



Hercegovina

Gastro Hercegovina
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A large, semi-transparent red circle is positioned at the top center. Below it, a white square contains the word "Hercegovina" in a light gray, cursive font. A small red dot is placed above the letter "o". The background features abstract, thin, curved gray lines.

Hercegovina

Hercegovina





Veljko Barbieri

HERCEGOVAČKA KUHINJA IZ MITA MYTHICAL HERZEGOVINIAN CUISINE





Hercegovina



legenda o postanku
the myth of its genesis







Zivi još i danas prastari mit kojeg pripovijeda hučeći vjetar iz Zraka, šapće Zemlja u vrtačama, mit koji podjednako šumi u Vodi hercegovačkih rijeka, brzaka, jezera, starih mlinica, čatrinja i bunara, pucketavo pjeva u Vatri na kaminima, ili isijavajući mumlja u žaru na ognjištima. Govori taj mit kako su se jednom udružili svi drevni elementi kako bi na Nebu i u Zraku stvorili duh, na škrtoj Zemlji i tlu klicu, u Vatri probudili iskru života, u Vodi moć i snagu. Pa kad su tako uskladili svoje želje, stali su vijećati kamo da pošalju taj tek probuđeni i tek stvoren mali svijet. I odlučili su. Uduhnuli su ga Hercegovini, tada još bezimenoj zemlji koja se tek budila iz zore svog nastanka kao dijete najstarijih počela.

To this day an ancient myth persists, once uttered by the whistling wind in the sky, whispered by the earth in little rock gardens, a myth which could be heard in the waters of Herzegovinian rivers, streams, lakes, old mills and wells. It could be heard in the crackles of the fireplaces, and even muttered in the cinder of the hearths. The myth tells how once upon a time, all the essential elements from the sky and the air joined to form a spirit. On skimpy earth, they would sprout seed, they would spark life into fire and power and strength would be granted to the waters. Once they harmonized their wishes, they began to argue about where to locate this newly created and awakened little world - and they decided. They bestowed it on Herzegovina, a land still nameless, which had just awakened in the dawn of its creation as a child.







Naravno ovo je samo mit, ali tko bi se od tih izabranika drevnih elemenata okrenuo samo svom evolucijskom podrijetlu, a ne svom božanskom korijenju?! Pa ipak, i među tim posvećenim miljenicima, Hercegovina je izabrani izuzetak. Ujedno škrtka i raskošna, oštra i blaga, nemilosrdna i blagonaklona, vesela i tužna, pa sita i gladna, usprkos svim izazovima koje su joj ponudili često nezahvalni prostor i vrijeme.

This of course, is only a myth, but what candidate, if chosen by the ancient elements would be so bold as to turn to chemical evolutionary origins, and forget to honor its divine roots? Nevertheless, of the chosen candidates, Herzegovina has never waned in its devotion. This land, in the face of all the challenges brought about in time and space - which were rarely merciful - is both barren and rampant, intense while meek, ruthless yet accommodating, joyful and sorrowful, famished yet satiated.







Hercegovina je stoga mala zemlja snažnih osjećaja, bistrog uma i istinskih vjerovanja. Zemlja surih kamenjara i planina, kamenu otete zemlje, tihih jezera i moćnih rijeka, mirne vode u bunarima, u kojoj se ogledaju nebo i sunce, u čatrnjama mjesec putnik, u lokvama zvijezde. Ona je zemlja dragocjenog tla zaštićenog suhozidinama, u planinama i brdima stijenjem opkoljenim, mukotrpno obradenim velikim poljima. No posvuda, kako u svom nizinskom plodnom dijelu, tako i u vasprenačkim uzvisinama, porubljenim nizinskom makijom i visinskim šumama, uz obale rijeka i jezera, u dijelu svoga mora, zaštićena počelima Hercegovina pruža utočište živim i neživim bićima iz vlastita mita. Daje život plodovima i biljkama, životinjama i ribama, iz kojih se u njenim kuhinjama radaju hercegovačka jela, svojstvenih okusa i mirisa, koji su postupno gradili njenu gastronomiju, u kolijevci prastarog mita.

Herzegovina therefore is a small land of strong emotions, a clear mind and true beliefs. It is a land of rugged mountains, a land of tranquil lakes and vigorous rivers, a land almost smothered by stone. These calm waters in wells reflect the sky and sun, the stars and the moon on its travels. It is a land of precious fields embraced with stone enclosures, and the mountains bear large plains, cultivated in sweat and toil that are topped with rocky mounds. But everywhere, the elements of Herzegovina act as a haven to living and inanimate beings within its own myth, from the fertile lowlands to the rocky limestone highlands, along the dense evergreen underbrush and the elevated forests, by the riverbanks and lakes and in its share of the sea. Herzegovina breathes life into the fruits and plants, the animals and fish which are essential to its dishes, which are of a specific taste and aroma. These ingredients have completely developed its gastronomy in the cradle of that ancient myth.





Hercegovina



poruke iz posuda i lonaca
messages from the pots and pans





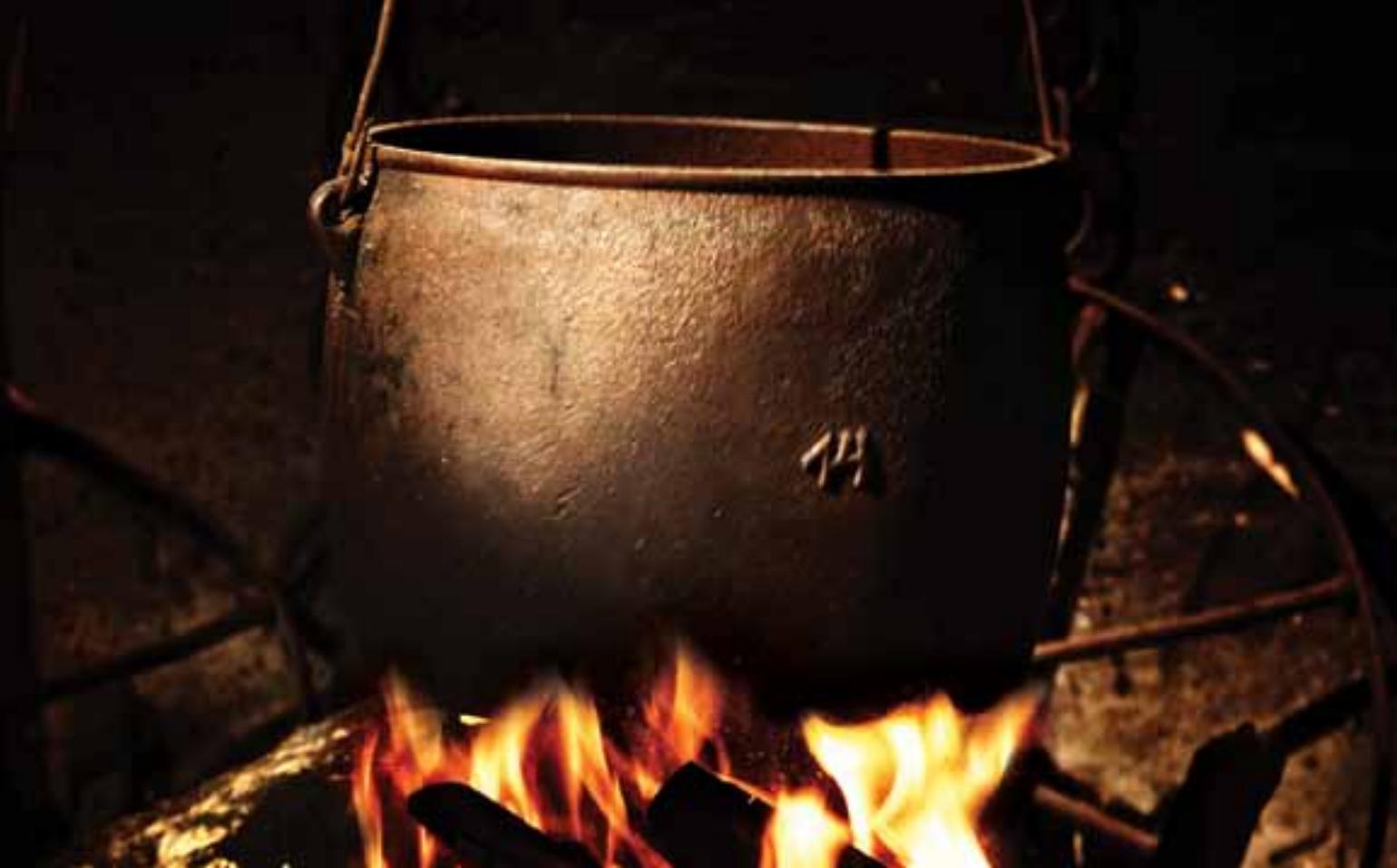


Hercegovačka je kuhinja, stoga potpuno zavinsna od mitske Hercegovine, prava pozornica dodira i udaljavanja, spoj vjerovanja i kulturnih i civilacijskih stećevina, duhovnih i manualnih tehnika. One su se neprekidno prožimale i tako u vremenjskim valovima pronosile svoje znanje i utjecaje, a onda ih, prepletene, uklapale su okvire već zatečenog nasljeda hercegovačke gastronomije. U slijed uzajamno utkanih značenja, koji kao sastojci složeni u jelu otkrivaju našu sudbinu, simboliziraju na svoj način naše rođenje, život i smrt. To ovoj kuhinji daje za pravo da nam otkrije i lice zemlje i lice naroda koji žive u ovim prostorima tako bliskim drevnim legendama.

Herzegovinian cuisine is entirely dependent upon the mythical Herzegovina. It's like a stage on which both close contact and extreme distance are palpable. It's a combination of religious, cultural and civilizational inheritance, coupled with spiritual and manual techniques. Knowledge of them and their influence have permeated and have survived through time, and have been intertwined, blended into the inheritance of Herzegovinian gastronomy. The dishes and what they stand for, like the ingredients that are added to them, reveal something about our destiny and symbolize in a unique way our birth, life and our passing. It gives this cuisine the right to reveal the character of the land and the people which live here so tightly intertwined with ancient legends.







Mitska i božanska je to tajna, misterija života koja se dimi sa ognjišta, starih kamina i kuhinja. A njezino čas zamagljeno, a čas opet jasno lice najbolje zrcali upravo iz tih arhetipskih kulinarskih hramova. Progovara iz lonaca, posuda i tava izvješenih nad vatrama prošlosti i vatrama sadašnjosti, u kojima još žive sjene predaka nad nekim opet pronađenim jelom, koje se vratilo u život kao zalog neprekinute stvaralačke duhovne i tjelesne, materijalne i nematerijalne baštine, za koju smo još do maločas mislili da je više nema i da je zauvijek izgubljeno njezino izvorno biće.

That secret mysterious life which swirls in the smoke of old chimneys and aged kitchens is both mythical and divine. Its sometimes blurred and then again sometimes vivid image is reflected in those archetypal culinary temples. It speaks in the pots, pans and skillets hung above the flames of the past and present, in which shadows of ancestors relishing newly discovered dishes live, and are reincarnated as a guarantor of a continuous creativity that is both spiritual and physical, material and immaterial, a heritage which up until recently, we thought had disappeared and was lost forever in its authentic form.







Takav jelovnik, složen od nizova vremena i nasljedivanja, premda škrt ali otporan, satkan od izravnih potomaka elemenata nastanka, čistih namirnica i začina, okusa i mirisa koje nije okrznulo neobuzdano planetarno onečišćenje i umjetni uzgoj, svakodnevno se stupnjevito razotkriva upravo u Hercegovini. Prokuhan u onim istim posudama i loncima, vatri i ognjištima, kuhinjama i bajkovitim recepturama iz kojih je moguće prepoznati kako se radovalo život, jačao naš duh i tijelo koji mnogo toga duguje upravo priči o izvornoj, zdravoj i začudnoj hercegovačkoj kuhinji. Njenim namirnicama i jelima koja rese ovu zemlju i njezine regije u velikom kotlu Sredozemlja. A, kaže se, sve do mjesta gdje raste maslina to je Sredozemlje, sve do mjesta gdje rađa smokva to je Sredozemlje, sve do mjesta gdje morska slana pokriva planinsko bilje to je Sredozemlje, na koncu, sve do mjesta gdje je hrana okrenuta moru i kopnu, Vodi i Zemlji, toploim sjaju i oštrom vjetru, Vatri i Zraku, to je Mediteran. Ako je vjerovati ovim pretpostavkama Hercegovina je uzorna kćer Sredozemlja.

This menu - compiled over time - covers a vast inheritance which is both meagre yet resistant. It is woven from the direct descendants of the elements of creation! They are pure ingredients and spices, tastes and aromas which are untouched by pollution, contamination or unnatural biological cultivation. That is what is gradually being discovered precisely in Herzegovina. Cooked in those same pots and pans, fires and hearths, kitchens and recipes that seem dreamed-up from ancient fables, in which one can recognize how life was actually generated: These recipes strengthened our bodies and souls. That health of body, mind and spirit owes a lot to the indigenous, healthy, miraculous Herzegovinian cuisine, to its food-stuffs and repasts which spring up all over this land with its respective regions in the great Mediterranean basin. They say that wherever olive trees grow – that is the Mediterranean. Wherever fig trees grow – that is the Mediterranean. Right up to where sea salt covers mountain flora – that is the Mediterranean, and finally, places where the food knows the debt it owes to the sea and land, the Water and Earth, warm sunshine and harsh wind – that is the Mediterranean. If these assumptions are true, then Herzegovina is an exemplary daughter of the Mediterranean.



