



Central to the city of Mostar is the Stari Most Bridge.

PHOTOS: MALIHA FAIROOZ

# Bengali girl in Bosnia

**MALIHA FAIROOZ**

When I was 12 years old, I was a wide-eyed girl in sixth-grade history class, learning about the First World War—how the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand by a young man by the name of Gavrillo Princip triggered a war in Europe and plunged the world into chaos. That incident took place in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. I had known only two things about Bosnia up until that point—first, that there is a kind of fried bread in Bangladesh which is referred to as Bosnian Bread and second, that there was a war of some sort in Bosnia in more recent history. Over time, I became more invested

in learning about the Balkans. I made my way through Bulgaria, Romania and Slovenia in 2016 and finally to Bosnia in 2018. I used my multiple entry Schengen visa to enter Bosnia as the country allows tourists with a proxy EU, Schengen or US visa to visit for up to 90 days.

**Sarajevo:**

On my first day, I took a stroll around the centre of the old part of town, where I was staying. It was beautiful, lively and happy. The next morning, I woke early and made my way to the walking tour, where I not only learnt about Sarajevo but about Bosnia in general. Sarajevo is truly the point where the East meets West; in fact, there is an exact point in one street at the city centre where the architecture changes from Ottoman to Austro-Hungarian. If you walk east from there, you will come across the most famous fountain in Sarajevo. Legend has it, if you drink the water from this fountain, you are bound to come back to Sarajevo. I hope this is true, because I intend to keep coming back to this wonderful city.

There is a street in old town which is renowned for its food. This street is home to Buregdžinica Bosna, which serves the best Burek in the world. Burek is a thin crispy layered pastry filled with cheese,



**Burek is a thin, crispy layered pastry.**

spinach, pumpkin or meat and is served with a heap of sour cream—and it is delicious! I was also told by several people that the street also hosts the best Cevapi, which is basically Balkan kebabs. I didn't get a chance to taste it, but trust the locals if you're a fan of meat.

Stroll up Mount Trebevi to the white and yellow fortresses to have a great view of the city. This spot is where the cable car into the mountain used to operate, until the operator of the cable car was the first casualty at the hands of the Serb forces in the Bosnian war. The siege on Sarajevo



Jajce is centred around a waterfall.



You simply can't miss Bosnian coffee.