

**Day 1 – SOFIA**

Arrival in Sofia. Transfer to the hotel. Welcome drink. Short tour and overnight.

**Day 2 – KOPRIVSHITSA – VELIKO TARNOVO**

After breakfast departure towards Koprivshtitsa Visits and Lunch in Koprivshtitsa. Continue to Veliko Tarnovo - the capital of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. Time at leisure. Overnight and dinner in Veliko Tarnovo.

**Day 3 – VELIKO TARNOVO - ARBANASSI**

Breakfast. Full day in Veliko Turnovo and the surrounding areas. Tsarevets Royal Hill and the fortress, museum village of Arbanassi, Petropavlovski monastery, Preobrajenski monastery. Overnight in Veliko Tarnovo

**Day 4 - GABROVO – ETURA- SHIPKA - PLOVDIV**

Departure towards Gabrovo, Etura open - air ethnographic complex. Lunch. Next, visit of the Memorial Church of Shipka The tour continues with visit of the Thracian Tomb in Kazanluk (UNESCO site). Departure towards Plovdiv. Overnight and dinner in Plovdiv.

**Day 5 – PLOVDIV - BACHKOVO MONASTERY**

Breakfast. Visit to the city of Plovdiv. Next you will depart to Bachkovo Monastery and have lunch. Return to Plovdiv, dinner and overnight.

**Day 6 – PLOVDIV – BANSKO**

After breakfast you will depart to Bansko, where you will have lunch. Overnight in Bansko.

**Day 7 – BANSKO – RILA MONASTERY - SOFIA**

After breakfast comes a departure to the most famous place in Bulgaria – the Rila Monastery. After this visit, you will depart to Sofia. Hotel accommodation. Dinner in a traditional restaurant with a folklore program. Overnight in Sofia.

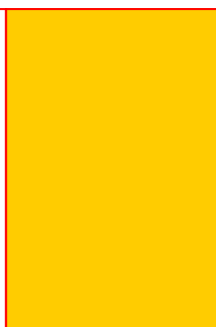
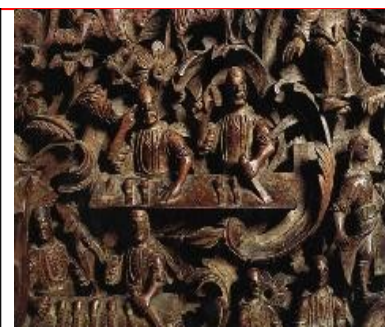
**Day 8 – SOFIA – DEPARTURE**

Breakfast. Transfer to the airport.

**The tour includes:**

- Accommodation in 4\* hotels;
- Meals: full board (breakfast, lunch, dinner); Welcome drink and farewell dinner;
- Entrances to all places mentioned on the itinerary;
- Professional guide throughout the itinerary;
- Accommodation and meals for the driver and the guide;
- Transportation according to the whole programme.

**We are expecting you!**



### **Sofia -**

Roads from all parts of the world have intersected here from nearly 7,000 years. Peoples have come and gone, civilizations have risen and fallen, but the city have stayed. Chronicles have called the city Serdika, Sredets and Sofia. Today's modern capital comprises more than 250 historic, archeological and architectural landmarks. The remains of solid fortress walls and splendid palaces, mosaics in public baths and marble columns of administrative buildings are still part and parcel of this colorful city. Monuments from different ages exist side in perfect harmony in the St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. Its crypt is a genuine treasure trove of mediaeval Bulgarian art. The St. Sophia early Christian basilica (5th - 6th c.), which has given the city its name, towers majestically nearby.

### **Veliko Tarnovo -**

One of the most picturesque Bulgarian towns. Known under the name of Tsarevgrad Turnov (i.e. King's Town) and Turnovgrad. In the town and its outskirts traces have been uncovered of life dating back to the late Palaeolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, the Bronze and the Iron Ages. After the foundation of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (1186), the town becomes its capital. In 1393 the town is conquered by the Turks and burned down. During the years of Ottoman rule it is a fortress of the Bulgarian national spirit and one of the centres of the struggle for liberation. In 1879 the Constituent National Assembly has its first session here and adopts the Constitution of Turnovo - the first constitution of the Bulgarian state liberated in 1878.

### **Arbanassi -**

Austere houses that resemble minor fortresses on the outside with high, solid walls and heavy gates, iron, rid and secret hiding-places, but which are spacious and comfortable, richly decorated and furnished on the inside.

### **The open air ethnographic museum "Etar" -**

was built in the middle of 20th century in the vicinity of the town of Gabrovo, an old industrial centre of Bulgaria. It was created to preserve for the coming generations the appearance and the spirit of the old time Bulgarian mountain villages and the manufacturing traditions of the region. The museum was built on the two sides of a small river and all the buildings and sites have their authentic appearance, the same as they had during the 19th century.

### **Plovdiv -**

is the second largest city in Bulgaria, situated on the Maritsa River. Its unique location on these ancient crossroads has stimulated strong cultural and political influences from East and West civilizations, and yet maintained its unique cultural identity. Being older than most of the oldest towns like Rome, Athens, Carthage or Constantinople, an almost contemporary of Troy, Plovdiv is a town built upon layers of towns and a culture developed upon layers of cultures. All sightseeing tours include the architectural and historical reserve Old Plovdiv. The millennial history of Plovdiv is reflected here with all its cultural diversity. The Three Hills, on which Old Plovdiv was built, are named Nebet Tepe, Djambaz Tepe and Taxim Tepe.

Explore the famous "**The Assumption of the Holy Virgin**" **Monastery of Bachkovo** - (11th c.) nestled amidst the slopes of the Rhodope Mountains nearby.

Monastery of Bachkovo is a holy place for all Bulgarians. The monastery not only keeps all that is preserved as a blessed heritage throughout centuries, but it also frees the national spirit and vitality at the time of the Bulgarian Revival and becomes a repository of historical valuables. The Bachkovo Monastery is situated in the northern part of Central Rhodopes, in the Valley of River Asenitsa, 10 km away from the town of Asenovgrad.

### **Rila Monastery**

It is the biggest, the oldest and the most renowned monastery in Bulgaria, located amongst the high rising mountain peaks and next to a river. Discover the biggest spiritual and cultural center in Bulgaria for hundreds of years.

The Monastery is included in the UNESCO World Heritage list.