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Dear Editor

We are submitting a manuscript (original scientific article) entitled "Simultaneous GC-MS determination of free and bound phenolic acids in Slovenian red wines and chemometric characterization" for publication in *Acta Chimica Slovenica*. The manuscript was prepared by doc. dr. Mitja Kolar as corresponding author (Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology, University of Ljubljana), Milena Ivanović and dr. Maša Islamčević Razboršek (Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, University of Maribor).

We describe a novel GC/MS analytical methodology for selected phenolic acids (PAs): caffeic, vanillic, syringic, p-coumaric and ferulic acid. For isolation of the PAs from real samples - Slovenian red wines, solid phase extraction (SPE) using hydrophilic modified styrene cartridges was used. Using this step, pigments, sugars and other interferences were successfully removed without losing information about PAs. The bound PAs were extracted after basic hydrolysis whereby o-coumaric acid was used as the internal standard. The method developed was successfully validated. In all of the wine samples tested, caffeic and p-coumaric acid were determined to be the predominant PAs, while other compounds were found in lower concentrations. Finally, chemometric interpretation using Principal Component Analysis and Cluster Analysis were used to study differences between wines related towards variety and Slovenian wine regions.

We believe that our research on PAs in real wine samples, together with chemometric characterization, will be of interest to many readers of *Acta Chimica Slovenica*. The importance of the methodology will increase in the future, as it can be applied to many other real samples containing PAs. Future work on PAs in wine is also important for detailed wine studies, concerning vintage, botanic origin, climate, wine regions.

Our results are original scientific work and are not under consideration by any other journal or database.

Since we were asked to suggest potential reviewers with references, perhaps the following experts could be contacted:

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With best regards,

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Ljubljana, 18th of April 2016