

UNESCO World Heritage List in Bulgaria:

The Boyana Church

in the eponymous Sofia suburb at the foot of Mt. Vitoshka, is one of the few complete and perfectly preserved mediaeval monuments testifying to the significant contribution of Bulgarian monumental painting to European culture in the Middle Ages. The Boyana Church was built in three stages: in the late 10th and early 11th, the mid-13th, and the mid-19th centuries. The oldest section (the eastern church) is a small one-apsed cross-vaulted church with inbuilt cruciform supports. It was built in the late 10th and early 11th century.

The second section, which adjoins the eastern church, was commissioned by Sebastocrator Kaloyan and his wife Dessislava and in the mid-13th century. This building belongs to the two-floor tomb-church type. It consists of a ground-floor family sepulchre with a semi-cylindrical vault and two arcosolia on the north and south walls, and an upper-floor family chapel identical in design to the eastern church. The exterior is decorated with ceramic ornaments.

The last section was built on donations from the local community in the mid-19th century.

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.

Thracian Tomb Kazanluk

Thracian Tomb is situated in the town of Kazanlak and is unique with its wall painting dated in the end of 4th B.C and the beginning of 3rd century. The wall paintings are uniquely found on the walls of the camera and the corridor and its 40 sqm

The camera features' painting of burial ceremony, in the central part is a painting of a Thracian king and his wife. Another feature of the painting is a cupbearer and two musician's women with long tubes.

Behind the king in the painting is a chariot with two horses, a young man hold four horses.

By the right hand side of the king's wife there are two maids with a box of jewelers and a mist.

The second smaller paintings feature dynamic competitors of cart.

The wall paintings are of high professional quality. After the discovery of the tomb, above it was built a protective gacher, featuring an air conditioner with perfect ventilation.

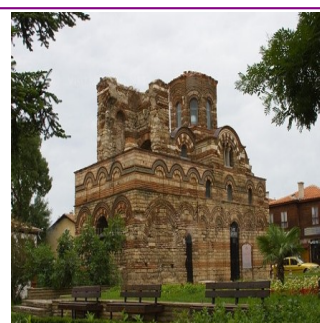
There is a duplicate of the tomb close to the main original tomb, and tourist could visit the duplicate in place of the original, and it was added to UNESCO World Heritage List.

Old Nessebar

is best known for the old town (about 9000 years) on the peninsula. No one can say for sure whether the isthmus is natural or man-made. The largest number and best known buildings date from 11th to 14th centuries almost all of them churches in the so called "picturesque" style: walls intersected by pilasters and lunettes, with stone, brick and ceramic ornaments and arches along the cornice. **Christ**

Pantokrator church (10th - 11th c.) Some of the churches have stunningly beautiful facades and interiors and are among the best preserved ones in the Balkan Peninsula. The oldest one is the Sveti Ioan Krastitel (St. John the Baptist, 10th -11th century.

Bulgaria UNESCO Tour
TOUR DURATION 14 days / 13 nights



Ivanovo rock Monastery

21km southwest of Russe, near the Ivanovo village, high in the vertical rocks above the Rusenski Lom river, churches and monk cells were built as far as back in the 12th century. By this time, there were 40 rock temples and around 300 dwellings for monk hermits. They were followers of the Hesychasm, searching for tranquility and the purpose was to enhance their spirituality. They used to eat forest fruits and roots. The rock churches in Ivanovo are under the protection of UNESCO as a valuable monument of history. In 2004, under the project executed by the regional administration in Russe and financed by European Union, the whole complex was restored for tourism.

Sveshtari

Discovered in 1982 near the village of Sveshtari, this 3rd- century B.C. Thracian tomb reflects the fundamental structural principles of Thracian cult buildings. The tomb has a unique architectural decor, with polychrome half-human, half-plant caryatids and painted murals. The 10 female figures carved in high relief on the walls of the central chamber and the decoration of the lunette in its vault are the only examples of this type found so far in the Thracian lands. It is a remarkable reminder of the culture of the Getes, a Thracian people who were in contact with the Hellenistic and Hyperborean worlds, according to ancient geographers.

The Madara Horseman

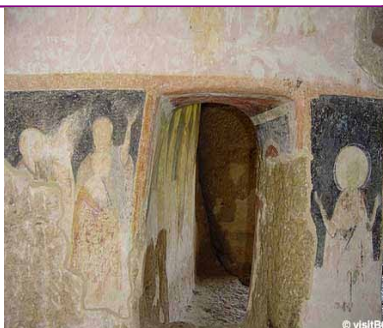
This is an imposing relief cut into rock. It represents a four figure life-size scene depicting a man on horseback thrusting his spear into a lion trampled beneath his horse's hooves, and a dog following the rider. The relief composition is cut at a height of about 75 m above the ground, in the almost vertical 100-metre cliffs of the Madara plateau near the village of Madara, Shoumen region, in north-eastern Bulgaria. The monument of the Madara Horseman /or Madara Rider/ was carved at the beginning of the 8th century. It is situated in the vicinity of one of the most significant proto-Bulgarian pagan sanctuaries of that age. There have been different opinions as to what the relief represents.

Varna

The city has a thousand year old history. The region was settled even during prehistoric times and the archeological remains testify of a developed civilization from the Eneolithic period.

