



PRESERVED ELVAS PLUMS

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar plums danced in their heads
Clement C. Moore, "A Visit from St. Nicholas", 1822

Just where and when Sugar Plums were confectioned for the first time is difficult to ascertain. The very idea of such a fanciful confection delighted the poet Clement C. Moore. Throughout the 1800's, the Sugar Plum gained in reputation. The German tale, "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King", told of a fairyland with marvels of sweets. Its French version, "Histoire d'un Casse Noisette", inspired the musical genius of Tchaikovsky. Like magic, the Sugar Plum Fairy came into being, dancing in the Nutcracker ballet.

In Portugal, long famous for its national sweet tooth and wonderously varied confection, plums, apricots, figs and peaches have been preserved in this way since the days of Henry the Navigator. First introduced to England by Port wine shippers who "discovered" these wonderful fruits, the Sugar Plum was soon established as a Christmas favourite. However, in recent years, production of these sweetmeats has declined and we were in danger of losing part of our traditional Christmas feast.

The Elvas plum, in fact a greengage, is grown in the special microclimatic conditions of the Elvas region of the Alentejo, close to Portugal's border with Spain. Continuing a tradition many centuries old, the plums are specially selected and harvested in July, cooked and soaked in sugar syrup for six weeks, then washed and sun-dried, when each plum is individually prepared and packaged.

We are very proud to supply you with Elvas plums and hope that you will enjoy them this Christmas

"ARE, QUITE SIMPLY, MAGNIFICENT, SUCCULENT, SWEET AND FLESHY IN THEIR VENETIAN GREEN SILK COVERING.....NO SELF-RESPECTING GOURMET AND GOURMAND WOULD CELEBRATE THE FESTIVE SEASON WITHOUT THEM."

-----PHILIPPA DAVENPORT - COUNTRY LIVING MAGAZINE

"ELVAS PLUMS - ACTUALLY GREENGAGES - ARE A UNIQUE AND FASCINATING PRODUCT.....THE FLAVOUR OF THE FRUIT IS IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT LEAGUE FROM RUN-OF-THE-MILL, EVEN SUPERIOR, VERSIONS OF CANDIED FRUIT."

-----JOANNA BLYTHMAN - SCOTLAND ON SUNDAY