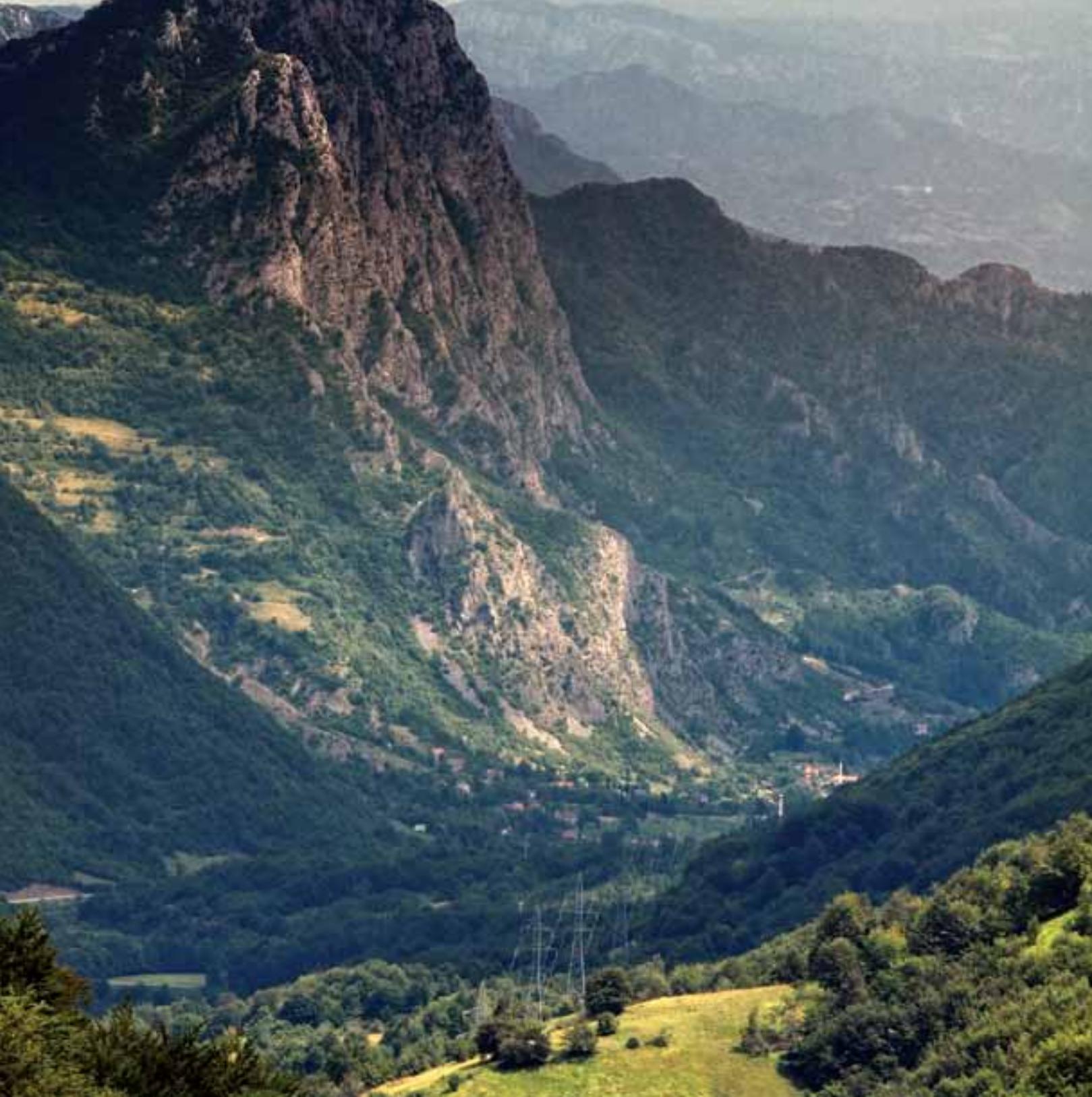


Hercegovina



zavjet gastronomskih elemenata
the vow of the gastronomical elements







U svojoj dugoj povijesti Hercegovina je bila čas središnje, čas rubno područje, mjesto susreta i sukoba domaćih i došljačkih civilizacija, vjera i utjecaja. Ona se stoga otkriva kao prostor spajanja i razdvajanja. Njezina je kuhinja otuda nježna i suvremena, a onda opet arhaična i tvrda, profinjena, ali ponekad i zastarjela u modernom kulinarском smislu. Ipak, kroz sve njezine mijene i epohe, ta kuhinja utemeljena na raznolikostima, samo na naizgled oskudna, svojom izvornom jednostavnošću pruža mogućnost da u već izabranom opet izaberemo ono što je najizvornije. No, ovo je ipak bajkovit izbor! Pa prije no što progovore recepture i kulinarske tehnike i umijeće, moraju progovoriti namirnice od kojih je sazdan ovaj neobični kulinarski molitvenik.

In its long history, Herzegovina has at times been a very important and at times a very minor region. It has been a crossroads and a battleground between local and newly invading civilizations, religions and centers of influence. It reveals itself therefore as an area that both connects and divides. Hence its cuisine is both gentle and contemporary while archaic and unyielding: It is both refined and yet obsolete in the modern culinary sense. However, through all of its changes and epochs, this cuisine has been based on diversity and while seemingly meager, its authentic simplicity allows one from an already indigenous selection, to re-choose truly native originality. This is truly a fairy-tale choice! Before looking at the recipes and culinary techniques, the ingredients which are fundamental to this remarkable culinary missal, must have their say.







bilje

Možda je Hercegovcima najdraža gastronomска molitva posvećena bilju, predvođenom od davnina slavljenim kukama, pupoljcima koji danas doslovce obilježavaju njenu kuhinju, potom divljem zelju, škripavcu, kupusu slatkom ili kiselom, poriluku ili prasi kako je nazivaju Hercegovci, blitvi, lobodi i špinatu i u njenom kulinarskom okružju legendarnoj i nezamjenjivoj raštiki i njenim mladim proljetnim izdancima bresunicama, botaničkim miljenicima mitova o postanku Hercegovine i njezinih najstarijih rođova. Potom ona osluškuje bajke o starim žitaricama sa njenih polja, poput sirka koji je jednom po cijelom Sredozemlju zamjenjivao kukuruz, o geršlu ili ječmu i sočivici ili leći i slanutku. Iz tla se povijaju prema nebu recepture za mahunarke, pripremu rodonačelnika sredozemne kuhinje, mahuna, graška i boba ili o sveprisutnom grahu pristiglom iz Amerike i profinjenoj bamiji koju su Osmanlije uvezli iz Afrike, slijedeći bogati trag polumjeseca i zvijezde, uz pravoslavnu perjanicu grah poljak, koji je onako šarenih i nepravilnih zrna, othranio stanovnike škrte istočne Hercegovine.

herbs

The highest gastronomic form of praise in Herzegovinia from ancient times would most likely be uttered by plants. This would be headed by wild asparagus, then the edible wild grasses which are literally a symbol of its cuisine, then wild cabbage, bladder campion (*silene vulgaris*), bitter and sweet cabbage, leek - or "prasa" as Herzegovinians call it - chard, sorrel and spinach as well as the legendary and indispensable collard greens and its young springtime outcrop – These are the botanical favorites which feature in the myths of Herzegovina and its oldest ancestors. Herzegovina knows fairy-tales about the old cereal crops on its fields, like sorghum which once substituted corn throughout the Mediterranean, and about couscous, barley or lentils and chickpeas. All sorts of pulse recipes rise up from Herzegovinian soil: Recipes for runner beans, peas or fresh broad beans, the ever-present American bean and the sophisticated okra bean imported by the Turks from Africa, which followed the opulent path of the crescent and star, along with the orthodox symbol, the "field bean" with its multicolored and unsymmetrical grains that fed the inhabitants of sparing east Herzegovina.







Žitarice

Posebna je priča o hercegovačkom žitu i hercegovačkom kruhu. Neprikosnovenom vladaru svakog stola i svake obitelji, jelu kraljeva i siromaha. No bilo da je pripremljen od crnog nekad neprosijanog pšeničnog brašna i zimice, mljevenog na ručnom žrvnju, bijelog, ili onog od miješanog brašna, bilo da je pečen pod pekom ili u pećnici, bez pšenice i kruha ne može se zamisliti nijedna trpeza nijedan blagovaonik, nijedna svetkovina. Potom sluša Hercegovina i priču o davno uvezenu kukuruzu, mljevenom u starim mlinicama koje još kloparaju uz potoke i brzake i protom skuhanom na hercegovački način, koji je pod imenom pura postao hrana koja je već primila dimenzije kulinarskog mita.

cereals

The tale of Herzegovinian wheat and bread is a special one - the undisputed ruler of each dinner table and family, the food of the princes and paupers. Regardless of whether it was prepared either from black unsifted wheat and rye ground on a grindstone, white, or mixed flower, whether it was baked under a baking lid or in the oven, it is unthinkable to picture any dining room or any festivity without wheat or bread. Herzegovina then lends an ear to the story of corn introduced long ago, ground in old mills which still rattle at points along streams and rapids. This corn is cooked the Herzegovinian way: The name of "pura" has assumed the proportions of a culinary legend.







korjenasto povrće

Potom o izvornom korjenastom povrću, mrkvi, celeru i petrusimulu, o američkim mahunarkama grahu i povrću iz Novog svijeta, nadasve došljaku krumpiru, koji je također u Hercegovini slavljen u jelima kao gastronomski kult. Osluškuje o arapskom patlidžanu i američkoj tikvi, koju su ih baš kao i grah Osmanlije preuzele od Saracena i Maura, o paprici i tikvici, o rajčici i njihovom mjestu u novoj domovini u kojoj su svi ti prekoceanski putnici, već zaboravili svoje podrijetlo. O njima bi se mogao napisati cijeli jelovnik Izgorenih tih i sa štovanjem kao molitva fratara i kaludera, imama i mujezina.

root vegetables

This is followed by the root vegetables – carrots, celery, and parsley, as well as American beans and vegetables from the New World, particularly the newcomer – the potato which is also glorified in Herzegovinian meals like a gastronomical cult. We then have the Arabic eggplant and the American marrows and squashes, which were inherited from the Saracens and Moors just as they inherited beans from the Turks. And what about our peppers, courgettes and tomatoes now firmly embedded in their newly found homeland, in which all travelers from oceans away have long forgotten where they came from. An entire menu could be dedicated to them, and they should be uttered with respect like the prayers said by friars or monks, imams and muezzins.







perad

No Hercegovina progovara i kroz svoja izvorna jela od peradi, posebno domaće kokoši, pilića i nadasve cijenjenog pijevca, pivca, i kopuna. Pa dok je ostatak velikog svijeta već zaboravio njihov okus, Hercegovina nije. Onaj tako prepoznatljiv slatkasto masni okus jela od ove ekološki prehranjene peradi još jednog gesla hercegovačke kuhinje. Pa bilo da se radi o fratarskom kešketu od komada mesa kuhanе koke ili pijevca, hercegovačkom čimburu od u vodi kuhanih jaja prelivenim lučenicom, bilo o mujezinskoj ičiji, kokošjem mesu služenom s rižom i tankom pogačom, bilo imamovom červišu, mesu od prokuhanе domaće kokoši ili orozana, pivca u juhi ugušćenoj brašnom i češnjakom, s malo sirčeta ili kvasine. Još jedna jasna poruka o jedinstvu u ljepoti raznolikosti malih hercegovačkih svjetova. No osim ove omiljene peradi nađe se u njenim bunjištima i dvorištima, u kamenim i drvenim kokošnjcima, i pataka i gusaka, najčešće purana, još jednog kočopernog došljaka iz Amerike, određenog za svečane prilike. Sveža ili sušena, kao i mnoge druge povrtne, gljivarske, mesne i riblje delicije, perad se pekla, kuhalila i pirjala, a jela od peradi često su se iznosila o svećima i svetim danima.

poultry

Herzegovina also speaks through its indigenous poultry dishes, especially home-fed chicken, and above all the respected rooster and wood grouse. While the rest of the world has long forgotten their flavor, Herzegovina has not. The easily recognizable sweet and lavish taste of this ecologically fed foul is yet another slogan of Herzegovinian cuisine. Sometimes we are dealing with Friar's Keshket made from pieces of cooked chicken or rooster. At other times, we are referring to Herzegovinian Chimbura made from cooked eggs topped by sautéed fresh butter, yogurt and garlic, or there again Muezzin's Itcheya - chicken served with rice and thin sweet bread, with Imam's Chervish, cooked domestic chicken or rooster soup thickened with flour and garlic and a dash of vinegar. This is yet another clear message of the unified beauty of the diversified Herzegovinian worlds. Aside from this adored poultry in its yards, dunghills, wooden and stone hen-houses, one can discover ducks and geese, and quite often turkeys – yet another haughty arrival from America and a feature for special occasions. Fresh or smoked, like many other leaf-veg, mushroom, meat or fish delicacies, poultry could be baked, cooked or braised. It was something reserved for national and sacred holidays.







divljač, janjetina i kozletina

Slijede brojna jela od visoke i niske divljači koja kao da je sišla sa nekog starog bogumilskog stečka. Zatim recepti i priče o svježem mesu, poglavito janjetini ali i kozletini, svježoj ili suhoj, oko kojih se na ražnju, tepsiji pod pekom ili u loncima punim mirisa bravetine i povrća i aromatičnog bilja s kamenitih visoravn i njihovog gotovo opojnog okusa, šapatom također otkrivaju kulinarске tajne. Tajne podjednako privržene zvonicima i minaretima, križevima, krstovima i sjajnoj zvijezdi koju štiti močni polumjesec. No te su bajke nedohvatljive, one su starije od našeg pisanih vremena i pripadaju svim njenim stanovnicima od nastanka svijeta do danas, baš kao i njihova zemlja Hercegovina. Slijedeći taj trag ova se kuhinja podjednako diči i jelovnicima od govedine, junetine i teletine. Ponajprije od mesa autohtone Buše, zvane još i Ilirsko govedo, što dovoljno govori o njezinoj povijesnoj genetici.

game, lamb and kid

Next, we have several dishes of large and small game. It is as if they emanate from an old Bogumil burial stone! We have recipes and tales of fresh meat, particularly lamb and goat - fresh or smoked, which whisper culinary secrets through the spit, roasting tin or pot steaming with the smell of mutton, vegetables and aromatic herbs of intoxicating flavor from the stony highlands. These mysteries belong equally to church towers and minarets, to crosses and shining stars shielded by crescents. The roots of these tales are however beyond one's reach, they are older than the written word and belong to the local inhabitants from the time of Creation up to the present, as does their land, Herzegovina. And following that track backwards in time, we find a cuisine proud of its recipes which including beef, baby beef and veal. First and foremost the indigenous *Buše* (bushe) meat, also known as Illyrian beef, which in itself says much about its historic genes.







mljeko i mlječni proizvodi

Pa nas stoka sitnog i krupnog zuba upućuje na možda najbolje sredozemno kiselo mljeko, obrani kajmaci, a podjednako na slavne hercegovačke sireve. Točnije, pažnju usmjerava na cijelu lepezu odnjegovanih sireva, mekih ili tvrdih, iz mijeha ili drvene kace ili iz maslinova ulja, ali u kojima je fermentirala sva snaga hercegovačkog bilja i hercegovačkog tla. Ona se osjeća i u tučenom hercegovačkom maslu jednom od temelja njenog kulinarstva iz kojeg se pri udaranju mećaja, drvenog tučka u drvenom stapu, izdvaja i pretače mlačenica, kiselo gorkasti napitak koji osvježava i jača.

milk and milk by-products

We then have small and large livestock which produce probably the best Mediterranean sour milk, skimmed cream and equally famous Herzegovinian cheeses. Particular attention is paid to an entire array of cultivated cheeses, creamed and hard varieties, preserved in sheepskin, wooden tubs or in olive oil and fermented with all the potency of Herzegovinian herbs and soil. This “je ne sais quoi” is present in whipped Herzegovinian butter – one of the foundations of its cuisine, produced from the battering of a pestle mounted on the end of a wooden staff; the end product is then skimmed to isolate the *Mlačenica* (mlatchenitsa) – a sour and bitter drink which refreshes and strengthens.







svinjetina

No priče i bajke ne bi bile potpune bez svinjetine, sušene od davnina a pečene tek u novije vrijeme. Bez žbara ili čvaraka, poznatih pača i drča, gustih hercegovačkih hladetina punih svinjskog mesa i njegovih hrskavičnih dijelova, kobasicu, suhih jezika, slanine i pancete, masti koja se iscijedila, pa se topi da bi oplodila mnoga jela ove zemlje. Ipak, ovo poglavlje gastronomskog brevijara nije potpuno bez skupocjenih svinjskih pečenica i slavnog hercegovačkog pršuta koji se zajedno sa srodnim dalmatinskim rođakom, ravnopravno mjeri sa svim svojim sredozemnim uzorima.

pork

The stories and tales, however, would be incomplete without pork, cured and processed from days of yore, and only in recent times fresh-roasted. The bill offare would be unthinkable without deep-fried *čvaraka* (chvaraka) - lardons, infamous pork heads and *drća* (drcha) - a thick Herzegovinian jelly full of pork with its crispy parts, sausages, pork tongues, bacon, and the lard extracted at slaughter-time which is then melted to impregnate the various meals of this land. And the chapter from this gastronomic breviary would also be incomplete without the precious pork tenderloin or the renowned Herzegovinian dry-cured ham which together with its Dalmatian kin, can easily match any of its Mediterranean paragons.







