

6 Nights / 7 Days

# BALKAN ESSENTIALS

Serbia – Bosnia – Montenegro – Croatia

- Travel back in time on Ćira, the retro train that rides along the Šargan 8 heritage railway
- Blend in with the locals in the vibrant Baščaršija bazaar in Sarajevo
- Enjoy a boat ride to the charming islet Our lady of the Rocks in Perast
- Try to find all the Game of Thrones filming locations in Dubrovnik



*The good thing about our tours is that they can be customized to suit your desires. If you need more time to settle in and adjust before the tour, we'll be glad to book additional overnights for you. You are welcome to contact us for more details!*

## Day 1

### Arrival to Belgrade

Upon arrival in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, you will be welcomed by your driver and escorted to your hotel. On the short coach ride from the Nikola Tesla airport, sit back, relax and enjoy the sights of New Belgrade with its prominent 'blocks' – a classic example of Socialist architecture, built after World War II – and modern business centres, including the imposing Ušće Tower. Along the way, your driver will show you and tell some stories about the Western Gate of Belgrade, the famous Belgrade Arena and the monumental Palace of Serbia. Check-in at your hotel.



Skadarska Street

Use your free time to rest and prepare for the trip. At 7pm in the hotel reception, you will be greeted by your guide who will introduce himself and provide you with detailed information about the entire trip. You will also meet the other travellers in the group. For the rest of the evening, we recommend you take a short, leisurely walk through one of the oldest quarters towards the bohemian heart of Belgrade - Skadarlija. In a charming 19th century cobbled street you will find many numerous 'kafanas' where you can try delicious local specialties while listening to traditional music. Overnight.

## Day 2

### Leisure day Belgrade Sightseeing

After breakfast, you will embark on a tour (driving and walking) around Belgrade, a capital city well known for

its various architectural styles, dynamic history and fantastic views of one of the biggest river confluences in the whole of Europe. Start the tour visiting the Museum of Yugoslav History, a memorial complex devoted to the life and deeds of Josip Broz Tito, the political leader of Yugoslavia. Next, you will pass by the



St. Sava Temple

stadium of FC Red Star – the former European and World Cup champions, and proceed to the Temple of Saint Sava, Belgrade's patron saint. Very much a symbol of the city, this impressive building can be seen from any part of the capital. After a short break at the Temple's plateau, the panoramic tour will then take you from Slavija Square, to Saint Mark's Church, the Serbian National Parliament and White Palace, and on to Republic Square. This most central point of Belgrade is surrounded by such cultural institutions as the National Theatre and National Museum. The tour will then head along the lively Knez Mihailo Street, the main pedestrian and shopping zone, before stopping for a visit to the Orthodox Cathedral Church of Saint Michael the Archangel, which is located just across from the Building of Patriarchate. Your guide will tell you about the tavern around the corner, the oldest in the city and intriguingly known as "?" (Question Mark), before continuing on to Kalemegdan Park and Belgrade Fortress, the most important cultural-historic complex of the city, situated on the confluence of the rivers Sava and Danube.

## Day 3

### Belgrade – Šargan Eight – Wooden-town – Zlatibor

Breakfast and check-out. Morning departure from Belgrade, heading west towards the picturesque Ovčar-Kablar Gorge, through which the West Morava river meanders. The tour will continue on to Tara National Park, and you will have time to reflect on its beauty from aboard the authentic, retro 'Nostalgia'

train which runs along the narrow-gauge heritage railway, Šargan Eight. Travelling from the bottom of Šargan mountain on a route shaped like the number eight (hence the name), you will be transported back in time while enjoying the stunning mountain scenery and numerous tunnels and viaducts. At the beginning of the 20th century, the railway used to be a part of the railway from Belgrade to Sarajevo. After enjoying the breathtaking nature, you will arrive at the ethno village Drvengrad (Wooden-town), built by prominent movie director Emir Kusturica. The village, which includes the Mečavnik Hotel, houses, galleries, shops, a cinema and a church, is made of natural materials, mostly wood. Since 2008, the village plays host to the annual Küstendorf Film and Music Festival and Drvengrad has been visited by the likes of Johnny Depp, Monica Belucci, Jim Jarmusch and many others. After exploring Drvengrad, there will be a short drive to the famous Zlatibor Mountain, home of the first royal resort in Serbia. Here you can enjoy a relaxing walk around the quaint town centre of this picturesque air spa. In the evening, an enjoyable dinner of traditional Serbian food typical of the region will be served in the hotel.

