards, hedges and meadows, fields and pastures.

Many valuable orchards with high trunk trees have disappeared in Switzerland in recent years. Reasons for the decline are the rationalization of agricultural production, the mechanization of agriculture and the emergence of low trunk orchards. Cultivating high trunk trees is no longer cost-covering.

For preserving high trunk orchards, a systematic promotion of existing trees and new plantings are necessary. Additionally the production and promotion of high trunk products helps with protecting the unique scenery.



Also you can help preserving the Jurapark landscape: When buying cherries and other fruit check their origin and cultivation method. High trunk products are specially labelled with «Hochstamm Suisse».



# Regional Cherry Products



Foto: kunz AG – the art of sweets



Foto: Martin Weiss

As mentioned at stop 6 there are various ways to process cherries. Fricktal Valley is especially known for its Kirsch. Kirsch is a clear, colourless brandy made from cherries. For distilling 1 litre of Kirsch, 7 kilograms of cherries are required. The Kirsch itself is being used to produce other specialties like Röteli (sweet cherry liqueur), Kirschtängeli (chocolate sticks filled with Kirsch), Kirschtorte (cherry brandy cake) and of course cheese fondue.

In the Jurapark area you will also find many more cherry products like vinegars, mustard, jams and dried cherries.

## Regional Products at Jurapark Aargau

The label «Jurapark Aargau – regio.garantie» certifies a regional product as being produced and processed in the Jurapark Aargau. You can buy labelled products directly from the producers, at regional Coop or Volg stores and at the village shops of the Genuss-Strasse.

Enjoy regional cuisine in one of our Genuss-Strasse restaurants.

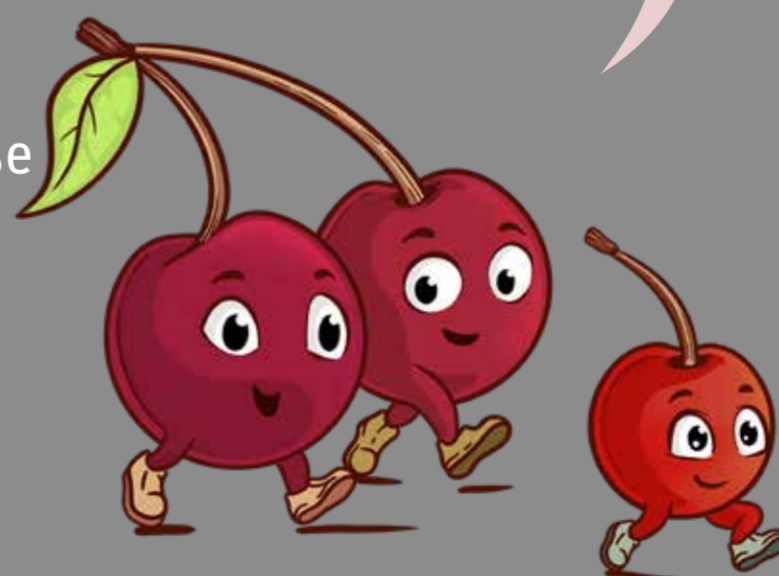
Find more information on regional shops and restaurants on our website.

## Superfood

Cherries are definitely a superfood. They are draining, protect the cells, prevent rheumatism and contain many valuable vitamins.

Nevertheless superfoods too have downsides : cherries are easily perishable. Thus, they are best consumed freshly, but can also be further processed or preserved. The most common conservation methods are deep-freezing, canning and drying.

« Mit dem ist nicht gut Kirschen essen » is a common Swiss saying and translates to «It's not easy to eat cherries with him». It means, that a person is not easy to be around. Do you know other sayings related to cherries ?





# Modern Cherry Cultivation



Low Trunk Orchard

## Low Trunk Trees

The modern market demands plannable and regular delivery of cherries. The fruit needs to be as large as possible, firm, aromatic and durable. Meeting these demands is almost impossible by cultivating high trunk trees due to their inability of being shielded from rain and hail.



Low Trunk Orchard with Weather Protection

## Weather Protection

On the contrary, low trunk orchards can be protected with a rain cover. The cover is being put up about 20 days before harvesting. Sheltered by the cover the cherries don't burst and can be plucked exactly when they are ripe. Another advantage of the cover is the possibility of reducing plant protectants.

