



Travel  
broadens  
one!



*Jim Gold International Folk Tours*

# **Bulgaria!**

# **Greece!**

# **Macedonia!**



Photo by John



**Folk Traditions  
and Sephardic Heritage!**

**July 28-August 11, 2013**

**SOFIA, THESSALONIKI, LAIMOS, Bitola,  
OHRID, Skopje, KJUSTENDIL, PLOVDIV,  
KOPRIVSHTITSA FOLK FESTIVAL!**

**Led by Jim Gold**

- ★ Follow the footsteps of *Alexander the Great!*
- ★ *Balkan culture, Ladino music, folk dance, cuisine, adventure!*
- ★ *Meet Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Greek folk dance groups !*
- ★ *Visit folkloric villages in three Balkan countries!*
- ★ *Learn Balkan dancing, traditions, geography and history !*
- ★ *Our traveling staff: Guide: Stefan Gendjov, folk musician Ventsi Andonov, and folk dance teacher Iglia Andonova !*
- ★ *Price includes round-trip airfare, city tours, transfers, hotels, two meals daily, and our own private bus.*

### **Itinerary**

**Day 1: Sunday, July 28:** Depart on Lufthansa from Newark, NJ airport.

**Day 2: Monday, July 29: SOFIA**

Arrival in Sofia. Transfer to 5-star **Radisson SAS**. Welcome dinner at **Victoria Restaurant**. Overnights at Radisson Hotel.

**Day 3: Tuesday, July 30:** Morning sightseeing tour of Sofia. Alexander Nevski Cathedral, National Parliament, Saint Sofia Basilica, Saint George Rotunda, ruins of Roman Serdica, and the National Museum of History. **Afternoon visit to Sofia Central Synagogue, largest Sephardic Temple in Europe and Jewish Museum. In the Beit Am Cultural House we'll meet members of the local Ladino Club, enjoy a musical performance, then sing and dance with them. Dinner and overnight in Sofia.**

**Day 4-6: Wednesday-Friday July 31-August 2: SOFIA-THESSALONIKI**

Morning drive through the Rila mountains to the famous 10<sup>th</sup>-century Rila Monastery. Then on to Thessaloniki where **our guided Sephardic Heritage tour will include Jewish Cemetery, Synagogues. Memorial Monument, and (Jewish) History Museum.** Evening dinner and overnight in Thessaloniki. 5 star Holiday Inn or Macedonia Palace. Morning sightseeing tour of Thessaloniki. Byzantine walls and Trigonio Tower, ruins of Galerius' Palace, Aristotle Square, Greek Agora / Roman Forum, church of Agios Demetrius, a UNESCO site: largest church in Greece. Dinner and overnight in Thessaloniki. Holiday Inn or Mediterranean Palace.

**Day 6-9: Friday-Sunday, August 2-4: THESSALONIKI-LAIMOS**

Drive to Laimos, En route, visit the ancient settlement of Heraklea Linkestis built by Philip II of Macedon in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, and later a Roman city on the Via Egnatia connecting the Western Empire with Constantinople. Drive to Florina, known for delicious red peppers and chestnut trees. Meet and dance with the Greek choreographer, Yannis Konstantinou, and his Greek folk dancers! 2 nights at Prespa Lake Hotel Mimallones.

**Day 9-11: Sunday-Tuesday, August 4-6 : LAIMOS-BITOLA-OHRID**

Visit Bitola, City of Consuls. Situated on the Dragor River, next to snow-capped Mount Pelister, Bitola renaissance architecture dates from the Ottoman Empire. European countries placed consulates here and influenced the city's appearance and culture. A thriving Jewish community, biggest in Macedonia, was also present until WWII. We'll visit the covered Bezisten market built by the Turks in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, **the Jewish Cemetery and Memorial Monument.** the Isak Celebi Mosque, St. Demetrius church, and stroll along the Shirok Sokak (wide street) with its many cafés and colorful romantic and neo-classical buildings.

