

**WELCOME
TO
BULGARIA**

**GENERAL INFORMATION
FOR TRAVELLERS**

SOFIA



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*Spa Resorts and
Healing Tourism*



Relief

Welcome to Bulgaria

Dear guests,

We are happy to welcome you to our beautiful country. With this brochure we would like to suggest useful information concerning your visit to Bulgaria, so it would be as pleasant and problem-free as possible.

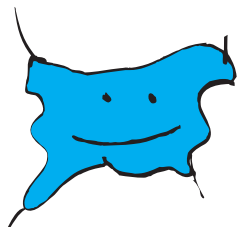
Bulgaria will offer various opportunities to spend your holiday in a diverse manner and take home with you numerous memorable experiences.

Bulgarian nature impresses with a wide variety of landscapes and natural phenomena. The Black Sea coastline affords splendid possibilities for a relaxing or, depending on your wishes and preferences, an active vacation on the beach.

The inland holds out a number of opportunities for you to discover. According to their particular interests, tourists may go skiing - with mountain transfers, organised for them in well-preserved mountain regions.

FREE COPY

General Information



Geographic Location:

Bulgaria is located in South-Eastern Europe. To the north it borders on Romania, to the east - on the Black Sea, to the south - on Turkey and Greece, to the west - on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Macedonia.

Surface: 110,912 sq. km.

Population: 7. 97 million. (2001 census)

Country Name: Republic of Bilgaria

Government Type: Parliamentary democracy

Capital: Sofia (1.2 million inhabitants)

Official Language: Bulgarian, alphabet - Cyrillic

Religion: East Orthodox Christians (83,8%), Muslims (12,1%), others (4.1%)

Time Zone: GMT (London) + 2 hours, Central European Time (GET), (Paris, Rome) + 1 hour

Electric Power: 220 V, 50 Hz

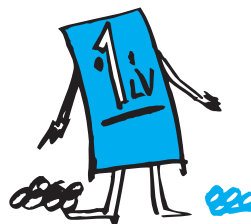
Entering the Country: EU citizens enter Bulgaria with an international passport that should be valid for at least three months more.

For additional information contact the Bulgarian Embassies in the respective country.

Custom Formalities:

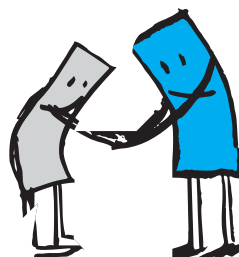
Personal belongings may be imported with no custom fees. Applied to consumption goods are the following regulations for persons older than 16:

- cigarettes 200 items or 250 g tobacco products
- 2 litres of wine, 1 litre alcoholic drinks
- coffee 500 g

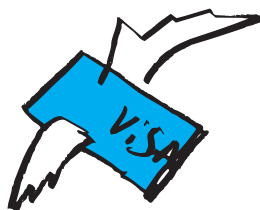


Currency Unit:

Bulgarian Lev (BGN). 1 lev = 100 stotinki. Presently coins in circulation are of nominal values 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 stotinki, as well as banknotes of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 leva.



Money Exchange: The Lev (BGN) is pegged to the Deutsche Mark at an exchange rate DEM 1: BGN 1. You may change cash in banks or in the numerous change bureaus many of which are open on weekends, too. Euro-checks may be cashed in many of the banks.



Credit Cards: Credit cards are accepted and they can be used for the payment of all standard services: hotel accommodation, restaurants, night clubs, shopping, car rentals, plane tickets, etc.

Medical Services:

Foreigners arriving to Bulgaria are not required to have any compulsory immunisations. All medical establishments in the country perform medical checks, tests and treatment of foreigners.

Foreigners pay for the medical services in exchange of an invoice in Bulgarian Leva in cash at the cash desk of the medical establishment or else with a bank transfer from abroad.

Insurances:

Persons visiting Bulgaria as tourists or guests may be insured. Insurance of foreign citizens is normally included in the tourist packages of the Bulgarian tour-operators. Foreign tourists may also enter Bulgaria with insurances by foreign insurance companies.