ribe

Ima Hercegovina i svoje podvode i podmorje. Mnogi stanovnici njihovih dubina hranili su Hercegovce. Od riječne ribe i jegulja, žaba i malih slatkih prikanaca iz jezeraca, bunara i plitkih stajačica, do šutljivih šarana iz velikih jezera u kojima se ono ogleda nebo, i skupocjenih pastrva iz brzaka i Neretve, Trebižata i Bregave. Tih hitrih voda koje klizeći šapću o prolaznost, a onda na bukovima i slapovima opet govore o životu. Jednom su se na njihovom dnu dičili mali oklopnići, riječni rakovi, koje danas potiskuje sve prisutnija morska riba i plodovi mora, važan podiok suvremene hercegovačke kuhinje.

fish

Herzegovina has its own seabeds and marshes. Many of the creatures from these depths have fed Herzegovinians over time. They include freshwater fish and eels, frogs and small sweet anchovy like fish, the *prikanac* (preecanats) from lakes, wells and ponds, the tranquil carp from great lakes which reflect the heavens, and the precious trout from the rapids of the Neretva, Trebizat and Bregava rivers. These waters whisper softly of transience, and their cascades and falls tell the tale of new life. Their beds were once covered with small shellfish – freshwater crab, but are now dominated with sea fish and other seafood which are an integral part of modern Herzegovinian cuisine.







voće

Medu voćem preteže slavna hercegovačka šljiva, slatka i muškatna, iz koje se peče glasovita rakija pa sve prisutna jabuka i u stihovima opjevana hercegovačka trešnja, potom šipak, taj glasnih antičkih božanstava. A tom slatkom svijetu iz voćnjaka koji se već prostro po stolu, prave društvo kruške i dunje, divlje kupine, šipci i oskoruše, orasi i ljeske, čijim mirisom i okusom odišu kolači i slatki sudionici ove gastronomskе pripovijesti, ali i mnoga osvježavajuća i alkoholna pića, ponajprije rakije od gotovo svih vrsta fermentiranog voća obogaćene hercegovačkim aromatičnim biljem. Pa Ipak, cijelo to slatko i opojno društvo, s predvodi smokva. Rana, ljetna i kasna, mednog okusa koji se cijedi iz ploda, ohlađena pa iznesena na ljetni stol, ili sušena za hladnije dane, kolače i rakiju, kada se hercegovački voćnjaci prisjećaju svog sredozemnog podrijetla.

fruit

Among its fruit, the infamous Herzegovian plum dominates – sweet and muscadine, often used for distilling the renowned rakija (*rakeeya*); we then have the everpresent apple and celebrated Hercegovinian cherry, followed by the pomegranate – a messenger of the ancient gods. This sweet world which is spread across the table is then joined by pears and quinces; wild berries; sorb; walnuts and hazel, whose scents enrich various pies and other sweet parties to this gastronomical tale. Not to be forgotten are the several refreshing alcoholic beverages. First and foremost would be *rakija*, distilled from all sorts of fermented fruit and enriched with aromatic Herzegovinian herbs. This sweet and intoxicating group of fruits is nevertheless led by the fig. There are early summertime and also late ripening figs, with their honey-like substance which trickles from the fruit. These are chilled and served at the outdoor tables, or dried for consumption in cooler weather. They are used in cakes and brandy when Herzegovinian orchards reminisce of their Mediterranean roots.







gljive

Njihovi pratioci su gljive, gubine, posebno one iz Zapadne Hercegovine, kupreške, duvanske, roškopoljske. Rijetki i skupocjeni vrganji sa svojim velikim, teškim klobucima, bukovače i lisičarke, uzgojeni šampinjoni i divlje pečurke. Ima ih još, no ovo su samo najčešće vrste, a jednom su bile dostupne svima kao važan izvor prehrane. I u njima ima nešto otajstveno, skriveno ispod tla odakle natopljene kišom bujaju njihove spore i dižu ih iz podzemlja kao dobroćudne duhove minulog svijeta.

mushrooms

Their companions are wild mushrooms, particularly ones originating from western Herzegovina; Kupres; Tomislavgrad and Rosko Polje. Herzegovina produces the rare and precious edible *vrganj* (*vrgany*) - Boletus with their large and heavy tops. It has Beech Staffs and Chanterelles, cultivated mushrooms and wild agaric mushrooms. There are several others, but these are the most common and once were available to all as an integral part of daily nourishment. There is something mysterious about them, hidden beneath the rain-drenched earth from which their spores swell and reach from the underground like friendly ghosts of the ancient world.





Ljekovito i aromatično bilje

U savezu su gljive, kažu, sa hercegovačkim aromatičnim biljem i travama, tim opojnim začinima ljekovitih svojstava, u čije su tajne upućeni hercegovački travari. Povijest je njihova umijeća duga, seže iza obzorja pisanog vremena i prvih receptura, baš kao i povijest glivara koji su zapamćeni i uvažavani u povijesti ove kuhinje i pučke medicine, prenosili svoja znanja, s koljena na koljeno. Jedni i drugi šamani su izgubljenih vremena, ali koji imaju svoje suvremene nasljednike i potomke upućene u izbor gljiva i bilja, njihova pogubna i dobrohotna svojstva. Kadulja, vrijes, majčina dušica, mažurana, smilje i bobilje, lovor i ružmarin vladaju biljem, maslačak, trputac, vlasac i divlji luk, travama koje zajedno sa biljem niču po kamenitom tlu i strmim pašnjacima. Uz naravno već spomenute kuke bez kojih je teško zamisliti čak i ovaj gastronomski podiok. A on je okusna i mirisna bit hercegovačke kuhinje. Pa se pokrenu peludni oblaci i pojave se pčele. Svaka voćka, svaka biljka, trava i plodina ima svoj cvijet, tučak, pelud i mednu suzu, ali i svoje pčele. Nose one leteći u rojevima nektar u svoje košnice. Iz saća, kao iz malih trezora, vrče se i cijedi med. I svaka vrsta ima svoj okus i svoju namjenu, svoj miris i svoga štovatelja.

aromatic and medicinal herbs

They say that mushrooms are allied with Herzegovinian aromatic plants and herbs, those toxic yet therapeutic spices, whose secrets are kept by Herzegovinian herbalists. The long history of this art originates from the dawn of the written letter. The first recipies, much like the history of mushroom gatherers who are distinguished in the history of this cuisine and folk medicine, passed their knowledge on from generation to generation. Both Shamans are from lost times, but both have modern heirs and descendants who know the secrets of how to select mushrooms and herbs, and know both their pernicious and benevolent potentials. Sage, heather, thyme, marjoram, immortelle and basil, bay and rosemary are the leading herbs, while dandelion, plantain, chives and wild onions are grasses which, together with these herbs, grow on rock-strewn earth and steep pastures. Along with these, one must not forget the already mentioned *kuke* - wild asparagus (lat. - *tamus communis*) without which one could not appreciate the scale of this gastronomic degree. With regards to taste and smell, they are the pith and substance of Herzegovinian cuisine. Above these herbs, the pollen clouds gather where honey bees come onto the scene. Each and every fruit tree, herb, grass and crop bears a flower, pestle or nectar as well as its own swarm of bees. They carry nectar to their hives and from the combs, the honey trickles and drizzles. Each variety has a distinguishable taste and intent, its own fragrance and its own admirers.







vinova loza

A onda, pri kraju niza, grožđe, još jedan simbol hercegovačke zemlje vinograda i vinskih podruma. Kao suncem zasjajena zlatna Žilavka, i tamna, kao hercegovačka snažna krv, crvena Blatina. To je od pamтивјека piće ilirskih vladara, rimskih veterana, hercega, hrvatskih kraljeva, pravoslavnih vojvoda i osmanskih begova koji su ispijajući svoje ukrašene pehare uživali u čuptaru, slavnoj slastici od mošta zlatne žilavke, prokuhanog sa brašnom šećerom i orasima. I bili su u tim hedonističkim trenucima silno ponosni ti moćnici, na svoje zavičajne hercegovačke posjede. Opjevane i moćne, snažne i krhke, kakvi su i sami jednom bili.

vine

At the end of the line we have grapes, yet another symbol of Herzegovina – the land of vineyards and wine cellars. There is the shimmering golden *Žilavka* (zhilavka), and the red version - *Blatina* (blatina) which reminds us of strong, dark Herzegovinian blood. From as long as anyone can remember, these were the beverages of choice of the Illyrian monarchs; the Roman veterans; the Herzogs; the Croatian kings; the Orthodox warlords and the Turkish bejs who, while sipping from their decorated chalices, enjoyed *Čupter* (chupiter). This infamous dessert is made from golden *Žilavka* stum, cooked with flour, sugar and walnuts. During those hedonistic times, the rulers were extremely proud of their native Herzegovinian lands - celebrated in verse - strong yet fragile as they themselves also were.





maslina

Ipak samo jedno stablo ima svoju posebnu priču, maslina! Već šest tisućljeća ovo dijete male Azije koje je osvojilo Mediteran, vlada kao plod i zlatno ulje svim sredozemnim zemljama, pa tako i Hercegovinom i uz maslo i mast čini gastronomski trokut ove kuhinje raznolikog podrijetla i raznolikih utjecaja. U maslini i ulju iscijedenom iz prastarih stabala, nekima starim i dvije tisuće godina, bljeskaju Homerove i Vergilijevе oči, Muhamedovo i Isusovo lice, smrtni obrisi ilirskih kraljeva, hercega i patarenskih svećenika, vladarske loze Tomaševića, Zahumskih i Humskih knezova, osmanskih aga i begova, vojskovoda i vezira, uzdignutih sjajnih oštrica njihovih mačeva i sablji, već položenih u hercegovačkoj burnoj povijesti. Sve do danas kada se u maslinovom zlatu, na sreću napokon utopio njihov ratoborni sjaj. No to je samo djelić, hercegovačke bajke. Priče i molitve jedne zemlje koja svakodnevno obnavlja zavjet koji je dala elementima stvaranja, sklopljen i čuvan kao svetinja u vatri ognjišta i drevnih kuhinja, loncima i zdjelama u kojima se dimi raznolik svijet namirnica. Priče i molitve koje ključaju u njenim jelima i pretaču se u naše tanjure i plitice, ili se izljevaju u naše čaše, kao zlatna Žilavka i stara crvena Blatina, kao prošlost u sadašnjost.

olive

There is however only one tree which has its own long history to tell – the olive tree! For over six millennia this infant of Asia Minor which has conquered the Mediterranean, is recognized as a fruit and a golden ointment in all Mediterranean lands. This is true for Herzegovinia as well. Along with butter and lard, it completes the gastronomic triad of this diverse cuisine that has been influenced by such a variety of elements. In the olives and the oil extracted from age-old trees - some of which are over two thousand years old - one can imagine the glitter in Homer's and Virgil's eyes; the complexion of Mohamed and Jesus; the embalmments of Ilyrean kings; Herzogs and Patarene priests; the Tomašević royal family; the princes of Zahum and Hum; the Turkish Aghas and Bejs and their generals and viziers. We can imagine the shine of their oiled swords and sabers during Herzegovina's turbulent past – up until today when their belligerent shimmer is merged into the gold of olive oil. This is however, only part of the Herzegovinian chronicle, the tale of a land which daily renews its devotion to the founding elements. These are consolidated and kept in the flames of hearths and ancient kitchens, pots and bowls. In them, a world of various ingredients simmer. The message carried within its meals is served into our bowls and plates, or poured into our glasses, like strong brandy or wine – golden Žilavka or aged red Blatina, from the past into the present.





Hercegovina



četri prva elementa
the first four elements







Ipak, ovaj izbor hercegovačkih namirnica, ma koliko živio svojim životom, ne bi naravno mogao bez kuhinje, kao što ni kuhinja ne bi mogla bez njega. No treba znati osjetiti njihove okuse i mirise, pa opet izabrati u izabranom. Tako se izdvajaju kao prepoznatljive izvorne odrednice hercegovačke kuhinje, izvješene komaštrama nad vatrom na ognjištu ili u onim loncima i tavama na starim pećnicama na drva, fijakerima, kako su ih jednom zvali, koje su danas zamijenili suvremenim štednjaci.

Regardless of the selection of these Herzegovinan ingredients, however independent they may be, they are useless without the accompanying techniques in cooking – as are the techniques obsolete without the ingredients. One must know their tastes and scents, and then reselect from the indigenous selection. Bouquets, odours, tangs ... lingering above burning fireplaces or found in pots or pans atop of old wood stoves - or *fijakeri* (feeyakere) as they were once called - nowadays replaced by modern stoves. These properties can be identified as the founding determinants of Herzegovinan cuisine.







Prve sa te sjajne površine zrcale kuke, kuhane, pomiješane ponekad sa divljim zeljem ili raštikom, po drugim izvornim recepturama ili sirove na salatu ili kuhane na stari način, začinjene raznim dodacima, jajima, kuhanim krumpirom ili zelenom salatom. No, bez obzira na koji su način pripremljene najčešće su podlivene maslinovim uljem. Nekad su bile hrana puka koji ih je brao skrivene među biljem, a danas su suvremena elitna uždanica najprobranijih hercegovačkih jelovnika.

First on the list are *kuke* – wild asparagus, cooked and mixed at times with wild spinach or kale, or according to other original recipies, raw on salad or cooked the old fashioned way, with spices, eggs or cooked potatoes or just as a green salad. Regardless of the manner in which they are prepared, they are most often seasoned with olive oil. Once a food picked by peasants who knew where they were hidden on the grassy hillsides, it has now become an elite mainstay of the best Herzegovinian menus.





Na ljestvici najvažnijih kulturnih hercegovačkih namirnica, podjednako značajno mjesto, zauzima raštika, po predaji onaj kupus koji je nikao iz Zeusova znoja ili iz Božjeg napora kojeg je Otac osjećao prilikom stvaranja svijeta. Raštika, samo kuhaná, potom raštika s krumpirom i raznovrsnim suhim mesom, pa raštika s janjetinom i teletinom, lonci od raštike s tjesteninom, grahoricama, mahunarkama, biljem i kupusima, lučnicom i češnjakom. Njeni nježni izdanci, bresunice, prevrću se u tavama i loncima na maslu, začinjeni češnjakom, ili jednostavno preliveni maslinovim uljem ili lučnicom, pa posoljeni i popapreni. Pa kako je raštika ogledalo tajne pripreme bilja, zelja i kupusa, po istim recepturama u Hercegovini se kuhaju i sve druge biljke i kupusnjače iz njezina jelovnika, od blitve i špinata, do divljeg zelja, glavatog kupusa i kelja, lobode i poriluka. prase, ponekad pripremljene sve zajedno. Ali i mahunarke i žitarice, slijede tu kulinarsku školu, od lonaca od leće, ječma i graha, ili graha poljaka iz istočne Hercegovine, tu i тамо skuhani s krumpirom, na propirjanom povrću, luku i kapuli, a ponekad, baš kao i zelje, kupusi i raštika, skuhani sa suhim ili svježim mesom i staklastim povrćem, mrkvama i celerom, začinjeni domaćim koncentratom od rajčica, solju i paprom, te rijđe feferonima. To su jednostavní načini pripremanja tako svojstveni hercegovačkoj kuhinji.