## Day 4

### Višegrad – Sarajevo

Breakfast and check-out. The tour continues to Bosnia and Herzegovina and a short drive takes you to Višegrad, where Emir Kusturica used his imagination and creativity to build Andrićgrad (also known as Stone Town). It is a cultural centre with numerous buildings and facilities built on the banks of the Drina river near the famous bridge (a monument under the protection of UNESCO). The bridge is referenced in the title of Ivo Andrić's novel The Bridge on the Drina and in honour of the Nobel Prize winning author, Kusturica's town was called



Sarajevo

Andrićgrad (literally translated as Andrić's Town). In Andrićgrad, the tour will stop for lunch at an unusual restaurant called Zlatna Moruna, the interior of which is decorated with frescoes by well-known artist Bisenija Tereščenko. After lunch, the tour will continue on to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Check-in at the hotel. After a short rest, the Sarajevo sightseeing tour will start, covering all the main sights including: Vijećnica or Sarajevo City Hall, the building of which was finished during the Austro-Hungarian period; the old downtown of the city called Baščaršija; the historical and cultural centre of Sarajevo with authentic shops and souqs from the Ottoman era; the Orthodox Church from the 16th century; the Gazi Husrev-bey mosque; the Sahat Tower from the 17th century; and the first public toilet in Europe. Next you will head on to the Latin Bridge where Gavrilo Princip shot the successor to the Austro-Hungarian throne Franz Ferdinand, consequently starting the First World War. After crossing the bridge, you will reach Bezistan, a market complex from the 16th century, and then on to the main pedestrian zone Ferhadiya with the Sarajevo Synagogue from 1580 and a Catholic cathedral from 1881. Return to the hotel and overnight.

## Day 5

### Mostar – Blagaj – Trebinje

Breakfast and check-out. Drive to one of the most beautiful cities of the Balkan Peninsula, Mostar. During the walking tour, you will visit the symbol of the city, Balkan TOP 10 and the most photographed sight in the country – the Old Bridge (a UNESCO protected landmark). You will then proceed to Koski Mehmed Pasha Mosque, the Crooked Bridge and the old tanner's quarter Tabhana. Free time in Mostar for getting lunch on the banks of the Neretva river, with an amazing view of the bridge that rises above you. The excursion continues to Blagaj (a site on the UNESCO Tentative List), an old town from the 15th century where the Kosača noble family ruled. Blagaj was also the crib of Islam of today's Bosnia and Herzegovina, when dervish Sari Satluk built a khanqah at the riverhead of Buna. During the short tour, enjoy the view of the monastery located in a fairytale environment, beneath the cliffs, on the shores of the emerald green river Buna. The next destination of the day is

Trebinje, a picturesque town with a wonderful mix of sights originating from a mix of different cultures. The tour starts with a visit to Arslanagića Bridge, a dream for artists and photographers alike; this stone bridge with its peaceful atmosphere will take you 400 years back in time. During the leisurely walk through the narrow streets of the old town, you'll see the most important sights of Trebinje as you make your way to the so called 'Poet's Square' where you can sit under the 115 year old trees, which are the symbol of the town. In this beautiful town, Emir Kusturica, the



Mostar

world famous movie director, made one of his last movies, with Monica Bellucci in the leading role. Overnight in the hotel.

