

Bulgaria: A Curriculum Guide for Secondary School Teachers



Created by the **Center for Russian and East European Studies**
University Center for International Studies
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Bulgarian Mountains, http://www.bulgarian-mountains.com/bg/Home/index_html

Bulgarian Folk Dance, http://www.bulgarianproperties.com/topimg/0_2260_72.jpg

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INTRODUCTION

Bulgaria: A Curriculum Guide for Secondary School Teachers was created to provide information on the historical and contemporary development of the Bulgarian nation, and in so doing, to assist teachers in meeting some of the criteria indicated in the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Academic Standard Guidelines (http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_board_of_education/8830/state_academic_standards/529102). To fulfill the fundamental themes for many of the disciplines prescribed by the state guidelines, this curriculum guide provides the following information:

- A description of the unique traits of Bulgarian culture.
- A description of the effects of political, economic and cultural changes and how these changes shaped the present Bulgarian nation.
- Identification and explanation of the contributions of key historical individuals and groups in politics, the arts, and religion in Bulgarian.
- Examination of the changing economic and political system of Bulgaria, and how these changes have affected Bulgarian society.

These and other areas of Bulgarian society and culture are explored in an attempt to assist the secondary school teacher in fulfilling the Academic Standard Guidelines. As the unique transitions in Bulgaria provide a laboratory for studying political, economic and cultural change, this guide may be additionally useful as a means for comparison with our own country's development. Whether as a tool for meeting the Academic Standard Guidelines, or as a means to explore issues affecting a society in transition, we expect that this guide will be useful in your classroom preparation.

Each section of this guide is designed to be suitable for classroom use either independently, or as part of a comprehensive study of Bulgaria covering the entire guide. Therefore, you may tailor your use of the guide to fit the amount of time that you have available and the specific topics that are most relevant to your subject area. The guide also contains references to sources of additional information.

This guide was prepared by the Center for Russian and East European Studies at the University of Pittsburgh, with funding from the U.S. Department of Education. It is part of a series of curriculum guides on post-communist countries in East Central Europe that entered the European Union in 2004, as well as those such as Bulgaria that are candidates for EU membership in upcoming years.

About the Center for Russian and East European Studies

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Bulgaria: In a Nutshell



Location:	Southeastern Europe between Romania and Greece
Size:	110,910 sq. km.; slightly larger than Tennessee
Border Countries:	Greece, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Turkey
Climate:	Temperate, cold, damp winters; hot, dry summers
Terrain:	Mountainous
Population:	7,450,349
Birth Rate:	9.66/1,000 population
Life Expectancy at Birth:	Male- 68.41 years; female- 75.87 years
Nationality:	Bulgarian
Ethnic Groups:	Bulgarian 83.9%, Turk 9.4%, Roma 4.7%, other 2%

Religion:	Bulgarian Orthodox 82.6%, Muslim 12.2%
Languages:	Bulgarian 84.5%, Turkish 9.6%, Roma 4.1%
Literacy:	98.6%
Government Type:	Parliamentary democracy
Capital:	Sofia
Constitution:	Adopted July 12, 1991
Suffrage:	18 years of age
Executive Branch:	Chief of state- President Georgi Purvanov (since 2002); head of government- Prime Minister Sergei Stanishev (since 2005); cabinet- Council of Ministers nominated by Prime Minister and elected by the National Assembly
Legislative Branch:	Unicameral National Assembly 240 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms
Judicial Branch:	Supreme Administrative Court, Supreme Court of Cassation, Constitutional Court, Supreme Judicial Court
GDP:	\$61.63 billion
GDP- Real Growth Rate:	5.3%
GDP by Composition:	Agriculture 11.5%, industry 30.1%, services 58.4%
Labor Force:	3.398 million
Unemployment Rate:	12.7%
Population Below Poverty Line:	13.4%
Inflation Rate:	6.1%

Agricultural Products:	Vegetables, fruits, tobacco, livestock, wine, wheat, barley, sunflowers, sugar beets
Natural Resources:	Bauxite, copper, lead, zinc, coal, timber
Exports:	Clothing, footwear, iron and steel, machinery and equipment, fuels
Export Partners:	Italy 13.2%, Germany 11.5%, Turkey 9.7%, Belgium 6.4%, Greece 6.1%, US 5.6%, France 5.1%
Imports:	Machinery and equipment, metals and ores, chemicals and plastics, fuels, minerals, raw materials
Import Partners:	Germany 15.7%, Italy 10.9%, Russia 9%, Greece 8%, Turkey 7.5%, France 4.7%, Austria 4%
Currency:	Lev
Official Exchange Rate:	Lev per \$1 U.S. - 1.49

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Background Note: Bulgaria
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History

The Bulgars first settled in modern-day Bulgaria in the seventh century. The name Bulgar is derived from an Old Turkic word that means “one of mixed nationalities.” The Bulgars were of mixed blood from various Turkic tribes. The early Bulgars were known for their skills as horsemen, as well as their strong political organization. By 630 A.D., the tribes existed as a federation. In 681, the first Bulgarian state was recognized under Prince Apararukh. The new state was largely influenced by Slavic culture, but preserved the political structure of the early Bulgars.



Simeon the Great

The Bulgarian Empire expanded its territory drastically after it defeated the Byzantine Empire in 811. Tsar Simeon (Simeon the Great) emerged as one of Bulgaria’s most powerful and effective rulers. Bulgaria expanded to its greatest size and controlled large parts of Byzantine territory. In 870, Bulgaria converted to Orthodox Christianity and moved closer to Byzantine culture.

By the mid-900s, Bulgaria’s power declined due to Byzantine pressure and weak rulers. The Byzantine Empire eventually allied with Russia and invaded Bulgaria multiple times. By 1018, the Byzantines controlled Bulgaria. Byzantine rule was harsh, imposing high taxes. Bulgaria also suffered from having Crusaders pass through the land, which resulted in the destruction of crops and damage to towns.

By 1185, the Byzantine Empire had weakened. In 1202, the Bulgarian tsar, Kaloian, effectively obtained Bulgaria’s independence from the Byzantines. Bulgaria protected its independence through its recognition of the Pope. Bulgaria was able to expand its borders on the Adriatic Sea, which resulted in an increase of trade. Turnovo, the Bulgarian port-city, became the cultural capital of the state. Kaloian’s successor, Ivan Asen II, was the

last strong ruler during this period. By the mid-1200s, various parts of the state were controlled by the Byzantines, as well as Tatars and Hungarians. In 1277, Bulgaria saw the rise of a peasant hero, Ivailo, who led an uprising against feudal landlords. Ivailo was a former pig herder, who through his dynamic personality became very popular throughout the state. He became tsar and successfully kept out the Tatars. The Byzantines eventually defeated him. In the beginning of the 14th century, Bulgarian leaders Mikhail Shishman and Ivan Aleksandur expanded the territory.



However, by the late 1300s the Ottoman Empire rose in power and conquered the Balkan region, including Bulgaria in 1385. The Ottomans controlled the area from the 1300s through the 1700s. The Ottomans reorganized the structure of the nobles' land, the government, and the Bulgarian Church. There were forced conversions of Christians to Islam. Converters were rewarded with positions within the government. There were various Bulgarian uprisings during Ottoman rule. A number of the uprisings were backed by the Austrian Empire, a rival of the Ottomans. However, when the Austrians and Ottomans made peace, Austria no longer supported the uprisings. By the 18th century, Russia was advancing its power in the Balkan region. Russia shared a Slavic identity with the people of the Balkans and was able to gain support. After the defeat of the Ottomans in the Russo-Turkish War in 1774, the Ottomans signed the Treaty of Kuckek-Kainarji. One of the terms of the treaty was Russia's new right to protect Christians under Ottoman rule. In practice, the Treaty had an adverse affect on Balkan Christians, since the Ottoman rulers perceived them as direct enemies of the state.

Russian influence grew stronger in subsequent years. Most importantly, Russia promoted the Slavic identity throughout the Balkans. This strong sense of identity ignited revolts across the region. In the early 1800s, Serbia and Greece revolted against Turkish rule. Bulgaria provided support through soldiers and money.

In 1862, Georgi Rakovski organized an armed group of Bulgarians for the purpose of achieving independence. Rakovski united intellectuals and scholars. He also played a key role in the Ottomans' recognition of the Bulgarian Church. Later, Vasil Levski and Liuben Karavelov emerged as revolutionary activists. Levski and Karavelov organized revolutionary groups, including the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee (BRCC). The BRCC staged unsuccessful uprisings in 1875 and 1876. The Turkish government responded with violence. There were massacres in the town of Batak and neighboring areas, resulting in the deaths of over 30,000 Bulgarians. Russia was quick to demand reforms of Ottoman rule in response to the brutality in Bulgaria. When the Turks refused, Russia declared war in 1877.

Russia was triumphant. In 1878, it drafted the Treaty of Stefano, which called for Bulgarian independence under Russian protection. The treaty returned Bulgaria to its largest historical size, encompassing land along the Black and Aegean Seas. However, the West severely amended the treaty to reduce the size of Bulgaria, fearing that the Bulgarian state would be in reality a Russian ambassador. Many Bulgarians remained outside the territory of the new Bulgarian state. This caused a number of uprisings in Macedonia and Thrace, where a large group of Bulgarians wished to be united with Bulgaria.

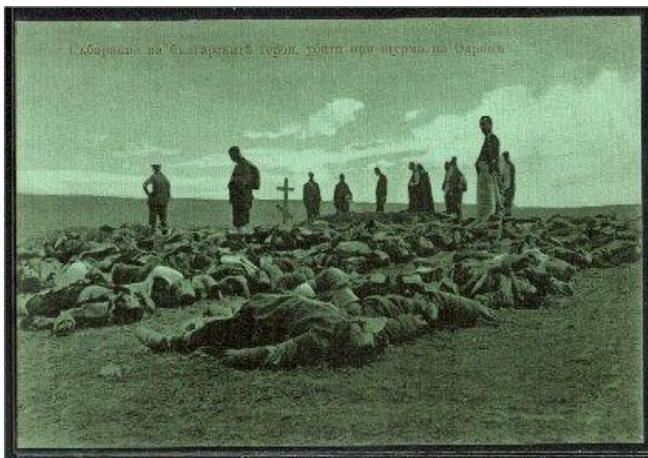


The new government of Bulgaria enjoyed much success under the leadership of Prince Alexander of Battenberg, who was elected by the parliament assembly. However, Russia continued to intrude in the governmental affairs of the state. Consequently, Bulgaria became relatively hostile towards Russia. The government had the Russian army removed from its territory and refused to build a Russian railway.

