



Meet

## Alice

“Being multicultural is like having a well-stocked pantry. It offers more variety and a richer result for your community.”



### Cultural heritage

Georgian

### Passion

Cooking

### Background fact

Food always has strong memories for me, especially of dishes I grew up with in Georgia.

### Australian ties

I was a contestant on *Masterchef Australia*, host *Kitchen Whiz* and have written *Alice's Food A-Z*.



I was born in Georgia, but my grandparents came from Russia. I was seven when we arrived in Australia. I didn't speak much English and felt like a real outsider. But when I finally found my voice, I fell in love with the language. When it came to finding a job I chose to be an English teacher. It's a funny leap to make from not knowing a language to teaching it to others. When I went back to Georgia I realised how important it was to speak Russian as no one spoke English. It's also helped me learn other languages. I guess all those years of Russian school on Sundays really paid off!

Georgia is a tapestry of cultures and food as it is on the border of Asia, the Middle East and Europe. People have so many layers. I am not just one thing. I'd describe myself as an Eastern European Jew. At our table we have Russian, Georgian and Jewish dishes. My great uncle wrote a cook book about Jewish food in the Soviet Union in the 1980s so it's nice to follow the family tradition. I remember my first job in the kitchen. I was only five years old, but it's still my only job when my father is cooking. It doesn't matter what I say, he'll just insist I 'watch the eggplant, make sure it doesn't burn.'

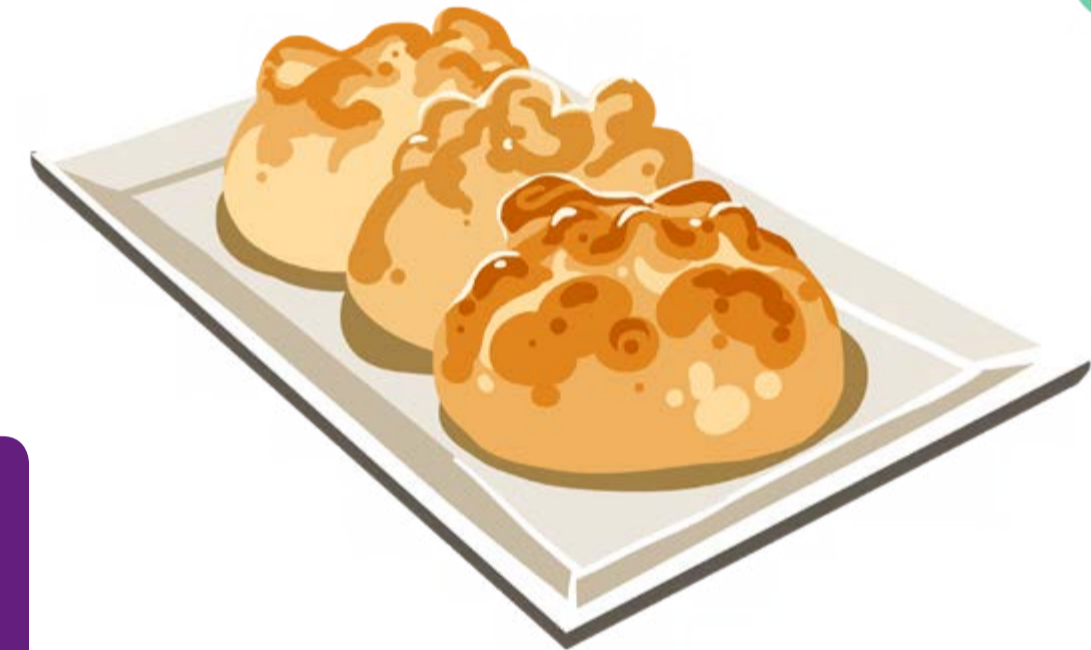
Everyone loves delicious food, and it's a great way for people to connect. It's very easy when you first meet a person to notice their differences but when you sit down and eat together, you'll notice similarities in both food and culture. Even though you might feel awkward bringing something different in your lunch box, in the long run that's what's going to make you special. People will want you to cook it for them, rather than stare and say, 'wow that's a weird looking rissole!'

