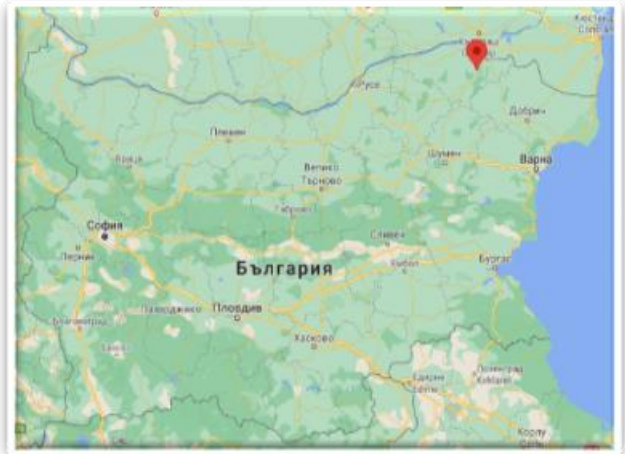




ETHNOGRAPHIC COMPLEX DOBRUJANSKA KASHTA

Location: Alfatar, Northeast
Planning Region

Key words: Ethnographic complex, folklore
program, traditional crafts and rites



Dobrudzha House in Alfatar is a traditional authentic house built in 1893 and transformed into an ethnographic museum in 1984.

It represents a typical Renaissance home from the region of South Dobrudzha and exhibits a number of artefacts used by our ancestors in their everyday life, work and leisure. The colourful carpets, clothes and the antique furniture recall the spirit of the “golden” past of the Bulgarian revival period.

The house is managed by Alfatar Municipality that actively collaborates with the local community and the folklore ensemble for performances and activities aimed at bringing the house into life. Residents in Alfatar are eager to show to visitors the rich folklore and cultural heritage of Dobrudzha. They would dress in traditional authentic costumes inherited by their ancestors and perform songs and dances for the tourists who visit the ethnographic museum. They will re-construct some of the typical practices such as welcoming guests with bread, salt and honey.

When walking around the house, the tourists are encouraged to try on working with the ancient tools they would see inside and locals are enthusiastic to show them the right way to do it. Sometimes they would demonstrate real-life practices such as wool spinning, crochet or embroidery and the visitors are welcome to participate in a traditional craft-making activity, such as preparing “martenitsa” or “kozunak”.

Dobrujanska Kashta and the folklore ensemble also organize various events during the national and traditional holidays. For example, on Eastern, there is a mass egg-colouring activity, where every visitor has a chance to dye eggs in natural paints assisted by locals dressed in national costumes. Other holidays like Christmas, Saint’s fests and the day before Palm Sunday (Lazarus Day) are also celebrated accordingly, rites and traditions are observed and anyone who is visiting in the house during this time can take part in the festive activities.

One of the most sumptuous performances in the House is the re-construction of the typical Alfatar wedding. Dozens of “actors” (local enthusiasts) participate in this whole spectacle. The performance of the wedding won a gold medal in a National folklore competition.

Other activities patronized by Alfatar Municipality are the Bread Fest and the Garden Fest. During those events the local community gathers in the centre of the village and showcases various bread and pastry products, vegetables and fruit. Those exhibits attract a huge interest and many visitors are drawn to the town by the opportunity to taste and buy local food products and to know more about the regional cuisine.



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Marketing approach

Alfatar Municipality is advertising their activities on their website and Facebook profile.

For the organized visit, there are contractual agreements with the Tour-operator but individual tourists can also arrange a performance of a write upon request.

Most of the events during the Holidays are organized by the local community and the folklore ensemble for free. Every visitor in Dobrudzha House can observe and participate in those active activities.

The House was featured in a series of short movies made by the National Television which present the rites performed by the folklore ensemble such as Alfatar wedding.

Because of its intense cultural program, Alfatar gained national recognition as a cradle of the Bulgarian traditions. It is presented often in news reports in the

national TV, radio and printed media. The PRs activities and the intended actions towards the popularization of the region outline Alfatar as one of the best destinations for cultural and heritage tourism in North East Bulgaria.

Financial situation

Direct income is received from entrance fee and paid performances.

Some activities are financed by the municipality budget or by national or EU-based projects.

Key success factors

- Traditional, authentic environment presenting a typical house from the region of Dobrudzha;
- Active participation of the local community in creating memorable and enriching experience;
- Performances of various rites and re-construction of traditional crafts in which tourists can take part;

• A large diversity of events and activities showcasing the various aspects of the cultural ethnographic heritage of the region;

• A range of intellectual, sensual and emotional triggers designed for a wholesome and enriching tourism experience: exhibition of arts, songs, dances, culinary degustation, participation in crafts, story-telling etc.;

• Intense interaction between local and visitors.

Plans for future development

Alfatar Municipality and Dobrudzha House are planning to continue diversifying the activities and events they organize for visitors. They are hoping that after the stall in arrivals in 2020 caused by Covid19 pandemic, the tourism in the region will be revived and there will be more opportunities for cultural exchange between hosts and visitors.

GALLERY:





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