Official Holidays:

January 1 - New Year;

March 3 - National Day of the Liberation from Ottoman Yoke

Easter - Two days (Sunday and Monday) according to the Orthodox calendar (a week after the Catholic Easter)

May 6 - St. George's Day;

May 24 - Day of the Bulgarian Culture and Slavonic Letters;

September 6 - National Day of Bulgaria's Unification;

September 22 - Bulgaria's Independence Day;

November 1 - Day of the National Revival Leaders

December 25/26 - Christmas

December 31 - New Year's Eve



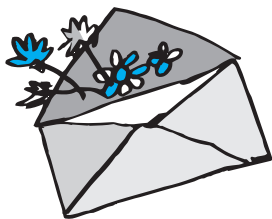
Working Hours:

Working hours of state institutions:
9.00 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.

Foodstuff shops are usually open from 9.00/10.00 a.m. to 7.00/8.00 p.m.

Many shops are also open on weekends and holidays from 9.00 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Banks work from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.



Post and Telecommunication:

Working hours of post offices are from 8.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. You can buy stamps and post cards at the post office desks as well as from newspaper kiosks.

International Telephone Country Codes

Bulgaria	359
Austria	43
Belgium	32
Eire	353
Finland	358
France	33
Germany	49
Hungary	61
Italy	39
Netherlands	31

Norway	47
Poland	482
Spain	34
Sweden	46
Switzerland	41
UK	44
USA	1

There are numerous street phones, which you may use with phone-cards for long-distance calls.

Attention: There are 3 different operators and 3 different types of phone-cards respectively.

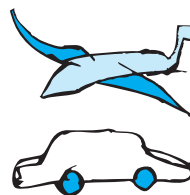


Mobile phones: In larger towns and Black Sea resorts the network has a good coverage. On request, your operator will gladly give you information about phone calling from a mobile phone in Bulgaria.

Emergency Phone Numbers:

150	-	Emergency
160	-	Fire
166	-	Police
1286	-	Road aid for Sofia
142	-	Road aid outside Sofia

After a crash or an accident, please call immediately the nearest police station and stay put.



Transport:

By air: Most tourists arrive to Bulgaria by airplane. Flights from Central Europe last between 2 and 2.5 hours. The international airports in:

Sofia airport	-	tel.: +359 2/ 937 22 12
Plovdiv airport	-	tel.: +359 32/ 60 11 11, 60 11 26
Varna airport	-	tel.: +359 52/ 57 33 23, and
Bourgas airport	-	tel.: +359 56/ 87 02 48 are at your disposal.

By land:

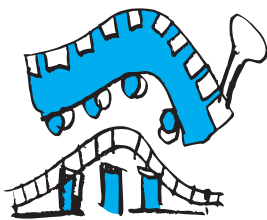
By land Bulgaria can be reached by car, bus, or train. When choosing the velocity of movement, motor vehicle drivers should not exceed the following limitations in km per hour:

Vehicle type	In built-up area	Out of built-up area	Motorway
Category A (Motorbikes)	50 km/h	80 km/h	100 km/h
Category B (Cars)	50 km/h	90 km/h	120 km/h
Category B, C, D (Trucks, buses)	50 km/h	80 km/h	100 km/h
Category C, D (With a trailer)	50 km/h	70 km/h	100 km/h

The limit of the admissible quantity of alcohol in blood for drivers is 0.5 ‰.

Rent-a-car: Big towns, resorts and airports have subsidiaries of the big international rent-a-car companies. You can get the respective information at the hotels or from the tourist agencies. Petrol stations with all types of fuel are to be found in all towns and along the motorways. Small fees are paid on the border checkpoints for the use of roads. Custom duty is owed for sailing the Danube and crossing the bridges. You can have the updated rates from the Bulgarian tourist offices.

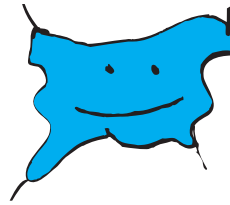
Taxi: The taxi services in Bulgaria are very good. All taxicabs in this country are painted yellow, signalled and with a phone service. They operate with daytime and night time rates. Additional pay is owed when ordering by phone. The average rate is between BGN 0.30 and BGN 0.60 per kilometre.



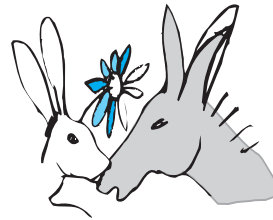
Public Transport: Towns have public transport network of buses and vans, while Sofia has also trams (street-cars), trolley buses and a subway. Tariffs are favourable, and tickets are normally purchased in advance to boarding the vehicle.

