

May minutes 2010 Foodies



Mira gave a mouth watering presentation on Serbian Food peppered with details of Serbian culture, history and family culture. Despite professing to be nervous her love of cooking and traditions shone through and we were enthralled.

The Balkans is known as the gateway to the east, due to the geographical location on major trade routes. Serbia owes its vast, varied and flavoursome cuisine to the countless invasions from the Ottomans, Byzantines, Greeks, Turks, Austro- Hungarians and more as well as the influence of surrounding countries.

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid=3044&HistoryID=ac79>

Generally the food is a Mediterranean/Oriental mix (although in certain areas it is similar to Hungarian and even German food). Despite the traditional life changing, there are still many people who live in the countryside in farms. These mini farms or small holding are widely spaced in rather hilly terrain and apart from sugar and oil they are self sufficient. Of course as the farms are a mix of dairy and arable, the people produce organic vegetables, meats, eggs, etc. and make their own sausages, cheeses, breads, pickles and plum brandy etc.

Mira took us through a traditional day, breakfast, lunch the main meal and supper.

She talked about the traditional dishes for Christmas,
<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/serbianchristmas/tp/christmas-eve-recipes.htm>

Lent, <http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/starches/r/lenten-kupus-i-grah.htm>

and the special Family patron Saint or 'Slava' day when families make special symbolic bread. Mira's bread was much prettier than the one on this site.

<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/holidaysfestivals/r/slavabread.htm>

Literarily translated the term slava means "praise" or "honour". The day of the patron saint of the family is passed on from one generation to the next. It is also part of the tradition of the non-Roma that the father is the one who bequeaths the slava to the first-born son if possible. Mira's family have St. George as their patron saint.

<http://ling.kfunigraz.ac.at/~rombase/cgi-bin/art.cgi?src=data/ethn/celeb/family-feast.en.xml>

This is a great site which has many of the dishes Mira talked about and showed us.

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

Mira forgot to mention the black coffee *crna kafé* which is similar to Turkish coffee drunk a great deal.

<http://www.travelsrbia.info/manners-customs.php>

<http://www.serbian-travel-system.com/special-interests/local-food.html>

To round of this tummy rumbling journey Mira produced burek (this I am sure is not Mira's own recipe)
<http://easteuropeanfood.about.com/od/maincourses/r/cheeseburek.htm>

Corn muffins followed on, both dishes still warm and fresh from the oven and to round off desserts made with nuts dried fruits and spice. All of which were scrumptious and wholesome and beautifully presented.

Thank you so much Mira for a wonderful morning! Thank you too to Cheda Mira's husband who made bread and photographed the latter along with foods that Mira had made and researched. A great duo!

Aslam (our octogenarian health guru!) passed me some information on Tart Cherries and their health benefits they raise serotonin levels and may ward off Alzheimer's have a look here are a couple of sites there are others.

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/24160-health-benefits-tart-cherry->

juice/http://whatscookingamerica.net/Information/TartCherries_HealthBenefits.htm

The June 17th meeting, the last before the summer, will be at 10.30 in the Javea Tennis when we shall have a question and answer session. So bring your tips and tricks or problems to solve.

On the 30th of June at the open meeting for the U3A we have been requested to make a display of Foodies goodies as you may guess along with the wine tasting we were extremely popular. If you would like to volunteer to make something (bite size portions or something cut into small tasters) you will be reimbursed by the U3A. So please keep a list of costs ready to be handed in on the day. If we have a few people making something none of us need work too hard. Please let me know if you wish to cook or help behind the tables or pass foods around.

At the end of the May meeting I announced that after staring Foodies two years ago I am now passing on the spoon hopefully. I need to be a bit 'selfish' or a while. It would be great if someone (or some ones) would like to carry on with the group. Bear in mind that someone new will have a refreshingly different approach and perhaps re name the group. We still have the venue until June and could book again for the rest of the year, so please let me know if you are interested, otherwise some other group may take the slot.

This month two years ago Anne Muir was dragged along as my moral support to meet a few like minded people to start the group, there are now over 80 Foodies, who granted do not turn up always as they are here for some of the time or have other commitments etc.

It has been great getting to know so many enthusiastic, creative, knowledgeable and supportive people as well as making great friends and acquaintances. You have made the group what it is. Sam Wells has received so many photographs, recipes and minutes which I had hoped would make our webpage, but he is so overloaded and doesn't have enough help, so that is my only regret that our webpage was not as I envisaged. Unfortunately I am not a computer wiz myself.

Despite the latter I still have my files and information so could probably dig up something if anyone needed it.

Hasta luego Barbara