

# Guide through the Traditional Macedonian Cuisine





# About Experience Balkan



“Experience Balkan” is a tour-operator for the Balkans, based in Macedonia, which offers excellent programs with good rates and quality hotels, trip leaders and local tourist guides (English-speaking), restaurants, vehicles, and whole lot that can give travelers a complete Balkan experience. During its existence, “Experience Balkan” has established successful cooperation with many international tour operators, and has built meaningful partnerships with local hotels, restaurants, museums and tourist guides. Our main objectives when making the programs, are the following:

- 24/7 availability during the trip;
- Providing excellent experience for the travelers;
- Fast confirmation of reservations and prompt reply;
- Providing quality tour guides, who will be more than just guides for the travelers;
- Improving our own performance and willingness for constant learning through experience;
- Learning and discovery;
- Promotion of attractions and cultural values and events from the Balkan region.

The team of dedicated workers is creating each part of the journey with special care and completely stands by the motto: “The only way to do great work, is to love what you do”.

## Macedonia

Macedonia is a small multi-colored piece of land, which attracts visitors with its natural beauty and tradition and this insignia that leaves a mark of recognition and singularity, is the reason why you should visit it.

The natural resources of Macedonia are interesting for adventurers and visitors who want to discover different countries. The beautiful lakes and the mineral baths are appealing for vacation and enjoyment. The mountains, decorated with different kinds of trees, but also with their mysterious caves, springs and picturesque waterfalls, are a pleasure for everyone who wants to get away in the beauty of each season.

Hundreds of churches and monasteries scattered around the country speak about the tradition forged in the stones and it is a real challenge to visit all of them. The archeological excavations call all the passionate researchers of the past to tell their story covered with dust and soil.

And about the gourmets, those who live to eat, the wealth of flavors is going to enapture them and fill them with longing for a new revival of that magic.

Therefore, we decided to present here, some of the most popular recipes from the traditional Macedonian cuisine, and cook together with a few entertaining customs related to food.

# The history of Macedonian cuisine

For people who love traveling and learning about new countries and cultures and discovering new tastes, the cuisine of Macedonia is definitely something worth trying. The variety of dishes that make the cuisine, the way in which holiday meals and craft complexity in the preparation of food are connected, provide enough material for a long research and even longer enjoyment.

The evolution of our cuisine is a result of the combination of several key elements: the environment and its specifics, and a fusion of different social traditions, transformed through time with the warmth and the hospitality of the local people. The sub-mediterranean climate with hot and sunny summers, rich and fertile arable land and abundance of fresh water, gives life to divine and nutritious fruits and vegetables and great variety of cereal and life-spices, grass and herbs. All these here, are essential food for the soul and body of every living being. Dairy products and domestic and wild animals are another remarkable part that local environment provides. Macedonia is a country that was ruled by various civilizations throughout

the centuries. Thus, the culture and the cuisine in the country have accepted much of those other nations. Due to the lasting influence of the Turkish culture, Macedonian cuisine provides recipes of Turkish origin with identical names to present day. Such examples are the numerous pastry and meat delicacies, as well as desserts with sorbet and walnuts. However, the most important element that contributed



to the Macedonian cuisine today is the love and generosity of the common man. By sharing a spot and inviting for a moderate or rich feast, joy and pain are shared, the existence and celebration of life is also shared, in other words we share the soul – ours and the one of Macedonia.



# Pacha (Meat Jelly)

**Pacha is food which is usually prepared in winter. It requires relatively long time to prepare, but when it is ready for consumption the cold morsels are rich in flavor, especially when accompanied by a good cup of grape brandy. The pacha is cut into cubes and it is served as a starter or appetizer.**



## Needed ingredients:

- 1 kg of pig feet
- 300 g boneless pork
- 5-6 cloves of garlic
- 1 onion bulb
- black pepper (whole)
- bay leaf
- salt

## Preparation method:

The pigs' feet and boneless pork are shredded and placed in a pot with cold water and boiled on a moderate fire for about 5 hours. Initially, once the water gets warm, foam appears and it should be removed. Once the foaming stops, salt, black pepper, bay leaf, chopped onion and half of the garlic are added.

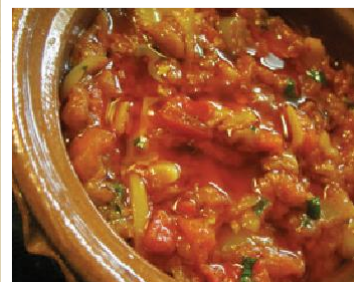
Once half of the water has evaporated, use fork to check if the meat is ready. If the meat separates from the bone by itself, it means it's done. The meat is cut into small pieces, and the meat from the feet needs to separate from the bone and shredded them into small pieces. The water from the pot is left to cool down, and it is poured through a strainer while using spoon to collect the detached fats that collect on the surface. The remaining cloves of garlic are finely chopped or crushed and added to the broth. The meat is then placed in a larger or smaller plates and the broth is poured over it. Leave the plates with pacha to cool down and the broth to become jelly.

# Letna Mandza (Summer Meal)

**This starter, characteristic for the region of Strumica, is often prepared during the summer period, which is the season of peppers and tomatoes. It can be served hot or cold, combined with cheese and home-made bread.**

## Preparation method:

The peppers and tomatoes are chopped into small pieces. First, the peppers are fried in a cooking pan with a pre-heated up oil. Once the peppers are fried, the finely chopped tomatoes are added. The tomato juice released by the tomatoes, is fried until the juice is smooth and thickened. Just before it is done, salt and the finely chopped parsley are added.



