

Excursion 1

Sofia – Borovets - Rila Monastery – Plovdiv – Kazanluk – Shipka

Price: 308 euro / minimum 10 pax /

TO BE OFFERED AFTER THE END OF THE ROTARY EVENT , I.E 05.12 – 09.12.2010

1day:

14,00h Departure from Sofia. Pick up point – registration desk

15.15h Visiting Samokov town

Guided sightseeing tour – local museum, Nunnery Monastery

/ Samokow is only 10 km from Borovets and 60 km from Sofia. The past of the town is related to iron mining. Once there was a Roman settlement and the present town originated much later - at the beginning of 14th century as an ore mining settlement. The town was famous for its icon painting and woodcarving schools, pottery and iron producing. /

17,30h Accommodation in “Samokov” hotel, Borovets

/ Borovets is the oldest Bulgarian mountain and ski resort dating back to the year of 1896. It was originally established at the end of the 19th Century as a hunting place for the Bulgarian Kings, Borovets gradually developed into a modern ski resort - luxury hotels, restaurants , bars and an average network of ski runs and lifts along the slopes of the Rila Mountains, providing excellent opportunities for a whole range of winter sports. /

19,30h Dinner in “Panorama “ Restaurant in “Samokov” hotel

2 day

08,00-10,00h Breakfast in “Samokov” hotel

10,00h Departure from the hotel to the Rila Monastery

Guided sightseeing tour in the Monastery – monastery’s museum

/ Rila Monastery is the oldest monastery in Bulgaria, dates back to the 10 c a.d. Take a look at over a thousand years of historical, religious and cultural artifacts which have helped shape this region of the Balkans into what it is today /

12,30h Lunch in a restaurant near the Monastery.

14,00h Departure

Visiting the Separeva Banya town

/ The town is known for its hot mineral (103 °C (217 °F) and clear mountain water, as well as the geyser in the town centre that sprang forth in 1957 /

Back to “Samokov “ hotel, Borovets

19,30h Dinner in the club-restaurant “Madarova house” in Samokov town

3 day

08,00-9,00h Breakfast in “Samokov” hotel

9,30h Departure from Borovets to Plovdiv

11,30h Accomodation in hotel in Plovdiv

12,00h Lunch in the hotel

13,30-16,00h Guided sightseeing tour in the old part of Plovdiv – Ethnographic museum, Balabanov house and the Ancient Romans theatre.

/ Plovdiv is one of the oldest centers of European civilization - older than Rome and Athens and a contemporary of Troy and Mycenae.

Its history spans some 6,000 years, with traces of a Neolithic settlement dating to roughly 4000 BC. Known in the West for most of its history by the Greek name Philippopolis, it was originally a Thracian settlement before becoming a major Roman city. In the Middle Ages, it retained its strategic regional importance, changing hands between the Byzantine and Bulgarian Empires. The town was built on the three hills /i.e.tepe/ that were grouped together - Nebet Tepe, Taksim Tepe and Djambaz Tepe./

19,30h Dinner in restaurant in Plovdiv

4 day

08,00 – 9,00h Breakfast in the hotel

10,00h Departure from Plovdiv to Kazanluk

Guided sightseeing tour – the local museum of Kazanluk, The museum of the roses, The Thracian Tomb

/ Bulgaria is one of the biggest producers of rose oil in the world. The reason for this is hidden in the high qualities of the Bulgarian Kazanluk rose ("Kazanlashka roza"), a special type, that was cultivated in our country after many years of production and development.

Also in Kazanluk you will have chance to visit the the Thracian Tomb. This monument dates back to the 4th century BC and has been on the UNESCO protected World Heritage Site list since 1979/

13,00h Lunch in Kazanluk

14.00h Departure from Kazanluk to Shipka

Guided sightseeing tour of Shipka

/ The Shipka Memorial is situated on Stoletov Peak. It is a memorial to those who died for the Liberation of Bulgaria during the Battles of Shipka Pass in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. It was opened with a ceremony in 1934 and designed by architect Atanas Donkov and sculptor Aleksandar Andreev. The monument is a 31.5 meters (98-foot) high stone tower. A giant bronze lion, 8 m (26 feet) long and 4 m (13 feet) high, stands above the entrance to the tower, and a figure of a woman represents the victory over the Ottoman forces. A marble sarcophagus housing some of the remains of the Russia and Bulgarian casualties is located on the first floor. There are four other floors where one can find replica of Bulgarian military flags and other relics, and the top of the tower reveals a panorama of Shipka Peak and the surrounding area./

17.00h Departure from Shipka to Plovdiv

19,30h Dinner in the old town of Plovdiv

5 day

08,00ч –10,00h Breakfast in the hotel

10,30h Departure from Plovdiv to Sofia

Excursion 2

Sofia – Borovets – Rila Monastery - Sandanski – Melnik - Bansko

Price: 310 euro / minimum 10 pax /

TO BE OFFERED BEFORE THE ROTARY EVENT , I.E 27.11 – 01.12.2010

1day:

10.00h Departure from Sofia. Pick up point – registration desk

11.30h Visiting Samokov town

Guided sightseeing tour – local museum, Nunnery Monastery

/ Samokow is only 10 km from Borovets and 60 km from Sofia. The past of the town is related to iron mining. Once there was a Roman settlement and the present town originated much later - at the beginning of 14th century as an ore mining settlement. The town was famous for its icon painting and woodcarving schools, pottery and iron producing. /

