

Monthly Newsletter

RODINA

The Bulgarian Cultural and
Social Association



Letters, Sound, and Light in May

April gifted us a true dose of inspiration and emotion! We kicked off the month with a bang – an unforgettable night of Bulgarian music. Milena Slavova, together with our local bands ABD and Plan BG, rocked the stage at Five Dock RSL and reminded us why music connects hearts, even far from home.

Easter brought us together again – this time under the sunshine of St Leonards Park. The picnic was a celebration of shared moments: egg hunts, colourful smiles, the aroma of sweet Easter bread, and heartfelt support for our dancers from Bulgarian Rhythms, whose sausage sizzle was a big success and brought smiles to everyone's faces.

Now, we look ahead to the month of May – a month filled with Bulgarian symbolism and pride.

On May 1, we honor Labour Day – a day for those who build our present with effort and heart.

Just a few days later, on May 6, we celebrate St. George's Day – a day of bravery, deeply rooted in tradition and widely cherished.

And on May 24, we will bow our heads in gratitude for the legacy of Cyril and Methodius – the creators of Bulgarian script, culture, and identity.

These holidays remind us that the Bulgarian spirit lives wherever there are hearts ready to protect and pass it on.

Enjoy the read!

Rodina team x

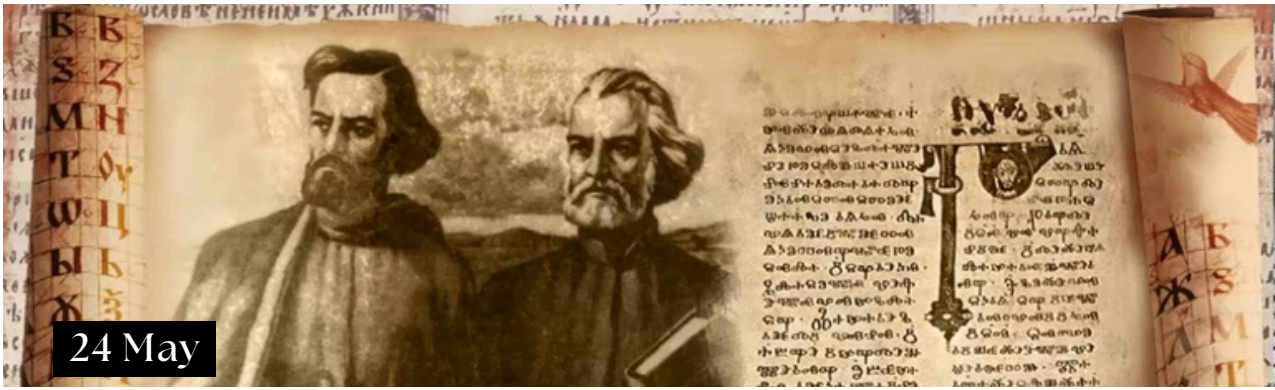
In this newsletter
you can expect:

May 24 – Day of
Bulgarian
Culture and
Education

Once upon a
time...
The story of
Georgi
Gospodinov

Things to Do
in & around
Sydney

Festivals in
Bulgaria in April



Go Forward, Revived People...

Every year on May 24, Bulgaria dresses in festive colors to honor the Day of Bulgarian Education and Culture and the Slavonic Script.

The first records of celebrations on this date date back to 1813, when Armenian sources mention festivities in the town of Shumen dedicated to the Thessalonian brothers Cyril and Methodius. However, the true revival of the holiday began in 1851, thanks to Nayden Gerov, who organized the first official celebration in Plovdiv. After the Liberation, May 24 became a symbol of national unity, especially in the territories that remained under Ottoman rule, where propaganda aimed to assimilate the local population began to intensify.

In the spirit of the holiday, here are a few titles that tell the story of the power of the written word and the history of the Bulgarian script:

- The War of the Letters by Lyudmila Filipova
- The Miracle Worker of Thessaloniki by Fani Mutafova
- The Riddle of St. Cyril and St. Methodius by Kina Kadeva

In recent years, Bulgarian literature has been experiencing a true renaissance. The 2024 Forbes annual ranking marks a significant presence of writers among Bulgarian celebrities, with more than 10 authors and writing personalities making it into the Top 70. This is a clear sign of the growing interest in Bulgarian literature and culture.

Among the recommended titles by contemporary Bulgarian authors are:

- The Thread by Viktoria Beshlijska
- The Gardener and Death by Georgi Gospodinov
- The Wound by Zachary Karabashliev
- The Sugar Bowl Fairy by Katya Antonova
- Lili by Georgi Toshev

On May 24, we do not simply celebrate the letters—we also pay tribute to those who continue to inspire and enrich Bulgarian culture through their words. Let this day be a reason to immerse ourselves in the world of books and discover new horizons through the power of the written word.