## Needed ingredients:

- 500 g of tomatoes (“frenki”)
- 500 g of peppers (“chushki”)
- 20 ml of oil
- parsley
- salt

# Fried Peppers with White Cheese-curd

**A fried pepper with white cheese-curd is a casual meal, which is often prepared in summer. It is served as a starter combined with bread, cheese and tomato salad.**

## Preparation method:

Once you wash and dry the peppers, remove the handles and the seeds. Add salt from the inside and fill them up with 1-2 spoons of salted curd mixed with the egg. The curd needs to be dry, in order not to run out of the peppers. The stuffed peppers with curd are fired from all sides in cooking oil on moderate fire.



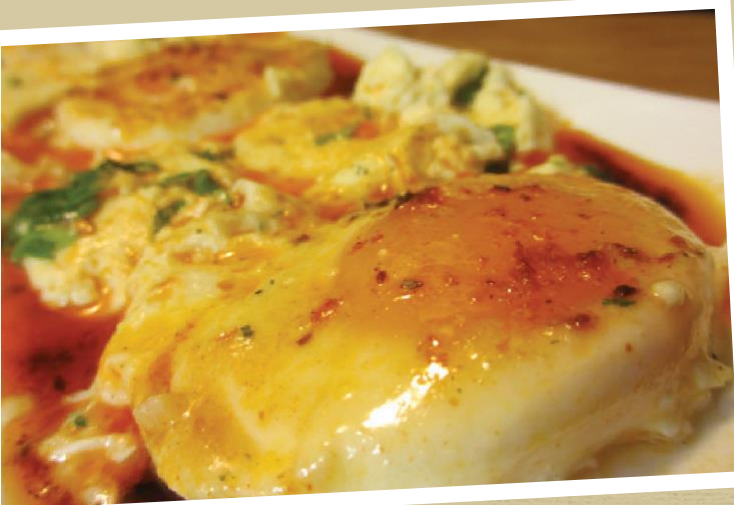
## Needed ingredients:

- 10 – 12 of green or red peppers
- 200 – 300 g of white cheese-curd
- 1 egg
- oil
- salt



# Chalbur (Poached Eggs)

Chalbur or eggs on water is a delicious dish that in the South-east region of Macedonia is mostly prepared in the following manner - with white cheese. But it can be combined with sour milk and garlic, and even onions, but the main thing is the eggs on water to remain unchanged.



## Needed ingredients:

- 2 eggs
- 150 g cheese
- oil
- salt
- paprika
- water

## reparation ethod:

The cheese is crushed and placed in a bowl. The eggs are broken and they are put in a pot of salted hot water or boiling water. Eggs are boiled a few minutes like yolk starts to thicken and still remain liquid. The duration for boiling of the eggs is different, according to taste. Once the eggs will take the desired density, they are taken out of the water and are placed towards the cheese. In a pan with little oil in it, half teaspoon paprika is slightly fried and it is poured over the eggs with cheese.

# Crouton

**The crouton is traditional food, served in each season. Mostly it is served with piece of cheese, but it is delicious, as well as in combination with sour milk or yogurt.**

## Preparation method:

The bread is cut into pieces. The eggs need to be put in a bowl, they are salted and nicely mixed with a fork. Each piece is nicely defiled in the eggs and is fried on both sides in a pan that is nicely covered with oil. In each frying for new pieces of bread, the pan is being wiped with a napkin and a little oil is added.



## Needed ingredients:

- 1 loaf of bread
- 6 eggs
- oil
- salt

# Ohridsko Makalo (Ohrid Garlic Dip)

**Ohridsko makalo is a very delicious dip prepared from garlic. It is served as an appetizer, in combination with different traditional food.**

## Preparation method:

The garlic is cleaned up and put in a pestle and mortar. Little bit of wine vinegar is added and grinded until getting a smooth paste. After that, salt is added and the mixture is mixed, by adding the oil drop by drop. The secret of getting a fine mayonnaise-like paste is in adding the oil drop by drop, constantly mixing. It should take about 100 ml of oil for this amount of garlic. Finally, there will be a fine white paste that is a nice addition for all kinds of meat.



## Needed ingredients:

- whole garlic
- wine vinegar
- oil
- salt



# Veal Stew

**Veal stew is one of the favorite dishes that people order in the mornings in the restaurants in the South-east of Macedonia. This soup is delicious and refreshing and it is considered as one of the healthiest foods prepared at home.**



## Preparation method:

The onion is cut into small pieces, salt is added and it is put into a pot. In a bowl over low heat, the oil with the butter is put and boiled until gets melted. Cut meat into cubes is added into the pot along with the butter, salt and a cup of water, and it is let to boil covered with a lid over very low heat

for about an hour and a half. This mixture is stirred occasionally and water is added if necessary. Once the meat is ready, finely chopped carrots are added and they are boiled together for another twenty minutes after which 1.5 to 2 liters of water are added into the mixture. Once the water is boiled it should be boiled for another 10 minutes. Veal stew is dragged from the fire and in a separate bowl, sour cream with egg yolk and little water from the stew are mixed and along with the fine-cut parsley are added into the stew.

## Needed ingredients:

- 300 g veal lean
- 1 onion
- 1 carrot
- 1 egg yolk
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 30 g butter
- 100 g cream
- parsley
- salt
- black pepper



# Chicken Soup

**This dish is usually prepared accompanied with rice and chicken dish, which is a traditional Sunday dish in Strumica. The soup is prepared from the chicken bouillon extracted from the boiled chicken meat.**

## Preparation method:

The chicken meat and the chopped into cubes carrots, are put into boiling water and cooked until they separate into small pieces. In the water, salt, dried vegetables and noodles for soup are added and boiled for few minutes until noodles soften enough. Once the noodles are done, add finely chopped parsley in the soup and leave aside for 5 minutes to slightly cool down. In a separate bowl stir the egg and add the vinegar. The mixture is gradually added to the soup.



