


Bulgaria – Turkey

Sofia, Plovdiv, Svilengrad, Edirne, Istanbul, Haskovo
10 days / 9 Nights



 The program includes 9 nights FB basis – 3 nights in **Sofia**, 3 nights in **Istanbul** (Turkey), 1 night in **Plovdiv**, 1 night in **Svilengrad**, 1 night in **Haskovo**. Transfer in an air-conditioned bus; English speaking guide throughout the entire trip.



PROGRAM

◆ DAY 1: ARRIVAL AT SOFIA AIRPORT.

Transfer to the hotel. Dinner and overnight stay in Sofia.

◆ DAY 2: BREAKFAST - DEPARTURE FOR RILA MONASTERY.

The Rila Monastery is the biggest monastery in Bulgaria, founded in the 10th century by the monk and hermit St. John of Rila, patron and protector of Bulgaria. The monastery served as the center of cultural and spiritual life of the Bulgarian people, during the centuries of foreign enslavement. The tour includes a visit to the monastery, the main church and the monastery museum. Lunch. Departure for **Plovdiv** – one of Europe's most ancient cities, older than Athens, Rome and Constantinople. Arrival. Accommodation at the hotel. Dinner. Overnight in Plovdiv.

◆ DAY 3: BREAKFAST - SIGHTSEEING TOUR OF PLOVDIV

A tour of the old town which consists of one of the most spectacular ensembles of town houses from the period of the **Bulgarian National Revival**. Visit to the Saints Constantine and Helena Church, Roman Theatre,

Regional Ethnographic Museum. Lunch. Free time. Around 17h00 departure for Svilengrad. Arrival. Accommodation at the hotel. Dinner. Overnight stay in Svilengrad.

◆ DAY 4: BREAKFAST - DEPARTURE FOR TURKEY.

Arrival in Edirne and visit of the **Selimiye Mosque**, Turkey's prettiest mosque, completed from 1568 until 1574. It is considered to be the masterpiece of Mimar Sinan – turkey's most famous architect. Lunch. Departure for Istanbul. Arrival. Accommodation at the hotel. Dinner. Overnight stay in Istanbul.

◆ DAY 5: BREAKFAST - SIGHTSEEING TOUR OF ISTANBUL'S HISTORICAL CENTER, FORMER CONSTANTINOPLE

Visit to the **Blue Mosque**, the only mosque in the world with six minarets; the Hippodrome square with an Egyptian obelisk; the Column of Constantine, the Serpent Column and the Fountain of Kaiser Wilhelm II. A visit to St Sophia Church, the royal church of the Byzantine Empire in Constantinople. It was built in just 5 years, from 532 to 537, by emperor Justinian, who wanted to build the biggest and greatest temple in the world. St Sophia Church is considered to be the brightest example of byzantine architecture and because of its size and the engineering successes surrounding it, it is considered to be one of the grandest buildings of the Antiquity. 1000 years after its completion St Sophia Church remains the biggest temple in the world and even today is the world's fourth largest temple. In 1453 St Sophia Church is turned into a mosque by the ottoman conquerors. Lunch. A visit to **Topkapi Palace** - center of the Ottoman Empire's government for 400 years (from 1465 until 1853). Dinner at a restaurant offering evening entertainment program with oriental dances. Overnight stay in Istanbul.

◆ DAY 6: BREAKFAST - PANORAMIC TOUR OF ISTANBUL

The Golden Horn, **the Bosphorus**, a tour of the Asian part of the city. Lunch. Free time. Dinner. Overnight in Istanbul.

◆ DAY 7: BREAKFAST - A VISIT TO DOLMABAHCE PALACE,

official residence of the sultans since its completion from 1853 until 1922. Lunch. Departure for **Haskovo**. Arrival. Accommodation at the hotel. Dinner. Overnight stay in Haskovo

◆ DAY 8: BREAKFAST - DEPARTURE FOR SOFIA.

On the way – a stopover at **the Bachkovo Monastery**. Situated at the foot of the Rhodope Mountains. It is the second largest Bulgarian Monastery, founded in the 11th century, keeping frescoes from 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, as well as the legendary wonder-working icon of Virgin Mary Eleusa from 1310. Lunch. Departure for Sofia. Arrival. Accommodation at hotel. Dinner. Overnight stay in Sofia.

◆ DAY 9: BREAKFAST - SIGHTSEEING TOUR OF SOFIA

– St. Nedelya Cathedral, St. George Rotunda, Russian Church of St. Nicolas, St. Sophia Church, St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Ivan Vazov National Theater. Lunch. A visit to **the Boyana Church**, which is included in the UNESCO List of World Cultural Heritage. It has preserved frescoes of an unknown artist, which date back to the year 1259. The frescoes impress with the spirituality and expressiveness of their images, created 7 years

before the birth of Giotto di Bondone, considered the first Renaissance artist. Free time. Dinner at a typical Bulgarian restaurant with a folklore program. Overnight stay in Sofia.



DAY 10: BREAKFAST - TRANSFER TO THE AIRPORT. DEPARTURE.

END OF SERVICE

PRICE UPON REQUEST