13,00h Lunch in club-restaurant “Madarova house” in Samokov town

14,30h Accommodation in “Samokov” hotel, Borovets

/ Borovets is the oldest Bulgarian mountain and ski resort dating back to the year of 1896. It was originally established at the end of the 19th Century as a hunting place for the Bulgarian Kings, Borovets gradually developed into a modern ski resort - luxury hotels, restaurants , bars and an average network of ski runs and lifts along the slopes of the Rila Mountains, providing excellent opportunities for a whole range of winter sports. /

19,30h Dinner in “Panorama “ Restaurant in “Samokov” hotel

2 day

08,00-10,00h Breakfast in “Samokov” hotel, Borovets

10,00h Departure from Borovets to Rila Monastery

11,45h Guided sightseeing tour in the Monastery – monastery’s museum

/ Rila Monastery is the oldest monastery in Bulgaria, dates back to the 10 c a.d. Take a look at over a thousand years of historical, religious and cultural artifacts which have helped shape this region of the Balkans into what it is today /

13,30h Lunch in a restaurant near the Monastery

14,30h Departure

Visiting the old part of Blagoevgrad “Varosha”

/ The city is the economic and cultural centre of southwestern Bulgaria. It is located in the valley of the Struma River at the foot of the Rila and Pirin Mountains, 101 km south of Sofia, close to the Greek, Serbian and Republic of Macedonia borders. Blagoevgrad features a pedestrian downtown with preserved 19th century architecture and numerous restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, and boutiques /

17,30h Accommodation in a hotel in Sandanski

/ Sandanski is a town and a recreation centre in south-western Bulgaria, part of Blagoevgrad Province. Named after revolutionary Yane Sandanski, it is located in a valley at the foot of Pirin Mountain, on both banks of the Sandanska Bistritsa River. Another famous native that probably came from the surrounding region of the town was Spartacus, the Thracian slave who launched an uprising against Rome in 73-71BC.

Sandanski's favourable position, suitable climate (with the highest average annual temperature in the country, +14.1°C) and the concentration of mineral water springs in the area are all reasons for the town's fame as a centre for relaxation and recreation. /

19,30h Dinner in the hotel

3 day

08.00-10,00h Breakfast in the hotel

10,00h Departure from Sandanski to Rozhen Monastery

/ The Rozhen Monastery is one of the few medieval Bulgarian monasteries well preserved until today.

The monastery church was built before the 15th century and painted in 1597; some of those frescoes are preserved. In 1611, the south facade was painted. The Rozhen Monastery was devastated by fire between 1662 and 1674, destroying the library and severely damaging most buildings. The monastery was restored over the next century with the financial help of rich Bulgarians from the whole country. The reconstruction began in 1715 and was fully finished in 1732.

The monastery reached its apogee in the 19th century, when it was a regional centre of Orthodox Christianity and owned a lot of land in the area. Famous Bulgarian revolutionary Yane Sandanski's grave is located near the monastery. /

13,00h Lunch in a restaurant in Melnik

14,30h Guided sightseeing tour in Melnik – Kordopulov's house

/ Melnik is an architectural reserve and 96 of its buildings are cultural monuments. With a population of 385, it is the smallest town in Bulgaria, retaining its city status today for historical reasons.

The town is also associated with the impressive natural sand pyramids in various forms, resembling giant mushrooms, ancient towers and obelisks, , spread in an area of 17 km² near Melnik, Kurlanovo and Rozhen.

The Kordopulov 's House is a large Bulgarian National Revival house in the southwestern Bulgarian town of Melnik. It was built in 1754 specifically for wine production and was bought by the rich and known merchant Manol Kordopulov . The house, possibly the largest of its kind and period, is located in the town's eastern part and consists of a ground floor that includes a wine cellar, The characteristic Melnik wine cellar is dug into the rock to form a tunnel. The cellar can take 300 tons of wine, with the largest cask being able to take 12.5 tons alone. /

16,00h Wine testing

/ Melnik has been famous for its strong wine since as far as 1346. The local wine was reportedly a favourite of Winston Churchill. /

17,00h Departure from Melnik to Sandanski

19,30h Dinner in the hotel in Sandanska

4 day

08,00-10,00h Breakfast in the hotel

10,00h Departure from Sandanski to Bansko

11.15h Accommodation in a hotel in Bansko

12,30h Lunch in the hotel

13,30h Sightseeing tour in Bansko – visiting the house-museum of N. Vaptsarov

/ Bansko is a town and ski resort in southwestern Bulgaria, located at the foot of Pirin at an altitude of 925 m above sea level. The mountain peaks near the town, the numerous lakes and the old pine woods make it a popular site for recreation. The archeological traces of the inhabitants of Bansko and the Razlog Valley in general date to the early periods of the Roman Empire. There are several housing structures at the outskirts of the town, which date to 100 BC. However, there is no consensus nor credible theory on who these people were.

Bansko is the birthplace of 20th century Bulgarian poet Nikola Vaptsarov and Bulgarian enlighteners Paisiy Hilendarski and Neofit Rilski. /

19,30h Dinner in the hotel

5 day

08,00ч-10,00ч Breakfast in the hotel

10,00ч Departure from Bansko to Sofia