## Needed ingredients:

- 1 piece of white chicken meat
- 1 carrot
- 1 egg
- 1-2 spoon of vinegar
- parsley
- dried vegetable
- salt
- noodles

# Fish Stew

**This tasty stew is part of the Dojran tradition but it can found in the homes and restaurants across Macedonia too. The preparation of the fish stew is simple, and the enjoyment is fulfilling.**

## Preparation method:

Put the fish to boil in a pot and clean its bones. Strain the water into another pot and the cleaned fish is added together with the chopped carrot and onion, bay leaf, the dry vegetables mix, salt and noodles. Pan fried sauce is made in a separate pan with oil and flour and it is added in the boiling stew. Together they boil for few minutes. Once the stew is ready, just add lemon juice.

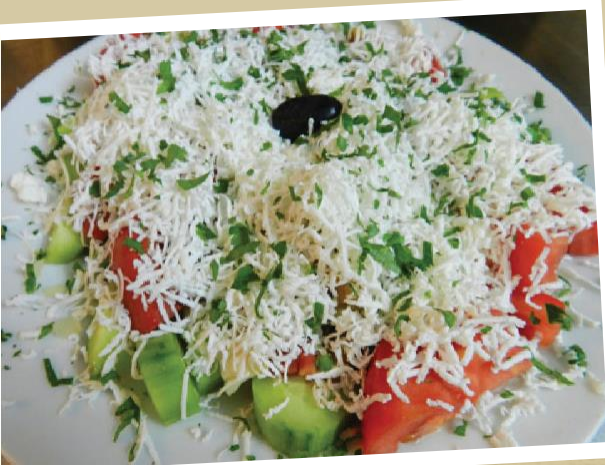


## Needed ingredients:

- 1 kg fish (carp, red snapper, perch)
- 1 onion bulb
- 1 lemon
- 1 carrot
- bit of noodles
- bay leaf
- salt and dried mixed vegetables
- 2 l of water
- 2 spoons of flour
- cooking oil

# Shopska Salad

The traditional, delicious and easy combination of several types of vegetables sprinkled with grated white cheese is what gives the irreplaceable taste of the Shopska salad, which is often present on every Macedonian table, as an appetizer and very often accompanied by a glass of home-made brandy.



## Preparation method:

Peel the cucumbers and together with the tomatoes, cut them into cubes. Finely dice the onion and the pepper in circles. All the vegetables are placed in a deeper pot. After that, add cooking oil and salt according to own taste. Once the ingredients are mixed, add grated white cheese on top and decorate with parsley and olive.

## Needed ingredients:

- 2 tomatoes
- 2 cucumbers
- 1 green pepper
- 1 onion bulb
- 200 g white sheep cheese
- cooking oil
- salt
- parsley





# Mixed Salad

Mixed salad is made from many kinds of vegetables and is usually present in the menus of the Macedonian traditional restaurants.

## Preparation method:

The cucumbers are cut into thin slices, tomatoes are cut into four pieces, carrots and beets are grated, cabbage is chopped and radishes are cut in thin circles. All ingredients are arranged in an oval plate according to own wish. Salt is added and



## Needed ingredients:

- 2 tomatoes
- 2 cucumbers
- 2 carrots
- 2 slices of cheese
- 2 radishes
- ½ beetroot
- ¼ cabbage
- olive, oil, salt



# Roast Pepp with G

This salad can be prepared during the whole year, as long as there are fresh peppers. It is best to combine it with beans and variety of meat dishes.

## Preparation method:

The fresh peppers are washed, dried and roasted. Once cooked, put them in a bowl and cover them until they cool down and are able to be peeled. Once the peppers are nicely peeled, add finely chopped garlic, salt and pour cooking oil and vinegar. They should be left aside for a little while and then served.



## Needed ingredients:

- 10 peppers
- 3 cloves garlic
- 50 ml of cooking oil
- 50 ml vinegar
- salt

# Banica

**Banica is the type of food that is most often consumed as a daily meal for breakfast, but it is also found on the table as traditionally prepared food on holidays, such as: Forgiveness Day, All Souls' Day, etc. It can be prepared in different ways, with rolled or finished layers with cheese or podvara (cottage cheese).**



## Needed ingredients:

- 600-700 g flour
- 250-300 ml lukewarm water
- 3 eggs
- 1 yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- oil
- 500 g cheese (for filling)

## Preparation method:

Yeast is put in a bowl with a little water, salt and sugar are added and mixed until the ingredients become melted. In a deeper bowl flour is put together with yeast, water and mixed eggs are added and dough is kneaded. Dough is nicely kneaded until it becomes smooth and it is left covered with a towel, for

about an hour to reach. Reached dough is divided into 5 balls. Each ball of dough is being rolled on a floured background and sprayed with a little oil and chopped cheese and then rolled in scrolls. Crusts are lined up like snail, starting from the middle of round and covered with oil casserole with no.30. Each new rolled crust is spirally arranged around the last crust. Such prepared banica is covered and left to reach about half an hour. Reached banica is sprayed with a little oil and baked in a pre-heated oven at 180 degrees for about 45 minutes.