Bulgaria's first tsar was Ferdinand I. However, the prime minister, Stefan Stambolov (pictured to the right), was the strong leader of the parliament and was the principal executive. Stambolov was a powerful proponent and strict protector of Bulgarian independence. Stambolov recognized Russia's underlying plan to keep Bulgaria as its protectorate and opposed Russia's interventions. He also distrusted the Austrian Empire, and refused to ally Bulgaria with either threat. Stambolov as prime minister modernized Bulgaria. He signed new trade agreements and promoted agricultural reforms. He was eventually killed by Russian-supported political opponents.



Shortly after, Bulgaria's relationship with Russia improved. The next 20 years produced relative prosperity for Bulgaria. The state borrowed from West European industrialized countries, developed a strong banking system, and followed a favorable investment policy. Despite these developments, those in rural areas grew more dissatisfied with the government. A number of farmers organized and created the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU). Under the leadership of Aleksandur Stamboliyski, the BANU became the most powerful opposition of the government. The party had an extreme group of followers, who were mostly peasants and farmers harmed by poor harvests and high taxes.



By the early 1900s, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro formed the Balkan League. The coalition was supported by Russia with the hope that this unity would finally expel the Turks from the region. Despite their participation in the League, the relationship between Bulgaria and Serbia remained fragile because both countries claimed Macedonia. Nonetheless, the Balkan League acted soon after its formation, resulting in the First

Balkan War. Consequently, the Turks were overthrown. After the first war, tensions between Bulgaria and Serbia heightened. Bulgaria demanded to preserve its control over Macedonia based on its triumphs from the war. Only months after the first war, Bulgaria and Serbia were on opposite sides in the Second Balkan War in 1913. Greece, Romania,

and Turkey allied with Serbia. Bulgaria was quickly defeated. Ultimately, Bulgaria lost much of its territory, including most of Macedonia.

Bulgaria emerged after the Second Balkan War with much hostility toward its neighbors. In the beginning of World War I, both the Entente (Russia, France and Britain) and the Central Powers (Austria-Hungary and Germany) offered Bulgaria land in exchange for its alliance. Under Prime Minister Vasil Radoslavov, Bulgaria sided with Austria-Hungary and attacked Serbia and Montenegro in 1915.

The war became very unpopular in Bulgaria due to the high number of casualties. Also, many did not like Bulgaria's opposition to other Orthodox Christians. The BANU protested the war and Stamboliyski managed to gain even more support throughout the country. At the end of the war, Ferdinand I abdicated. His son, Boris III, became tsar. Bulgaria lost Macedonia and its territory along the Aegean Sea to Greece.

In 1920, Bulgaria held elections for prime minister, resulting in the election of Stamboliyski. World War I left Bulgaria with large amounts of debt and fewer resources. Stamboliyski turned to the Soviet Union for aid and support. In addition, Stamboliyski signed an agreement with Yugoslavia. In reaction to his warm ties with Yugoslavia, there was a nationalist coup that resulted in Stamboliyski's assassination. The Bulgarian Communist leader, Georgi Dimitrov, fled to the Soviet Union.



Boris III shaking hands with Hitler

The more conservative, Aleksandur Tsanskov, took power until 1931 when an agrarian and more moderate leader, Nikola Mushanov, was elected. However, Muchanov's power was short-lived. In 1935, Boris III took over the government himself, appointing puppet leaders. He banned all opposition parties and allied Bulgaria with Germany and Italy in World War II. Bulgaria allowed German troops to enter the country in order to invade Greece and Yugoslavia. Bulgarian soldiers occupied Thrace and Macedonia after German victories.

In 1943, Simeon II became the new tsar after Boris's death. Germany put Dobri Bozhilov into power as prime minister. At this time, communists within the country began to receive widespread support. The war was not going well for Germany and Italy, and

Bulgarians feared defeat. The communists used the imminent loss of the government to their advantage.

Despite its alliance with Germany and Italy, Bulgaria did not declare war on the Soviet Union. The government feared that there would be too much Russian support among its people. Nonetheless, the Soviet Union declared war on Bulgaria and invaded the country. In 1945, the Bulgarian government was removed from power. A number of its leaders were charged with war crimes and executed. Tsar Simeon was exiled from the country.

Though the Bulgarian government had supported anti-Semitic legislation, the government did not round up its nearly 50,000 Jews for sending to concentration camps. Therefore, Bulgarian Jews were not exterminated during the war. However, Bulgarian authorities did send Jews in Macedonia and Greece to German camps. Bulgarian authorities were responsible for the deaths of at least 11,000 Jews in these territories.

Georgi Dimitrov returned from the Soviet Union to become leader of Bulgaria. However, his leadership was short-lived. The Soviet government viewed him unfavorably because Dimitrov was eager to form an alliance with Tito's Yugoslavia. It is believed that the Soviet government was responsible for his sudden death in 1949. Todor Zhivkov became the new leader, and would remain in power for the next forty years. Zhivkov was closely aligned with Moscow and followed Moscow's orders religiously.

In the 1980s, upon Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in the USSR, Zhivkov could not separate himself from the public's view of him as a hard-line communist. The communists replaced him in 1990. Only a few months later, Bulgaria held democratic elections marking the end of communism. Two political parties, the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) and the Bulgarian Socialist Party (former communist parties), won seats in parliament, and each side won in separate presidential elections. However, due to Bulgaria's very difficult transition to privatization, neither party was able to stay in power for multiple terms. Bulgaria faced very high unemployment rates and a rise in inflation rates.

By the late 1990s, Simeon II, the former tsar of Bulgaria who had left the state as a young child, returned and victoriously ran for Prime Minister. Simeon II, now referred to as Simeon Saksoburggotski, has promoted liberal civil rights and closer ties with the West. Historically, he is the only monarch to be democratically elected to a different office after being deposed. He plans to run for president in 2006. Bulgaria joined NATO in 2004, and is expected to join the European Union in 2007.



Simeon Saksoburggotski

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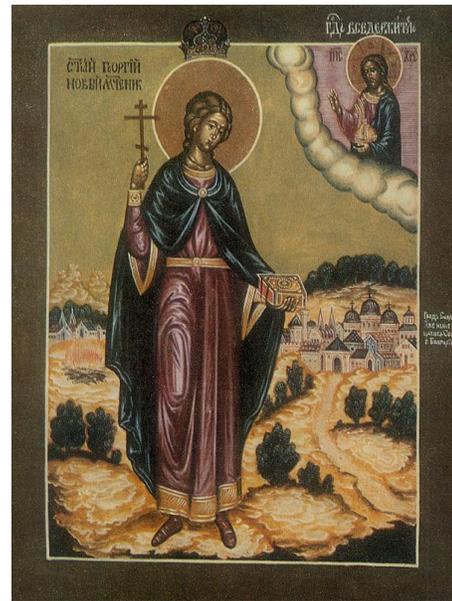
Religions

Bulgarian Orthodox

Bulgarian Orthodox has been the majority religion throughout the 20th and 21st century. The Bulgarian Orthodox Church gained much popularity before World War II because it was tied to strong sentiments of nationalism.

Though the church continued to exist throughout the communist period, its power as a separate entity was largely curtailed by the communist government. After the government took control of all church property, it seized the well-known Rila Monastery and turned it into a museum. The government prevented the church from participating in politics. The government also controlled and paid the salaries of the church's clergy maintaining much influence over the clergy. The number of priests decreased by half during communist rule.

Since 1990, there has been a revival in all religions in Bulgaria. Today, church baptisms, weddings and religious holidays are popularly celebrated. The government has returned most church property.



Islam

The Ottoman Turks encouraged Bulgarian conversion to Islam during their rule. Many converted to Sunni Islam. Some Bulgarians also converted to Kuzulbashi Islam because it allowed them to continue to go to confession and worship Christian saints. This was a unique hybrid of Islam and Christianity found only in Bulgaria.

Bulgarian Muslims were persecuted by the communist government. The communist government portrayed Muslims to be enemies of the state and did not consider them Bulgarian. The study of the Koran was against the law. Since 1990, Bulgarian Muslims have had more freedoms. However, Muslims continue to be targets of persecution and discrimination. Today, nearly 13% of the population is Muslim.



Catholicism

Catholics were greatly persecuted under communism. The religion was seen as being a mechanism of foreign control and a remnant of fascism. It was also considered anti-Russian. In the late 1950s through the 1960s, the government carried out a number of trials against priests, labeling them as traitors of the state who conspired with the West.

Since the 1990s, the government has not persecuted Catholics. Catholics enjoy much religious freedom today. The government invited Pope John Paul II to visit the country in 1990.



Judaism

Before World War II, there were about 50,000 Jews in Bulgaria. The Jewish population was largely mixed with the overall population. Though Bulgaria allied itself with Nazi Germany, it did not endorse or carry out the anti-Jewish policies. The Bulgarian government refused to round up its Jews and send them to concentration camps. While no Bulgarian Jews were sent to camps, the Bulgarian army did send Jews in Yugoslavia and Greece to concentration camps.

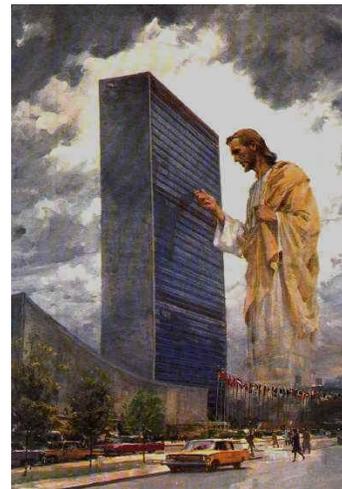


The number of Bulgarian Jews after World War II was about the same as before the war. This represented the largest number of Jews saved in a European country under Nazi occupation. A large number of Bulgaria's Jews moved to Israel after the war.

