

Sara Katalan



This is a picture of my mother, Sara Katalan, nee Bidjarano, taken in Kazanlak in 1942. She is wearing a blue dress that she knitted herself. My mother was a housewife all her life, a fastidious person: she sewed, knitted, cooked, did the shopping. She had a great sense of humor, she was a cheery and sociable person; people loved her and visited her to drink a cup of coffee, to have a

talk, to exchange gossip. My mother was never a member or supporter of any parties. My father was a member of the Bulgarian Communist Party but he was expelled in 1963 in Kazanlak because he stood up for a friend of his, an ex-military officer named Slavov. Later my father was invited to join the Party but he refused, he was very grieved. My parents lived in Kazanlak until 1966 when they came to Sofia to live at my sister's place. My mother cooked very well, she made a special mayonnaise with chicken and fish. She also made a meal called apio with celery and lots of lemon juice; it is served cold. She cooked a lot of meals with aubergines, especially a kind of mussaka [a meal of potatoes, minced meat and yogurt]. And a special meal made from zucchini - andjenara. I loved her baked blue tomatoes minced with meat croquettes. She also cooked okra with a lot of tomato juice. I learned to cook all these meals, my sister too and now my daughters-in-law, the Bulgarian girls, are fond of them and cook them. And I don't know whether they will pass this tradition on to their children. I don't have this particular contact with my grandchildren. But I suppose that mothers will pass the things on to their children that they themselves like.