# Gjomleze

**Gjomleze is an old traditional Ohrid recipe, prepared for more than 3 hours. If somebody invites you and prepares gjomleze for you, it means you are respected and appreciated guest at their place.**

## Preparation method:

In a deep bowl, flour, water and salt are put and it is all mixed to make a porridge, homogenous mixture as for making pancakes. The “sach” is being heated on strong fire. Two saches are needed for faster preparation of this specialty. The pan is covered with oil and two scoops from the porridge are put in it, and is put on the oven for around 5 to 6 minutes. The baked crust is sprayed with oil, and then two scoops are again put and covered with sach. This is repeated until the porridge is wasted (around 20 crusts). When the last crust is baked, the gjomleze is being cut in the form of baklava and it is being sprayed with oil. The pan with gjomleze is put on fire, and left covered under sach for 30 minutes.



## Needed ingredients:

- 3.500 g flour
- 4 lukewarm water
- 1 handful of salt
- 500 ml oil

# Fried Pastries

**The fried pastries can be served with powdered sugar, jam or white cheese for breakfast or dessert. Otherwise, this recipe is traditionally prepared for a new-born child ceremony, when the fried pastries are served with powdered sugar and Turkish delight, and during fasting period they are prepared without milk and eggs.**

## Preparation method:

Place the yeast in a container with warm water until it blooms. In a deeper bowl put the flour and add all the ingredients. Knead the dough and let it grow. Once ready, knead the dough again and let it grow again. This procedure is repeated 3-4 times. When the dough is finally ready, put oil on own hands and make a hole in the middle. Fry the pastries in a hot pan with a large amount of oil. The fried pastries are best cooked if they are white and hollow.



## Needed ingredients:

- 250 ml carbonated mineral water
- 250 ml milk
- 800 g flour
- 1 yeast
- 1 spoon of salt
- 1 spoon of sugar
- 3 eggs
- oil

# Sarma with Cabbage Leaves

For any village celebration, Feast day of a Saint and/or a Memorial Day, the sarma with cabbage leaves is a mandatory food. During the winter period, it is made with cabbage in brine, and in summer with fresh cabbage, rice and minced or finely chopped meat.



## Preparation method:

The cabbage is removed from the stub and placed in a pot of boiling water to which salt and vinegar are added. The cabbage is left to stay in the water until it softens, about 20 minutes. Finely chop the onion and fry it in a pan with oil. The fried

added to the minced meat, and once fried add the washed rice, add salt and black pepper and fry it for additional few minutes. When the cabbage is already soft, each sheet is removed from the hard part which is closer to the stub. Place several big leaves of cabbage and hot pepper on the bottom of the pot after it is oiled. In each leaf of cabbage put the mixture and wrap it. Place the sarma wraps in the pot and pour hot water in which salt and vinegar are added. Boil the sarma on moderate fire, covered, for about 2 hours.

## Needed ingredients:

- 1 cabbage
- 500 g rice
- 400 g ground meat
- 1 hot pepper
- 1 onion bulb
- oil
- salt
- vinegar
- black pepper



# Rice with chicken

**Rise with chicken is an old traditional recipe that is prepared in every home in Macedonia and gathered families on a festive table on Sunday. This dish, in south-eastern Macedonia, can often be found and prepared for the Islamic holiday Ramadan Bajram.**

## Preparation method:

Wash the half chicken meat and put it to boil. Once the water boils, change it with clean hot water and leave it to boil. When the meat is already cooked in water, we put salt and "Vegeta", and it can be proceed with preparing the rice. Cut the onion finely and fry it in a pan with a little oil until it gets golden color. Wash the rice, it is estimated, add to the fried onion, and fry it together for a few minutes stirring constantly. Pour the rice in casserole no. 26, in which it will be baked and Saale with water in which the meat is cooked. The casserole with rice is left to boil at a moderate fire and add water if it is necessary. After 5 - 10 minutes, when the rice is almost ready, we put the meat from the boiled chicken on it. On top of it we put black pepper and bake in a pre-heated oven, on 200 degrees, about 20 minutes.



## Needed ingredients:

Half chicken; 400 g rice; 1-2 heads onions; dried vegetables (mixed spice "Vegeta"), salt; black pepper.

# Sheep specialty

**This Gevgelija specialty is prepared for Easter holidays and the holiday of St. George, where lamb is part of the festive table for many families.**

## Preparation method:

The meat is washed with water, dried with kitchen paper and cut into 4 pieces. Each piece is messed in flour and put to fry in hot fat. When frying the meat, water is added 5-6 times until it's done. Onion is cut and fried in a pan with a little fat. Eggplant is added, peeled and sliced in tiny cubes before. After a little frying, peeled and finely sliced tomatoes are added. It is fried for a little and cut garlic and parsley are added, salt is added and pepper is poured. The seeds are removed from the olives and they are cut into 4 pieces. Meat is poured with sauce from vegetables and olives are lined up on the top. It is placed on moderate fire to boil for another 10 minutes, after which it can be served.



## Needed ingredients:

1 kg mutton; 120g fat; 300g tomatoes; 1 head of onion; 1 bunch of parsley; 3 eggplants; 3 cloves of garlic; 100g flour; 10 olives; salt; black pepper.

# Carp pan

The specialty carp pan is characteristic for the Dojran region. It is one of the offered rich recipes and part of the heritage and tradition of this region.



## Needed ingredients:

- 1 of 2 kg carp
- 2 kg onions
- 3-4 tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 tablespoon red pepper
- oil
- parsley
- salt
- black pepper

## reparation ethod:

carp is cleaned, washed and cut into slices or truffles, and then is salted. Onions are cleaned, minced and fried in a pan with oil until it gets a pinkish color.

Tomatoes are cut into small pieces and fried with the onions for 5 to 10 minutes. Salt, black pepper and chopped parsley are added. Fried ingredients are put in casserole no. 36 and pieces of carp are lined up over it, then with a strainer are sanded with flour, then with paprika and each piece of fish is sprinkled with a little oil. A little boiling water is added in the casserole, as needed for onions to sprinkle, then the pan is poured to bake at 250 degrees for about 1 hour or until the pieces of fish get a finer color.