Protestantism

Protestantism first appeared in Bulgaria in the mid-19th century. The religion was introduced by Methodist and Congregationalist missionaries from the US. By 1875, the Methodists and Congregationalists had grown in popularity and organized into the Union of Evangelical Churches in Bulgaria. In 1871, the Union translated the entire Bible into Bulgarian and distributed copies throughout the country. In addition to Methodists and Congregationalists, the Pentecostal and Adventist Churches emerged in the early 1900s. Both became more popular in the mid-1950s.

Under communism, the Protestants were persecuted



more than the Catholics. Because the religion had close ties with the West, Protestants were considered traitors of the state. Over 30 clergymen were charged with treason. The government took all church property.

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Sofia's Religious Buildings in Photos

http://goeasteurope.about.com/od/bulgaria/ss/sofia_religious_7.htm

Famous Bulgarians

Leaders & Scholars

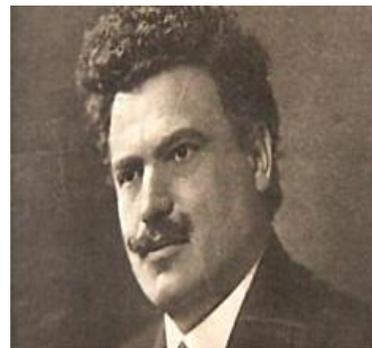
Saint Clement of Ohrid (840-916): He was the first Bulgarian archbishop. He accompanied Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius on their mission to Great Moravia, which they considered to be part of the Great Slavic Empire. At the time, however, German clergy controlled the area. During this period, there was an ongoing battle against the German clergy who wanted to preserve control over Great Moravia. In the late 800s, Boris I of Bulgaria commissioned Saint Clement to teach the Slavonic language to the clergy. In his lifetime, he taught the Slavonic language and Glagolitic alphabet to over 3,500 students.



Georgi Mikhailov Dimitrov (1882-1949): Bulgarian Communist leader. He was the leader of the failed 1923 uprising. He eventually returned to Bulgaria as leader of the Communist party in 1944. He became premier in 1946 and maintained a very close relationship with Stalin.

John the Exarch (~9th – 10th century): Theologian and scholar. He was a student at the Preslav Literary School, which was the first literary school in Bulgaria. The Preslav School was a cultural center in Bulgaria and home to Bulgaria's greatest philosophers and scholars. John received some of his formal education from a Byzantine school. Consequently, he was a master of the Greek language. His major contribution was his translation of writings of Basilus the Great, who was one of the three holy hierarchs and bishop of the Orthodox Church. John the Exarch also was a historian who documented the life of Simeon I.

Aleksandar Stamboliyski (1879-1923): He opposed Bulgaria's involvement in the Balkan Wars and World War I. He was imprisoned for his opposition against King Ferdinand. Stamboliyski eventually served as prime minister from 1919 until 1923.





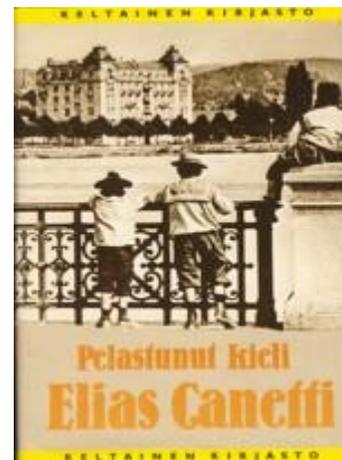
Stefan Stambolov (1854-1895): He believed in the independence of Bulgaria and joined the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee. He later became the leader of the organization. He led uprisings in Stara Zagara in 1875 and Turnova in 1876. He is considered to be one of the “founders of modern Bulgaria.” He was a great nationalist and served as prime minister for a number of years. As prime minister, he led the country with a clear economic plan and strong national government.



Todor Zhivkov (1911-1998): Communist leader and dictator for over 35 years. Zhivkov was a dogmatic follower of Soviet communism. He was a personal friend of most of Moscow’s leaders, including Brezhnev. In the late 1980s, due to pressures of Gorbachev’s *glasnost* and *perestroika* reforms, Zhivkov attempted half-hearted reforms in Bulgaria. However, his efforts were not enough. He was removed from power in 1989. He was later charged and convicted of embezzlement.

Arts & Literature

Elias Canetti (1905-1994): Winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. He studied chemistry in school, but literature and philosophy were his passion. He lived for much of his life in Austria, and wrote in German. Some of his major works include *The Wedding* (1932), *The Comedy of Vanity* (1934), *Crowds and Power* (1960), *Kafka’s Other Trial* (1974), and *the Agony of Flies* (1992). He focused on the sociology of crowds and the human instincts that take control in mobs. Canetti applied his analysis to the Nazis and referred to Hitler as “the paranoiac ruler of crowds.”



Boris Christoff (1914-1993): A great opera singer. He was known for his performances in Naples, Barcelona, Lisbon, and Rio de Janeiro. Though he was invited to debut in the US at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1950, he was unable to enter the country because he came from a Soviet bloc country. Christoff never did return to the Metropolitan Opera House, though he was later invited back.



Vasil Nikolov Drumov (1841-1901): Writer of the first original short story in Bulgaria, called *The Unfortunate Family*. He founded the Bulgarian Literature Society. Drumov was also a revolutionary who opposed the Stambolov and Ferdinand governments. Instead, he supported Russia's influence in the region.

Chernorizetz Hrabar (~9th – 10th century): He was a Bulgarian writer and scholar. He studied at the Preslav Literary School. He wrote *An Account of Letters*, which was the most popular work written in Old Slavonic. Hrabar was a proponent of the Glagolitic alphabet, which was the oldest Slavonic alphabet. He opposed the view that the Greek alphabet was the work of divinities.

Dobri Hristov (1875-1941): Musical composer who wrote mostly choral and church music. He studied in Prague under Antonin Dvorak, who inspired him to apply folk to his compositions. His sound was a beautiful marriage of Bulgarian tradition and pure classical.

Christo Javaheff (1935-): Bulgarian-born artist. Married to Jeanne-Claude Denat de Guillebon. This artistic duo is responsible for some of the most famous installation art in the world. The couple's earliest accomplishments included wrapping a coastline in Australia and a valley in Colorado with over 400 meters of fabric. The couple has wrapped a



number of skyscrapers and bridges, including the Pont Neuf in 1985. The couple received negative attention with their Japanese and Californian *Umbrellas* project in 1990. In California, one bystander was killed when one of the oversized umbrellas was blown by the wind. Also, a worker was killed during installation. Most recently, the couple exhibited *The Gates* (shown above) in Central Park, New York.



Raina Kabaivanska (~1935-): A great soprano singer. She studied opera singing and piano at the Bulgarian State Academy of Music. In 1957, she performed at the Bulgarian National Opera in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. In the 1960s, after performances in Italy, she became known worldwide. She has performed in major opera theatres in New York, London, Moscow, and Buenos Aires.

Miladinov Brothers (1830-1862): Authors of *Bulgarian Folk Songs* in 1861. This work includes a total of 665 songs and 23,559 verses. It was one of the first works compiled and written in Bulgarian.

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Language

Bulgarian is an Indo-European language, which is the largest language family in Europe. Bulgarian is a Slavic language within this family. Early Bulgarian appeared in the late 9th century and early 10th century. St. Cyril and St. Methodius translated the Bible from Greek into early Bulgarian. It was the first Slavic language to be written. Modern Bulgarian emerged by the 16th century. Originally, Bulgarian was heavily influenced by the Turkish language. Many Turkish words were used frequently. However, by the 19th Century, Russian and Church Slavonic became the main foreign influences on the language. Today, Bulgarian is part of the Balkan language union, a term for those languages in the Balkans that share similarities in grammar, syntax, and vocabulary.

Below are some Bulgarian words and phrases:

- Здравей (zdravéi) — Hello
- Здравсти (zdrásti) — Hi
- Добро утро (dobró útro) — Good morning
- Добър ден (dóbær dén) — Good day
- Добър вечер (dóbær vécher) — Good evening
- Лека нощ (léka nósht) — Good night
- Довиждане (dovízhane) — Good-bye
- Чао (chao) (*informal*) - Bye
- Как си? (kák si) (*informal*) — How are you?
- Как сте? (kák sté) (*formal, and also plural form*) - How are you?
- Да (dá) - Yes
- Не (né) - No
- Може би (mózhé bí) - Maybe
- Какво правиш? (kakvó právish) (*informal*) — What are you doing?
- Какво правите? (kakvó právite) (*formal, and also plural form*) - What are you doing?
- Добре съм (dobré sǝm) — I'm fine
- Всичко най-хубаво (vsíchko nai-húbavo) — All the best
- Поздрави (pózdravi) — Regards
- Благодаря (blagodaryá) (*formal and informal*) — Thank you
- Мерси (mersi) (*informal*) - Thank you
- Моля (mólia) — Please
- Извинете! (izvinéte) (*formal*) — Excuse me!
- Извинявай! (izviniávai) (*informal*) — Sorry!
- Колко е часът? (kólko e chasót) — What's the time?
- Говорите ли ...? (govórite li...) — Do you speak ...?

Reference:

Bulgarian language http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulgarian_language

Economy



Historically, Bulgaria was controlled by other foreign leaders and empires for hundreds of years. Situated on the Black Sea, Bulgaria was a target for foreign control. The Ottomans controlled the country for hundreds of years. When Bulgaria became autonomous in the late 19th century, the country did not have its own economic structure in place. Consequently, Bulgaria struggled in its transition as an independent state. Bulgaria's government continued to experiment for the next several decades.

Bulgaria's economy experienced continuous challenges throughout the 20th century. After World War I, the country was forced to pay very costly war reparations to the Entente. In addition to the burdensome reparations, Bulgaria also faced a large increase in its population from Bulgarian refugees expelled from Yugoslavia. The state found itself with a stumbling economy and an enormous refugee problem. By the 1930s, the Great Depression hit Bulgaria. Unemployment rose dramatically and food prices soared. Though Bulgaria developed an industrial base before World War II, it remained a mostly agrarian society.