## Day 6

### Perast – Kotor – Dubrovnik

Breakfast and check-out. This day is devoted to the Republic of Montenegro, a country that boasts of rich heritage and immense natural beauty. The Bay of Kotor with its unique landscape is a must-see location for more than 500 cruisers per year. On the way to the marvellous Kotor, you will make a stop at the town of Perast, a little settlement baroque in style. From Perast, you'll start a relaxing boat ride along the Bay of Kotor to the picturesque island of Our Lady of the Rocks. This manmade island is home to a church with valuable paintings by local artists, silver votive tablets and a famous votive tapestry. After the boat ride, you will arrive in Kotor, an old Mediterranean town that dates back to the 12th and 14th century. A walking tour will allow you to explore this UNESCO site, including the churches of Saint Nicholas and Saint Luke, the Cathedral of Saint Tryphon and other cultural moments. You will have free time to continue wandering around the old paved town, or have lunch in a restaurant on one of romantic squares. The next destination is Dubrovnik, one of the most significant monuments in



Our Lady of the Rocks

the world and one of Europe's best preserved walled cities, known since the 7th century. The old town is surrounded by a 2 km long wall that gives a great opportunity to see old Dubrovnik from above during a one hour relaxing walk; the city's churches, fortifications and monuments are a real must-see. Dubrovnik has enchanted a lot of famous persons to devote their pieces of art to the city, thus in this city of marble and light coloured stone, you will find numerous art galleries and unique shops. In the historical centre of Dubrovnik, you will visit the main street Stradun, the main square Placa, Pile Gate, the Rector's Palace, Sponza Palace, the walls of the Old Town, the church of Saint Blaise, the cathedral, the Jesuit church, Orlando's Column, Big Onofrio's Fountain, the city port and other hidden gems. Hotel check-in and overnight.

## Day 7

### Departure

Breakfast and hotel check-out. As most of our clients decide to extend their trip within their own organisation, transfer to the airport at the end of the tour is not included in the overall price. Any guests who would like Balkan&more to organise a departure transfer on their behalf are welcome to contact us. End of services.

*If you feel like you are not ready to end this trip and would like to spend more time on your vacation, let us know and we will book some more overnights for you. You are welcome to contact us for more details!*

## GENERAL INCLUSIONS / VALID BOTH FOR STANDARD AND SUPERIOR PACKAGE

- Airport arrival transfer
- All sightseeing tours and transfers that are included in the itinerary
- Entrance tickets to the Museum of Yugoslav History, Wooden-town and Blagaj
- Ticket for the 90-minutes ride on Museum Train - Šargan eight\*
- Boat trip from Perast to the island of Our Lady of the Rocks
- 1 bottle of water (0.5 l) daily for each passenger
- Professional tour guidance throughout the tour
- VAT, accommodation taxes and city taxes
- Tour logistics and organisation by a licensed incoming agency

## STANDARD package / ACCOMMODATION

**2 BB in Belgrade** in Hotel Royal Inn 4\* / Hotel Mark 4\* / Hotel Prag 4\* or similar

**1 HB in Zlatibor** in Hotel Palisad standard 4\* / Hotel Mir 4\* / Hotel Iris 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Sarajevo** in Hotel Holiday 4\* / Hotel Bosnia 4\* / Hotel Old Town 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Trebinje** in Hotel Platani 4\* / Hotel Central Park 4\* / Hotel SL Industry 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Dubrovnik** in Hotel Lapad 4\* / Grand Hotel Park 4\* / Hotel Uvala 4\* or similar

## SUPERIOR package / ACCOMMODATION

**2 BB in Belgrade** in Hotel Saint Ten 5\* / Hotel Hyatt Regency 5\* / Hotel Hilton 5\* or similar

**1 HB in Zlatibor** in Hotel Palisad superior 4\* / Hotel Mona 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Sarajevo** in Hotel Europe 5\* / Hotel President 4\* / Hotel Residence Inn by Marriott 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Trebinje** in Hotel Nar 4\* / Hotel SL Industry 4\* / Hotel Central Park 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Dubrovnik** in Hotel Rixos Libertas 5\* / Hotel Neptun 4\* / Hotel Valamar Lacroma 4\* or similar