



Bulgarian

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Bulgarian

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make the most of this phrasebook ...

Anyone can speak another language! It's all about confidence. Don't worry if you can't remember your school language lessons or if you've never learnt a language before. Even if you learn the very basics (on the inside covers of this book), your travel experience will be the better for it. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain when the locals hear you making an effort.

finding things in this book

For easy navigation, this book is in sections. The Tools chapters are the ones you'll thumb through time and again. The Practical section covers basic travel situations like catching transport and finding a bed. The Social section gives you conversational phrases, pick-up lines, the ability to express opinions – so you can get to know people. Food has a section all of its own: gourmets and vegetarians are covered and local dishes feature. Safe Travel equips you with health and police phrases, just in case. Remember the colours of each section and you'll find everything easily; or use the comprehensive Index. Otherwise, check the two-way traveller's Dictionary for the word you need.

being understood

Throughout this book you'll see coloured phrases on each page. They're phonetic guides to help you pronounce the language. Start with them to get a feel for how the language sounds. The pronunciation chapter in Tools will explain more, but you can be confident that if you read the coloured phrase, you'll be understood.

communication tips

Body language, ways of doing things, sense of humour – all have a role to play in every culture. 'Local talk' boxes show you common ways of saying things, or everyday language to drop into conversation. 'Listen for ...' boxes supply the phrases you may hear. They start with the foreign language and then lead in to the phonetic guide and the English translation.

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bulgarian



ABOUT BULGARIAN

УВОД

Surprisingly, the name of the oldest South Slavic literary language, Bulgarian, isn't of Slavic origin at all. It's one of a handful of words remaining in Bulgarian from the language of the Bulgars, a Turkic people who invaded the eastern Balkans in the late 7th century. Along with their language, they assimilated with the local Slavs who had crossed the Danube and settled in the Balkan peninsula at the dawn of the 6th century.

As a member of the South Slavic group of languages, Bulgarian has Macedonian and Serbian as its closest relatives. However, it also shares similarities with the non-Slavic languages in the so-called Balkan linguistic union (Romanian, Albanian and Greek), as a result of multilingualism and prolonged contact between the Balkan peoples. These foreign influences explain many of its grammatical features – for example, its simplified noun system, which sets Bulgarian (and Macedonian) apart from other Slavic languages. In addition, numerous Turkish

words entered Bulgarian over five centuries of Ottoman rule. In the 19th century, many of these Turkish loanwords were eliminated from the language. Their place was partially filled by Russian words, as Russian has influenced Bulgarian through both Bulgaria's ties with the Orthodox Church and long-standing cultural links with Russia.

Old Bulgarian (which is very similar to Old Church Slavonic) was the first Slavic language recorded in

at a glance ...

language name:

Bulgarian

name in language:

български
buhl·gar·skee

language family:

South Slavic

approximate number of speakers: 9 million

key country: Bulgaria

close relatives:

Macedonian, Serbian, Russian

written form in religious literature from the 9th century. The central figures in the development of the Slavic literary language were Saints Cyril and Methodius, missionaries of the Byzantine emperor who invented the Glagolitic alphabet around AD 863 and used it to translate Greek liturgical texts into Old Church Slavonic. Their disciples devised the Cyrillic alphabet (based on Greek and Glagolitic) in which Bulgarian has been written ever since.

In its modern version, standardised after the last spelling reform in 1945, the Bulgarian alphabet is very similar to the Russian Cyrillic alphabet. Today, Bulgarians celebrate St Cyril and Methodius Day as a national holiday on the 24th of May (also known as the Day of Bulgarian Culture or the Cyrillic Alphabet Day). On joining the European Union in January 2007, Bulgaria also had the honour of introducing the Cyrillic alphabet to the EU as its third official writing system, alongside the Roman and Greek alphabets.

Modern Bulgarian has about 9 million speakers and is the official language of Bulgaria, with Bulgarian-speaking minorities in Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Hungary, Greece and Turkey. The literary standard is based on the northeastern dialects. The transitional dialects spoken around the borders between Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia are very similar to one another and this has provoked sensitive political issues over the centuries.

This book gives you the practical phrases you need to get by as well as all the fun, spontaneous phrases that lead to a more successful interaction with Bulgarian people and a deeper understanding of their culture. Local knowledge, new relationships and a sense of satisfaction are on the tip of your tongue. So don't just stand there, say something!

abbreviations used in this book

a	adjective	n	(after English) noun
adv	adverb	n	(after Bulgarian) neuter
f	feminine	pl	plural
inf	informal	pol	polite
lit	literally	sg	singular
m	masculine	v	verb