

The Rose Fields of Bulgaria Tour

31 May – 5 June 2017 (Tour code: RF)

Price: £995

(Based on a group of minimum of 4 persons, if more people book price will be lower – see Price Conditions at the end of the leaflet).

See the most beautiful and aromatic face of Bulgaria – the rose! We shall visit the unique Rose Valley, one of Bulgaria's best-known symbols and its numerous fields of roses, which make the world famous rose oil. We shall join the official celebrations in Kazanluk area, as well as lots of private activities: authentic rose-picking, Eastern Orthodox choir concert, folklore concert and visits to some Thracian tombs from 5th to 3rd Centuries BC. The important historical sites of Sofia and Plovdiv will be visited as well.



Bulgaria's beautiful scenery, friendly people and excellent wine and food are additional highlights. The B-BS offers you the

benefits of nearly forty years' experience of organising tours to Bulgaria and excellent value.

For your financial protection our tour operators for the last twenty years, Balkania Travel Ltd. are licensed by the UK Civil Aviation Authority, ATOL 4465 and bonded by the International Air Transport Association, IATA number 91-2 7839.

Projected itinerary (which may be subject to adjustment)

Wednesday 31 May Our guide will meet you at the airport, and take you to your hotel. After check-in, walking tour of central Sofia. We shall see the Rotunda of St. George, 4thC. AD) which is the oldest building in Sofia still in use: the Roman ruins of Emperor Constantine's Serdika, the President's office, the former Royal palace and the iconic gold domed St. Alexander Nevski Memorial Church. Dinner and overnight in Sofia.

Thursday 1 June Morning drive to UNESCO listed Boyana church, with its amazing pre-Renaissance 13thC. frescoes, then continue on to Plovdiv. Check-in to your central hotel. Independent lunch. Afternoon visits to see the restored Tsar Simeon's Garden, ongoing excavations of the Roman forum, Roman mosaics in the newly opened basilica from 5th C. AD and the mosaics in a residential building from 4th C., now a small private museum. Independent dinner. Overnight in Plovdiv.

Friday 2 June Walking tour of the Old Town. Plovdiv is one of the oldest still inhabited cities in the world. We shall explore some of the remains of the numerous civilizations on these lands: among them Thracian, Greek, Romans, Ottoman and the beautiful decorated timber buildings of the Bulgarian National Revival Period, 18th-19th Centuries. Independent lunch. Drive to Kazanluk visiting Hissarya on the way. The town gained popularity in the Roman period mainly

due to its hot mineral springs. We shall walk among the Roman ruins and taste some of the waters directly from the springs.

Continue to Karlovo where we shall visit a producer of rose products, and then on to Kazanluk, via a rose distillery where we learn about the production of rose oil. Accommodation and dinner in the village of Shipka. Opening ceremony of the Rose Festival in Kazanluk (reserved seats). Return to our hotel for overnight.

Saturday 3 June Very early in the morning (around 6 am) optional visit to the rose fields where workers pick the rose petals and see who is the best rose-picker among us. Later we shall visit the Rose Museum and, by special permission, the Rose Institute. Our other visits for the day include: some of the Thracian tombs of the Valley of the Thracian Kings, the historical museum, the atelier of a local violin-maker and a concert by an Orthodox choir in a local church. Then we shall drive back to the village of Shipka and visit the beautiful Russian church.

Festive dinner with a folklore performance especially for us. Overnight in Shipka.

Sunday 4 June Official rose-picking ceremony in the fields near Kazanluk with lots of photo opportunities and a presentation of the original rose-distillation process. Then we shall drive to Kazanluk for the colourful parade. Independent lunch, then drive to Koprivshitsa. Walking tour along the cobbled streets with visits to some of the house-museums. There are numerous houses from 19thC. National Revival period. Overnight stay and farewell dinner in Koprivshitsa.

Monday 5 June Some time for shopping or sightseeing before driving to Sofia airport for your return flight.

Price condition: At the time of booking we shall confirm and invoice at the **starting price of £995** per person. That price will be reviewed subject to number of participants booked at the time of due balance (8 weeks before departure) and if necessary, re-invoiced accordingly. E.g. if 6 people booked the price will be reduced to £970, if 8 people book, the price will be at its final **lowest of £950** per person.

OUR PRICE INCLUDES:

- Return flights from Heathrow to Sofia with all taxes and charges. Our online check in, seat reservation and boarding pass service.
- Meals as described in itinerary. Breakfasts and 4 dinners, including Festive dinner at Shipka.
- 5 nights accommodation in 3* and 4* hotels with en suite facilities on a twin bedded shared occupancy basis. Pension/private accommodation in Shipka.
- Coach for transfers and excursions.
- Leader/Interpreter.
- All entrance fees.
- Bradt's Travel Guide to Bulgaria 2015 edition before your departure and information pack locally

NOT INCLUDED:

- Lunches and light suppers (about £4 - 5).
- Travel Insurance (compulsory). Balkania Travel can advise.
- Drinks and personal expenses such as gratuities.
- Single room supplement £85.

Published May 2016.