On the scale measuring prominence in Herzegovinian dishes, occupying an equally important position, we find *raštika* (*rashtika*) – an indigenous flat leaf cabbage, which according to the legend “sprouted from Zeus’ sweat or from the divine exertion which God felt while creating the world”. *Rastika* can be simply boiled, or it can take the form of rastika with potatoes and various smoked meats; *raštika* with lamb or veal or *raštika* stew with pasta, beans, herbs and cabbage (with or without a yoghurt and garlic dressing). Its gentler offshoot, the *bresunica* (*bresunitsa*), is tossed and turned in pans and pots over butter, seasoned with garlic, or simply covered with olive oil or a yoghurt-garlic sauce, then salted and peppered. Seeing how *raštika* mirrors the secrets of leaf-vegetable and cabbage preparation, the same recipes are used throughout Herzegovina for all other greens in her cuisine including spinach and chard; wild leafy greens and Savoy cabbage; lambs's-lettuce and leek. Sometimes they are prepared all together. Pulses and grains also follow this culinary school – lentils, barley, string-beans and “field” beans from eastern Herzegovina. Here and there, they are cooked with potatoes; braised vegetables; garlic and onion, and sometimes much like spinach, cabbage and *raštika*, they are cooked with smoked or fresh meat and vegetables such as carrots and celery, then dashed with a home-made tomato paste, salt and pepper. They are even made with chilli peppers - although less often. These are the truly simple preparation methods specific to Herzegovinian cuisine.







Pa ipak jedno je jelo proslavilo njezinu gastronomiju. To je hercegovački japrank. Slavni smotulci od raštike, otomanskog podrijetla, ali hercegovačkog značaja i koji se u izboru namirnica i pripremi, ne razlikuju mnogo od regije do regije. Naravno gastronomija mora podjednako voditi računa o osnovnom načelu svake recepture i načinu njene pripreme. Pa dok će izvorna, mostarska, obarena raštika biti punjena smjesom od miješane mljevene janjetine i junetine, ili samo junetine, riže, slatkog paprike i ribane mrkve, pa prokuhanja u mesnom temeljcu, zapadno hercegovačka će inačica sve te sastojke upotpuniti slanim i suhom svinjetinom i tako japraku dati svoj dimni slatko - slankasti naglasak.

There is one course, however, that has made Herzegovinian cuisine famous – the infamous *Japrak* (yaprak). These reknowned kale rolls, of Turkish origin and Herzegovinian importance do not particularly differ in preparation or ingredients from region to region. But gastronomy must, of course, particularize the basic principles of each recipe specifying the manner of preparation: While the true boiled raštika from Mostar is filled with a mixture of ground lamb and beef, or simply beef, rice, sweet peppers and grated carrots and then simmered in a meat stock, the West Herzegovinian version complements these ingredients with bacon and smoked pork and hence gives its *japrak* a smoked, sweet and salty accent.

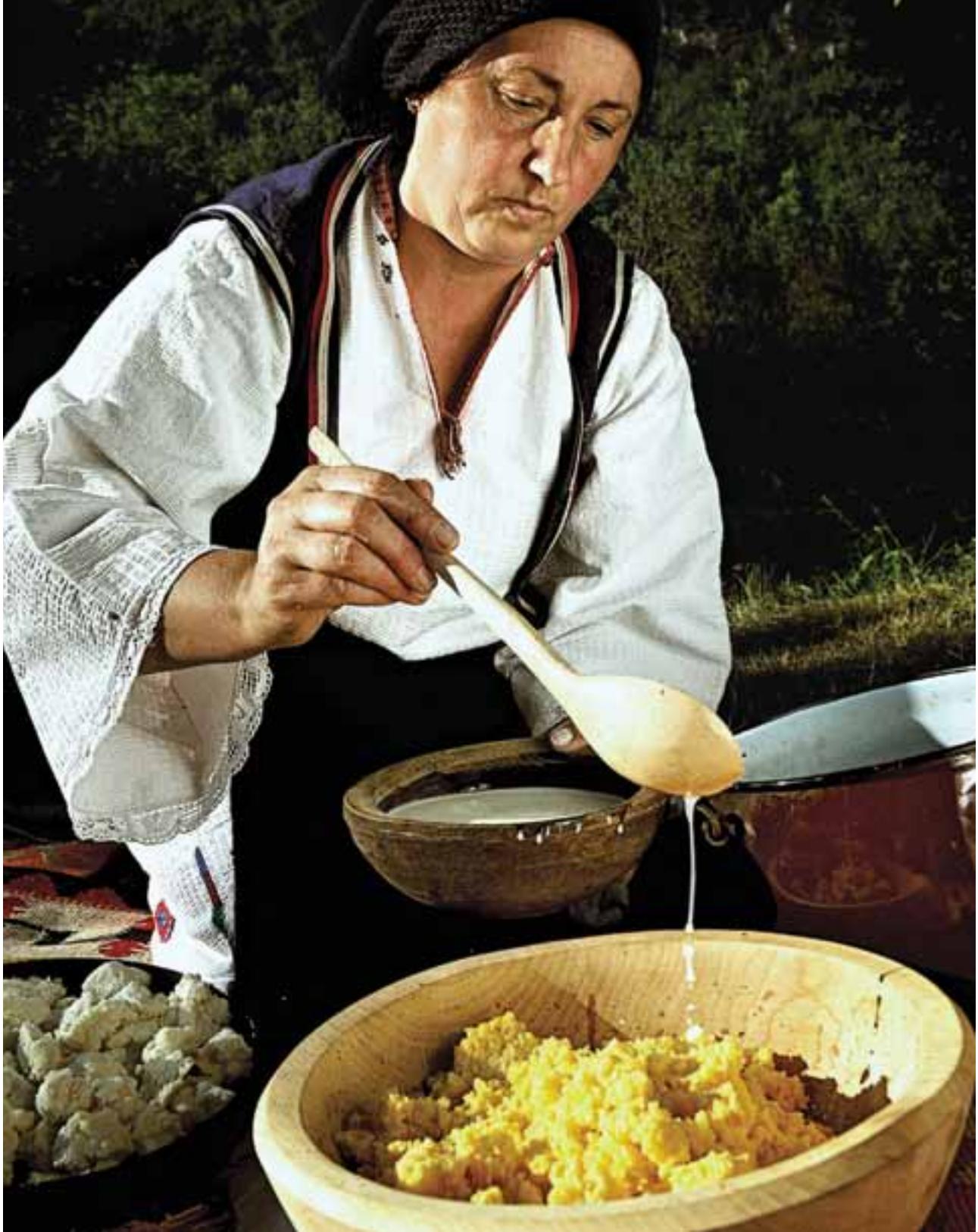




Slično je i sa sarmama od kiselog, u rjedim prilikama, i slatkog kupusa, ili otomanskim jalan sarmama od vinove loze, i jalan dolmama od paprike, samo bez mesa, i onima punjenim sa mesom, kuhanim ili mesnim dolmama od paprike pečenim u pećnici, toj istočnjačkoj braći japraka. One također rese hercegovačku kuhinju, poredane baš kao i japraci i sarne u keramičkim ili metalnim loncima, nalik na male vojнике ili zagrljene ljubavnike. Zeleni lisnati, korjenasti, stapkasti, biljni i mljeveni mesni inventar koji je hranio i štitio kao i hercegovačka pura i hercegovački kruh. No on se podjednako osjeća i u drugim tradicionalnim jelima osmanskog podrijetla koja su odavno postala dio sveukupne hercegovačke kuhinje. Posebno u slavnim turskim sogan dolama od, istom smjesom, kao u slučaju japraka i sarne, punjenog crvenog luka, pa punjenim patlidžanima i rjede tikvicama i rajčicama, koje su se u otmjenijim kućama znale ponekad nuditi zajedno. Svaka umotana u svoju dolamu, dolmu, košuljicu, od kojih je ona od raštike bila najsvečanija i kao japrak, postala opće mjesto hercegovačke kuhinje.

The same goes for sarma or the cabbage rolls that are made from sauerkraut, or less often with sweet cabbage. The ottoman *jalan sarma* (yalan sarma) is wrapped in grape vine leaves while *jalan dolma* (yalan dolma) uses bell peppers as a holder for its filling, and may or may not use meat. These can be boiled or oven baked. It is the oriental kin of the *japrak*. These treasures adorn Herzegovinian cuisine, lined up just like *japrak* and *sarma* in ceramic or metal pots, like small soldiers or lovers closely embracing. These green-leafy, root-like, stem-like, “leaf-veg and ground beef” repasts have fed and protected its inhabitants from hunger, much like Herzegovinian *pura* or corn-meal and homemade bread. Its substance is also present in other traditional meals of ottoman origin which long ago became an integral part of Herzegovinian cuisine. This is particularly true of the infamous Turkish *sogan dolma*, made with the same mixture as *japrak* and *sarma*, but it is stuffed with onions as well as eggplant, and less often pumpkin and tomatoes which in upper class household would have been served altogether. Each meatball would be wrapped into its own cape or *dolma* - the most celebrated wrapping being *rastika*. Much like *japrak*, it has become an inevitable actor on the stage of Herzegovinian cuisine.







Red je na puri. Ovo dijete Novog svijeta koje hrani podjednako ljude i blago, nije za razliku od drugih američkih došljaka stiglo u Hercegovinu nekom karanom iz sultanovih velikih kuhinja u Topkapiju, već iz Dalmacije, koja je s Hercegovinom spojena duhovno i civilizacijski još od zore prapovijesnog vremena. Pa ipak Dalmacija i Istra naslijedili su puru, iz Venecije pa se ona u tim hrvatskim regijama zove po mletački palenta, iz Venecije. Moćne kolonijalne, pomorske i trgovačke države, koja je upravo palentu, puru, i uz rižu posebno odnjegovanu za kuhanje rižota, od nje napravila svoj gastronomski predznak. Pa dok se hercegovački rižoti, bilo od mesa, ribe, povrća ili gljiva, da ne nabrajamo dalje, ne mogu mjeriti sa mletačkima, hercegovačka pura nadmašuje svoj uzor iz Republike Sv Marka i Dalmacije, i s punim pravom može nositi epitet najbolje.

Next in line is *pura* (*pura*) corn-meal or corn porridge. This child of the New World which nourished both livestock and people did not arrive like the other newcomers from America on a convoy of camels from the sultan's great kitchen in Topkapija - but rather from Dalmatia, which was connected to Herzegovina spiritually and civilisationally from ancient times. Dalmatia and Istria inherited *pura* from Venice and for this reason, in that region, it is referred to as *palenta* (*polenta*). Venice was a powerful colonial and merchant state, and its *palenta/pura* and its specially cultivated rice - intended for use in risotto - are now gastronomic symbols of that area. While Herzegovinian risotto, made with either meat, vegetables or mushrooms cannot compare with its Venetian counterpart, Herzegovinian *pura* far outweighs its predecessor from St. Mark's Republic (Republic of Venice) and Dalmatia in terms of taste.







Onaj tko nije probao puru s lučnicom od kiselog mlijeka s češnjakom tučenim u lukotucu, drvenom mužaru ili puru sa kašom, izlivenom za vrijeme kuhanja, pomiješanom sa lučnicom i pancetom prženom u maslu, taj doista nije probao puru. Ova hraniteljica i braniteljica, spasiteljica i čuvarica Hercegovine, pripremljena na desetke načina, bilo kao prilog, bilo kao glavno jelo, obična, tek kuhana i omekšana maslom, mašću ili maslinovim uljem, kao lojnica, kukuruzni kruh s čvarcima, sirćana sa sirkovim brašnom, vlaša pura s krumpirima, zamićena, bijela, žuta ili zapečena kao prilog mesnim i ribljim pirjancima, prava je perjanica hercegovačke kuhinje. Pa kad se pomisli na kukuruz, mlad samo kuhan u vodi ili pečen na ploči, salatu i juhu od mladog kukuruza ili kukuruznu čorbu sa suhim mesom i nadasve puru, čini se da je nikao i rođen na škrtom hercegovačkom tlu, da je ovo oduvijek njegova zemљa, od onog mitskog početka ovog malog svijeta i njegove gastronomije.

It can be said that one has only truly tasted *pura* when in combination with *lučnica* "loochnitsa" (made from sour milk and garlic diced or crushed with a pestle) or as *pura* with *kaša* "kasha" – (poured while being cooked and mixed with *lučnica* and bacon fried in butter). This provider, protector, savior and keeper of Herzegovina was prepared in several different ways - either as a side dish or a main course. In its most frequent form, it was freshly cooked and softened with butter, lard or olive oil. It could also have come in the form of cornbread with lardoons mixed through it; corn and sorghum flour bread or *vlaša pura* with potatoes, (white or yellow). It could also be baked as a side dish with meat or fish stews. *Pura* is truly a front runner of Herzegovinian cuisine: When one thinks of corn, freshly boiled or baked on a hot plate; corn soup or salad; even corn stew with smoked meat or most of all just as "*pura*", it seems as if it sprung up and "came to be" on sparing Herzegovinian soil, that it has always belonged to this soil from the mythical beginnings of this small world and its cuisine.







Ali i krumpir ima visoko mjesto u hercegovačkoj gastronomiji i sasvim sigurno nezaobilazan je član hercegovačkog kulinarskog Olimpa. Naime, od svih iz Amerike uvezeni a povrća on je stigao posljednji. Stigao je tako krumpir sa habsburškog dvora tek u XVIII. stoljeću, a potom u Hrvatsku i Dalmaciju, i otuda u Hercegovinu. Stoga ni ne čudi da su najpoznatija jela otomanskog podrijetla pripremljena uglavnom bez krumpira, dok je teško pobrojati kršćanski jelovnik kojem krumpir ne bi bio važna uždanica. Najbolji je primjer istočnjačka musaka od redova ploški patlidžana i mljevenog mesa i ona hercegovačka, od slojeva krumpira i mesa ponekad prelivena kiselim vrhnjem i zapečena u pećnici.

Although the potato is not highly ranked in Herzegovinan cuisine, it is definitely an unavoidable member of Herzegovina's culinary Mount Olympus. Of all the vegetables introduced from the Americas, the potato was the last to arrive. The potato then, arrived at the Habsburg Court in the 18th century, and was then introduced in Croatia and Dalmatia and from there arrived in Herzegovina. It is therefore no wonder that the most prominent meals of Ottoman descent are generally prepared without potatoes, while a menu originating from a Christian country in which potatoes are not an integral part would be unthinkable. The best example of this is the comparison between oriental Mousaka, made of layered eggplant and ground beef, while the Herzegovinian version is made with layered potatoes and ground beef and often topped with sour cream and then oven baked.







No smisao ove priče nije samo u usporedbama, budući da je u hercegovačkoj kuhinji, krumpir u svim prilikama određeno počasno mjesto. Od najstarijeg krumpira pečenog u žaru i pepelu, jednostavnih pola iz tepsije, ili začinjenih lučnicom, do lonaca od kuhanog zelja ili kupusa i salata od kuka sa kuhanim krumpirom i jajima. Podjednako je nezaobilazan u jelima pečenim pod sačem, a bez krumpira nema mesnih pečenja ni ribljih jelovnika. Kuhan u salati, protisnut u pire, pržen ili restan, onaj je dio svakodnevnog objeda koji se naprosto podrazumijeva. Najbolji su primjer krumpirače od rastegnutog lisnatog tijesta i u njemu zamotanog krumpira, izlivače od ribanog ili sjećenog krumpira, brašna, vode, maslaca ili masti i mladog sira, sve umiješane u posudama, pa onda izlivene u namašćene tepsije ili limove za pečenje, i koje se peku dok izlivača ne poprimi njoj svojstvenu tamno smeđu koricu. Kako nam kažu izvori, ovo se jelo uz čorbu krumpiraču jelo najmanje tri puta u tjednu, dokazujući tako da je krumpir u Hercegovini jedno od najvećih bogatstava koje joj je podario Novi svijet. Njena se kuhinja krumpiru odužila jedinstvenim jelima za njegovu pripremu koja doista zasluzuju da ukrase stolove daleko preko njenih granica.

The intention here is not just to compare but rather to point out that potatoes always had a special place in Herzegovian cuisine. Variations range from the oldest method of baking on embers and ashes, to the simple potato halves baked in a pan and dressed with sour cream and garlic, right through to cabbage stews and *kuka* salad which are prepared with boiled potatoes and eggs. The potato is also indispensable in meals baked under a baking lid - pot roasts and fish dishes. Whether boiled for salads, mashed, fried or prepared for hashbrowns, the potato is an implicit part of many meals. The best example is potato pie made from potatoes rolled in a flaky dough or the alternative potato pie as baked hashbrown made from grated or diced potatoes, and then mixed with flour, water, butter or lard and cottage cheese – and then emptied into a greased pan and baked until it attains its unique golden brown crust. According to a reliable source, this meal alternated with potato stew and was served at least three times weekly. This clearly proves that the potato is one of the greatest treasures introduced to Herzegovina from the New Continent. Herzegovian cuisine repaid this favor to the potato by inventing unique meals and means of preparation and these truly deserve the right to decorate tables far beyond its own borders.





Hercegovina



sveto sače, kotluša i lonac
the holy baking lid, cauldron and pot







sveto sače

Kažu da su konkvistadori otkrili krumpir kada su u žaru ostataka sela, kojeg su spalili u Peruu, probali u pepelu ispečene gomolje. Nazvali su ih plamenim tartufima. Stoga zapalimo hercegovačka ognjišta. Na njima opet gore vatre, a žar sjaji kao vatreno injе, koje čeka da u svoje okrilje primi tepsiјu s kruhom, mesom i povrćem, ispod sača ili peke. Takav način pripremanja kruha, povrća i mesa seže još u neolitičko vrijeme, budući da su ilirska keramička zvona, i lonci, pronađena posvuda gdje su vladala njihova plemena i poslije ujedinjenja, moćno ilirsko kraljevstvo. Dakle prastari kuharski alati koji se nisu mnogo mijenjali kako su prolazila stoljeća i tisućljeća.

the sacred baking lid

They say that the Conquistadors discovered the potato when they, in the remains of smouldering villages that they burnt down in Peru, tried the unfamiliar vegetable in the scintillating ashes. They called them flaming truffles. With them we light up Herzegovinan fireplaces! The fires are once again lit, their coals glow eagerly waiting to embrace a baking dish containing bread, or meat and vegetables which will be covered by *the baking lid*. This manner of baking bread, or cooking vegetables and meat must date as far back as the Neolithic Era - given that those Ilyrian ceramic lids and pots have been found throughout the land where their tribes ruled, and later united into a powerful Ilyrian Kingdom. These ancient cooking tools have hardly changed at all over hundreds and even thousands of years.









okusi ispod peke

Pa ipak, dok se rudimentarna peka ispod koje će izaći ispečeno krušno sunce priprema sličan način, kao i jela od mesa i krumpira, hercegovačka izvorna i jednostavna kuhinja u ovom slučaju opet je izuzetak. Naime u namašćenoj tepsi, pomno slagani komadi mesa od dijelova koje imaju nešto više kostiju i krumpira, začinjeni lовором i ružmarinom, u Hercegovini su obogaćeni raznolikim povrćem. Izbor je širok, od kapule, luka, paprike, tikvica do bijelog glavatog kupusa, baš kao i razne vrste mesa. Pod sačem prednjaci janjetina i kozletina, no nađe se pod njim i kozletina, piletina ili cijeli manji pivac, koji ispečen na ovaj način dobiva poseban okus. Sve ove vrste mesa u Hercegovini se također pripremaju i po uobičajenim recepturama, u juhama, kuhanje, pečene na ražnju i pećnici, u tavama ili na roštilju, osim mljevenog mesa predodređenog za čevape i pljeskavice, čufte, japrake, sarme i dolme i hercegovačke inačice turskog šiš čevapa od kockica teleće mekači, paprike i kapule naizmjenično nabodenih na čačkalice pečene kratko i potom malo propirjane u umaku od rajčice, ponekad i pirjanog povrća.

the tastes beneath the lid/bell

This rudimentary cooking lid, below which we can find a circular slab of golden-brown baked bread or even meat and potatoes cooked in the same way, allows Herzegovinian cuisine in its simplicity and its antique roots, to excel once again. In a greased pan, pieces of meat - mostly from along the bone - and chunks of potato spiced with bay leaves and rosemary, are layered. In Herzegovina these are further enriched with a variety of vegetables, ranging from onions and garlic, peppers, zucchini right through to white cabbage as well as several types of meat. Below the baking lid one most commonly finds lamb and goat, but also chicken and small roosters too, which when prepared in this manner acquire a specific flavor. All varieties of meat in Herzegovina are also prepared according to standard recipies whether made into soups, boiled, roast on the bar-b-q, the spit or in the oven. Ground or minced meat has its own uses. Ground or minced meat is intended for *ćevapi* (chevapee) or grilled meat fingers and *pljeskavica* (pleskavitsa) or hamburger, meat balls. It's also used in *japrak*, (cabbage rolls), and stuffed bell peppers. The Herzegovinian version of the turkish *šiš čevap* (shish chevap) or shish-kebab is made from diced veal, peppers and onions alternatively pierced onto a thin stick and quickly grilled and then sautéed in tomato sauce or in vegetable puree.





Ipak, pod pekom pomiješane vrste mesa, kako je pomiješano i povrće, začinjene aromatičnim biljem solju i paprom tu i tamo pokojom ploškom slanine, cvrče i upijaju rastopljenu mast, pa odišu mirisima koji suknju i ispune kamin kada se digne cijelo šače. Plove prostorom i miješaju se sa vatrenim dahom žara i pepela na ognjištu. Tijekom pečenja sastoјci u tepsiji okreću se samo jedan put, kada to odluči iskustvo kuhara, a onda do kraja ostaju pod žarom pokrivenim zvonom i čekaju vatreni znak da izadu zajedno sa tepsijom na stol. I ne zna se koji je prizor ljepši. Onaj kada se hlađi sunce kruha izašlo ispod peke, ili kada meso i povrće zagasiti boja i korice, koja se presijava nalik na ulašteni bakar, zauzme mjesto na središtu stola. To je istinski i ikonski kulinarski blagdan za dušu i tijelo, kojemu se Hercegovci podaju s uvjerenjem da je njihov svijet jedinstven i neusporediv. Samodostatan unatoč svim mijenama i utjecajima. Jer jedna je Hercegovina, šapću u sebi ponosno, dok meso i povrće iz tepsije kao velika hostija puni tanjure na stolu i počinje gastronomска svečanost.

Then there is a whole variety of meats mixed under a baking lid together with a selection of vegetables which are dashed with aromatic spices, salt and pepper and a slice of bacon here and there. These sizzle and absorb the melting grease, and emit scents which fill up the fireplace when the lid is lifted. These fragrances flow throughout the room and intertwine with the smell of flames and ashes in the hearth. During baking, the ingredients in the pan are stirred and mixed only once - when decided by an experienced cook - and then are left under the lid and wait to be removed and served at the table. It is difficult to decide which sight is more attractive: the circular slab of golden bread emerging from under it, or when the steaming crusty colors of meat and vegetables are first seen under the copper-like dusty lid and the dish is placed on a table. This is truly a primordial culinary holiday for the body and soul, to which Herzegovinians yield themselves, convinced that their world is unique and unequivocal. Herzegovina is self-sufficient, regardless of all changes and influences! There is only one Herzegovina, they whisper to themselves proudly, while the meats and vegetables much like the host, satiate the waiting plates on the dinner table and set a gastronomical festivity in motion.





svemoćna kotluša

Pirjanci baš kao i rižoti nastali su na uvezenim pa opet na svoj način prokuhanim izvorima. Ima u njima poruka Orijenta, Balkana, Panonije, južne Hrvatske, Italije i Austrije i stizali su i osvajali hercegovačke jelovnike onako kako su se mijenjale epohe i utjecaji. Gulaši, tripice, pirjanci sa bamijom, mostarski pirjani, hercegovački kuhani jezici svih vrsta u pikantnom umaku, rižoti i pilavi od piletine, govedine, junetine, janjetine, gljiva, kuka i šparoga, najčešće uskladeni od zajednički pripremljenih sastojaka, najčešći su na jelovniku. Pa ipak, ma koliko zvučalo paradoksalno, jedno pravilo vrijedi podjednako i za gulaše, hercegovačke tripice, i za bošnjačke bamije, za rižote i pilave. Naime, u spomenutim jelima, prije nego li se dodaju mesni, riblji, biljni i povrtni osnovni dodaci, govedi, juneći rjeđe teleći i janjeći drobovi, koji gulašima, tripicama i rižotima daju ime, na masnoći, ponekad na masti, ponekad na maslu ili maslinovom ulju, mora se prvo zazlatiti njihova posteljica od povrća i začina, a onda dodati osnovne namirnice. Pirjaju se i potom kuhađu podlijevajući temeljcima probranim za svaki rižot posebno, ili se dodaje vino sa začinima za svaki gulaš ili pirjanac posebno, za svaki rižot posebno. Sve dok ne postanu gusti i ljepljivi, u slučaju gulaša najčešće služeni s purom i krumpirom, u slučaju tripica ponekad sa kockicama kuhanog krumpira, a u slučaju rižota samostalno.

the almighty casserole dish

Braised dishes like risottos originated from both near and far. They carry messages from the Orient; the Balkans; Pannonia; southern Croatia; Italy, or Austria. They arrived and took over Herzegovinian cuisine in accordance with the changing times and influences. Goulashes; giblet stews; okra dishes; Mostar stew; Herzegovinian tongue of all sorts in spicy sauce; risottos and pilafs made from chicken, beef, lamb, mushrooms or *kuka* – (asparagus most often harmonized with other ingredients), are all to be found on the bill of fare. However, although seemingly paradoxical, there is an abiding rule for all goulashes; Herzegovinian gullet stews; Bosnian bamija stews; risottos and pilafs. The one rule for all is, prior to the addition of the essential meat, fish, herbal and vegetable ingredients, baby beef or organ meats from which the goulashes, giblets and risottos get their name, they must first obtain a golden color on the grease, (whether lard, butter or olive oil) from the mixture of veg, herbs and grease. They are then sautéed, cooked and mixed with the respective meat and stock for each risotto, or wine with spices for each goulash, sauté and vegetable risotto. This is done until they reach the desired consistency. Goulash is most often served with *pura* and potatoes. Giblets are sometimes served with boiled diced potatoes while risotto is served most often as a dish in itself.







okusi divljine

Slična pravila vrijede i za jela od hercegovačke visoke i niske divljači, no za njih valja prvo pripremiti marinadu sa korjenastim povrćem, klinčićima, muškatnim oraščićem, ružmarinom, lовором, pa zajedno sa mesom potopiti u vino i kvasinu, snažnu koliko to već zahtjeva meso srne, veprja, jelena ili zeca, a nježniju ako se radi o jarebicama, prepelicama ili fazanu. Tek se tada povrće iz marinade pirja na masnoći, procijedeno i isjeckano. Onda se ubacuje divljač. Visoka divljač pirja se duže, uvijek zavisno o starosti ulovljene životinje i polako miješa u loncu. Tek kad uhvati tamnu boju, dodaje se crno vino u kojemu se ovi lovačka lonci privode kraju. Kod pernate divljači postupak je sličan ali zahtjeva manje vremena i podlijeva se uglavnom temeljcem od peradi i bijelim vinom dok sve ne ugusti. Pa se iz daljine začuje lovački rog i lavež pasa koji njušeći trče po kamenjarima, gusišima i proplancima, dok nepcem klizi hercegovački lovački gulaš, pirjanac ili rižot, a osjetila se oslobadaju kao da i sama sudjeluju u nekom zamišljenom lov iz davnina.

a taste of the wild game

The same rules apply for big and small Herzegovinian game where we first prepare a marinade from root vegetables, sprouts, nutmeg, rosemary, bay leaves which when combined are soaked in wine and vinegar – a strong mix necessary for deer, wild boar or rabbit, while a more gentle concentration is necessary for partridge, quail or pheasant. The vegetables in the marinade are then simmered in lard, then strained and diced. We then add the game. Big game is simmered longer, always depending on the age of the capture and is slowly stirred in the pot. Once a dark color is obtained, wine is added and this is the final step in the preparation of this stew. As far as feathered game is concerned, the procedure is similar but it is less time consuming and a fowl and white wine stock is used until the right thickness is achieved. From afar we can hear the sound of the bugles and dogs barking which while sniffing run along the rocky hillside, brushwood and glades; Herzegovinian goulash, sautée or risotto oozes along the palate, and the senses are released as if we ourselves are part of an imaginary hunt long ago.







okusi iz lonca

Ako sliče u svom kulinarskom postupku gulašima, juhe, čorbe i lonci razlikuju se od svoje gušće braće po tome što za pripremu svih njih nema prethodnog pirjanja, već se namirnice zajedno stavljuju u posudu i kuhaju dok sastojci ne bude meki i ne puste svoj puni okus, upotpunjeni začinima i kulinarskom maštom. Juhe i čorbe ne treba posebno spominjati budući da je svako meso, riba, gljiva ili zelen pogodna za juhu. Spomenimo samo izvorne hercegovačke juhe od sjeckane raštike i suhog mesa, krem juhe od mljevene raštike, temeljca i začina ukrašene prepečenim listićima slanine, juhe od tikve zvane krmetnjače, u gastronomskom svijetu rijetke juhe od pastrve, ili graška i mesa, mahuna i mrkve.

tastes from the pot

Eventhough they are similar in their culinary treatment, goulashes, soups, stews and casseroles differ from their “thicker” kin in that during preparing there is no preliminary braising; the ingredients are rather placed all together in a pot and are cooked until they tenderize and release their full flavor, complimented by spices and culinary imagination. We don't need to mention broths and *čorba* “chorba” (a type of watery stew) separately, because any type of meat, fish, mushroom or vegetable is appropriate for a broth. We will mention only the authentic Herzegovian chorbas made from diced collard and smoked meat or the cream of collard soup made with stock and spices which are then decorated with charred bacon strips. There are also squash or marrow soups called *krmetnjače* (*krmetnyache*), trout soups which are very rare in the culinary world, or soups made with runner beans and meat, peas and carrots.





Čorbe, za koje vrijede ista pravila, nešto su gušće, od raznih vrsta povrća, mesa i ribe, po imenu poznatih bijelih i begovih čorbi s dodatkom bamije te čorbi od janjetine i teletine, ili čorbe od šarana koja se u važnim detaljima pripreme razlikuje od madarskih, slavonskih i baranjskih.. U Hercegovini su često na jelovniku čorbe od žutim mahunama i krumpirovom, sa pireom od rajčica ili one od mesa, povrća i mahunarki. No i svijet lonaca, tih miljenika svake stare kuhinje, autohton je na svoj način: Poput hercegovačkog slanog graha, slanutka, sa dimljenim svinjskim rebarcima, graha se suhim svinjskim jezikom, pa mostarski pirjan, od komada teletine ili janjetine, skuhanim sa žutim mahunama, korjenastim povrćem, umakom od rajčice i na kraju dodanom rižom. Vežu se ta jela uz lonce od svih vrsta grahorica sa suhim i svježim mesom. Iz takvog kulinarског ambijenta iskuhala se i hercegovačka kalja, izvorno jelo pripremljeno, najbolje u keramičkom ili gusanom loncu i kotluši. Od raznih vrsta mesa, opet najčešće pomiješane teletine i janjetine i prethodno skuhanog suhog mesa čiji se komadi i nešto slane juhe dodaju naknadno, i povrća, glavatog kupusa i raštike, krumpira i korjenastog povrća, vezanih sječkom od koncentrata od rajčice, češnjaka i peršina, može i malo sjeckane slanine i naravno začina. Ovako pripremljena hercegovačka kalja cijenjeno je jelo u mnogim jelovnicima Hercegovini bliskih zemalja.