Audio contains a section from the track: MixxxMusic. (2012). Georgian suliko. (CC BY 3.0)

Cook

## Khachapuri (cheese bread)

“Khachapuri is passed down from mothers to daughters. My mother's recipe is different to my aunts as there are many variations.”



### Ingredients

- 500g plain flour
- 175ml water
- 1 packet dry yeast
- 250g grated mozzarella cheese
- 100g tasty cheese
- 50g cottage cheese
- Olive oil seeds
- Pinch of sugar
- Pinch of salt



### Tools

- Pastry brush
- Rolling pin
- 2 mixing bowls
- Wooden spoon
- Sifter
- Plastic wrap

### Instructions (serves 4)

1. Add the yeast and a pinch of salt into a bowl with water, and let it sit for 7 minutes.
2. Sift the flour and add it to the bowl with a little more water if it is too dry.
3. Mix together with a wooden spoon until a soft dough forms.
4. Sprinkle flour on the bench and knead the dough for 5 minutes.
5. Oil the sides of a bowl and put the dough in there for 40 minutes, covering the top with plastic wrap.
6. Using a wooden spoon, combine the mozzarella, tasty cheese and cottage cheese together in a mixing bowl.
7. When the dough is ready and has risen, roll out the dough until it is about 1cm thick.
8. Place the dough square onto a tray and top with cheese mix. Flip it over and roll it so that the centre is sealed.
9. Brush with olive oil and place in the oven to bake for about 10 minutes or until dough has turned golden brown and cheese has melted.

Note: If you don't have time to make a dough, use filo or puff pastry instead!



Explore

## Georgian culture

This country is located at the eastern end of the Black Sea and has the deepest cave in the world, the Krubera (Voronya) Cave.



Georgia's history extends deep into the past, possibly as far back as the 1st millennium BC. It came under the influence of Rome in the first centuries AD when Christianity became the main religion. A mighty Georgian kingdom existed in medieval times. Georgia was part of the Soviet Union between 1921 and 1991.



Georgian dancers © Aris Jansons (CC BY-SA 2.0)