There are modern bus shuttles and trains between the bigger towns in Bulgaria.

Country and People



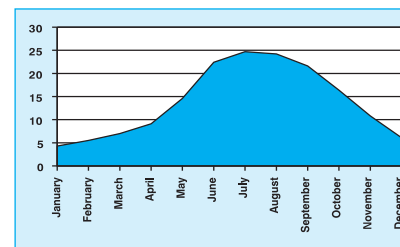
Relief: Bulgaria possesses a variety of natural forms, located in the range of 0 and 2,925 m. altitude. The Bulgarian Black Sea coast-line is 378 km long, and 40% of this territory is mountainous.



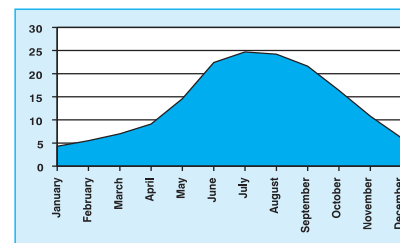
Flora and Fauna: Numerous plant and animal species are to be found in the various regions of Bulgaria. There are 3 national parks, 9 natural parks, and 16 bio-reserves, of which the Pirin National Park and the Srebrna Biosphere-Reserve are on UNESCO's World Heritage List.



Climate: It is determined by the clear-cut seasons. Summer is warm, autumn - long and sunny, while winter in the mountains - with thick snow.



■ Average Monthly Water Temperatures (along the Black Sea coast)



■ Average Monthly Air Temperatures (along the Black Sea coast)

Table of Average Monthly Air and Water Temperatures along the Black Sea Coastline

Month	Air Temperature °C	Sea-water Temperature °C
January	1.2	4.3
February	2.5	5.5
March	5.1	7.0
April	10	9.1
May	15.5	14.6
June	20.1	22.4
July	22.6	24.7
August	22.4	24.2
September	19.0	21.6
October	13.9	16.4
November	9.1	10.8
December	4.0	6.1

History: Bulgaria has a rich history rooted back in ancient times. Especially impressing are the relics from the Thracians times (6th through 3rd c.c. BC), whose tombs and gold treasures are to be found in various places (Kazanlak, Panagyurishte, Vratsa, Lukovit, Letnitsa, Valchetran, Plovdiv, Sveshtari and Starosel).

681 AD - The Bulgarian state was established. It is one of the first ever European states. The first Bulgarian capital was Pliska. Its khans Asparoukh, Krum (803 - 814 AD), and Omurtag (852 - 831 AD) turned it into a mighty power in south-eastern Europe.

855 AD - The Saint brothers Cyril and Methodius created the Slavonic (Cyrillic) alphabet.

865 AD - Knyaz Boris I Mikhail (852-907 AD) did away with paganism and introduced East-Orthodox Christianity as the official religion in Bulgaria. The Byzantine Empire recognised him as Tsar of the Bulgarians.

893 - 927 AD - Under the reign of tsar Simeon (the Great), son of tsar Boris I, the Bulgarian kingdom became the

biggest in territory and the most powerful in Europe. The "golden age" of Bulgarian culture set in.

1396 Bulgaria fell under Ottoman yoke that lasted 5 centuries.
1762 - The beginning of the Bulgarian National Revival, which found expression above all in the development of the arts, culture, and crafts. Monk Paissii of the Hilendar Monastery (on Mount Athos) wrote the "Slav-Bulgarian History" book.

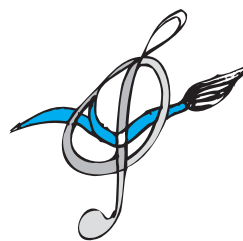
3 March 1878 - Following the Russian - Turkish War a peace treaty was signed. It put the end to the Ottoman rule. There followed the period of the Third Bulgarian Kingdom.

6 September 1885 - Unification of the Principality of Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia (the real-term liberation of Bulgaria).

22 September 1908 - prince Ferdinand Saxe-Coburg-Gotha proclaimed Bulgaria independent and himself the Tsar.

1944 - After World War II Bulgaria fell under the influence of USSR.

