

BULGARIA FOLK TOUR 2019 ITINERARY

VISIT THE LAND OF 1001 DANCES

September 16-30, 2019

With Vlasto Petkovski (choreographer) and Gratzian Kolev (musician)

(Sofia, Rila Monastery, Bansko, Dobarsko, Leshten, Kovachevica, Blagoevgrad, Avramovo, Velingrad, Plovdiv, Starosel, Kazanluk, Shipka, Gabrovo, Trjavna, Veliko Turnovo, Elena, Trojan)

*** For pricing details, please contact sunstagecompany@gmail.com ***

Price includes: Round-trip air, city tours, guide, hotels, hotel taxes, three meals daily, transfers, all museum entrances, performance fees, air-conditioned tour bus, workshops with professional folk dance instructors, and service charges.



Itinerary subject to change without notice

Day 1 - Monday, Sep 16: Departure from Toronto to Sofia at 20:40

Day 2 - Tuesday, Sep 17: Arriving at Sofia Airport at 12:20. Transfer to hotel. Short panoramic bus tour and stroll through the centre of Sofia in the afternoon. Dinner at 19:00 at the hotel.



Day 3 - Wednesday, Sep 18: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, sightseeing tour of Sofia - The ruins of Roman Serdica, “Alexander Nevski” Cathedral, Ethnographic museum, “Saint Sofia” Basilica, National Museum of History, Folk Dance Schools, Saint George Rotunda, Boyana church, Saint Nikolas Russian church. Dinner at 19:00 at the hotel. Folk dance workshop after dinner. Overnight in the hotel.



Day 4 - Thursday, Sep 19: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, visit of Rila Monastery. Tour of the monastery and museum, and visit an authentic monk’s cell. Traditional fresh trout lunch from the Rila river. Late afternoon – arrival at Bansko. Check in to the hotel. Dinner at 19:00 at the hotel. Overnight in the hotel.



Day 5 - Friday, Sep 20: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, tours around Bansko, Dobarsko, Leshten and Kovachevica, and visit of folk performers there. Evening at Bansko with traditional Bulgarian dinner at 19:00 followed by a folk dance presentation. Overnight in the hotel.



Day 6 - Saturday, Sep 21: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, trip to Blagoevgrad, and visit Varosha district. Lunch in the city. Back to Bansko. Free time until dinner. Dinner at 19:00 at the hotel. Overnight in the hotel.



Day 7 - Sunday Sep 22: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, visit Velingrad, and Avramovo (the highest railroad station on the Balkans). Lunch at spa hotel in the traditional Bulgarian restaurant on the lake, "Kleptuza." Afternoon – arriving at

the Cultural Capital of Europe for 2019-Plovdiv. Stroll on the main street, and visiting local attractions. Check in to the hotel in Plovdiv. Dinner at 19:00 at the hotel. Folk dance workshop after dinner. Overnight in the hotel.



Day 8 - Monday, Sep 23: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, visit the main attractions of Plovdiv (Cultural capital of Europe for 2019 – the Old Town, the Antic Theater, the ethnographic museum, and the St. Konstantine and St. Helena churches). Lunch in a traditional restaurant in the Old Town. Visit Bachkovo Monastery and the three churches in the afternoon. Back to hotel in Plovdiv. Dinner at 19:00 at the hotel. Overnight in the hotel.



Day 9 - Tuesday, Sep 24: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, visit of the Thracian tombs in Starosel. Dégustation of local wines. Lunch in Starosel. In the afternoon visit the Rose Valley and Rose Museum in Kazanlak. Back to hotel in Plovdiv. Dinner at 19:00 and overnight at the hotel.



Day 10 - Wednesday, Sep 25: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, visit of Pick Shipka, and the local museum. Lunch in ethnic complex “Etur” in Gabrovo. Stroll through the local market, and folk crafts show. Visit Trjavna, and arrive at the Old Bulgarian capital Veliko Tynovo in the evening. Check in to the hotel in Veliko Tynovo. Dinner at 19:00 at the hotel. After dinner, folk dance workshop/performance and overnight at the hotel.



Day 11 - Thursday, Sep 26: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, sightseeing in Veliko Tynovo. Visit of Carevec, Samovodska Charshija, and the Old Castle. Lunch at Arbanasi. Visit the Konstancalieva house, and Birth of Christ church. Evening in Veliko Tynovo. Back to the hotel in Veliko Tynovo. Dinner at 19:00 at the hotel.



Day 12 - Friday, Sep 27: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, visit of Preobrazhenski monastery. Tour to Elena, and visit of one of the biggest dairy farms. Sampling of local feta cheese and yogurt (Bulgaria is the birthplace of the yogurt, and *Bacillus Bulgaricus* – the bacillus that turns milk into yogurt). Back to Veliko Turnovo to see the light show “Sound and light” from a VIP hall with a panoramic terrace and complimentary glass of wine from the Ljaskovec winery. Dinner at 19:00 and overnight in the hotel.



Day 13 - Saturday, Sep 28: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, depart for Trojan. Lunch in Trojan and visit the Trojan monastery. Back to Sofia. Check in to the hotel in Sofia and dinner at 19:00 at the hotel followed by a folk dance workshop/performance.



Day 14 - Sunday, Sep 29: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, day trip to Koprivshtica – visit the houses of the Bulgarian revolutionaries from the April uprising, and the famous bridge from where the uprising started. Lunch in Koprivshtica. Back to Sofia with dinner in a folk restaurant with a program including the unique Fire phenomenon “nestinari dances” (barefoot dance on fire).

Day 15 - Monday Sep 30: Breakfast at 07:30. After breakfast, free morning, and preparation for going back home. Drive to Sofia airport. 14:20 Flight to Toronto. Arriving at Toronto Pearson Airport at 19:30.

To be determined:

Folk dance workshops, and musical instruments presentation.

The dates of the following festivals will be in September, but are still not finalized by the trip organisers. Some of them will be included in the tour. As soon as we have the final dates, we will inform you which ones will be included:

- Panbalkanian folk meeting in Petrohan (Общобалкански народен събор в Петрохан)
- Tabiet – Novi Han (Табиет – Нови Хан)
- Horo with the Shops – Novi Han (На хоро при шопите – Нови Хан)
- The Balkanis singing and dancing – Berkovica (Балканът пее и танцува – Берковица)
- Folktrails – Breznica (Фолклорни пътеки – Брезница)
- Vansko Balkan Fest – Vansko (Банско Балкан Фест – Банско)
- Folk groups and orchestras fest – Radnevo (Фестивал на фолклорини групи и оркестри – Раднево)
- Tastes from yesterday – Rakovski (Вкусовете от вчера – Раковски)
- From Dunabe to the Balkan – Borovo (От Дунав до Балкана – Борово)
- Folkcraftsfest – Gabrovo (Панаир на народните занаяти-Габрово)
- Day is feeding a year – Polikraishte (Ден година храни – Поликраище)
- Plumfest – Trojan and Oreshaka (Фестивал на сливата – Троян и Орешака)

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