Bulgarian Language School "Dr Petar Beron"



This year again, the Bulgarian school will organize a celebration with the participation of the children to honour the contribution of the Holy Brothers Cyril and Methodius. Follow our platforms for updates.

Bulgarian Rhythms



Join us on May 3rd to enjoy the performance by Bulgarian Rhythms at the event organized by Nan Tien Temple at Darling Harbour!

"Once upon a time..." - legends in the making

How Words Are Born – The Story of Georgi Gospodinov

Once upon a time, in the small Bulgarian town of Yambol, there lived a boy named Georgi who loved listening to the stories of the elderly and imagining the worlds hidden behind words. He grew up during socialism, in a time of silence and unspoken truths, where imagination was the safest refuge. He began writing as a student – quietly, without fanfare. His first poems were scribbled on the back of bus tickets – short, yet full of the sense of a world waiting to be told.

After graduating in Bulgarian Philology from Sofia University, Georgi began publishing poetry in the 1990s. In 1997, his first novel *Natural Novel* was released and quickly drew attention for its unconventional style – a collage of thoughts, feelings, and memories, narrated as if from the inner voice of every person. With its unorthodox structure and ironic tone, it captured the interest of both readers and critics in Bulgaria and abroad. This novel marked the beginning of his international career.



Then came *The Physics of Sorrow* – a book that travelled the world. It offered labyrinths of time, childhood, myths, and silences. The novel wove together personal and mythological stories, exploring themes like memory and sorrow. It was translated into dozens of languages and earned him international acclaim with awards such as the Jan Michalski Prize and the Angelus Award.

But even as he travelled the world, Georgi never forgot Bulgaria. He began collecting stories – small, personal, disappearing. Stories of streets, people, and sensations from the past. He wrote essays, plays, led literary projects, and brought together writers and readers in dialogue. He became part of a great literary family but always remained that boy from Yambol who simply wanted to tell something true.



Inspired by a desire to preserve memory, he wrote *Time Shelter* – a novel about the illness of forgetting, but also about memory as salvation. In 2023, the book earned him the greatest honour yet – the International Booker Prize – making Georgi Gospodinov the first Bulgarian author to receive such recognition. It not only celebrated Bulgarian literature but placed his name alongside the world's greatest writers.

Georgi continues to create – quietly, with a smile, with reverence for words. In 2024, he published *The Gardener and Death*, a book inspired by the personal loss of his father.

His upcoming projects are exciting, but he's in no rush. He knows that every story has its time. That a good book comes when it's most needed. And that the world always needs a little more empathy and a little more magic.

And like in every real fairy tale – the hero's greatest weapon isn't a sword, but words. Because when arranged with love, they can heal.

Even in a world full of noise and haste, there is still space for quiet storytellers. With words full of sorrow and hope, Georgi Gospodinov reminds us that stories have the power to heal, to unite, and to make us feel a little less alone.

True heroes don't shout – they tell stories. And if they're patient enough, the world will listen.

Things to do this month

In and around Sydney

- **The Royal Easter Show**

When: 11 – 22 Apr

Where: Sydney Olympic Park

Cost: starts from \$41

- **Sydney Family Show**

When: 12-27 Apr

Where: Moore Park

Cost: child \$15, adult \$30, family \$75



- **Anzac Day Dawn Service**

When: 25 Apr

Where: Martin Place

Cost: free

- **Sunset Series jazz & funk**

When: 13 Apr,
2pm - 6pm

Where: St Leonards Park

Cost: free

- **Q Station Easter Egg Hunt**

When: Q Station Sydney

Where: 19 Apr

Cost: child \$15, adult \$25

- **Sydney Comedy Festival**

When: 21 Apr- 18 May

Where: Enmore Theatre,
Riverside Theatre,
Concourse Theatre,
Joan Sullivan Performing
Arts Centre
Bondi Pavilion

- **Family Sunday: Music in Art**

When: 6 Apr

10am-12:30 pm

Where: State Library NSW,
Paintings Gallery

Where: child \$10,
free for
accompanying adult

- **Camden City Show**

When: 4-5 Apr

Where: Camden
Showground

Cost: \$8-32

- **Wansolwana Film Series**

When: 6-7 Apr

10:30am - 4:15pm

Where: Australian Museum
Theatre, Upper Ground

Cost: free
(registration is required)



- **Alice in Wonderland in the Garden**

When: 12-27 Apr

Where: Pioneer Garden,
Royal Botanical Garden

Cost: starts from \$25

- **Great Laughs at the Park Sydney Comedy Festival**

When: 26 Apr

Where: Tumbalong Park

Cost: free

Festivals in Bulgaria in April



- II Ancient Festival "Diocletianopolis – Crossroads of Time" VIA GASTRONOMICA ROMANA
When: 04 Apr
Where: Hisariya City

