



Perfectly Plum Elixir

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Prep Time 5 / Cook Time / Serves 4 - 6

Fun-Da-Mentals Kitchen Skills

stir: to mix together two or more ingredients with a spoon or spatula, usually in a circle pattern, or figure eight, or in whatever direction you like!

measure: to calculate the specific amount of an ingredient required using a measuring tool (like measuring cups or spoons).

mash: to reduce food, like potatoes or bananas, to a soft, pulpy state by beating or pressure.

Equipment

- ☐ Pitcher
- ☐ Dry measuring cups
- ☐ Cutting board
- ☐ Kid-safe knife
- ☐ Wooden spoon

Ingredients

Perfectly Plum Elixir

- ☐ 1/2 C granulated sugar
- ☐ 2 plums
- ☐ 3 C water
- ☐ 1 can sparkling water, flavor is optional
- ☐ ice, optional

Food Allergen Substitutions

Perfectly Plum Elixir

Instructions

Perfectly Plum Elixir

measure + slice

Measure **1/2 cup sugar** and pour into a pitcher. Then, roughly slice **2 plums**, removing as much fruit as possible before discarding the pit. Add the plums to the sugar in the pitcher.

mash + stir

Mash the plums and sugar until a thick syrup forms. This is the plum syrup that will flavor the drink. Stir and mash as much as it takes to get the syrup to form.

pour + serve

Pour in **3 cups of water** and **1 can of sparkling water**. Stir a few times and serve! You can pour this one into cups as is or add ice. "Noroc" (NO-rohk) or "Cheers" in Romanian!

Featured Ingredient: Plum!

Hi! I'm a Plum!

"We can be a round or oval fruit with smooth yellow, green, red, or purple skin and yellow or red flesh, with a pit in the middle. We are a delicious summer fruit and when ripe, we are sweet and juicy! Some of us can be dried and eaten as dried plums (also called prunes)."

History & Etymology

Plum trees may be one of the first fruit trees to be cultivated. The three main species of plums, *Prunus domestica*, *Prunus salicina*, and *Prunus simonii*, were not found in the wild but only near where humans lived.

Plums are thought to have originated in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. European plums were introduced to the United States in the 1700s. Japanese plums came to the US in the 1800s.

The remains of plums have been found at archaeological sites from the Neolithic age (10000 to 2000 BCE).

Plum cultivation was mentioned in a 12th-century agricultural book. Monasteries during the Middle Ages (400 to 1400 CE) grew plums, and Chaucer refers to a garden with "ploumes" in the 14th century.

There are over 100 plum species in the world and over 2,000 varieties. About 15 species are native to North America, such as *Prunus Americana*.

The Japanese plum (*Prunus salicina*) is the most common plum eaten in the US. European plums (*Prunus domestica*) are also available. The prune plum is a subspecies of *Prunus domestica*, which is often used to produce dried plums or prunes.

China produces the most plums, over 54 percent worldwide. The US produces about a third of that amount.

The word "plum" came from the Old English "plume," from the Latin "prunum," from the Ancient Greek "proumnon."

Anatomy

The Plum tree is a flowering, deciduous tree that bears the plum fruit. It comes from the Rosaceae family and the *Prunus* genus. It is 16 to 20 feet high when pruned.

Plum trees blossom in the spring. Their color may be white, pink, or pinkish-purple. Some varieties are grown for their ornamental value.

A typical plum is about 1 to 1 1/2 inches in diameter. It is considered a "drupe" or stone fruit, like the apricot, cherry, nectarine, and peach. Drupes have a thin skin, fleshy inside, and a hard pit in the middle containing the seed. Prune plums are called a "freestone" drupe, as their pits can easily be removed from the flesh.

How to Pick, Buy & Use

When harvesting plums, choose ones that are dark and rich in color, plump, give slightly when gently pressed, and have a pleasant, fruity fragrance. Their skin should be smooth, not wrinkly, and without blemishes. The same is true for choosing plums at the grocery store.

To pick a homegrown plum, support the branch with one hand and gently grasp the ripe plum with the other hand, twisting it off the stem.

Store ripe plums in the refrigerator for up to three days. Unripe plums will ripen on the kitchen counter. Add them to a paper bag with apples or bananas to speed up the process.

Fresh plums are often eaten whole as snacks. Plums are very versatile in cooking. They can be baked, poached, sliced, broiled, stewed, or mashed.

Plums can be cut up and added to hot and cold cereal, ice cream, cakes, cobblers, and pies. They can be added to meat dishes. Plum jam and plum wine are additional options.

Nutrition

Plums are 87 percent water and about 11 percent carbohydrates and have a moderate source of vitamin C.

Plums contain phytonutrients and antioxidants. They may aid digestion, reduce the risk of some cancers, and improve heart health.