1990 - In the course of the changes in the Eastern Bloc countries the first free elections were held and the new democratic Constitution of Bulgaria was passed in 1991.



Culture: Bulgaria has a remarkable cultural heritage that is conditioned by its rich history.

In Bulgaria there are 36 cultural reserves, 160 monasteries, some 40,000 monuments of culture, 7 of which are on UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage List.

There are numerous monuments from various historical eras: prehistoric finds, Thracian tombs, archaeological sites of the Hellenic era, Roman and Byzantine castles, historical monuments from the First and the Second Bulgarian Kingdom, from the National Revival Period, architectural ensembles in the bigger towns, as well as entire settlements that have preserved their authentic nature.

The oldest gold in Europe was discovered in the necropolis of Varna. World-famous are the Valchetran gold treasure from the Bronze era, the Panagyurishte, the Vratsa, the Lukovit and the Letnitsa gold treasures dating around 4th c. BC, as well as the Rogozen silver with gilding treasure. In many regions of the country there are towns and museum villages with authentic Bulgarian architecture from the time

of the Bulgarian National Revival. The best known of these are: the Old Plovdiv, Veliko Turnovo, Koprivshitsa, Tryavna, Arbanassi, Bozhentsi, Zheravna, Melnik, Bansko, Kovachevitsa, Nessebar, Sozopol, etc.

Bulgaria is extremely rich in **Monasteries and Churches**. The most visited monasteries are the Rila, the Bachkovo, the Rozhenski, the Troyan, the Preobrazhenski (Transfiguration) ones, as well as the Aladja Rock Monastery. Very fascinating are also the hundreds of churches where one can see unique samples of the Bulgarian iconography, wood-carving, medieval paintings and icons.

In some monasteries (to name some in Northern Bulgaria: the Dobridolski, the Chiprovtsi, the Klissura, the Chekotinski, the Seven Thrones, the Cherepish, the Glozhene, the Trojan, the Batoshevtsi, the Sveta Gora of Veliko Turnovo, and the Dryanovo one; and some in Southern Bulgaria - the Rila, the Bachkovo, the Arapya, the Kaloffer, and the Maglizh one) you may spend the night in common rooms and thus sense the special atmosphere of these holy places.

For additional information call: +359 2/ 987 56 611



Folklore: Bulgaria is especially proud with its rich folklore. Folk dances, music, national costumes and traditional rituals do have an important place in the life of the Bulgarians. There are numerous holidays and happenings that a foreign tourist may also attend.

- **Sourvakars** - a health and prosperity ritual that takes place on New Year. Long after midnight, boys set out on their merry round, going from house to house, slapping people ritually with decorated cornel twigs while wishing a Happy New Year, health, longevity and success.

- **Martyr Triffon Zarezan** (*Pruner*) - vine-dressers' day (–first pruning of the vines) on February 14th;

- **Lazarovden** (*St. Lazar's Day, the Saturday before Palm Sunday*)

This is the first stage of the big spring holiday called Vrabnitsa or Tsvetnitsa (Palm Sunday) It is the people's belief that this is the holiday of the fields, meadows and forests. Groups of young girls, wearing the traditional national costumes, carry hand baskets to collect eggs as gifts. They sing The Lazar Day songs. Easter is coming...

- **Festival of Roses** - celebrates the start of rose-picking season in Kazanlak in early June;

Art: Bulgaria is the venue of numerous modern-day culture events. Many of the Bulgarian towns have numerous music festivals, theatrical shows, art-galleries, which will be glad for your visit:

- The New Year Music Festival at the National Palace of Culture in Sofia;

- The March Music Days, March 17-31;

For additional information call: +359 82/ 223 064

- The Sofia Music Days, May 23 - July 10;

For additional information call: +359 2/ 954 9086, 801 025

- The Verdi Festival in Plovdiv, June 7-9.

Museums: They have preserved numerous evidences of the rich, millenary history of Bulgaria, of everyday life, traditions and customs of the Bulgarian nation.

National Museum of History

Home No. 1, Residence Boyana, Sofia (last terminal of trolleybus No. 2), tel.: +359 2/ 955 42 80, 955 76 04. The museum is open daily from 9.30 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. The exhibition encompasses all the period from the pre-historic era to modern days. Here one can see the gold and silver treasure of Panagyurishte, as well as ceramic and archaeological finds.

