



# Plump cook wins taste of love

Recipe of rage and jealousy makes for compelling movie set in small German town



**PIAF film festival**

by **Michael Perrot**

## **EDEN (M)**

**Directed by:** Michael Hoffman

**Starring:** Josef Ostendorf, Charlotte Roche, Devid Striesow and Leonie Stepp

**Screening:** Joondalup Pines, February 18-24

**T**HE way to a man's heart is through his stomach.

In *Eden* it is inverted – an overweight master chef seduces a woman with his cooking.

More than just delicious food, it's a story about the power of love based on a recipe of jealousy, rage, destruction, bad luck and a flawed business model.

This is German writer/director Michael Hofmann's third feature and, while not so daring as his 2002 feature *Sophiiiie!*, it shows what an interesting filmmaker he can be.

With its fairytale similarity to *Beauty and the Beast*, *Eden* is a mix of personality, love and greed laced with unhappiness, disgruntlement and the pressures of having a disabled child.

There is a wonderful scene, when someone gets his just desserts, that is funny and poignant.

If you ever plan to start a restaurant, the business model Hofmann exposes is a good lesson.

Gregor (Josef Ostendorf) is overweight and lonely but perceptive. A gourmet chef, Gregor runs a small restaurant in a small

German town.

He believes food can awaken the erotic impulses and revels in the sensual pleasures of his cooking.

Because of his size, Gregor hasn't found anyone to share his love of cooking.

One afternoon he has coffee at a resort hotel where he meets Eden (Charlotte Roche), a waitress.

Telling her to watch four men because they will leave without paying, she takes an instant dislike to him. When this happens, her attitude changes.

Days later in a park, Gregor rescues Eden's daughter Leonie (Leonie Stepp) from drowning.

Invited to Leonie's birthday party, Gregor arrives with a delicious chocolate cake he has baked.

After Eden eats a piece of the cake, she's smitten and visits his restaurant to taste more of his cooking. They make a date for Gregor to cook for her on the night Eden's husband Xaver (Devid Striesow) goes out on the town with mates.

With subterfuge, Xaver gets a table at Gregor's restaurant, so when Eden becomes pregnant for the first time in years, Xaver thinks Gregor has been doing more than cooking for his wife.

Full of rage and jealousy, Xaver sets out to destroy Gregor.



**Leonie Stepp, Josef Ostendorf and Charlotte Roche in *Eden*.**