### Population

4,935,880

### Land area

69,700 sq km

### Climate

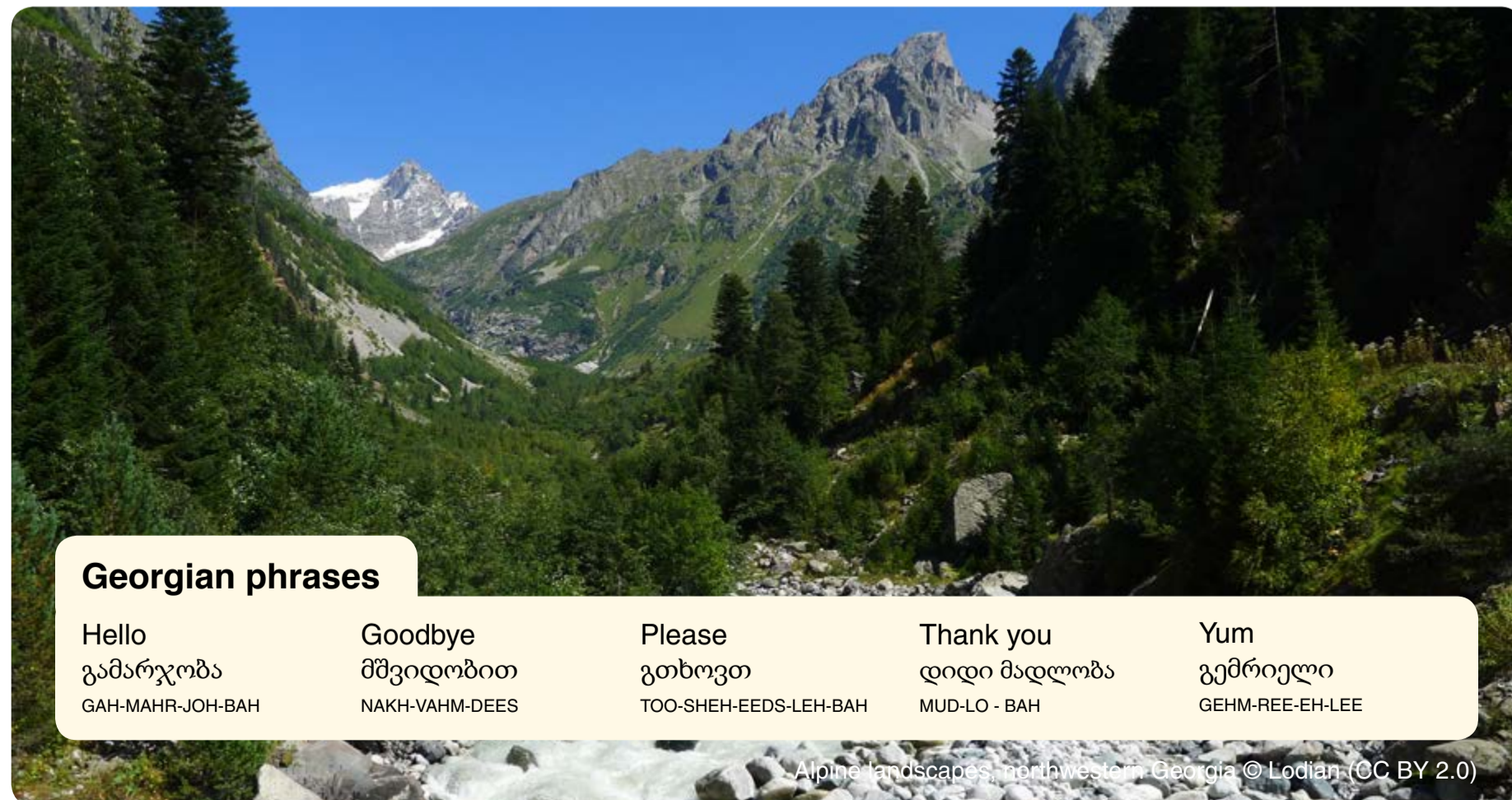
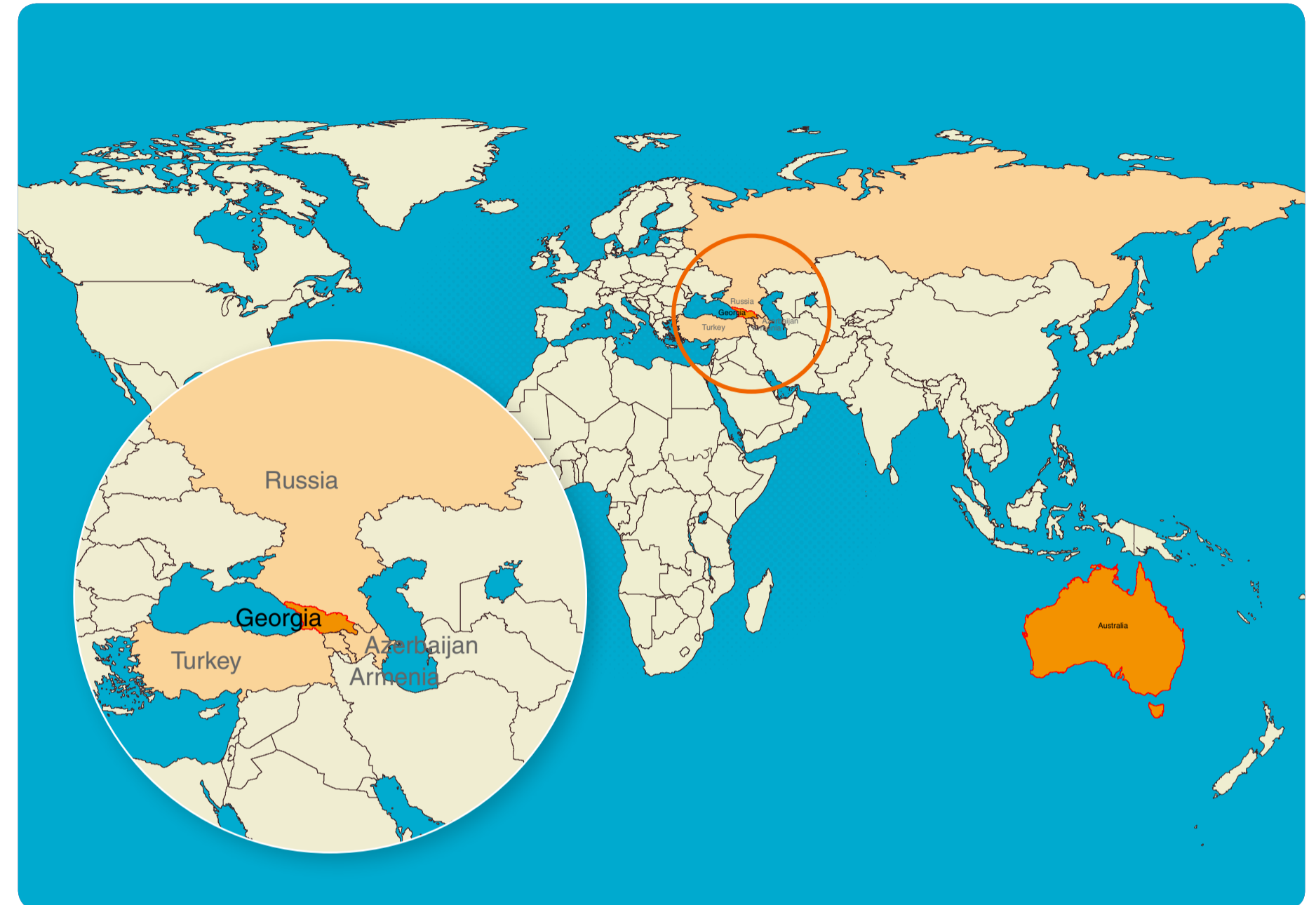
Mediterranean