After the war, the Communist Party took control of the government and implemented economic reforms. The reforms collectivized farms and seized private industries. The Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) launched its Two-Year Plan. The Two-Year Plan's goals included raising industrial production by nearly 70% and agricultural production by 35%. However, both sectors were severely under-budgeted to reach their goals. Additionally, there were shortages in energy, labor and equipment. The BCP created the Bulgarian National Bank, which became the only bank of Bulgaria. The BCP froze personal bank accounts resulting in the reduction of the money supply by two-thirds. By 1988, industry made up 38% of the economy, which was an enormous shift from its earlier figure of 7.9% prior to the BCP's reforms.

Despite its transition to an industrial society, Bulgaria's economy was greatly injured by a number of factors. The government was poorly managed and over-spent. Bulgaria's job market was unable to grow because the country was operating at full employment. In the 1980s, Bulgaria felt the disadvantageous impact of its low birthrates from the 1960s and 1970s. The country's labor force shrank. In 1989, Turkish-Bulgarian tensions reached their peak. Over 300,000 Turks in Bulgaria returned to Turkey, resulting in a large

decrease in the labor population. Also, by the early 1990s, a number of highly educated Bulgarians left the country to pursue opportunities abroad. The government was unable to provide people with public services like welfare and healthcare.

After the communist government's fall in 1989, the new government proposed rapid privatization. The IMF provided Bulgaria with a three-year loan aimed at developing financial markets, improving the tax system, and liberalizing trade. Bulgaria's main problems concerning reforms were its large increase in unemployment and inflation.

Bulgaria was one of the few East European countries to elect the Communist Party in its first free elections. Consequently, the BCP continued to control the government and reforms were sluggish. The markets remained uncompetitive in the early 1990s. In 1996, Bulgaria's market collapsed due to its poor banking system and its lack of international lenders. In 2001, the newly elected government got Bulgaria back on its course for economic recovery. Since 2001, the economy has grown. The country's GDP is expected to grow by about 5% in 2005 and 2006.

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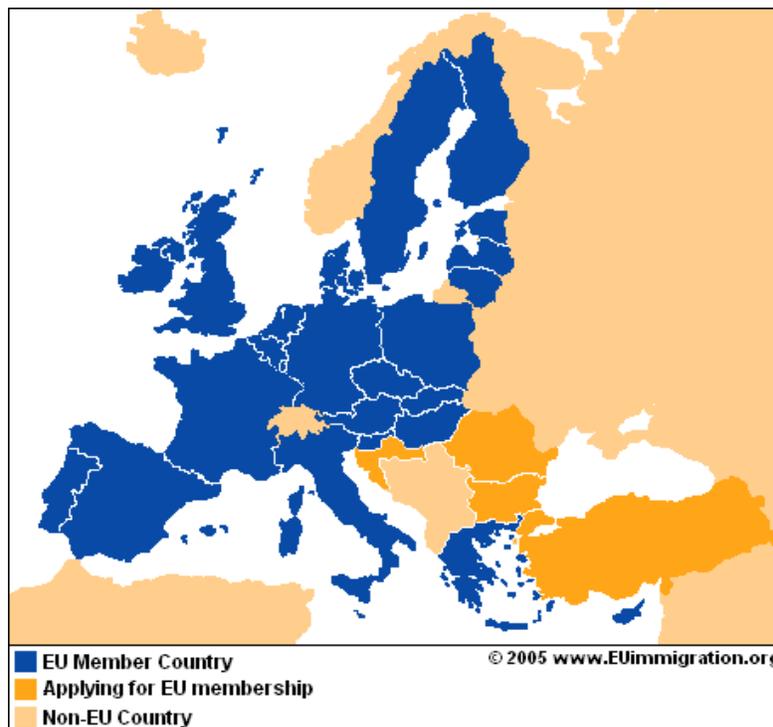
[http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+bg0102\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+bg0102))

Economy of Bulgaria

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulgaria#Economy>

Bulgaria and the European Union

Bulgaria began diplomatic relations with the European Union (EU) in 1988. In 1990, Bulgaria signed the Convention on Trade, Business and Economic Relations. In 1993, the EU's mission changed as a consequence of the newly independent countries in Eastern Europe and Central Europe. The EU pledged that "the associated countries in Central and Eastern Europe that so desire shall become members of the European Union." As long as countries meet the requirements identified by the EU, they have the opportunity to become members of the EU.



Shortly after this announcement, Bulgaria received funding under the *Poland and Hungary Assistance for Restructuring of their Economies (PHARE)* program. *PHARE* initially began as a means to assist Central European countries in their transition to market-based economies and democracies. *PHARE*'s objective was to focus on economic and political restructuring. *PHARE*'s programs included strengthening public administration and institutions. Bulgaria also receives funding through two other pre-accession programs: *Instrument for Structured policies for Pre-Accession (ISPA)* and *Special Accession Program for Agricultural and Rural Development (SAPARD)*. *ISPA* finances transportation infrastructure initiatives, as well as environmental development. *SAPARD* finances reforms in agriculture and rural development.

In the early 1990s, Bulgaria began negotiations and roundtable discussions concerning trade with the EU Commission. In 1995, Bulgaria submitted its application for EU membership. Subsequently, the EU created a number of reports concerning steps that

Bulgaria needed to take to become a member. The EU identified the following needs for reform:

- Increase privatization
- Decrease organized crime and corruption
- Reform administration and judicial system
- Develop free movement of goods, persons, and services
- Reform corporate law
- Enforce tax systems
- Lessen violence and discrimination against minority groups
- Advance mental health facilities and treatment
- Promote protection of the environment

The majority of Bulgarians support Bulgaria's accession into the EU as evidenced through public surveys taken by the government. However, it is expected that fewer people will support accession when the date of accession nears. The government has established information centers to provide the public with information concerning the EU and its effects in Bulgaria. The information centers often host debates concerning accession



issues. The EU has also published and circulated pamphlets, newspapers, books, magazines, and bulletins that provide information about the European Union. There have also been radio and television broadcasts. Nonetheless, citizens remain largely uninformed about the stages of the accession process and what requirements they will need to fulfill. Most think that integration into the EU will only affect the government.

Ultimately, Bulgaria needs to meet the political, economic, and legal criteria established by the EU. Bulgaria has set up a number of ministries and administrative departments to carry out these reforms. Some of these include:

- Council of European Integration
- Coordination Council
- European Integration Directorate Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mission of the Republic of Bulgaria to European Countries
- Countries of European Directorate Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Delegation for Negotiations

In order to become a member of the EU, Bulgaria will need to be in compliance with the over 80,000 pages of EU law. Bulgaria is expected to meet these criteria by 2007.

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Relations with Bulgaria

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/bulgaria/key_documents.htm

Government and Politics

After decades of authoritarian rule, Bulgaria became a parliamentary democracy in 1991.

Executive

The head of state and commander of chief is the President. The President is elected for five-year terms. The President is unable to legislate, but does have certain veto powers over the parliament.

The Prime Minister is the main executive and chairs the Council of Ministers. The Council manages the state budget and maintains law and order. The ministers included in the Council of Chairs are shown to the right.

Council of Chairs includes:
• Prime Minister (Chair)
• Minister of Foreign Affairs
• Minister of Education and Science
• Minister of Emergencies
• Minister of Finance
• Minister of Economy and Energy
• Minister of Transport and Communications
• Minister of Interior
• Minister of Culture

Legislature

The legislative branch, called the National Assembly, is made up of a unicameral parliament. It consists of 240 deputies, who are elected for four-year terms. The parliament enacts laws, approves the budget, declares war, and deploys troops outside of Bulgaria. The picture to the right is the House of Parliament in Sofia.



Judiciary

The Judiciary is made up of regional, district, and appeal courts, and the highest appeal court called the Court of Cassation. The Supreme Judicial Council appoints judges in the above-mentioned courts. The Council is made up of 25 members, who serve for five-year terms. The Supreme Judicial Council members are appointed by the National Assembly or are promoted within the government to set-aside positions. A separate court, called the Constitutional Court, interprets the Constitution. This Court includes 12 justices who serve nine year terms. They are appointed by the President and National Assembly.

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Bulgaria Background Notes

<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/ci/bu/>

Bulgarian National Anthem

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mila_Rodino

Milo Rodino (Dear Motherland)

Мила Родино (in Bulgarian)

Горда Стара планина,
до ней Дунава синей,
слънце Тракия огрява,
над Пирина пламеней.

Прпев:

Мила Родино,
ти си земен рай,
твойта хубост, твойта
прелест,
ах, те нямат край.

Паднаха борци безчет
за народа наш любим,
майко, дай ни мъжка сила
пътя им да продължим.

Mila Rodino (transliteration)

Gorda Stara planina,
do ney Doonava siney,
sluntse Trakiya ogryava,
nad Pirina plameney,

Pripev:

Mila Rodino,
ti si zemen ray,
tvoyna hoobost, tvoyna
prelest,
akh, te nyamat kray.

Padnakha bortsy bezchet
za naroda nash liobim,
mayko, day ni muzhka
sila
putya im da produlzhim.

Dear Motherland (English translation)

Proud Balkan mountains,
next to them the Danube flows,
the sun sheds its light over
Thrace,
shining over Pirin.

Chorus:

Dear native land,
you are paradise on earth,
your beauty and your charm,
ah, they never end.

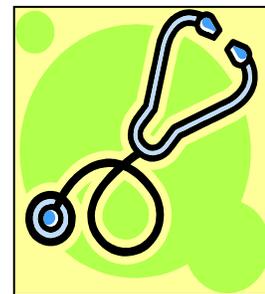
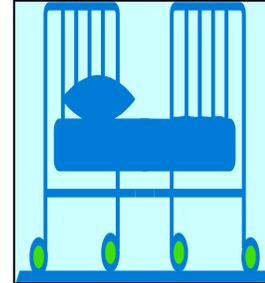
Many fighters gave their life
for our dear nation,
Mother, give us strength
to follow in their steps.

Welfare

Health

Up to the 1920s, many Bulgarians relied largely on herbal medicine. Most Bulgarians knew about home remedies, including magical cures and special drink remedies for common ailments. Herbal medicine continues to remain popular.

