

# THE BEST OF SERBIA, ROMANIA AND BULGARIA

11 NIGHTS | 12 DAYS

Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria

Day 1

## Welcome to Belgrade

Belgrade

Day 2

## Vibrant Capital of Serbia

Belgrade

Day 3

## Treasures of Vojvodina

Belgrade - Fruška Gora NP - Sremski Karlovci - Novi Sad - Belgrade

Day 4

## Banat to Transylvania

Belgrade - Timișoara - Sibiu

Day 5

## Transylvania Unveiled

Sibiu - "Astra" National Museum Complex - Transfăgărașan Road - Sinaia

Day 6

## The Castles of Transylvania

Sinaia - Peles Castle - Brașov - Bran Castle - Sinaia

Day 7

## From Vineyards to Capital

Sinaia - Dealu Mare Wine Region - Bucharest

Day 8

## "The Little Paris"

Bucharest

Day 9

## Introduction to Bulgaria

Bucharest - Veliko Tarnovo - Arbanasi

Day 10

## Traditions and Craftsmanship

Arbanasi - Etar Ethno Village - Valley of Roses - Plovdiv

Day 11

## Sofia's Cultural Fusion

Plovdiv - Sofia

Day 12

## Farewell, Sofia

Sofia

## EXPERIENCE MORE

Some of our experiences included in the tour:

### Wines of Fruška Gora

Day 3

### Transfăgărașan Scenic Road

Day 5

### Etar Traditional Crafts

Day 10



**Balkan**  
&more

# THE BEST OF SERBIA, ROMANIA AND BULGARIA

11 NIGHTS | 12 DAYS | 3 COUNTRIES | 8 EXPERIENCE MORE

Cruise the Danube and Sava to view Belgrade's fortress anew, and taste delicious local wines of Fruška Gora. Seek Bram Stoker's inspiration for Count Dracula. Explore Ancient Plovdiv and Sofia's onion-domed churches, communist-style architecture and Ottoman legacy. Be astonished by Niš's Skull Tower and visit Constantine the Great's birthplace.



## EXPERIENCE MORE

EXPERIENCE MORE is at the core of our travel philosophy, elevating each tour beyond the ordinary. These carefully curated moments enrich our itineraries, offering deeper insights and unique perspectives of every destination. From exclusive cultural encounters to hidden local gems, EXPERIENCE MORE ensures each journey is unforgettable and engaging.

## FOR TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS

For dates, prices and to choose your group size contact your Balkan&more Local Expert or visit the tour on our website by scanning the QR code.

**PRE-STAY:** 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 | WELCOME TO BELGRADE Belgrade

Upon arrival in Belgrade, Serbia's vibrant capital, your driver will welcome you and escort you to your hotel. Enjoy the sights of **New Belgrade**, featuring Socialist architecture and modern business centres, during the ride from Nikola Tesla Airport. After hotel *check-in*, use your free time to rest and prepare for the journey ahead.

In the evening, we recommend a leisurely stroll through one of Belgrade's oldest quarters to **Skadarlija**, the city's bohemian heart. This charming 19<sup>th</sup> century cobbled street is lined with "kafanas" where you can enjoy delicious local specialties and traditional music.

**Overnight:** Belgrade

### DAY 2 | VIBRANT CAPITAL OF SERBIA Belgrade

On your first day in Serbia, you will embark on a walking and driving tour around Belgrade, starting at **Knez Mihailova Street**, the city's bustling pedestrian zone, filled with shops, cafes, and historic buildings.

**EXPERIENCE MORE / Serbian Morning Routine:** Your guide will take you to a hidden gem close to the main district, **the city's oldest tavern** intriguingly known as "?" (Question Mark), where you'll try Serbia's most cherished traditional drinks: **coffee and rakija**, but also learn about the **UNESCO-protected art of making "šljivovica"**, Serbia's renowned plum brandy.

Having started the day like a true local, we will walk through **the historical Belgrade Fortress and Kalemegdan Park** and be amazed by the view of the mighty Sava and Danube rivers.

Crossing Branko's Bridge into New Belgrade, our panorama tour begins. You'll experience the bold **Brutalism architecture** and see the emerging **Belgrade Waterfront**, a symbol of the city's modern transformation. Continuing the journey, you'll gain **insight into Serbia's past**, from its 19<sup>th</sup> century struggle for independence

to its turbulent 1990s. We'll stop for a visit and devote time to the impressive **Temple of Saint Sava**, the symbol of the city and the fourth-largest Orthodox temple in the world, adorned with stunning mosaics.

Our tour concludes in **the lively heart of Serbia's bustling capital** - The Republic Square, having offered you an insight into both the city's and the country's diverse culture, heritage, and history.

