



PLUMS – The Queen of Autumn Fruit



There's only one queen as far as Stefan Meier is concerned, namely Fellenbergs! We're talking here about plums, the fine autumn fruit this Lifestyle by VZUG chef looks forward to ardently every year. No surprise there, as he associates plums with playful childhood memories. "We had a plum tree in the garden," he says. "Every day, we crept around the tree. If a plum fell we were allowed to eat it. My father picked all the others from the tree." He laughs mischievously, and says: "Every now and then, we bumped into the tree, so that a plum fell..."

He fell in love with this fruit a long time ago. Even today, he goes to the farmyard to pick up plums picked fresh from the tree. "It's the freshness that decides whether a dish is successful or goes off," he says. "Plums that have already been sitting around for a couple of days in the shop disintegrate when cooked, while those fresh from the tree keep their shape." Yet again, it's the small details that count.

So here they are, crates full of freshly picked plums. "This way, they're tasty, juicy and beautiful acidity," Meier says. Then it's down to business: preserving the plums. Halve 20 plums and put the halves into a 1-litre preserving jar, then fill with a solution of 1 litre of water and 300g of sugar. Put in the combi-steam oven for 14 minutes with the lid off then put the lid on and steam for another minute, so that the rubber at the top of the preserving jar can tighten up nicely. Turn the jar on its head and leave to cool.

"The simple unseasoned preserving solution leaves all culinary options open during the winter," Meier says, so if he wants to serve the plums with meat he can do so. Alternatively, if he's thinking of something



sweet, the preserved plums would work for this dish too: a universal plum that can satisfy autumnal cravings in sweet and savoury dishes and even in the winter. If there are a few plums left over after the autumn, they can be made into a delicious jam. Either way, Stefan Meier has preserved autumn in a glass in no time at all. Even in winter, he can still revel in memories of plums that have fallen from the tree.