

Blood oranges as a plate-tickler



How wonderful – that yearning for the freshly picked fruits each season. Secretly, you start planning recipes and can hardly await the day when the fruit will finally be on the market. Aromas are often very closely linked with memories and feelings from a specific time. In the winter I yearn for blood oranges, which I associate with cold winter days. Simply by peeling an orange, its refreshingly warm fragrance harmoniously envelops the whole house, even when it's bitterly cold outside. They have a deep sweetness yet make a fruity fresh impression.

They're a nice quick energizer, but also a highly versatile ingredient in the kitchen. They enhance meat like pigeon, can compete with the sharp aroma of watercress, and nicely balance the acidity of chicory and radicchio. They grow in the Mediterranean region and, when mixed with cinnamon and pine nuts to create a beautiful couscous salad, bring a dash of exoticism to our table in the cold months. Or can be made into a quick dessert with some fresh mint, deep red pomegranate seeds and a touch of creme fraiche. They also superbly complement beetroot. From this you can whip up a nice winter pizza: cover pizza dough with finely chopped slices of steamed beetroot, season with ground coriander, fennel seed, cardamom and pepper, and bake in the oven until crisp. When fresh out of the oven, sprinkle with blood orange slices, little pieces of roasted hazelnut and a generous handful of watercress. Just before serving, sprinkle with some creme fraiche. A beautiful splash of colour and a total palate-tickler: blood oranges.