# Moussaka

Moussaka is food which is prepared from minced meat, usually pork and minced beef and potatoes. In the Macedonian cuisine, this dish today can be found cooked in different ways and with different ingredients, but we have provided the traditional way in which our grandmothers have prepared the moussaka.

## Preparation method:

The potatoes are peeled and cut into circles with a thickness of about half an inch. Onion is finely diced and it is fried in a pan with oil. Over the fried onion are added minced meat, salt, black pepper and a little oregano, and it is stirred and fried. In oiled, medium size tin, are being arranged one row potatoes and one row minced meat. Minced meat is covered with another row of potatoes and poured with mixed and salted eggs with milk. Moussaka is baked in a pre-heated oven at 200 degrees for 40 minutes.



## Needed ingredients:

- 1 kg potatoes
- ½ kg minced meat
- 1 head of onion
- 3 eggs
- 300 ml milk
- oil
- oregano
- salt
- black pepper

# Tavce Gravce (Beans in a Skillet)

Beans in a skillet is a traditional Macedonian dish and a part of the family tradition dinner table, every Friday.

## Preparation method:

The beans are cleaned and immersed in cold water to stand for 3 hours. Then, wash and put them in a pot to boil. Once boiled, the water is shed and pour fresh water together with the onion, bay leaf and black pepper in it. When the beans will soften enough, in a pan with oil, fry the onions with the red pepper. The roux is added to the beans after what salt and pepper are added. Bake in an earthenware pot at a temperature of 220 degrees until the water evaporates.



## Needed ingredients:

- 500 g beans
- 1 onion head
- 1 dry pepper
- 2 tea spoons red pepper
- cooking oil
- bay leaf
- salt
- black pepper

# Baklava

The baklava is a specialty that adorns the table of every Christian family during Christmas Eve dinner. The baklava is also the major dish in the Islamic feast of Ramadan Bairam when the guests are treated, and was once part of any family celebration or a Feast day of a Saint.



## Preparation method:

The nuts are chopped. The semolina is fried with the vanilla sugar. Prepare round tin with No. 36. Spray with oil and place the filo pastry on top of one another. On each filo sheet, put oil and semolina, and every second sheet put oil, semolina and nuts. The last few layers without nuts. Once you lay down

all the filo sheets, cut them in the form of diamond or baklava. The baklava covered with aluminum foil and baked in a pre-heated oven for 1 hour. The foil is removed after 30 minutes of baking. After baking, the baklava is left to cool. The sorbet is prepared with 2 kg of sugar and 1 liter of water. Add vanilla sugar to the mixture and by the end, cut circles of lemon. The sorbet is ready when it starts to create foam. When the baklava is fully chilled the hot sorbet is poured over it and put aside to chill before serving it.

### *For the dough:*

- 1 kg filo for baklava
- 500 g walnuts- chopped
- 200 g semolina
- 150 ml oil

### *For the Sorbet:*

- 2 kg sugar
- 1 l water
- 2 bags of vanilla sugar
- 1 lemon



# Kadaif

Another dessert with water sugar from the Turkish menu is Kadaif that is traditionally prepared for Trimmers, and not left out in everyday gathering of older generations.

## Preparation method:

Half of the kadaif is placed in a rectangular tray smeared with margarine. Finely sliced nuts, mixed with the vanilla sugar are evenly placed on the kadaif, and in that order put the rest of it. Melt the margarine and with that fluctuate the kadaif and put it to bake in a pre-heated oven at moderate temperature until it gets darker color. The watery sugar is made in a heated pot with a half kg sugar and a half liter of water. The content needs to simmer for ten minutes, then add the lemon cut in quarters and let it simmer for a while. What will the density be depends on taste. Pour the hot sugar water on the cooled kadaif, and when it gets cold cut it into cubes.



## Needed ingredients:

- 500 g Qatayef (kadaif)
- 250 g nuts
- 200–250 g margarine
- 1 vanilla sugar

### *For the Sorbet:*

- ½ kg sugar
- ½ l water
- 1 lemon

# Ravanija

Ravanija is a lite dessert with sorbet which can be found on the menus in Macedonia. It is often served with ice-cream and walnuts.

## Preparation method:

Mix the eggs and sugar throughout with a mixer. Add the milk and cooking oil and mix them some more. Then gradually add mixture of semolina, nuts, flour and the baking powder. Mix well until the mass gets consistent. The dough is placed on an oiled baking pan no.28 and is baked for about 25 min. at 180 degrees. The sorbet is made by adding water and sugar in a pot until they boil. Finally, vanilla sugar and little lemon juice are added. Once chilled and cut into cubes, pour the sorbet over it.



## Needed ingredients:

### *For the dough:*

- 3 eggs
- 12 spoons of sugar
- 12 spoons of ground/crushed walnuts
- 12 spoons of cooking oil
- 12 spoons of milk
- 12 spoons of semolina
- 12 spoons of flour
- 1 baking powder

### *For the Sorbet:*

- 3 cups of water
- 3 cups of sugar
- 1 vanilla sugar
- lemon juice

# Ajvar

The most delicious and the most difficult to prepare, but the favorite winter preserve “Ajvar” is part of every home and every table in Macedonia. Hot or cold, spread on bread with or without white cheese, it makes the mouth of both young and elderly people red.



