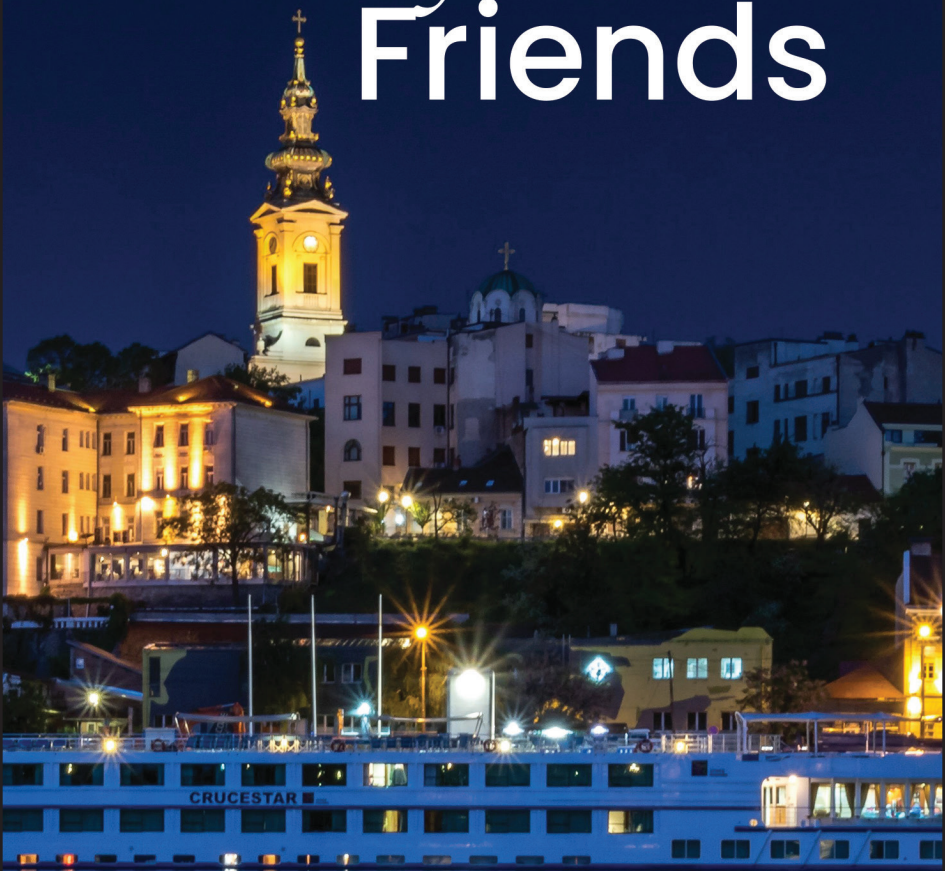




# Serbia *for our* Friends



HALIFAX

Lazar Bošković

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# Foreword

Dear friends,

We have prepared this edition specially for you, to celebrate **our first 20 years!**

Welcome to Serbia, welcome to Halifax, our Halifax Consulting on Banovo Brdo in Belgrade, not the one from Yorkshire after which it was named. In modern history that city has become known as a cradle of the industrial revolution, and after that era as a city of entrepreneurship and energy. The city of Halifax has grown and developed, but it has also changed, in harmony with the demands of the times.

Can a company travel such a road, can it develop and grow in the reality of these times, and on the basis of the personal qualities of colleagues and associates who are actually its essence? We believed it was possible. And we did our best to make it happen.

Halifax's journey began as a consulting company focused on projects in the field of humanitarian and development aid funded by multilateral and bilateral donors. Our reference list includes a large number of successfully completed international development projects in the field of finance, administration, infrastructure and education in the Western Balkans. We are proud of the quality of our cooperation with large European and other consulting companies and donor organizations and, of course, the results we achieved.

These projects, by their nature, also required translation. Project documentation and reports were translated, conference interpreting was established, but all that time translation was just a part of our consulting service.

And then in 2008 an EU-funded project took place to translate 16,000 pages of European legislation from English into Serbian. The success of this two-year project was an important experience for us and created the conditions to form an independent translation division.

Today, Halifax has ten full-time staff who process thousands of pages and hours of translation annually in a variety of language combinations and in collaboration with dozens of translators and court interpreters around the world. Our company is an important regional provider of

translation services, and an increasing number of clients from other continents are making Halifax an important global player.