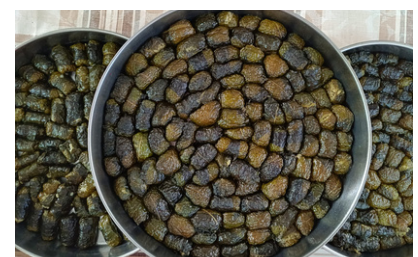
- Banitsa Festival
When: 19 Apr
Where: Kotevovtsi Village

- Festival of Gabrene-style sarma and butima
When: 26 Apr
Where: Gabrene Village

- Festival of the Yellow Dock
When: 26 Apr
Where: Bryagovitsa Village

- II Spring Culinary Festival of Strandzha dyado and Strandzha cabbage pie
When: 26 Apr
Where: Kosti Village

- Celebration of the cabbage pie and the sweet temptations
When: 27 Apr
Where: Zhabokryt Village



Things to do this month ...

In and around Sydney

- **Sydney Comedy Festival**
When: 22 Apr - 10 May
Where: Riverside Theatre
Cost: \$25 - 65
- **Palestinian Film Festival**
When: 01 - 04 May
Where: Dendy Newtown
- **Ironman Australia**
When: 04 May
Where: Port Macquarie
- **South African Film Fest**
When: 04 - 31 май
Where: selected cinemas
Cost: \$20-45
- **The other art fair**
When: 08 - 11 May
Where: White Bay Cruise Terminal, Rozelle
- **Meatstock BBQ & music**
When: 09 - 11 May
Where: Sydney Showground
Cost: from \$55
- **Australian Fashion Week**
When: 12 - 16 May
Where: Carriageworks
Cost: free
- **Pymont food and wine festival**
When: 17 - 18 May
Where: Pirrama Park Pymont
Cost: free
- **The ultimate autumn market**
When: 18 May
Where: Wentworth Point
- **Sydney Writers Festival**
When: 19 - 25 May
Where: Sydney Town Hall, Sydney Opera House, Carriageworks и други
Cost: from free - up to \$45



- **Vivid Sydney**
When: 23 May - 14 June
Where: Sydney Opera, The Rocks, Circular Quay, Darling Harbour, Surry Hills
Cost: free
- **Luna park - Stranger Things Take Over**
When: 23 May
Where: Crystal Palace, Luna Park Sydney
Cost: starts from \$53
- **Cronulla Jazz & Blues Fest**
When: 28 May - 01 June
Where: Cronulla
Cost: free



Фестивали в България през май



- I National Festival of Mămăligă and Traditional Dishes of Different Ethnicities
When: 01 May
Where: village of Zdravets, Targovishte
 - XV Cultural and Folklore Festival "St. George's Day"
When: 02 - 04 May
Where: village of Antimovo
 - Festival of the Roast Lamb on a Spit (Cheverme)
When: 03 - 04 May
Where: Zlatograd
 - Festival of Samardala (Wild Garlic)
When: 03 May
Where: Nova Zagora
 - Festival of the Ragged Banitsa
When: 10 May
Where: village of Varbitsa
 - "Tasty Dishes" 2025
When: 17 May
Where: Pleven
 - Festival of Crafts and Arts
When: 23 - 25 May
Where: Dobritch
 - III FARMFEST "The Beauty of the Rhodopes"
When: 24 - 25 May
Where: Momchilgrad
 - XIII National Shepherds' Fair
When: 3 May - 01 June
Where: Lyaskovets
 - Culinary Festival "Aroma from the Past, Taste from the Future"
When: 31 May
Where: Osenets
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September will be May ...

May here doesn't arrive with blooming cherry trees, but with a carpet of rust-coloured leaves, the scent of apple pie fresh out of the oven, and the gentle tapping of rain on the windowpane. This is our autumn May – warm in the heart, even if crisp in the air. A time for shared moments, for cosiness, and for inspiration.

While in Bulgaria May is the month of rebirth, for us it brings a sense of contemplation – a soft shawl wrapped around our shoulders, the aroma of cinnamon and tea, and a heart open to all that connects us as a community. The holidays in May – Labour Day, St. George's Day, and the Day of Bulgarian Education and Culture – are more than dates on the calendar; they are golden threads woven into the fabric of our identity.

May is a time for reflection, but also for action. Even as the leaves fall, we believe our community is growing – with every new

initiative, every gathering, every new face that joins with enthusiasm and ideas. If you feel you have the time and the heart to be a more active part of this change, your place is with us.

The Bulgarian Cultural Association "Rodina" warmly invites anyone with the desire, energy, and heart to join our committee. Experience is not required – only a love for Bulgarian culture and a willingness to contribute. If this message speaks to you, reach out to us at admin@rodinasydney.org.au – and let's move forward, together.

Let this golden May remind us that every autumn carries with it a beginning – of new ideas, new friendships, new inspiration. In the quiet between the raindrops, the most meaningful stories are often born. And you – are you ready to become part of them?

Warmest regards,
The Rodina Sydney Team

Thank you for reading!

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