

EMBASSY UPDATES

NEWSLETTER FOR U.S. CITIZENS IN KOSOVO



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Photo courtesy of American BBQ Kosovo

American Business- [American BBQ Kosovo](#)

Andre Nascimbeni, founder and owner of a new restaurant by Camp Bondsteel, American BBQ Kosovo, is eager to share with our community the gastronomical delight that is the encounter between meat, smoke, and savory sauce. LOTS of it.

Andre first moved to Kosovo in 2017 while posted at Camp Bondsteel, where he met his fiancée Arlinda, a Kosovar herself, and together they decided that they would begin their life here. In keeping with his desire to serve his country and fellow Americans, he decided to do something about the perceivable lack of access to tasty, authentic, American food near Bondsteel. The couple's shared culinary interests and creative ease in the kitchen sparked an idea they could not ignore acting on: In February 2020, American Barbecue Kosovo opened its doors.

ABK prides itself in providing a menu that showcases your typical finger-lickin'-good American flavor and offers a range of delivery and catering services. At the heart of the American "get-together" culture is the art of barbecue. The restaurant invites locals and Americans far from home into a space that gives them comfort and a sense of the familiar. All of their meats are hand-smoked or grilled, and sides are

prepared with an old fashioned American flare. Their meat is supplied by a butcher located in Gjilan who sources his cattle from Croatia and has learned to cut beef across the grain as is customary in the U.S., resulting in a more tender and traditional style barbecue.

While the current public health climate has placed the company's scheduled expansion on hold, it has created the opportunity to build upon the delivery and take out aspects of the business. They are open five days a week, but

The U.S. Embassy will be on maximum telework until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Should you have an emergency, please email PristinaACS@state.gov or call +381 338 59 59 30 01.



accept catering orders for any day or time, deliver anywhere from Ferizaj to Pristina, and accommodate the KFOR bases around the country. Plans are underway for the opening of a second location, and until then, make sure to stop in and try the mouthwatering fare at the newest pit master in town. They boast some of the best tasting, fattiest brisket that will grace your taste buds. No guarantee there will be leftovers, but they are certain you will be back again soon.



Consular Section Abilities

While the embassy is on maximum telework, this is what we can do:

1. Receive your phone calls and emails and respond to them.
2. Notify you of changes in status of local restrictions. To ensure you receive these notifications, register in [STEP](#).
3. Issue emergency passports.
4. Issue Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, new passports, and passport renewals. Please email us at PristinaACS@state.gov to set up an appointment. It may take us a few weeks to fit you in.
5. Loan money to return home if all other options are exhausted. These loans must be paid back.
6. Organize medical evacuation flights for United States citizens ONLY. These flights average a cost of \$250,000. You will be expected to pay the government back.
7. Provide notariats. Notariats are our lowest priority. To be put on the list for notariats, please email PristinaACS@state.gov.
8. Help you out of a dangerous situation and into a safe place.
9. Receive and forward ballots. A ballot box is placed outside the main entrance to the embassy every Wednesday between 10:00 and 14:30.



Photo courtesy of travel.state.gov

Vote!

This is an election year, and one with extra challenges. We encourage you to request your ballot from your county elections board as soon as possible or go to <https://www.fvap.gov/> and fill out a ballot to send back. We can help you with ballot return. Every Wednesday between now and November, we will put a ballot box in front of the main entrance to the embassy, 10:00-14:30. Drop it into the box, and we will do the rest. Our [video](#) shows you how. Because we rely on mail systems to get your ballot to your election board, please drop off your ballot by October 1, 2020. Your vote counts.



Section of the Quarter – Health Unit

The embassy Health Unit, while taking care of Americans under Chief of Mission authority, also does other things for the community at large. Staffed by four embassy employees, the Health Unit packs a lot of punch for a small set of people.

The Health Unit's first priority is the health of personnel and their families stationed at the Embassy. While not authorized nor equipped to treat people outside the Embassy, they do provide other services that help American citizens in Kosovo.



