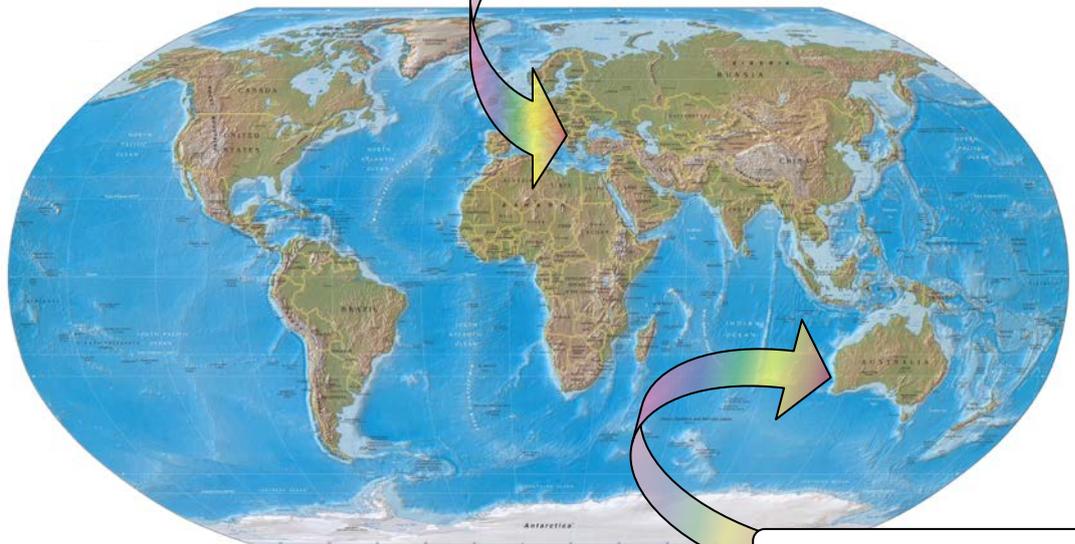


BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA



We were there



Now we are here

FACTS:

- **Full name:** Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Population:** 4,6 million
- **Capital:** Sarajevo
- **Area:** 51,130 sq km (19,741 sq miles)
- **Major language:** Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian
- **Major religion:** Islam (40%), Orthodox (31%), Catholic (15%)
- **Life expectancy:** 75 years (men), 82 years (women)
- **Monetary unit:** 1 Marka = 100 pfenniga
- **Main exports:** Metals, Clothing, Wood Products
- **GNI per capita:** US \$4,700
- **Internet domain:** .ba
- **International dialing code:** +387

Bosnian-Herzegovian Community in WA

Bosnian Islamic Society Perth, WA, Inc. PO Box 514, Mirrabooka WA 6941

Bosnian –Herzegovian Cultural and Recreational Centre Lot 289 Beechboro Rd
ph: 9377 7133

Overview of cultural groups

After World War I Bosnia became part of the 'Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes' (later called 'Yugoslavia').

Prior to the mid-1960s very few Bosnian Muslims migrated to Australia, preferring to emigrate to Turkey (as many Bosnian Muslims have Turkish ancestors) and, in more recent years, to Germany. Immigration to Australia increased significantly in the 1960s. Significant numbers of Bosnia and Herzegovina-born have arrived in Australia since 1991 due to conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. Before the outbreak of civil war in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1992, the constituent republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina was populated by three major ethnic groups: Muslims about 40 per cent, Serbians 32 per cent and Croats 18 per cent.

The latest Census in 2006 recorded 24 630 Bosnia and Herzegovina-born people in Australia, an increase of 3.0 per cent from the 2001 Census. The 2006 distribution by state and territory showed Victoria had the largest number with 8900 followed by New South Wales (7170), Queensland (3280) and Western Australia (2550).

The social organisation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina-born in Australia depends mainly on their ethnic/religious background.

Language/dialects spoken

Bosnian (*Bosanski*, Cyrillic: *босански*) is Serbo-Croatian, a South Slavic language, as spoken by Bosniaks. As a standardized form of the Shtokavian dialect, it is the official language of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The same subdialect of Shtokavian is also the basis of standard Croatian, Serbian, and Montenegrin, so all are mutually intelligible. Up until the dissolution of former SFR Yugoslavia, they were treated as a unitary Serbo-Croatian language, and that term is still used to refer to the common base (vocabulary, grammar and syntax) of what are today officially four national standards.

The Bosnian standard uses both Latin and Cyrillic alphabet. The first dictionary in the Bosnian language was printed in the early 17th century, while first dictionary in Serbian was printed in the early 19th century.

Sometimes, the name of the language is referred to as *Bosniak* (also spelled "Bosniac"; *bošnjački*), mostly by Croatian and Serbian nationalistic circles stating it is the standard language just of ethnic Bosniaks, not ethnic Serbs and Croats who also live in Bosnia.

Dietary preferences

Bosnian cuisine is balanced between Western and Eastern influences. The food is closely related to Turkish, Middle Eastern and other Mediterranean cuisines. However, due to years of Austrian rule, there are also many culinary influences from Central Europe.

Bosnian cuisine uses many spices, but usually in moderate quantities. Most dishes are light, as they are cooked in lots of water; the sauces are fully natural, consisting of little more than the natural juices of the vegetables in the dish. Typical ingredients include tomatoes, potatoes, onions, garlic, bell peppers, cucumbers, carrots, cabbage, mushrooms, spinach, zucchini, dried and fresh beans, plums, milk, paprika and cream called pavlaka and kajmak. Typical meat dishes include primarily beef and lamb. Some local specialties are ćevapi, burek, dolma, sarma, pilav, gulaš, ajvar and a whole range of Eastern sweets. The best local wines come from Herzegovina where the climate is suitable for growing grapes. Plum or apple Rakija, is produced in Bosnia (region).

Religion/spirituality/observances

Religion in Bosnia is very important to the people who live there. The three major religions of Bosnia are Roman Catholicism, Serbian Orthodox, and Islam.

Bosnian Croats make up the majority of Roman Catholics. Bosnian Serbs make up the majority of the Serbian Orthodox population. Bosnian Muslims make up the Islamic population of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Islam is the dominant religion in Bosnia, an estimated 48% of Bosnians are Muslim; while, the remainder of the population is Serbian Orthodox Christian, accounting for roughly 37% of the population. Roman Catholicism accounts for the rest. For Bosnian Serbs, Orthodox churches serve as a hub for social activity as well as houses of worship. Bosnian communities are heavily invested in their religion, which provides a center for community development. Some Islamic practices in Bosnia differ sharply from those in other Muslim countries. For many Bosnians, religion is something observed only on major religious holidays.

Public Holidays:

Date	English Name	Local Name
1 January	New Year's Day	
2 January	New Year Holiday	
9 January	Republic Day	Dan Republike
1 March	Independence Day	Dan Nezavisnosti
	Easter Orthodox	Vaskrs
	Easter Catholic	Uskrs
1 & 2 May	Labour Day Holiday	Međunarodni praznik rada
9 May	Victory Day	Dan pobjede na fašizmu
1 November	All Saints Day	Dan Martvih
25 November	Statehood Day	Dan državnosti
25 December	Christmas	Božić

According to the Islamic Calendar		
Date	English Name	Local Name
1st Day of Muharram	New Year	Muslimanska Nova Godina
12th Day of Rabe'e'ul-Awwal	Prophet's Anniversary	Melvud
10th Day of Dhul Hijja	Eid ul-Adha	Kurban Bajram Religious holiday for 4 days
1st Day of Shawwal	Eid ul-Fitr	Ramazanski Bajram Religious holiday for 3 days

Customs/traditions

Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the most diverse countries in former Yugoslavia, and you will feel this almost immediately when you visit. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, three groups make up the greatest percentage of the population: the Bosnians, Croats, and the Serbs. You can also find Jews, Romanian, Albanians, and Turks in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With this rich blend of culture and beliefs, you'll feel steeped in a very old and complex way of life.

In the countryside in Bosnia and Herzegovina, families usually live in houses of brick, stone, or wood. Countryside homes were traditionally *zadugas*, which were made up of several families living on a common land. Families shared the farming responsibilities to lighten the workload of farming a great deal. Today, you will still find a great community atmosphere in small villages and suburban city regions alike.

Many Bosnians are Muslims, and if you plan home visits during your travels, keep in mind that removing your shoes is regular practice in Muslim households. Slippers are generally provided by the host when you visit Bosnian homes.

Recreational activities

Thanks in part to Bosnia and Herzegovina's rich culture and love of celebration, there's never a quiet moment in even the smallest of towns. There are arts presentations and cutting-edge cultural commentary in Sarajevo and Banja Luka, while smaller cities offer more traditional festivals, including winter sports competitions and countless religious celebrations. This is Bosnia-Herzegovina's festival schedule: ***International Sarajevo Winter Festival*** (February/Winter), ***Banja Luka Choir Gathering*** (April/May), ***Kids' Festival*** (June), ***Bascarsija Nights*** (July), ***Summer on the Vrbas*** (July), ***Sarajevo Film Festival*** (August), ***Banja Luka Summer Games*** (August), ***MESS Theater Festival*** (October), ***Jazzfest Sarajevo*** (November).

Environment

Bosnia is in southeastern Europe on the Balkan Peninsula, bordering Slovenia to the northwest, Croatia to the north, and Serbia and Montenegro to the south and southwest; it has a tiny coastline along the Adriatic Sea. The land area is 19,741 square miles (51,129 square kilometers). Herzegovina is the southern portion of the country; it is shaped like a triangle whose tip (surrounded by Croatia and Yugoslavia) touches the Adriatic. Northern Bosnia is characterized by plains and plateaus. The central and southern regions are mountainous. The Dinaric Alps that cover this area also extend southward into Serbia and Montenegro. These regions, including the area around Sarajevo, the capital, are conducive to skiing and other winter sports and before the civil war were a popular tourist destination. Much of the land (39 percent) is forested; only 14 percent is arable. Most of the farmland is in the northern part of the country.

The climate varies from cold winters and mild, rainy summers in the mountains to milder winters and hot, dry summers in the rest of the country and a more Mediterranean climate near the coast. The entire region is vulnerable to severe earthquakes. Bosnia also suffers from air and water pollution because of poorly regulated industrial production in the years before the civil war.

Your Notes and Comments: