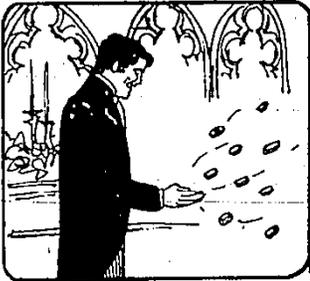


government, there is no way of being married in a church. If we had been married there, I can't say whether it would have been allowed.

"A church wedding was always my dream."

"If they go to church, they have beautiful dresses... there are no seats... everyone stands... the bride and groom walk together down the aisle... they hold candles and make a circle... at the end, they leave the candles and exchange rings... the rings are worn on the right hand.

"There is a best man and a maid of honor, but no other attendants. The groom and many of the men wear a small branch from a pine tree on their lapels.



"After the ceremony, they come out of the church, and the best man throws coins out for the children to gather. The custom has a name. It is translated 'best man your bag is burning.'

Saveta said that those who do not get married in church go to a special office. "They may not wear a wedding dress... sometimes just a skirt and blouse. The same words are spoken."

"No matter where you are married, there is usually a celebration afterwards, she continued. "What that celebration is depends on how well off you are.

Saveta explained that people bring flowers to the bride before the wedding and money or presents afterward.

"The bride and groom pay close attention to what they get. There, they do not have as much as we do here, so every gift is important.

"You don't send thank you note cards. You thank people when they give the gift. We don't have as much formality."

More often than not, according to Saveta, there is no honeymoon. "It's just not something many can afford. Sometimes a couple will go for a few days to the sea."

However, there is in Yugoslavia a "Honeymoon Day." It is on a specified date each year and is for all couples married during that year. "Relatives usually bake special cookies and small cakes -- honeymoon cakes -- and take them to the couple. There is a small party."

Saveta, who is 21, reported that in Yugoslavia the average age for marriage would be about 27.

Saveta and Mitch live in an apartment in Westland, but she does not take this for granted. "In my country, lots of married people live with their parents -- sometimes for their whole lives. Apartments are so expensive and there aren't enough of them."

Of her life in the United States, including her first year of marriage -- "It is everything I expected it to be."



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