

Ethnographic Museum

The Ethnographic Museum in Varna introduces the visitor to the rich material and spiritual culture of Southeast Bulgaria. It is situated in a house built during the Bulgarian Revival period in 1860. The exposition covers an extensive period of time - from the late 1800's, throughout the whole 19th century, up to the early 1900's. The exhibits display how local people earned their living as well as their lifestyles, homes, husbandry, festivities and customs.

The presentation depicts the main vocations of local Bulgarians: farming, stock breeding, beekeeping, river and sea fishing, vine growing and wine making. One stand is dedicated to labour-related rituals: the begging of seed-time or the making of a wheat to celebrate the end of the harvesting season. A variety of tools presents the work of various craftsmen typical of Varna region, which included copers, coppersmiths, furriers, hatters, weavers and tailors.

The major occupation of Bulgarian women was to process wool, hemp and cotton. The exposition presents authentic spinning and weaving devices: hemp scutch, cotton gin, wool and hemp combs, spinning wheels, distaffs, horizontal loom, belt-weaving loom, and so on.

The garb exposition is actually a demographic profile of North-east Bulgaria, including the age differences. Visitors will be

Farming tools: sickles, rollers, hayforks, rakes, winnows



Summer dress for official occasions 19th - the beginning of the 20th c.



Garbs for men, ladies and children from Asparuhovo, Varna region, 19th - the beginning of the 20th c.

intrigued by the wear of local ethnic groups: vaikovtsi, chengentsi, hurtsoi, gagaouzi, as well as immigrants from Yambol and Sliven regions, Macedonia, East Thrace and Asia Minor. Ritual attire includes garments for Christmas, St. Lazarus celebrations, outfit for brides, sisters-in-law and even midwives as they were dressed on Rooster Day. The attire is naturally complemented by charming decorations: buckles, belts, rings, bracelets, earrings, frisettes, under-chins, quavers, pendulums, necklaces. These add conviviality and solemnity to the costumes.



Belt Buckles from Northeast Bulgaria, 18th - 19th c.

"Camels" is a New-Year ritual with performers masked as camels playing for health and fertility (their "stage property" is presented in the exhibition). Decorated dogwood twigs are a symbol of abundant food and reflect the working and living styles of local people. The twigs are adorned with everything the earth gives and



Amulet pendulum from Northeast Bulgaria, 19th c.



New Year dogwood twigs from Varna region



Porcelain dishes, Varna, 19th c.

Ritual breads - for Christmas, Easter and weddings from Varna region, 19th - the beginning of the 20th c.

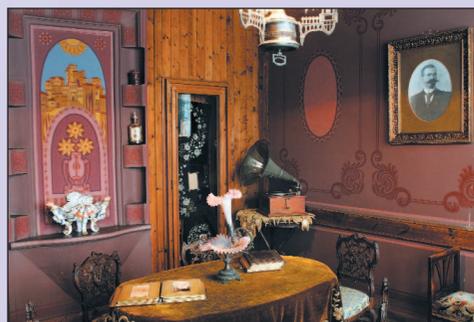


the good farmer's hand produced. The exhibited ritual breads for Christmas, New Year, Easter and St. George's day reside about the peoples' believes, hopes and wishes for fertility, health and well-being.

Part of the museum replicates the interior of a wealthy city house from the late 1800's and early 1900's, including parlour, guest room, bedroom and kitchen. There is also some space dedicated to commercial life of old Varna.



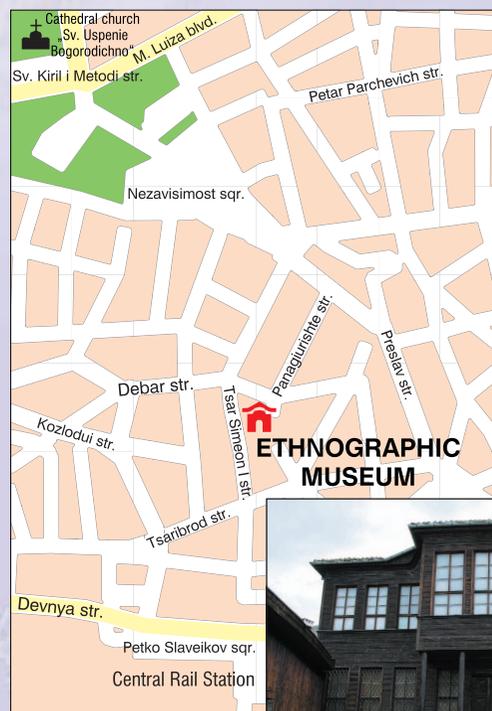
Varna,
Parlour,
19th -
the beginning
of the 20th c.



Varna,
Guest room,
19th -
the beginning
of the 20th c.



Varna,
Bedroom,
19th -
the beginning
of the 20th c.



Text: Lidia Petrova



Opening hours:

In winter: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Days off - Saturday and Sunday
In summer: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Day off - Monday

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22, Panagjurishte str., 9000 Varna, Bulgaria
phone: + 359 52 / 630 588



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