



Sound

Tradition and Events



Senses are gates of our souls



The Carnival of Vevchani



In Macedonia, the act of joining two souls always inspires graciousness and great celebrations. Therefore, one of the most beautiful cultural events to mark this rich Macedonian tradition is the Galichnik wedding.

The weddings in this village were traditionally held on Petrovden (St. Peter's Day, 12th July). This tradition is kept alive, mostly thanks to the people from Galicnik. Starting on Petrovden in 1963, an annual event began in the village of Galichnik where a bride and groom are married according to traditional marriage rituals and practices. Each year a couple that chooses to be a part of this well-known wedding is chosen.

During the ceremony, the mountain echoes the sounds of drums and the yelp of zurla (traditional instrument similar to oboe); people sing old folk songs and dance well known folk dances, among which, the most beautiful one is Teshkoto. The beauty of the wedding is complemented by the traditional clothes of the groom, as well as the well-known Galichnik dress of the bride, made by tailors with filigree precision and accuracy.

You should see in person this wedding that is accompanied with ancient customs. It is a wedding that you will not experience anywhere else.



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Galicnik Wedding





If the road takes you to the Tikvesh region, you should not miss the traditional wine harvest which is held in the town of Kavadarci. This event has been organized since 1964 and it represents a continuation of a long and rich tradition which existed in this area in the past. At that time the *Days of Dionysus* was celebrated, to honor the God of grape and wine.

Kavadarci is one of the largest grape and wine producers in Macedonia and it is among the largest producers in the Balkans. The wine harvest, which is held in September, is a regional attraction and a unique experience for visitors.

Stands of wineries and hoteliers are placed in the city square and there is a carnival-like parade led by a queen and a king of the wine harvest toasting for a rich and fruitful wine harvest. Then, the first bunch of grapes is cut and the mass harvest begins.

At the central stage there is a vivid cultural and artistic program that lasts until the morning, and during the Wine Bohemian Festival, people have the chance to do some wine tasting. Kavadarci is a town that has wine in its veins, and if you love this elixir too, then the Tikvesh wine harvest is an event that you must visit.

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Wine Harvest





The Strumica Carnival is a secular traditional custom that has its origins in a pagan cult and in its essence, celebrates fertility and cleansing. The Carnival has turned into an event that in 1994 climbed the international ladder.

This Carnival is held every year at the beginning of the Great Lent, before Easter. The Strumica Carnival was first mentioned in 1670 by the Turkish writer Evliya Çelebi.

The opening of the Carnival is marked with a masquerade ball, during which a prince and princess are elected. The following night, the main international carnival begins where awards for best and most original masks are given.

The most common motif during the carnival is the bride and groom; the priest who blesses the newlyweds for happiness and unity; and the devil who is chased by everyone and represents purging of bad thoughts.

The Carnival and the people of Strumica are known for their generosity, cheerfulness and positive attitude so if you decide to be a part of this event, with or without a mask, you will undoubtedly have the time of your life.

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The Strumica Carnival





According to Orthodox beliefs, Vodici (also known as the Baptism of Jesus Christ) represents the day when St. John the Baptist baptizes Jesus Christ in Jordan. The baptism in the Orthodox Church represents a spiritual birth and beginning of the human life in faith.

The celebrations have two segments and last two days – the first one on 19th January is named “Mashki Vodici” (Male Vodici), and the second on 20th January is named “Zhenski Vodici” (Female Vodici). Historically, in Skopje there was a custom that on these days the sons-in-law and their first-born sons, as well as the daughters-in-law and their first born daughters, respectively, were bathed in the river Vardar and sprayed with holy water by a priest.

Today, every year on 19th January, in many places throughout Macedonia, priests traditionally throw the ritual cross in a large water area and people jump for the cross. There is a belief that the person who catches the cross will be blessed for a whole year.

The ritual symbolizes the entrance of Christ in Jordan. The most visited rituals happen in Skopje and Ohrid. The air and water are cold but nevertheless, believers are inspired to jump in and swim in order to find the cross. This Orthodox custom is very specific to Macedonia – do not miss it.

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Vodici



Any literature lover already knows that Struga has been gathering the most significant and best known poets at the Struga Poetry Evenings for more than 50 years. Towards the end of August the meeting of notable poets from around the world begins as they gather to pay respect to poetry. The Festival is traditionally opened by reading the poem “T’ga za jug” (“Longing for the South”) written by Konstantin Miladinov, a poet who is considered the pioneer of modern Macedonian poetry and in whose honor this event is held.

Each year a renowned poet is chosen and awarded with an international poetry award called “Golden Wreath”. At the same time, the award “Brakja Miladinovci” (Miladinovci Brothers) is awarded for the best book of poetry published in Macedonian.

Throughout the existence of this international poetry festival, more than 5,000 poets have participated, coming from more than a hundred countries. This makes Struga the biggest gathering point for poets from around the world. Therefore, it is said that this city is a poetry kingdom, and the festival is called the biggest celebration of poetry. Previous poets who have been awarded the “Golden Wreath” are Pablo Neruda, Allen Ginsberg, Ted Hughes, Joseph Brodsky, Tomas Tranströmer and many others.

Readings on the Poetry Bridge over the beautiful river Drim, the sound of many languages, the beautiful landscape of Struga, and the different cultures and civilizations intertwined, create a unique and unforgettable experience for all lovers of peace and life, as well as of nature, wine and literature.



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Struga Poetry Evenings



One more reason to love Ohrid during the summer is Macedonia's biggest music and theatre event: Ohrid Summer Festival.



This festival marked its 50 years jubilee in 2010. It is traditionally held from 12th June until 20th August and it features a rich artistic programme. Ohrid, being the spiritual capital of Macedonia, provides a magical atmosphere to the whole event.

This event offers a programme that will suit anyone's taste. The concerts, the plays, the poetry readings and ballet performances create a huge interest among the public. Ohrid Summer Festival has hosted performers, musicians and theatre groups from more than 60 countries and many well-known artists have participated throughout the years. Furthermore, many theatre companies from around the world have been a part of this festival.

The magical places which are selected to host the events add to the atmosphere of the Ohrid Summer Festival: the garden of the Cathedral Church of St. Sophia's, the Samuil Fortress, as well as the antique theatre. Since 1994, Ohrid Summer Festival has been a part of the European Festival Association. This festival is a great pride for Macedonia and provides a big cultural benefit for the country as well as its visitors.



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Ohrid Summer Festival





Ocarina - music instrument made of treated clay with irregular spherical shape, dating from the time of Neolith, 6.000 years B.C, found at the site in Mramor in Macedonian municipality Chaska.



There is no better place to hold a festival devoted to the antique drama than the stage that derives from Antiquity. Each year during the summer, the ancient stage of Stobi is a home of plays written by the most famous antique playwrights.

Since 2001, this stage has hosted the international festival of antique drama. Between the illuminated walls of the amphitheatre the actors revive well-known texts of antique heroes thus enabling a spectacle for the viewers who, due to the ancient ambiance, feel as if they are a part of that period.

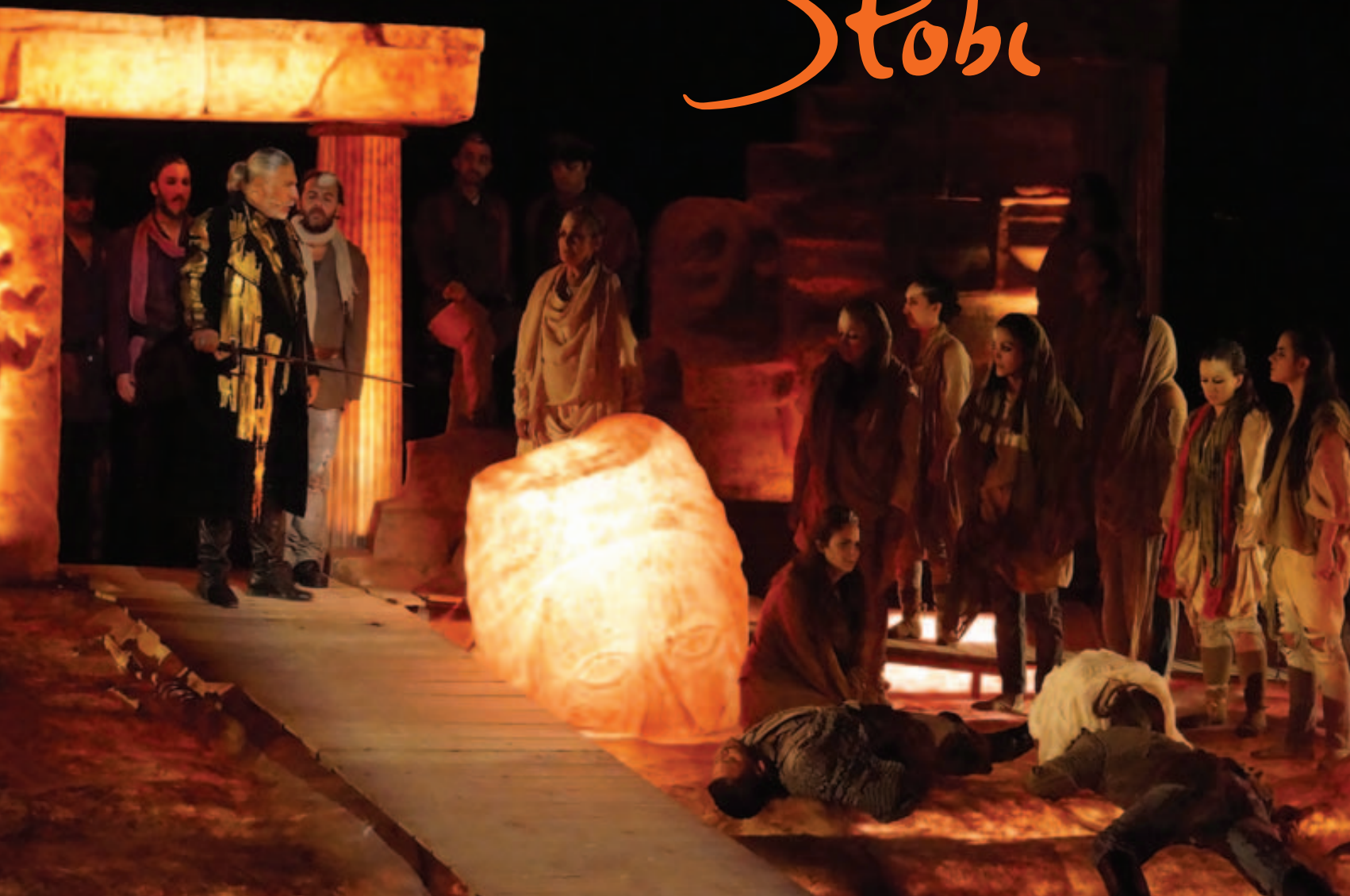
Except for plays by authors such as Aristotle, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes and others, guest theatre companies from other countries give performances, specially created for this stage. Traditionally, awards are given for best play, best director and best actors.

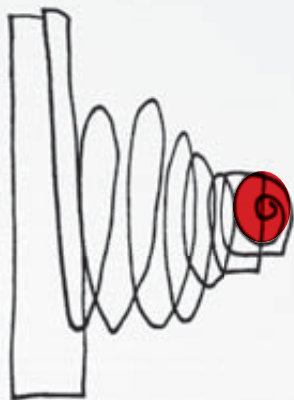
This antique drama festival has turned into an attractive cultural event, proven by the number of visitors during this period. To feel the magic, one should sit on the seats where the nobles of the city of Stobi used to sit. Under the night sky you can hear the voices of the oldest human thoughts expressed through a theatre play and enjoy the master performance of the actors involved in it. The catharsis of tragedies or the smile deriving from comedies will cleanse you and the authentic space in Stobi will additionally inspire you.

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International Festival of Antique Drama Stobi





Every year, the “Manaki Brothers” international film festival is held in Bitola, the city where in 1905 the first cameramen in the Balkans, the brothers Janaki and Milton Manaki, moved to.

Janaki bought a film camera from London, made by “Charles Urban Trading” and it was the 300th piece of the BIOSCOPE series. Cinematography on the Balkans was initiated with this Camera 300 and that is the name of the main award for this film festival.

International motion pictures are competing for Gold, Silver and Bronze Camera 300 that are awarded to the best directors of photography.

In addition to the official competition, the festival has a section where short motion pictures are shown. Workshops, seminars, discussions and exhibitions are also held in the frames of the festival, which also gives a Lifetime Achievement award.

This elite international film festival in Bitola will be a true delight for any movie professional or movie lover.

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film festival
“Manaki Brothers”





When the month of May is mentioned in Skopje, people usually refer to the May Opera Evenings. This festival of classical music is traditionally held in May and attracts many opera lovers. The audience enjoys excellent performances by renowned Macedonian and world opera singers, conductors, directors and choreographers.

The Macedonian People's Theatre orchestra and opera ensemble performed the opera "Tsar Samuil" composed by Kiril Makedonski during the first May Opera Evenings, held on 9th May 1972. Over the years, this event has become an international opera festival. The festival has hosted more than 280 performances, with more than 1,200 participants from more than 20 countries.

Spring in Skopje is beautiful and May is the most joyful month here. If you are a lover of beautiful music and appreciate the refined opera sound, then you should allow this music to take you to beautiful new places.

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May Opera Evenings





The prestigious Skopje Jazz Festival, one of Skopje's most eminent music festivals, has been held here since 1982. Although jazz has an audience with a specific taste and ear for music, there are many people who come to the festival to escape conventional music.

Every year, towards the end of December, lovers of free and genteel music have a chance to enjoy performances by the best jazz musicians, on several locations in the city (including the Universal Hall/Univerzalna Sala).

Skopje Jazz Festival is one of the oldest and best quality jazz festivals in the Balkans; the concept each year is to involve avant-garde performers as well as famous ones. The reputation of the festival is constantly increasing and it is well known around the world. The festival has featured almost everyone who is famous on the world jazz stage: Ray Charles, Tito Puente, Ornette Coleman, Pat Metheny, Wayne Shorter, Stanley Clark, BB King, Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Joe Zawinul, John McLaughlin, Al Di Meola, James Carter and many others.

The festival is a part of the European Jazz Network and the European Forum of Worldwide Music Festivals. If you are in the area, you must allow yourself to feel the magic of Skopje Jazz Festival by listening to the sound of freedom reflected by jazz music.



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Skopje Jazz festival





Each summer, lovers of water sports and people who have come on vacation to Ohrid witness the incredible endurance and art of the best marathon swimmers from all around the world, competing in the waters of Ohrid Lake.

This international sporting event – the biggest in Macedonia – has many male and female participants. The first three finishers in both categories are awarded with a medal and a cash prize.

The first marathon race was held in 1954. The race started in Gorica and ended in Ohrid and it was 2.5 kilometers long. In 1962 the route changed. The start was in Peshtani and the finish remained in Ohrid – via Struga and the length was 36 kilometers. Since 1992 the Ohrid Marathon has been held annually, and since 1998 this competition has been a part of the official International Swimming Federation, FINA schedule.

The route called Klime Savin, which the swimmers need to complete, is 30 kilometers long, starting from the monastery of St. Naum, and ending in the marine in Ohrid.

Visit the beautiful Ohrid Lake to give the competitors your much-needed support while enjoying the beautiful summer ambiance at the beach or on a boat.



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Ohrid Marathon





Sharplaninec - shepherd breed dog, symbol of Macedonia. Named after the Shara Mountain - where this dog has lived for centuries, adapting to the harsh conditions. It is characterized by discipline, loyalty to its owner, speed and adaptability, and shows big affection and patience with children.



Each year the ski centre Popova Shapka on Mt. Shara hosts competitions in slalom and giant-slalom for the International Sharplaninski Cup. This event was held for the first time in 1947 and it is the oldest international skiing competition on the Balkan territory.

The biggest skiing event in Macedonia has a long history. In 1954 it was a part of FIS B competitions, and from 1969 until 1986 it was a part of the European Skiing Cup.

The slalom is held on a slope called Ezerino, whereas the giant-slalom is on a slope called Orlova. Male and female skiers compete for cash prizes and the first place winner receives a dog of the Sharplaninec breed, the symbol and mascot of the cup.

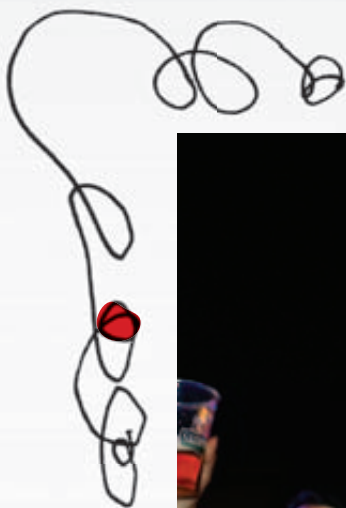
This tradition continues on the beautiful ski trails, and you can enjoy the skier's skills as well as the wonderful ambiance of the glorious Mt. Shara.

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Sharplaninski Cup





Everyone who is a fan of cold beer, delicious barbecue, music and entertainment eagerly anticipates a summer weekend at Pivofest in Prilep.

This beer festival first took place in 2002, and the tradition continues with the number of visitors getting bigger and bigger each year. A big choice of beer, fun atmosphere, and thousands of friendly visitors make Pivofest one of the most visited open-air festivals.

Some of the most popular stars in the region take part in this event, and you can find beer manufacturers and local caterers providing for the needs of the visitors. Pivofest and Prilep are a magnet for lovers of good entertainment from Macedonia as well as the neighboring countries. Join in!



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Beer Festival in Pilsen





Baskerfest, an international street festival, is characterized by spectacular open-air events. This audio-visual festival transforms Skopje, where the creative energy of young artists provides new experiences for the public.

Street artists, acrobat dances, live music, various performances, pantomimes, dancers, art exhibitions, a craft bazaar and workshops provide excellent entertainment and promote new artists.

As a part of Baskerfest there are puppet shows, jugglers and magicians for kids, bursting with innovation and creativity.

This is the first international and multicultural street festival in Macedonia and in the near future the plan is to extend it beyond Skopje. So, if you are in the capital and you have the opportunity to attend this party, give your full support to many undiscovered and talented artists - they are waiting for you.

The entertainment is guaranteed.

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Baskerfest





Fans of alternative music always get excited during late November and early December because this is when they find out when the annual Taksirat Festival will begin. This music event lasts several days and attracts an audience of approximately 15,000 visitors. Each year the number of music lovers increases and it always exceeds the capacity of the hall where this festival happens.

Taksirat celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2013. This festival is the biggest in Macedonia and it is the only winter music festival in South Eastern Europe. A lot of eminent domestic and foreign artists have performed here: Manu Chao, Kaiser Chiefs, Parov Stelar, Juliete Lewis, Guano Apes, Laibach, The Stranglers, Wailers, Kreator, Iggy Pop & The Stooges, Neville Staple (the Specials), Buzzcocks, Marki Ramon from The Ramones and many others.

This is the only festival in Macedonia that has won the prize Green'N' Clean (2011) presented by the European Festival Association YOUROPE and it has been nominated in the categories for best small festival and for best indoor festival by the "European Festival Awards" for five years in a row.

The festival madness lasts all night long, the atmosphere is always hot, and the crowd is joyful and playful. Every performance will leave a powerful impression on you and it will raise your adrenaline levels to the maximum. Join the excitement and prepare yourself for guitar riffs and powerful sound. Punk, metal, rock, hip-hop, reggae or indie music – you can find everything there.



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Taksirat



Caption

1. Vevchani Carnival (Vevchani)*
2. Vodici (Ohrid, Skopje)*
3. Carnival of Ratevo (Ratevo)
A traditional carnival that has been held for centuries in the village Ratevo on the religious holiday St. John the Baptist
4. St. Triphon (Kavadarci)
Day of the wine growers that is celebrated on 14th February
5. International Caricature Day (Kriva Palanka)
International call for caricature
6. Sharplaninski Cup (Popova Shapka)*
7. Strumica Carnival (Strumica)*
8. May Opera Evenings (Skopje)*
9. Ethno-city (Krushevo)
10. Sharski vodi (Popova Shapka – Vrutok)
11. Baskerfest (Skopje)*
12. Woodcarvers' colony (Kriva Palanka)
A traditional international woodcarving colony – Macedonian tradition
13. Festival of antique drama (Stobi)*
14. Rekansko leto (Janche, Rostusha)
An event encompassing the nature and traditional foods from Mavrovo, Reka and Miyachija region.
15. Galichnik wedding (Galichnik)*
16. Ohrid Summer Festival (Ohrid)*
17. Pivofest (Prilep)*
18. Resen Ceramic Colony (Resen)
An international event - sculpture and creation of modern ceramic art.
19. Ohrid marathon (Ohrid)*
20. Struga Poetry Evenings (Struga)*
21. Ohridska sofrа (Skrebatno)
An event promoting and representing traditional food and drinks from Ohrid.
22. “Maleshevija na dlanka” (“Maleshevija on a palm”) – ethno festival (Berovo) An international fair for traditional food products and tourism.
23. International Folk Festival (Kriva Palanka)
Traditional international folk festival.
24. Smokvijada (Gevgelija)
An international festival and mass preparation of candied fig in Macedonia.
25. A festival for candied wild figs – speciality of the South-West part of the country.
26. Wine harvest (Kavadarci)*
27. Ajvarijada (Strumica, Novo Selo)
A competitive event where the best homemade ajvar is selected.
28. International film festival “Manaki Brothers” (Bitola)*
29. Pastrmajlijada (Shtip)
An event where the best makers of traditional Macedonian pastrmajlija are presented.
30. Somunijada (Radovish)
Promotion of the Radovish traditional speciality – somun.
31. Pitijada (Veles)
An event revolving around a traditional specialty – the Veles pie.
32. Orizijada (Kochani)
An event devoted to the popular Kochani rice.
33. Rakijada (Valandovo)
An event where the traditional rakia distillation process is presented.
34. Kostenijada (Makedonski Brod, Tetovo)
A festival promoting the endemic and incredibly tasty Macedonian chestnut, as well as old chestnut cakes and cookies recipes
35. Skopje Jazz Festival (Skopje)*
36. Taksirat (Skopje)*

*Find more on these sites in the brochure.



Divine sound is the cause of all manifestation. The knower of the mystery of sound knows the mystery of the whole universe.

Hazrat Inayat Khan



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