

Appendix 3: Traditional culinary specialties of Vlova County

The traditional cuisine in Vlova county is rich and diversified with similarities but also distinctions between the coastal area and the hinterland as well as among the districts themselves. It reflects the agriculture and livestock produce cultivated in the county's rural area as well as fishery in the coastal area.

Some traditional specialties are typical for Vlova Region in both coastal and hinterland areas as it is the grilled lamb or kid (of one year) on a skewer, "arapash", "kukurec", "përshesh" with turkey or goose, pie with different ingredients, traditional mix salad of tomato and cucumber with cheese and olives. The use of "kos" (yogurt), strong white cheese of goat/cow/sheep, "gjize" (made by boiling yogurt and dribbling it), strong cheese known as "kackavall", as well as olives and olive oil is common in every table. Traditional spirits use in the area is raki and wine. Raki is used widely in all the county, while wine has been less in common; mainly used in Narta village and Himara. The main varieties of wine produced locally are Kallmet, Shesh and Vlosh wines.

More specifically the areas are distinguished for the traditional specialties as following:

Vlova's area traditional specialties:

Grilled meat, "arapash", "kukurec", "trahana", pie with leafy wild greens and "gjize" and yogurt, "pispilit", fish/eel cooked in a baking pan, salad with boiled leaf greens, mix salad, yogurt, hard white cheese of goat/cow/sheep, olives and olive oil, "revani".

Shushica valley's area traditional specialties:

Grilled meat, "arapash", "kukurec", "pace" with the meet of veal's head, "pasterma", "përshesh" with turkey or goose, "thërime / rosnica", pie with different leafy wild greens, "kulac" baked in hot wooden ash, salad with boiled leafy wild greens, mix salad, yogurt, hard white cheese of goat/cow/sheep, olives and olive oil, "revani" as sweet.

Ionian coastal area (Bregu e Saranda) traditional specialties:

Trout fish cooked in a baking pan, "ksirogjak", pie with rice and different leafy wild greens, "revani", as well as mix salad, yogurt, hard white cheese of goat/cow/sheep, olives and olive oil. The area, being known for the cultivation of garden orchards, uses their fruits as traditional sweets in form of jams, compotes, marmalades, gliko. The fresh fruits grown in the garden orchards are known mandarins, oranges, lemons, grape, cherry, nespulla, and figs.

Delvina's area traditional specialties:

Traditional culinary specialties of the area have a big influence from Greek cuisine as well as the livestock tradition of the hinterland. The most traditional specialties are: the Greek traditional pie (mainly cooked in villages as Finiq, Mesopotam, Mursi, Ciflik), "musaka", sufle, pie with rice, pie with "cep dore", trout fish cooked in baking pan with spices and vegetables (characteristic for Finiqi area). Also the area is known for "pace", grilled lamb / kid on a skewer, "tas kebab", "kukurec" (Delvina area is distinguished for its cooking), and yogurt made with sheep milk.

Specifically some of the settlements are known for traditional specialties as below. A list of specialties with a description is given at the Appendix 5: Traditional culinary specialties of Vlova County.

Shushica Valley: Grilled lamb or kid on a skewer, "arapash" with bowels of the lamb, "përshesh" with turkey or goose, "urle", "kukurec", pie with leafy wild greens, "thërime / rosnica", "pastico", "revani".

Himara: Salad with oranges, olives, dried onions, boiled leafy wild greens, olive oil and lemon, pie or pita, pie with fish, pie with chicken, “bllacaria”, lamb / kid meat with spices in oven, marinated sardines, fish cooked in a baking pan, cooked white neens, stew dish, “arapash”. Himara is known for the traditional produce of bukfiqe and palafi, as well as the wine. Coffee’s liqueur is a traditional home made speciality in Old Himara.

Piluri: Grilled lamb or kid on a skewer, pie with potato, spinach, “gjize” and yogurt.

Qeparo: Pancakes, pie with pumpkin, pie with spinach, baked meat (chicken, lamb, kid) with potato. Old Qeparo has the tradition of making biscuits with canella.

Borsh: “Petanik”, grilled lamb or kid on a skewer,

Saranda: Fish, cooked mussels, cooked sea food (a mixture of octopods, shrimps squids and common cuttlefishes). The fish mainly is mullet, cod, sea bass, scald, “sira”, “koce”, etc..

Delvina: Traditional Greek pie (in Finiq, Mesopotam, Mursi, Ciflik), as well as, “musaka”, “sufle”, pie with rice, pie with “cep dore”, trout fish with spices and vegetables (characteristic for Finiqi area), “pace”, grilled lamb or kid on a skewer, “tas kebab”, “kukurec”, yogurt made from the sheep milk.

List of culinary specialities with description

Grilled Meat. The lamb is normally grilled on a skewer over fired wooden ember. It is one of the most favourite and widespread dish in the region.

Lamb boiled in milk. The lamb is cooked by boiling it within a hermetic pot. It is something considered very special.

Meat with spices. The meet of lamb / kid is baked in oven with spices such as parsley, dill, garlic, spinach.

Pasterma. It is prepared for consumption during wintertime; it is a dried smoked meat. It is mostly consumed in the mountainous areas.

Kukurec. Small intestines of lamb stuffed with innards and grilled at a skewer over fired wooden ember.

“Ksirogjak”. It is the cattle rectum stuffed with rice and flinders of lamb liver.

Baked meat with potatoes is made with chopped meet of lamb / kecit / chicken baked in oven.

“Pace”. It is made with meet of veal head, tomato sauce, some wheat flour and boiled together. It can be tasted with garlic and vinegar.

Stew dish (gjelle jahni). It is made with chopped dried onions, papers and tomatoes and cooked and served over the pasta or rise (pilaf).

Trout fish in casserole. The chopped fried trout is placed in casserole together with fried onions, chopped tomatoes and garlic and some spices added during cooking.

“Përshesh” with turkey or goose. The dish is prepared with maize flour, wheat flour, turkey (chicken) or goose.

Thërime ose Rosnica. The dish is prepared frying wheat flour with olive oil and boil together with the field chicken.

Arapash. It is a dish prepared with maize flour, butter, olive oil and some parts of the bowels of the lamb. All these are cooked in the fat that wraps the inner organs. It is originally cooked only in Vlorë villages.

Trahana. It is a mixture of flour, yogurt, salt with butter and after processing is left to dry under the sun. When it is cooked, usually in winter time, it is mixed with water and after is added bread, butter and cheese.

“Povelak”. It is a mixture of boiled butter, cheese and bread.

“Byrek”. A pie stuffed with different ingredients as: leafy wild greens / rice and leafy wild vegetables / different leafy wild vegetables, cottage cheese and yogurt / fish / chicken / potato, spinach, cottage cheese and yogurt / white beans / pumpkin / spinach / dried onions and tomato

Bllacaria, a pie made with leafy wild vegetables and wheat flour mixed together with olive oil and baked in oven; it is used in Himara.

Petaniku is a kind of pie made with only two foils and stuffed with the mix of yogurt, cheese, milk, oregano; it is used in Borshi.

Pispilit. It is made with maize flour mixed with spinach, leafy wild vegetables, barley, white cheese and olive oil. It is spread at a baking pan and baked in the oven.

Trazore. It is made with maize flour, fresh cheese, butter and cottage cheese. (Tragjas)

Kulluri. It is a big bread made with wheat flour and eggs. Mainly cooked at weddings occasions. (Himara)

“Kulac”. It is a kind of bread baked in hot wooden ash or in oven.

White beans is a dish made with white beans boiled with water and olive oil, no spices.

Green salads made with leafy wild vegetables growing in the gardens and are very popular.

Mix salad made with tomato, cucumber, cheese, olives and olive oil.

Orange salad made with oranges, olives, dried onions and olive oil.

Leafy wild vegetables salad made with leafy wild vegetables, olive oil and lemon.

Hard white cheese made of milk of sheep, goats and cows

Kackavall cheese (strong cheese)

Kos (yogurt). Albanian way of yogurt (the one produced in artisanal way) differs much from that produced in western countries. It is of extremely good quality. It is consumed fresh (maximum one day after the production).

“Gjize”. It is made by boiling yogurt and dribbling it. It can be consumed fresh with olive oil or cooked.

Revani. It is a sweet made with gluten, honey and vanilla and baked in oven.

Bukfiqa are dried chopped figs and mixed with raki and uzo.

Palafi are dried figs pierced in loops.

Spirits: Raki of grape and local primitive wines: Kallmet, Shesh and Vlosh