## preparation

The peppers and eggplants are washed and dried, their handles removed and the peppers are cleaned from seeds. Then they are baked in a stove or grilled. Once cooked, peppers and eggplants are placed in plastic bags for easier peeling. Carefully peeled and cleaned from the rest of the seeds they are placed in mesh-like bags to drain overnight. The next day peppers and eggplants are grinded fine for meat. The mixture is

placed in a pot and fried until the liquid has evaporated, during which oil is added and it is fried for a few hours with a constant stirring to achieve a density of marmalade. Before the end of the frying process add salt to taste and mix well. The warm ajvar is placed in hot jars and closed firmly.

## Needed ingredients:

- 20 kg red peppers  
– Kurtovska Kapija
- 2 kg eggplants
- 1 l of oil
- 1 spoon of sugar
- salt



# Watermelon Rind Jam

**Watermelon rind jam is the only way in which watermelon is processed in this region. The taste and aroma of melon jam are unique and look up to your imagination. It is served as a dessert with a glass of cold water.**

## Preparation method:

Cut watermelon into large pieces and remove the red part and the outer green rind. The white part of the watermelon which remains, is cut into pieces or the mold is cut in the desired shape. Cuts are put in cold water and left to boil 5 minutes. This procedure is repeated 5-6 times and always drain boiled water and pour new and cold. During the last boiling, sorbet is prepared. For about 1 kg of cleaned watermelon pieces, 1 kg sugar is used in 250 ml water. When you boil sorbet, watermelon slices are added to the same pot and boil on a strong fire, without stirring. When jam is half boiled, add vanilla sugar and lemon cut into quarters. When part of the liquid has evaporated and sweet bubbles begin to appear over the jam, this means it is done. Allow to cool and fill the jars, and then close them firmly.



## Needed ingredients:

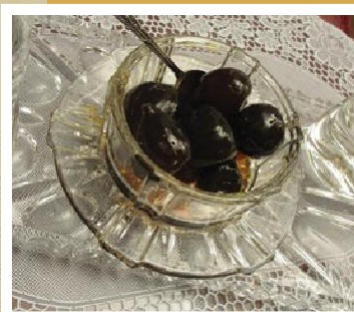
- 1 kg watermelon
- 1 kg sugar
- 250 ml water
- 1 vanilla sugar
- 1 lemon

# Green Figs Jam

**If you go in the Gëvgelija region, you will be served with the best and most carefully prepared jam, of which the locals are very proud of – green figs jam with a glass of cold water, as part of the culinary traditions of this region.**

## Preparation method:

Take exactly 60 green figs (not ripe), peel them and place them in a large frying pan on the fire. In the pan, pour water and once boiled remove it and add fresh water. This process is repeated up to 9 times in order to remove the bitter taste of the green figs. After this process, leave the figs aside to drain of the water. In a pan, placed on fire, pour 1 liter of water and 1 kg sugar and boil them to make the sorbet. When the sorbet is halfway ready, pour the figs and boil them until they are filled with the sorbet. Before the jam is removed from heat, pour 1 teaspoon citric acid and stir. The green fig jam is left to cool and once it gets a shiny color, fill it in jars.



## Needed ingredients:

- 60 green figs
- 1 kg of sugar
- 1 l of water
- 1 spoon of citric acid



# Macedonian real food adventure

## **Day-1. Arrival in Skopje (D) (20 km)**

Pick up from the airport. Accommodation in a hotel in Skopje. Orientation walk and time on your leisure. Welcoming dinner in a national restaurant. Overnight.

## **Day-2. Skopje (B, L, D)**

Breakfast at the hotel. After the breakfast, a walking tour from the centuries-old Kale – Skopje Fortress. Continue to the Old Turkish Bazaar, mingling with the locals, meeting different cultures and religions, old forgotten crafts as well. After that, go to the “Museum of Macedonian Struggle”, or the “Archaeological Museum of Macedonia” which has one of the biggest ancient coins collection in the world, exclusively from the Macedonian territory. Walk across the Stone Bridge, the landmark of the city, and stop in front of the biggest monument and fountain, Alexander the Great. The next stop will be the Memorial House of Mother Teresa, where she was born in 1910. After that, lunch in a national restaurant. Have some free time for exploring Skopje and dinner with wine tasting in the winery&restaurant “Kamnik”. Overnight in the hotel.

## **Day-3. Skopje – Kratovo – Berovo (B, L, D) (205 km)**

Breakfast. Drive to Kratovo (95 km), a little medieval town founded in the middle of a once-volcano crater. Have a guided walking tour around the town, crossing many medieval bridges and towers. See a small unique museum with artifacts from the 20-th century

B.C. until nowadays. Then, have a chance to taste slowly-cooked food by the locals and taste the local home-made wine and rakija (Macedonian brandy). After that, drive towards Berovo (110 km). Accommodation in a hotel. Dinner in a local national restaurant. Overnight.

## **Day-4. Berovo (B, L) (20 km)**

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive (8 km) close to Bachilo (tea hut), and have the option to walk to Bachilo (about 800 m) in a steep terrain; or to use a tractor from the main road to the tea hut. It is a private property in the middle of the mountain, where they grow their own fruits and vegetables around the hut, and keep their own cattle. The host will take us around the property and serve us home-made food. After that, come back to Berovo and have free time to stroll around Berovo Lake. Overnight.

## **Day-5. Berovo – Strumica – DemirKapija (B, L, D) (140 km)**

Breakfast. Drive to the village of Koleshino (70 km), a rare friendly village with 4 different Christian religions. There, we visit the beautiful Koleshino waterfall.

Just 4 km from the waterfall is the small village of Gabrovo, and there we have a home-hosted lunch with folk music performance by local musicians. After that, drive to DemirKapija (70 km) and accommodate in the winery&hotel “Popova Kula”. Have dinner with wine tasting in the restaurant of the winery “Popova Kula”. Overnight in the hotel.