From left to right: Besa, Errol, Courtney, and Gjika, the Health Unit staff. Photo courtesy of the Health Unit.

Before the COVID crisis, the Health Unit regularly gave lectures at the American Corners, inspected Immigrant Visa Panel Physicians for compliance, vetted the list of medical professionals the Consular Section provides for American citizens in the country, and helped when Americans requested medical evacuations. Consular staff regularly consult with the Health Unit before providing advice and assistance to the American community. Last year, they trained over 150 local residents in CPR and supported international schools in Pristina, providing proper first aid training to school personnel.

Since the advent of COVID, the Health Unit has doubled its workload. They have helped find new ways of working in the Embassy to avoid transmission, handed out masks to Embassy personnel, and monitored the situation at local hospitals and medical facilities.

The Health Unit has been consulted by the National Institute of Public Health in Kosovo (NIPHK) regarding cautionary measures to take. The Health Unit has discussed best practices, mitigation, and treatment for COVID, keeping the NIPHK apprised of the latest CDC guidance.

The Consular Section has used the Health Unit to guide us in our COVID updates to you in MASCOT messages. Their advice has been invaluable.

In the Embassy, the Health Unit decides who must be self-isolated and for how long, while treating other ailments as they come up – COVID doesn't negate the need for vaccines, or treatment of ear infections or high blood pressure. They take care of us so we can take care of you.

Did You Know? – Agrotourism in Kosovo

Agrotourism is an amalgamation of several things: farm production, rural atmosphere, and tourism. Several businesses in Kosovo have embraced this concept and are working hard to make unique experiences for tourists from both inside and outside Kosovo. This area has a lot to offer – farm fresh food, spectacular views, and friendly, competent service.

If you want to spend a night (or several) in the countryside, many places offer rooms to rent along with food from the garden. If raki or wine is to your taste, local vineyards offer drink tastings with their rooms.



Photo courtesy of N'Katun.

Usually, food is prepared fresh on site, with a menu that changes with the seasons. Some places offer set menus, while others offer a la carte dining. One of the best things about it for now is all offer outside dining service in this time of social distancing. Try out [N'Katun](#), [Nuovo Monte](#), [Molla e Eger](#), [Etno Kuca](#), or [Vinaria Petrovic](#) to experience agritourism for yourself.



Photo courtesy of Vinaria Petrovic.



Lunch at Nuovo Monte. Photo courtesy of Andreas Welch.

Keeping Everyone Safe At The Embassy

As we open our American Citizen Services starting with passports and Consular Reports of Birth Abroad (CRBA's), we are changing our procedures to keep you and us safe in this viral time.

We are not allowing appointments to be made online at this time; if you need a passport or CRBA appointment, email PristinaACS@state.gov. We make as many appointments as we can every week, usually on Wednesdays. Because of this and the possibility of cancellations and adding other people in, we ask two things of you: patience and emailing your documents to us ahead of time. You may be called on short notice to fill a vacancy, and you will not be told the time of your appointment until a few days ahead of it.

When you get to the embassy, leave your electronics in your car – or don't bring them at all. Wear a mask. You will not be admitted without one. Remember the originals and copies of all your documents! We will have to reschedule you if you do not have them with you. Bring your payment, either in euros or dollars. While we do accept credit cards, sometimes they don't work.

You will be admitted into the embassy one family/appointment at a time. No other customers will be in the consular waiting room with you. Because of this, we cannot let you in until the previous appointment is concluded.

Once in the waiting room, you will be asked to turn in your documents, pay, and wait while we review the documents. You will then talk with a consular officer if necessary. We will inform you when you will be able to pick up your new passport or CRBA.

At this time we are unable to do notarial services. We can put you on a list for those services when we are allowed to resume them, including free to marry statements. If you wish to be placed on this list, email PristinaACS@state.gov.