The constant support of our lawyer, our IT support and our process management consultant allow us to work with confidence and continuous improvement. For this we need full compliance with current regulations, a fantastically secure IT system that for years has been operating remotely, a custom-made translation project management system and the fourth cycle of ISO 9001 and ISO 17100 standards.

The changing and growing needs of our clients are driving our evolution. Your business and professional path brought you to Serbia. We are here to make your business and communications easier.

**Sonja Babić – Lythgoe**

Managing Director, Halifax Consulting d.o.o.

# About Serbia

For centuries the meeting point between East and West, Serbia is a country where civilizations, cultures, religions and climates meet and intertwine. It lies at the centre of the **Balkan Peninsula** in south-east Europe. The northern part of the country belongs to Central Europe, but its climate has a more Mediterranean flavour. Serbia is a landlocked country, but the river **Danube** with the the Rhine-Main-Danube canal has placed it at the centre of Europe's main waterway: from the North Sea and the Atlantic to the Black Sea.

Serbia also lies at **the junction of eastern and western European roads** that lead through the Morava-Vardar and Nišava-Marica valleys to the shores of the Aegean Sea, Asia Minor and the Middle East. **European traffic corridors** 7 (Danube) and 10 (road and rail) cross the territory of Serbia and intersect at Belgrade. Belgrade's Nikola Tesla airport lies at the crossroads of major European airways.

As you journey southwards from the agricultural expanses of the **Pannonian Plain** in the north, through the orchards of **Šumadija**'s fertile river valleys and hills, Serbia's relief gradually turns mountainous, rich in canyons, gorges, caves and well-preserved forests. Mountain beauties (Vlasina, Zlatar...), five national parks (Djerdap, Fruška Gora, Kopaonik, Tara and Šar-planina), rivers (Sava, Drina...) and lakes provide excellent settings for active nature holidays - from hiking, hunting and fishing to extreme sports.

Many times in its **centuries of rich history**, Serbia has been at the centre of European and global attention, in complete disproportion to its size, economic power and population. Lessons about courage, patriotism and the struggle for freedom can be learned in Serbia, at every step through its cities and landscapes (Belgrade Fortress, Orašac...).

**Serbia's cultural and historical heritage** begins with prehistoric archaeological sites (Lepenski vir, Vinča...) and the heritage of the ancient world (Felix Romuliana, Viminacium...), and is richest in Serbian medieval churches and monasteries, some of which are included on the UNESCO World Heritage List. (Studenica, Sopoćani...).

A large number of cultural, entertainment, traditional and sporting **events** are organized in Serbia throughout the year, showing the creative strength and spiritual health of this country (Guča, Exit...). The **tourist destinations** most visited are cities (Belgrade and Novi Sad), mountains (Kopaonik and Zlatibor) and spas (Vrnjacka Banja and Sokobanja).

# Important dates

**6500-5500 BC** Mesolithic culture of Lepenski Vir in the Djerdap gorge.

**4500-3200 BC** Early neolithic culture of Vinča near Belgrade.

**IV century** Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica) one of the capitals of the Roman empire

**527-565** The Byzantine emperor Justinian builds and renovates cities, churches, and in his native region Justinian Primus.

**VI century** Slavic tribes from the Danube region settle the Balkans.

**Around 630** Slavs conquer Singidunum (Belgrade).

**VII century** Serbs begin to convert to Christianity.

**Around 780** Prince Višeslav, the first historically known Serbian ruler.

**IX century** Constantine (called Cyril in monasticism) and Methodius, Christian missionaries, create the first Slavic Glagolitic alphabet, and liturgical books are translated into Old Slavonic.

**878** First mention of the Slavic name of Belgrade.

**X century** Emergence of the Cyrillic alphabet.

**1054** Schism of the Christian Church into eastern and western, Serbia falls under the east.

**1166-1196** The great ruler Stefan Nemanja, founder of the Nemanjić dynasty, fights against Byzantium, he rules a territory stretching from the Adriatic coast to the Morava and the Šar Mountains.

**1175-1236** Saint Sava (prince Rastko Nemanjić), the first Serbian archbishop.

**1180** Miroslav's Gospel is created, the most important and beautiful Serbian manuscript.

**1217** Serbia becomes a kingdom, Stefan Prvovenčani is crowned by the pope.

**1219** The Serbian Autocephalous Archbishopric is established, with its headquarters in Žiča.

**1243-1276** King Stefan Uroš I marries Jelena of Anjou, economic strengthening of Serbia and the arrival of Saxon miners.

**1284** Belgrade comes under Serbian rule for the first time.

**1346** Dušan is crowned in Skopje as emperor of Serbs, Greeks and coastal areas. The Serbian church receives the rank of Patriarchate.

**1389** The Battle of Kosovo in which both rulers, Prince Lazar and Sultan Murat I die together with the flower of the Serbian nobles. Serbia becomes a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire.

**1402-1459** Serbian despots, in double vassal relations with Hungary and Turkey. Mining and trade develop, cities prosper.

**1403** Under despot Stefan Lazarević, Belgrade becomes the capital of medieval Serbia.

**1739** The peace of Belgrade: the Danube and the Sava again became the border between Austria and Turkey.

**1751-1753** Many Serbs emigrate to Russia, and mass colonization from various parts of the Habsburg monarchy create ethnic diversity in Vojvodina.

**15 February 1804** After the people's assembly in Orašac, the First Serbian Uprising against the Ottomans begins, and Djordje Petrović, or Karadjordje, is elected leader.

**1806** Karadjordje liberates Belgrade, which again becomes the capital of Serbia.

**1841** Belgrade becomes the capital of the Principality of Serbia.

**1914** Austria-Hungary attacks Serbia, starting the First World War. Over half a million Serbs are killed from a population of just 3 million.

**1918** The Serbian army breaks through the Thessaloniki front, Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary capitulate, Germany signs the armistice.

**1918** The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes is established, from 1929 called the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

**6 April 1941** The Nazis bomb Belgrade and other Serbian cities without declaring war.

**20 October 1944** Belgrade is liberated by the Yugoslav People's Liberation Army, supported by the Red Army.

**1945** The monarchy is abolished and the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia is proclaimed under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and Josip Broz Tito.

**1991-1995** Civil war and the disintegration of Yugoslavia along republican borders.

**1992** Federal Republic of Yugoslavia composed of Serbia and Montenegro. United Nations imposes economic sanctions.

**1999** NATO air forces bomb FR Yugoslavia. The Kumanovo Agreement places Kosovo and Metohija under a UN protectorate.

**5 October 2000** After elections and civil protests, a democratic government is established.

**2006** Belgrade is again the capital of an independent Serbia, after the secession of Montenegro.

**2009** Serbia applies for membership of the European Union.



# From fortresses to cities

There are about 200 sites throughout Serbia with the remains of old fortresses and fortified cities, some dating to **the ancient world**. But after many centuries of wars and destruction, the only ones that survive are those that still had a military function in the **Middle Ages**, under Turkish rule. Some of them were the **forerunners of modern Serbian cities**, which are still adorned by their ramparts and towers.

**The fortresses** were exclusively military strongholds, and **the castles** were smaller fortifications in which kings or aristocrats held court. The most spacious were **fortified cities** with specially protected zones and a civilian settlement around the walls.

**The Roman Empire** established its eastern border on the Danube, with a string of military fortifications along a road used by the legions to raid barbarian tribes across the river. Merchants and craftsmen followed the army, and soon cities sprang up along all the important roads. **Upper Moesia** and **Lower Pannonia**, and later the province of **Illyricum**, which roughly covers today's Serbia, developed from marginal border provinces into centres of the Roman Empire, for some two hundred years from the **3<sup>rd</sup> century** onwards.

## ROMAN FORTRESSES AND CITIES

### Sirmium

Built in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, in the heart of Pannonia on the banks of the Sava River, Sirmium, today's **Sremska Mitrovica**, reached its peak in 294, when it became one of the four capitals of the Roman Empire.

### Singidunum

With the arrival of Flavius IV's legion, which built a fortification in the Upper Town of today's **Belgrade Fortress**, Singidunum reached its peak in 86 AD.

### Viminacium

Today's **Kostolac**, near Požarevac, was a large Roman city called Viminacium and a military camp between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC.

### Naissus

In today's **Niš**, the Roman Naisus, the Roman emperor Constantine the Great was born, the founder of Roman Christianity (Edict of Milan, 313) and of Constantinople.

### **Iustiniana Prima**

Today's **Caričin Grad**, near Leskovac, once called Justinian Prima, was named after Emperor Justinian and founded in 535 as the capital of the Illyrian province.

