

Gastrosophy and food as cultural practice: The case of Montenegro

Vesna Vujačić

University of Montenegro, vuvesna@ac.me

Filip Kovačević

University of Montenegro, filip@ac.me

Abstract

As a recently independent country in south-eastern Europe, Montenegro belongs to the Mediterranean, not only because of its geography and climate but also its gastronomy, according to gastrosophy, a term coined by Michel Onfray, a prominent contemporary French philosopher. Gastrosophy is an innovative philosophical discipline connecting philosophical concepts with that food culture that is strongly tied to a country's cultural heritage and tradition. The gastrosophic approach to the Montenegrin cuisine requires the examination of three regional cuisines: the coastal, lake, and mountain cuisines. The main conclusion of the authors of this paper is that while these cuisines do not give rise to spectacular sauces, exotic spices, and elaborate forms, what makes them special is their simplicity and intense flavour, conditioned both by geographic features and cultural/historical development. Regardless, the authors argue that Montenegro represents an ideal place for the experience of gastrosophic hedonism.

KEYWORDS: gastrosophy, food culture, gastronomy, food, Montenegro

Introduction

A prominent contemporary French philosopher, Michel Onfray (2011), has advocated the establishment of a new scientific discipline that would connect philosophical concepts with the principles of food. His book *Gourmet Mind: The Philosophy of Taste* [*La raison gourmande*] (2002), published in Paris in the mid-1990s, can be taken as a basic text on gastrosophy. Onfray (2002: 4) begins with Nietzsche's crucial question from *The Gay Science*, and that is 'Do we know the moral effect of food? Is there a philosophy of food?' Precisely such a philosophy of food, which Nietzsche wanted to see, can be called "gastrosophy". In this paper, we will demonstrate the application of gastrosophy in cultural practice through the study of specific regional cuisines in Montenegro and the explanation of their importance for understanding the relationship between food and the philosophy of life of a community.

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The very concept of gastronomy, from which the concept of gastrosophy is derived, comes from the Greek word *gastri*, which means stomach, and the word *nomos*, which means law or regularity of knowledge. According to the generally accepted definition, gastronomy is the art of the pleasing consumption of food, enjoying food preparation, food culture, cooking, knowledge about food (Protić 2011). Gastronomy has had its social dimension, which has changed over time. This is shown in the fact that good recipes and delicious dishes initially could be prepared only by the privileged strata of society, because rare ingredients were available only to some (Ivkov and Stamenković 2008). It is clear that the trends of development of human society from the prehistory to the present time, as well as the general political and economic circumstances, conditioned the methods and type of food and, therefore, the history of gastronomy. This is the reason the relationships between gastronomy and social sciences, as well as certain natural, and even medical sciences are very strong and should not be ignored in the formation and presentation of gastronomic attitudes.

Michel Onfray (2002) considered Alexandre Balthazar Grimod de la Reynière to be the founder of modern gastronomic science in 19th century in France. Because Grimod de la Reynière, in his culinary endeavours, defied conventions and conformism of his time in gastronomic matters, Onfray called him “the modern Diogenes”. The most important aspect of the philosophical attitude of modern gastronomy that Onfray (2002) specifically indicates is that the body is ‘...the womb in which visions and attitudes of the world begin: that is, then, the seat of the world, the world itself.’ Therefore, Onfray claims, modern Western civilisation, in order to survive, must change its attitude towards the body. It must cultivate and satisfy bodily wishes and needs. The body is not the “prison” for the soul as conceptualised by Plato, but the only basis for a free and happy existence.

It should not be surprising that the issue of nutrition for Onfray (2011) is the “epicentre” for the whole of human existence and, if neglected, can lead to catastrophic consequences for physical and mental health. Onfray claims that this can be seen in the example of the distribution of the so-called fast foods, which are not only harmful to health but also represent ‘a shock’ to the senses of taste, smell and sight. Moreover, it is precisely those senses that enable every gourmet and gastrosopher to feel the joy and beauty of life. Onfray represents this *joie de vivre* with the figure of a “hedonistic angel”, so it can be said that gastrosophy is defined as the search for divine pleasures through the tasting of different foods and beverages. One of the goals of this paper is the quest for the hedonistic angel in the characteristics of Montenegrin cuisine and its specialties.

