

## 4-2022 RODOPE MOUNTAIN Walking tour of Bulgaria 10 days \$ 3295

Sep. 10 - 21, 2022 Price: \$ 3,295

Group size 4 – 6 people can pick up their 10 days from May to October

Guarantee departure - Single supplement: \$250 per person

Register by August 8 and get a \$300 discount.



The walking routes chosen for this tour pass through some of the most spectacular parts of the Rhodope mountains - Trigrad Gorge, the Devil's Throat Cave, Yagodina Cave and Chairski Lakes. The trails offer breathtaking views over high rocky cliffs, thick forests, alpine meadows, and remote mountain villages where you can observe Bulgaria at its best, untainted by the influence of western society. The green 139 miles long mountain ridge of Rhodope Mountains is situated in southern Bulgaria. Its highest peak is around 6561 ft. and average height is around 2624 ft.. With its pleasant climate, the mountain is the perfect place for hiking, offering walkers a rolling landscape with pre-historic caves, ancient Roman roads and bridges and medieval fortresses and churches.

### Highlights:

- Shiroka Luka - an architectural reserve hosting a bagpipe music school
- Villages of Yagodina, Lyaskovo, Ziburdo Gela, Stikul, Solishta, Mugla
- Orehovo - a magical mountain village located at a height of 950m.above sea level.
- Trigrad Gorge, Yagodina Cave and Chairski Lakes
- The Devil's Throat Cave - one of the highest underground waterfalls in Europe (42m)
- Natural stone phenomenon of the Marvelous Bridges (Chudnite Mostove), Kabata Hut
- Sofia, Trigrad, Plovdiv
- Bachkovo Monastery - the second largest Bulgarian monastery

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**Dates:** Sep. 10 – 21, 2022 groups of 2 – 6 persons can pick their dates May - October

**Cost:** \$3295 per person, double occupancy  
Single supplement: \$250  
**Register by July 16 and get a \$300 discount.**

**I can't wait to go!** Reserve my place with my \$200 deposit per person by registering through  
**PayPal:** <https://www.paypal.com/myaccount/transfer/homepage/preview>  
**Once in, enter:** [georgevishegonov@yahoo.com](mailto:georgevishegonov@yahoo.com)

**Price Includes:**

- airport transfers and all ground transportation according to itinerary
- accommodation in 3\*, 4 \* hotels, family guesthouses or mountain hots based, dbl. occ.
- all meals according to the itinerary – breakfast, lunch, and dinner
- tour highlights entry fees for sights and events according to the itinerary
- English-speaking guide
- equipment rental needed and route map according to the itinerary
- luggage transport
- VAT and all local taxes & Fuel Surcharges.
- 24/7 technical support

**Not Included:**

- airfare international flight tickets
- travel insurance
- Tour Extensions and Optional programs
- single supplement of \$250 per person
- drinks and meals not mentioned in the Itinerary
- tips at hotels, restaurants family guesthouses or mountain hots
- additional taxis rides or public transportation
- personal expenses
- optional excursions and entrance fees

**Good to know:**

- Recommended travel period of the year: May – October
- Participants need to be fit and capable of being comfortable walking 2 – 7 hour per day
- There is a minimum age of 12 for children on this tour.
- Necessary equipment: backpack (15 - 25 l) for the daily hikes, hiking boots/shoes, waterproof gear, hat for sun protection, sunglasses, water bottle etc.

**For a detailed itinerary and questions,** please email [georgevishegonov@yahoo.com](mailto:georgevishegonov@yahoo.com)  
or call George Vishegonov at 201 328-7744

**COVID-19 safety measures**

- COVID 19 vaccination with buster shot required
- Events will be outdoors
- COVID UPDATE: If your trip is canceled prior to departure in the event of a COVID-19-related reason, a full refund will be made.
- Check Bulgaria's COVID-19 policies online.

**Remember to join** the "Balkan Splendors: Tours, Trips, Culture, Adventure" group to stay up to date on upcoming tours and trips.

<https://www.meetup.com/balkan-splendors-tours-trips-culture-adventure/>

## **Itinerary:**

**Day 0. Overnight flight** from New York JFK airport or Newark Liberty airport, New Jersey to European airline hub and catching connecting flight to Sofia International Airport.

