

Bodie's Treasures of Serbia Tour

Serbia – Bosnia

21.06/02.07.2023

11 nights / 12 days tour



Day 1

Arrival to Belgrade

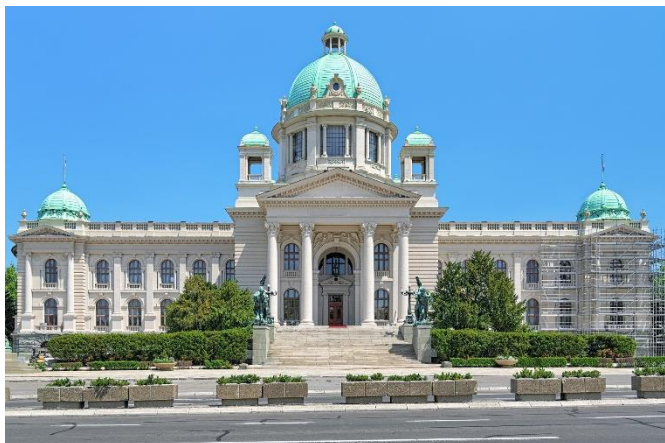
Upon arrival in Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, you will be welcomed by your driver and escorted to your hotel. On the short coach ride from the Nikola Tesla airport, sit back, relax and enjoy the sights of New Belgrade with its prominent 'blocks' – a classic example of Socialist architecture, built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

Day 2

Belgrade Great Sightseeing Tour

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. Pass the Autokomanda 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. Coming back to the hotel. Organized group dinner at Skadarlija. Overnight.

Day 3

Belgrade Sightseeing Tour - Zemun

After breakfast, you will start your tour to the Zemun, where you can feel the magic of its charming streets and get acquainted with the Austro-Hungarian architecture that beautifully adorns this part of the city. Walk along Gospodska Street and the Massaryk square', the Square of the Magistrate and continue to the bottom of Gardos hill and the most famous symbol of Zemun - the Millennium Tower.



The most curious visitors can take a 10-minute walk to the top of Gardoš Hill, where they will surely enjoy the view of the Danube and the spectacular Belgrade skyline. Don't forget to take some amazing photos. Back to the hotel. Free time for your individual activities. Overnight.

Day 4

Belgrade – Topola – Žiča – Studenica – Kosovska Mitrovica

After breakfast, you will start your tour to the Topola and Oplenac which are situated in the part of Serbia so-called Šumadija region, famous as the center of Royal Dynasties, and a strategic place for organization of Serbian Uprising and not less important, wine industry. During the relaxing walk around the Oplenac, you will visit the St. George's temple and Mausoleum of the royal

family Karadjordjevic. The church is situated on the very top of the hill. This monumental building with authentic beauty has a unique structure and extraordinary ornaments. You will be dazzled by the interior. The white marble floors and the lavish colourful glass mosaic on the walls will leave you amazed. In the museum you will be able to admire the art masterpieces and the personal belongings of the royal family. Continue driving to two very important monasteries – Žiča and Studenica. Žiča Monastery, “mother of all churches”, is located in the “Valley of the Kings” where Serbian medieval state was born. Built in 1221, the monastery was founded by first Serbian King Stefan Nemanjić the First-Crowned. When the Serbian church became independent, at beginning of 13th century, Serbian Autocephaly was located in Žiča. Studenica Monastery is one of the biggest, most valuable, and most important monasteries of Serbian Orthodox Church.



This is the second Serbian monument that had the honor to be included into the list of UNESCO World Heritage in 1986. Studenica was built in 1196 as endowment of Great Prince Stefan Nemanja, founder of independent Serbian state and ancestor of the dynasty that will rule in Serbia two full centuries. The monastery is stunningly situated in the forested hills of Šumadija. For those with a little extra energy, we will hike up to the Hermitage of St. Sava, the little wooden room where the founder of the Serbian church lived for many years while evangelizing the Serbs.

Studenica's importance and its preserved riches were the reason the Monastery was included into the „Rout of culture Transromanica“ (Route of Cultural Transformation) – a route that binds European heritage of the Romanesque period. We will drive to Kosovska Mitrovica, the heart of the Serbian enclave in Kosovo, where you can get a glimpse of how some Serbs in Kosovo live now. Check-in the hotel. Overnight.