Čorba, for which the same rules apply, are somewhat thicker and made from a variety of vegetables, meats and fish. They are known as white or Bejs *čorba* if containing okra. Then there is *čorba* made with lamb or veal, and *čorba* made with carp which significantly differs in preparation from its Hungarian, Slavonian or Baranian counterparts. In Herzegovina we can often find *čorba* on the menu made with yellow beans as well as tomato, meat, and vegetable purees. Casseroles are also a favorite element of all ancestral cuisines, and in Herzegovina there are varieties indigenous in their own special manner. These are Herzegovinian salty bean casserole with chickpeas and smoked pork ribs; bean casserole with smoked pork tongue; Mostar hot-pot made from pieces of veal or lamb cooked with yellow runner-beans, root vegetables, tomato puree and rice which is added at the end. These meals are quite similar to other stews made from various pulses cooked with smoked and fresh meat. This culinary environment brought about Herzegovinian kale casserole, an authentic meal best prepared in a ceramic or cast-iron pot and deep pan. It is made with various types of meat, most often a combination of veal and lamb and pre-cooked smoked meat whose slabs, along with salty soup are added afterwards; then we have vegetables – white cabbage and *raštika*, potatoes and root vegetables coupled with tomato paste, garlic and parsley and perhaps a small amount of diced bacon and of course, spices. Herzegovinian kale, prepared in this manner, is an adored favourite in menus found in Herzegovina's neighbourhood too.





Hercegovina



vatra i voda u hercegovačkoj gastronomiji
water and fire in herzegovinian gastronomy





vječna hercegovačka vatra

Podiok jela sa žara, iz tava, sa roštilja i gradela, ponutrica i kobasica i kobasičarskih prerađevina, malo se razlikuje od onog u drugim kuhinjama, premda zna iznenaditi kulinarском neobičnošću poput na tavi prepržene, prethodno skuhane krvi, pripremane za vrijeme klanja životinja, prženih ili pečenih divenica i mesnih kobasicu s malo propirjanog kiselog kupusa, pa po recepturi vrlo starih bubrega i svinjskih kotleta pečenih izravno na žaru kojima kad se ispeku treba tek otresti pepeo. Podjednako su privlačni klasični roštilji, s ražnjićima od telećeg, svinjskog, rijetko u posebnim prilikama, i janjećeg mesa, uz njih čevapčići i pljeskavice od raznih mješavina mesa, jetra, bijela jetra, brizle, i bubrezi, naravno mesa svih vrsta i sve češće tikvice i patlidžani, svi sa gradela, uz ribe iz rijeke, jezera i mora. Ovo je gastronomsko sazviježđe otvorene vatre, no sukladno je svijetu zemlje, svijetla, neba, vode, svih elemenata i prapočela. Ono je, osim trenutka prvog ugriza u sirovo tkivo, najstariji podiok, i stoga mu je i gastronomski značaj dio velikog civilizacijskog preokreta ljudske vrste koji je bljesnuo onog trenutka kad je svjesno upaljena prva vatra i na njoj ispečena prva namirnica.

everlasting herzegovinian fires

The range of grilled, roasted or barbequed food such as sausages, sausage like products, and offal uses, differs little from other cuisines although there are a few exceptions that can surprise us. For example, pre-cooked and pan-fried blood, common at the time of animal slaughter; fried or baked blood pudding or meat sausages mixed with sautéed sauerkraut; or there again, if the pig is old, pork-kidneys or porkchops charred directly on coals from which we have to remove ashes after baking. Also attractive are the classical barbequed dishes – Kebabs made with chunks of veal and pork even lamb sometimes, as well as barbequed *čevapčići* or *pljeskavica* (a type of burger made with a combination of meats, white liver, offal, minced glands, kidneys and of course all other kinds of meat). More recently popular is the barbequed sliced eggplant and zucchini which accompanies fresh-water and sea-fish of all kinds. This gastronomical open-fire constellation is in harmony with the earth, the light, the sky and the seas – with all elements and our primordial beginnings. It is – after bidding farewell to the taste of raw meat - the oldest ritual of food preparation and for this reason the gastronomical significance is a huge step forward in civilisation which started at the moment when the first fire was lit and the first meals were baked over it.





bistra hercegovačka voda

No vatra je u sudaranju počela, vezana i uz Vodu. Kad bi zaronili u hercegovački voden gastronomski svijet naišli bi na ribe i podvodna bića kakve nalazimo posvuda, osim gastronomski rijetkih endema poput, prikanaca. No i ove se omiljene ribice, kao i njihovi veći rođaci, prže, ponekad čak i peku i kuhaju. Slavna je stoga hercegovačka pastrva pržena u kukuruznom brašnu, ili sušena pa pripremljena na bakalar. Šarani se prže izrezani u poprečne komade uvaljani u brašno, a ovinjeni, pijani, kako ih nazivaju, peku se u pećnici na posteljici od krumpira, pri kraju podlijevani bijelim vinom i posuti češnjakom. Na ovom probranom jelovniku stoje ravnopravno uz bok posebnoj poslastici Neretve, jeguljama pečenim na žaru. Morske ribe, glavonošci i plodovi mora u načinima priprema ne razlikuju se od dalmatinskih, od kuda su i stigli na hercegovačke trpeze, i danas čine značajan dio hercegovačkog gastronomskog prostora. Pa ipak, ima i izuzetaka, posebno kada se govori o pripremi suhe ribe, ponajprije bakalara. Uz uobičajene načine pripreme hercegovačka crvena čorba od bakalara, posebna je jedinica u razlikovnom kulinarском rječniku, a musaka od sječenog bakalara i krumpira slaganih u redove, na tavane kako se kaže u hercegovačkom kuharskom žargonu, pečena u pećnici pod folijom i koja se pri kraju zalije sa malo kajmaka da zazlati njezinu površinu, doista se može kušati samo u Hercegovini i to samo u izvornim kuhinjama.

clear Herzegovinian waters

Fire was one of the rudimentary generating energies, as was water. If we could dive into the Herzegovinian gastronomical aqua-world we would come upon fish and underwater creatures which we find everywhere else too, with the exception of rare endemic fish such as the *prikanac* (preekanats or lat. *phoxinellus pseudalepidotus*). These tiny adored fish, much alike their larger kin, are most often fried, sometimes grilled and even boiled. The infamous Herzegovinian trout is fried in corn flower, or smoked and prepared for fish stew. Carp is sliced into diagonal slices, rolled in flour and also fried. Drunken carp, as they call it, is oven baked over a layer of potatoes. White wine is poured and minced garlic is sprinkled over the dish towards the end of the cooking. The dishes on this exquisite menu go hand in hand with a true speciality of the Neretva - *Barbequed Eel*. Sea fish, giant squid and other seafoods are prepared in the same manner as in Dalmatia, from where they arrived in Herzegovina and today encompass a significant part of Herzegovinian gastronomy. There are, however, a few exceptions in the preparation of dried fish, particularly cod. Aside from the regular methods of preparation for Herzegovinian red cod stew, there are other uniquenesses to this diverse cookbook. We have mousaka made from diced cod and potatoes piled in rows, in "lofts" as the say in Herzegovinian culinary slang, This is oven baked, wrapped in aluminum foil and towards the end of baking, cream cheese is added to give a golden brown topping. These specialities can only be tried in Herzegovina and only in traditional kitchens.







No još se jedno jelo izdvaja. Trebižatski brodet, priprema na maslinovom ulju, zažućenoj sjeckanoj kapuli i češnjaku, s dodatkom pirea od rajčice, pa potom rezane jegulje rezane prsten po prsten ribe, u svoj sastav na posteljicu od propirjanog povrća, kapule, češnjaka, peršina, celera i rajčice i ljute paprike, voli pozvati i druge ribe da daju svoj obol brodetu u loncu. Somiće, pastrve, ponekad i šarane, uz obvezne jegulje i žabe, pa kad i one zalegnu na posteljicu, podlijeva ih se povrtnim temeljcem, vinom, što ga i po okusu i po načinu pripreme čini istinskim hercegovačkim kulinarskim izuzetkom.

One more meal must be mentioned here. *Trebižat* (Trebizhat) fish stew, prepared with olive oil, sauteed onions and garlic, tomato puree, and then eel sliced into rings on sauteed vegetables, onions, garlic, parsley, celery, tomatoes and hot peppers - ingredients which invite other fish to contribute to the savor of this stew. Catfish, trout and sometimes carp, along with the inevitable eel and frogs, when prepared on a bedding, are splashed with vegetable stock and wine, which both in flavor and manner of preparation make them a true Herzegovinian speciality.







stoljetni hercegovački deserti

Među pitama, savijačama slanim i slatkim, te brojnim slasticama, tom završnom ali podjednako važnom podioku hercegovačke kuhinje, malo je izvornih jela osim onih istočnačkih. Možemo opet spomenuti čupter i pitu krumpiraču, dodajmo im tikvaču od sjeckane tikve u tjestu, i zeljanicu sa zeljem i blitvom, posvuda u Hercegovini i dalmatinskom zaledu zvanu prisnac, pa blagdanske uskršnje sirnice, savijače od mladog sira i šećera, uštipke od krumpira i tikvica, pržene na ulju, i sa burecima od mesa i sira, zagrizimo u slatke okuse koji uglavnom stižu iz osmanske tradicije. Tako u Hercegovini možete zateći smokvaru, od mljevenih suhih smokava, ili onu mostarsku od pekmeza od smokve, pa sutlijаш od u mlijeku kuhanе riže začinjen šećerom i cimetom i na samom kraju u svijetu poznate halve, baklave, gurabije i hurmašice.

century old Herzegovinian deserts

Among the pies both sweet and savory, that final but equally important part of Herzegovinian cuisine, there are very few recipies exclusive to Herzegovina, except those which came from the orient. Here we can mention once again the grape gelee (Čupter) and the potato and courgette strudel. We then have green strudel made with green cabbage and chard – called *prisnac* (*prisnats*) in Herzegovina and the Dalmatian hinterlands. We have the Easter Holiday cheese strudel made from cottage cheese and sugar. There are also potato and zucchini doughnuts fried in vegetable oil. All these meat and cheese pies and all the sweet pastries are oriental in origin. In Herzegovina we can also find fig strudel made with ground dry figs, or in Mostar fig jam. There is *sutlijash* (*sutliyash*) made from rice cooked in milk and dashed with sugar and cinnamon, and finally, we cannot forget the world famous cakes, baclava, turkish delight, *gurabije* (*gurabeeye*) and *hurmašice* (*hurmashitse*), a date shaped turkish pastry.







One polako u tišini nekog hercegovačkog blagov-aonika, uz ružinu vodicu na sofri, slatku višnjevaču i travaricu u kuhinji, ili vino uz zapaljeno ognjište, u iz-maglicama prošlosti otkrivaju obrise predaka. Jedni su u izobilju birali i znali izabrati, drugi su stisnuta želuca tražili i pronašli. A onda, iza njih, stižu sjene davnih kuharica koje brode u oblacima vremena i dimu mirisnih i okusnih uspomena, koje se opet bude i postaju hercegovačka gastronomска stvarnost.

In them, we get a vague feel of our ancestors in the stillness of the Herzegovinian dinner tables decorated with rosepetals in water while we sip sherry, herb brandy, or wine by the fireplace. Some of them could choose from an abundance and were selective, while others - famished, sought and found alternatives. Then, the ghosts of ancient chefs and cooks roaming in the clouds as bouquets and tangs of tasty memories through time hover in their shadows. They are once more awakened and become the essence of Herzegovinian gastronomy.





Hercegovina



povratak počelima
a return to our origins







Zatvorio se tako čitav jelovnik ispisan u pro-lomima hercegovačkog vremena na malom hercegovačkom stolu. velikom u svojoj svakodnevnoj otvorenosti ali i nagnućima vlastitoj izvornosti i prošlosti. On naime ipak više vjeruje onim elementarnim počelima iz mita koje prepoznaće kao svoje roditelje, nego tumačenjima koji se kreću utabanim stazama. Sklonijima nabranju i nizanju recepata nego unutarnoj biti Hercegovačke kuhinje kao suverenog dijela njene civilizacije, od epohe do epohe. Pa ipak, iako je ponekad osnovna predodžba o gastronomskim odlikama ove posvećene zemlje sve jasnija, događa se to u pravilu tek sa dobrohotnim odobrenjem, izvornih okusa i mirisa. Jer, kulinarska lepeza jela i jelovnika, sličnosti i različitosti, utjecaja i izvornosti, polako se slagala onako kako se začini i sastojci slažu u dobroj hrani, podneblje i njegova povijest utapaju u okuse i mirise.

And so we come to the end of an entire bill of fare written through an arduous Herzegovinian past and found on a small dinner table – a great menu in its openness and inclination towards its own origins and history. In fact, it is reliant on those elementary principles from the legend which it sees as being much more the cause of its genesis than the more conventional interpretations. These tend more to enumerate and thread recipes together than concentrate on the internal gist of the cuisine as a sovereign element of Herzegovinian civilization from era to era. However, even though the basic concept of the gastronomical traits of this devoted land are more and more clear, it's only really crystallized when these delicacies are tasted and smelled. That's because the wide array of meals and menus, similarities and differences, influences and originalities have been tranquilly arranged in the manner that spices and ingredients are arranged in good food, while the climate and history are allowed to merge into the variety of flavors and aromas.





Na tako ponuđenom jelovniku, u kojem se snažno ogleda naša sveukupna baština, i hercegovačka kuhinja, ponudila je svoj samosvojni i dragocjen slijed u stalnom otkrivanju. S tom tvrdnjom složila bi se i stara počela s početka ove priče, iz one legende o nastanku jednog malog svemira i njegovog živog i neživog svijeta kojeg danas nazivamo Hercegovinom. I nema točke gdje on osjetilnije nastaje i živi, od samih njegovih početaka do same hercegovačke kuhinje. Cijeli jedan mali kulinarski i gastronomski svemir, rođen u vlastitom mitu, na križnjacima, raskršćima i rubnjacima koji začudo nisu podijelili njegovo tkivo, već naprotiv. civilizacijske i kulinarske raznolikosti, pretvorili u njegovu vlastitu prednost. Onaj preduvjet, koji omogućava da se od starog recepta iskuha nešto novo. Da se novi recept, primjeni na izvornu namirnicu, ili obrnuto, da se uvezena namirnica pripremi na izvoran način. Hercegovina u tom smislu nije izuzetak među kuhinjama, ali sigurno joj nema premca kada se pokrenu svi njeni elementi nastanka i zapale njene vatre na ognjištima. Izgaraju i griju na kaminima i pećnicama, baš kao sastojci u jelima, koji zahvaljujući kuharskom umijeću koje se stvaralo vjekovima, iz početnih počela stvaraju nova. Novi zaseban svijet okusa i mirisa i novo prokuhanje i stvoreno izvorno jelo. Gastronomski eliksir u kojemu opet zrcale svi narodi i vjere, izvornost koja je, u svojoj velikoj kotluši, prokuhalo Hercegovačku kuhinju. Raznoliku i izvornu, koliko je to i naše sveukupno zajedničko nasljeđe. Sačuvano u jelima i jelovnicima koji kroz biranje namirnica pričaju o našem začeću, kuhanjem o našem rođenju, uživanjem u hrani o našem životu, a odbacivanjem hrane o našoj smrti.

In such a menu, which strongly reflects our overall heritage, an autonomous and precious sequence of continuous discovery is provided. The ancient elements from the beginning of this story would agree with this assertion – from the legend of the creation of this small universe with its animate and inanimate world, there is no other place like Herzegovina. This universe was generated and lives with more fervor, from its beginning right through to its cuisine. An entire miniature culinary and gastronomical cosmos is born, conceived in its own myth, at crossroads which surprisingly did not divide its essence. On the contrary, the civilizational and culinary diversity gave it a distinctive advantage. This is the condition which makes it possible to cook something new from an old recipe – it allows a new recipe to be made with an old ingredient, or vice versa, or for an imported ingredient to be prepared in a native manner. In this regard, Herzegovinian cuisine is not an exception but is certainly unrivaled when it unleashes the elements of its inceptions and lights up the flames in its fireplaces. They burn and emit warmth in the hearths and fireplaces as if they were ingredients in meals which, thanks to culinary workmanship formed over the centuries, offer new ones from elementary principles - a new world of flavors and aromas, a newly cooked and created authentic meal. It is a gastronomical elixir which reflects all of its peoples and religions, an authenticity which in its resounding cauldron inspires Herzegovinian cuisine - it is varietal and authentic much like our entire heritage. It is kept in meals and menus which - in choosing these - tell the story of our conception, through cooking speak of our birth, and through their enjoyment the story of our lives. When discarded, they tell the story of our passing.





Stoga su kuvarice posvećene knjige koje govore više o našoj prolaznosti, nego o našem vječnom životu. Pa tako i mala hercegovačka kuhinja, koja se proteže od jednog vremenskog obzora do drugog. Mi se krećemo kraćim putem. Nismo u stanju dokučiti razmjere tih obzorja.

Jer ipak smo „mali pod zvijezdama“.

This is why cookbooks are dedicated scripts which speak more of our transience than of our eternal life. The same is true for Herzegovinian cuisine which extends from one horizon to another. We travel a shorter path. We are unable to fathom the extent of these horizons

because we are, after all, small actors on the big stage.



Hercegovina





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recipes





Raštika na janjetini

U dublju posudu s poklopcom 5-6 litara zapremine uspemo 3-4 litra hladne vode, stavimo 4 srednje velika oguljena bijela krompira , dvije jušne žlice geršla (po želji može i bez) i na srednje komade izrezana janjetina do 1,5 kg, te jušnu žlicu svinjske masti. Poklopiti lonac i kuhati kad provrije cca 20 minuta (ovisi od mesa koje je starosti), a nakon toga dodati sitno narezanu cca 1,5 kg, dobro opranu i iscjeđenu raštiku. Kuhati dok raštika ne omeša. Kad je raštika omešala, skinuti lonac s vatre, lagano i pažljivo posoliti raštiku s krupnom morskom soli, dodati 1 dl maslinova ulja, promiješati i zgnječiti krompir, te ostaviti da se raštika skoro ohladi. Služiti toplu sa svježim kukuruznim kruhom, kukuruzom ili purom u grumenjima.

Raštika on lamb

A copious saucepan, large enough to fit 5-6 liters of liquid, is filled with $\frac{3}{4}$ liter of cold water. 4 medium sized peeled potatoes and 4 tablespoons of pearl barley (optional) are placed inside. Having smeared a kilo and a half of lamb (chopped into bite size pieces) with lard, it is then placed in the pot. The pot is then covered and brought slowly to the boil. The older the lamb, the slower the boil should be, (at least 20 minutes). When the pot has boiled, a kilo and a half of chopped *raštika* is added and the cooking continues. When the *raštika* has softened, it is removed from the heat and some sea salt and a tablespoon of olive oil are added. This is then mixed together gently crushing the potatoes and it is then left to cool. It is served hot with some cornbread, or cooked cornmeal or polenta.

Raštika "pod ulje"

U dublju posudu s poklopcem zapremine 5-6 litara uspemo 3-4 litra hladne vode, 3-4 cijela oguljena bijela krompira i pustimo da voda provrije, a zatim stavimo raštiku, koju smo predhodno rukom iskidali na srednje velike komade. Kuvamo u polupoklopljenoj posudi dok raštika ne omekša. Kad je raštika omekšala skidamo lonac s vatre, procijedimo i vratimo ponovno lonac s raštikom i krompirom na vatru, uspemo po želji maslinovog ulja i predhodno zgnježeni bijeli luk, blago posolimo i prodinstamo par minuta, tako da se krompir i raštika sjedine s maslinovim uljem i bijelim lukom. Služiti samostalno uz kukuruzni kruh, kukuruzu ili puru kao glavno jelo ili kao prilog ribi, šniclama i slično.

Raštika on oil

In a large pot with a lid, copious enough to hold 5-6 liters, 3 or 4 medium sized peeled potatoes are placed in 3-4 liters of cold water and the water is then brought to the boil. Having reached the boil, the *raštike* which we would have previously torn into medium sized pieces is thrown in. The cooking continues in the half-covered saucepan until the *raštika* softens. When softened, it is removed from the pot and from the heat and the water is drained, then the *raštika* with the potato in the saucepan is replaced over the heat, doused with olive oil (according to preference) and a well crushed clove of garlic is added. It is salted and stirred well. It is left to stand to let the flavors of the oil, garlic, cabbage and potatoes mingle. It's served alone with cornbread or cooked cornmeal or as a side dish to fish, steaks etc.





Hercegovačka juha "svaštara"

U široku posudu s poklopcom zapremine 4-5 litara naspemo 2,5 – 3 litra hladne vode, dva srednje velika oguljena paradajiza, korijen od celera (manji komad), korijen od peršina, komadić korijena ili lista koromača, list celera, 3-4 srednje velike mrkve na kolutiće narezanu, čajnu žlicu slatke mljevene paprike, jednu ljutu papričicu (po želji), srednje velik i oguljen, te na kocke narezan patlidžan, 10-15 mahuna isjeckano na sitnije komade dva do tri srednje velika krompira na kocke izrezana. Posolimo krupnom morskom soli, poklopimo i pustimo da se kuha na laganoj vatri 1,5 sat. Prethodno na masti ispirjamo 2 - 3 glavice, srednje veličine, crvenog luka da požuti i dodamo na kraju sitno sjeckanu slaninu 0,25 kg, koju samo kratko propirjamo s lukom. Uspemo sve to zajedno u posudu, dodamo malo deblju tjesteninu za juhu i pustimo da juha provrje. Na kraju kad je tjestenina omekšala skinemo posudu s vatré, dodamo sitno narezani peršin i мало svježeg bosiljka, probamo slanost i služimo poluvruće uz domaći pšenični ili kukuruzni kruh ispod peke.

Herzegovinian soup "made of odds and ends"

An ample wide lidded cooking pot, (dutch oven) large enough to hold 4-5 liters, is filled with 2.5-3 liters of cold water. 2 medium sized peeled tomatoes, a small celery root, a parsnip, fennel, (either part of the bulb or some leaves), celery leaves, 3-5 large carrots peeled and sliced, a teaspoon of ground paprika, one pfeferoni, a medium sized aubergine, peeled and diced, 10-15 finely chopped runner beans, and 2 or 3 medium sized potatoes peeled and diced are then added. It is seasoned with rock sea salt, covered and brought to the boil, then simmered for an hour and a half. In the meanwhile 2-3 medium sized onions are chopped and fried in lard until golden. 25gr of smoked bacon is finely chopped and added to the fried onion, mixed together over the flame and then removed from the stove when heated. This fried mixture is added to the pot when it has simmered for an hour and a half, then some short pasta - the type meant for soups and stews - is added. When the pasta is cooked, the pot is removed from the heat and seasoned with some freshly chopped parsley and basil. It is tested for saltiness and served with home-made wheat or cornbread which has been baked under the baking lid.

Gurmanski krompir "na pole"

Ogulimo 5-6 većih bijelih krompira. Prerežemo ih na pola po širini, posušimo i gornju ravnu stranu pažljivo narežemo oštricom noža (paziti da se probije dno krompira) po dužini tri puta. Oguljeni bijeli luk narezan na ploške utisnemo u razrezani dio krompira, stavimo na gornju starnu krompira svinjsku domaću mast i posolimo krupnom morskom soli, te stavimo u predhodno dobro ugrijanu pećnicu (sač po mogućnosti) i pečemo oko 45 minuta dok ne dobije krompir zlatno smeđu boju. Izvadimo pleh s krompirom vani, stavimo na svaki krompir par komada tanko narezane slanine, koju smo predhodno pripremili dok se krompir pekao, te vratimo u pećnicu na par minuta da slanina postane prozirna (ne smije izgorjeti, jer postaje gorka). Izvadimo pleh s krompirom i prelijemo svaki krompir s predhodno rastopljenim maslacem, kajmakom i мало ovčijeg sira iz mijeha. Služiti vruće kao glavno jelo uz dodatak po želji tvrdog sira i hercegovačkog pršuta, a od salata ide paradaiz narezan na velike kriške i sveža paprika na četvrtine narezana, posoljeno s krupnom morskom soli, začinjeno s maslinovim uljem uz kukuruzni ili pšenični domaći kruh.

Gourmand halved-potatoes

5-6 large white potatoes are peeled and sliced in half across their widest parts and their top flat sides are towel dried. With a sharp knife three slits lengthwise are cut into the potatoes piercing them to their bottoms. A few cloves of garlic are peeled and thinly sliced. The slices of garlic are then pushed into the slits, and the tops are spread with pork-suet. These are then placed in a very hot oven, (or even better, under the baking lid on an open fire). These are left for 45 minutes or until their tops are golden. In the meanwhile, some smoked bacon is very thinly sliced. The potatoes are then removed from the heat and the slices of bacon are placed over them. They are placed in the heat once again but just until the white of the bacon goes transparent. (When over-cooked it acquires a much more bitter taste). They are then removed from the heat and drizzled with some melted butter or kajmak or some sheep cheese that is preserved in animal skins. They can be served as a main dish accompanied by some hard cheese and Hercegovinian prosciutto, or as a side-salad - widely sliced tomatoes go well, or some quatered barbura peppers, seasoned with rock sea salt and drizzled with olive oil and accompanied with some home-made wheat or corn bread.





Salata od "kuka"

Svježe ubrane kuke oko 1 kg (tehnika branja kuka je da se ide hvatom ruke od dna prema mekšem dijelu prema vrhu i gdje se prelomi kuka to se bere) dobro operemo u hladnoj vodi, narežemo na 1,5-2 cm i stavimo u drvenu veliku zdjelu, zatim dodajemo 20 lista peršina sitno sjeckanoga,rukohvatljutike narezane na 1,5-2 cm, list do dva celera, par lista kadulje, vrlo malo koromača u prahu, par listića svježeg ruzmarina, malo majčine dušice, malo bosiljka, par česana bijelog luka sitno sjeckanog, sol, biber, jabučni ocat, domaći vinski crveni ocat, maslinovo ulje, bučino ulje, ali vrlo malo i sitno sjeckanu domaću slaninu 0,20 kg (po želji može i bez nje). Dobro sve izmješamo drvenom kuvačom i stavimo da odstoji pola sata, a nakon toga još jedanput dobro izmješamo i služimo kao salatu uz tvrdi sir,svježi kravljji, ovčiji ili koziji sir, hercegovački pršut, tvrdo kuhanu jaja i kukuruzni ili pšenični domaći svježi kruh.

Kuke Salad

About a kilo of freshly picked *kuke* (the *kuke* is carefully picked by gripping the part closest to the root. It should break at the point where the stem starts to soften. This is the correct technique for picking asparagus) is put in cold water. The *kuke* is then snipped into bite size pieces (about 1.5-2 cm) and placed in a wooden bowl. About 20 finely chopped parsley leaves are added. The following ingredients are carefully added: A handful of scallion leaves chopped into 1.5-2 cm sized pieces, two leaves of celery, a few leaves of sage, some ground fennel, a few spikes of freshly picked rosemary, a little thyme, a little basil, a few garlic cloves finely chopped, some salt and pepper, cider vinegar and some home-made red-wine-vinegar, some olive oil, some pumpkin seed oil, and very little (about 20gr of) home-made smoked-bacon. All the ingredients are mixed together with a wooden spoon and left to stand for half an hour, then mixed again before serving. This is served with hard cheese, or some fresh cow's, sheep's or goat's cheese or some Herzegovinian prosciutto, some hard-boiled-eggs and fresh home-made wheat or corn-bread.



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Mladi hercegovački krompir s janjetinom (teletinom, kozletinom ili svinjetinom) ispod peke (za 8 osoba)

U veću posudu za pečenje s poklopcom stavimo iste dijelove maslaca i svinjske masti (cca po 200 gr), kad se masnoća dobro ugrije stavimo veće komade mesa do 3-4 kg (plećka, rebra i vrat) da se peče poklopljeno na srednje jakoj vatri. Nakon pola sata pečenja i nekoliko okretanja meso je dobilo zlatno smeđu boju. Meso izvadimo u veliki pleh za pečenje ispod peke i posolimo, a na masnoći gdje se pržilo meso stavimo oguljeni mladi sitni krompir do 4-5 kg (od dva puta pečemo), kojega smo dobro posušili, te pečemo u otvorenoj posudi desetak minuta često miješajući. Nakon toga krompir posolimo i s masnoćom stavljamo zajedno s mesom u pleh za pečenje, prelijemo s 4 dl temeljca (koji će dati posebnu sočnost i puninu okusa mesu i krompirima) od kostiju, koje su se kuhale na laganoj vatri par sati sa začinima (list kadulje, majčine dušice, bosiljka, crveni i bijeli luk, par zrna bibera i soli) i pečemo ispod peke 25 minuta na srednje jakoj vatri. Služimo u posudi u kojoj se peklo. (ovaj način pečenja se može uraditi i u pećnicu) (za 8 osoba)

Tender lamb, veal or goat's meat with new potatoes "under the baking lid" Serves 8

In a large lidded cooking pan, the same amount of butter as lard is placed (about 200 gr). When the fats are well melted, a large quantity of meat, 3-4 kilos of ribs, shank or neck is placed in the dish to roast over a medium flame in a covered pot. After half an hour having turned the roast a couple of times and when the meat acquires a golden brown color, the meat is placed on a circular cooking tray. Meanwhile, about 4-5 kilos of peeled new and towel-dried potatoes are placed in the fat from the meat. These are mixed and stirred over the heat in an open pan for ten minutes. (If necessary, this large quantity of potatoes can be braised in two batches). Having braised the potatoes for ten minutes they are then placed on the tray together with the meat and all is generously sprinkled with salt. 4 dl of broth (made from stewing the bones with sage, thyme, basil, garlic, onion and pepper and salt in a liter of water for a few hours) is poured over the meat and vegetables (which will give a special juiciness and taste to the meat and veg.) The ingredients are baked/roasted together for 25 minutes on medium to strong fire. They are served in the same dish in which we have cooked the food. Although the baking lid contributes its own properties, we can achieve similar results when cooking in the oven.



recepti

recipes



Hercegovačka gurmanska peka (za 10-12 osoba)

Ogulimo oko 2-3 kg bijelog i 2-3 kg crvenog krompira, te ga narežemo na uzdužne veće kriške, zasolimo i pobiberimo,dodamo jušnu žlicu slatke mljevene paprike,dvije grančice sitno sjeckanog celera, malo mljevene chili paprike, te dobro izmješamo. Meso (janjetina, kozletina, teletina i svinjetina do 4,5 kg) narežemo na manje komade, posolimo,pobiberimo, te utrljamo mješavinom bosiljka, majčine dušice i bijelog luka (ne previše začina) i rasporedimo po plehu za pečenje, kojega smo predhodno namastili svinjskom masti. Izdinstamo oko 1 kg crvenog luka dok ne omekša i dodamo na kraju 0,30 kg suhe domaće slanine sitno nasjeckane , koju samo malo prodinstamo i dodamo krompiru, dodamo sitno sjeckani bijeli luk (dvije veće glavice) i dobro izmješamo. Stavimo krompir oko mesa, tako da meso pola viri. Predhodno skuhana domaća koka „prpa“ (oko 1,5 kg), koju smo izrezali na sitne komade stavlja se između krompira i ostalog mesa, ali da ne viri meso vani (meso je od sebe tvrdo i žilavo), te zalije cijela masa s juhom od koke „prpe“ (1 l juhe). Između mesa i krompira stavljamo cijelu mladu mrkvu 10 – 15 komada, četvrtine svježe paprike (5 cijelih paprika) i zgnjećimo 3-4 srednje velika oguljena paradaiza po cijeloj masi . Malo još po vrhu sameljemo chili paprike, lagano s dva prstohvata krupne soli posolimo, te stavimo na lističe narezan maslac po krompiru i mesu i pečemo ispod peke na srednje jakoj vatri 1 sat i 15 minuta. Služimo u posudi u kojoj se peklo, a serviramo tako da sipamo s većom žlicom uzimajući s dna posude masu s toćom. (ovaj način pečenja se može uraditi i u pećnici).