Museum of Archaeology

2, "Saborna" Str., Sofia, tel.: +359 2/ 988 24 06, working hours: 10.00 - 12.00 a.m. and 2.00 - 6.00 p.m., closed on Mondays. The museum exhibits relics from Thracian, Hellenic, and Roman settlements. The museum itself is housed in the restored building of a mosque from the 15 c.

Museum "Land and People"

2, "Cherni Vrah" Blvd., Sofia, tel.: +359 2/ 65 66 39, working hours: 10.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m., closed on Sundays and Mondays. Established in 1986, the museum has over 20,000 exhibits in stock, grouped in 6 sectors, like giant crystals, earth minerals, precious stones, etc.

Ethnographic Museum

6 A, Moskovska Str., Sofia, tel.: +359 2/ 988 19 74, 987 41 91. Working hours: 10.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m., closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

The museum exhibits national folk costumes, fabrics, ornaments,

woodcarving, artefacts of various folk arts. A small shop (at the former Royal Palace, Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd.) sells souvenirs, music instruments, and national costumes from all over Bulgaria.

Museum of Natural History

1, Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd., Sofia, tel.: +359 2/ 988 51 15, working hours: 10.00 a.m. - 7.00 p.m., open every day. The museum was established in 1889 and opened doors to visitors in 1907. At present, it has three sections: geology, zoology, and botany.

Boyana Church National Museum (in Sofia's vicinity)

3, "Boyansko ezero" Str., tel.: +359 2/ 68 53 04. The museum exhibits valuable mural paintings of 1259, reckoned unique works of art of the European pictorial art of the Middle Ages.

Crypt of the Alexander Nevski Church

1, Alexander Nevski Sq., Sofia, tel.: +359 2/ 988 17 04, working hours: 10.30 - 12.30 p.m. and 2.00 - 6.30 p.m., closed on Tuesdays.

The Crypt-museum was set up in 1965 and exhibits artefacts dating from the very beginning of the Bulgarian iconographic school, i.e. late 9th c., through to the end of 19th c. A collection of 1,500 icons visually presents all the stages of development of the Bulgarian icon-painting school.

Other interesting museums across Bulgaria:

Plovdiv

Archaeological Museum

1, Saedinenie Sq., tel.: +359 32/ 62 43 39, 63 31 06, 26 99 33, 63 17 60

Museum of the Revival and National Liberation

1A, Tzanko Lavrenov Str., tel.: +359 32/ 62 33 79

Museum of Natural Science

34, Hristo G. Danov Str., tel.: +359 32/ 62 66 83, 63 30 96

Balabanov's House

57, Konstantin Stoilov Str., tel.: +359 32/ 620 670

Kazanlak

Museum of the Rose and Rose-oil Production

Tel.: +359 431/ 25 170

Thracian Tomb (a replica) - 4th - 3rd c.c. BC.

Tyubeto Park, tel.: +359 431/ 24 750

Varna

Museum of Natural Science

Morska Gradina (seaside garden), tel.: +359 52/ 61 02 43

Aladja Cave Monastery (near the Golden Sands)

Tel.: +359 52/ 35 54 60

Archaeological Museum

41, Maria Luisa Blvd., tel.: +359 52/ 237 057

Bourgas

Ethnographic Museum

69, Slavjanska Str., tel.: +359 56/ 84 25 87

Archaeology Museum

21, Bogoridi Str., tel.: +359 56/ 84 35 41

Museum of Natural Science

30, Fotinov Str., tel.: +359 56/ 84 32 39

Gabrovo

Architectural and Ethnographic Open-Air Museum "Etur"

Tel.: +359 66/ 42 023, 42 927

Tryavna

Specialized Museum for Wood-Carving and Icon-Painting (Zographic) Arts

7, Kapitan Dyado Nikola Sq., tel.: +359 667/ 25 17

Veliko Turnovo

National Museum of the Bulgarian Architecture

2, Chitalishtna Str., tel.: +359 62/ 3 05 87, 2 58 79

History Museum

2, Nikola Pikolo Str., tel.: +359 62/ 2 02 56, 3 38 05, 2 37 72

"Tsarevets" Architectural Museum Reserve

Tel.: +359 62/ 3 88 41

"Arbanassi" Architectural Museum Reserve

Tel.: +359 62/ 3 02 29, 3 48 71, 3 49 46

Bulgarian cuisine: Being our guests you should taste the delicious Bulgarian dishes.

