

BYRN August 29-September 11, 2014 • #140 • Price 1€

# Prishina Insight

# WWE

Burek Yoga  
Nightclubs



Beer Trileqe  
Makiato

**PI Guide:** The people and places that make this city great. PAGES 7-19

# PI

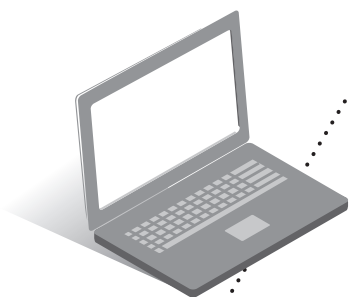
# Page Two

## HOW TO FUND EXTREMISM - AND NOT GET CAUGHT

1.

### Start a fake business

Create a web page for a fictitious company that works internationally. Include staff bios and job vacancies for extra credibility.



2.

### Open a Middle East bank account

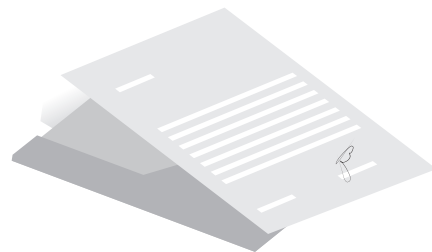
Open a company bank account account in the Middle East, such as in Yemen or Afghanistan. Deposit 50,000 euros per month as income.



3.

### Create fake work contracts

Create 10 fictitious contracts for workers in Afghanistan and/or Iraq, where thousands of Kosovars have taken lucrative jobs as contractors.



4.

### Open accounts in Kosovo

Contacts in Kosovo present contracts while opening bank accounts. A bank officer likely will do little more than check the company name against a black list, and perform a Google search to verify that the company on the contract exists. The existence of the website will provide sufficient proof of this.



**Prishtina  
Insight**

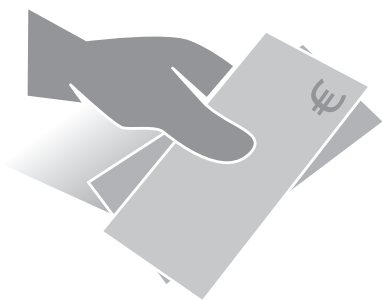
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# 5.

## Make payments

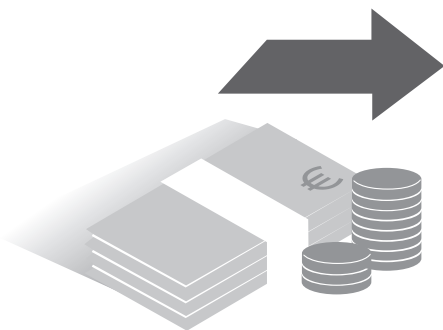
Monthly payments of 5,000 euros to 10 Kosovars begin coming in, appearing as regular salaries for civilian contractors. Transactions won't arouse suspicion of the banks or authorities.



# 6.

## Make the money disappear

Simply start withdrawing cash. Cash transactions under 10,000 euros are not actively monitored. But to be extra safe, buying and reselling property is an easy way to launder large sums of money.



# 7.

## START SPENDING!

Whether you want to keep a terror cell fed and clothed, fund Sharia law classes - the money is safely out of the reach of authorities.



Financial crimes expert Bashkim Zeqiri recently explained to PI how a terrorist group in the Middle East could hypothetically bring money into Kosovo under the nose of authorities.

### from the editor

## Fighting terror means cutting off the money, too

The arrest of 43 suspected Muslim radicals by Kosovo Police in August seemed intended to send the message that authorities are serious about fighting terrorism. According to the Kosovo Intelligence Agency, more than 130 Kosovars have gone to fight in Syria or Iraq - mostly young men fighting for radical Muslim groups including the Islamic State. Naturally, this has raised concerns of what they'll do when they come home. The arrests suggest some may be interested in turning on their own country.

These arrests, along with troubling reports about a little boy reportedly taken by his father to fight in Syria or the Facebook post showing a young man beating a prisoner, are leading many in Kosovo to do a lot of soul searching about a problem that dates back to the end of the war. This problem isn't unique to Kosovo, and the answers of how we got here are complicated. But it's safe to assume that significant amounts of money have helped produce so many young people eager and willing to take up arms for frightening groups like the Islamic State. It's also shockingly easy to bring this money into Kosovo.

Bashkim Zeqiri, an analyst for BIRN, this newspaper's publisher, is a financial crimes expert who has done stints with the Kosovo Police, the Financial Intelligence Unit and the private sector. He recently noted in an op-ed on Kallxo.com that millions of euros have entered Kosovo from the Middle East with little to no scrutiny by the authorities. While Kosovo has the laws

on the books to properly monitor financial transactions, it isn't putting them into use, Zeqiri says.

A combination of a lack of personnel and cooperation among the entities tasked with monitoring financial transactions - the Kosovo Intelligence Agency, Kosovo Police and the Financial Intelligence Unit - has created almost an open door for terrorist organizations, among others, to bring money into Kosovo. While a group such as the Islamic State or al-Qaeda might raise some red flag if it, say, tried to wire 10 million euros from a charity on a government watch list, it takes relatively little effort or sophistication to move money without arousing suspicion and make it disappear in Kosovo. The large number of Kosovars working as contractors in Afghanistan and Iraq has made things easier to disguise transactions as legitimate payments for work.

The good news it is also easy to uncover such transactions. It requires doing a bit of due diligence. In Zeqiri's experience, it's even as simple as performing a Google search to realize that an entity connected to a transaction is suspect. When I chatted with Zeqiri about this, he pointed out that Kosovo nevertheless is doing a better job - and has better laws - than some of its neighbors when it comes to detecting suspect transactions. The trouble for Kosovo, which also isn't alone in facing the threat of home-grown terrorism, is that the stakes are higher. Kosovo is getting its footing as a country, and is fighting for international recognition and against the perception that it's a jihadist narco-state. As such Kosovo has a greater burden to show that it's serious about tackling terrorism. And that means more than just making some high-profile arrests.



Nate Tabak

Editor-in-Chief

# Nation



# 83

days and counting since Kosovo held national elections on June 8. Meanwhile, the country remains under the caretaker government of PM Hashim Thaci.



## Govt plans to restart dangerous power plant

By Paulina Nushi and Valerie Hopkins

The government plans to have the Kosovo A power plant up and running by the end of the year despite having not fully investigated why a hydrogen tank exploded at the 40-year-old facility in June, killing two people and seriously injuring another.

The accident and another in 2008, which took the life of another worker, appear to have changed little about how things are done at the plant. There are no signs that authorities are taking concrete steps to prevent another catastrophe from occurring or are considering shutting down the plant before 2017 as planned.

The explosion caused damage to infrastructure worth 12.4 million euros, plus 180,000 euros in the municipality of Obiliq. A spokesman for Kosovo Electricity Distribution

and Supply Company (KEDS) said imports to cover the energy Kosovo is not making for itself are projected between 20-25 million euros only for 2014. As a result, a price hike of 5 percent is to go into effect in September. The last time prices rose, in early 2013, about 1,000 people protested.

The plant produces 35 percent of Kosovo's energy by burning lignite coal, which is considered the dirtiest kind of energy because it emits more greenhouse gases than other kinds of fossil fuels.

Located just 10 kilometers from Prishtina, the plant is considered one of the worst polluters in Europe, and last year international donors pledged 154 million Euros to close it down. According to World Bank research, 835 people die annually because of pollution-related illnesses, and it takes five years off the lives of those who live in its vicinity.

## COURT

# No clear path around political logjam

Constitutional Court ruling fails to help resolve deadlock that has left Kosovo without a government for nearly three months.

By Nektar Zogjani

Three months on since June's general elections and Kosovo is no closer to getting a permanent government.

With an opposition bloc holding the most seats in parliament on one side, and the former ruling Democratic Party of Kosovo, PDK - with the weight of the highest court behind it - on another, the political tug of war has yet to produce a real winner.

A ruling released on Tuesday by the Constitutional Court, concerning the election of the speaker of parliament, has not offered a path forward - and left many scratching their heads.

The court threw out the election in July of the opposition leader Isa Mustafa as Speaker and said that the PDK - as the largest single party parliament - had the sole right to nominate a candidate.

But the court offered no alternative solution should Hashim Thaci's PDK fail to get its Speaker elected.

Meanwhile, President Atifete Jahjaga is signaling that she will

not nominate a candidate for Prime Minister until parliament has put its house in order.

"Constituting the Assembly will pave the way for the next steps in order to establish new [governing] institutions," Arber Vallahu, Jahjaga's adviser, told Koha Ditore.

Only when Jahjaga nominates a Prime Minister is there legally imposed deadline to form a government - within 60 days. Once that time limit expires, new elections must be called.

An earlier Constitutional Court Ruling means that Thaci's PDK, as the party that won the most votes in the June elections, has the right to name the Prime Minister nominee, which will presumably be Thaci himself. If he fails to form a government, Jahjaga can nominate someone of her own choosing.

The two Constitutional Court rulings have dealt blows to the opposition coalition, led by Ramush Haradinaj, which includes his party, the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, AAK, the Democratic League



## Briefly

**Critics bash planned power rate hike.** Consumers in Kosovo will have to pay more for their electricity if the recommendations for a price increase taken by the Energy Regulatory Office are approved. The authorities say the increase is needed to compensate for the damage caused by an explosion that took place on June 6 at the “Kosovo A” power plant in Obiliq. Critics say the planned hike of 5 per cent for electricity is unfair and bad for the economy. Ibrahim Rexhepi, an economics expert, told Balkan Insight that the decision effectively punished ordinary people “for the two operators’ mismanagement”.