Day 5

Kosovska Mitrovica – Kosovo Polje – Gračanica – Dečani – Peć – Kosovska Mitrovica

Breakfast and check-out. Today is a day rich in the glory of Serbia's medieval history. We drive first to the monumental complex of Gazimestan, which covers the area where the famous Battle of Kosovo took place in 1389. Here, we will also visit the monument to Kosovo's heroes. After this visit, we continue our journey through Kosovo to the monasteries Gračanica and Dečani. Gračanica monastery is another UNESCO World Heritage Site.



With its elegant silhouette, colorful facade, and impressive fresco paintings it represents the culmination of the Medieval Serbian art of building in the Serbo-Byzantine tradition. Founder, king Milutin, wished here to show the richness of his country and power of his ruling, and also to crown his intensive construction activities (he built over 30 churches, monasteries, hospitals, etc.). Next to the Bistrica River, amongst the steep cliffs of the Prokletije Mountains surrounded by verdant forests and with an abundance of water, you will find the Visoki Dečani Monastery (UNESCO World Heritage Site) founded by Holy King Stefan.

Within Dečani's marble walls, the Church of the Ascension of Christ dominates with its eclectic architecture, extravagant stone ornamentation, magnificent frescoes, and sculptures. It represents the very spiritual identity and historical memory of the Serbian people, embedded here and thus forever preserved. The Dečani treasury is the richest among the monastery collections in Serbia. It contains very valuable works of our applied art from the 14th through 19th century. The next stop is the famous town of Peć where the Patriarchal Monastery of Serbian Orthodox Church, former home of the Serbian Patriarchate, and other sights are located. Drive back to Kosovska Mitrovica. Overnight.

Day 6

Kosovska Mitrovica – Sopoćani – St. Apostles Petar and Pavle’s church – Djurdjevi Stupovi - Čačak

Breakfast and check-out. We drive first to Novi Pazar in the Raška region, and visit Sopoćani monastery, Djurdjevi Stupovi monastery and St. Petar and Paul’s church (Crkva Sv. Petra i Pavla).



Sopoćani monastery, one of the most valued religious sights of the Middle Age, was built in Raška architecture style with noticeable Romanesque influence. Its frescoes are world famous. It is also included in the “Rout of culture Transromanica”.

The St. Apostles Petar and Pavle’s church is the oldest monument of the church architecture in Serbia. It is the original seat of the Raška bishopric. According to known sources it was founded 8th century. Both St. Sava and his father, Nemanja (founder of the first Serbian dynasty) were baptized here in a baptismal you can see.

Djurdjevi Stupovi Monastery is located in the “Valley of the Kings” atop a small peak, between rivers Ibar and Raška, with panoramic views of Raška – the place where medieval state was born. Along with the ruins of Stari Ras (the first medieval Serbian capital) and Sopoćani, it is among the first Serbian sights included in the UNESCO World Heritage list.

After full day of exploring rich orthodox heritage, we continue our drive to Čačak. Check-in in the hotel and organized dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 7

Leisure Day: Čačak

This day will be devoted to relaxation and optional activities. Use your time for exploring the surroundings on your own, or join one of the few optionals we have prepared which will be presented by your tour guide.

In the evening enjoy spectacular performance of KUD Abrašović, Serbia’s most acclaimed folklore group. Overnight.

Day 8

Čačak – Šargan 8 – Woden-town – Višegrad – Foča (rafting)

Breakfast and check-out. 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. After being immersed in breath-taking nature, you will arrive at the enchanting ethno village Drvengrad (Wooden Town), built by famous 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) and resembles a fairy tale scenery. Since 2008, the village is a 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.

The tour continues to Bosnia and Herzegovina and a short drive takes you to Visegrad, 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 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 Biseniya Tereshchenko.

Driving to the rafting camp near Foca. Check-in. Dinner. Overnight.