Of course, in order to thoroughly define each element of gastrosophy, it is necessary to gain knowledge about the properties of different ingredients. This means that without the scientific basis of nutrition (i.e. clear rules on how to eat properly, what kind of ingredients to use, in what quantities and with what kind of preparation), it is not possible to build a consistent gastrosophic system. In addition, we should beware of exaggerated generalisations, that is the universalisation of arguments, because it is clear that different cultures and civilisations have different standards of nutrition. Whether something is delicious or distasteful for us, and even whether it is edible or not, is primarily a matter of early socialisation and habits, rather than some generally accepted rules (Ivanović 2010).

With regards to food preparation, it is important to think about the practice of cooking. Onfray (2002) states that for decades in some European countries cooking has been taught at universities within the so-called Fine Arts. For example, Peter Kubelka teaches cooking at the Academy of Fine Arts in Frankfurt and Daniel Spoerri, the initiator of the “eat-art” (art that can be eaten), movement, at the University of Cologne. Of course, the history of culinary art in Europe is several centuries long. The oldest book, titled *Cookbook*, was issued in France during the reign of Charles V in the first half of the 16th century, and the oldest culinary document *Viander* in 1498 (Davidson 2014). The practice of culinary art depends on the entire range of historical and cultural factors, as will be shown in the case of Montenegro and its history.

It should also be noted that whole areas of economic development can be established on the culinary and gastrosophic experiences, such as the economics of tourism. A special type of tourism based on gastronomy (*food tourism*) is oriented towards tourists who choose destinations because of their interest in different kinds of food and beverages. They visit food producers (primary and secondary), wineries, vineyards, and so on, and participate in various festivals that promote the culinary specialties and wines of a particular region. Through tasting of food and wine, these tourists gain important experiences for understanding the destinations they visit as well as for the understanding of themselves (Hall et al. 2003). In this manner, they meet their hedonistic angel, who (at least for the duration of the trip) can open up new dimensions of a “carefree” life. Deliciously prepared foods and quality wines create a sense of harmony, mildness and happiness, and, through the positive effect on the body, they positively affect the mind. All the negative moods, suffering, depression and pain disappear, and the world (re) presents itself as it should be, as a space for delight, play, and enjoyment (Onfray 2002). Man reveals his essential nature as *homo ludens* and rejects the imposed false identity of *homo economicus*.

Gastrosophy and culture in Montenegro

The geographic term *Montenegro* was first mentioned in documents from the late 15th century. The original Old Montenegro consisted of four areas: Katun, Lješan, Rijeka, and Crmnica, which are characterised by very hilly, rugged, and almost inaccessible terrain. At that time, Montenegrins were mostly involved in animal husbandry, some farming, and, with regards to social conditions, they were very poor (Vuksan 1951). Later, with the expansion of the territory, Montenegro also included fertile regions, and as a result, the average living standard increased.

In Old Montenegro, bread was the main foodstuff, and it was so precious that it was the subject of oaths (Spasojević 2001). Bread was usually made of rye, barley, wheat, buckwheat, and corn. The everyday diet was not rich with stews or soups, and, in rare situations, they were consumed at the end of meals, and cold. Meat was prepared in an extremely simple manner. Mostly it was cooked, baked, or dried, especially beef and goat meat, while pork and game were much less prevalent. Various species of fish were eaten (mostly from the Skadar Lake). Milk and dairy products (cheese, cream, butter, etc.) were produced and consumed in large quantities, while eggs, as well as meat, were prepared in hot ashes. Vegetables, as a

regular food supplement, onions and garlic, tomatoes, peppers, parsley, beets, chard, cabbage, eggplant, and rastan (the common Montenegrin type of chard).

