

BULGARIAN CULINARY TRADITION

INTRODUCTION

Bulgarian cuisine is a mix of flavours shaped by the Balkans, the Ottoman Empire, and our own rich agricultural heritage. Every dish has a story, and every story starts at the family table.



BULGARIAN CULINARY IDENTITY

Our food is seasonal, colorful, and communal. Meals in Bulgaria are not just about eating—they are about togetherness, sharing, and celebrating life. We love to cook slowly, using clay pots, fresh vegetables, herbs like savory (chubritsa), and fermented foods like yogurt and sauerkraut.





SHOPSKA SALAD

History of Shopska Salad

“Shopska salad” was first named in a Bulgarian cookbook in 1940 as a variation on lyutenitsa, a Bulgarian vegetable relish. The dish we know as Shopska today was created in 1955 as part of the state tourist agency. It got its name from the Sopski region in western Bulgaria, where it is said to have originated.

Ingredients:

- Roasted bell pepper
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber
- Parsley
- Onion
- Bulgarian white cheese
- Seasoning
- Olives



BANITSA

Bulgarian banitsa's history is rooted in a tradition of filo pastries that emerged from the Ottoman Empire as börek, with banitsa arriving in Bulgaria in the 15th century and evolving into a cherished national dish.

It's a must for breakfast, holidays, and celebrations. On New Year's Eve, we hide little fortune slips inside—each piece carries a wish for the year ahead.

Ingredients:

- Filo dough
- White bulgarian cheese
- Yogurt
- Eggs
- Baking soda
- Oil/ butter



TARATOR

This is our summer soup!

The soup was likely influenced by the Greek and Ottoman cuisines, which have a strong presence in the Balkan region. Over time, Tarator evolved into a unique Bulgarian dish, and it is now a favorite of locals and visitors alike.

Ingredients

- Yogurt
- Cucumbers
- Garlic
- Dill
- Walnuts
- Oil
- Salt



LUTENITSA

This is our iconic red pepper and tomato spread, eaten with bread or as a dip.

Lyutenitsa's history is rooted in the long-standing Bulgarian tradition of preserving harvest vegetables, particularly red peppers and tomatoes, to be eaten throughout the winter

Ingredients

- Roasted red peppers
- Tomatoes
- Vegetable oil
- Salt
- sugar

SWEETS

- Rice pudding - It is prepared from fresh cow's milk, rice, water, sugar, salt, vanilla, and cinnamon powder—the favorite dessert of Bulgarian grandparents
- Tikvenik - It is impossible to have Christmas in Bulgaria without this pumpkin cake! You find this Bulgarian dessert on every Christmas table. It is prepared by filling a pastry with walnuts, pumpkin, sugar, and cinnamon.
- Mekitsi - They are made of a kneaded dough and yogurt – deep fried and topped with your choice of sweet or savory toppings.



DRINKS

- Boza - traditional fermented drink, made from wheat
- Rakia - fruit brandy, made from
- Mavrud wine - The King of Bulgarian wine



CULTURAL ELEMENTS AND TRADITIONS

- Slow cooking in clay pots - symbol of patience and depth of flavour
- Seasonal eating - fresh vegetables in summer, sauerkraut and beans in winter
- Hospitality
- Fortune Banitsa - a unique New Year tradition