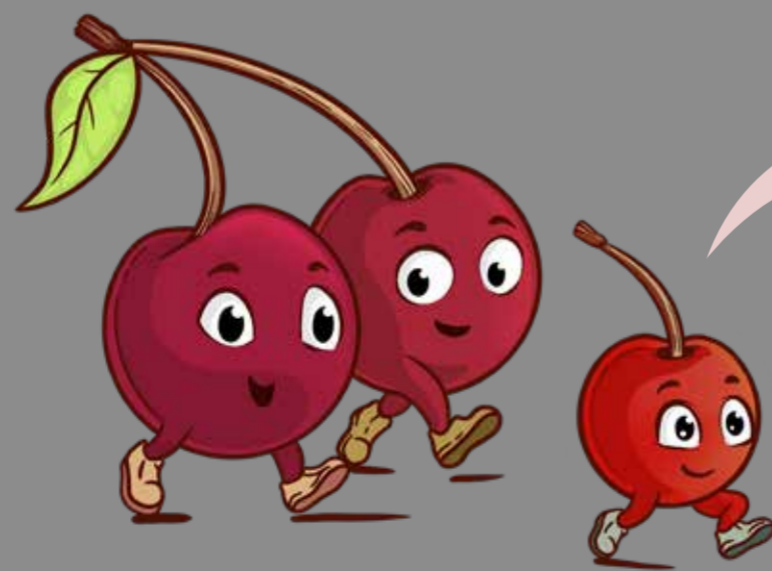


Modern Irrigation System

## Easier Harvesting

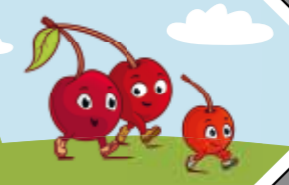
With low trunk trees, farm labourers no longer need to be free from giddiness. Also, after about four years the trees can already be harvested, whereas high trunk trees can't be harvested during their first ten years of growth. Thanks to a modern irrigation system dry periods are no more threatening. The irrigation system is even being used against frost during bloom.

Did you know that it's actually pretty easy to tell whether you're standing in front of a high or low trunk tree? A low trunk tree's crown starts at a height of 80 cm, the high trunk tree's crown starts at 160cm.



For our home and our neighbors it's very important that in addition to the modern low trunk orchards, valuable high trunk trees are preserved.

Help us out and become a fruit picker for one day or more ! On one hand you support the local farmers with the time-consuming harvesting of high trunk trees. And on the other hand you get to enjoy a genuine cherry experience: [jurapark-aargau.ch/pflueck-helfer](http://jurapark-aargau.ch/pflueck-helfer)



# Cherrywood



Foto: Schreinerei Müller Staffelbach



Foto: frohraum.ch

## The Wild Cherry

The wild cherry's wood is well suited for processing. Wild cherry trees are found in large parts of Western Europe as far as Turkey and Iraq, as well as in North America and North Africa.

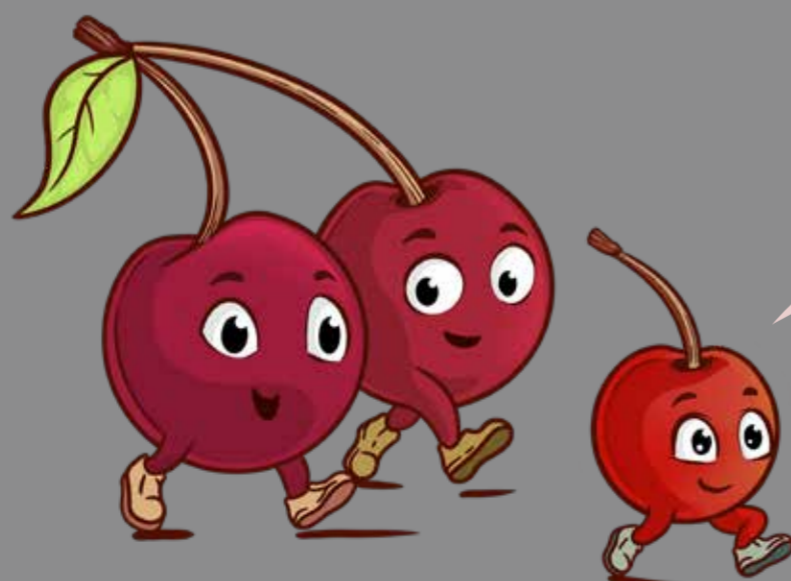
## Characteristics and Use

The wood is fine pored, dense and flexible. Therefore it is usually used as veneer, solid wood or for turnery.

The slightly reddish colour of the wood was especially popular in Biedermeier and Art Nouveau furniture making. Until today it is used mainly for panneling and ceiling lining. More rarely, cherrywood furniture is being crafted. A use as firewood in an economic sense does not exist.



Foto: Ursula Wättinger



The official name of the wild cherry tree is sweet cherry (*Prunus avium* in Latin). «Prunus» suggests the cherries' relation to plums.



# Gipf-Oberfrick



## History

Gipf-Oberfrick has been settled early. There is evidence of settlements from the Bronze Age and Roman times. In the year 1230 Gipf-Oberfrick became part of the Habsburg Monarchy. In the Middle Ages Gipf-Oberfrick belonged to the domain of the Earls of Homberg-Tierstein-Frick, who built their ancestral castle Alt Tierstein in the early 11th century on the eastern slope of the Tiersteinberg mountain. The uncovered castle ruin, located at the extra loop of the Cherry Trail, is surely worth a visit.

In 1803 Fricktal Valley became part of the Canton of Aargau.

## Agriculture

Agriculture has always been and still is important to Gipf-Oberfrick. After the devastating harm caused by the vine frotter around 1860, vineyards in Gipf-Oberfrick declined drastically. Meanwhile fruit growing, especially cherries and apples, became more popular. In 1960 around 8000 cherry trees were counted in the village. Gipf-Oberfrick remains one of the largest cherry producers in the region.

## Lively Village

Gipf-Oberfrick is a lively community in the sunny Upper Fricktal Valley. The village is surrounded by a largely well-preserved scenery and embedded in the typical gentle Jura hills. The former farming village has developed rapidly during the last 40 years. The population has risen from 1500 to around 3800 residents. Nevertheless, the village managed to keep its charming character. The large number of associations and various cultural activities enrich the village life.

The community of Gipf-Oberfrick is part of the Regional Nature Park Jurapark Aargau. The park holds many more cultural, natural and culinary treasures to discover. Let's experience nature's treasures.

