
PACKAGE TOUR OFFER

Red breasted geese in Bulgaria

PROGRAM

Price per person in EUR:

Per person in Double room	Per person in Single room
959.00 EUR	1189.00 EUR

The price includes:

1. 6 overnights in the hotels listed above
2. Transportation with a licensed 18 seater mini bus, or 8 seater for a smaller group according to the program
3. Professional English speaking guide throughout
4. Breakfast, lunch and dinner as specified in the program
5. Entrance fees for all the sites on the program

**** Tour dates 27.01.2018 – 02.02.2018. Small groups from min. 10 to max. 15 participants

The reason for the diversity is the geographical location of Bulgaria. Via Pontica and Via Aristotelis - two of the main transcontinental ornithological trails pass through Bulgaria.

The emphasis of this tour is the Red breasted geese – one of the most endangered species in the world. For the last 30 years its population has decreased 3 times to only 30 000, with such a ratio it can soon become extinct, and we will no longer be able to enjoy its beauty. **80-90% of the Red breasted geese population winter in the northeastern coast of Bulgaria.**

Day #1 Arrival, Sofia – welcome to Bulgaria - D

Meet and greet at the airport, transfer to Hotel Sense 5*. Check in followed by a walking tour of Sofia (around 3 hours). We will visit: St. George rotunda, the Presidency, the Archeological Museum, Bulgarian National Bank, Ivan Vazov National Theatre, the Russian church, St. Sofia church, Alexander Nevski Cathedral, the Parliament. Around 19:30, transfer for dinner in Vodenitsata restaurant for dinner and folklor show. Here you will be able to witness Nestinarstvo, a fire ritual, which involves a barefoot dance on smouldering embers
Overnight in hotel Sense Sofia 5* - <http://www.sensehotel.com/>

Day #2 Sofia - Troyan - Bulgarian caves -B, L, D

Breakfast and departure to the northeast. En route we will enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Balkan Mountain range. Before lunch we will visit the Prohodna Cave also known as the „Eyes of God“, an unique rock formation. Followed by a visit to the Saeva Hole cave. This cave is famous for its population of bats. Some of the species we will see include - Rhinolophus ferrumequinum/ greater horseshoe bats, Rhinolophus hipposideros/ lesser horseshoe bats, Geoffroy's bat / Myotis emarginatus, Myotis blythii/ Lesser Mouse-eared Bat, Myotis bechsteinii/ Bechstein's bat. We then stop at the village of Balgarski Izvor to try some of their traditional sausages for lunch. After lunch our trip continues to the town of Troyan, where we can visit the Troyan Monastery if you wish.
Dinner and overnight in the small village of Oreshak, hotel Casa Art 4* - <http://arthotel.bg/>

Day #3 Troyan - Veliko Tarnovo – Old Bulgarian Kingdom – B, L, D

Breakfast, departure for the town of Veliko Tarnovo and the village of Arbanasi. Veliko Tarnovo is the medieval capital of Bulgaria, during the times known as the „Golden Century“. The city is located in the foot of the Balkan Mountain range, on the historical hills of Tsarevets, Trapezitsa and Sveta Gora (Holy Forest), right by the Yantra River. We will visit the architectural reserve of Tsarevets, where the king's palace was located. An unique wax museum with sculptures of the Bulgarian Kings is located right by the entrance of Tsarevets. We will continue with a stroll through the Samovodska Cherkhia, a paved street capturing the spirit of the Renaissance period, with its workshops – pottery, smithy, carving, iconography and many others. We will have lunch at the Shtastlivets (Happy Man) restaurant, with its scenic location over the Yantra river. In the afternoon we will continue to the village of Arbanasi and its beautiful Bulgarian Renaissance houses from the 16th and 17th century.
Dinner and overnight at Arbanashki Han hotel 4* - <http://www.arbanashkihan.com/>

Day #4 Veliko Tarnovo - Shabla - Balchik – First sight of the Red breasted geese – B, L, D

Breakfast and transfer to Shabla, the northeastern coast of Bulgaria (about 3.5 hours). Here we will be able to witness the beauty of many bird species including: Branta ruficollis/Red breasted geese, Anser albifrons/Greater White-fronted Goose, Great Crested Grebe/Podiceps cristatus, Little Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, Cygnus olor/ Mute Swan and the world endangered Anser erythropus/Lesser White-fronted Goose. There are a total of 90 endangered species of birds that can be seen in the area of the Shabla lake, and are worthy of our attention. Packed lunch will be provided.
Dinner and overnight in the town of Balchik, hotel Regina Maria 4* <http://reginamariaspa.com/>

Day #5 Durankolak Lake – the winter home of the Red breasted geese– B, L, D

Early morning departure for the Durankulak Lake (packed breakfast and lunch will be provided) where we will spend most of the day witnessing thousands of Red breasted geese in flight. The lake is an important place for the wintering as well as the migrating birds, due to its location en route Via Pontica. Some of the endangered species we can witness here include: *Acrocephalus agricola*/Paddyfield Warbler, *Ardea purpurea*/Purple Heron, *Botaurus stellaris*/Eurasian Bittern, and *Aythya nyroca*/Ferruginous Duck.

Of greatest importance for the area is the preservation of 3 species of birds wintering here: *Haliastur pygmaeus*/ Pygmy Cormorant, *Anser anser*/ Greylag Goose and *Branta ruficollis*/Red Breasted Goose. A few nesting species - *Ixobrychus minutus*/ little bittern, *Charadrius alexandrinus*/Kentish, *Lanius minor*/ Lesser Grey Shrike, *Aythya nyroca*/Ferruginous Pochard, *Circus aeruginosus*/Eastern Marsh Harrier, *Burhinus oedipnemos*/Eurasian Thick-knee, *Melanocorypha calandra*/ Calandra Lark.
Dinner and overnight in hotel Regina Maria Balchik 4* - <http://reginamariaspa.com/>

Day #6 Durankulak/Varna – the sea capital of Bulgaria – B, L

Early morning transfer to Durankulak lake area (packed breakfast will be provided). This will be our second morning spend birthwatching in the northeastern sea coast of Bulgaria. This morning we will visit some different points of observation, Cape Kaliakra and Yailata – a national archeological reserve, detached from the sea by 50-60 meters high rock massifs, There is a cave 'city' of 101 'apartments', settled as far back as V century B.C. Three necropolises (family tombs) out of III- IV century have been hollowed out in the rocks. The great biological diversity of the area attracts many tourists and is a popular site for ornithologists.

Our journey will continue with transfer to the city of Varna (sea capital of Bulgaria) where we will have lunch at a nice restaurant by the sea.

We will give you some free time in the afternoon to enjoy Varna and possibly do some shopping. Dinner on own.

Overnight at hotel Graffit Galary Varna 5* - <http://graffitohotel.com/>

Day #7 Departure from Varna airport – Hope to see you again - B

Breakfast at hotel and transfer to the airport for flight back home.

PRICES