Here we will briefly present you some of the best-loved ones:

Salads and appetisers:

- **Shopska Salad** - a traditional Bulgarian salad of fresh vegetables and finely grated white-brined sheep-milk cheese;
- **Kyopolu** - roasted and pounded aubergine, peppers, tomatoes, flavoured with garlic, parsley and walnuts;
- **Chushki-byurek** - peppers stuffed with white-brined cheese and fry-panned in eggs and flour or bread-crumbs;
- **Shoppi cheese** - white-brined cheese with tomatoes and peppers baked in earthenware;

Soups:

- **Tarator** - refreshing cold summer soup of yoghurt, cucumbers, crushed garlic and fennel;
- **Monastic bean soup** - soup of white beans, cooked like in monasteries;
- **Green soup** - soup of sorrel (sour dock), goose foot, parsley, cow parsnip and dock;
- **Kourban** - soup of mutton and vegetables;

Dishes:

- **Kavarma** - (water-mill styled) - bits of meat cooked with lots of onion and spices. Some red wine can be added too;
- **Gyuvetch Sredna Gora mountain** - hotchpotch of various vegetables baked with meat;
- **Broiled veal** - a veal roll (roule);
- **Sarmi** - wine or cabbage leaves stuffed with rice and (or without) minced meat;
- **Rhodope "cheverme"** - lamb baked on a spit;

Desserts:

- **Sheep's yoghurt with blueberry jam**
- **Banitsa** - sheets of pastry, with eggs, white-brined sheep-milk cheese and butter inside;
- **Katmi** - pancakes served with white cheese or with honey and nuts;



Bulgarian Wines: Bulgarian wine tradition dates back to the era of the Thracians. There are numerous types of grapes and wines. The great number of sunny days in the southern parts of the country favours the red wine species, while in the North - the white wine ones.

Make use of the opportunity and taste the following prominent varieties:

Red Wines:

- Cabernet Sauvignon from Svistov, Sliven, Yambol, and Oryahovitsa;
- Mavrud from Assenovgrad and Perushtitsa;
- Merlot from Stambolovo and Sakar;
- Gamsa from Pleven, Suhindol and Novo Sello;
- Wine from Melnik;

White Wines:

- Traminer "Han Krum" from Preslav and Shoumen;
- Aligote from Lyaskovets;
- Misket from Straldja;
- Sauvignon Blanc from Targovishte;
- Chardonnay from Rousse and Slavyantsi;
- Rosè from Bourgas;
- Muskat from Pomorie and Varna;

"Nazdrave" - Cheers!

Tourism in Bulgaria

Bulgaria is an attractive tourist destination and it offers various opportunities for a fascinating vacation:

City Tourism: The following towns in Bulgaria offer very interesting possibilities for getting to know them and to visit:

– **Sofia** is the largest city and the capital of Bulgaria. It offers the tourists endless opportunities. There are hotels of all categories, numerous restaurants,



exciting nightlife, and a lot of cultural events. The best-known tourist attractions are:

- " St.Alexander Nevski" Memorial Church - the biggest Church on the Balkan Peninsula;
- Many other churches like "St. Nedelya", "St. George" Rotunda, "St. Petka Samardjiiska" Church, etc;
- Numerous museums (see the List of Museums);
- Numerous and diverse shopping centres;

– **Plovdiv** is a live museum. It has ruins from the Thracian era, impressive evidences of the Roman time like the big amphitheatre, the stadium and the city gates. The exciting Old Town offers a spacious ensemble of historical buildings from the Bulgarian National Revival Period of 17th and 18th c.c. Life in the city is very dynamic. There are many cafes, restaurants, and bars.

– **Varna** is referred to as "the Black Sea capital". Most guests of the Bulgarian Black Sea resorts arrive at the Varna airport. The town offers various attractions that are worth seeing. Besides the numerous shops and restaurants, Varna boasts a big Aquarium (tel.: +359 52/ 25 78 76, 30 21 99) and Dolphinarium, a Planetarium (tel.: +359 52/ 63 20 08) and various museums like the well-known Museum of Archaeology.