**Serbia reinforces border after policeman's killing.** The Serbian Interior Minister says he is sending fresh police officers to the Kosovo border following the death of an officer who was shot near the border, allegedly by illegal loggers. Stevan Sindjelic, of the special police unit known as the Gendarmerie, died Thursday in Belgrade, after being shot by unknown attackers, reportedly illegal loggers from Kosovo. Kosovo police said that they have no information as yet on an increased presence of Serbian officers on the border.

**Kosovo Serb leader pleads not-guilty to war crimes.** Serb political party leader Oliver Ivanovic has pleaded not guilty to committing war crimes during the Kosovo conflict and inciting the murder of Albanians during clashes that erupted afterwards. A former Serbian government official and head of a Kosovo Serb political party called Freedom, Democracy, Justice, Ivanovic is accused of war crimes by ordering the murder of four ethnic Albanians in Mitrovica on April 14, 1999 during the NATO bombing. He is also accused, along with another person, of inciting the killing of ethnic Albanians during unrest that erupted after the war.

## How the Constitutional Court decision complicates things

### NO ALTERNATIVES

The ruling does not address what will happen if PDK cannot get its nominee for speaker elected. This could potentially lead to an endless cycles of failed nominations that can only be broken by the opposition voting in PDK's speaker or dissolving Parliament for new elections.

### ONLY PDK CAN NOMINATE A SPEAKER

The Constitution calls for the speaker of the Parliament to be nominated by the largest parliamentary group. The court has taken this to mean the party that won the most votes in the elections, the PDK, rejecting the validity of the post-election coalition of NISMA, AAK and LDK.

### EVERYONE HAS TO SHOW UP

The court has ruled that the constitutive session of parliament – the session where the speaker is elected among other things – can only be valid if every MP shows up. A single lawmaker can hold up the entire process.



# A



# B



# C

of Kosovo, LDK, and NISMA.

The parties united shortly after the elections in June as a united front against Thaci. With the opposition Vetevendosje [Self-determination] party offering conditional backing, Haradinaj's election seemed a certainty.

However, in its two rulings, the court rejected the legitimacy of a coalition formed after elections, concluding that the PDK, which won around 30 per cent of the vote, must have the first opportunity to nominate its pick for Prime Minister - and also nominate the Speaker.

The PDK, for its part, insists that it can summon up enough votes to elect a Speaker, and has also voiced confidence that it can get Thaci elected to a third mandate as Prime Minister.

“We have enough votes to pass all these decisions and to implement the will of the Kosovo citizens,” PDK MP Adem Grabovci told Koha Ditore.

Doing so, however, will require getting votes from the opposition bloc and/or from Vetevendosje, which would be challenging.

Haradinaj has said the opposition bloc will go ahead and nominate its candidate for Speaker once the PDK has failed to secure its nominee.

“The right that the court gave to the PDK to nominate the Speaker ends immediately with the failure from this party to get the required votes,” Haradinaj told re-

porters this week.

“The court says... the assembly should find a way to elect the speaker, so we have the solution to this, we have our own candidate, Mustafa, and we also have the votes,” he added.

But it's unclear whether, if the bloc did so, the result would be another court challenge. The Constitutional Court also stated in its ruling that every one of the 120 members of parliament must be present for the body's first session, when the Speaker is elected.

But in doing so, the court has given each MP the power to effectively block any nomination, thus requiring widespread consensus for the election of any nominee.

While the major political parties have not voiced any serious interest in holding new elections, both the opposition coalition and the PDK could gain from new polls.

New elections would allow the opposition bloc to run as an electoral coalition, while the PDK could boost its votes if it persuaded its former coalition partner, New Kosovo Alliance, AKR, to run together with it. The AKR failed to get the 5 per cent of the votes it needed to get into parliament.

Analyst Leon Malazogu said he doubted a new election would change anything. “It is not in the interest of Kosovo citizens,” Malazogu said. “I think that we would arrive in the same position again after more elections.”



### THE HOLDOUT

Judge Robert Carolan's has offered clear, no-nonsense dissents in the last two court decisions concerning the post-elections debacle. In the latest he wrote, “The conclusion and reasoning of the majority in this case is wrong because it misinterprets specific language of the Constitution. It also erroneously attempts to answer questions that, as a Constitutional Court, it does not have the authority to answer.”



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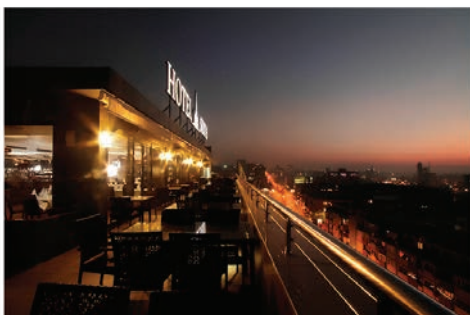
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# Cover

We love Prishtina

The people

and places

that make

this city great.



Kaltrina Krasniqi: How Prishtina presses on. [PAGE 8](#). Alex Butler and Etida Zeka: Filling our glasses with great beer. [PAGE 10](#). Edi Shukriu: Loving the old in a young town. [PAGE 12](#). Kafu: A soundtrack for Kosovo's chaotic capital. [PAGE 14](#). PI Guide: Want burek? Need a yoga fix? Prishtina has it all. [PAGES 9-18](#).

## KALTRINA KRASNIQI

# A witness to a city that endures

By Nate Tabak

Kaltrina Krasniqi has seen Prishtina through its ups and downs. The filmmaker was born in 1981, the year that marked the end of a short-lived golden age for Albanians in Kosovo. Protests at the University of Prishtina became a rallying point for Albanians as the small political, economic, cultural renaissance that began in the second half of the 1970s, after Tito extended Kosovo's autonomy, began to unravel.

As a young child living in the center of Prishtina, not far from the Grand Hotel, Krasniqi did not feel the effects of the turmoil. She recalls a more beautiful, liveable, place.

"There were political tensions but I enjoyed growing up here mostly because Prishtina was never designed to be a big city, it was a small town," Krasniqi says. "Us kids from the center didn't really have parks, but we had the city center. All the kids that lived in the center mixed, which means Serbs, Albanians and everyone, and it was safe."

In the 1990s, things turned from bad to worse. In 1989 Kosovo lost the last vestiges of autonomy, thanks to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, while tensions worsened between Serbs and the increasingly marginalized Albanians. By the time she was 13, in the mid-1990s, Krasniqi felt that the former sense of security had disappeared.

The situation escalated into war, which only stopped with a NATO bombing campaign in 1999. While the war was hardest in rural areas, Prishtina was nevertheless a scary place, particularly during the bombing campaign. Along with her brother and sister, Krasniqi remained in the city for the first three weeks of the bombing before her mother found a way to get them to Skopje.

That period informed her latest film, "The Canaries Know," a fictional story of a family in Prishtina during the bombing. The short film infuses her own experience of the conflicting emotions of that time – the elation of the bombing bringing a close to a traumatic period, while the bombing itself brought its own trauma.

"When the first bomb fell we were happy, but after it fell, we knew nothing would ever be the same again and it wasn't. It changed us all," Krasniqi says.

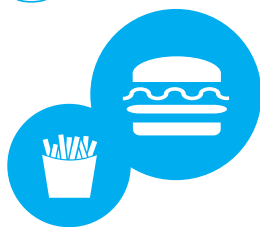
While the bombs ended a period of oppression for Albanians and brought them the political freedom they had sought for years, it also marked the start of a complicated period for Prishtina. The small city expanded rapidly with new people and buildings, bringing chaos and ugliness, particularly as a result of unchecked illegal construction.

Krasniqi misses parts of the old Prishtina, but she has also helped bring life to the new Prishtina. Along with her partner, the musician Genc Salihu, and the aspiring writer Baton Domi, she established Dit' e Nat', a bookstore and café that has brought something beautiful to a chaotic city in transition. In a city where cafés come and go, Dit' e Nat' has endured as a place where everyone from high school students to the old intelligentsia, artists, musicians, hipsters, and international mission employees can come together in a welcoming environment lined with books and often buzzing with people and music.

"The magic of Prishtina comes from the people and their endless energy, an energy that wants to keep the city and themselves intact. Several times it felt as if this would disintegrate entirely, but there are people who continuously work and try to keep it together," Krasniqi says.



# pi guide



## CHEAP EATS

### ■ Burek, burgers reign at Bosna

Bosna is a local chain of restaurants here in Kosovo that offer a more traditional, Balkan version of fast food. It's a casual and mint clean venue and not to mention wallet-friendly. You can get a combo meal of a burger, fries, and a coke all for under 3 euro. Bosna has a quality burger that Prishtina Insight loves. The beef patty is plump, juicy and absolutely delicious. The side fries weren't too greasy or salty, and were cooked to a golden crisp. The qebapa seemed to be the more popular option in the restaurant. The qebapa were well seasoned, grilled to perfection and tucked away between two fluffy pieces of bread like a sandwich. They also have some of the best burek in Kosovo. Bosna's locations are ideal since many of them are just a short walk from the center. The service was quick and our bill for two was less than 6 euro.

**BOSNA 1 LOCATION:** Underneath the Kurriz thoroughfare in Dardania. **BOSNA 2 LOCATION:** Perandori Justinian street. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 7am-10pm.

### ■ Tender, Tasty Chicken at Lupa

The place is literally falling apart, but the chicken is amazing. There's a little secret that those run-down, sketchy looking restaurants tend to serve the best food in town. Most restaurants in Prishtina put great effort into their design interior to lure customers in, the food, however lacks that motivation. Lupa's is far from being an attractive restaurant, and will make you question why you sat down there in the first place, but once you try their chicken - you'll be sure to return. For 2 euro, you'll get a large portion of juicy and well seasoned chicken on the bone, along with a small side salad. Don't expect to see a menu, or even matching dishes and silverware, because they only serve chicken, and they do it well.

**LOCATION:** Across from the Bill Clinton Statue, on Bill Clinton Boulevard. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 9am-11pm. **CONTACT:** 049-282-828.