**Day 1. Sofia** Arrive Sofia airport, transfer to your hotel for overnight. -/-/D

### **Day 2. Sofia**

Our day at the capital: morning sightseeing tour of the capital and lunch at Vitosha Boulevard FREE TIME. Late afternoon visiting Boyana church and dinner at traditional Bulgarian restaurant at the skirts of Vitosha mountain. Tonight, at the hotel we will have our Orientation meeting with your tour leaders. FREE TIME and overnight in Sofia. Getting ready for tomorrow's first day of our walking tour. Overnight in Sofia. B/L/D.

### **Day 3. Shiroka Luka – Gela**

Transfer to the village of Shiroka Luka. We spend about an hour in the village taking a walk along its cobbled streets and then continue for another 20 min. drive to Gela - The Rhodope's highest situated village (1500 m). Gela hosts the annual Bagpipe Festival in August, when musicians from all over the country gather to participate in the bagpipe contest and promote authentic Rhodopinal folklore. The afternoon offers a delightful introduction to the Rhodope Mountains by taking several hours circular walk from our guest house to the nearby villages of Stikul and Solishta. B/L/D

Walking: 16 km, 5 hrs.; Uphill walk: 770 m; downhill walk: 770 m

### **Day 4. Gela - Lednicata Hut - Mugla - Chairski Lakes**

A long and rewarding day of walking through the heart of the Rhodopes. We walk most of the time above the tree line enjoying the magnificent views over Mt.Turlata and Mt.Perelik. This walk combines forest tracks with old mule trails without any steep ascents and descents. After a short rest in the small village of Mugla, we reach our final destination - Chairski Lakes Hut for overnight. The hut is named after the seven lakes nearby formed by melting glaciers during the Ice Age. The origin of the name of the lakes is Turkish. It comes from the word "chair", meaning "meadow". B/L/D

Walking: 18.5 km, 6 hrs.; Uphill walk: 950 m; downhill walk: 960 m

### **Day 5. Chairski Lakes - Trigrad Cave – Trigrad**

An easy day of walking lies ahead of us. After two hours along a dirt road following the Chairska River we reach the main road Devin-Trigrad, and we walk another 30 min. to get to the Devil Throat cave of Trigrad. The cave waterfall located here is one of the highest in Europe - about 42 m. B/-L/D

Walking: 8.5 km, 4 hrs.; Uphill walk: 305 m; downhill walk: 500 m

### **Day 6. Trigrad - Yagodina Cave - Yagodina – Lyaskovo**

This day starts with gentle 30-40 min. ascent North-West from the village to a forest trail

leading into alpine meadows offering views over Trigrad Gorge. The spectacular, 8 km Yagodina Cave is the longest known Rhodope cave and with its many abysses and labyrinthine tunnels, also one of Bulgaria's deepest. The 45-minute tour highlights the remarkable stalagmites and stalactites, which resemble curtains, and mentions the Neolithic settlers who lived here 8000 years ago. B/L/D

Walking: 8.2 km, 4 hrs.; Uphill walk: 285 m; downhill walk: 495 m

### **Day 7. Lyaskovo – Ziburdo**

After leaving the village we follow ancient trails crisscrossing streams as we ascend. Then after a steep climb we reach the highest point in the trek at 1470 m enjoying the panoramic views. Now descend through thick pine forests to the village of Ziburdo where we will stay overnight. B/L/D

Walking: 17.5 km, 6 hrs.; Uphill walk: 920 m; downhill walk: 795 m

### **Day 8. Miraculous Bridges - Kabata Hut - Orehovo - Bachkovo Monastery – Plovdiv**

After breakfast our hosts will transfer you to the Miraculous Bridges, two natural bridges of solid rock rising to 45 m, peacefully set among the pinewoods. You will first hike to Kabata Hut (1 hour 20 min) following a blue marked dirt road. After another 30 min. climb from the hut we reach Tsirikova Church - a small chapel at 1740 m. The trail affords breathtaking views over Chaya Valley and Chernatitsa Ridge. From here descend to Orehovo where our guide will be waiting for you to take you to the Bachkovo Monastery, one of southern Bulgaria's architectural gems, and then to Plovdiv for overnight. B/L/D/

Walking: 21 km, 7 hrs; Uphill walk: 850 m; downhill walk: 1180 m

### **Day9. Plovdiv – Sofia**

Private transfer to Sofia and check in at the hotel. FREE TIME till dinner. Tonight, we will explore the capital by visiting some hot night life establishments. Overnight in Sofia. B/L/D.