– **Bourgas** is the second-biggest town on the Black Sea. Here again one will find dynamic town life with many cafes, shops and cultural emphases.



Seaside Vacationing: The 378, km-long Black Sea coast offers pleasant temperatures and many sunny days from May till October.

8 Black Sea resorts and beaches received Blue Flags signalling in 2001 for the very good quality of the water and environment situation.

Golden Sands (near Varna) and **Sunny Beach** (near Bourgas) offer numerous hotels and lodgings that would be happy with your visit and will reward you with good service and attractive proposals for spending your vacation, including different kinds of water sports like surfing, yachting, diving, motorboats, water-ski, jet ski, hang-gliding and many others. Children will be delighted with the clean sand beaches and the numerous opportunities to play and enjoy. The various

resorts offer many opportunities like riding, tennis, and beach volleyball. The countless restaurants, cafes, taverns, bars and discos offer fun and joy to everyone.

Discover the Inland of this Country:

Besides sea and city landmarks Bulgaria also has many other regions that are worth visiting.



Mountains: The Bulgarian mountains of Rila, Pirin, the Rhodopes, Stara Planina (the Bulgarian name of the Balkan range, meaning "old mountain"), and Vitosha are bound to astound you with their impressive nature and landscapes.

Small towns like Zheravna, Melnik, Bansko, and Koprivshitsa, surprise and charm with their natural beauty and the Bulgarian revival spirit streaming from each old house. They also provide an insight into provincial Bulgaria. Being a guest you may stay at the cosy little houses, and take delight in the typical dishes for the region and indulge in the contemplative rhythm of living in the Bulgarian mountains. Opportunities for riding, mountain tracking and cycling, as well as the numerous culture events will certainly provide you with days of rich experience.

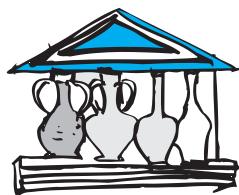
There are various national parks and protected territories in the mountains. Virgin nature and impressive landscape are a prerequisite for eco-tourism and hiking tours.

On all related issues you may be interested in, you can apply to the Bulgarian Association for Rural and Ecological Tourism: 1113 Sofia, Tel.: +359 2/ 979 33 63, Fax: +359 2/ 971 34 85, e-mail: baret@aster.net

Here are some additional opportunities for vacationing in the Bulgarian mountains:

- cycling tourism routes;
- mountain routes for alpinists;
- numerous caves;
- rafting in mountain streams;
- para-gliding;
- angling in the mountain rivers;
- hunting tourism;

Ski-Vacation: Bulgarian mountains offer exciting ski opportunities in winter. The biggest resorts are Borovets, Pamporovo, Bansko, and Vitosha. The numerous ski-runs, up to 2500 m altitude, the ski-schools, and the attractive hotels, coupled with the heavy snowfalls from December to April, provide a precondition for a wonderful ski-vacation.



Spa Resorts and Healing Tourism
Bulgaria has a millenary tradition in balneology. Back in time, the Romans made use of the numerous hot and cold mineral water-springs. Today various spa resorts offer the following types of therapy at favourable prices:

- Aroma-therapy;
- Tangentor;
- Copper therapy;
- Phyto-therapy;
- Tallasso-therapy;
- Inhalations;
- Massaging;
- Acupuncture;
- Remedial gym;
- Procedures with oxygen and ozone;
- Slimming programmes;
- Spa-cosmetics;

Here is a short list of the best-known spa centres:

- On the Black Sea:
 - Dobrudja Hotel **** - Albena resort;
 - Ambassador Hotel *** - Golden Sands resort;
 - Riviera Vacation Club;
 - Pomorie Interhotel *** - Pomorie;
 - Grand Royal Varna Hotel ***** Sv. Konstantin resort;
- Inland:
 - Sandanski Hotel **** and Sveti Vrach **** residence in the town of Sandanski;
 - Velina Hotel *** and Kamena Hotel *** in the town of Velingrad;
 - Augusta Hotel *** in Hissarya;
 - Velbazhd Hotel *** in the town of Kyustendil;
 - Bankya-Palace Hotel ** in Bankya.

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