**EXPERIENCE MORE / Belgrade Sundown Cruise:** Set sail on an enchanting evening river cruise through Belgrade, where the grand Sava and Danube Rivers unveil the city's splendour. Cruise past iconic landmarks, absorb the vibrant riverside ambience, and capture stunning views of Belgrade's **skyline, bridges, and historic landmarks**.

**Overnight:** Belgrade

### DAY 3 | TREASURES OF VOJVODINA Belgrade - Fruška Gora NP - Sremski Karlovci - Novi Sad - Belgrade

Today, you will explore the most interesting sights of **Vojvodina**, a province in northern Serbia. Visit Fruška Gora NP, the "**Serbian Holy Land**", with its 17 active monasteries, including the well-preserved **Krušedol Monastery**, where you can buy wine and rakija made by the monks. The tour continues to **Sremski Karlovci**, a cultural gem with its Baroque centre, Patriarchal Court, Orthodox Cathedral of Saint Nicholas, and historic secondary school.

**EXPERIENCE MORE / Wines of Fruška Gora:** Step into the enchanting **Fruška Gora wine region**, home to Serbia's finest wines. Enjoy **a delightful array of wines** at a local winery, showcasing the region's diversity and craftsmanship. Don't miss trying **Bermet**, an internationally acclaimed Serbian wine that famously graced the tables of the Titanic.

Your next stop will be **Novi Sad**, the vibrant capital of Vojvodina and 2021 European Capital of Culture. This **multicultural gem** is renowned for hosting **EXIT**, Southeast Europe's largest music festival. Wander through its lively pedestrian zone, where historic landmarks like the City Hall and the old city centre blend with cultural sites. Explore the impressive **Petrovaradin Fortress**, often called "Danube's Gibraltar", where you can enjoy stunning views of the Danube River and the cityscape, perfect

for capturing unforgettable moments.

After a short drive, you will return back to **Belgrade** and enjoy the rest of your evening.

**Overnight:** Belgrade

### DAY 4 | BANAT TO TRANSYLVANIA Belgrade - Timișoara - Sibiu

Your Serbian part of the tour ends after *check-out*, and the tour continues to **Timișoara**, the largest city in western Romania, nestled on the northern bank of the **River Bega**. Known as "**Little Vienna**" for its unique architectural charm and vibrant cultural life, Timișoara offers a visit to Unirii Square, the Catholic Cathedral of Saint George, Liberty Square, and Victory Square, home to the Romanian National Opera and National Theatre.

As we continue our journey, soak in the picturesque landscapes of **Transylvania** with the stunning **Carpathian Mountains** in the distance.

Your day ends with a tour of **Sibiu**, once the largest and wealthiest of the seven fortified towns, and home to Romania's first hospital and pharmacy. Today, **medieval walls** still encircle the old town, where narrow streets weave past historical landmarks, including **the Large Square** with the Brukenthal Museum - Romania's oldest museum, the Small Square, the Council Tower, the Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, inspired by Hagia Sophia, and more.

*Check-in* to your hotel and rest before the tour continues.

**Overnight:** Sibiu

### DAY 5 | TRANSYLVANIA UNVEILED Sibiu - "Astra" National Museum Complex - Transfăgărașan Road - Sinaia

After *check-out*, enjoy your leisurely morning with a cup of coffee on the charming cobbled streets of **Sibiu**, after which we'll continue our journey through **the heart of Transylvania** to our next destination.

A true Romanian journey must include exploring its traditional villages, and **the "Astra" National Museum Complex** offers a perfect glimpse into this heritage. As one of Europe's largest open-air museums, it showcases **the essence of rural life**.

**EXPERIENCE MORE / Transfăgărașan Scenic Road:** The legendary **90km route of Transfăgărașan** is often described as "the road to the sky".

Take **a ride on the cable car** towards the stunning **Bălea Lake**, a glacial gem nestled amidst the peaks, where its serene waters mirror the beauty of **the Făgăraș Mountains**.

Continue towards **Sinaia**, nestled in the Carpathian Mountains of Romania, and renowned for its stunning natural beauty and historic charm. *Check-in* to hotel and soak in the memories of the day.

**Overnight:** Sinaia

### DAY 6 | THE CASTLES OF TRANSYLVANIA Sinaia - Peleş Castle - Brașov - Bran Castle - Sinaia

Our day begins with a visit to **Peleş Castle**, where King Carol I of Romania was once mesmerized by the breathtaking Carpathian Mountain scenery. Captivated by the views, the royal family chose this location for their summer residence, resulting in a magnificent **Neo-Renaissance masterpiece**. This combination of **noble taste and ingenious engineering** makes Peleş Castle a true marvel.

The tour continues to **Brașov**, founded by the Teutonic Knights in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Baroque buildings, churches and relaxed cafés line the main square, **Piața Sfatului**, after which you'll walk towards the Gothic-style cathedral, **Biserica Neagră**, famously called the Black Church.