## THE GREAT BUREK CRAWL

### ■ Furra Lumi, a High Class Burek Option

Near the University of Prishtina's student cafeteria Menza e Studenteve, it's hard to get burek at Lumi's because it's almost always sold out. Prishtina Insight sampled the cheese burek, which was baked to a golden crisp, incredibly puffy, and not too oily with just the right amount of feta cheese. Lumi is also famous for their

variety of pastries, desserts, chocolates and homemade pite. You can also enjoy a coffee after your burek, an option many burek stores lack.

**LOCATION:** Anton Cetta Street. Second location on Eqrem Cabej street, close to Bill Clinton Boulevard. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 7am-9pm. Sunday, 7am-6pm. **CONTACT:** 038 229 752.

### ■ A Bite Between Classes: Burektore Studenti

Across from the University of Prishtina, the name is self-explanatory. Burektore Studenti is a favorite amongst students, just ask any student in Prishtina. With a small, traditional venue, and only a few tables, Burektore Studenti has the classic burek options: spinach, meat and cheese. Prishtina Insight went with the cheese burek, the dough was flakey and stuffed with cheese and there's no question as to why this place is a classic.

**LOCATION:** On George Bush Street, across from the RTK building.

### ■ Picadilly: Oily, Doughy, Simply Satisfying Burek

Picadilly's burek is less crispy and has more of a oily, dough-like texture. Although it's very greasy, the meat burek Prishtina Insight tried was flavorful, juicy and satisfying. The burek is also baked right in front of customers. In most burektore, bureks are heated up from whatever is leftover in the morning. Most Picadilly customers take their burek to go because there are only a few tables and the aroma of burek can get overwhelming. A local customer told us, no need to try anymore because this is the best burek in town.

**LOCATION:** Agim Ramadani Street, next to Hotel Sirius. **HOURS:** Monday through Saturday, 7am-4pm.

### ■ The City Burektore: Venezia

Located in the center of Prishtina, the Venezia bakery offers many baked goods besides their bureks. At Venezia, Prishtina Insight initially ordered the spinach burek, but it was sold out (once again), so we went with the cheese burek. The burek was moist but not too oily, flaky on the outside, but soft and chewy near the center. The cheese was salty, but fresh. The location of Venezia is also ideal, since it's surrounded by some of Prishtina's best stores and cafes.

**LOCATION:** Rexhep Luci street, near Luan Haradinaj street. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 7am-10pm.

### ■ Burektore Destan, Proudly Traditional

Located across the street from the Ministry of Public Services, Burektore Destan is a tiny venue where you'll have

### A PERFECT SATURDAY IN PRISHTINA

"I would go to Dit'e Nat', have a coffee – short espresso – and then jump in a cab, go to Germia park, take a walk, and have some tea. Then I'd go back to city, have some lunch at Pjata, and go to the National Gallery."

#### ■ Dit'e Nat'

This bookstore and café, as the name suggests – it means Day and Night in Albanian – is perfect at any time of day. During the day, it's a quiet place to have great coffee and get some work done. In the evening, the place livens up a bit, with a solid selection of drinks, including good cocktails and Sabaja Beer. They frequently have intimate musical events.

**LOCATION:** Fazli Grajgevc street, behind Skanderbeg Statue. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 8am-midnight, Sundays 10am-8pm. **CONTACT:** 038 742 037, info@ditenat.com

#### ■ Pjata

There seems to be a revolving door of nice restaurants in Prishtina, many of them not actually nice or delicious. Pjata has lasted, however. It serves modern cuisine elegantly without being overbearing. Their homemade pasta is superb, and the staff take care of their meat. Brunch is especially good, and wins points for including a potent Bloody Mary.

**LOCATION:** Ali Pashe Tepelena No 1 at Gazmend Zajmi Street. **HOURS:** Daily, 11am to 11pm. **CONTACT:** 038 220739

## ALEX BUTLER AND ETIDA ZEKA

## Brewers quench an emerging thirst

By Nate Tabak

“Check this out,” Alex Butler says, motioning from the back of his brewery. Between stainless steel tanks is a stout glass jug in wooden housing. Inside a tannish sludge moves about, periodically letting out a belch of carbon dioxide through the top. “That’s life,” Butler says, with the enthusiasm of a proud father.

Butler, 28, is making an experimental India Pale Ale with a new kind of Slovenian hop, the plant that gives beer its bitterness and an especially key ingredient in the American-style craft beer that Sabaja brews on the outer edge of Prishtina.

Butler owns Sabaja with his Kosovar partner, Etida Zeka, 27. A little more than a year ago, they began selling their beers, and have since built a loyal following among Prishtina’s drinkers, myself included. They’ve sold more than 55,000 bottles (18,333 liters) - with the IPA as their biggest seller. The reason is simple: their beer is great.

This summer’s Beerfest on Zahir Pajaziti Square was especially heart-warming for Butler.

“So many people coming together as a community - getting drunk as a community - that was pretty cool. You really saw Prishtina more or less at its best,” Butler says.

Kosovo is a tough market for just about any business, with alcohol being especially challenging, since people don’t drink much.

According to customs figures, Kosovo is the least thirsty country in Europe.

The owners hope that the drinking culture can change. Zeka, whose go-to beverage is instant vanilla cappuccino, discovered a soft spot for beer though one of Butler’s home brews, a Russian Imperial stout.

Butler, on the other hand, has gotten to know Prishtina through Zeka and her family. Zeka laughs when admitting that Butler’s first restaurant experience was at Symphony, a kitschy place in Ulpiana that feels like it hasn’t changed much since the 1990s, and is known for its meat on a stone.

“My father insisted,” Zeka says.

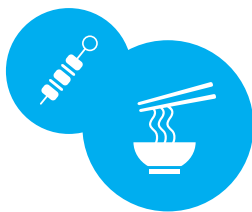
These days the couple does a lot of their eating at the Sabaja Beer House, the American-style pub near the city stadium, which has close ties to the brewery (it’s part owned by Zeka’s family). It’s a great place to try Sabaja’s entire beer range - IPA, Session, Saison, Smoked Porter, and periodic seasonal beers - along with the best burgers in town.

While Sabaja won’t be challenging Peja beer anytime soon, there are plans to roll out the beers nationwide and outside Kosovo. Meanwhile there’s talk of a retail store and another branch of the restaurant. In short, the owners say Kosovo is ready for more Sabaja.

“The culture of beer is developing and has grown a lot since we started,” Butler says.



PHOTO/ATDHE MULLA



to take your burek to go. Destan offers a more traditional styled burek that's thin, flakey, and extremely oily. Prishtina Insight's meat burek was full of flavor and cooked to perfection.

**LOCATION:** Luan Haradinaj, next to Central Room. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 7am-6pm. **Out of country dining experiences**

## OUT OF COUNTRY DINING EXPERIENCES

### ■ For your Thai fix: Filou Restaurant

Filou offers a well-priced Thai menu and a tranquil atmosphere on Fehmi Agani Street. With ingredients from Bangkok and Europe, Filou has an appealing menu that is full of interesting Thai food options. The menu has 17 different plates. The most requested dishes are chicken Satay, Spring Rolls, Chicken Tempura Powder, and Pad Thai.

**LOCATION:** 27 Fehmi Agani Street.  
**HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 8am-12am.  
**CONTACT:** 045 516 978.

### ■ Chinese Restaurant: Go for the Black Fungus

The name Chinese Restaurant is pretty self-explanatory. It's the only Chinese restaurant in Prishtina, and perhaps the country. It's actually pretty good. Standouts include shredded chicken, black mushrooms (unfortunately called fungus) with beef, spinach with peanuts, and of course, spring rolls. The convenient location in the centre is nice for a quiet dinner or take-out. If you avoid the pricey seafood items, two people can eat there for under 20 euro.

**LOCATION:** 17 Luan Haradinaj Street, across from the police station. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 11am-10pm to 10 p.m. Sunday, 12pm-10pm. **CONTACT:** 044 384 928/044 164 032.

### ■ Himalayan Ghorka, a Hangover Hideaway

Tucked away in the Qafa neighborhood, the Himalayan Ghorka is a safe choice for when you want all your carbs at once, in a quiet, unassuming, and dimly lighted Indian/Nepalese restaurant. This is the most reliable location in Prishtina for your naan, chicken tikka massala, momo, samosa and chai lassi fix, and they do takeaway as well. We suggest visiting for when you need comfort food and/or a quick hangover recovery.

**LOCATION:** 17 UCK Street, inside the "Qafa" mall. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, until 11pm. **CONTACT:** 044 821 970.

### ■ Antonella's Place: Il Passatore

Run by the warm and friendly Antonella, an Italian transplant in Kosovo now for many years, Il Passatore is a hidden gem tucked away on Hil Mosi Street. The

restaurant is a converted pre-war home, with stove heating in the winter and garden seating in the summer. Expect handmade pasta, and a selection of fish and salads. Our advice is to ask the waiter for what's available that day - you can expect there to be at least two off menu specials.

**LOCATION:** 13 Hil Mosi Street. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 12-4pm; 7pm-11pm. **Closed on Sundays.** **CONTACT:** 038 516 473.

### ■ Taverna Greke - Meze You Need to Try

Taverna Greke, on the road to Sunny Hill, does not have much of that over-the-top Greek kitsch stereotypically expected of Greek restaurants, like theatrical saganaki service or waiters exclaiming "Opa!" On Prishtina Insight's first three visits we only heard smooth jazz. Only on a recent evening did we hear actual Greek music. But it's just as well. The food — the meze in particular — is really good and distinctive. Things got more serious the next day when Prishtina Insight delved into fried zucchini. It seemed to be the offspring of potato chips, french fries - and the vegetable that bore its name. In other words, it was great.

**LOCATION:** 9 Eqrem Cabej (across from the 1 Tetori Auditorium). **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 7am-12am. **CONTACT:** 044 153 914/049 153 914 or visit [facebook.com/tavernagreke](https://www.facebook.com/tavernagreke).