### **Day 10. Sofia**

Late Breakfast and a day for shopping at Paradise Mall. After lunch taking the chair lift to Aleko Hut - trekking to Cherni Vruh the Vitosha highest pick. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight in Sofia B/L/D

### **Day 11. Sofia Departure**

After breakfast get ready for your transfer to Sofia airport for departure. B/-/-

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\*NOTE: Necessary equipment and details will be provided upon request.





**REGISTRATION FORM:** Enclosed is my registration deposit of \$200 per person.

Single supplement: \$450. Additional charges: \$145 hotel taxes and service. Gratuities and drinks during meals not included. Program subject to change without notice. Cancellations 90 days prior to departure: Total refund: Less than 60 days: No refund. Travel insurance always recommended Total balance due July 13, 2022.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ No. of people \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

**Pay by PayPal:** <https://www.paypal.com/myaccount/transfer/homepage/preview>

**Once in, enter:** [georgevishegonov@yahoo.com](mailto:georgevishegonov@yahoo.com)

**OR**

**Make checks payable to:** George Vishegonov 381 Fort Lee Road, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A.

Phone (201) 328-7744. Web site at <https://www.jimgold.com/balkan-sporting-tours/> or  
<https://www.meetup.com/balkan-splendors-tours-trips-culture-adventure/events/283790163/>

**Jim Gold International, Inc./ Balkan Sporting Tours:**

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS Air Transportation:** International air not included except as noted.

**Rates:** Tour rates are subject to change in the event of currency fluctuations or increase in costs.

Inclusive tour rates are per person in double occupancy. In case of computer or human billing errors,

we reserve the right to re-invoice clients with corrected billing. **Reservations:** Deposits and Payments: Deposit of \$200 per person is required at time of reservation. Balance is due 30 days prior to departure date.

**Changes:** Prices and program subject to change without notice **Baggage:** One baggage per person and a carry on is allowed. **Cancellations:** Cancellations 60 days prior to departure: Total refund. Less than 60 days: No refund. Additionally, any cancellation fees imposed by the respective hotels, airlines, tour companies and cruise lines will be charged. Travel Insurance is non-refundable as are unused services. Gratuities: Tipping to guides, drivers, transfer personnel and hotel staff is left to the discretion of the participants and is not included. **Insurance:** Tour participants are strongly recommended to purchase insurance for trip cancellation, trip interruption, accident, sickness and/or loss of baggage and personal effects. **Dispute Resolution:** The sole and exclusive method of resolving any dispute which might rise under this agreement and any agreement between Balkan Sporting Tours., and another party (ies), the brochure or website and deemed to arise in the United States of America, shall be by arbitration before the American Arbitration Association in New York City pursuant to the Association's rules then in effect. Any such arbitration must take place in N.Y.C., N.Y. In any such arbitration, the substantive law of N.Y. will apply. In the event a tour participant should find a service or hotel unacceptable, it should be reported immediately to the local representative and to Balkan Sporting Tours/George Vishegonov upon their immediate return. No claim shall be deemed legitimate if not reported to the local representative and if reported after the scheduled service or after departure from the hotel. **Responsibility:** Balkan Sporting Tours George Vishegonov 328 Fort Lee Road, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A acts solely in its capacity as marketing agent on behalf of its suppliers such as air carriers, ground operator, taxi suppliers, motor coach suppliers, excursion or tour companies and hotels identified on documents supplied in connection with purchase of the tours. Balkan Sporting Tours/Jim Gold International, Inc. shall not be held responsible for any wrongful or negligent acts or omissions by any supplier or other party not directly owned or exclusively controlled by Balkan Sporting Tours/Jim Gold International, Inc. or by the failure of any equipment operated by

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