

Homemade Food in Bulgaria

Bulgarian transcript:

Интервюиращ: А какво ядат българите?

Павла Цонкова: Българите основно си готвят всъщност. Това ги спасява.

Милена: Точно това исках [да кажа], да, да...

Павла Цонкова: Българинът винаги си е готвел, винаги си е правил зимнина и това го спасява от глад. Определено не е популярно ходенето по ресторантите, което е типично за културата на Америка, те просто ходят по ресторанти за да... след дългия ден, за да могат да си видят лицата и очите. В България това не е типично. Всички се събирате около масата, готвенето е нещо типично. Ами всичко, яхнии, боб, и леща, и пилета, и пиперките са любимото ни, лютеницата...

Милена: Гювеч.

Павла Цонкова: Къпоолуто, гювеча, гювеча, мусаката, сърмите, с лозовите листа и зелето, което се прави...

Милена: Пълнените пиперки...

Павла Цонкова: Пълнените пиперки, после зелето, което се прави за зимнина – киселото зеле – което е много добро след също като... самата чорба. Тиквички пържени...

Милена: Лютеница казахме ли?

Павла Цонкова: Лютеница да, любимата ни, българската лютеница.

Интервюиращ: А какво е, да обясним какво е лютеница?

Павла Цонкова: Лютеницата ще бъде сега вече... ще има... марката ще бъде... в Европейския съюз ще има българска лютеница, която ще бъде призната. Тя се прави от червени пиперки...

Милена: Домати...

Павла Цонкова: Да. Червени пиперки, те се препечат, може на котлон, може в чушкопек, и се белят, и се слагат, прибавят се домати. Всеки го прави по различен начин: може да се добавят домати, може да ги разделят и после да правят лютеницата, само да имат продуктите, защото самата лютеница понякога може да изгърми, ако не е доре изварен продукта, нали, самия буркан. Но изключително много лютеница се прави в България,

защото имаме много пиперки и камби. Туршии се правят страшно много, пак от червени камби, зелени камби, чесън. Къпоолу страшно много се прави от сини домати със зелени пиперки, чесън...

Милена: Патладжан?

Павла Цонкова: Патладжан не казах ли аз? Патладжана е основното, да, патладжана първо, печения патладжан. И дори режат примерно месото също, свинското месо също страхотно го съхраняват в буркани, също го преваряват и го пазят като зимнина го съхраняват. Изобщо основно, абсолютно всичко гледат: плодове и зеленчуци, и картофи, всичко основно, така че по-евтино излиза през целия зимен сезон. И обикновено бабите и дядовците хранят града, защото те правят цялата зимнина и изпращат на градските деца.

English translation:

Interviewer: What do Bulgarians [typically] eat?

Pavla T.: Bulgarians cook for themselves for the most part. That is what saves them.

Milena: That is exactly what I wanted [to say], yes, yes...

Pavla T.: Bulgarian people have always cooked at home, they have always prepared pickled food for the winter, and that is what has been saving them from hunger. Eating out at restaurants is definitely not common, unlike in the American culture, where people just go to restaurants after a long day so they can socialize¹. That is not typical in Bulgaria. Everyone gathers around the table and cooking [at home] is something typical. Well, [people cook] anything: stews, beans, lentil, and chicken, [stuffed] peppers are a favorite [dish], *lyutenitsa*...

Milena: Hotchpotch.

Pavla T.: *Kyopolu*², hotchpotch, *moussaka*³, grape leaves, and cabbage, which prepared...

Milena: Stuffed peppers...

Pavla T.: Stuffed peppers, also cabbage which is prepared as winter supplies – sour cabbage – which is really good after a night of drinking, the broth itself. Fried zucchini...

Milena: Did we mention *lyutenitsa*?

¹ Lit. trans. “see their faces and eyes” – “да си видят лицата и очите.”

² *Kyopolou* is a Bulgarian and Turkish relish made from roasted eggplants and garlic. This relish is popular throughout the Balkans. In other countries of the region it is better known as *ajvar*.

³ *Moussaka* (Greek: “μouσακάς”) is an eggplant or tomato-based dish originating from Greece and popular throughout the Balkans.

Pavla T.: *Lyutenitsa*, yes, our favorite Bulgarian *lyutenitsa*.

Interviewer: And what is it? Let's explain what *lyutenitsa* is.

Pavla T.: *Lyutenitsa* is going to become a brand in the European Union now; there will be Bulgarian *lyutenitsa* that will be recognized. It is made of red peppers...

Milena: Tomatoes...

Pavla T.: Yes. Roasted red peppers, they can be roasted on a stove or in a *chushkopek*⁴. Then you peel them and add tomatoes. Everyone makes it differently: you can add tomatoes, or you can keep the ingredients separately [in winter] and then make *lyutenitsa*, because *lyutenitsa* [cans] can explode if the product has not been well processed, that is, the can itself. But [people] make great amounts of *lyutenitsa* in Bulgaria because we have a lot of peppers, bell peppers. [People] make pickled vegetables out of red bell peppers, again, green bell peppers, garlic. *Kyopolu* is also really commonly made – [it is made] of eggplant⁵ and green peppers, garlic...

Milena: Eggplant?

Pavla T.: Did I not mention eggplant? Eggplant is the main [ingredient], yes; eggplant in the first place, roasted eggplant. [People] even cut up meat as well, they make excellent canned preserved pork; they simply boil it [and can it], and then store it as winter supplies. Generally, [people] produce everything: fruits and vegetables, potatoes, everything essential, so that living costs would be lower during winter. And it is mostly done by grandparents who manufacture it to feed the city folk – they make canned food and send it to their children who live in the cities.

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⁴ *Chushkopek* is an electric device used for roasting peppers. It is cylinder-shaped and it typically fits one pepper to seven peppers at a time. It was named as the most important invention of the 20th century in Bulgaria as people were forced to produce food at home during the unpredictable economic situation in the period of post-communist transition. Its popularity is on the decline in recent years.

Source: Чушкоек. (n.d.). In Wikipedia. Retrieved May 17, 2012, from <http://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A7%D1%83%D1%88%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BF%D0%B5%D0%BA>

⁵ *Сини домат* (lit. trans. “blue tomato”) is a synonym for eggplant in Bulgarian. This expression leads to some confusion later on in the conversation.