At that time (all the way to the beginning of the 20th century) table dishes had to be borrowed because there were very expensive, and the financial status of the population was very low. With cooking, imprecise benchmarks were used, such as ‘handful of flour, a chunk of cheese, a piece of bread’ (Perić 2007: 16) Therefore, nowadays it is very difficult to determine the exact taste of the prepared meals. What is clear is that food was not plentiful, but it was also not hidden in case of the sudden appearance of a guest. For the people of Montenegro, the guest was sacred, and hospitality itself was elevated to the level of a strictly respected, almost religious custom. It was reflected in the warmth, joy, and intimacy, and there was a rule that the highest quality food and beverages were stored for the guest (Spasojević 2001). It can be assumed that such an attitude towards the guests has its roots in pre-Christian (old Greek) belief that a stranger could be a wandering god or a politically powerful person.

Even today, the vast majority of Montenegrins gladly play the role of careful and caring hosts or hostesses. Everything is done to make guests feel at home, and the highest quality and the most delicious food and beverages are always served. The gastrosophic principle that good food is the foundation for good mood and good companionship is fully respected.

Culture of food: Traditional cuisine of Montenegro

The philosophy of taste is based on the knowledge of its history, and food to a significant extent determines human existence and the fact that ‘man is certainly not just what he eats, and also he is not only what he thinks’ (Hirschfelder 2006:215). Food is one of the basic human needs for life and survival. It is, to some extent, older than the human race, it is one of the primary cultural and human achievements, and recipes of various dishes of national cuisine serve as a communicative form of culture (Radojčić 2012). Outside the family environment, food has the social function of bringing people together. Ways of food and drink consumption are very suitable for observation of social as well as cultural changes in societies. This basic physiological needs of the social and cultural community are turned into one of the basic segments of culture, which recognise nations or their larger or smaller communities, which are formed on the basis of natural and cultural conditions (Vlahović 2008). Human beings, in addition to their instinctive need for food, based on the need of their bodies to restore their energy reserves, have developed another property in relation to food: the hedonic preference, which is a pleasure not only in the act of eating but in the selection and preparation of food. Food has become a cultural activity, associated with many customs and rituals, and according to the skill of preparing and relation to nutrition, it approaches art. It is, like everything else that is related to human being, in a constant process of changing. The main factors of changes are the commercial, religious, economic and ethnic diversity of the population. Globalism imposes uniform nutrition; so what is unusual in one culture, is acceptable or even highly valued in another. At the several levels, food determines the identity of people: from diverse social identities (ethnic, class, religious) to personal identity, which includes questions of attitude and

personal taste. The issue of nutrition becomes a question of the attitude towards oneself and towards the world and not merely the issue of self-preservation.

Although Montenegro is one of the smaller countries in the world, its cuisine is very regionalised, as is also the case of well-known European cuisines (e.g. French cuisine). Each of the three Montenegrin regions (coastal, lake and mountainous) has its own specific culture of food, determined by geographical, climatic and historical differences. One key difference is also the energy density of food. In the northern parts of Montenegro (the mountainous region), where the winters are heavy and snowy, the energy density of food is higher. Towards the south, there are fertile plains and a milder climate, and so the diet is different. In contrast to the mountainous regions, in the lake region (referring to Skadar Lake) and in the coastal region, simple dishes are based on meat, grains, dairy products, and supplemented with fish, citrus fruits, and vegetables. Various spices obtained from the plants growing in the area are also used, including rosemary, parsley, and laurel.

Throughout the centuries, the territory of the present Montenegrin state was very interesting to great powers and empires from the geopolitical and geostrategic perspectives. Therefore, the history of Montenegro was marked by frequent wars and great suffering of its population. At the same time, modern European cultural influences and trends have not bypassed Montenegro. With the modernisation and urbanisation of life, other customs and habits have changed, including the principles of nutrition. It is thus not surprising that modern Montenegrin cuisine reflects the influences of several European and Eurasian cuisines. Particularly notable is the influence of Turkish cuisine, and the influence of Italian and Austrian cuisine in the coastal region.