## SEAFOOD



### ■ Detari, Easily the Best Fish Place in Town

The Detari Fish Market has been open for several years on the outskirts of Prishtina near the US Embassy, and recently opened a restaurant in the same area. The rich menu of seafood pastas and rizottos include Spaghetti with Frutti di Mare, or choices between the usual fish available in this region: John Dory, Orada, Sea Bass and Sea Bream. Prishtina Insight ordered a plate teeming with calamari, a small portion of grilled salmon, lightly charred shrimp, and a whole sea bass (levrek). The calamari were some of the most tender around, lightly charred with a smoky grilled aftertaste, just like the shrimp. The sea bass was tender and light. We garnished it only with a lemon, but it would have been nice to have a sauce or some additional flavors. The combined decor seemed unsure of whether it wants to evoke the air of a casual family dining spot or an elegant, upscale vibe that the food deserves. The meal for two, including a 7 euro bottle of wine, cost 31 Euros without tip.

**LOCATION:** Ferid Curri Street (Across from Minimax), Arberia. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 9am-10pm. **CONTACT:** 049 262 231.

### SABAJA CRAFT BREWERY

This is where the magic happens. Check out the brewery, buy the beers (20 euros for a case of 20 for regular offerings), and home-brew lessons with prior arrangement.

**LOCATION:** On the road to Gjiljan/Gracanica, just after the American Hospital, in Prishtina's Hajvalija neighborhood.  
**HOURS:** Call ahead. **CONTACT:** 049 550 222 or [info@birrasabaja.com](mailto:info@birrasabaja.com). **ONLINE:** [www.facebook.com/SabajaCraftBrewer](http://www.facebook.com/SabajaCraftBrewer) or [www.birrasabaja.com](http://www.birrasabaja.com).

### BEST PLACES TO DRINK SABAJA

- **Sabaja Beerhouse (See guide)**
- **Country House** (Bernica e Perme village, off the road to Podjueve, [www.facebook.com/pages/Country-House-Restaurant](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Country-House-Restaurant))
- **Babaganush** (See guide)
- **Taverna Tirona** (2 Korriku no. 8, off Mother Teresa Blvd)
- **Backgarden** (Fehmi Agani 2, off Mother Teresa Blvd)


**EDI SHUKRIU**

## Living history while uncovering it

By Jeta Xharra

Edi Shukriu shows her love for Prishtina by restoring and curating it. Shukriu, 63, is a writer and archaeologist, and the only female member of the Kosovo Academy of Arts and Sciences. Though she was born in Prizren, she has lived most of her life in Prishtina.

Shukriu is a soft-spoken woman - not the least because she loves to smoke. Her voice is deep and a bit cryptic - like she is unwrapping a mystery even when she is offering you coffee in her office.

During the tumultuous 90s, Shukriu was an activist in the peaceful movement of the Democratic League of Kosovo, LDK. Shukriu was married to the dissident Albanian nationalist Ukshin Hoti, who disappeared in 1999 after spending 17 years in jail in Serbia for his political activity. Together they had a daughter, Erleta, who has also grown up to be a political activist.

Now Shukriu teaches archeology in the University of Prishtina, where she poses provocative questions for her classes. She is currently studying the pre-Illyrian "Goddess on the Throne," the symbol of Prishtina, and has been asking her classes whether it is a man or a woman.

It is only natural that Shukriu's favorite places are linked to archeology.

"My favorite place to visit in Prishtina are the remains of a thermal baths - these are inside the premises of the Kosovo parliament, or more concretely in the back of the parliament, where its parking lot is and where the new annex has been built," Shukriu says. "The fact is that there was never care about making these remains available for public access."

Shukriu laments that successive governments made no effort to preserve these baths, even in the seventies and eighties when Kosovo was in a better economic situation.

"The Yugoslav government never invested much in archaeology, and we don't do that now either - we have always lacked funds to do proper excavations," she says.

Her second favorite place to visit in Prishtina is the archeological park opposite the National Museum.

"It is a very modest archeological park but when I go there and look at some of these old stones with figures that speak of different rituals - it completely calms me down. I forget the mess of Prishtina outside. I suggest you go and look at the stone with the six-member family."

Shukriu's third favorite place is Ulpiana, about 10 km from Prishtina near Gracanica. It is seen as the country's most promising archaeological site, though proper excavations have begun relatively recently.

Shukriu has models of labyrinth gardens that exist in the world pinned to the wall in her office and she believes that the mayor of Prishtina should build such a garden in Prishtina itself.

"Labyrinth gardens are known to calm people down - you can bring your kids there, leave them by the playground, go for a walk inside yourself and get lost a bit - only to come back and find the world still out there. We are able to reflect differently after getting ourselves lost in labyrinths - I believe in the spiritual power of places like that and not necessarily that historic places should offer that power but we should strive to create places in this city where we can just go out and reflect."



PHOTO/ATDHE MULLA

**VISITING HISTORY**

Many of Kosovo's most treasured artifacts are still in Serbia, but there is a lot of history to see in and around Prishtina.

**■ The Goddess on the Throne**

Now a symbol of Prishtina, the tiny (30cm tall) Goddess on the Throne is believed to be a fertility talisman that is more than 6,000 years old. Found in 1956 in what is today the Calabria neighborhood of Prishtina, the statuette is housed in the National Museum of Prishtina.

**■ Thermal Baths behind Kosovo Parliament**

Check out these baths, just nestled nonchalantly in a parking lot behind Kosovo's Parliament.

**■ Archaeological park opposite the National Museum**

The little grassy park shows relics from ancient Kosovo, tombs from the Roman era, and a piece of the ornate Mosaic from Gllamnik. Its just opposite the Kosovo Museum, on the corner of Rruga Haxhi Zeka.

**■ Ulpiana**

Ulpiana, a Roman settlement just outside modern-day Gračanica, was a stopping point on the road from Constantinople to Rome. Ulpiana was built and developed in the first century C.E. When you visit you can see a basilica, funerary rooms, and a graveyard, in addition to some city walls.

**■ Casa Rita brings the seaside to Prishtina**

Fish is the bread and butter of Casa Rita, with the menu offering octopus, stingray, and catfish, rare on most Prishtina menus. Casa Rita's fish comes from Ulcinj. During Prishtina Insight's first visit to Casa Rita, we tried salmon carpaccio appetizer, which was excellent. The salmon was perfectly fresh and salty, and rubbed with aromatic spices and topped with a tuft of arugula. The octopus salad appetizer is also great. It was a large portion of octopus, chopped tomatoes, potatoes, lemons and onions covered in a sweet oil. Together the rather unconventional mix created the perfect dish with a hint of sweetness. The spaghetti fruta di mare, which has diced tomatoes, basil, shrimp and octopus offers the simple ingredients of pure Mediterranean bliss. Casa Rita has an elegant atmosphere that doesn't make you feel uncomfortable. Its serene setting more than makes up for being a bit out of town. The prices are decent too: our dinner for two was a little under 25 euro.

**LOCATION:** Dr. Shpetim Robaj Street, on the way to Germia Park. **HOURS:** Monday - Sunday, 8:00 am - 11:00 pm.

**CONTACT:** 038 516 677.

**TRADITIONAL EATING****■ Taverna N'14:****Excels at the classics**

Tucked away down a road behind the KEK/KEDS building, Taverna N'14 is part of a big wooden house with bright lights and a traditional feel. While there's nothing novel about traditional Albanian decor or cooking in Prishtina, N'14 avoids the all-too-common trap of adulterating classic cuisine. Prishtina Insight ordered the qofte cooked that was swimming in a thick sauce consisting of kos. The qofte arrived in a hot iron pot, along with a lid, which kept in the heat. The qofte were flavorful, soft and well seasoned. We also ordered the qofte cooked in tomato sauce, which came with delicious chunks of sweet diced tomatoes. The service was also excellent and our meals arrived shortly after one another. The meals were also a better price than expected. The qofte was priced at 4 euro, and two people can get out of N'14 spending less than 20 euro. The restaurant also has live Albanian music every week.

**LOCATION:** Ilaz Kodra, behind the KEK/KEDS building. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 7am-12am. **CONTACT:** 038 556 665/045 676 067 or visit [facebook.com/nekatermbedhete](https://www.facebook.com/nekatermbedhete).

**■ Mezzeria: Kosovar tapas done right**

Opened a few months ago across the

street from Komiteti, Mezzeria is kind of place where you plan to spend at least a few hours drinking and sharing communal, tapas style dishes with company. Prishtina Insight ordered the meze plate first, with arrived with a generous serving of cheese, smoked beef, cuts of suxhuk - a local, dried cured sausage, olives, and apple. Then came the stuffed peppers. Mezzeria's stuffed peppers are worth paying for - the peppers were properly roasted, and filled with creamy sheep's cheese and ricotta in a tava (an earthenware pot used for this and other Albanian dishes). The stuffed eggplant followed, also prepared in a tava, with ricotta cheese and a chunky tomato sauce. The flavors blended well in the dish, and the eggplant was tender and tasty. Our bill in total came to around 20 euros, including one shared bottle of water, one glass of grape raki, and a small tip.

**LOCATION:** Fehmi Agani street 52/2, across the street from restaurant Komiteti.

**HOURS:** Open Monday-Saturday.

**CONTACT:** 045-663-665 or online at [facebook.com/mezzeria](https://www.facebook.com/mezzeria).

**■ Tiffany's, a Prishtina institution**

With an appreciation for meat, cream and a healthy dose of repetition, Tiffany's is a restaurant in Prishtina that never disappoints. The menu at Tiffany's is not too extensive, and the insistence of the servers on bringing particular dishes means that first time diners will not realize that they can choose what they want to eat. Meals begin with rounds of fresh oven-baked bread that is crusty on the outside and fluffy on the inside. For a heavier meat experience, the grilled meats platter is a good choice. A sizeable combination of chicken kebabs and pieces of veal, all grilled right in front of your eyes. A dish to order during lunch-time is the veal soup. It is served in a huge old-fashioned tureen, and with chunks of meat, vegetables and rice as it floats in a lightly seasoned broth. It is one of the restaurant's simplest dishes, and also one of the tastiest. The lack of menu also means a lack of pricing. Diners can never be absolutely certain of what a meal will cost. However, Prishtina Insight finds that it is rarely more than 10 euro per person, including a glass of house wine.