Herzegovinian Gourmand Roast "under the baking lid"

Two to three kilos of red, and two to three kilos of white potatoes are cut lengthwise into quarters and if very large, into eighths. They are seasoned with salt, pepper, a tablespoon of ground sweet pepper, two sticks of finely chopped celery, a little ground chili-pepper, and this seasoning is mixed well into the potatoes. The meat (which can be mutton, kid, veal, pork or lamb) is chopped into smaller pieces and rubbed with seasonings (basil, thyme and finely chopped garlic, but not too much) and placed on a baking tray which we will have previously greased with lard. A kilo of chopped onions are then braised with some water on a pan until softened and then about thirty grams of finely chopped bacon are added to the pan. This is stirred over the heat briefly, and then added to the potatoes. Some finely chopped garlic is added, (two heads) and well mixed. The potatoes are arranged around the meat so that only half of the meat is showing above the potatoes. Then a previously boiled home-fed chicken of about 1.5 kilos is chopped into pieces and arranged between the potato and meat pieces, but is never left sticking out, because a home-fed chicken of itself is very tough and sinewy. With a ladle, a liter of the chicken stock is poured over the meat and potatoes. The preparation is finished by placing about 10-15 pieces of young carrots, the quartered pieces of 5 sweet peppers and three to four medium sized squashed peeled tomatoes are arranged around the mixture. This is seasoned with salt and chili pepper and some finely sliced butter is arranged evenly over the potatoes and this is covered with the lid. This is cooked for an hour and a half on a medium to strong fire. It's served in the same dish that it was cooked in and the plates are generously doused with a helping of the juices from the base of the pan. This way of baking can also be completed in an oven.





Lučenica

Lučenica se pravi tako što uzmemo domaćeg kiselog punomasnog mlijeka (ako se nema domaće, onda može i punomasno kupovno uz dodatak jednog dijela kiselog punomasnog vrhnja) i dobro zgnječimo bijeli luk s krupnom soli i umješamo u kiselo mlijeko. Na tavi istopimo maslac, dok ne dobije smeđkastu boju i tako vreo maslac sipamo u kiselo mlijeko da „cvrkne“. Par žlica kiselog mlijeka sipamo u tavu da pokupi ostatak maslaca i malo zamiriše bijeli luk od topline tave. Dobro izmješamo i sipamo preko pure.

Lučenica

Lučenica can be made by using some farm-fresh full-fat milk that is turning sour. If it cannot be obtained fresh from the farm, then shop-bought full fat milk with a dollop of full-fat sour cream can be used. In a pestle and mortar, some cloves of garlic are ground with some sea salt and added to the sour milk. Some butter is put on a pan until it melts and gains a brownish color, and this is poured into the sour milk to make it curdle. On the same pan, a few spoonfuls of the sour milk are put to collect the remains of the butter and to make the aroma of the garlic arise from the pan. This is then mixed with the remains of the milk and poured over the cornmeal.

Kaša

Kaša se pravi tako što u tavu stavimo isjeckanu domaću slaninu srednje krupno narezanu i malo sitno sjeckanih čvaraka (ako nemate, nije nužno). Kada se slanina istopi i počinje da lagano dobija zlatno smeđu boju istresemo sve u posudu s kašom u koju smo predhodno stavili dobro skašenu glavicu bijelog luka. Malo pobiberimo i stavimo po želji dvije do tri jušne žlice domaćeg vinskog crvenog octa. Dobro promješamo kašu i sipamo preko pure. Poseban doživljaj i okus je kada služimo kašu s purom u drvenim zdjelama i drvenim žlicama.

Kaša

Kaša can be made by finely chopping some bacon and some traditional Herzegovinian *čvarci* (optional) onto a pan. When the bacon has turned a golden color, everything is put into a bowl together with the *kaša*. Previously we will have put some finely ground garlic pulp (out of one head of garlic). This is then sprinkled with pepper and if desired drizzled with two or three soup-spoons full of red-wine vinegar. The *kaša* is then well mixed and poured over the cooked cornmeal. It's particularly good when the meal is served in a wooden bowl with a wooden spoon.





Pura na maslu

Pura na maslu se priprema od pure koja je ostala kao višak od predhodnih jela, jer je najbolja pura na maslu od pure koja se počme malo sušiti, tj. sutradan. Na crnu od kovanog željeza tavu stavimo par bublji domaćeg maslaca i kada se rastopi i poče dobijati smeđkastu boju stavimo puru u tavu i mješamo na laganoj vatri desetak minuta. Nakon toga u tavu s purom stavimo jednu pregršt (četiri do pet jušnih žlica) prpe ovčjeg ili kozjeg sira iz mijeha i lagano propržimo još par minuta, zatim lagano poravnamo i pomalo stisnemo drvenom kuvačom puru s maslom i sirom i pustimo da malo i blago pura zagori na vatri. Skinemo s vatre i služimo uz kajmak, kiselo vrhnje, crveni luk, bijeli luk, kiselo mljeko ili bukara s blatinom.

Pura na maslu

Pura on butter is made with left-over *pura* or cornmeal because it is best when *pura* that is already beginning to dry up is used. Then on a black iron pan, a few knobs of home-made butter are put. When it starts to turn a golden brown color, the left-over *pura* is put on the pan and stirred over a low heat for 10 minutes. After that, about 5 tablespoons of either sheep or goat cheese (the type that is preserved in animal skins) is put on the pan and the *pura* is gently cooked over the heat. The mixture is pressed gently down and left to burn slightly over the heat. It is removed from the heat and served with *kajmak* or sour cream or onion or garlic and sour milk - or with a wooden mug full of Blatina wine!

Janjetina na lešo

U polu duboku posudu s poklopcom zapremine 4-5 litara uspemo hladne vode 2,5-3 litra, stavimo par lista kadulje, grančicu vriska, grančicu bosiljka i malu grančicu ruzmarina, tri do četiri srednje velika krompira na pola razrezana, dvije srednje velike glavice crvenog luka na pola razrezane i nekoliko zrna biberna. Poklopimo posudu i pustimo da voda zavrije. Vodu posolimo s 3-4 prstohvata krupne morske soli i stavimo srednje velike komade janjetine (do 2 kg janjetine od plećke, rebara i vrata) u kipuću vodu. Poklopimo i kuvamo kad voda provrije oko dvadesetak minuta (janjetina u proljeće težine 12-13 kg - brdska). Služimo vruće s krompirom iz vode u kojoj se kuhalala janjetina i mladim crvenim lukom i krupnom morskou soli s kojom se može još malo po želji dosoliti janjetina. Hrskavi topli kukuruzni ili pšenični kruh s dodatkom ozimičnog brašna pečen ispod peke bi odlično pristajao uz ovu hercegovačku deliciju.

Boiled Lamb

A copious lidded saucepan, large enough to hold 5 liters, is filled with 2.5-3 liters of water. This is seasoned with a branch of rosemary, a branch of basil and a branch of heather and a few sage leaves. 3-4 peeled and halved potatoes, two peeled and halved onions and a few pepper corns are put into the pot. The pot is covered and brought to the boil. 3-4 generous pinches of sea salt are then put into the pot and up to 2 kilos of lamb (shoulder, shank or ribs) are placed into the boiling salted water. When the water has been bubbling for 20 minutes, the lamb is cooked (here we are referring to spring-lamb or about 12-13 kilos from hill country.) This is served hot with potatoes from the same pot, and some scallions and some sea salt, (optional). A helping of oven warm crusty corn or wheat bread with some added winter/wheat is an excellent accompaniment to this Herzegovinian specialty.





Hercegovačka "Kalja"

U poluduboku posudu zapremine 10-12 litara slažemo kiseli kupus (iz Knešpolja kod Širokog Brijega) u glavicama (dvije glavice po cca 2 kg), koje smo predhodno narezali na šestine i s korijenom (tako da se kupus ne razdvoji). Kada smo složili prvi red s kupusom, onda slažemo suvo domaće meso po kupusu (govedina, svinjetina, kozletina, može čak i malo divljači ili po želji samo jedna vrsta suvog domaćeg mesa, npr. suva ovnovina ili bravetina), stavimo par zrna bibera, par listova lovora i nekoliko zrna smrekovih bobica. Tako idemo do kraja dok ne potrošimo kupus s kojim završavamo slaganje. Kupus zalijemo s pola rasola u kojem se kupus kiselio, a druga polovica tekućine je temeljac od junećih – goveđih kostiju, kojega nismo solili, zbog rasola i kupusa, koji su dosta slani. Nasuti toliko tekućine da ona bude preko kupusa par centimetara. Kuhati 2,5 – 3 sata na laganoj vatri u poklopljenoj posudi, bez miješanja, nego samo posudom nekada malo zavrtjeti lijevo-desno. Nadosipati po potrebi nezasoljeni temeljac i tekućina treba da bude ispod kupusa par centimetara kad je gotova „kalja“. Služiti „kalju“ kad ostoji par sati. Sipati pažljivo kupus i meso da se ne raspada. Obavezan sastojak „Kalje“ su suve svinjske nogice, razrezane uzduž na pola, suhi dijelovi glave i slanina s povora (tvrdna slanina iznad plećki). Ako je kupus prekiseo, dodajte par krompira na šestine uzduž narezan i složite ga između kupusa u svaki red i nekoliko oguljenih također na šestine narezanih jabuka, koje će se sjediniti s kaljom tijekom kuhanja, ali će dati poseban ukus „kalji“ i ublažiti kiselost kupusa. Pura u grumenjima, topla kukuruza ili kukuruzni kruh ispod peke bi odlično pristajali uz hercegovačku „Kalju“, kao i nezaobilazna bukara s blatinom.

Herzegovinian *Kalja* (Calya)

In a saucepan, large enough to hold 10/12 liters, a layer of sauerkraut (we recommend the sauerkraut from Knešpolje near Široki Brijeg) is placed which you will have previously halved and then cut into sixths, (including the root stem so that it doesn't come apart while cooking). When the first layer of sauerkraut is spread, then a layer of home-made smoked meat is placed on top. This can be smoked beef, pork, mutton or kid or even some wild smoked game. It can be just one type or a mixture of all. Some bay leaves, peppercorns and juniper berries are added. This layering of cabbage and meat is continued until we use up everything, finishing with a layer of sauerkraut. With a ladle, the layers are doused with a mixture of the juices in which the sauerkraut was pickled and a saltless broth made from beef bones. (It must be saltless because the sauerkraut and juices are of themselves quite salty). The ladling must be continued until they cover the cabbage by a few centimeters. This is then simmered for 2 and a half to 3 hours without stirring, just jerking the pot every so often to prevent the bottom layer sticking. If necessary, some more juices are added during cooking - but the level of the liquid should be a few centimeters below the cabbage when the *kalja* is fully cooked. The *kalja* is then left to stand for a few hours. When serving (hot) it should be carefully spooned onto the plate, in such a way that it doesn't disintegrate. Smoked pork hocks are an obligatory ingredient in this recipe. They are halved and placed in the pot together with parts of the head and some of the harder cuts of bacon from the foreloin. If the sauerkraut is very strong, then it is better when some potatoes cut lengthwise into sixths are added and placed in between the sauerkraut. This can even be some apples cut in the same way. These will merge with the *kalja* while cooking but will lend it a special flavor and lessen the sourness of the sauerkraut. Oven baked corn dumplings, cornmeal or even cornbread are an excellent side-dish to Herzegovinian *kalja* as well as the unforgettable wooden mug of Blatina.





"Patišpanja" ili žuti kolač (kolač naših baka)

U poluduboku posudu zapremine 10-12 litara slažemo kiseli kupus (iz 10 domaćih svježih jaja i 8 šalica od 1,5 dl šećera i dvije vrećice vanilin šećera pjenasto umješamo s mikserom, nakon toga, ne prekidajući miješanje, dodajemo 4 šalice od 1,5 dl mljeka i isto toliko ulja, naravno postepeno ulijevajući u pjenastu masu i nastavimo mješati s mikserom. U međuvremenu naribati koru od jednog limina i jedne naranče i dodati smjesi. Postepeno dodajemo u tu smjesu, koja se neprestano miješa s mikserom u manjoj brzini, 10 šalica od 1,5 dl brašna i dva praška za pecivo, koje smo zajedno dva puta predhodno prosljali, kako bi se brašno i prašak za pecivo ravnomjerno sjedinili. Masa se dobro umješa i sipa u pleh 38x35x5 cm, koji je premazan maslacem i pobrašnjen (malo pospemo s vanilin šećerom i naribanom koricom od limuna). Peče se na 180 stupnjeva, dok ne porumeni gornji sloj (svijetlo – smeđa boja). Nakon toga se pleh vadi vani, „patišpanja“ se pošećeri s krupnim šećerom, koji se pomiješa s vanilin šećerom i limunovom koricom. Malo pustimo „patišpanju“ da se odmori u plehu (pola sata) i onda se može rezati na kocke 5x5 cm ili više, te služi topla.

Dobar tek!

Patišpanja, yellow cake or Grandma's cake

Ten farm fresh eggs are mixed with a mixer with 8 glasses (of 1.5 dl) of sugar and two packets of vanilla sugar. Four measures (1.5dl) of milk and the same of oil are emptied into the mixing bowl without turning off the mixer. The grated rind of one orange and one lemon are added. Again, without turning off the mixer, but lowering its mixing speed, 10 measures of flour are gradually added and two packets of baking powder which have been previously sieved together to ensure even mixing. This mixture is then added into a greased and floured baking tray (35x38x5). This is sprinkled with some lemon and orange peel and mixed with some vanilla sugar. This is baked at 180 degrees until the upper layer turns a golden brown color. It is removed from the oven and sprinkled once again with a mixture of coarse sugar, lemon and orange rind and vanilla sugar. This is left to stand for a while and then cut into 5cm squares. It is served while still warm.



Bon appetit!



Gastro Hercegovina

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A central pink circle is surrounded by three concentric white rings. Below this, a white rectangular box contains the word "Hercegovina" in a light grey, cursive font. A small red dot is positioned above the letter "o".

Hercegovina



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