Coastal food culture in Montenegro reflects the broader Mediterranean food culture. The Mediterranean diet is not only a specific nutrition plan, but it is also the combination of food and lifestyle habits that are traditionally deep-rooted among the people of the Mediterranean region (Brajović 2012a, 2012b). The Mediterranean zone includes states located in the territory where olive trees are traditionally cultivated: Spain, Portugal, France, Greece, Croatia, Montenegro, parts of North Africa (Morocco and Tunisia) and part of the Middle East (Lebanon and Syria). Although the states of the Mediterranean region differ in religious, cultural, and economic characteristics, which also determine the specific nutrition habits of certain areas, what they have in common is that their way of nutrition in combination with the lifestyle is described by the concept of the traditional Mediterranean nutrition (Krešić 2012). The Mediterranean nutrition and lifestyle have become a synonym of desirable contemporary foods, as the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) included French Mediterranean cuisine in the world heritage list in 2010. The list of cultural traditions, rituals, and crafts under the protection of UNESCO was complemented for the first time by gastronomic culture, that is, the French and Mediterranean cuisine. This cuisine was chosen precisely because it fulfils more than the simple pleasures of food needs; it involves a series of rituals and rules of the techniques of cooking, which have become a form of art, and also the ways of serving, eating, and table manners.

Coastal food culture in Montenegro mainly includes seafood as well as homemade olive oil produced from the native varieties of olives called Bar's yellow (after the town of Bar). The "holy trinity" of olive oil, fish, and wine is often mentioned, as it is one of the main elements of the entire Mediterranean cuisine and a fundamental component of the gastrosophic experience on the Montenegrin coast. In addition, the tasting of the authentic Montenegrin wines should be added, such as Vranac red wine and Krstač white wine. Dishes of coastal cuisine are characterised by the frequent use of parsley and rosemary, potato, onion, garlic, chard, spinach and *žučenica* (a native type of chard). Regarding olive oil, the best quality is obtained by first squeezing the olives (extra virgin, with an acidity less than 1%), and it is produced in the centuries old traditions of the coastal population. As such, it is the main ingredient of coastal cuisine (The traditional Montenegrin gastronomy 2005.)

It is said that the fish from its natural habitat to the table of the gastrosopher swims up to three times: first in the water, then in the olive oil, and, finally in the white wine. Regarding its preparation, on the Montenegrin coast, it is grilled on a *gradele* (a type of grill), baked, cooked (boiled), or the fish stew with tomatoes is made of it. Various spices are added to it, mostly rosemary, parsley, chopped garlic, and sometimes celery. Traditionally it is served with chard and potatoes, and with lettuce and radishes. If it is boiled, a mixture of water, olive oil, wine vinegar, onion and garlic, carrots, and, very often, a bay leaf is used. Fish stew is usually made from the smaller fish, or the fish that is not particularly tasty for baking. As one of the most suitable side dishes with the fish stew, *polenta*, made from maize flour, is served (Kažić 2004; Brochure Restaurant Guide of Montenegro 2007). In the coastal region of Paštrovići, the cuisine is elevated to the level of a ritualistic cult, and the old Paštrovići dishes, such as beef stew, cheese, *ruštule*, *paštica* and others require true craftsmanship during preparation. Even today, in every home, even in the poorest ones, food is always served at the same time, on white tablecloths, while, in the wealthier families, old porcelain dishes can be seen, as well as tablecloths and monogrammed napkins from the beginning of the 20th century (Perović 2003).

A special part of the coastal food culture is the Boka cuisine, the traditional cuisine in the places of the Boka Bay. This bay is extremely attractive to artists and tourists because of high mountains with steep slopes meet the blue-green depths of the sea, limestone plateaus, cypress and deciduous forests. Regarding climate, Boka is simultaneously under the strong influence of the Mediterranean and Alpine climates, resulting in the peculiar phenomenon of the "early spring" when the Mediterranean flora flourishes by the sea, while the surrounding mountains are still under snow. The local flora is diverse and differs from that in other parts of Montenegro. Boka is rich in the orange, lemon, and pomegranate trees as well as olive trees, camellias, mimosa trees, agaves, oleanders, magnolias, and pittosporum (Radović 2010; Pasinović 2010).