**LOCATION:** Off Fehmi Agani Street, behind the Croatian Embassy and Bukka Bar.

**HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 9am-11pm.

**Sunday, 6pm-11pm. CONTACT:** 038 244 040.

**■ A Quick Escape:****Shpija e Vjetër (Old House)**

With comfortable chairs arranged around small wooden tables, Old House - or Shpija e Vjetër - at first glance looks just like any of the other bars and restaurants lining Qamil Hoxha Street. Appearances in this

## BAJRAM KINOLLI, AKA 'KAFU'

## Inspiration in Prishtina's 'beehive'

By Valerie Hopkins

Bajram Kinolli, better known as Kafu, is the frontman of Prishtina band Gypsy Groove, which plays a fusion of Roma, folk, reggae and funk. Born in Gjakova in 1985, Kafu played drums and rode Harley Davidsons in Tirana before moving to Prishtina in 2009. He found work with the Rolling Film Festival, got involved in activism, met his wife, and started learning the Romani language and the Roma songs that infuse his music. PI caught up with Kafu in Sharra, behind Kafja e Vogel, which he says is one of his favorite summer haunts. Kafu splits his time between Prishtina and Novi Sad, where his wife lives and works.

"Since I moved here, the city is totally different. It has grown a lot, and there is a great music and arts scene, but it shouldn't be only Prishtina. What's depressing is that all the other cities are totally dead, except for Prizren in the summer."

He sees Prishtina as a place where people are coming together from all over the region. "I'm from Gjakova, our band members are from Mitrovica, Novi Sad, Croatia. Nobody is from Prishtina but we came together to play music here... in that way we are truly a Prishtina band."

Kinolli says Prishtina's pace of growth, and the tensions between old and new have brought him tremendous inspiration.

"Our entire first album is basically what is happening in Prishtina. One of our early songs is 'Beehive.' It is because—I love this place!—in many ways Prishtina is like a beehive because there are so many different places, differ-

ent holes full of honey, I have to try them all. But also in lots of ways it is inside, people are closed."

Another song, 'Meet Your Neighbor' is a collaboration with two rappers who grew up in Germany but got deported back to Kosovo. "We are all living in close quarters here, but we don't know each other. The song is an invitation to meet me in a deep way. I want to change the picture of people. I don't want anybody calling me a minority, in as far as I'm human."

Kinolli wants to remind people that there are important social justice issues to think about as Prishtina continues growing, and hopes people push for it to be inclusive.

"To be welcome in a society like in Prishtina is hard—I know how much! An entire [Roma] neighborhood on Moravska Street was forcibly removed (in 1999). This is not a symbol of welcome, no matter what kind of laws are on the books. Now they are living around Prishtina, and more of them are around Belgrade and Novi Sad, in very bad conditions. In Plemetina there is no bus connection. Is this a capital city who wants to hide its poor people? Do they have rights in a way that can only be read about?"

On the other hand, Kinolli expresses joy at some positive developments on Prishtina's streets, like new posts being installed on the city sidewalks to prevent cars from parking on them.

"The city is always changing, I can see the changes this week! They are finally making the sidewalks free! It's great because I was always so nervous before because there were cars everywhere, I get depressed that it is a problem to walk or bike."



PHOTO/ATDHE MULLA

**COFFEE WITH KAFU ...**

“These days if I’m in Prishtina, it’s usually only for a few days so I have to spend the whole day drinking so much coffee, it’s insane. I like drinking coffee at Dite Nat (Page 9), Tingell Tangell, and Kafja e Vogel (Page 17) in the summer. On the weekend I like to get outside of the city, places like Germia and Gracanica.”

**■ Tingell Tangell**

You can tell Tingell, as it is affectionately known by its clientele, is cool because of its mismatched furniture, low lighting, and sketches on the wall. Come to Tingell to mingle with people with funky hairstyles and vintage clothes, and drink a few laidback beers. Tingell manages to be utterly hip and completely unpretentious at the same time. It’s a great place to listen to eclectic music, especially when there is an event on.

**LOCATION:** It’s complicated to explain. In the series of park lots bounded by apartments in the center. Enter near EULEX police headquarters (Former UNMIK HQ) or the Photo Nesha sign on Mother Teresa. Best to ask someone who knows.

**HOURS:** Generally open daily, from morning until late.

**CONTACT:**  
[www.facebook.com/tingelltangell](http://www.facebook.com/tingelltangell).

case are deceiving, as the restaurant extends all the way into the back, and fills an old Ottoman-style house, with a wrap-around terrace, managing to be cool in the summer and very cozy in the winter. The food is reliably good, and is definitely worth a try. The standards (pizzas, pastas, salads, omelets, and sandwiches) are all tasty and make Old House a good spot for a lunch, or a leisurely weekend brunch. The more traditional menu items are where Old House really excels. The restaurant whips up fantastic traditional donuts (llokuma), which are served either with ajvar and a creamy dip, or with honey and plum jam (2-4 euro). Meat lovers will appreciate the range of beef, veal, and chicken options. The chicken is reliably tender, and rarely dry, while the beefsteak is not terribly impressive, and perhaps not worth the 7 to 9 euro.

**LOCATION:** Qamil Hoxha Street Nr. 9, next to Cantina AM/PM. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 8am-12am. **CONTACT:** Visit [facebook.com/shpijaevjeter](https://www.facebook.com/shpijaevjeter).

**■ If it’s not broke, don’t fix it: Tradita**

Tradita occupies an old house in Prishtina’s centre. The restaurant as traditional as its name and fills a much-needed void in restaurants focusing on simple, old-time Albanian food in all of its glory. The menu at Tradita is vast, covering traditional breads and appetizers, a wide selection of tavas, grilled meats, and salads. They also offer lamb, kid goat, and baked “village chicken” to order for larger groups - an appealing prospect. Prishtina Insight’s portion of traditional pie with spinach (3 euro) was carefully presented on a wooden board, alongside pleasantly sharp cheese and a bowl of fresh creamy yogurt. The bread itself was buttery, fresh, and much fluffy. Prishtina Insight also tried a Gjakova tava (7 euro), which arrived still bubbling from the oven. The beef was tender, the sauce was succulent but not too salty, and was flavored with just the right amount of tomato and pepper. Tradita is the perfect restaurant for those craving a traditional village meal, but be aware that you will still pay city prices (mains 5 – 10 euro).

**LOCATION:** Parking lot behind Tingell Tangell. **HOURS:** Open daily, 8am to midnight. **CONTACT:** 045 282 222 or visit [facebook.com/restaurant.tradita](https://www.facebook.com/restaurant.tradita).

**CASUAL DINING****■ Your Neighborhood Gourmet Bistro: Te Lali**

Te Lali - which means At Lali’s - feels right at home in a green corner of Sunny Hill, among low-rise apartments from

the Yugoslav era. On a nice day, the large patio is the perfect place for a meal or a drink. Inside, the abundance of dark wood radiates a nice homey feel. The menu is refreshingly limited. Steak and pasta are offered consistently, with specials contingent upon Lali’s whims - which included lobster last summer. Prishtina Insight heartily recommends the salad. It features spinach, juicy tomatoes, white cheese and shredded beet in a rich balsamic vinaigrette. The salad was nearly perfect, with an expressive beef flavour and a touch of smokiness to boot. We can’t praise the steak enough either. Beautifully seared, the meat was slightly blackened on the outside and pink and juicy inside. While the steak alone is reason to check out Te Lali, the atmosphere adds a lot, too. It’s casual with little fuss. Absent are the white table clothes or bow-tied waiters, while the food is refined. The restaurant manages to hit the sweet spot of casual gourmet. In Prishtina, that’s a rare find. The whole meal totalled €21.50, and included a beer, mineral water and one coffee. The priciest item, the steak, was €10. While not cheap, beef that good is hard to come by.

**LOCATION:** On a side street near the Qendra Tregtare (Trade Center) in Sunny Hill. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 8am to 10:30pm, Sunday, 12pm-8pm.

**■ Good Beer, Good Food, Good Service: Sabaja Beer House**

Sabaja Beer House, the restaurant incarnation of Prishtina’s only microbrewery, Sabaja, is a must for their beer - India Pale Ale, Session Pale Ale, Smoked Porter, Amber Ale, and Belgian Style Saison - with classic American fare. Fred, the manager of this warm and welcoming pub, describes the motto of Sabaja Beer House as “Good Beer, Good Food, and Good Service.” With the beer flowing freely, waiters attentive to your every need, and with down home American food favorites such as Buffalo wings, chili, BBQ ribs, grilled chicken, bacon cheeseburgers and French fries, Sabaja definitely lives up to their motto.

**LOCATION:** Behind Prishtina Stadium, right next door to the Red Cross. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 8am-12am. **CONTACT:** 049 582 000, also visit [sabajadrsbeerhouse.com](https://www.sabajadrsbeerhouse.com) or [birrasabaja.com](https://www.birrasabaja.com).

**■ Miqt Taverna, Lunch Dishes Like Mom Makes Them**

Advertised as a “traditional” restaurant, Miqt Taverna feels less strictly traditional, and more cozy and homey, like eating in someone’s very well decorated dining room. The restaurant is an offshoot of the ever-popular Miqt bar, and seems to rival the appeal of its boozier relative.



