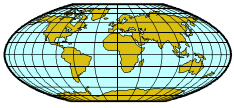


Jim Gold International Folk Tours

Bulgaria !



Travel to
Bulgaria
broadens
one!

Folk Culture, Folk Dancing, History, Art, Music, Adventure

August 3-15, 2010

Sofia, Plovdiv, Veliko Turnovo

Koprivshitsa Folk Festival, Bansko

Led by Jim Gold

Join our Bulgarian adventure! Travel with us and attend the famous **Folk Festival** held in the historic Balkan mountain village of **Koprivshitsa**. **Performing groups, traveling in full costume with their own musicians and dancers come from all over Bulgaria** to participate. Meet and mingle with them. Learn their songs and dances. We will explore the ruins and monuments from ancient **Thracian, Greek, Roman, and Byzantium**, as well as those of medieval **Bulgaria**.

We will visit **Sofia**, the artistic capital of **Plovdiv**, the 10th-century **Rila monastery** with its historic icons and murals, **Veliko Turnovo**, medieval capital and birthplace of the Second Bulgarian Empire in 1187, **Bansko** and the **Pirin Mountain** region. Our price includes round trip jet from New York, transfers, hotels, two meals daily, professional English speaking guide, and entrance and performance fees.

OUR ITINERARY:

Day 1: Tuesday, August 3: Depart on Air France Air from JFK airport in New York City.

Day 2: Wednesday, August 4: Arrival in Sofia. Transfer to **5-star Radisson SAS** located in the heart of the city. Short tour in vicinity of our hotel, ending up with a welcome dinner at **Victoria Restaurant**. Overnight at Radisson Hotel.

Day 3: Thursday, August 5: Sightseeing tour of Sofia: Alexander Nevski Cathedral, National Parliament, Saint Sofia Basilica, 4th century Saint George Rotunda, and the ruins of Roman Serdica. Optional visit to the Sephardic Synagogue, largest of its kind in Eastern Europe. Afternoon free for individual sightseeing, and shopping. Vitosha Mountain dinner at traditional restaurant with **live folklore**.

Day 4: Friday, August 6: After breakfast depart for the village of **Kovachevitsi** for half a day singing workshop at the Summer School of **Kremena Stancheva, a world famous Bulgarian folk singer**. After a delicious traditional lunch, we continue on the scenic Rila Mountain circular road to one of our tour's highlights, the **10th-century Rila Monastery**. After this, we'll take a mountainous drive through the Rila and Pirin mountains, the two highest ranges in the Balkans, to the town of **Bansko**. Upon arrival, we'll settle in the luxurious Hotel Orpheus. Light dinner provided.

Day 5: Saturday, August 7: Morning walking tour through Bansko, a stronghold of Bulgarian culture and tradition. Then we head for the **mysterious village of Dobarsko**, where the unique local choir

Dobarski Babi will give us a private performance followed by a traditional Bulgarian banista and yogurt snack. In late afternoon, we have a **picnic dinner at Chalin's Farm** including a horse cart ride, wine, and live music.

Day 6: Sunday, August 8: After breakfast at the hotel, we'll head east across the Rhodope mountains (birthplace of mythological Orpheus). Dinner and overnight at **5-star Orlovetz Hotel in the world-famous Pamporovo Resort**. Fresh mountain air and primeval pine forests; deep breathing strongly recommended.

Day 7: Monday, August 9: Morning free to relax and take advantage of the Orlovetz's spa facilities. Noon departure to visit the 11th-century **Bachkovo Monastery** with its exquisite murals and icons. Meet the monks. Then we'll stop at the 13th-century **Assenova Fortress** and enjoy panoramic views of the **Thracian Plain and city of Plovdiv**. In the afternoon, we'll check in to the **4-star Trimontium Princess Hotel** in Plovdiv. Dinner and overnight in this artistic capital of Bulgaria.

Day 8: Tuesday, August 10: Sightseeing tour of **Plovdiv's Old Quarter**, known as Bulgaria's Montmartre for its dozens of art galleries and antique shops. View masterpieces of 17th to 19th century Bulgarian architecture, a 2nd century **Roman Theater**, and the country's richest **Ethnographic Museum**. Afternoon free. Visit Plovdiv's modern section. Dinner at famous **Alafrangi Restaurant** which provided the lunch for Pope John Paul 2nd during his visit in 2001. Second overnight in Plovdiv.

Day 9: Wednesday, August 11: Morning drive through the **Valley of the Roses to the Valley of Thracian Kings (UNESCO's site)**. We'll visit the newly discovered **Kosmatka Tomb**. After another short stop at the gold-domed **Shipka Memorial Church**, we'll cross the **Balkan Mountains** through the **Shipka Pass**, decorated by the granite **Liberty Monument** commemorating Bulgaria's Liberation from Turkey in 1878. Continuing our drive, we'll visit the **Etura Open Air Crafts Museum** displaying two centuries of country houses and crafts. Late afternoon arrival in the city of **Veliko Turnovo**, Bulgaria's medieval capital, where we'll check into our **4-star spa hotel, the Grand Yantra**. Dinner and overnight.

Day 10, Thursday, August 12: Morning sightseeing tour of **Veliko Turnovo**. We'll visit the dramatic **Tsarevets Royal Hill** with palaces and churches perched on cliffs of Yantra River gorge. In the afternoon drive to the charming village of **Arbanassi**, summer residence of medieval royalty where we'll take a waling tour. Dinner served at a stylish local restaurant. Optional **Sound & Light Show** at the Tsarevets Royal Hill.

Day 11, Friday, August 13: Morning drive to Museum Town of **Koprivshitsa**. En route, we'll stop at the **14th century Troyan Monastery** and the **Oreshaka Crafts Center**.with late afternoon arrival in Koprivshitsa. Check into Hotel Bashtina Kashta and Hotel Dahlia in time to attend the official opening of the **Koprivshitsa Folk Festival**. Dinner and overnight in Koprivshitsa.

Days 11-13: Friday-Sunday, August 13-15:

KOPRIVSHITSA FOLK FESTIVAL!

Held once every five years, the Koprivshitsa Folk Festival brings together over 12,000 performers from all over Bulgaria, making it one of the biggest festivals in Europe! Three days of unforgettable folk dancing, singing, ethnic costumes, performing groups, and photo opportunities! Our morning walking tour will include the official Festival opening with **Bulgaria's President or Prime Minister**. Overnights in our country hotel in Koprivshitsa.

Day 13, Sunday, August 15: Transfer to Sofia Airport for return flight to JFK airport in the USA.

Land Only: \$2295 approx. Land and Air: \$3195 approx.

Plus \$85 for hotel taxes and service charges. Gratuities not included.

REGISTRATION FORM: I can't wait to go! Enclosed is my registration deposit of \$200 per person. Single supplement: \$395 approx. Air tax of \$355 approx. is additional. **Total balance due May 10, 2010.**

Cancellations 30 to 45 days prior to departure: Refund 50% of total price. Less than 30 days: No refund.

Name _____

Address _____

No. of people _____ Phone_(_____)_____

Make checks payable to: **Jim Gold International**, 497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A.
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