## **MEDIEVAL FORTRESSES AND CITIES**

### **Stari Ras**

The medieval town of Ras is located west of Novi Pazar. In the first half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century it was the main stronghold of the Serbian state.

### **Maglič**

Located on the right bank of the Ibar, south of Kraljevo, one of the most beautiful monuments of Serbian medieval military architecture was built here in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Novo Brdo**

One of the largest Serbian medieval towns, located on the top of Mala Planina, east of Priština, was founded at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century to protect the settlement of miners, merchants and craftsmen near rich mines.

### **Petrovaradin fortress**

Petrovaradin was built between 1692 and 1780 on the Danube near **Novi Sad**, during the constant Turkish-Austrian struggle for supremacy in the area.

### **Smederevo fortress**

Despot Djuradj Branković built the **Smederevo** fortress in this former Serbian capital in the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Golubac fortress**

A fortress with nine towers was built in the 14<sup>th</sup> century on a cliff above the Djerdap gorge, and this exceptional position makes it one of the most impressive fortresses on the Danube.

# Culture

On the tumultuous roads from Europe to the East and from the East to Europe, Serbia has for centuries been at the centre of a region of frequent wars, destruction, disasters and migrations. But it has a rich cultural and historical heritage. Prehistoric life in this region can be seen in the **many archaeological sites**. Lepenski Vir, the first economic and social structure from 6,500 and 5,500 BC, Starčevo from the early Neolithic 5,500 to 4,500 BC and Vinča from the later Neolithic 4,500 to 3,200 BC, show that for millennia this was a cultural centre of the prehistoric world.

Today, the remains of important **Roman roads and cities** testify to six centuries of the Roman Empire in Serbia – Gamzigrad, Sirmium, Mediana, with all kinds of buildings and infrastructure.

Among the most important and well-preserved monuments in Serbia are the **Orthodox monasteries**, built in the period from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. They are located from Fruška Gora in the north, across the Morava and Ibar valleys to Kosovo and Metohija. The architecture of Serbian medieval monasteries displays a special diversity. During the 13<sup>th</sup> and partly in the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, the churches' proportions, decorative facade treatment and sculpture shows a **Romanesque** influence on the **Raska School of Architecture**. These are Studenica, Banjska, Dečani, Gradac, Arilje, Mileševa, Sopoćani... The first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century was marked by exceptional architectural and artistic achievements during the reign of **King Milutin** (e.g. Gračanica). After 1371, the special architectural style of the **Moravian School of Architecture** began, with polychrome facades and plastic decoration, which developed in the Morava Valley (Ravanica, Lazarica, Ljubostinja, Kalenić ...).

So far, the **UNESCO World Heritage List** for Serbia includes:

- **Stari Ras with Sopoćani** (1979) - a whole that includes the monasteries Sopoćani and Djurdjevi Stupovi, Peter's Church and the remains of the fortresses Ras and Gradina.
- **Studenica Monastery** (1986)
- **Medieval monuments in Kosovo** (2004) - in addition to the Dečani Monastery, which was individually inscribed in 2004, the monasteries of the Patriarchate of Peć and Gračanica and the Church of Our Lady of Ljeviška were added to the list in 2006.
- **Gamzigrad - Romuliana, Palace Galleries** (2007)
- **Stećci – medieval tombstones** (2016)

Under the **UNESCO Memory of the World programme**, the **Nikola Tesla Archive** (2003) and **Miroslav's Gospel** (2005) were entered in the World Register of Cultural Documentary Heritage of Serbia.

The **UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage** of Serbia includes:

- **Family Slava** (2014)
- **Kolo – a traditional folk dance** (2017)
- **Songs accompanied by the gusla** (2018)

# UNESCO World Heritage List

## STARI RAS AND SOPOĆANI

In the vicinity of Stari Ras, the first **capital of Nemanjić Serbia**, near **Novi Pazar**, there is a group of medieval monuments consisting of fortresses, monasteries and churches. The most important monuments in this complex are: the monastery Sopoćani, the monastery Djurdjevi Stupovi, the Church of the Apostles Peter and Paul (Peter's Church) and the remains of the fortresses of Ras and Gradina. Preserved monuments in this area are the oldest original forms of artistic expression of the Serbian people and at the same time the highest achievement in architecture and painting in the period from the **10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> century**.

The **Sopoćani Monastery** from the first half of the **13<sup>th</sup> century** is dedicated to the Holy Trinity and is reminiscent of the triple-nave basilica of the Western Christian world. Its portals, windows and narthex with a bell tower are Romanesque in form, and the frescoes in Sopoć are the culmination of a particular classical style.

The **Djurdjevi Stupovi monastery** was built between **1167 and 1170** on the top of a hill, which was not common for Serbian medieval buildings. The spatial design of the church, the portals, the two towers and the stylistic treatment were made in the Romanesque spirit.

## MEDIEVAL MONUMENTS IN KOSOVO AND METOHIJA

The list includes the Dečani Monastery, the Patriarchate of Peć, the Church of the Mother of God Ljeviška in Prizren and the Gračanica Monastery. They reflect the peak of **Byzantine-Romanesque religious culture**, with a unique style of fresco-painting, which developed in the Balkans between the **13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries**. With their architecture and frescoes, but also with the icons and church fittings that are preserved in them, they provide a rich picture of artistic events in medieval Serbia. Sadly, after the arrival of the international peacekeeping force in Kosovo and Metohija in 1999, Albanian extremists destroyed or severely damaged more than 100 Orthodox churches and monasteries.

## STUDENICA MONASTERY

This monastery near Kraljevo, on the right bank of the river Studenica, surrounded by a high protective wall, is one of the best combinations

of Romanesque and Byzantine style. It is the endowment of the great ruler **Stefan Nemanja**, founder of the independent Serbian state and of a dynasty that would rule Serbia for two centuries. This is the most important monastic complex of medieval Serbia and a great spiritual and artistic centre of the Serbian nation. This most beautiful building of Serbian medieval architecture was built **from 1183 to 1196**.

#### GAMZIGRAD - ROMULIANA

**Felix Romuliana** is an imperial palace built by the Roman emperor **Galerius Maximilian**, on the vast plateau of Gamzigrad, near **Zaječar**. Galerius was born in this area, and built this palace in the **3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries** for himself and his mother Romula, after whom he named it. It belongs to a special category of monuments of Roman court architecture related exclusively to the period of the tetrarchy and is the best preserved example of that style. The palace is surrounded by strong ramparts that protected the city from barbarian incursions.

#### STEĆAK TOMBSTONES

The stećak is a medieval tombstone reflecting the deepest origins of Europeans in the central Balkans. It represents a unique testimony of cultural tradition and civilization. Their origin is connected to the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, though most were erected in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century they were decorated with carvings, but this fashion did not last long. There are 4,100 stećak tombstones in Serbia at 203 locations, while others can be found in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Croatia.

# UNESCO programme

## Memory of the World

### NIKOLA TESLA ARCHIVE

The Nikola Tesla archive holds a unique collection of manuscripts, scientific documents that are indispensable for studying one of the most important eras in the history of modern technology. **Nikola Tesla** (1856-1943), an American scientist of Serbian origin, made an unparalleled contribution to science and technological progress as the inventor of the rotating magnetic field, induction motor, polyphase alternating current, wireless, the generator and a complete system of production and distribution of AC electricity. The *Tesla* – the unit of magnetic induction in the international SI system was named after him. Tesla constructed a high-frequency, high-voltage generator, known today as Tesla's Transformer, Tesla's Coil or a coreless transformer.

### THE MIROSLAV GOSPEL

Miroslav's Gospel, a liturgical book with miniatures of exceptional beauty written around **1180**, is representative of a group of illuminated manuscripts with specific stylistic and iconographic features that are the result of combining elements of the West (Italy) and the East (Byzantium). This Serbian manuscript with a concept of decoration common to the cultural model of Orthodox Slavs and with the style of miniatures originating in Central European transcription centres is one of the most important testimonies of influential artistic paths from West to East and vice versa. This is the first preserved Serbian illustrated manuscript, it is written in Cyrillic and has the status of a national relic.

# Nature

Serbian nature abounds in **protected areas** that have a pronounced geological, biological and ecosystem diversity according to international criteria. **Biodiversity** – the biological diversity of species and ecosystems and **geodiversity** – the geological diversity of phenomena and forms of geological structure, make Serbia a country where all lovers of natural beauty can find something for themselves.

## UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MaB) Programme

Biosphere reserves declared in Serbia:

- **Golija - Studenica Biosphere Reserve** (2001), based on the Golija Nature Park and the 12<sup>th</sup> century Studenica Monastery which is on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The reserve covers an area of about 54,000 ha, most of it occupied by well-preserved forest ecosystems.
- **Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve** (2017), part of one of the best-preserved marsh wetlands on the entire course of the Danube, which is also called the European Amazon. This Reserve covers an area of about 176,635 ha.

## NATIONAL PARKS

There are five national parks in Serbia: NP Djerdap, NP Fruška Gora, NP Kopaonik, NP Šar-planina and NP Tara. Each national park is an area with a large number of diverse natural ecosystems, prominent features of the landscape and a cultural heritage in which man lives in harmony with nature. The intention is to preserve existing natural characteristics and resources, the overall landscape, the geological and biological diversity, and to meet scientific, educational, spiritual, aesthetic, cultural, tourist, health and recreational needs in accordance with the principles of nature protection and sustainable development.

## NATURE PARKS

The Serbian Nature parks are: Golija, Kučajske planine, Sićevačka klisura, Stara planina, Šargan - Mokra Gora, Palić, Zlatibor, Beljanska bara, Tikvara, Jegrička, Stara Tisa near Biserno ostrvo, Grmija, Ponjavica, Begečka jama, Kamaraš, Radan, Bačkotopolska valleys and Rusanda. The nature park is an area of natural characteristics with mostly well-preserved natural ecosystems and picturesque landscapes.



## RAMSAR AREAS

On the **UNESCO List of Internationally Important Wetlands** (protected under the Ramsar Convention), there are ten Serbian Ramsar areas covering a total of 53,714 hectares: Obedska bara, Ludaško lake, Stari Begej - Carska bara, Zasavica, Slano Kopovo, Vlasina, Gornje Podunavlje, Labudovo okno, Peštersko polje and Koviljsko-petrovaradinski fen. These areas are also **nature reserves**.

## RIVERS AND LAKES

The rivers of Serbia belong to the basins of the Black, Adriatic and Aegean Seas. Three rivers are navigable throughout their courses in Serbia: the Danube, the Sava and the Tisza, while the Velika Morava and Tamiš are partially navigable. The longest river flowing through Serbia is the **Danube**, with 588 km out of the 2,783 km of its complete course, and its basin covers over 90% of Serbia.

The largest lake in Serbia is the artificial accumulation on the Danube - **Djerdap Lake**, with an area of 253 km<sup>2</sup>, followed by Lake Vlasina with 16 km<sup>2</sup> and Perućac Lake with 12.4 km<sup>2</sup>. The following lakes are especially interesting for tourists: Ludaško, Paličko, Srebrno and Belocrkvanska lakes.

# The spirit of Serbia

Serbia has always lain **between East and West**, not only geographically, but also politically and culturally. It first found itself between the Byzantine and Roman empires, and then between the Ottomans and Western Christianity. These centuries on the roads of conquering armies from both directions caused constant migration and mixing in the population. The result is a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-confessional society.

Even under communism, the inhabitants were somewhere between the Warsaw Pact and NATO. Unlike other post-communist countries in the region, the population has a more all-round education, a more modern approach to life, a better knowledge of foreign languages and is more ready to accept new technologies and models of behaviour.

The ethnic composition of Serbia's population is diverse, so that in addition to the majority population made up of Serbs, there are about **40 nationalities**. All have the same rights and duties and enjoy full national equality.

The **Serbian Cyrillic** alphabet has 30 letters - one letter for each sound, which makes it unique among languages.

**Hospitality** is one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for visiting Serbia, and foreigners need little time to be convinced of the kindness, openness and warmth of its inhabitants. Foreign tourists in Serbia have often had the opportunity to be hosted as if they were part of a family.

A **handshake**, with the right hand, is *de rigueur* when presenting and getting to know each other, regardless of gender. A **kiss** is not expected at the first meeting, but on following occasions. If you are dear to the one you meet, kissing on the cheek follows, and typically Serbian - three times. Of course, no one complains if the number of kisses is reduced to two or one, with a warm hug.

A Serbian **toast** is usually made with homemade brandy, very often made in the family. A toast goes with knocking glasses, an obligatory look in the eyes and loud shouting: *Živeli!* Toasts are usually held only on festive occasions, they are often held by the host, but a guest may also make a toast.

Serbians enjoy plentiful and spicy food and usually have three meals a day, with lunch being the largest.

An important part of the Serbian mentality is '**paying the bill**' in the restaurant. The host will almost never allow a guest to pay for lunch, dinner or drinks, because it is customary for the host to bear all the costs while a guest is with him.

Unlike the rest of Europe, there is no day of the week in Serbia with no opportunity for **nightlife**, for all generations, for all styles of life and music and for every available budget. After a crazy night of fun, around 3 or 4 in the morning we go for a barbecue or burek.

# Traditions

## THE FAMILY SAINT'S DAY

The family saint's day is an ancient Serbian Orthodox custom in which special rites and feasts are held to celebrate a **Christian saint, the family protector**. This feast is a holiday of the "small church", the basic Christian cell, the family, when the family remembers in prayer their ancestors, who celebrated the same saint. Serbs celebrate the baptismal feast in a circle of family and friends, special and varied dishes are prepared, and a festive atmosphere reigns in the home.

**The most celebrated Serbian saint's days** are St Nikola, St Jovan, St Dimitrije (Mitrovdan), St George (Djurdjevdan) and the Archangel Michael (Arandjelovdan).

## CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

On **Christmas Eve**, early in the morning, the head of the house goes to get an oak wreath, which is brought into the house at sunset. Christmas Eve dinner is a strict fast, and bread is not cut with a knife but broken by hand. Besides unleavened bread, fish, honey, wine and beans are also eaten, with walnuts, apples, pears, prunes, dates, dried fruits, almonds and hazelnuts.

Serbians celebrate **Christmas** according to the old Julian calendar, so it falls on January 7. Early in the morning, the first person to come to the home has a special status. When he enters, it is customary to greet the household with the words "Christ is born", and then to approach the fire, take a twig of the oak wreath and light a fire with the words: "As many sparks, so much health, as many sparks, so much happiness and fun, as many sparks, so many couples". It is believed that the family will then be healthy and happy throughout the year, reflecting an old belief that this person is a sage from the east and that while the fire is burning, he is divining the stars for the benefit of the host.

**Christmas dinner** is festive and must contain certain ritual dishes that are prepared only on this day - Christmas roast (a whole piglet) and garlic - wheat flour bread, in which a coin is placed and which is broken exclusively by hand. Whoever finds a coin in his piece of bread will be lucky during the next year!

## EASTER CUSTOMS

**Easter** is a movable feast celebrated after the Jewish Passover, on the first Sunday after the first full moon that falls on or after the spring equinox. It can fall on April 4 at the earliest, and on May 8 at the latest. Easter eggs are painted on Good Friday, a day reserved for doing nothing else. The people greet each other with the words: "Christ is Risen!" with the reply "Truly He is Risen!"

# People

## STATESMEN AND MILITARY LEADERS

### **Stefan Nemanja (1114-1200)**

The great Serbian leader and founder of the Nemanjić dynasty

### **Saint Sava (1169-1236)**

Educator and first archbishop of the autocephalous Serbian Church

### **King Milutin (1253-1321)**

One of the most powerful Serbian medieval rulers

### **Emperor Dušan (1308-1355)**

First Serbian emperor and legislator

### **Prince Lazar (1329-1389)**

Holy Emperor Lazar, a cult figure of the Serbian Kosovo myth

### **Despot Stefan Lazarević (1377-1427)**

Modern ruler, diplomat, warrior and poet

### **Despot Djuradj Branković (1377-1456)**

Serbian ruler and General

### **Djordje Petrović - Karadjordje (1768-1817)**

Leader of the first Serbian uprising

### **Prince Miloš Obrenović (1780-1860)**

Leader of the Second Serbian Uprising and Prince of Serbia

### **Prince Mihailo Obrenović (1823-1868)**

A reforming prince

### **King Petar I Karadjordjević (1844-1921)**

Founder of the Serbian parliamentary constitutional monarchy

### **General Živojin Mišić (1855-1921)**

One of the most prominent Serbian military leaders

### **Nikola Pašić (1845-1926)**

The longest-serving Serbian politician and statesman

### **Dr Zoran Djindjić (1952-2003)**

Philosopher, politician, prime minister and role model for modern Serbia

## SCIENTISTS

### **Rudjer Bošković (1711-1787)**

Universal creator and scientist

### **Vuk Stefanović Karadžić (1787-1864)**

Linguist, ethnographer, historian, reformer of the Serbian language

### **Josif Pančić (1814-1888)**

Doctor, botanist and first president of the Serbian Royal Academy

### **Jovan Cvijić (1865-1927)**

Founder of Serbian geography

### **Mihajlo Pupin (1854-1935)**

Scientist and inventor

### **Milutin Milanković (1879-1958)**

Creator of the theory of ice ages and author of a most precise calendar

### **Nikola Tesla (1856-1943)**

One of the world's greatest inventive minds

## ARTISTS

### **Dositej Obradović (1739-1811)**

Writer, philosopher, pedagogue and public educator

### **Petar II Petrović Njegoš (1813-1851)**

One of the greatest Serbian poets, ruler and bishop of Montenegro

### **Borisav Stanković (1876-1927)**

One of the most important writers of Serbian realism

### **Branislav Nušić (1864-1938)**

The greatest Serbian playwright

### **Branko Radičević (1824-1853)**

A poet: Serbian poetry is divided into before and after him

### **Vojislav Ilić (1862-1894)**

Poet of realism and a bohemian

### **Djura Jakšić (1832-1878)**

Writer, painter and bohemian

### **Ivan Gundulić (1589-1638)**

Famous writer of the Dubrovnik Baroque

**Ivo Andrić (1892-1975)**

Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1961

**Isidora Sekulić (1877-1958)**

Serbian writer and first female academic

**Jovan Dučić (1871-1943)**

Serbian poet, writer and diplomat

**Jovan Jovanović Zmaj (1833-1904)**

Children's poet, lyricist of Serbian romanticism, doctor and publisher

**Jovan Sterija Popović (1806-1856)**

Founder of Serbian drama and comedian

**Laza K. Lazarević (1851-1891)**

Doctor and creator of the Serbian psychological short story

**Laza Kostić (1841-1910)**

Serbian poet, journalist and translator

**Meša Selimović (1910-1982)**

Prominent Serbian writer from Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Milan Rakić (1876-1938)**

Serbian poet, diplomat and academic

**Milena Pavlović - Barili (1909-1945)**

One of the most interesting European painters of the interwar period

**Miloš Crnjanski (1893-1977)**

Poet, narrator, novelist, playwright

**Nadežda Petrović (1873-1915)**

The most important Serbian painter of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries

**Paja Jovanović (1859-1957)**

A typical representative of Serbian academic realism

**Radoje Domanović (1873-1908)**

Creator of the Serbian satirical short story

**Sava Šumanović (1896-1942)**

One of the most important Serbian painters of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

**Stevan Mokranjac (1856-1914)**

Classic of Serbian music and music pedagogue



# Gastronomy

**The richness of Serbian cuisine** comes from its geographical, national and cultural diversity, created by centuries of mixing of populations. The influences on Serbian cuisine are rich and varied – Greek, Bulgarian, Turkish and Hungarian.

An old Serbian legend says that during the time of **Dušan's empire** in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, people ate with golden spoons and forks at the Serbian imperial court. Historians tell us that Serbian medieval cuisine consisted mainly of milk and dairy products and vegetables. Not much bread was eaten, the richer ate wheat bread, and the poorer oats and rye. The only meat was game, and cattle were kept for use in agriculture.

Beef prosciutto, kajmak, ajvar, cicvara, rose jam and various specialties with prunes are considered **autochthonous Serbian dishes**.

Typical of today's **Vojvodina** are doughs - breads, strudels, noodles, as well as various types of meat products from the rich livestock and poultry. In **Šumadija**, vegetable pies are more common, with pork on a spit. The specialty of **western Serbia** is dried meat, and lamb dishes are indispensable on Zlatibor and Zlatar. The cuisine of **eastern Serbia** is characterized by dry shepherd's pies, boiled lamb in milk, dried wild boar meat, lamb with three types of meat and various vegetables, and Homolje porridge. In **south Serbia**, popular dishes include grilled meat or skewers, especially specialties of the famous Leskovac grill. **Kosovo and Metohija** is rich in hundreds of delicious lean and fatty dishes: bingur, stew, various pies, baklava, lamb and mutton specialties...

It is not easy to show a foreign visitor to Serbia all the secrets of the country's gastronomy. Many dishes simply do not exist in the dictionary or menu of other nations, although they are made from common ingredients that exist in every European country. That is why the study of the Serbian national cuisine, created in an unpredictable combination of historical influences at the crossroads of civilizations, should be left to the experienced hands of **Serbian master chefs**.

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Lazar Bošković  
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