The oldest cultivated gold in Europe was found in the city, known as the "Varna Gold Treasure". According to specialists its history dates back from 5000 years. Later on ancient Thracian villages emerge in the region. In the 6th century before Christ, Greek colonizers from Millet build the tow of Odessos. The town soon becomes a huge trade centre, despite of the fact that it was first settled by fishermen and farmers. The Thracian lifestyle and culture combined with the Hellenic traditions, brought by the Millet colonizers transform the town into an important cultural and trade centre. In the 28th year before Christ Odesos was conquered by the Romans, and they provide administrative independence of the town and free trade. Gymnasium, theater, numerous temples, draining system and roads that lead to the town were constructed in the town.

During the great migration of the nations the town was burned down by the Avars and long after that stays in ruins.



Day 1 – SOFIA

Arrival in Sofia. Transfer to the hotel. Welcome drink. Short tour.
Dinner at a folk style restaurant and overnight.

Day 2 – SOFIA – RILA MONASTERY – SANDANSKI

Breakfast. Departure to Rila Monastery in the UNESCO List.
Lunch. Visit to the town of Melnik, the smallest in Bulgaria. Visit the Kordopoulov House.
Visit to Damianitsa winery. Tasting of the dry red wine Cabernet Sauvignon of Melnik.
The overnight and dinner will be in the town of Sandanski – a famous spa resort.

Day 3 –SANDANSKI – DOBURSKO – BANSKO

After breakfast you will depart to Bansko. You will take a city tour of Bansko - visit of the Holy Trinity Church, the Neophyte Rilski Museum House, the Icon Gallery, the Velyanov House.
Lunch and next, you will visit the picturesque mountain town of Bansko. Departure for the village of Dobursko. Visit of the SS Theodore Tyron and Theodore Stratilates Church.
Overnight in Bansko. A really exciting folklore show and delicious Rodopean meals in The Moller's House.

Day 4 - BANSKO – PLOVDIV

Departure towards Plovdiv – antique capital of Thracians. Walking tour in the old part of the town. Visit the archeological museums with parts of the Gold Treasures and icons collection. Lunch at a typical Bulgarian restaurant. Overnight and dinner in Plovdiv.

Day 5 – PLOVDIV - BACHKOVO MONASTERY – BURGAS

Breakfast. Drive to Assenovgrad – visit the Assenova Fortress from the Byzantine time and Bachkovo Monastery. Next you will depart to Bachkovo Monastery and have lunch.
Dinner and overnight in Burgas.

Day 6 – BURGAS – NESSEBAR – VARNA

Breakfast. Burgas – town tour and visit of Nessebar – antique town from the List of UNESCO, one of the oldest in Europe with plenty of churches. Lunch.
Next, you will depart to Varna. Time for rest. Overnight.

Day 7 – VARNA

Sightseeing tour of Varna – 2500 years old town on the Black Sea. Visit the Roman Terms, the Art and History Museum with the oldest Gold Treasure in the world.
Lunch, dinner and overnight in Varna.

Day 8 – VARNA – SHUMEN – ROUSE

After breakfast, you will have a trip to Madara cross the Rock Fortress and visit the monument "Madara Horseman bas –relief – in the UNESCO List.
Departure to the town of Shumen – visit the Tombul Mosque, one of the most beautiful turkish buildings. Lunch. Visit the discovered Sveshtari Tomb – in the UNESCO List.
Dinner and overnight in Rouse – town on Danube river.

Day 9 – ROUSE – VELIKO TARNOVO

Breakfast. Visit the Ivanovo Rock Monastery – in the UNESCO List and the Fortress Tchernven.
Afternoon journey to the village of Arbanassi. Visit of the Kostantsaliev House and the Nativity of Christ Church. Lunch in Arbanassi.
Departure to the town of Veliko Tarnovo - the capital of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom.
Time at leisure. Dinner. Sound-and-light night show of the Tsarevets mediaeval fortress.
(On request) Overnight in Veliko Tarnovo.

Day 10 – GABROVO – ETURA- SHIPKA – PLOVDIV

After breakfast, you will have a sightseeing tour in Veliko Tarnovo.
Visit of the SS Peter and Paul Church and the Tsarevets mediaeval fortress.
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 11 – PLOVDIV - BACHKOVO MONASTERY

Breakfast. Next you will depart to Bachkovo Monastery. Return to Plovdiv and have lunch. After lunch– visit the remarkable old town, the remains of the ancient Roman theatre.
Dinner and overnight in Plovdiv.

Day 12 – PLOVDIV- KOPRIVSHTITZA – SOFIA

Breakfast. Visit of Thracian Temple Starosel and some of the cult tombs. Drive to Koprivshtitsa, full of old Bulgarian houses – typical Bulgarian atmosphere. Lunch.
Departure to the town of Sofia. Accommodation at hotel. Dinner and overnight.

Day 13– SOFIA

After breakfast you will have a sightseeing tour of capital the Bulgaria – Sofia.
Visit the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Sofia Church, St. George Round Church, St. Petka Church, the old Turkish Mosque, National Museum of History.
Visit of Boyana Church – in the UNESCO List of Cultural Heritage.

Day 14 – SOFIA – DEPARTURE

Breakfast. Transfer to the airport.

We are expecting you!

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.