Inhabited places in Boka are imbued with the cultures of the East and the West, and the remains of prehistoric, Illyrian, Roman and Byzantine settlements and artefacts can be seen. There are many religious objects from the Renaissance, Gothic and Baroque periods. It can be said that from the beginning of Western civilisation, this area has been marked by the full potential of all former the imperial cultures (Milošević 2003a; Milošević

2003b; Rastoder 2006). In 1918, Boka Bay became a part of Montenegro's political and cultural realms, and differences remain in the language, customs, and possibly in the worldview and lifestyle of the inhabitants of Boka and the inhabitants of other regions of Montenegro (Karadžić 1969; Marković & Vujičić 1997; Šćekić 2009).

For centuries, Boka has lived on the development of the maritime economy, and many of its inhabitants were sailors (many are still are today), but there were also very wealthy ship-owning families. Sailors brought influences of the East and the West to their homeland; therefore, in Boka cuisine, we can find foods whose origins are in the Middle or the Far East, northern Africa, or northern Europe. Great importance was given to the culinary art, and today many local cookbooks are published by those who promote traditions, culture and customs of this part of the Mediterranean. Common specialties include dumplings and fish stew; fish and meat are treated equally on the menu of the typical Boka family, together with chard and other vegetables as side dishes to the main course (Čolpa 2008:10; Mandić 2009:41; Čolpa, 2009). Although Boka is a relatively small area, each inhabited place has its own gastrosophic distinction, in terms of a particular meal, or at least, a special way of its preparation.

Mountain food culture characterises not only the northern part of Montenegro but also the mountainous area, which is not far from the sea. One example is the village Njeguši, which is about twenty kilometres from the ancient coastal town of Kotor. Njeguši, where the Montenegrin members of the royal dynasty Petrović were born, is characterised by gastronomic specialties such as prosciutto, *kastradina* (dry sheep meat), floury sausage (stuffed with corn flour) and various types of cheese (Spasojević 2010). The prosciutto, which is regionally appreciated, gets its specific aroma due to the traditional drying method, the use of the special type of wood and the mixture of sea and mountain air in the village of Njeguši. With the ham and dried cottage cheese (sometimes marinated in oil), which are an integral part of the Montenegrin traditional welcome ritual, the mountain cuisine includes dishes such as polenta and gruel, which are served with lamb and potatoes under the *sač*. The latter is a relatively large metal cover that looks like some kind of an elongated and shallow bell. Roasted meat or dough for bread is covered by the *sač*, and the of embers and ashes are put on it. Dishes prepared in this way have a very delicate and distinctive flavour. From the gastrosophic standpoint, dishes prepared under a *sač* provide clear evidence that, even in the extremely modest living standards which have characterised the rural mountainous part of Montenegro, the 'hedonistic angel' can be found. Alongside the energy density of these dishes, strong alcoholic beverages such as mead and brandy or sherry are often consumed with them, in addition to the red and white wines.

In Montenegro, there are a number of restaurants that prepare traditional dishes of the coastal and mountain cuisine, and some architectural reminders of ancient Montenegrin houses. Such are, for example, the restaurants Ognjište on the Podgorica-Nikšić road, Stara kuća (Old House) in Podgorica and Konak on the Cetinje-Budva road. Built of stone and with relatively small windows, they evoke a traditional Montenegrin way of life, in which food is prepared on the hearth, which was typically in the middle of the main room of the house.

Along the coastal and mountain cuisine, specific lake cuisine related to the Skadar Lake is distinctive in Montenegro. This cuisine is characterised by seafood dishes, trout, carp, eels and bleak. A particular specialty represents small dried bleak, consumed with homemade wine. The overall gastrosophic experience of the lake cuisine complements traditional dishes such as carp with prunes, quince, and apple, or eel with rice. Between Lake Skadar and the Adriatic Sea, there is the area of Crmnice, which is the cradle of Montenegrin wine growing, especially with regard to the wines Vranac and Krstač.

The philosophy of enjoying wine was introduced by the Greeks. In the Mycenaean and Minoan cultures, i.e. in the ancient Greece and on Corfu, wine was the drink of the social elite. There were even official ceremonies in honour of wine, the so-called *symposia*, devoted to pleasures, both intellectual and social, where discussions were held in which guests were each trying to outdo each other in rhetoric and wit. Today, wine is drunk in moderate amounts with food, especially in the southern part of Europe, and the leading wine producers in Europe are France, Italy, Spain, and the largest consumers of wine are French and Italians. Wines are also widely produced on other continents, in North and South America and Australia. One of Australia's most famous wines Penfold was created by a Dr. Penfold, who began to produce wine to treat patients (Genevieve-Iličković 2010).

Wine in Montenegro has always been an integral part of nutrition:

In Montenegro, due to climatic and topographic characteristics, the intensive cultivation of the vine is only possible in the southern part. In this area, according to its characteristics, position and importance, the coastal belt and Skadar Lake are distinguished (Savić 2003: 10)

In support of this thesis, an edition of the newspaper *Voice of Montenegrins* from 1891 mentions wine: 'As science and our faith confirm, wine is the most beneficial alcoholic beverage, so grapes as a crop, from which wine is made, among all fruits, must be considered as the most valued' (Mirković 2009: 15).

Wine is the most famous, the most important, and the most appreciated drink on the banks of Skadar Lake. The culture growing grapes in Montenegro dates back to the pre-Roman period. In the age of the Illyrian state, in 3th century, vines were grown on the banks of Skadar Lake. Numerous archaeological sites and artefacts found there (jars and other vessels) indicate that in the Illyrian time, much wine was drunk, and wine drinking was revered:

Grape-growing in the area of Skadar Lake basin was later improved by the ancient masters-Romans, and they left many records of varieties and methods of growing vines. Later in the Middle Ages, winegrowing was well developed on the shores of Lake Skadar in Crmnica. According to the medieval archives from Kotor, Crmnica was a major producer of grapes and wine in Montenegro and beyond (Brochure *The Wine Trails in Montenegro* 2010: 5–7).

The region of Crmnica, which extends from Lake Skadar to the Adriatic Sea at an altitude of 500 m, is known for its centuries-old tradition of grape growing and the production of wine. In the village of Brčeli, human remains were found with vessels for wine, amphora from the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC. Today, Crmnica is widely acclaimed as a place for the

production of quality wines, and it is also known for its indigenous vine varieties of Vranac, Krstač, Kratošija, Muskacela, and Žižak (Savić 2010a). With its geographical position, mild climate, fertile soil, historical and cultural circumstances, set at the crossroads of several civilisations, Crmnica developed as an authentic unity, so its cuisine has developed created a distinctive and specific flavour (Genevieve-Iličković, 2010). In Crmnica, the main ingredients are vegetables, fish from Lake Skadar and wine. Vranac red grapes dominate the central and coastal part of Montenegro. A grand pleasure for any gastrosopher is the consumption of wine in the authentic setting of Crmnica, provided by the Pelikan and Badanj restaurants with dishes prepared in the traditional manner from local products. In records from the late 19th century, it is said that: ‘The region of Crmnica was the leader in winegrowing as by the number of planting and the vine cultivation, resulting in Crmnica’s best wine that in its quality is comparable to the wines of Bordeaux’ (Genevieve- Iličković 2010: 109). Crmnica is also famous for the traditional rituals of hospitality, which state that

... whoever comes to the house is considered to be coming in good faith and, by his presence, shows honour to the host of the house, and so these occasions are opportunities to share food and wine in common and develop friendships (ibid.: 21).

At a relatively short distance from the Crmnica’s villages, on the two thousand acres of Čemovsko polje around the capital of Montenegro, is the biggest vineyards in the Balkans, producing the wines (Vranac, Procorde, Krstač) that make Montenegro famous on all maps of European wine and culinary destinations (Savić 2010b; Savić 2008). From the same vine, the Montenegrin Vranac sort, grape brandy is also produced (Kruna, Prvijenac), seen by many as unique “ambassadors” of Montenegro.