But the day isn't over yet, as mystery awaits in **Bran Castle**, commonly known as **Dracula's Castle**. This 13<sup>th</sup> century gothic fortress, set atop a 60-meter cliff, offers an irresistible journey back to **the Middle Ages**. Discover how the legend of Vlad the Impaler became the inspiration behind Bram Stoker's "Dracula".

In the evening, return to your **Sinaia** hotel as you collect your impressions and memories from Transylvania.

**Overnight:** Sinaia

### DAY 7 | FROM VINEYARDS TO CAPITAL Sinaia - Dealu Mare Wine Region - Bucharest

After *check-out* from Sinaia hotel, our Romanian adventure takes a delightful turn. Having explored its enchanting mysteries and castle stories, today we'll indulge in **a journey of tasting natural gifts of the Carpathians**.

**EXPERIENCE MORE / Carpathian Wines:** As





a part of experiencing the diversity of Romania, we invite you to enjoy **a wine-tasting experience**. You will travel through **the expansive wine region of Dealu Mare**, to reach a charming estate nestled amidst these lush fields.

Your final stop of the day is **Bucharest**, the capital and largest city in Romania. Check-into your hotel and enjoy some free time to explore this vibrant city.

**Overnight:** Bucharest

## DAY 8 | "THE LITTLE PARIS"

### Bucharest

Famous for its wide, tree-lined boulevards and magnificent **Belle Époque architecture**, Bucharest earned the nickname "**The Little Paris**" in the early 1900s due to its vibrant social scene. You will visit all of the city's best-known sights, including **the Piața Unirii** for a view of the colossal **Palace of the Parliament**, the second-largest building in the world, after the Pentagon. From there, the tour continues to the **medieval Old Town**, one of Bucharest's oldest settlements. When you arrive at **Revolution Square**, you'll delve into the story of what **communist rule** meant for Romania and discover how this historic square earned its name.

**EXPERIENCE MORE / Art Nouveau Dinner (Optional):** For those desiring a deeper connection with Bucharest, we present an **optional exploration** of the city's **enchanting 19<sup>th</sup> century era**. Discover Bucharest's rich history and timeless charm firsthand. With the assistance of our expert guide, you'll discover a **carefully selected restaurant** that captures the essence of **Art Nouveau** Bucharest.

**Overnight:** Bucharest

## DAY 9 | INTRODUCTION TO BULGARIA

### Bucharest - Veliko Tarnovo - Arbanasi

The first stop of the day will take you on a journey back to the rise and fall of the mighty capital of the Second Bulgarian Empire - **Veliko Tarnovo**, where you'll discover how its resilient population thrived under Turkish rule, as they created magnificent architectural masterpieces and formed a strong and **united craftsmen's guild**. The legends and stories, along with the interesting history of Veliko Tarnovo and **the Tsarevets fortress**, have gained them numerous

admirers in both Bulgaria and abroad, making the region a **top tourist attraction in the country**.

Next, you'll head to the nearby village of Arbanasi, known for its well-preserved traditional architecture and serene atmosphere.

**EXPERIENCE MORE / Rural Roots of Bulgaria:** To truly discover the essence of Bulgarian rural lifestyle, there is no better place than the neighbouring village of **Arbanasi**, an architectural and museum reserve. A picturesque **open-air museum of cultural heritage** includes 80 houses, some of which still have original Ottoman decor and design. To conclude this rural experience, we check-in to our accommodation, nestled within an ethno complex, with the ambience of a 17<sup>th</sup> century han (Turkish for a motel). It captures the spirit of Oriental architectural tradition. *\*In case of restricted availability, alternative options will be offered.*

**Overnight:** Arbanasi

## DAY 10 | TRADITIONS AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

### Arbanasi - Etar Ethno Village - Valley of Roses - Plovdiv

After **check-out** from Arbanasi, our journey leads us to the **Open Air Ethnographic Museum Etar**, where you'll continue to uncover the charm of traditional Bulgarian life and explore **Bulgarian National Revival era architecture**.

**EXPERIENCE MORE / Etar Traditional Crafts:** Unveil the secrets of herbal traditions as you craft your own **handmade soap** or soothing calendula ointment in Etar Ethno Village. Delve into **the art of creating herbal cosmetics**, with a **hands-on demonstration** of crafting natural, herb-based products.

Continue towards the South, to discover yet another testament of the rich Bulgarian heritage and craftsmanship. Explore **the Damascena Complex** in the stunning **Valley of Roses**, home to Bulgaria's first private rose factory. Uncover why roses are a cherished symbol of Bulgaria, visit the amphitheatre, and buy **renowned rose oil** straight from the distillery.