Day 9

Tara rafting - Belgrade

After breakfast you will start your adventure on the Tara River – rafting the rapids of the Tara River. The Tara River is renowned as the cleanest river water in all of Europe. When you finish with rafting and the lunch, you will start your way back to the Belgrade. Check-in. Overnight.

Day 10

Belgrade – Fruška Gora – Sremski Karlovci – Novi Sad – Belgrade

Breakfast. Today's tour starts at the picturesque scenery and Serbia's famous wine region towards the 'Serbian Holy Land', home to 17 functioning Serbian Orthodox monasteries.

You will visit well preserved monastery Krusedol, where you'll have the opportunity to buy wine and rakija made by the monks.

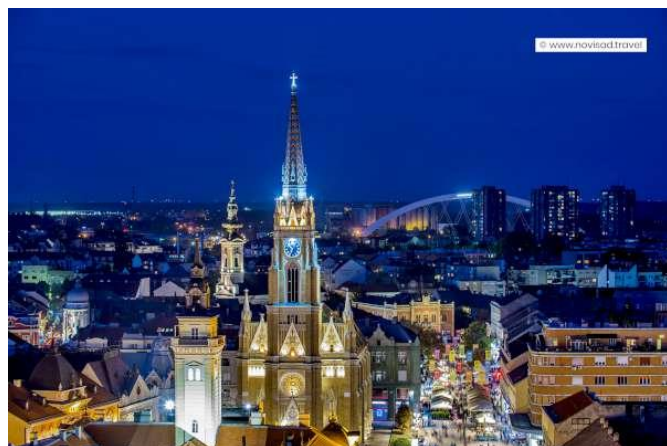
The tour continues on to the town of Sremski Karlovci. A real gem of Serbian culture and spirituality, Sremski Karlovci feels like a 'museum town' with its Baroque centre, the Patriarchal Court, the Orthodox Cathedral of Saint Nicholas and the first Serbian secondary school (gymnasium). It is also famous for wine production and the town's annual Wineball festival.



You will finish your tour of this charming town with a visit and wine tasting at one the region's most prominent wineries. As Sremski Karlovci lies on the banks of

Danube, you will have the opportunity to enjoy lunch on the shore of Central Europe's longest river.

Further on the tour, you will visit the 2021 European Capital of Culture, Novi Sad.



Located on the historical border of two former empires – the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman – as a result, the capital of Vojvodina is a multi-cultural city with an interesting mix of architectural influences. On a sightseeing tour around the city, you will walk around the city's pedestrian zone, past the City Hall, a Catholic church, the old city centre, the former house of Albert Einstein's wife Mileva, the cultural foundation Matica Srpska and a synagogue. Then you'll follow the right bank of Danube and visit Petrovaradin, or the so-called 'Danube's Gibraltar', where the fortress is located. Driving back to Belgrade. Overnight.

Day 11

Belgrade

Breakfast. This is a free day for your individual activities. Revisit Kalemegdan (once is not enough), get some famous Bosnian ćevaps, or shop at the little stores that dot downtown. There will be an organized farewell dinner.

Day 12

Belgrade

Breakfast and check-out. End of services.

General inclusions:

- ❖ 7 BB in Belgrade in hotel Mercure Excelsior 4*
- ❖ 2 BB in Čačak in hotel Beograd 4*
- ❖ 2 BB in Kosovska Mitrovica hotel North City 4*
- ❖ 1 Full board in Rafting Camp in Bosnia and Hercegovina
- ❖ Airport transfers
- ❖ All sightseeing tours and transfers that are written in this program
- ❖ Entrance tickets to the Millenium Tower, Temple of Saint Sava, Oplenac, Studenica monastery, Sopoćani monastery, St. Apostoles Petar and Pavle's church, monastery Krušedol, Wooden Town
- ❖ 3 dinners: Skadarlija in Belgrade and local restaurant in Čačak
- ❖ Rafting on Tara River with lunch and dinner
- ❖ Ticket for the 90-minutes ride on Museum Train - Sargan eight*
- ❖ 1 bottle of water (0.5l) daily for each passenger
- ❖ Professional tour guidance throughout the tour
- ❖ VAT, Accommodation taxes and City taxes in every country
- ❖ Tour logistics and organization by licensed incoming agency