### **Day-6.**

#### ***DemirKapija – Bitola – Ohrid (B, L, D) (205 km)***

##### **Breakfast.**

Drive to the city of consuls, Bitola (130 km), and have short sightseeing

city tour. After that, have a home-hosted lunch in the mountain village of Dihovo (5 km). Continue to the town of UNESCO, Ohrid (70 km). Accommodation in a hotel. Start the city tour of Ohrid, one of the oldest towns in Europe, full of history, with traces of civilization 4.000 years old. Visit the famous untouched medieval churches, the fortress of Tzar Samuel with a beautiful panorama, the ancient Macedonian-Roman theatre. Sail with small boats on the way back to the town centre. Have some free time on your own. Then, have dinner in a national restaurant with a folk ensemble, performing traditional Macedonian songs and dances. Overnight in a hotel.

#### ***Day-7. Ohrid – Elshani – Bay of Bones – St. Naum – Ohrid (B, L) (73 km)***

Breakfast. Drive to Elshani (12 km), a beautiful mountain village with excellent view of the Ohrid Lake. There, have a chance to ride donkeys and to mingle with the locals. After that, have home-hosted meal with the locals. In the afternoon, visit the unique prehistoric settlement on water from the Bronze Age – Bay of Bones (8 km). Contin-



ue driving to the extraordinary monument of nature – lake springs and the monastery of St. Naum (14 km) from the 9-th century. One of the first Cy-

rillic and Glagolitic letters were carved on the pillars of this monastery, and are still standing there. Transfer to the hotel (29 km). Have free time for dinner. Overnight.

#### ***Day-8. Ohrid – Vevchani - Janche - Matka - Skopje (220 km) (B, L, D)***

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive for a visit of the village Vevchani (28 km) and have the chance to enjoy around the Vevchani springs. Continue our tour to the village Janche (62 km), for lunch. See the monastery “St. Jovan Bigorski” (5 km). After that, drive close to the capital Skopje, and visit one of the most beautiful canyons in Europe, Matka (110 km), on the river “Treska”. Set sail with small boats 6 km upstream to visit the cave Vrelo, full of cave decorations. Accommodation in a hotel (15 km). Farewell dinner in a national restaurant. Overnight.

#### ***Day-9. International airport Skopje (B) (20 km)***

Breakfast at the hotel. Have some free time. Drive back to the International airport Skopje (30 minutes) for your return flight.



# Wine tasting experience in Macedonia

## **Day-1. *International Airport Skopje – Skopje – Kamnik winery (D) (20 km)***

Pick up at the airport. Accommodation in a hotel in Skopje. Orientational walk and time at your leisure. Welcoming dinner in the restaurant of the winery “Kamnik” with wine tasting. Transfer back to the hotel. Overnight.

## **Day-2. *Skopje – “Chateau Sopot” winery – Skopje (B, D) (80 km)***

Breakfast. After the breakfast, a walking tour beginning from the centuries old Kale – Skopje fortress. Continue to the Old Turkish Bazaar, mingling with the locals, meeting different cultures and religions, old forgotten crafts as well. After that, a visit of the “Museum of Macedonian National Struggle”, or the “Archaeological museum of Macedonia”, which has one of the biggest ancient coins collection in the world, exclusively from Macedonian territory. Walk across the Stone Bridge, the landmark of the city, and stop in front of the biggest monument and fountain of Alexander the Great. The next stop will be the Memorial house of Mother Teresa, where she was born in 1910. In the afternoon, a visit of the monastery “St. Pantaleimon” and the Macedonian Ethno village. The dinner will be served in the winery “Chateau Sopot”, with wine tasting and traditional delicious plates. Transfer back to the hotel.

## **Day-3. *Skopje – Kratovo– Tikveshregion – Popova Kula winery (B, L, D) (240 km)***

Breakfast. Drive to Kratovo (95 km), a little medieval town, founded in the middle

of a once-volcano krater. First, have a guided walking tour around the town, crossing many medieval bridges and towers. Visit a small unique museum with artifacts from the 20th century B.C. until nowadays. Then, have a chance to taste slowly-cooked food by the locals and a chance to taste the local home-made wine and rakija (Macedonian brandy). After that, drive to the central part of Macedonia in one of the most important wine regions in Europe, Tikvesh. Accommodation in a hotel in the Tikvesh region. Walk around the winery with a guide who will explain the wine-producing process to you. Have a pre-organized dinner that includes varieties of wine, cheese and meat. Overnight in the hotel.

## **Day-4. *Tikvesh region– Stobi, the Ancient City – Stobi winery– Demir Kapija (B, L) (65 km)***

Breakfast. Drive to the biggest archaeological site in Macedonia – Stobi. The oldest synagogue in Europe, from the 1st century A.D. is found on this archaeological site. Continue driving to the next winery that has the same name as the archaeological site, Stobi winery. Take an organized tour around the winery, and then have lunch and the possibility to taste some of the wines. Drive back to the hotel. Overnight in the hotel.

## **Day-5. *Tikvesh region –Tikvesh winery – Ohrid (B, L) (160 km)***

Breakfast. Drive towards the biggest and the oldest winery in Macedonia, as well as one of the biggest in Europe, the Tikvesh win-



ery. The professionals from the winery will take us through the cellars, they will talk about the history of the winery and the whole wine making process. Have the chance to taste some of

their wines in the restaurant, in a beautiful atmosphere with some specialties cooked from their chef, especially for us. Continue to the town of UNESCO – Ohrid. Accommodation and overnight in a hotel.