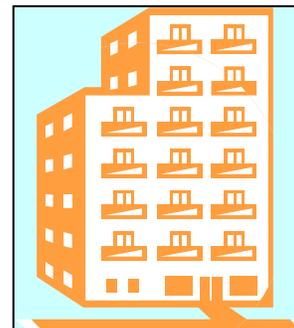
By the mid-20th century, medicine and healthcare had greatly advanced. Life expectancy increased and infant mortality rates decreased. Despite Bulgaria's healthcare improvements, its infant mortality rate remained one of the highest in the world. Throughout much of the century, health facilities were poor and unequipped with modern technology. There were shortages of hospital beds and medical staff, including doctors and nurses. In 1990, Bulgaria began to receive foreign aid for medicine and medical equipment. Throughout the 1990s, lack of funding and increased demand for care and need for medicine burdened the health system.



The most common illnesses in Bulgaria are heart disease, cancer, and respiratory illnesses. The country also has one of the highest rates of stroke per year. A large number of adults are overweight, which contributes to health risks. The main reason is the type of diet and lifestyle. Environmental pollution has been a large source of increased health problems. It has caused an increase in birth defects, miscarriages, lead poisoning and various cancers. Children and the elderly are at the highest risk from these pollutants.

Housing

In the 1990s, more than half of Bulgarians felt that their current housing was inadequate. Most Bulgarians who live in cities reside in high-rise apartment buildings, which were built during under communism. Apartments usually have no more than three rooms. Many families are forced to convert living rooms and kitchens into makeshift bedrooms, especially since many Bulgarian households also include grandparents. The majority of couples live with their parents after marriage.



Housing in the cities is scarce and has driven up the cost of housing. Though the majority of Bulgarians would like to improve their housing, it is too expensive to do so. Homelessness has become an epidemic since the early 1990s. Many Bulgarians were unable to pay the high increases in rent and mortgage payments for their homes.

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Housing

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Political Priority for Housing

<http://www.unece.org/env/hs/prgm/cph/countries/bulgaria/cp1-conc.pdf>

Education

The first system of organized education was in the form of student liturgies and scripture readings. Beginning in the mid-19th century, children were encouraged to congregate to memorize religious writings. This eventually led to the creation of *chitalishtas*, which were youth community centers. By the end of the 19th century, the government passed laws that formalized education. In 1878, primary school for both sexes was made compulsory throughout the country. Students learned basic reading, writing, and arithmetic. Eventually, the educational system modeled schools in Western Europe, including Germany and France.

Under communism, formal education was used as a mechanism to spread Marxist ideas and beliefs. The government focused on increasing literacy, so that literacy programs for children and adults were made available throughout the country. One of the goals of increasing literacy was to have a larger number of Bulgarians able to read pamphlets and newspapers imposing Marxist doctrine. *Pravda*, the main propaganda newspaper of the Soviet Union, was widely circulated throughout the country. Russian became a mandatory second language to be taught to children as young six years old.



Bulgarian First Graders

In 1991, education went through a major restructuring. Three grade levels were established—primary (ages 6 through 9), basic (ages 10 through 12), and secondary (ages 13 through 16). Education became compulsory to age 16. The new government wished to eradicate the old communist educational structure. However, reforms met many obstacles. Teachers and school administrators were not readily willing to change their curriculum, which had been used for decades. Also, the government did not immediately have the funding to update old materials that were written with a communist bias. Despite these hindrances, there have been recent reforms in educational curricula. Also, a number of specialty schools have been opened. Religious schools, art institutes, and music conservatories have become more popular.

At the university level, Bulgarian education remains poor. Technical fields, including computer science and mathematics, are not often studied. Since 1991, foreign countries, including the United States, have provided assistance for higher education institutes. Private universities have been established. Though the education offered at these universities is comparatively better than at the public universities, most Bulgarians are unable to afford the tuition of these private schools. Higher education continues to be in need of reform.



Sofia University

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Education

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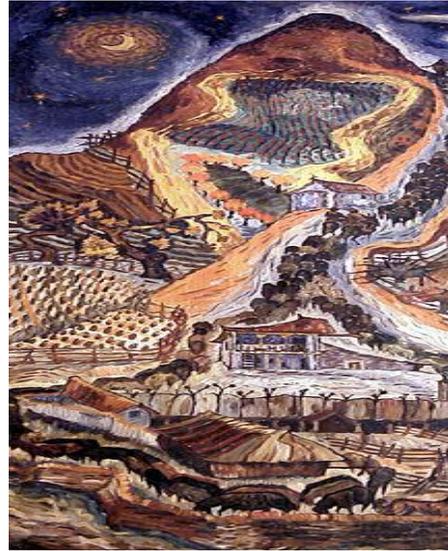
Pictures

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<http://www.gta.igs.net/~vpetkov/pictures/bulgaria/SofiaUniversity.jpg>

Bulgarian Artists

Zlatyu Boyadzhiev (1903-1976): Best known for his portraits and landscapes. He used vibrant color to depict different emotions. His work is divided into two periods. During the first period, prior to 1951, he was more restricted in his artistic form. In 1953, Boyadzhiev suffered from paralysis due to illness. After this time, he was forced to paint with his other hand. His work became more expressive during his second period and included some of his most well-known creations.



Vladimir Dimitrov-Maistora (1882-1960): Most of his artwork was in the form of landscapes. He also painted scenes capturing peasant life. Maistora romanticized the farmer's life and captured folk festivals and traditions in his work. He was a great patriot, and his strong love of his country was a theme of his paintings.



Iliya Petrov (1903-1975): A realist painter. His work was most developed in his portraits. Petrov's portraits were eerily life-like, capturing much expression, including pain and disappointment. He was influenced by a strong sense of patriotism, which is exhibited in his historic scenes and landscapes.



Tzanko Lavrenov (1896-1978): His work centered on a religious theme. Many of his paintings were of Bulgarian monasteries. He also painted murals, similar to the classic icons. He used folk influences in a number of paintings.



Svetlin Rousseau (b. 1933): Contemporary painter of portraits and historic scenes. Rousseau is considered unique in his modern depictions of a more traditional form of art. He is considered a great preserver of Bulgarian sentiment and spirit.



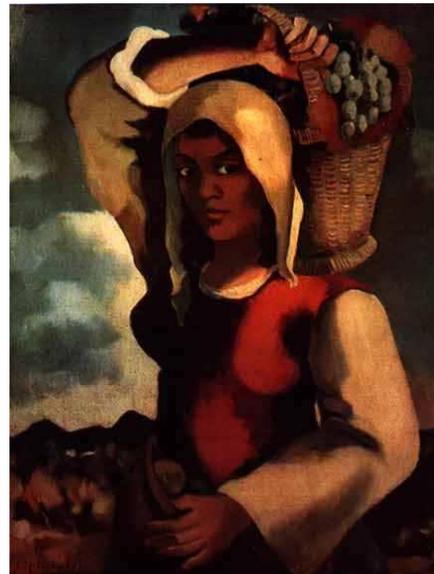
Ognyan Markov (b. 1935): He studied architecture and later lectured at the Higher Institute of Architecture and Civil Engineering and Academy of Fine Arts in Sofia. His paintings are known for their expansive use of the complete color palette. He mostly paints abstract figures and landscapes. Critics have applauded his “vital force.” His work has been described as “abstract symphonies that are perfect in special forms”. His work has been shown throughout the world, including in Germany and Italy.



Julius Mordecai Pincas, also known as “Pascin”(1885-1930): A tortured artist who suffered from depression, Pascin painted thousands of watercolors and portraits. He was well-known in the artistic circle in France. Many thought of him as a French expressionist painter. He was also fondly immortalized in Hemingway’s story “A Moveable Feast,” which described an evening with Pascin. Pascin was popular for lavish parties and being surrounded by numerous people. All of the galleries in Paris closed on the day of his funeral in honor of his life.



Bencho Obreshkov (b. 1899-1870): Studied painting in Dresden. He was a great contributor to the National Art Society of Bulgaria and the New Artists Society through lectures and artwork. He painted mostly portraits and figures. He celebrated Bulgarian everyday life, especially the life of peasants. His paintings have been called “daring and expressive”.



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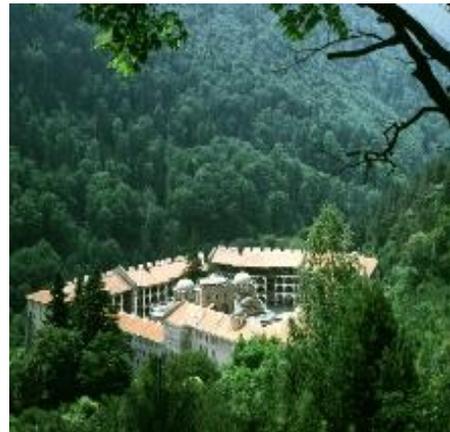
Bulgarian Architecture

Greek colonies emerged along the coast of the Black Sea in prehistoric times. These colonies included Apollonia and Odesos. The colonies were impressive in their design and sophistication. They had public facilities, temples, baths and amphitheatres. Some colonies were later built on by the Ottomans to create fortresses. The original foundations of the colonies were incorporated into fortress designs.



With the creation of the first Bulgarian Kingdom, many castles and fortresses were built throughout the country by 700 A.D. Many of the castles were decorated with mosaics and mural paintings. These were built to protect local rulers. Most were designed after Roman fortresses.

After Bulgaria converted to Christianity, many churches were built throughout the country. In addition to churches, monasteries were erected. Monasteries were centers of religious studies. Monasteries also became pivotal for art, language translation, and even economics. The Preslav Monastery had art studios where the first Slavic icons and canvases were painted. There were often farm lands and residential lands within the protected monastery walls. The Rila Monastery, pictured to the right, became one of the largest centers of culture and art. It is the largest monastery in the Balkans.





In the 18th century, whole Bulgarian villages were designed in styles of the Renaissance. Most homes were two to three stories. These homes have a unique supporting wooden beam for the second story. Often a window extends beyond the main structure of the house, supported by these beams. The towns of Plovdiv, Nessebar, and Tryavno illustrate this design.

