This document has been produced based on the material provided by the Sharra Stakeholder Group.

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Local cuisine in the Sharra region combines Balkan and Mediterranean characteristics, inherited largely from Turkish tastes that have prevailed in local gastronomy during long centuries of Ottoman rule. Regional cuisine is also influenced by Albanian, Macedonian, Serbian and Greek ways of preparing food, which are combined with the influences from Western Europe, primarily Italy, in the last decades since a large number of people originating from the Sharra region lives all around the old continent. The specific climate conditions have contributed to production of authentic varieties of agricultural products whose specific tastes can be experienced only here.

Every village in the region offers unique and tasty variety of cheese. Numerous sheepfolds in Shar/Sharri Mountain provide for the finest dairy products and meat which are main ingredients in many traditional dishes from this region.

Apart from being noted for the diversity and quality of its other dairy and meat products, it is famous for its wines and the rakija - local alcoholic beverage - a kind of brandy - produced from locally grown grapes, pears and plums.

The hosts of the Sharra region cordially welcome all their guests to the table, offering home-made dishes to satisfy the keenest appetites - Shar/Sharri cheese, fresh vegetable salad, roasted lamb or beef, concluding with the best tasting sweets. The golden hands of the people, the fertility of the land, and the secrets of their recipes all combine to make this a region of specialties waiting to be discovered.

This brochure gives basic information about the region’s gastronomic offer, providing a description of some of its typical products and recipes for several traditional dishes. Although these meals might not taste the same as in their original surroundings when you prepare them in your kitchen, you should have them written down as a reminder, either to remember the region’s tastes, or to remember that you should visit it and taste the delicacies at the place they originate from.
There is a long tradition in sheep breeding in the Sharra region due to its rich pastures, meadows and water which has given the ideal conditions for this kind of farming. Lamb is the most exported product from this region especially during the religious holidays in Greece and Italy. Some cooking recipes can take up to several hours, but this meal’s unique quality combined with the local ingredients and tradition in preparation gives you a tasteful experience, one of a kind.

Alongside with the long tradition of sheep breeding is the production of dairy products from the Sharra region such as soft white cheese and yellow hard cheese, which are famous worldwide for their unique quality and taste. Although new food safety regulation, the migration on the region’s inhabitants and losing the famous recipes of regional cheese masters have caused a decrease in the production of this exquisite delicacy, it is still surviving while local population is struggling to stimulate its production again. Shara/Sharri cheeses are usually consumed as appetizers or are the ingredients in salads, and taste perfect when consumed with domestic rakija or wine.
The most famous variety of bean in the region is the Tetovec that is cultivated in the Sharra region, especially Polog Valley. The main characteristic of the Tetovec bean variety is its wonderful taste and compactness; during the boiling process the shell is not separated from the grain. This product is the main ingredient in the famous dish – Tavce gravce and also in different kind of salads, stews and dips.

The abundance of water and streams that flows in the Shar/Shari Mountain provide the perfect conditions for homegrown trout. This is a specialty that can be tasted in many restaurants in the Sharra region and its unique taste derives from its freshness. Usually it is prepared grilled or fried, and served with potatoes and lemon. This should be on your ‘must taste’ list.

Ajvar is a type of spread made from red peppers (Kurtovska kapija). Depending on the local recipe, eggplant, carrots, garlic and chilli pepper may be added. It is traditionally homemade all over the region at the beginning autumn, and its preparation is especially charming because whole families participate in it. It tastes great with homemade bread, Shara/Sharri cheese (soft white and hard yellow) and cup of yogurt or sour cream (kiselo mleko).
Sudžuk

Sudjuk is a dry spicy sausage that consists of ground meat with various spices including onion, cumin, garlic, salt and red pepper which is filled into a sausage casing and kept to dry for several weeks. It can be spicy, fairly salty and has a high fat content. Sudjuk can be served as an appetizer but also it is important part of the famous mixed grill dish.

Rakića

This is a domestic brandy that you can find in almost any household in the region. It has long tradition of production and each household has its own specific recipe and different taste. It is mostly produced from grape, plum or peer. Traditionally it is served as a appetizer along with different kind of salads, Shara/Sharri cheese (soft white and hard yellow), dips, spreads and pickles.

Shara/Sharri Tea

This is an endemic type of tea that you can taste only in this region. Along with a spoon of honey it is the right energizer after good hiking. It is consumed especially in the winter, but you can also prepare it as iced tea during the summer. Only few leaves are enough to make this amazing beverage and to enjoy it in the breathtaking mountainous landscape.
Pita

Pita (pie) is a very famous specialty in the region. You can find many local recipes with different techniques of preparation. Usually dough is filled with white cheese, ground meat, spinach, onion or beans. It is served with thick yogurt or sour cream (kiselo mleko).
Alongside with the tradition of preparation of the domestic brandy, Sharra region is also famous for the production of the domestic wines - white and red. Even though this region is not among the famous wine regions, the tradition prevails and you can find it in many households and restaurants in the area. It is an inevitable part of the main course, white wine going well with the homegrown trout and the red one especially good with the mixed grill and roasted lamb.

Here you can taste different kinds of forest berries such as raspberries, strawberries, blueberries etc. They are the best energizer that can be freshly consumed during your hiking tours and exploring the mountainous region of Sharra. You should start your day with a perfect breakfast - the one of homemade bread with jam from mixed forest berries and cup of Shara/Sharri tea.
There are large numbers of chestnut trees in the Sharra region, especially in its Macedonian part, and it is here that you can taste the famous sweet chestnut. It can be prepared either baked or boiled and it is a perfect snack that will warm your hands during your walk in the winter. The chestnut is the main ingredient of many regional sweets.
Alva

Ingredients:
• 1 cup of oil
• 2 cups of semolina
• 4 cups of water
• 3 cups of sugar
• 250 g of ground walnuts
• 1 pack of vanilla sugar (optional)

Preparation:
Start with frying the walnuts and semolina at lower temperature. After the mix gets light-brown add the additional oil and continue stirring with a wooden spoon. Afterwards add the sugar, fry it for several minutes and then add the water. After the mixture becomes thick and sticky stir for several more minutes. Towards the end add the vanilla sugar.

After the cooking is finished, put the mixture either in one container or in several molds that are previously greased with oil.

Prior to serving you can decorate with ground walnuts.
Ingredients:
for the cake
- 750 g of ground walnuts
- 1 kg of readymade phyllo dough
- 200 g of margarine or butter
- 3 cups of sugar
- 5 tablespoons of semolina
- 4 dl of oil
- 2 packages of vanilla sugar (optional)

for the sherbet (sweetened water)
- 1 kg of sugar
- 8 dl of water
- 1 lemon

Preparation:
In one container place the walnuts, semolina and the vanilla sugar and mix them. In other pan put the oil and margarine or butter to boil.

Grease the baking pan and start putting layers of phyllo dough, sprinkling each layer with the oil and margarine/butter mixture. After several layers spread the mixture of walnuts and semolina, and then repeat the procedure with the remaining layers (several layers sprinkled with oil-margarine/butter mixture, one with walnut and semolina mixture). Leave an empty layer on the top of baklava.

Cut the baklava in cubes or diamond shape. Bake it for 10 minutes in preheated oven at 200°C. Afterwards decrease the temperature to 140-150°C and bake it for another 90 minutes. It is ready when goes golden-brown. Take it out of the oven to cool at room temperature.

Prepare the sherbet by putting the water and sugar to boil. When it starts to get thick add the lemon cut in slices. Pour hot sherbet over the cooled baklava and leave it for at least 24 hours to absorb.
Ingredients:
- 3 red tomatoes (medium size)
- 3 green peppers (medium size)
- 1 cucumber (medium size)
- 1 onion bulb
- salt to taste
- oil
- chopped parsley

Preparation:
Cut the tomatoes, pepper and peeled cucumber in identical cubes. Clean the onion and chop in small pieces. Put them in bowl, add salt and oil and mix well. Put grated white cheese on the top and decorate with the chopped parsley. In some salads vinegar is added depending on the local recipe.

This is a very famous appetizer that tastes even better when consumed with rakija.
Flija

Ingredients:
Batter
• 3 kg of flour
• 2 litres water
• 2 spoons of salt
Extra:
• 2 jars of cream cheese

Preparation:
Flija could be considered a pie or a pack of pancakes (crepes). The batter is put in a pie-pan and covered with a saç (sach)- a metal dome over which hot cinders are placed to bake the dough. After pouring each layer on the pie-pan, coat them with melted cream cheese and bake them individually under the saç. The process is long, needs patience and a long time to prepare but the results are delicious! It is served with sour milk or yoghurt, pickled vegetables, cheese, honey, jam or ajvar.

Tavche Gravche

Ingredients:
• 500 g of white beans
• 3 bulbs of white onion
• meat (optional): bacon, sausages, smoked ribs, etc.
• 3 dryed pepers
• 1 clove of garlic
• 80 g of sunflower oil
• 2 tablespoons of flour
• 1 tablespoon of red paprika powder
• fresh mint and parsley
• 1 tablespoon of spice mixture (such as region-famous vegeta), salt and pepper

Preparation:
Wash the beans well and then place them in a pot. Add water to cover the beans (let the water be 5 cm over the beans), then put them to boil, cook them for about 1-2 minutes, pour the water out and add fresh water to the pot.
Chop the onion in big pieces and add it to the beans. Add the meat chopped in a bitesize pieces. Boil the beans until they are ready, but be careful not to overboiled. The beans must be whole and soft inside, not a mush.

Put oil and flour in a hot pan and mix well until golden. Add the paprika, mix fast and add this to the pot with beans, onion and meat. Add the minced garlic, salt, pepper and spices. Stir well and cook for another 2 minutes.

Pour the beans to a clay pot, add the dryed pepers and put them in the oven preheated to 250°C. Bake until the beans have little liquid and a thin crust has been formed.

Serve with finely chopped parsley on the top.
Ingredients:
- 1kg of pork meat (from thigh)
- 4-5 onion pieces
- 300 g of ground meat (for small meat balls)
- tomatoes or ketchup
- 700 g of mushrooms
- 300 g of dry smoked meat chopped into small pieces
- salt, pepper, spices
- wine, cheese cream or yellow cheese

Preparation:
Prepare the meatballs first by combining ground meet with 1/2 grated onion, pinch of salt and black pepper. You can add any other herbs and spices that suit your taste. Mix the ingredients and form small balls. Fry the meatballs in an oiled pan for about 2-3 minutes until they just a little browned. Remove from the pan and set aside.

Cut the pork into 3/4 inch cubes. Fry it in the remaining oil until it browned on the outside but still rare inside. Add chopped onion and fry for 2 more minutes. Add tomatoes, mushrooms, smoked meat and red pepper, salt and spices. Sauté for about 5 minutes. Add the meatballs and add wine.
Transfer the mix from the pan into the clay pot. Pour wine mixture over, cover and place in the oven. Set the oven to 250° C and let it cook for about 1 – 1.5 hour. Garnish with fresh herbs such as parsley or basil.
Ingerdients:
- 1 kg of trout
- 1 large onion
- 4 cloves of garlic
- 150 g of wine vinegar
- little parsley
- oil

Preparation:
Cut open, clean the trout, drain and dip them in flour. After preparing them like this, fry them in oil and put them in a plate.

Fry the chopped onion in 3 to 4 tablespoons of oil, add the chopped garlic, then add the vinegar and boil it for half an hour. Pour this mixture on the top of the trout and sprinkle with chopped parsley.
**Ingredients:**

- 40 sour cabbage leaves or 40 big grape leaves
- 1 kg of ground meat (pork, lamb, beef or any other meat)
- 300 g of rice
- 2 medium chopped onions
- 2 tablespoons of flour
- 1 tablespoon of paprika
- oil
- water, liquid from the sour cabbage or vegetable soup
- 1 tablespoon of vegeta spice (mixture of dried vegetables and salt)
- salt and pepper

**Preparation:**

Fry the chopped onions on sunflower oil for about 2 minutes. Add the meat and fry until the it is cooked. Add the rice and cook for about 5-10 minutes. Add salt, pepper and vegeta. The rice should be half cooked.

Prepare the leaves and clean them from the thick parts. Add the filling onto each leaf and wrap it. Put the prepared sarmas into a deep clay pot, placing them as close to one another as possible. Add the water, liquid or soup until the sarmas are covered. Add little salt and pepper and cover the pot.

Bake the sarma for 2 hours at 200°C. After 2 hours take out the pot and remove the lid or the plate.

Put about 80 g of oil in a pan and fry the flour until golden. Than add the paprika, and add all to the sarma.
Ingredients:
- 1 kg of corn flour
- 2.5 litres of water
- 1.5 dl of oil
- salt to taste
- pork cracklings or white cheese (optional)

Preparation:
Pour the water in a pan, add salt and bring to boil. Gradually start to add the corn flour. At the beginning it will take a formless shape. Lower the temperature and then add some of the oil. Leave it to simmer. After the flour is dissolved into the water and starts boiling add the remaining preheated oil and continuously stir for several minutes until gets a homogenous form.

Put it in a plate and add pork crackling or white cheese on the top. This dish is best served hot, usually with sour cream or plain yogurt.
WHERE TO TASTE
THE REGION

Restaurant Bella Vista
The restaurant attracts the visitors with its beauty, atmosphere and surroundings. Overlooking the Polog Valley, this place is away from the city noise. The restaurant offers the Macedonian specialties. Besides the restaurant there is swimming pool, and there is also a possibility for placing tents in the surrounding area.
Contact information:
Village Belovishte, Jegunovce, Macedonia
+389 78 500 414
miredzabala@gmail.com

Restaurant Relax
Wonderful surroundings of the restaurant with a garden will provide you unforgettable moments with you closes friends and family. Here you can taste the famous freshly prepared Shar/Sharri trout and enjoy in the magnificent view. The name says it all!
Contact information:
Village Dobroshte, Tearce, Macedonia
+389 70 590 587; +389 70 557 196 - Contact in Macedonian and Albanian
+389 71 374 796 - Contact in English
restorant.relax@gmail.com
Restaurant Koha
The restaurant is located at the center of Prizren, on the first floor of an 300 years old traditional house, beside the Lumbardhi/Bistrica river and old Stone Bridge. It is a lovely place where you can enjoy the beauties of the town and taste traditional dishes.
Contact information:
Str. Bazhderhane, Prizren, Kosovo*
+377 44 190 122
Ibrahim Sallauka
ibrahimsallauka@facebook.com

Restaurant Ambient
The restaurant is located beyond the Prizren Castle, nearby the Lumbardhi River. This quiet two-floor restaurant with family ambience has 90 places available inside, and the same number available outdoor at the terrace. The restaurant offers different types of traditional and international specialties.
Contact information:
Shadërvan / Prizren, Kosovo*
Krenar Krajku
+377 44 119 964
+386 49 119 964
krenarkrajku@hotmail.com
**Vila Park**
The family restaurant Vila Park is a warm place with a beautiful garden located in Zhupa Valley next to Lumbardhi/Bistrica River, 20 kilometers from Prizren. The restaurant offers high quality traditional specialties.
Contact information:
Village Reqan, Prizren, Kosovo*
+377 44 295 973
+377 44 656 427
http://vilapark-ks.com

**Monastery restaurant Leshok**
Located in the area of the Monastery complex Church of St. Athanasius and Church of the Holy Mother of God, this is a wonderful place where you can enjoy in the pleasant atmosphere and breathtaking nature and surroundings, and taste specialties such as Monastery Pot - pork meat with mushrooms and other traditional Macedonian food.
Contact information:
Village Leshok, Tearce, Macedonia
+389 44 382 666
Beljshki Biser
The restaurant is located near the picnic area Petachko Vodiche just on the left side of the road that leads there. This traditional restaurant is surrounded by lovely nature and a river passes just next to it. Near the restaurant there is source of water that is believed to have healing powers. There are many interesting things to see such as the monastery, a small chapel, waterfall, etc. Here you can also taste the famous Shara/Sharri trout, freshly prepared.
Contact information:
Village Belovishte, Jegunovce, Macedonia
+389 44 522 122;
+389 70 263 289
belojskibiser@gmail.com

Panorama NM
Surrounded by green area, mountains and has magnificent view, this is a place you will feel relaxed, away from the city noise. Here you can taste homemade alva and freshly prepared Shara/Sharri trout.
Contact information:
Village Prshovce, Tearce, Macedonia
+389 44 382 122
panorama-nm@hotmail.com
Restaurant Shtepia e Bardhe (White House)
This restaurant, located in Zhupa Valley, 12 km from the main road Prizren-Brezovica, is well known for its quality food offer that combines national and international cuisine, traditional hospitality, professional staff and exclusive design. The restaurant represents one of the masterpieces of its kind which is located under the huge latitude of the Sharra mountains with the impressive view of real landscape almost during the whole year.
Contact information:
Regional Road Prizren Brezovica Village Srecka, Kosovo*
+377 44 337 103
+377 45 489 965
http://shtepiaebardhe.com
info@shtepiaebardhe.com

Woodland Restaurant
This newly-built luxury restaurant is a very comfortable place with a stylish design. It is a right place to relax in warm atmosphere, combining great variety of food and quality of service. It offers a wide range of traditional and international dishes with excellent salads.
Contact information:
Brezovica ski resort
+377 44 444 448
info@woodlandhotel-ks.com
www.woodlandhotel-ks.com
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The Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South Eastern Europe (SWG RRD) is an International Intergovernmental Organization consisting of members from governmental institutions in South Eastern Europe (SEE) responsible for agriculture and rural development in respective member countries and territories. The SWG is a platform for networking and regional cooperation in SEE in the field of agriculture and rural development.

The SWG is carrying out the project Preparation for Implementation of the Area Based Development (ABD) Approach in the Western Balkans - 2nd phase which works on building the capacities and structures within the SWG and selected regions in order to be able to implement the forthcoming ABD programmes. The project's objective is the contribution to sustainable economic growth of the target regions: Drina- Sava (cross-border region between B&H, HR, SRB), Drina- Tara (cross-border region between B&H, SRB, MNE), Prespa (cross-border region between ALB and MK) and Sharra (cross-border region between ALB, MK and KOS*) by strengthening the cooperation of public administrations and other public bodies, the private sector and NGOs in the fields of local development and regional cooperation by building-up local and regional cross-border capacities. The project will create framework conditions within the SWG as organization and the SWG member countries for implementation of the area based development approach and in that way contribute to the sustainable growth of the rural cross-border areas of the SEE region.

This document has been prepared and published with the aim to present the region and its attractions, thus contributing to attracting visitors to the Sharra cross-border area.

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