#### **Day-6. Ohrid (B, D) (5 km)**

Breakfast. Start the city tour of Ohrid, one of the oldest towns in Europe, full of history, with traces of civilization, 4.000 years old. Visit famous untouched medieval churches, the fortress of Tsar Samuel with a beautiful panorama, the ancient Macedonian-Roman theatre, sailing with small boats on the way back to the town centre. Guide through history in the biggest open-air museum of the Byzanthium. In the afternoon, take a boat trip to the unique prehistoric settlement on water from the bronze age, the most visited site in Macedonia – Bay of Bones, guided by a professional curator. Continue sailing to the extraordinary monument of nature – the lake springs and the 9th century monastery of “St. Naum”. One of the first Cyrillic and Glagolitic letters were carved on the pillars of this monastery, and are still standing there. Free



time. Sailing back to the town. Dinner in a national restaurant. Overnight in the hotel.

#### **Day-7. Ohrid –Tetovo– Skopje(B, D) (180km)**

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to the ethnically and religiously mixed town of Tetovo to visit the unique colorful mosque, painted from outside and inside in different colours, presenting paintings of towns and cities from the 19th century, a kind of a Renaissance in the Islamic world. After that, close to the capital Skopje, a visit of one of the most beautiful canyons in Europe – Matka, on the river “Treska”. Set sail by small boats 6 km upstream to visit the cave Vrelo, full of cave decorations. Accommodation in a hotel. Farewell dinner in a national restaurant with mixed types of wines.

#### **Day-8. International airport Skopje (B) (20 km)**

Breakfast at the hotel. Have some free time. Drive back to the International airport Skopje (30 minutes) for your return flight.

# Macedonian authentic villages

Many beautiful villages are spread like hidden gems in the mountains and valleys of the country. In some of them, a traveler can taste the home-prepared traditional meal from the local hosts or restaurants, and enjoy the beauties that nature offers and are still mostly preserved from the human influence. Beautiful traditional manifestations can also be attended at the right time in the right village.

The **Galichnik wedding** is a traditional custom that was kept through the years, and every year on the 12th of July, the day devoted to the apostle Peter, in the village of Galichnik (located about 10 kmsouthwest from the Mavrovo Lake), it can be attended. This magnificent manifestation will leave you speechless. Under the sounds of the traditional Macedonian music, you can enjoy in the taste of the most delicious „bakrdam“, maize porridge



with home-made sour milk and home-made yellow cheese or the salt brine white cheese made in the local sheepfolds.

Not that far from Galichnik, there is the small picturesque village of **Janche**. If you are exploring the path that connects Galichnik to

Janche, the silence of the region will open all of your senses. This is also one of the villages in the western part of Macedonia that reveals the beauty of the traditional Macedonian architecture, the houses made of soil, stone and wood. The locals will discover the secrets of their way of living as well as the secrets of the well-prepared specialties.

In the most western part of Macedonia, the village **Vevchani** is the host of the **Vevchani Carnival**, on 13th and 14th of January, every



year, for over 1,400 years. This time of the year, the beautiful narrow streets of this village are turned into a scene, on which disguised people perform plays like real actors.

Another interesting thing about Vevchani is that after the fall of the Communism, the inhabitants of this village voted for creating "The Republic of Vevchani". They created local currency and passports, which today they sell to the visitors as souvenirs. While here, you can taste some of the local pastries, the famous traditional sausages, or drink of the local wines.



One of the most beautiful villages that offers a breath-taking view of the Ohrid Lake is the village of **Elshani**. Located 10 km south of Ohrid, and near the National Park Galichica, Elshani is one of the villages that can offer you a donkey safari through the landscapes of the Galichica Mountain. Groups and individuals from all over the world have already experienced the hospitality of the local people and they are witnesses of the tasty home-made food as well as the home-made wine and raki-ja, the strong aperitif served for welcome.

The donkey safari, being more and more popular, can also be experienced in the village of **Kuratica**. But, the location of the village, be-

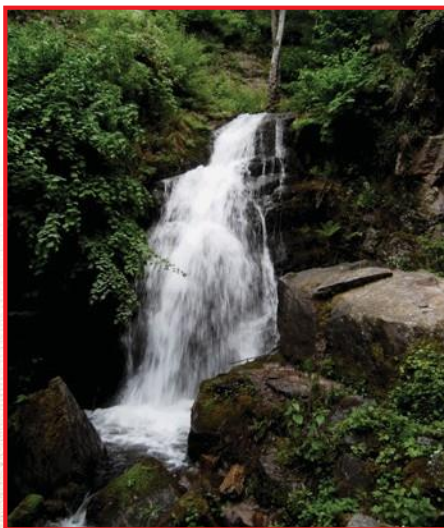


ing about 20 km northeast from Ohrid, gives you a different perspective. The natural washing machines, located in the nearby river, are attracting people from the surrounding areas, for washing their bedding, while they picnic around. The locals offer visitors many tasty specialties, giving them the opportunity to participate in the process of making them.

Nonetheless, if you want to taste a delicious carp or trout, the village of **Brajchino** could be the place where you can be accommodated and served. The village is located about 15 km

east of the Prespa Lake, near the National Park Pelister. Here, you can be involved in diving activities, or do things that get you closer to the daily life of the locals, like picking mushrooms or berries for making home-made juice, confiture and liqueur; harvesting herbs or teas for preparing traditional medicines.

If you travel in the eastern part of Macedonia, **Gabrovo** is one of the villages that can impress you with the wild nature of the mysterious Belasica Mountain. The symbol of the village is the **Gabrovo waterfall** where you can



find your inner peace, only by listening to the cold water flowing. This region of Macedonia is considered to be the cradle of agriculture; so many home-made specialties typical for the region are prepared and served together with the warm welcome from the locals, making your stay pleasant.





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