Under communist rule, most government buildings of significance were built in Neo-Classical style. Neo-Classicism is a nostalgic style that emulates ancient Roman and Greek designs, such as the Pantheon and the Parthenon. The National Palace of Culture, as well as the Plovdiv Amphitheatre, were built in this style. As for private residences, Soviet-style apartment buildings were erected to house the growing number of city dwellers, especially in Sofia.



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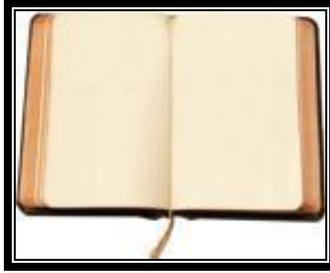
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Photos from <http://www.bulgariatravel.org/etis/gallery.php?offset=80>

Bulgarian Literature



The birth of Bulgarian literature was delayed by the control of the Byzantine Empire and later the Ottoman Empire. Bulgarian works emerged slowly in the 15th century. Before that time, Bulgaria preserved a predominate oral tradition. In the late 1700s, the historian and monk Paisif wrote the *History of the Slavs and Bulgarians*. This was the first major work written by a Bulgarian. Later, strong feelings of patriotism triggered the growth in popularity of Bulgarian poetry and drama, including works by the poet Dobri Voynikov.

Ivan Vazon, considered the “father of Bulgarian literature,” wrote *Under the Yoke*, which illustrated the oppression of the Bulgarians under the Ottomans. In the 1890s, Aleko Konstantinov wrote what has been considered the most popular Bulgarian work, *Bay Ganyo*. The story captured the newly emerging bourgeois class. The main character was delineated as greedy and extremely arrogant. Other authors focused on the simplicity of peasant life. Elin Pelin was a great narrator, depicting rural communities. He was also one of the first Bulgarian authors of children’s stories. His stories include remarkable color and lovable characteristics.

Many of Bulgaria’s best known poets wrote at the end of the 19th century, including Pencho Slaveychov and Dimco Debelyanov. Other writers who were popular in the late 1800s were comedy authors, St. L. Kostov and Angel Karaliychev, who both provided social commentaries on the new rich class. By World War I, revolutionary writers Hristo Smirnerski and Nikola Y. Vaptsarov became the prominent literary forces.

Elias Canetti is the most well-known Bulgarian writer. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1981. Today, there are a variety of world-known Bulgarian writers. In the last twenty years, more writers have embraced spiritualism in their writings, including Viktor Paskov. Blaga Dimitrova is considered the “most influential female writer.” Jordan Radichkov is a master of historical narratives.

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Customs

Baba Marta (Grandmother March)

From Baba Marta <http://www.b-info.com/places/Bulgaria/BabaMarta/>



Grandmother March is behind a famous tradition in Bulgaria, as well as the mythical explanation as to why March has 31 days and February only 28.

Before the beginning of March each year, Bulgarians present to relatives and friends *martenitsa* (also known in some Bulgarian regions as *martenka*) – a double red and white tassel – to bring health and happiness.

On the first day of March, people in Bulgaria put the *martenitsa*-s on their clothes or wrists and wish each other health and happiness with “*Chestita baba Marta*” - (in English, “Happy Grandma Marta”). “Marta” comes from the word for March (Mart) in Bulgarian.

This is an ancient Bulgarian (pagan) tradition (nobody knows exactly how old, but it is probably more than one thousand years old), and it symbolizes the end of the cold winter and the coming of the spring.

Martenitsa-s are supposed to be worn until the person sees the first stork (supposedly returning from the South, and not the one in the Zoo). Then *martenitsa*-s are thrown onto a tree. The red and white colors symbolize the snow and the blood from an old story where a stork brings the blessing for health to a small child from its parents, who are far away. The giving of the *martenitsa* makes you expect the spring very soon. The “arrival” of the stork indicates that this has happened.

In Bulgaria, March 1 marks the beginning of spring, and the month of March is personified as Baba Marta (Grandmother March), a hunched old woman whose unpredictable temper is reflected in the changeable March weather. She is always arguing

with her brother, Little Sechko (February), who likes a drop to drink.

One year, spring came earlier than usual in February, and an old woman decided that she would take her goats up to pasture before the proper time on March 1. “Why should Baba Marta mind?” she said to herself. “After all, isn’t she a woman, like I am? Grandmother to grandmother, what will she do?”

Baba Marta overheard her, and watched in a fury as the old woman set off up the mountainside with her herd of goats. At once Marta stormed off to her brother, Little Sechko. “Brother,” she cried. “Now it’s time for you to repay me for stealing my wine. Lend me three of your days so that I can kill that old woman who mocks me by taking her goats early to pasture.” So Little Sechko, remembering how Marta had once threatened him, gave his sister what she wanted.

Then Marta started to blow and to storm, to rant and rampage across the mountain, breathing icy winds and blizzards of snow. For three days and three nights she raged. And the old woman on the bare mountainside shivered and shook until her heart grew numb, her blood froze and she turned to stone.

For three days and three nights Baba Marta raged, but at last her anger subsided, the weather calmed and the sun smiled.

The people of the village wondered what had happened to the old woman during the terrible snowstorm, so as soon as the fine weather came they went up the mountain pastures to look for her. They found her turned to stone. But from her bottom half, a spring of water was flowing. Although the villagers were very thirsty after their long climb, they could not bring themselves to bend down and drink because it made them laugh so much!

So, it is said that Baba Marta wreaked her revenge and had the last laugh on the old woman. And that is why Baba Marta has 31 days, and Little Sechko only has 28.

Yes or No? (A head shake or head nod?)

Bulgarians have a custom that leaves many visitors confused. And it can make communication a challenge – see the account below!

Enough to Make Your Head Spin

By Elizabeth Vernon, Bulgaria Peace Core Volunteer

http://www.peacecorps.gov/wvs/cybervol/2004-5/Vernon_Sept_Letter.html

“I’ll have coffee,” I tell the waitress at a cafe during my first week in Bulgaria. She shakes her head from side to side. “OK, tea,” I say, thinking that maybe there’s something wrong with the coffee machine. Again, she shakes her head. “Um ... cola?” Once more, she shakes her head. By now, she’s looking at me like I’m crazy, and I’m

totally confused. Then I remember: A shake of the head by a Bulgarian means “yes,” and a nod – what the rest of the world does for “yes” – means “no.”

I knew about this before I arrived in Bulgaria, but it’s amazing how something that seems simple and easy enough to remember can lead to so much confusion, and so many funny moments. Early on, when I communicated with Bulgarians, it seemed like my head was moving in ways my brain hadn’t told it to. Sometimes I wanted to grab my ears and use them as controls. Learning a language with a completely different alphabet was challenging enough, without trying to figure out whether to nod or shake.

When I began teaching, all this head-bobbing made communication in the classroom interesting. Although I had made sure my students knew about this cultural difference on the first day of school, we all frequently forgot what we were doing. My students would answer a question correctly or say something really great, and I’d nod. A second later, they were trying to change their answer, since they thought the nod meant they had been wrong. But the confusion went both ways. Sometimes I’d ask a student a yes-or-no question and he or she would answer with a nod or a shake, without saying anything. Not remembering the difference, we’d have to go through the motions several times before I understood. Frequently I found myself saying: “*Da* or *ne* – just tell me one or the other!”



Elizabeth with her fifth-grade students

I also had to deal with confused colleagues who couldn’t figure out why I kept nodding my head while they talked, as if I were arguing with them. In truth, I was just trying to show that I understood and was following along with the story. And then there was the even greater problem of how to act with Bulgarians who spoke English and were aware of the nodding-shaking problem. Was I supposed to nod or shake for “yes” when I was speaking English with them? And what was I supposed to do when we were speaking Bulgarian? What if we were in a situation where both languages were being spoken? To make matters even more complicated, after going a couple of weeks without any contact with other Americans, we’d finally get together and I’d find myself shaking when I should have been nodding. My head was spinning!

After a year of living here, the gestures have become second nature, and I rarely have to think about what my body language should be. Once in a while, if I’m really tired or not thinking clearly, I find my head moving in a semi-circular nod-shake wobble, which the Bulgarians find quite amusing.

Along with all the funny moments this cultural difference has provided me and my Bulgarian friends, I've come to understand the importance of using all my senses in a new culture, and of not making assumptions that a gesture or other form of communication, even one that seems very simple and universal, means the same thing everywhere. Beyond being conscious of the yes-no difference, I must make sure I am really listening and watching for other clues when someone is communicating with me. Here, a sound along the lines of a cluck of the tongue often accompanies a "no," and being aware of that helps me steer clear of confusion. Tuning in to how the people around me communicate has brought me closer to the people and the culture here. And whenever we slip up and forget to control our heads, the laughter that follows brings us together. Luckily, a smile is a smile the world over.

Bulgarian Fairytales

The Golden Girl

http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/culture/Completed_projects/Legends/bulgaria.asp

Once upon a time there lived a man and a woman. They had a daughter, as lovely as a flower. She was so young and pretty that no one could take his eyes off her. They lived in harmony and happiness, but it was not meant to go on for long. The mother fell seriously ill and soon died.

The man was left all alone with the girl. It was hard for him to take care of everything, so his neighbors advised him to remarry. Soon he brought home his new wife. The stepmother herself had a girl, and she came to hate her stepdaughter so much that she could not stand her. She scolded and berated her all the time, she made her do the hardest housework, and she constantly quarreled with her husband because of her. One evening she told him:

“I don’t want your daughter in this house. Get her out of here! If you don’t, I will leave!”

This saddened the man. He loved his daughter dearly and had no intention to yield to her stepmother. They began quarreling every day. A quarrel today, a quarrel tomorrow, a quarrel in the morning, a quarrel at lunch time until finally the father saw red. He was weary of such a life and agreed to do what his second wife wanted.

She kneaded a small flat round loaf with ash, put it in her husband’s bag and sent him and her stepdaughter off. She told him not to come back home unless he was alone.

The man led the girl to a desolate mountain overgrown with thousands of trees. When they had climbed up the highest peak he took out the small flat round loaf, rolled it down the steep slope and sent the girl to bring it back so that they could have lunch.

The girl rushed after the loaf and chased it in the dark bushes for quite a long while. When she came back her father had left. She began calling and searching for him. She went on shouting and crying, and wandering around the wilderness until dark. All at once in the twilight she saw a tiny house with a tilted roof in the middle of the clearing. From the window the girl heard a voice.

“Who’s there? Who’s crying? Are you a boy or a girl? If you are a boy – then off you go, if you are a girl, do come in!”

A strange old woman lived inside the tiny forest house.



The greenish graying hair on the old woman's head had thinned out as a forest after a storm, but it was long and the wind blew it on all sides, so that it looked like a cobweb blown by the wind. She had a pointed nose, long sharp nails and there was an owl perched on her shoulder. It was not difficult to guess that the old woman was the forest witch. She took the girl in and fed her.

In the morning the girl got up early, and while the witch was still asleep she tidied up the room, sprinkled the floor with water and swept in and outside the cottage. When the queer old woman got up, she washed up, took her owl and went about her own business in the forest. But before she left she told the stepdaughter to feed her small animals – some snakes and lizards. A person would rather run away from such scary reptiles than feed them.

“And don't be afraid of my animals,” the witch said, “they do not bite.”

The girl poured boiling water on some bran, left it to cool and fed the snakes and lizards. On her neck she wore a necklace made of beads, which she unthreaded and tied a tiny little necklace on each of the small animals.

When the old woman came back, she was greeted by the animals who boasted about their necklaces.

“Granny, the girl tied a tiny necklace on my neck! Granny, the girl tied a necklace on my neck, too!”

And the old woman answered, “Granny will tie the girl a necklace! Granny will tie the girl a necklace!”

A river ran near the tiny house. After the two of them had lunch – they ate the tasty meal that the girl had prepared – the old woman said, “Let's go to the river so that you clean my hair from the shingles.”

They were sitting by the river and as the old woman warmed her old bones in the sun, she yawned.

“You know, the way you are cleaning my hair, I might fall asleep. When you see the water running red, do not wake me. When you see it colored in blue, do not wake me. When it becomes yellow, well then you should wake me!”

In a little while the old woman did fall asleep, and as the girl went about with cleaning her hair from the shingles, she saw that the river was colored in red. When the red water had flown out, it was blue water that flooded in. When it had flown out, green water came in. Then it turned black. At last yellow water flooded the river, and the girl woke the old woman up. She quickly grabbed the girl by the hair, dipped her in the river and yelled:

“Catch, dear, whatever you can! Catch, dear, whatever you can!”

The girl obeyed. She caught what she could lay her hands on, and when the old woman pulled her out of the river, she held a chest.

The witch walked the girl to the road that led out of the forest, waved for farewell and disappeared. And the girl – following the road – went back home.



As she stood on the doorstep, her stepmother and father gasped – a golden girl stood at the door and shone with unprecedented beauty. The golden girl stretched out her hands and gave the chest to her father, and when he opened it, what did they see but gold coins and pearls piled up to the top of it. From that day on, the stepmother began to languish away with envy. She did not leave her husband alone, and she constantly nagged him to take her own daughter to the forest so that she could become as beautiful and rich as his own.

“If you want me to take her, I will,” the poor man finally gave up.

Then the stepmother rolled up her sleeves, scooped up the best white flour and sifted it out three times. She kneaded a small flat round loaf, baked it, wrapped it in a clean cloth, then put it in a bag and gave it to her husband. He hung the small bag over his shoulder and led his stepdaughter to the same place where he had left his own child earlier on. The father rolled down the small flat round loaf and sent the girl to get it.

Then he set off quickly and went back home. When the girl got hold of the loaf she began looking for her father. She looked here, she looked there, but could not find him. She cried and shouted and wandered around the thick forest. In the evening she came by the old woman’s tiny little house and heard her voice.

“Who is out there? Are you a boy or a girl? If you are a girl, come to Granny, if you are a boy – then off you go!”

“Granny, I’m a girl, I’m a girl!”

“Well, come on in, then!”

Just like before, the old woman took in the visitor and fed her.

But in the morning the girl did not get out of bed until the old woman woke up. She waited for the old woman to make her sops for breakfast and did not even lift a finger to tidy up the room a bit or sweep it, as the other girl had done. The old woman passed it over in silence and said nothing. She took her owl and again went about her own business

in the forest, but before that she told her visitor to scald some bran and feed her small animals while she was out. She told the girl not to be afraid of them because they did not bite.

The girl poured boiling water on some bran, but did not wait for it to cool. She gave it to the snakes and lizards to eat right away and they burnt themselves. When the old woman returned, they greeted her and started complaining.

“Granny, the girl burnt my mouth! Granny, the girl burnt my mouth!”

“Granny will burn the girl’s mouth! Granny will burn the girl’s mouth!” the witch frowned.

After having lunch they went to sit by the river. The old woman asked the girl to help her clean her hair from the shingles. The girl was lazy and very squeamish about poking into the old woman’s tangled hair, so she did not go to a lot of trouble to finish what she had been asked to do. The old woman noticed this and said, “I feel sleepy and might doze for a while. And you watch the river. When you see it become red, do not wake me. When you see green water flooding in, do not wake me even when it becomes yellow, but when you see black water flooding in, then you should wake me!”

The old woman dozed off and the girl saw the river turn red. When the red water had flown out, green water flooded in. When it had flown out, the water turned white. And then it turned yellow as gold. The girl liked the yellow water and thrust her little finger in it so that she could take a better look at it. Her finger turned golden, and golden it remained. After the golden water had flown out, black water flooded in. Then the girl woke the old woman, who got up, grabbed the girl by the hair and dipped her in the black water. She held her under and yelled:

“Catch, dear, whatever you can! Catch, dear, whatever you can!”

The girl held tight to what she had in her hands. When the old woman pulled her out of the water she held a chest in her hands. Then the old woman walked her visitor to the end of the forest and let her go home.

When the girl walked into the house, the stepmother swooned. Her daughter was as black as the devil, and when she opened the chest, frogs, snakes and lizards came crawling out of it.

“What have you done with my daughter, you wicked man?” raged the evil woman at her husband.

“Well,” said the man, “I took my daughter to the same place where I took your daughter. I did the same thing with my daughter as I did with your daughter. But where they went, what they did and how all this happened, well I know as much as you do.”

It did not take long for the tsar's son to hear about the golden girl; he had heard of her beauty and that she was one of a kind, so he decided to ask for her hand. He sent some matchmakers, but the stepmother hid the golden girl from the matchmakers and instead, dressed in a wedding gown and covered with a veil her own daughter, the black lass. The mother told her to show only her gold finger under the veil so that the matchmakers would think she was the golden bride.

As the matchmakers set off, the rooster stopped digging around the dunghill, flapped his wings, landed on the board fence and crowed.



“Cock-a-doodle-doo! The golden girl is under lock and key, the black one's riding on horseback!”

The matchmakers did not understand what the rooster meant by this. They were puzzled, and after exchanging glances they went on. The rooster crowed again,

“Cock-a-doodle-doo! The golden girl is under lock and key, the black one's riding on horseback!”

“What could that possibly mean?” The matchmakers stopped, but the black bride

nudged her horse and set off again.

“Cock-a-doodle-doo! The golden girl is under lock and key, the black one's riding on horseback!” The rooster cried himself hoarse again.

“Something is definitely wrong!” the matchmakers decided.

“Let's see who's hiding under that veil! Who is pretending to be the tsar son's bride!”

They lifted the bride's veil and what did they see – a girl as black as the devil! They took back the phony bride and made them bring the real one out.

When the golden girl walked in the palace, it lit up with her beauty. The tsar's son and the golden girl got married and lived happily ever after, while the black girl went back to her evil mother.

The Magic Forest

A story by Donka Dragova

<http://www.leaf-international.org/Leaf/myths.html#bulgaria>



There was a beautiful forest, surrounded by mountains, with a magnificent small lake in the center of it. Thousands of fish lived in the clear water, and many animals and birds found their shelter in the trees and bushes.

Fabulous forest creatures lived in that heavenly spot untouched by human eye or hand. Beautiful forest nymphs gathered around the big willow-tree by the lake every night. They used to sing and dance under the oldest tree in the world.

But the Devil was envious and decided to harm the harmony of the magic forest. He washed his muddy and ugly body, combed his hair and suddenly turned into a handsome forest spirit.

One night he went to the old willow and started dancing together with the fine creatures there. Their queen was swinging on a big branch while her friends sang and danced with the stranger.

The Devil grinned cunningly and invited the beautiful queen to dance with him. They started dancing, enchanted by the magic songs and motions of the other fairies. Suddenly the Devil jumped, grabbed the golden crown from the head of the queen and sank in the black ground.

The young queen screamed and started crying. She felt sick and lay down on the bottom of the lake. Frightened, the animals hid in their holes and shelters, the birds started yelling, and black clouds covered the sky over the century-old forest. Terrifying thunder and lightning cut the darkness.

The queen of the fairies died in sorrow after two days. At that time the old willow-tree fell down. Chaos reigned over the forest. The fairies were crying all the time and they forgot the songs and dances. They did not leave their palaces on the bottom of the



lake, whose water raved in grief too. All the inhabitants of the forest felt something terrible was about to happen.

And the revenge was not late. All the forest powers got angry. The old trees entangled the Devil in their roots and took him out of the ground. All the birds and animals were waiting for a signal to attack him. The forest spirits appeared, and they crucified the Devil on the place where the old willow-tree was growing and burned him.

After a long time, the harmony in the heavenly forest was restored. The fairies chose a new queen, and the body of the late queen was placed in a glass coffin covered with flowers on the bottom of the lake. You can still see it there.

Illustrations:

Princess by Sulamith Wulfing, http://www.artsycraftsy.com/wulfing_prints.html

The Old Witch by S.G. Talifero
<http://www.indigoimpressions.com/galleries/houseoftalifero/goldenyears/008.jpg>

Forest Scene
http://members.aol.com/_ht_a/vgoern63/html/forest.html

Rooster <http://www.algonet.se/~anki-p/rooster-2005.jpg>

Wood Fairy by Mary Baxter St. Calir
<http://www.foundationariel.org/savetherainforest.htm>

Food

Starters

Kyopolou (Eggplant Dip)



Ingredients

2 eggplants
3 sweet peppers
2 large tomatoes
4 garlic cloves
2 tbsp freshly chopped parsley
Red wine vinegar (about 2 tbsp or to taste)
Sunflower oil
Salt and black pepper
Freshly chopped parsley and pinch of paprika to garnish

Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 425°F. Prick the skins of the eggplants in several places, then place them in a shallow roasting tray together with the tomatoes and peppers. Bake in the oven for about 20 minutes or until soft.
- When cooked, remove the skins and cut the flesh into small pieces.
- Place in a mixing bowl together with the crushed garlic and mix well, adding enough oil to create a thick paste.
- Season with vinegar, salt and pepper to taste, mix well, then transfer to a serving dish and garnish with freshly chopped parsley and paprika. Serve warm with toast. Can also be served at room temperature.

Lutenitza (Parsley and Tomato Garnish)



Ingredients

1 can (½ lb) tomato paste
½ cup cold water
¼ cup vegetable or olive oil
½ tsp salt
½ tsp ground black pepper
1 bunch green onions, finely chopped
½ bunch fresh parsley, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
Chopped tomato for garnish

Instructions

- In a medium-size bowl, mix all ingredients.
- Can serve with crackers, bread, or use as marinade

Sirene po Shopski (Baked Cheese)

Ingredients

1 ¾ cup white cheese (such as Monterey Jack or white cheddar)
¾ cup yellow cheese (such as yellow cheddar or a sharp cheese)
2 eggs
2 hot peppers
2 sliced tomatoes
2 chopped roasted peppers
Oregano, parsley or any other dry green spice

Instructions

- Take two small casserole pots with lids (“gyuveche” pots) and put in a layer of cheese.
- Add a layer of peppers and tomatoes, then more cheese.
- Bake for about 20 minutes or until the cheese is melted.
- Break an egg on top of each dish and cook until the egg is the consistency you like.

Shopska Salad



Ingredients

4 spring onions, sliced
4 tomatoes, each cut into eighths
1 cucumber, sliced
1 green sweet pepper, deseeded and cut into rings
1 red capsicum sweet pepper, deseeded and cut into rings
Freshly chopped parsley
Salt and black pepper
2 tbsp vinegar
4 tbsp olive oil
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup Bulgarian white cheese or feta

Instructions

- Place all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and mix well.
- Transfer to individual serving plates and sprinkle with the crumbled or grated cheese.

Main Dishes

Syrmi (Stuffed cabbage leaves)



Ingredients

1 lb minced veal
 $\frac{3}{4}$ lb minced pork
1 bunch spring onions
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rice

1 cup yogurt
1 tbsp parsley
1 tsp mint
1 tbsp paprika
30-40 cabbage leaves
½ cup butter or sunflower oil
Salt and pepper

Instructions

- Fry the finely chopped onions in some of the oil
- Add the meat, rice, paprika, pepper, mint and finely chopped parsley.
- Add 1 cup of water and simmer until water has been absorbed by the rice.
- Steam the cabbage leaves using salted water
- Put 1 tsp of the mixture on each leaf. Use cooking string to wrap if preferred.
- Arrange stuffed leaves in saucepan
- Pour 1 ½ cups warm water over leaves and 1 tsp butter, close with a lid and simmer
- When ready, pour beaten yogurt and melted butter over leaves
- Sprinkle with more paprika for taste

Kavarma Meuniere (Pork and Veal Liver in Tomato Wine Sauce)



Ingredients

1 ¾ lb pork
1 lb veal liver
5 peppers (green or red)
4-5 onions
1-2 tomatoes
1 cup mushrooms
1/3 cup white wine
Paprika and pepper for taste
Parsley for garnish
½ cup sunflower oil
Salt

Instructions

- Cut the meat into small pieces and fry in oil and some water.

- Add the onions, the cooked and diced liver (when tender), sliced mushrooms, peppers, tomatoes, pepper, wine, salt and some warm water.
- Stir, pour in oven dish and bake at 350°F for 20-30 minutes.
- Serve with finely chopped parsley.

Srednogorie Hotchpotch (Veal with Mushrooms and Tomato)



Ingredients

2 lbs veal
 2 cups mushrooms
 ¼ lb okra
 2-3 onions
 2-3 tomatoes
 3-4 peppers
 ½ cup rice
 1-2 potatoes
 ½ cup of white wine
 1 tsp paprika
 Pepper
 Parsley
 ¾ cup sunflower oil
 Salt

Instructions

- Fry the meat in large pieces in oil and some water, remove from pan.
- Brown the finely chopped onions, tomatoes and paprika in the same oil.
- Replace the meat, add the wine and some hot water, bring to a boil and salt.
- Add the mushrooms and, after 10 minutes, the peppers sliced into strips and the cleaned okra.
- When tender, add the remaining oil and bake.
- Sprinkle with finely chopped parsley and pepper before serving.

Kebapcheta (Spicy Lamb)



Ingredients

1 ¼ lb minced lamb
Salt
½ tsp black pepper
1 tsp ground allspice
1 tsp paprika
1 tsp ground cumin

Instructions

Place all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and mix well (recommended that you use your hands to mix).

Cover with cling-wrap and leave for 2-4 hours.

Preheat the grill to 375°F.

Shape the meat into 12 cylinders (about 12 cm/5 inches long and 2.5 cm/1 inch thick).

Slightly flatten them to stop them from rolling around, then cook under the grill for 15-20 minutes, turning frequently and basting with oil if the meat is very lean.

Traditionally served with Lutenitza, white beans, pickles or a salad.

Gyvetch (Steak and Mushroom Casserole)



Ingredients

2 tbsp oil
2 lbs braising steak, cubed
1 large onion, chopped
2 ½ cups beef stock
1 tbsp paprika
½ lb rice
¼ lb mushrooms, halved
4 large tomatoes, chopped

¼ lb whole olives
2 tbsp butter
1 tbsp sugar
Salt and black pepper
Freshly chopped parsley to serve

Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 350°F.
- Heat the oil in a large saucepan, add the meat and brown on all sides.
- Add the onions, stock, paprika and rice, mix well then bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
- Add the mushrooms, tomatoes, whole olives, butter, sugar, salt and pepper, mix well and cook for 5 more minutes.
- Transfer to an ovenproof casserole, cover and bake for about 45 minutes.
- Sprinkle with parsley just before serving.

Skumriya na Keramidi (Baked Mackerel in Tomato Wine Sauce)



Ingredients

3 tbsp oil
2 large onions, chopped
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1 lb chopped tomatoes
1 cup dry white wine
1 tbsp freshly chopped parsley
Salt and black pepper
4 large mackerel fillets

Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 375°F and lightly grease a shallow ovenproof dish.
- Heat the oil in a saucepan, add the onions and garlic and sauté for 5 minutes.
- Add the tomatoes, wine, parsley, salt and pepper, bring to a boil, then reduce the heat a little and simmer for 15 minutes.
- Spread half of the sauce in the bottom of the baking dish, place the mackerel on top, cover with the remaining sauce and bake for about 35 minutes or until the fish is cooked through.
- Serve hot.

Dessert

Mekitsas (Batter fried in oil)



Ingredients

2 lbs flour
3 eggs
½ lb yogurt
1 tsp baking soda
1 cup water
½ tsp salt
1 cup sunflower oil

Instructions

- Beat eggs and yogurt together with the water and yeast or baking soda diluted in some cold water.
- Prepare a soft dough and let stand for 1 hour.
- Then roll into a sheet and cut out circles with a teacup.
- Fry in plenty of oil until a reddish hue is obtained.
- Serve with icing sugar, jam or cheese.

Banitsa (Cheese pastry)



Ingredients

2 lbs flour
1 lb white brined cheese
4 eggs
1 lb yogurt
½ tsp baking soda
2 tbsp butter
Salt

Instructions

- Use the flour, salt and 1 ½ cups water to make a hard dough, which is divided into fist-sized balls or squares.
- Let stand for 1 hour, then roll into about 1 mm thick sheets.
- Line with melted butter and top with a mixture of beaten eggs, baking soda, yogurt and crumbled cheese.
- Roll together and place in a lined dish, either lengthwise or in circles.
- Bake in a moderate oven and some water when ready.
- Cover with a cloth to make it soft.

Banitsa saralia



Ingredients

1 lb flour
½ cup walnut kernels
4 cups sugar
4 cups water
Vanilla
2 ½ tbsp butter.

Instructions

- Prepare a medium hard dough from the flour, some salt and cold water, and roll into sheets (2 lbs of ready-rolled sheets may also be used).
- Baste each sheet with some butter and top with crushed walnut kernels.
- Roll together and arrange either lengthwise or in a circle in a butter-lined dish.
- Bake in a 325°F oven.
- After it has cooled, pour hot syrup made from sugar, water and vanilla over dish.

References:

Bulgarian Cuisine

http://tokuda-www.cs.titech.ac.jp/~pavlin/Bulgaria/cuisine/bg.cuisine.html#Srednogorie_hotch-potch

Bulgaria Recipes Culinary Information and History

<http://www.recipes4us.co.uk/Cooking%20by%20Country/Bulgaria%20Recipes%20Culinary%20History%20and%20Information.htm>

Recipes from Ralitsa's Kitchen

<http://www.roesing.net/recipes/>

Additional Resources

A Country Study: Bulgaria

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/bgtoc.html>

Bulgaria

<http://www.state.gov/p/eur/ci/bu/>

Bulgaria Culture

<http://members.tripod.com/~MILTENOFF/culture.html>

Bulgaria- Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulgaria>

EU and Bulgaria

<http://www.evropa.bg/en/del/eu-and-bulgaria.html>

History of Bulgaria

<http://www.bulgaria.com/history/bulgaria/period.html>

Relations with Bulgaria

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/bulgaria/index.htm>

Republic of Bulgaria

<http://www.government.bg/fce/index.shtml?s=001&p=0023>

The World Factbook: Bulgaria

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/bu.html>