

Felicity Mason
Bulgaria 2013

Having just returned from Bulgaria I am so thankful for the opportunity and was so fortunate to have been offered a place on this fantastic experience. The organisation of the trip was excellent from being greeted at the airport by Vellis to our departure. Vellis ensured that we were all settled and happy at each stage of the trip.

The woodcarving in Teteven was an interesting placement, helped by Rackof who was a great teacher. His enthusiasm for his craft inspired me to learn a new skill, the days were well structured which made me feel like I had progressed by the end of the week. The accommodation was lovely and Vellis kindly organised activities for us to do at the weekend. I really enjoyed the folk festival we were taken to and it gave a true insight into the Bulgarian culture.

On the Sunday when we were taken to the next place, I had a brilliant day as we were taken to the Folk museum and craft exhibition. I could have spent another day here and would have liked longer to explore. The welcome we were given by Villis and Encho was lovely, the lodge was a fantastic place to stay, the food was delicious and we were spoilt rotten by lovely Villis nothing was too much trouble. I really enjoyed the pottery however the language barrier made it hard to make the most of Encho's knowledge, albeit this did give me the opportunity to explore the medium and think in different ways.

The final destination was very different, it was nice to learn a variety of skills within the week and I really enjoyed being part of the craft fair and raising money for the local charity. Everyone was extremely welcoming and embraced us into their culture. Being able to spend a month in Bulgaria allowed me to experience a totally different way of life. This has inspired me to learn more about the traditional crafts in England as the craft in Bulgaria is so important to their way of life.

The variety within the trip was perfect and the whole program was well thought out. In addition to the crafts that I have learnt the group I travelled with made the whole trip very memorable. I would encourage many people to apply to Grampus as I have made lasting friendships with like minded people and would never have been able to have this experience without Grampus.

I am returning university enriched by the crafts I have learnt and I am eager to involve them in my work both in terms of illustration and sharing my newly found skills.

Thank you ever so much I am only sad that I cannot do any further Grampus projects.