

## 3-2022 Cycling Bulgaria & Greece 14 days \$ 3995

From Rodopi Mountains to Halkidiki Seashore

Aug. 28 – Sep. 10, 2022

Group size 4 – 8 people can pick up their 14 days from April to October

Supplement for group of 2 or 3 people: \$ 180 per person

Guarantee departure - Single supplement: \$650 per person

**Register by July 16 and get a \$300 discount.**



Cycling trip combining mountain and seashore cycling in charming Bulgaria and sunny Greece.

This cycling tour will take you on a memorable adventure in the lands of the Rodopi mountains in Bulgaria, the central parts of Northern Greece and Halkidiki peninsula (Sithonia and Athos). You will bike among pristine landscapes of old coniferous forests, gorges, caves, big dams, and beautiful meadows in the mythical Rodopi mountains. After crossing the border with Greece you will start exploring the lands of Drama prefecture typical for their karst relief housing 2 of the most beautiful caves in Greece Aggitis and Alistrati. The tour ends with three days of exciting cycling in the middle peninsula of Halkidiki – Sithonia full with sun, numerous secluded beaches, stunning cliffs, rich island vegetation, olive gardens, palms and peaceful small villages and towns. This tour will show you the changing of the landscape, culture and architecture going from North to South to the Aegian Sea while you cycle, experience the local village life, swim in the crystal-clear sea waters and flavor your senses with local traditional food.

### Highlights:

- Rodopi Mountains - are the oldest mountains on the Balkan Peninsula, housing 2 of the most beautiful caves in Bulgaria - Devil's throat and Yagodina cave.
- Ognyanovo - famous spa resort with thermal mineral water swimming pools.
- Alistrati cave – with its length of 3000m is one of the most beautiful and biggest caves in Greece with rare cave formations and fauna. Nearby is the stunning canyon of Aggitis river.
- Athos Holy mountain - set in an area of outstanding natural beauty it is the center of Eastern Christian Orthodox Monasticism with more than 20 monasteries. It is also an UNESCO World heritage site

Sithonia – it is the middle part of Halkidiki peninsula known for its pristine nature and beautiful sandy beaches. It was named after Sithonas, son of Poseidon (God of the sea in the Greek mythology).

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**Dates:** Aug. 28 – Sep. 10, 2022      **Register by July 28 and get a \$300 discount.**

**Cost:** \$ 3995 (per person, double occupancy)  
Single supplement: \$650

**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
- 5 nights' accommodation in 3\*, 4 \* hotels, during the cycling tour in family run hotels - double accommodations, Single supplement: \$650 per person
- 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
- Bike, helmet, and saddlebag's
- Driver with a supporting vehicle luggage transport
- VAT and all local taxes & Fuel Surcharges.
- 24/7 technical support of the bikes

### **Not Included:**

- airfare international flight tickets
- travel insurance
- single supplement of \$650 per person
- drinks and meals not mentioned in the Itinerary
- tips at hotels and restaurants
- additional taxis rides or public transportation
- personal expenses
- optional excursions and entrance fees

### **Good to know:**

- **Roads:** we use mainly village asphalt roads with little traffic, road conditions are relatively good with some exceptions (bumpy sections, potholes, rough asphalt), In Halkidiki peninsula we use main quality coastal roads with low traffic in the tour's active season. Short off-road sections can be added.
- **Guide/driver:** The guide with the supporting vehicle and the luggage inside checks several times a day if everything is OK with the group, waiting by crossroads, accompanying them for breakfast, lunch and dinner and giving them talks by the most interesting sites en-route

### **Necessary equipment:**

All riders must always wear a helmet riding. We encourage riders to bring their own helmets or rent one of ours. Cycling gloves, breathable clothes, waterproof gear, cycling

shoes/trainers, swimming suit sunscreen lotion; sunglasses with UV protection, (For the full list with recommended items see General” in the trip dossier).

**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 and transfer to your hotel for overnight in Sofia. -/-/D.

#### **Day 2. Sofia**

Our day at the capital: visiting Boyana church and trip to the Vitosha mountain. Tonight, we will have our Orientation meeting with the cycling tour leaders. Getting ready for tomorrow’s cycling tour. Overnight in Sofia. B/L/D.

#### **Day 3. Trigrad - Devil's throat cave - Yagodina cave - Dospat dam**

Early transfer to Trigrad (3.5 hours’ drive). Today we bike through the stunning cliffs of Trigrad and Buinovo gorge and visit the Devil’s Throat cave, housing one of the highest underground waterfalls in Europe and the beautiful Yagodina cave. After lunch we continue cycling through some small villages, potato fields, coniferous forests, and picturesque meadows with great panoramic views. We end up in Dospat town situated near the biggest Dospat dam in Rodopi mountains. Cycling distance: 47km. Uphill/downhill: 1220/1230m. Overnight in Dospat. B/L/D

#### **Day 4. Dospat - Kovachevitsa - Ognyanovo spa**

Today we continue cycling westwards to the hot spring resort Ognyanovo with optional stop in the architectural reserve of Dolen village. The road goes mainly downhill on nice meadows and coniferous forests, and we finish cycling in the hot mineral swimming pools of Ognyanovo. Optional visit to architectural reserve Kovatchevitsa. Cycling distance: 51km. . Overnight in Ognyanovo. B/L/D

#### **Day 5. Ognyanovo - Aggitis cave**

We pass the border with Greece in the bus (1h transfer) and start cycling from Granitis

village at 800m. From there we go downhill and visit the interesting Aggiti's river cave (11 km long). After that we continue cycling on isolated mountain roads in secluded country regions surrounded by vast pastures with sheep herds, vineyards, cotton fields, meadows, and high mountains. The cycling day ends in Alistrati village famous for the nearby cave and canyon. Cycling distance: 57km. Uphill/downhill: 870/1400m. Overnight in Alistrati. B/L/D

#### **Day 6. Alistarti cave - Aggitis canyon – Athos**

Relax day. After breakfast we visit the beautiful Alistrati cave (1 hour tour) and the Aggiti's river canyon nearby. Then we get on the bus for a transfer (2.30 hours) to the Athos peninsula (the most eastern finger of Halkidiki peninsula). We stay at Ouranoupoli village near the border of Athos holy land and enjoy the rest of the day for relaxation – walking, swimming in the sea or lying on the beach. We also recommend a boat trip to the nearby island Amoliani. Cycling distance: 65km. Uphill/downhill: 920/960m. Overnight in Ouranoupoli. B/L/D

#### **Day 7. Ouranoupoli – Vourvourou**

Cycling on mountain and coastal roads via small towns and villages from Ouranoupoli to the nice coast village Vourvourou with great beaches and views towards the Diasporos island. The route goes all the way from Athos peninsula to the middle finger of Halkidiki peninsula - Sithonia. Cycling distance: 65km. Uphill/downhill: 920/960m. Overnight in Vourvourou. B/L/D

#### **Day 8. Vourvourou - Kalamitsi beach - Porto Kofu**

Cycling from Vourvourou to Porto Kofu on the main coastal road with nice views towards the sea and the interior mountains. You pass by several small villages and have a rest for a swim on the beautiful beach of Kalamitsi. After some 10km cycling over the mountain you reach the beautiful bay of Porto Kofu village, where you stay overnight. Optional bike trip on dirt roads among olive gardens and farmlands to the top of a rock with splendid view over rocky coves. Cycling distance: 55km. Uphill/downhill: 1090/1080m. Overnight in Porto Kofu. B/L/D

#### **Day 9. Porto Kofu - Nikiti**

Today is one of the prettiest cycling routes of the whole program. You follow mainly isolated roads very near the sea passing by secluded beaches and small sea villages set in rich green vegetation. Enjoy the splendid views of the small islands nearby, the rocky coast and the dense green coniferous forests while you cycle, swim, and sunbathe on one of the many lonely beaches en-route. Option for visit the secluded mountain village of Parthenonas. The cycling ends in the region of Nikiti where we stay overnight. Cycling distance: 51km. Uphill/downhill: 490/500m. Overnight in Nikiti. B/L/D

#### **Day 10. Thessaloniki – Sofia**

Transfer back to Sofia checking at our hotel. FREE TIME explore the city on your own. Dinner and overnight in Sofia. B/L/D

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

Breakfast Walking tour visiting National Museum, indoor market Halite, Musk and Synagogue, lunch at the Vitosha boulevard. Free time or optional shopping at the fashionable mall of Sofia. Dinner and overnight in Sofia at the hotel B/L/D

**Day 12. Sofia – Plovdiv**

After breakfast we will take a day trip to Plovdiv - the second big city of Bulgaria. Walking tour and lunch at the Old Town of Plovdiv. FREE TIME and dinner at the Old Town. After dinner departure to Sofia and return to the hotel. Overnight in Sofia. B/L/D

**Day 13. Sofia – Pravets Golf Resort**

Today after breakfast we will make a short transfer to Pravets Golf Resort for a day of outdoor relaxation laying down by the pool or taking a swing at the golf course. Lunch at the resort. After sundown return to Sofia for dinner and FREE TIME and chance to explore the night life at the capital Sofia. Overnight in Sofia. B/L/D

**Day 14. Sofia** Transfer to Sofia airport and departure to your destination. B/-/-

**\*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 any such supplier or other party. Balkan Sporting Tours/Jim Gold International, Inc. shall not be liable for any loss, injury or damage to person, property or otherwise, in connection with any accommodations, transportation, or other services, resulting directly or indirectly from any acts of God, dangerous incident to the sea, fire, breakdown of machinery or equipment, acts of government or other authorities, wars whether or not declared, hostilities, civil disturbances, strikes, riots, thefts, pilferage, epidemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, defaults, delays or cancellations of or changes to itineraries or schedules, or from any causes resulting from insufficient or improperly issued passports, visas, or other documents passports, visas, or other documents. Neither Balkan Sporting Tours/Jim Gold International, Inc. nor any of its affiliates or subsidiaries shall be or become liable or responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the tour member as a result of any of the aforementioned causes. Tour participant agrees that any claim against Balkan Sporting Tours/Jim Gold International, Inc. is subject only to the jurisdiction of the courts of the country in which the cause of action arose. The right is reserved to substitute hotels and to alter itineraries. The right is also reserved to cancel the tour prior to departure. If any tour is canceled prior to departure, Balkan Sporting Tours /Jim Gold International, Inc. will be responsible only up to the amount of monies Balkan Sporting Tours /Jim Gold International, Inc. received less any cancellation fee applied by a supplier as defined above. Travel Insurance is recommended. Balkan Sporting Tours/Jim Gold International, Inc. is not responsible or liable for defaults of those not directly under the exclusive co