



Bulgaria

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ MoMa Bulgarian Food & Wine (p234)
- ➔ Shtastliveca (p243)
- ➔ Rosé (p246)
- ➔ Made In Home (p234)
- ➔ Memory (p240)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Hotel-Mehana Gurko (p242)
- ➔ At Renaissance Square (p239)
- ➔ Canapé Connection (p231)
- ➔ Hostel Old Plovdiv (p239)
- ➔ Yo Ho Hostel (p244)

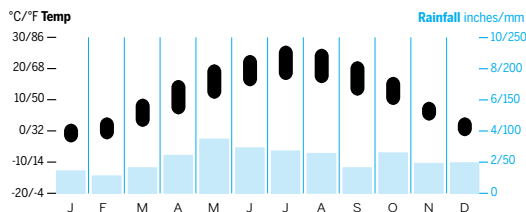
Why Go?

Soul-stirring mountains, golden beaches and cities that hum with music and art. There's a lot to love about Bulgaria (България): no wonder the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines and Turks all fought to claim it as their own. Billed as the oldest nation on the continent, Bulgaria is rich with ancient treasure. The mysterious Thracians left behind dazzling hauls of gold and silver, and tombs that can be explored to this day. The Romans built cities of breathtaking scale, the bathhouses, walls and amphitheatres of which sit nonchalantly in the midst of modern cities.

Centuries later, Bulgaria still beguiles with its come-hither coastline and fertile valleys laden with vines and roses. Plovdiv is the European Capital of Culture for 2019, