



# IS LIFESTYLE A CHOICE?

*SINCE THE NEW MILLENIUM, IT GOT MORE ACCESSIBLE AND MORE NORMAL TO TAKE A SUICASE AND GO ABROAD. THE INTEREST OF THE **UNKNOWN** AND THE DIVERSE ATTRACTS PEOPLE BUT AT THE SAME TIME SCARES THEM, MOST OF THE TIME GIVING A LABEL TO AN ENTIRE COMMUNITY OR COUNTRY, KNOWN BETTER AS **STEREOTYPE**. EVERY AREA OF THE PLANET HAS ITS OWN BELIEFS AND HABITS AND IT IS THE TRAVELLER'S ROLE TO UNDERSTAND THEM AND RESPECT THEM, IN ALL OF ITS POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS.*



Cupola di San Gaudenzio, Novara

In this article, the reader, through an Italian volunteer's eyes, will know more about the main differences in lifestyle between two countries that, though they are not that far apart, present unique features, traditions, beliefs and way of living: Italy and North Macedonia.

Downtown, Prilep



**Sport** take a relevant amount of time in the youngsters and especially in Novara people have a wide range of sport they can practice such as: soccer, swimming, dancing... It is common to see people running across the streets, even during winter time. In Novara there are yearly tons and tons of sportive events that keep the town energetic. In particular it occurs the half-marathon of 'San Gaudenzio' that welcomes runners from every surrounding area.

Also there are so many parks and open space in town to play basketball, jogging and even just hang out, like several parks.

If someone loves sport, Novara is an incredible place to do it and meet so many other people with the same passion.



In Prilep people tend more to stay indoor, I guess for the cold weather. Gyms in particular are really crowded, and probably where most of the inhabitants go to work out.

Unlike Novara, Prilep presents a skatepark where in sunny days youngsters go with bikes or skates.

As Italy, here people love soccer and there are few soccer fields and people cheering for their team, which reminds me the sundays playing soccer.

As a foreign student I recognized big differences in everyday life that make Prilep so unique and different than my hometown and overall my culture.

Being a pretty small town, in Prilep everybody knows each other and try to help each other, which is a fact unknown in Novara. Because of its much bigger area, and way more people, it is unused to know everybody and most of the time there is no chance to meet others outside your circle, besides night locals.

Prilep has this unique feature in which it's easy to adapt to the life and briefly know what's going on.

I noticed how drivers stop on the walkways for few minutes, go in a shop and then go away, without even shut down the engine of the car. Cars chasing and not slowing down - even when someone crosses a road - is a feature of Prilep and it's surprising to me but so normal here.

Another special fact is that people, no matter the day of the week, do not lose any opportunity to get out with friends and drink something in downtown. In Novara just during weekends is common to go out until late, but it's normal to see the city empty while people are working.

Overall, Prilep inhabitants seem more relaxed and enjoy their freetime - most of them smoke cigarettes, but I can't blame them since it's so cheap and somehow it's part of this culture - considering the fact there is also a tobacco museum.

As I mentioned in the previous pages, people here are similar to the south of Italy, that means warm,friendly and pretty honest. There is always a chance to talk with someone new as if it is a huge family. I was really surprised when I realized that most of the people walk or move around with someone else and rarely alone.

Reagarding this point, Novara is the opposite. It is normal to meet and talk with the same persons and sometimes know someone new but, being a big city, is not that frequent. That's why it presents a colder behavior and there is no much interest in knowing new people, generally.





Food has a pivotal role in the life of a man and it reflexes the personality of the country. Like never before, I finally found a similar cuisine to the Italian one here in Prilep. Every taste of the traditional dishes reminds me somehow of my country. Family and food are a big deal here as in Novara, and it's amazing how both of the places have such deep roots that still are alive in the families' tradition. It is incredible the story grandmothers tell by preparing food to their grandson and, by doing so, creating endless memories. Food is always a good reason to meet up people and share recipes and somehow know better the interlocutor.



# CONCLUSIONS

Overall, even though Prilep is a poor and not developed town, it is indistiputable the spirit and trasparence of its inhabitants. I realized how, in life, it's not necessary to have a lot of money or success to have a healthy and positive life. Friends should be forever and growing up in a familiar environment, which is Prilep, can be more useful for a personal growth than growing up in an environment where people are really close but spiritually far away.

Small realities help to individualize easily our own needs and passions, and keep staying attached to our roots and traditions, where in bigger realities can fade away.

In conclusion, both these two places have positive and negative aspects but what it counts is the soul we put in our lives and how we can manage to make them work perfectly from all of prospectives.

Lifestyle is imposed for sure by what sourrounds us and most of the time, being inside of it, we don't realize how special and lucky we are, to be born where we did .

I truly believe it is our job to be proud of our background and try to make it better than how we found it. Because no matter how we change in the future, we can't deny our blood.



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