OTHER ACTS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs

(2020/C 183/08)

This publication confers the right to oppose the application pursuant to Article 51 of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council (1) within three months from the date of this publication.

SINGLE DOCUMENT

‘Brački varenik’

EU No: PGI-HR-02454 – 8.4.2019

PDO () PGI (X)

1. Name
   ‘Brački varenik’

2. Member State or Third Country
   Croatia

3. Description of the agricultural product or foodstuff

3.1. Type of product
   Class 1.8. other products listed in Annex I to the Treaty (spices etc.)

3.2. Description of the product to which the name in (1) applies
   ‘Brački varenik’ is a product used as a condiment. It is produced by cooking the juice pressed from fresh or dried grapes until its volume falls to roughly one third of the initial volume. ‘Brački varenik’ is a sweet, viscous liquid with notes of honey, a mildly pronounced flavour and aroma of grapes and a moderately pronounced flavour of caramel. ‘Brački varenik’ may be dark red to dark brown in colour where red grape varieties are used, and dark yellow to light brown where white grape varieties are used. When placed on the market, ‘Brački varenik’ must have a soluble dry matter content (determined refractively) of at least 45 %, and a pH value of 3-5 (when diluted with water to 25 % dry matter). ‘Brački varenik’ is placed on the market in glass bottles with a maximum volume of 0,5 l.

3.3. Feed (for products of animal origin only) and raw materials (for processed products only)
   ‘Brački varenik’ is produced from indigenous wine grape varieties, i.e. the red varieties Babić, Crljenak and Plavac mali, and the white variety Maraština. These varieties must make up – individually or combined – at least 80 % of the product, with the remainder composed of other grape varieties from the island of Brač.

3.4. Specific steps in production that must take place in the identified geographical area
   All steps in the production of ‘Brački varenik’, from picking, pressing and straining the grapes to cooking them, must take place within the production area defined in point 4.

3.5. Specific rules concerning slicing, grating, packaging, etc. of the product the registered name refers to

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3.6. Specific rules concerning labelling of the product the registered name refers to

When placed on the market, the name 'Brački varenik' must stand out more clearly on the label than any other inscription in terms of the size, type and colour of its lettering (typography). The size of the producer's inscription must not exceed 70 % of the size of the product name.

4. Concise definition of the geographical area

'Brački varenik' is produced on the island of Brač, which administratively forms part of Split-Dalmatia County, and is divided into eight local self-government units: the town of Supetar, and the municipalities of Postira, Pučišća, Selca, Bol, Nerežišća, Milna and Sutivan. It is separated from the mainland by the Brač Channel to the north, from the island of Šolta by the Split Gates to the west, and from the island of Hvar by the Hvar Channel to the south.

5. Link with the geographical area

The causal link between 'Brački varenik' and the island of Brač is based on the reputation enjoyed by the product, as well as its specific traditional production method and recipe preserved to this day, which are characteristic of this geographical area.

There are three different geomorphological areas on the island of Brač: a lower-lying coastal belt (up to 170 m high), a central plateau (up to 400 m), and a more mountainous area. The most common parent substrate on the island of Brač is Cretaceous limestone and dolomite, on which rocky, black, brown, red and anthropogenic soils have formed. Best suited for cultivation on these types of soil are the following traditional Mediterranean crops: olives, grape vines and citrus fruits, figs, and aromatic and medicinal plants.

Wine-growing has a long, rich tradition and forms the most important branch of agriculture on the island of Brač. This is indicated by the continued cultivation of grape vines in the area since ancient times. As the island of Brač is dominated by contoured terrain, to create as much land for cultivation as possible, the local inhabitants cultivated anthropogenic soil by clearing, digging and fertilising the land to create terraces. By cutting into the land and building terraces, they retained the fertile soil and enabled the land to be cultivated, most commonly for growing grape vines.

The age-old tradition of cultivating grape vines on the island of Brač; the influence of know-how and expertise in selecting the varieties of grape vine best suited to the natural conditions of the geographical area; the cultivation method and production technique; these are just some of the human factors that have had a decisive influence of the quality of grape used to produce 'Brački varenik'.

The main grape varieties grown on the island of Brač and used to produce 'Brački varenik' are Babić, Crljenač, Plavac Mali and Maraština, whose vineyards are located on south-facing slopes. A warm microclimate prevails on the island of Brač, as it is located in southern Dalmatia, which is characterised by a mild Mediterranean (Csa-type) climate, with hot, dry summers, mild winters and high mean annual temperatures (21.8 °C during vegetation), plentiful sunshine, and maritime influences. During the warm part of the year, winds – by day the Maestral, by night the Burin – blow over the south-facing slopes, alleviating the searing summer heat. The island of Brač is located in the sunniest part of the Adriatic, with some 2600 sunshine hours per year, which is extremely important during the ripening of the grapes.

The inhabitants of the island of Brač use these grapes to produce not only wine, but also the speciality 'Brački varenik', by boiling off the juice from the grapes, for use as an essential condiment in traditional dishes from Brač.

Proof that 'Brački varenik' was used as a condiment as far back as ancient Roman times was provided by the author Marcus Gavius Apicius, who described the method for producing the product (V. Vostanović Kukč, 1997, Iz pijata i žmula, Korijeni bračke kuhinje). In historical records from 1885, the author S. Bulimbašić states that “Brački varenik” is prepared using a traditional recipe on the Didolić family holding on the island of Brač, destined for the top kitchens of Vienna, where it is especially prized and sought-after as a spice (S. Bulimbašić, Brački varenik, published on 30 September 2011).
As ‘varenik’ had been produced since ancient times, at the end of the 18th century the inhabitants of the island of Brač sought to save from obscurity its distinct honey aroma and the taste and scent of this condiment made from grapes, according to a recipe guarded for hundreds of years by the old families of Brač. The traditional method for preparing ‘Brački varenik’ was a special social event forming part of the ‘jematva’, or grape harvest, which occurred in September and October. The event involved local producers using their extensive know-how and skills to select the best grapes of the indigenous red varieties Babić, Crljenač and Plavac mali or white variety Maraština. The grapes were placed in separate baskets and, at the end of the harvest, crushed and pressed by hand to produce a fresh grape juice that was slowly cooked (for more than 10 hours in some cases) on a low heat, in a large pot known as a ‘kotlenka’. ‘Brački varenik’ would cook well into the night, usually until the next morning, watched over mainly by women, until a thick liquid was formed. The indigenous red and white grape varieties – Babić, Crljenač, Plavac mali and Maraština – have a high sugar content, which is essential for the end product. This age-old tradition of preparing ‘Brački varenik’ has been preserved to the present day and forms an integral part of the way of life of the inhabitants of Brač.

The reputation enjoyed by ‘Brački varenik’ is reflected in its re-emergence as a staple on the restaurant menus of Brač, as it is used as an essential condiment in a number of traditional dishes of the island of Brač (Slobodna Dalmacija, article entitled ‘Tajni recepti bračkih nova’, 2014, and Slobodna Dalmacija, article entitled ‘Supetar pijati puni kuhaarski čudes’, 2015).

The cultivation of grape vines, the production of grapes, and the products derived from them have formed the backbone of the island’s economy for centuries.

The grape varieties (Babić, Crljenač, Plavac mali and Maraština) used to produce ‘Brački varenik’, the numerous sunny days when the grapes ripen, the suitable climate, fertile soil and the terracing and position of the vineyards increase the sugar content of the grape, which is essential in the production method of ‘Brački varenik’, since the cooking time is shortened.

The reputation of ‘Brački varenik’ and its traditional production method can be attributed to the fact that it is a regional product from the island of Brač that has a long history. The recipe for this product is based on the extensive experience of the local inhabitants of the island of Brač, is passed down from generation to generation and is closely linked to the defined geographical area.

The reputation of ‘Brački varenik’ is also attested to by its regular appearance each year at various festivals, the numerous awards it has won, and the various press articles it has featured in (Dani varenika na otoku Braču, 2015, Supetar Producer Group, Brački varenik na Markovom trgu, 2017, and GAST Fair, Izvorni brački varenik otrgnut od zaborava, 2017).

The link between the name ‘Brački varenik’ and the geographical area of the island of Brač is also evident in the promotion of tourism: the tourist board of the town of Supetar has declared ‘Brački varenik’ an indispensable condiment to the culinary specialities of the island of Brač and to the list of must-try products when holidaying on the island of Brač (Supetar Tourist Board, Croatian Hot Spots, March 2017).

To prevent the tradition of production of ‘Brački varenik’ from being forgotten, workshops are held on the island of Brač to pass on to younger generations the traditional skills needed to prepare the product. One such workshop on how to prepare ‘Brački varenik’ was held in Supetar’s primary school (Supetar Primary School, Eko kutak, 2016).

Reference to publication of the product specification

(the second subparagraph of Article 6(1) of this Regulation)