### Capital city

Tbilisi

### Languages

Georgian (official),  
Russian, Armenian



### Georgian phrases

Hello გამარჯობა GAH-MAHR-JOH-BAH	Goodbye შშვიდობით NAKH-VAHM-DEES	Please გთხოვთ TOO-SHEH-EEDS-LEH-BAH	Thank you დიდი მადლობა MUD-LO - BAH	Yum გემრიელი GEHM-REE-EH-LEE
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Alpine landscapes, northwestern Georgia © Lodian (CC BY 2.0)



### Environment

It rains a lot in Western Georgia where it is very humid. Eastern Georgia ranges from partly humid to dry.

The landscape varies from tropical forests to snowy mountain peaks, deep gorges, rivers and alpine meadows. **Forests** and grasses cover more than a third of the country.



### Customs

Georgia's culture is **ancient**, with literature dating back to the 5th century AD. Evidence of this can be seen in Georgian monuments, such as churches and monasteries.

Food in Georgia's east often contains mutton and pork. In the west, more vegetarian food is eaten.



### Arts & traditions

The Georgian language has its own alphabet and may have been created as early as the 5th century AD.

**Metalwork** is a traditional craft of Georgia. Jewellery and religious crosses made from bronze, gold and silver have been found in tombs as old as 1000 BC!



### Interesting facts

Georgia comes from the Persian word varkana, which means 'pack of wolves.'

Georgians are known for their hospitality and sense of humour. They are famous for living long lives, although this has not been proven!

Georgian winemaking dates back 8,000 years.