Morning walking tour of Ohrid, magical City of Lights, a cradle of Slavic written language and literature. We'll explore St. Sofia Church, the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC Hellenistic Amphitheatre, the Upper Gate and the St. Virgin Mary (Perivleptos) Church with its Icon Gallery housing the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest collection of icons in the world, and King Samoil's Fortress, a erected on top of a 4<sup>th</sup> century BC fortifications, considered to be built by Phillip 2<sup>nd</sup> of Macedon, and then, take a small path through the woods to the site of the First Slavic University at Plaoshnik Monastery. We'll see hand-made clay products, old musical instruments, embroideries and Ohrid pearl jewelry in the Old Bazaar. Panoramic drive around the Ohrid Lake. Visit the charming fishing village of Trepetsa, a 1200 B.C. Neolithic settlement, and St. Naum Monastery. Conclude with a scenic boat ride on lake Ohrid and meeting with Zlatko Stoychevski and his famous Pletenka folk dance group! Dinner and overnight at our hotel Bellevue

**Day 11-12, Tuesday-Wednesday, August 6-7: OHRID – Skopje – KYUSTENDIL**

Drove to Skopje. **Guided tour of the Bet Yaakov Synagogue, and Holocaust Museum.** Drive across the Vardar River, then proceed to the Statue and birthplace of Mother Teresa, and the monument to Alexander the Great. Cross the historic Stone Bridge and enter Oriental Skopje. Stroll through the Old Town Bazaar, purchase lunch, a snack, or cup of

Turkish coffee in Skopje's old town. Then cross the Bulgarian border for dinner and overnight at Strimon in Kyustendil—just awarded #1 Spa Hotel on the Balkans!

**Day 12-14: Wednesday-Friday, August 7-9: KYUSTENDIL-PLOVDIV**

Visit museum house of Peshev in Kyustendil, Then drive to Plovdiv. Sightseeing tour of Plovdiv's Old Town with its art galleries, antique shops and bistros. See masterpieces of 18-19<sup>th</sup> century Bulgarian architecture, and 2<sup>nd</sup> century Roman Amphitheater. Stroll along the city's main pedestrian street with its excellent shopping opportunities. **In Plovdiv's visit Jewish Quarter, tour Zion Synagogue, built in 1886. We'll end at the Shalom Organization Club where you can join a discussion on history and the present Jewish community with local leaders, synagogue administrators, and 91-year old Ivet Anavi, author of culinary books with traditional Sephardic recipes.** Afternoon trip to 11<sup>th</sup> century Bachkovo Monastery with its unique icons, monastery garden, and architecture. Dinner at Alafrangi restaurant. Overnights in 4-star Trimontium Dedeman Hotel

**Day 14-16: Friday-Sunday: August 9-11: PLOVDIV – KOPRIVSHTITSA**

En route we'll stop to explore the Starosel Thracian Tomb. Thracians ruled the ancient territory of Bulgaria for 1500 years. Continue through Sredna Gora mountains to museum town of Koprivshtitsa. See its 18-19th century architecture, enjoy its annual folklore festival! Two days of dancing, singing, local cuisine, mountain air, and tranquil nights. Overnights in charming, traditional-style Bashtina Kashta, Dahlia, Astra Hotel.

**Day 16: Sunday, August 11: KOPRIVSHTITSA – SOFIA Airport (B)**

Transfer to Sofia Airport. Return flight to Newark airport in the USA.

**Visit [www.jimgold.com](http://www.jimgold.com) to see YOUTUBE tour videos !**

**Land Only: \$2995    Land and Air: \$3995**



**REGISTRATION FORM: I can't wait to go!**

Enclosed is my registration deposit of \$200 per person. Single supplement: \$395. Additional charges: \$85 hotel taxes and service, air tax/fuel surcharge: \$475. **Gratuities not included in price.** Program subject to change without notice. Cancellations 45 days prior to departure: Refund 50% of total price. Less than 30 days: No refund.

**Total balance due May 10, 2013**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

No. of people \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: **Jim Gold International**, 497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A. Phone (201) 836-0362. [www.jimgold.com](http://www.jimgold.com) Email: [jimgold@jimgold.com](mailto:jimgold@jimgold.com)