The food is very reasonably priced, and the menu feels familiar for Prishtina: a standard selection of salads and some bar food including chicken tenders (3 euro), potato skins (2 euro) and a particularly appetizing looking cold meze platter that I spied at the next table. Most of the main courses are meat-based standards. The highlights of the menu are definitely the daily specials. Miqt Taverna offers a daily hot main (2.5 euro), a daily soup (1.5 euro), and a daily stew (2 euro). These dishes are mostly adapted from the one of the owners' mothers home recipes, and indeed they all taste like something that you'd be served at a friend's home. It's small enough to work for a more intimate meal, but would also be a good place to begin a weekend night out with a group of friends.

**LOCATION:** Right off Mother Theresa Boulevard, next to Foto Nesha. **HOURS:** Open Monday-Saturday. **CONTACT:** 045 999 957 or visit [facebook.com/miqt.taverna](https://www.facebook.com/miqt.taverna).

#### ■ The place for your next date: De Rada

De Rada still simple, elegant and great. The food is all carefully prepared and carefully plated, the ingredients clearly fresh and of particularly high quality. The restaurant boasts a full bar, with bartenders who know how to mix a decent cocktail, as well as an extensive wine list with regional options, as well as bottles from Italy and France. The menu is simple and short – five to seven appetizers that rotate out every week or so, and the same number of entrees, which range from pastas to more carnivorous options. De Rada aims for simple dishes crafted expertly from few ingredients. Try the warm mushrooms and gorgonzola appetizer and seared vegetable and polenta to start, and the house-made vegetarian fettuccine, or the steak and vegetable penne as an entree. You won't be disappointed.

**LOCATION:** 50 UCK Street. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 8am-12am. **CONTACT:** 038 222 622.

#### ■ Hani 2 Robertve - Still Cool, and Still Delicious

During the 1990s, Hani 2 Robertve, or the Inn of Two Roberts, was the kind of place where you could rub shoulders with Prishtina's intelligentsia and take in the works of local artists. These days Hani 2 Robertve seems to be less of a restaurant and more of a tapas bar. The tapas menu has 15 items that are priced from 1 for olives to 2.50 euro for mussels. Standout items include hummus and cheese that are cooked on the grill and their house wine from Slovenia. The antipasto Prishtina Insight ordered proved to be a pleasant surprise. Slices of tomato, eggplant, zucchini and red pep-



per were grilled and then assembled into small stacks anointed with olive oil and balsamic. The flavor of each vegetable stood out, while still contributing to the toothsome chorus. The ramsteak we also ordered was certainly serviceable cooked as per our request, but it was nevertheless a bit dry and tough, which was not worth the 7.50 euro. Above all, Hani 2 Robertve left us with a good feeling even if the food wasn't pitch-perfect. It feels like it belongs here, and it's a place that Prishtina Insight will surely return to.

**LOCATION:** Zahir Pajaziti Square. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 9am-11:45.

**CONTACT:** 044 112 609 or visit [facebook.com/hanii2robertve](https://www.facebook.com/hanii2robertve).

## FINE DINING



#### ■ Purobar: Fancy Food for Non-Fancy People

Sometimes it feels nearly impossible to get an elegant meal without feeling embarrassed in Prishtina. There are the bow-tied waiters, white table clothes, and wine glasses large enough to accommodate entire bottles. Now, if only the food could be prepared with such effort. But Purobar, another fancy-food haven, is an offshoot brasserie that feels down to earth while serving delicious, classy fare. It has a bit of exposed brick, dim lighting and spare but elegant modern decor. Having a meal there feels normal, and that's a rare thing among the nicer restaurants here. The menu is a happy medium between upmarket and value, offering everything from a 3 euro burger to a 10 euro steak, with plenty in between. The beef tenderloin with ratatouille (9.50 euro) was nearly tender enough to be cut with a fork. The meat was seasoned just enough to bring the flavors to life. The ratatouille added a bit of acidity and smokiness, which brought it all together. Luckily, we still had room for the warm apple strudel, aptly paired with cinnamon ice cream. While some people undoubtedly love the fancy restaurant experience, those who want elegant food without too much ceremony or annoyance will not be disappointed at Purobar.

**LOCATION:** 3/1 Fehmi Agani. **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 11am-11pm.

**CONTACT:** 049 875 875 or visit [facebook.com/purobar](https://www.facebook.com/purobar).

#### ■ Central Room, a Place for Everybody

Central Room is a chic place to have dinner. It's a little brown house covered in bright white lights. Inside there are dark wooden tables, modern furniture, and vibrant artwork. The sophisticated menu had a vast amount of flavorful

options. From creative salads to several steaks, the menu has a little something for everyone. The restaurant seems to draw in many tourists due to its ideal location and appearance. While eating dinner, I heard different languages all around me and our waiter spoke English fluently. Central Room offers a refreshing take on European cuisine especially here in Kosovo. Portions are a good size. It's one of the better fine dining options here in Prishtina. Desserts are baked in the restaurant and the tiramisu is absolutely decadent.

**LOCATION:** 63 Garibaldi Street, Pejton neighborhood. **HOURS:** Monday-Friday, 7am-12am. Saturday-Sunday, 8am-12:00am. **CONTACT:** 044 810 000.

#### ■ Illiria Terrace: Fine dining on the boulevard

Mother Teresa Boulevard isn't known for its compelling eating and drinking options. But as I sat table side in the shadow of the Swiss Diamond hotel, I was fixated on the Negroni cocktail that was among the best I've had in this city. This being the Illiria Terrace, the luxury hotel's most downmarket eating and drinking venue, the cocktail did come with a price: 6 euro and change. The food options also caught my attention, especially the Swiss Diamond Sandwich, and its promise of veal and peanut butter. But for all its lack of affordability – this sandwich coming in at a whopping 4 euro – the hotel's kitchen knows how to prepare good food. With two sandwiches and two Coke Zeros (marked up to 1.50 euro apiece), we escaped the Illiria Terrace for 10.50 euro, which is a lot to spend in Kosovo on lunch. Illiria Terrace, like the hotel's main restaurant, Restaurant Illiria, and the hotel as whole, is selling an escape. The escape is one of luxury and proper execution that is lacking across the service industry in Kosovo. All of this comes at a price – and that's not for everyone.

**LOCATION:** Mother Theresa Boulevard (at the Swiss Diamond Hotel). **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 8am-12am. **Contact:** 038 220 000.



## NIGHT LIFE AND HANGOUT SPOTS

#### ■ Miqt: The place for your next weekend bender

MIQT is Albanian for "friends," an appropriate name for this tiny bar on Prishtina's "Kafet e Rakise" street. An unofficial center of the Strong Party, Miqt has a cozy and fun atmosphere, good for a drink after work and ideal for a drinking marathon.

**LOCATION:** 2 Korrik Street, off Mother Teresa Boulevard. **HOURS:** Open daily.

**CONTACT:** 049 222 696 or visit [facebook.com/miqt.net](https://www.facebook.com/miqt.net)

#### ■ Meet up here: **Kafja e Vogel**

Kafja e Vogel has a friendly atmosphere and an incredibly artistic spirit. It was the first bar that gave a name to the whole neighborhood. The bar has a unique style. There are handmade lamps on the wall, colored stone decorating the ground and quirky pictures painted by children that cover the walls. It's a great place to spend time with some friends. Kafja e Vogel is also an ideal place to get lost in a novel. Winter months are magical and inviting, especially when you're sipping coffee near the warm fireplace.

**LOCATION:** Fehmi Agani street, in front of Croatian Embassy. **HOURS:** Open daily, 8am-12am. **CONTACT:** 045 670 008/044 000 000 or visit [kafjaevogel.com](https://www.facebook.com/kafjaevogel.com).

#### ■ The vivid colors of Mhz

Within the wide spectrum of colors, you will find yourself amazed by the music, company of good people and constantly surprised by the interior design. In 2000, the first Mhz opened and it was the most popular club at the time. With a new location, the owner is living up to its legacy. The club has two separate floors that each have different music, themes and designs. Mhz Bar Klub is definitely a place to discover, especially during winter time. Vivid colors, selected soul music and welcoming people will cheer you up on those grey and cold winter days.

**LOCATION:** Luan Haradinaj Street at Kino ABC-1. **HOURS:** Wednesday-Saturday, 11pm-4am. **CONTACT:** 049 660 066 or visit [sprayclub.com](https://www.facebook.com/sprayclub.com).

#### ■ Last stop of the night: **Te Xhoni**

Te Xhoni is one of those Prishtina institutions that people tend to forget about. The small, cozy bar is something right out of the 60s, with leather lining the walls, and an impressive collection of vinyls kept behind the bar. The bartenders rotate through their music options every night, but you won't be disappointed by their selection of rock 'n' roll, jazz, soul, and other classic favorites. In my experience, Xhoni's is not the best way to start a night, but heading there in the wee hours for one (or two, or three) is one of the better ways to end a long night out. The cozy bar is definitely more of a wintery spot, and it gets quite crowded, so expect to be overheated, and don't expect to find a seat. Xhoni's serves the standard selection of Peja and a few other beers, some wine, and some liquor.

**LOCATION:** Rexhep Mala street, unmarked door next to Allegro Restaurant. **HOURS:** 8pm-3am, closed Sundays. **CONTACT:** 044 750 720.

#### ■ **Sweaty Dancing and a Disco Ball: 13 Rooftop**

13 Rooftop is located on the 13th floor of the notorious and formerly glorious Grand Hotel — a particularly unusual but exciting setting. The wraparound windows offering impressive views of all sides of Prishtina are more than enough of a draw to take you to the club at least once. The ambience will either convince you to make numerous return trips, or have you running in the opposite direction once you've snapped a few pictures. This is a club that offers Grey Goose bottle service and features neon flashing lights in every possible color. The DJ will thump hits until the break of dawn, and your fellow club-goers will be dancing right along. This is the place to be if you're in the mood for sweaty dancing, thumpin' beats, a well-dressed crowd and a disco ball.

**LOCATION:** Grand Hotel, 13th floor. **Hours:** Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 9:30pm-4am. **CONTACT:** 049 698 698 or visit [facebook.com/pages/13-Rooftop](https://www.facebook.com/pages/13-Rooftop).

#### ■ **Take Shelter under the White Tree**

The White Tree cafe has been styled to look like a beach bar, with dominant white wood paneling, floors lined with pebbles, a hammock and a pair of wooden beach chairs, and cozy wraparound couches on the two adjacent sides of the bar. Visitors can choose between sitting in the cafe area when you enter, or on the veranda of the White Tree hostel on the right and its overlooking balcony. The typical cafe menu is served once the doors open at 8am, and it offers a relaxed alternative for Pejton's lunch break target group. Alcoholic drinks are served in the afternoon, but stop at 11pm on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays when the Creme de la Creme is open. Unlike Creme, the White Tree Cafe offers local beer on tap. Hostel residents can mingle with the visitors of the cafe, since both share the same yard, and the reception is to the right of the bar.

**LOCATION:** 15 Mujo Ulqinaku Street, Number 15, behind Creme de la Creme. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 8am-11pm. **CONTACT:** 049 166 777 or visit [whitetreehostel.com](https://www.facebook.com/whitetreehostel.com).

## FANCY COFFEE

#### ■ **High Quality Caffeine Fix at Illy**

Illy offers quality coffee in an elegant atmosphere. With modern decor and window paneled walls, the cafe feels as though you've left Prishtina for a few hours. Illy offers a wide variety of delicious desserts that are not common in Kosovo. Some desserts include the apple crumb cake, walnut filled brownies, and an exquisite tiramisu layered over Plazma cookies. They also have lunch and dinner options. While Illy's coffee options and

desserts are pricier than the average cafes, for example a cafe latte is 2.30 euro, more than double the price it is at most cafes, a trip to Illy is well worth it.

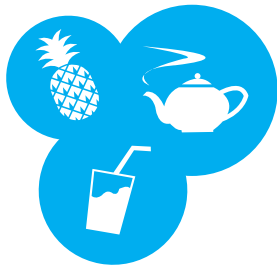
**LOCATION:** Next to Prince Cafe, Near RTV and Sheshi 21. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 7am-12am. **CONTACT:** 045 660 925 or visit [facebook.com/illy.prishtina](https://www.facebook.com/illy.prishtina).

#### ■ **Prishtina's Coffee Chain: Coffee-shop Company**

There's no shortage of coffee in Prishtina. For better or worse, international coffee chains like Starbucks and Costa have yet to land in the macchiato country, with one notable exception. Vienna-based Coffeeshop Company has three outposts in Prishtina and they serve some of the best coffee in town. With two located at the Albi Mall and another located at the smaller Albi Center, offer a wide assortment of hot and cold alternatives to the Prishtina macchiato. A big selling point is the coffee itself. Coffeeshop Company's beans are 100 percent Arabica, which tends to be more expressive and less bitter than the beans most cafes here use, which generally include a significant amount of the cheaper Robusta beans.

**LOCATION:** Albi Mall, ground floor and fourth floor. (Second location at the Albi Center in the industrial zone, near Fushe Kosove). **CONTACT:** Visit [coffeeshopcompany.com](https://www.facebook.com/coffeeshopcompany.com).





## GET HEALTHY

### ■ Babaghanoush

Meat may be king in Kosovo, but it's nowhere to be found at Prishtina's only vegetarian restaurant, Babaghanoush. Falafel, salads and meze are fresh and delicious. Tucked away near the Grand Hotel, it also offers a tranquil hideaway from the loud city center. Another plus: the ample selection of Scotch and Irish whisky.

**LOCATION:** Follow the small road to the left of Metro Cafe (across from the Grand Hotel) and take your first right.

**HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 4pm-late.

**CONTACT:** 049 886 214

### ■ Connect, Relax and Work Out at Ne Yoga

One of Prishtina's largest yoga studios, Ne Yoga offers a much needed oasis of calm and concentration in the capital's noise and crowds. Classes are only offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as Sun Salutation yoga sessions at Germia Park. Real yoga practitioners will appreciate the studio's emphasis on timeliness and quiet during classes, and special monthly workshops provide a great opportunity to get your friends involved.

**LOCATION:** Near Prince Caffè House, call for exact location. **HOURS:** Monday/Wednesday, 7-8pm, Tuesday/Thursday, 6-7pm.

**CONTACT:** 049 293 193 or visit [nyoga.net](http://nyoga.net).

### ■ Fresh Greens at the New Green Market (Tregu i Ri i Gjelbert)

The closest thing Prishtina has to a perfect supermarket, Tregu i Ri i Gjelbert has just about everything going for it. The biggest draw is the large selection of quality produce, which is consistently the freshest that Prishtina Insight has seen at any market in town. In addition to typical fruits and vegetables, the market has more exotic items like avocados, mangoes and coconuts, as well as a comprehensive selection of fresh herbs. Tregu i Ri i Gjelbert is also a full service supermarket, with a full selection of typical groceries and a butcher.

**LOCATION:** Trade Center (Qendra Tregtare), Sunny Hill. **HOURS:** Monday-Sunday, 7am-11pm. **CONTACT:** 049 309 030 or visit [facebook.com/treguiri](http://facebook.com/treguiri).

### ■ Diambe: Rotating hard to find goods

Very obviously inspired - both visually and in concept - by the international supermarket chain Aldi, Diambe's no-frills discount stores stock a small selection of groceries and small household items. The stock tends to rotate, but that's part of the fun. Prishtina Insight recently bought a 5-kilogram bag of sea salt for 75 cents. Until recently, it was also possible to buy bags of German oats for under 1 euro.



**LOCATIONS:** Several locations in Prishtina, including Rr. Ahmet Krasniqi, Lam 1, near the new Municipality building, Dragodan. Go their website for more locations.

**CONTACT:** Visit [facebook.com/diambemarkets](http://facebook.com/diambemarkets) or [diambe.com](http://diambe.com). [www.diambe.com](http://www.diambe.com).

### ■ Pronto: Stock your kitchen restaurant-style

If you have been looking for jalapenos, pine nuts, a superb selection of Italian wines, limoncello, curry, peppercorns, bay leaves, oregano, tortellini and other pastas, prosciutto, mozzarella, pesto, Worcester sauce, balsamic vinegar, and all sorts of other food products, then Pronto, a bulk food store that supplies local restaurants, is the place for you. Even though the store will win few design awards, it is loaded with plenty of imported Italian and German products. The main drawback is that these food products are only sold in bulk, so either you better be ready to eat, or you should arrange to buy as a group and divide your purchases.

**LOCATION:** Behind the Albi Mall in Veternik. **Contact:** 044 137 768/038 137 768, or write to [pronto\\_ks@hotmail.de](mailto:pronto_ks@hotmail.de).

## DESSERT



### ■ The sweets shop you remember as a kid: Embeltore Rinia

Embeltore Rinia is a traditional little ice cream shop here in Prishtina. Besides the key ice cream flavor options, there are more intriguing options like pineapple. The ice cream was smooth, creamy and not too sweet. Among their sweets are classic Albanian desserts like shampite, tollumba and boema. While you can get tres leches at almost any cafe or restaurant in Prishtina, Embeltore Rinia's tre leches was decadent, creamy and contained the perfect amount of caramel. They also make their own homemade lemonade and grape juice. It's in a convenient location in Dardania, surrounded by small boutiques and stores. It's a nice stop for some dessert and ice cream especially now that the weather has been warmer.

**LOCATION:** In Kurrizi, Dardania's underground thoroughfare.

### ■ Jara Cake, Calling All Sweet Tooths

It's easy to get jaded when it comes to sweets in Prishtina. Most stuff looks far better than it tastes. Unfortunately, far too many things are blindingly sweet and taste of things like industrial-grade cooking cream. But the newly opened Jara Cake is a different story. The friendly young man behind the counter steered us toward the Torta Roche. We were suspicious at first, as it consisted of a layer of

chocolate cake topped with an equally thick layer of a mysterious tan cream full of nuts. But the young man promised that he would pay for this cake if we didn't like it. We devoured every last bite. The chocolate cake was moist and just fluffy enough. And the creamy layer was something magnificent. It was basically a luxurious compound of various nut butters and chocolate. The classic tres leches we had tasted as if at least all three milks are there. We were split on the Rovani - something we'd never seen before. It was a sponge cake soaked in syrup. And we couldn't agree on whether it was too sweet. Definitely worth trying.

**LOCATION:** Agim Ramadani 18-3 (basement level, beneath Fisi Gold). **HOURS:** Monday-Saturday, 8am-8pm. **CONTACT:** 049 333 11/044 410 840 or visit [facebook.com/jaracake](http://facebook.com/jaracake).





# FYI

## 24 AND THERE'S SO MUCH MORE

One year ago we launched our guide to Prishtina, PI Guide, as part of the redesign of the newspaper. With 24 editions behind us, we're looking forward to uncovering the best spots in Prishtina in the next 24. Thanks for your support!

### WHERE TO PICK UP PRISHTINA INSIGHT

**06 Hotel Prishtina**  
 Hotel Prishtina's 43 charming guest rooms and suites are reminiscent of a small hotel in the European tradition. The hotel offers free, fast wifi internet, complimentary breakfast, conference room, swimming pool, sauna and laundry service. Hotel Prishtina, St. Vaso Pasha nr. 20, +381 38 / 22 32 84.

**07 Pizza Napoli**  
 A taste of Napoli in Prishtina. After ten years of making pizza in Napoli, and with only love to blame, Fatmir, the head chef, returned to Prishtina. His pizzas, made in a woodburn stove, are definitely genuine-napolitanas. Fatmir also has several delicious pastas on offer, a true joy for the taste buds. Pizzeria Napoli off Luan Haradinaj, opposite Newborn. 044/194-710. 049/194-710

**04 Hotel Gračanica**  
 A place to relax in the calm and clean air of the countryside, just 15 minute sfrom Prishtina city center, 500 m from the center of Gračanica and its UNESCO World Heritage monastery and a short walk to the archeological site of Ulpiana. The boutique hotel combines contemporary architecture with traditional elements to create a unique atmosphere that will make you feel at home. +381 (0)38 729 888 (landline) +386 (0)49 764 000 info@hotelgracanica.com www.hotelgracanica.com www.facebook.com/HotelGra-canica



**01 Pallet Lounge**  
 Pallet lounge is a newly opened, exquisite cafe restaurant that offers a variety of multicultural dishes and drinks. It is located right across the AUK University in the outskirts of the city, surrounded by nature. Gërmia Road (across AUK) +386 (0)49 880-777 palletlounge@gmail.com facebook.com/Pallet

**02 Lounge Papillon Bistro Bar**  
 Papillon offers more than 60 types of wines from France, Italy, Spain, and Kosovo with great prices and delicious dishes. You can also try different types of local or international beers. Mother Teresa Str. Nr. 51 A info@caffepapillon.com 044 103 310

**03 Hotel AFA**  
 Located in a quiet neighbourhood just outside the city centre, Hotel Afa can guarantee guests a peaceful night while being within walking distance of all the action. Rooms start at 45 euro for a single, and luxury rooms and apartments are available. The hotel's rooms are well appointed and comfortable. 15, Rr Ali Kelmendi, Sunny Hill, Prishtina +381 38/225 226 www.hotelafa.com



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# culture

## DokuFest takes stand as govt threatens cinema

**T**he late artist Andy Warhol wrote in his 1975 book, “The Philosophy of Andy Warhol”: “They always say time changes things. But you actually have to change them yourself.”

The International Documentary and Short Film Festival - DokuFest has grown into one of the brightest beacons for international filmmakers the world over. This year’s edition had a very specific theme, expressed with the taglines: “Change, Don’t Hide.” And, “Change it yourself.” Warhol would have been extraordinarily pleased.

Change sometimes happens quite quickly. There was a rapid and immediate call and response that directly illustrated the growing influence of DokuFest. At the opening ceremonies for the festival’s 13th edition on Aug. 16, Artistic Director Veton Nurkollari explained to the audience that there were plans afoot for the Kino Bahce, where they were gathered, to be privatized.

“I’d like to encourage you to join us on our journey of change, a journey we started so passionately 12 years ago in the garden of a beautiful open-air cinema, that same cinema that is now being threatened with demolition,” Nurkollari said. “We simply cannot and will not accept losing a place responsible for the birth of DokuFest.” The opening film this year was called “Everyday Rebellion.”

In Kosovo, as has been seen many times before, privatization has come to mean the destruction of a precious resource in exchange for an unnecessary eyesore, rarely benefitting the community it is supposed to serve. Would the Kino that sits in the city center be turned into another parking lot, another shopping mall? No one knew.

What was acknowledged, however, was that the organisers of DokuFest hoped that they could maintain enough



Change was in the air during the 13th edition of DokuFest.

pressure on the government to keep it as a cherished place of national interest for its historic and cultural value.

Just nine days later at the closing ceremonies last Sunday, there was a response. Oddly, it came from the Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama, instead of that of Kosovo’s own PM, Hashim Thaci. Rama told the packed crowd that Kino Bahce would, indeed, be safe from privatization and would be protected as a cultural heritage site, placed back in the safekeeping of the community that has single-handedly kept it going with no support whatsoever, maintaining a safe haven for film screenings, live music shows, and cultural events for the families of Prizren. Suffice to say, the applause and cheers that greeted this announcement were loud and prolonged.

And what does all this have to do with film? What does it have to do with the festival’s continuing push to bring the best



PAMELA COHN

of international nonfiction cinema and short film work to Kosovo? It has very much to do with the export and dissemination of Kosovo’s own burgeoning film landscape, a collective push to give the talented filmmakers that reside within Kosovo exposure to the rest of the world. As a film programmer there, I can say that the quality, cinematic excellence and storytelling breadth of Kosovar filmmakers improves annually and this country has much to offer through its emerging artistic talents.

As well, there is a desire on the part of the DokuFest organisation to nurture that talent - starting with programs for high schoolers and university students



PHOTOS/DOKUFEST

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that provide resources and platforms to teach, instruct and expose the young people of this young nation to work towards a career in the arts and media through practical workshops, master classes and casual social meetings with renowned international guests during the festival's run. After all, it is the only time the rest of the world comes to Kosovo's door.

Pamela Cohn is an American filmmaker, media producer, curator and freelance arts journalist based in Germany and Kosovo. She is an associate programmer for DokuFest.





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# Opinion

Send us your thoughts to [info@prishtinainsight.com](mailto:info@prishtinainsight.com).

## Kosovo is sleepwalking into the Islamists's arms

Recent horrific images of a Kosovo Albanian with bloody hands, holding a knife and apparently beheading a blindfolded man somewhere in Syria or Iraq spread like wildfire over the internet and shook Albanians to the core. The monstrosity and savagery of this act is so disturbing that even writing about it is stomach-turning. While it has been known for a while that a group of young men from Kosovo travelled to Syria and Iraq to participate in jihadist fighting, the gruesome images brought home a nightmarish reality: For the first time, the newest country of Europe was staring at its own creation, little creations that had mutated into monsters - who had turned their world upside down and violated the very meaning of being Albanian. Sons of Kosovo were now taking lives of others in the most barbaric form in the name of some religion and god they discovered during the mutation period of the last 15 years.

What happened? How could a group of innocent boys who grew up like majority of Kosovar boys - watching football, flirting, loving cars, and oblivious to the existence of violent jihad during their boyhood - turn into vicious killers on behalf of one of the most savage terrorist groups that the world has ever seen? Where were their families? Where was the nation that prides and defines itself by its youth? Why did it allow its sons to turn into killers?

It wasn't always so. A mere two decades ago, in the mid-1990s, life was hard, enduring Serbia's repressive regime, but the face of the youth was different. Instead of heading east to become jihadists, they headed west, looking for jobs to help families survive. For the rest of us, brought up in Kosovo, life was an improvised act that made up for the lack of a normal childhood that our peers enjoyed in the West. While conflict raged next door in Bosnia and jihadists of all shapes travelled to fight there in the name of Allah, Kosovo's youth went to underground schools and watched pirated movies at home.

When I was growing up just a few kilometers outside Prishtina, my friends and I never went to a mosque or church to make a religious point. Houses of worship were places where ceremonies took place and where old men went to pray in silence with soft-voiced aged imams who preached a simple creed of humility, respect for the elderly, family and

neighbors. Occasionally, these imams engaged in voodoo-like healing practices with patients afflicted with mental issues. But these were relatively harmless belief systems with roots in witchcraft that had nothing to do with turning faith into a hateful and murderous ideology.

By contrast, over the last decade, Kosovo's religious landscape has been totally transformed with mosques popping up with dizzying speed, sometimes two per village and in Wahhabi-style. Young bearded, strange-looking men speak in foreign tongues in a fire-brand type of preaching that is both un-Albanian and offensive. What is this alien institution, which has crept into our society pushing out all the fundamental values and the religious tolerance that Albanians have held dear for so long? Where did the demand for Saudi-style mosques come from? Why did this nation allow its cultural heritage, like the Orthodox Church in my neighborhood, to be destroyed while allowing a mosque with its alien architecture to rise up just a mile down the road on the banks of the river?

These are questions that every Kosovo Albanian parent, wife, husband, brother, sister, cousin and friend, should ask. These are existential questions that strike to the core of what this nation is. It's an opportune moment, not only for the security apparatus to wake up, but for all Kosovars to stop what they are doing and take a hard look at themselves, and examine their families, their sons and daughters. What have they become? Why are 16-year-olds going to Wahhabi-style mosques all over Kosovo? Why are teenagers at the mosque in the first place? That may be an institution where an Iraqi, Afghani, or Syrian teenager spends his time, but it is not a natural place for boys in Kosovo to learn about life's lessons. It has never been and it should never be a place where sons of Kosovo get an education about anything, least of all in religion.

This is not an Islamophobic perspective, but it is a perspective that vehemently rejects the Islamification of Kosovo's youth. For those who still have the illusion that somehow the nation must strike a tenuous balance between freedom of speech and security, they are living in ultimate denial - and the price for this misapplied principle will be enormous to the country.

A basic tenet of modern society, free



MIKRA  
KRASNIQI

speech is the most sacred value of democracy and it should be protected. But Kosovo, especially Muslim Kosovo, should not confuse free speech with the insidious language of preaching an extreme form of Islam in mosques. It's almost laughable to link the problem of the radicalization of youth with free speech. It's a shameful failure of Kosovo's institutions to do their work and stop infiltration of extremists in the country. Millions of dollars have been funneled through thinly disguised Islamist NGOs and charities to build mosques and influence large swaths of the younger generation. Orphanages have been built where children as young as five are inundated with religious teachings. CDs with sermons from religious figures from Saudi Arabia and elsewhere have been distributed in high schools. Mosques overflow with youthful prayers, occupying the sidewalks while the nation sits by and watches them, while some of them take things to the limit and quietly slip through the borders to join brutal organizations that kill in the name of Allah.

It is misguided to think that those young jihadists are just a few outliers and outright criminals. It's true that a majority of Kosovo's young are outraged by these acts of barbarism and abhor those who took that route. But this argument misses the point, for while these may be extreme cases, the economic and social environment in Kosovo these days is ripe for extremism to spread its toxic teachings and indoctrinate ever larger numbers of young people.

That is why pooh-poohing these incidents is dangerous and will only reinforce the idea that both Kosovo's institutions and people in general are complicit in the radicalization of the youth. Kosovars should rise up now and stop the march of this malignant and dangerous trend.

Mikra Krasniqi is a senior economist with the Government of Maryland's Department of Economic and Business Development in Baltimore. Born in Kosovo, he holds graduate degrees from George Mason University and Harvard University.

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