

## 'Chosen by ourselves'

### Chosen item with a story

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Below are some stories with pictures which form part of my research 'Chosen by Ourselves'.

#### Berimbau from Brazil



A single-string percussion musical instrument (a musical bow ) that is played when people do Capoeira (the practice of the Afro-Brazilian martial art). When I hear the sound of a 'Berimbau' it takes me back to people playing Capoeira on beaches in Brazil.

#### Rose oil from Bulgaria



Precious yields of rose oil can be found nowhere else, but in Bulgaria. If you ask rose manufacturers which rose oil is better – there is no doubt that the rose oil, gathered from Rose valley in Kazanlak, Bulgaria is the best. The oily rose – Rosa Damascena is the source of the best Bulgarian rose oil. The extraction of rose oil is very complicated process, due to the fact that every single operation as planting, hoeing, pruning, gathering, is made

manually. Gathered flowers are immediately put into distillation, the result from which is the rose water – Aqua rosae. The next step is exuding the water from the oil – this is how the rose oil is extracted. 1 kilo of rose oil is extracted from 3000-4000 kilos of rose yields. Bulgarian rose oil is one of the most expensive and best seller essential oils in the International market. In medicines Bulgarian rose oil is used in treatment of chronic cholecystitis, biliary tract disease, and bronchial asthma.

#### Dragon flag of Qing Dynasty from China



China has been ruled by Emperors (represented by dragons) for thousands of years. Qing Dynasty was the last of imperial China. In late Qing Dynasty, there was a series of wars between China and European countries. Unsurprisingly "dragon flags of Qing Dynasty" currently displaying in Europe (including UK) were captured by European armies as proof of victory during the wars. While the Opium War itself might symbolize the failure of justice (i.e. Europeans began selling opium to Chinese), it also marks the beginning of democracy in Hong Kong.

### Matyo sewing from Hungary



The story: When I was a little girl, in summer we often sat with my cousin in our big garden and she taught me how to sew. We spent a lot of time to find the most beautiful colours for this sewing and all our pocket money to buy them. We usually bought several skeins and shared it, that was a good business.

### Food, music and art from Italy



I could start a never ending list here: my country, but in particular my city, Naples is famous for its traditions, Greek colonization, Roman empire, Spanish and French invasions, so history and ancient rests are everywhere. Religion has been very strong in the past so churches are part of the local treasure. Naples is the city of the Pizza and Spaghetti, of an imaginative and laid back population. I would certainly choose food, music and art to represent my culture.

### Lava stone from Italy



I chose Lava stone from Etna because it has a strong meaning for every Sicilian. It represents the power and the quietness of the volcano and the nature. The volcano Etna is the tallest active volcano in Europe. It is on the East coast of Sicily. In the Greek mythology the forges of Hephaestus were said to be located underneath it. Above all, it is still in activity but mercifully it isn't dangerous for local people. For example, through January and February 2012, the summit craters were the site of intense activity and the lava destroyed the main tourist hub on the volcano. Moreover, this winter Etna's ashes arrived to cover many little villages 50 km far from Etna. For Sicilian people lava

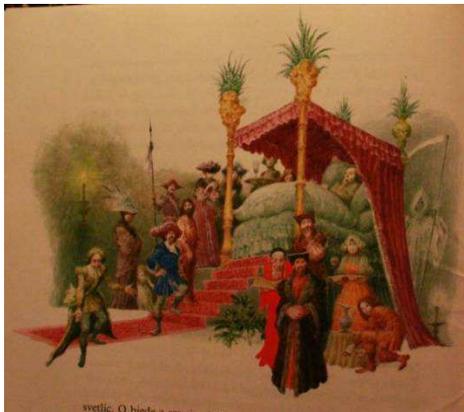
stone is the evidence of a greater connection between nature and humans. Its meaning is ambivalent: on the one hand it is the symbol of life underneath the earth but on the other hand it is a danger. Through the ages people have understood how to cooperate with the volcano, in fact they have managed to use the lava stone in many different ways, for instance, as covering for floors and also as material for jewellery and crafts. Another reason why this kind of stone is important is for its amazing resistance to the weather conditions and for its capacity to conduct the heat well.

### Kimono Wedding dress from Japan



I choose the Kimono wedding dress because I think it represents Japanese fine arts & crafts, culture and tradition, and also it are the special ceremonial costume. The brides wear white Kimono at the wedding ceremony at a shrine and wear this kind of coloured Kimono for the reception party. Most of the Kimono design pattern is telling a story itself, from what animals, plants and objects, you know what the meanings of the particular Kimono is. I didn't wear this for my wedding as I married in England. My mother gave me her engagement Kimono when I got engaged, I think she wanted me to wear it for my wedding, I now wish I had worn it.

### Book: Slovakian stories. Illustrated by Albin Brunovsky from Slovakia



I am Slovakian. I identify with the Slovak culture, admire Slovakian folklore and Slovakian art. Slovakian art is very colourful and full of happiness. Because we were long time under Hungarian domination and then Russian, I think you can see it on our art, very modest, genuine art, architecture, texts of songs, full of hope and love. Slovakia is catholic country so art is inspired by religion. You can see a lot of icons (Christian paintings), sculptures, and so on. We have a lot of beautiful religious buildings such churches, monasteries, calvarias (symbolic places where Jesus was crucified)... We have a lot of great piece of art. I have a strong feeling about middle aged Slovakian art, maybe because I am from the town with beautiful gothic basilicas surrounded by great gothic-renaissance architecture houses and town hall. My hometown is in UNESCO and it is gorgeous place to see. I was

born on the eastern part of Slovakia, not far away from polish borders and Ukraine borders. In the villages close to my town there is polish (goral) cultural influences or Greek Catholics, or Orthodox from Eastern Europe. Eastern Slovakia: full of stunning unique wooden churches, part of UNESCO or Word heritage too. During the Russian occupy, art was official: socialistic realism or illegal, inspired by western culture....many artists emigrated...Andy Warhol - not many people know that his parents immigrated to America, long time ago but they were originally from a small village in Eastern Slovakia. Medzilaborce: town, you can see his museum. Slovakia is a very small country but really rich about folklore, language-dialects. Let's say, we have 5 neighbours (Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Austria, Czech) so we can find a lot of mix of cultures, languages and so on.

### Model covered bridge,USA

I love this little wooden object(a model of the image above) because it belonged to my mother; it was always



in the house and so was part of my childhood -- I don't have very many things that remind me of that time. In addition, my roots are in New England (the northeast corner of the US); both my mother's and father's families were from there, and settled there early (by American standards) -- in the 17th century. Covered bridges on the whole are not found outside New England.

## The big 5 from Zimbabwe



African animals like the big 5 - the lion, African Elephant, buffalo, leopard and rhino represent Africa very well. African sunsets are also a special part of Africa and pictures of the beautiful areas, Africa have beautiful landscapes. For my religion I'd have pictures/icons of bible stories and of saints and crosses. There would be lots of pictures of Mary and baby Jesus.