Wine is a part of any good meal, and which wine goes perfectly with which dish depends on the lifestyle and culture of the individual. Wine and food are a matter of personal taste, but the French call this match “a wedding”, because the matching of wine and food should be a perfect match and the crown of culinary enjoyment. One of the basic rules of the wine drinking culture is the rule of the harmonisation of the food of a region with the wine from that region. This practice is found throughout Montenegro. However, notwithstanding the gastronomic varieties in the Montenegrin cuisine as well as the production of quality wine, Montenegro still has an underdeveloped culture of wine consumption.

Conclusion

Healthy, high-quality, and meaningful nutrition is a need of all people. Although the importance of food in life is based on the instinctive need for self-preservation, nutrition should be seen not only as a mechanical intake of food in the body but also as an aesthetic and cultural process. In this sense, culture of food can be said to be one of the primary human cultural achievements. It shapes the identity of the people, and it has the potential to unite diverse aspects of identity as it may be the way for different national, religious, and lifestyle issues to be resolved in peace and harmony. This is why the question of food as eminently political must be included in all studies of global cultural practices.

Our belief is that food should satisfy all the human senses, and this is the main

determinant of gastrosophy as conceptualised by Michel Onfray. This article presents the application of gastrosophy in cultural practice through the research of the specifics of food culture in Montenegro. We claim that gastrosophy is essential for understanding the philosophy of life of a community.

The Montenegrin culture of nutrition follows no particular historical tradition, and, as we have shown, is not characterised by either spectacular sauces, or exotic sauces, or flamboyant form. It is simple and with minimal innovation because it arose from the rural highland way of life of Montenegrins who have constantly had to struggle for political and economic survival. In such circumstances, it was not possible to express the mastery of cooking because delicious meals can hardly be made out of nothing. This is why, historically, the gastrosophic emphasis in Montenegro has always been on energy-rich foods.

As we have elaborated, Montenegrin cuisine is based on three regional cuisines: coastal, lake, and mountainous. Coastal cuisine is based on a blue and white fish, olives and olive oil, on wine, the abundance of spice plants, vegetables, fruit and pasta and, as its special part, the so-called Boka Cuisine is distinct. Lake cuisine is specific for the freshwater fish bleak, carp, eel, also for ristan, the herb fennel, and dry goat meat (*kastradina*), while the mountainous cuisine is recognisable for preparing food on the hearth under the *sač*, milk and milk products, then the lamb and goat meat, all of which are foods with high energy density.

It is clear that the gastronomic offer is an inseparable part of the potential economic prosperity of a country. It is also a part of the cultural heritage of all people living in one country, and a summation of their centuries-old experience of struggle and work. Although small in territory, Montenegro is a good example of the wealth of interweaving of different culinary cultures

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Povzetek

Črna gora je ena izmed držav jugovzhodne Evrope, ki ni del Sredozemlja samo geografsko in podnebno, temveč tudi gastronomsko oziroma gastrozofsko. Gastrozofija je inovativna filozofska disciplina, ki povezuje filozofske koncepte s kulturo hrane in je nerazdružljivo povezana s kulturno dediščino in tradicijo vsake države. Ustanovitelj gastrozofije je eden najbolj znanih sodobnih francoskih filozofov Michel Onfray. Gastrozofski pristop in kultura hrane v Črni gori narekujeja preučevanje treh regionalnih kuhinj: primorske, jezerske in planinske. Glavni zaključek avtorjev je, da teh kuhinj ne zaznamujejo spektakularne omake, eksotične začimbe in umetelne forme, temveč preprostost in izjemna okusnost, ki sta pogojeni tako z geografskimi značilnostmi in zgodovinsko kulturnim razvojem, kakor tudi s tradicijo. Poleg tega pa avtorja trdita, da je Črna gora idealno območje za doživljanje gastrozofskega hedonizma.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: gastrozofija, kultura hrane, gastronomija, hrane, Črna gora.

CORRESPONDENCE: VESNA VUJAČIĆ, University of Montenegro, Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management, Stari grad 320, Kotor, Montenegro. E-mail: vuvesna@ac.me.