Finally, explore **Plovdiv**, one of Europe's oldest cities, where heritage is marked by a striking blend of ancient Roman, Ottoman, and Bulgarian influences. Located on the banks of **the Maritsa River**, the city presents a rich cultural mix and a

unique architectural blend, earning it the title of an open-air museum. Marvel at **the Ancient Theatre of Philippopolis\***, stroll through **the Old Town**, with its charming cobblestone streets and beautifully preserved Revival-era houses. Conclude your tour in **Kapana**, Plovdiv's vibrant creative hub, before **checking in** to your hotel. *\*Due to limited visiting hours, there may be restrictions on entering the Ancient Theatre of Philippopolis in the late afternoon and evening.*

**Overnight:** Plovdiv

## DAY 11 | SOFIA'S CULTURAL FUSION

### Plovdiv - Sofia

**Check-out** and bid farewell to Plovdiv. Enjoy a leisurely morning with some free time to explore the city at your own pace. Afterward, we'll continue our journey toward Sofia.

**Sofia** is a modern, youthful Eastern European capital, distinguished by a unique combination of onion-domed churches, communist-style architecture and Ottoman legacy. The home to many of **Bulgaria's finest museums, galleries and restaurants**, Sofia will reveal to you its most interesting landmarks, such as the impressive **Saint Alexander Nevsky Cathedral** and **Largo**, one of the prime examples of Socialist Classicism architecture and one of Sofia's main landmarks. Finish the day by **checking into** your hotel in Sofia and rest well.

**Overnight:** Sofia

## DAY 12 | FAREWELL, SOFIA

### Sofia

After hotel **check-out**, it is time to conclude your Balkan tour. 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.

**POST-STAY: 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*

### Transportation:

- Airport arrival transfer
- Transportation as per the itinerary with modern, comfortable vehicles tailored to your group size

### Entrances & tickets:

Temple of Saint Sava, Krušedol Monastery, "Astra" National Museum Complex, Bran Castle, Peleş Castle, Damascena Complex with rose water and rakija tasting

### Experiences:

Coffee & rakija in a Belgrade tavern (*Serbian Morning Routine*); Sava and Danube Rivers Cruise (*Belgrade Sundown Cruise*); Wine tasting in a local winery in Northern Serbia (*Wines of Fruška Gora*); Cable car ride in the Carpathian Mountains in Romania (*Transfăgărășan Scenic Road*); Wine tasting in a local winery in Dealu Mare region of Romania (*Carpathian Wines*); Visit to the ethno village in Bulgaria (*Rural Roots of Bulgaria*); Natural and handmade herbal cosmetics making experience in an open-air ethnographic museum in Bulgaria (*Etar Traditional Crafts*).

*\*Optional experience: Dinner in an Art Nouveau restaurant in Bucharest (not included in the price)*

### Meals:

- 11 x breakfast
- Additional meals included in our experiences

### Additional:

- Professional English-speaking tour guidance throughout the tour
- VAT, accommodation taxes and city taxes
- Tour logistics and organization with dedicated service and care
- 1 bottle of water (0.5l) daily for each passenger

## HOTELS / STANDARD package

**3 BB in Belgrade** in Royal Inn 4\* / Mercure Excelsior 4\* / Central Point 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Sibiu** in Continental Forum Sibiu 4\* / Golden Tulip Ana Tower 4\* / Art 4\* or similar

**2 BB in Sinaia** in Sinaia 4\* / Anda 4\* / Vila Economat 4\* or similar

**2 BB in Bucharest** in Capitol 4\* / Leonardo 4\* / Mercure Bucharest City Center 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Arbanasi / Veliko Tarnovo** in Arbanaski Han 4\* / Yantra Grand 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Plovdiv** in Grand Plovdiv 4\* / Holiday Inn 4\* / Best Western Premier Plovdiv Hills 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Sofia** in Central Sofia 4\* / Coop 4\* / Abraso Sofia 4\* or similar

## HOTELS / SUPERIOR package

**3 BB in Belgrade** in Envoy 4\* / Museum 4\* / Moskva 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Sibiu** in Radisson Blu 4\* / Art 4\* / Hilton Sibiu 5\* or similar

**2 BB in Sinaia** in International 4\* / Vila Economat / Boutique Vila La Kastel 4\* or similar

**2 BB in Bucharest** in Grand Continental 5\* / Novotel Bucharest City Center 4\* / Mercure Bucharest City Center 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Arbanasi / Veliko Tarnovo** in Arbanaski Han 4\* / Yantra Grand 4\* or similar

**1 BB in Plovdiv** in Double Tree by Hilton 4\* / Imperial Plovdiv 4\* / Este Park 4\*

**1 BB in Sofia** in Grand Sofia 5\* / Sense Sofia 5\* / Crystal Palace Boutique Sofia 4\* or similar



Plovdiv, Bulgaria