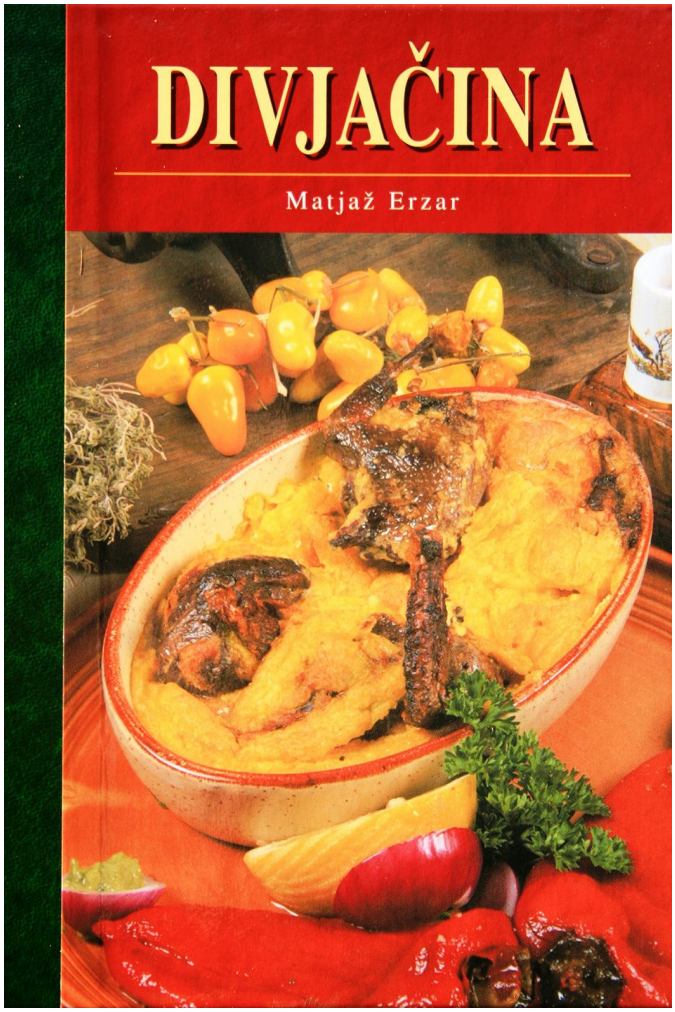

Venison, a healthy and noble nourishment

Venison has lately become popular again, especially amongst gourmands and more demanding guests, who are seeking high quality food and their own specific preferred variety within the offered range of game sorts.

The quality of the game depends from its habitat, age, season of capture, preservation and even the hunting itself, before it has been captured.

Hunters are the first in the chain from the forest to the customer’s plate who are responsible for the proper selection and handling of the captured animals, quality control and preservation of its high quality to the final consumer.

Game is hunted in various seasons, weather and terrain conditions which all influence its quality and usage range for the nourishment.

Request for venison and consequently its price varied substantially in different historical periods and in various European regions, based on social circumstances, eating habits, tradition and its availability. The lead of course belonged to the Roman nations where the art of preparation, usage and feasts connected to its consumption were brought to perfection, somewhere we could even say to the limit of being pervert in it.

Already the old Romans of two thousand years ago enjoyed in carefully selected dishes from various wild animals, ranging from the tinniest bird sorts to the dormice and wild boars. Menus from later periods reveal the importance of venison consumption on numerous European royal courts, with ecclesiastical lords and nobility, where wide range of varieties and sorts were represented.

Also on the Slovenian territory the venison consumption shows a long tradition, started in monasteries with rich menus with predominant selection of various venison dishes.

In the recent past venison in Slovenia was mainly exported to Western Europe. Nowadays we are rediscovering its importance in our nourishment and recognizing its meaning as a part of our cultural and national identity.

Culture, tradition, eating habits and food preparation put a significant stamp onto a nation, region, family and even each individual. Slovenia, being on the crossroads of Mediterranean, German and Eastern cultural influences, strongly faces all the above phenomena in its cuisine. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to preserve all the unique characteristics of the traditional Slovenian nutrition and resist the fast food wave, ruining the diversity of flavours and aiming only at rapid profits.

Changes in society bring along also changes in people's diet. Numerous restaurants and inns got famous in the last decade by introducing venison, fish and seafood onto their menus. Houswives and chefs started searching for long-forgotten recipies, buying foreign recipe books to show-off their mastery to their friends, guests and customers.

Therefore Lovska zveza Slovenije (Hunters' Association of Slovenia) decided to publish the book of venison recipies in Slovenian cuisine "Divjačina" written by famous chef Matjaž Erzar in the Zlatorog library series.

"Healthy food is the best medicine."

Increasing demand for venison in our daily cuisine is also due to the health risks because of more and more industrially processed food in our nutrition. Serious hazard for human health is caused by chemical additions in food processing, pesticides, preservations. Mass farm production of cattle, sheep and poultry further endangered human health because the primary goal is not quality healthy food but quick profit, sometimes even at the cost of lost health. Numerous scandals of the last past decadess bring up the demands for regulations and legislation changes.

Self-aware people started demanding healthy food. The question being raised of what healthy food is and where to get it nowadays.

Healthy meat for human consumption can be obtained from free-living open air and wild animals on land and in water, living in healthy, natural environment.

Janez Černač, M.Sc., Editor-in-Chief

(Translation is a brief summary of the editorial)

The venison recipe book “Divjačina” can be obtained at the inn “Pr’Matičku” or can on request be sent per post.

Please mail your orders to: prmaticku@gmail.com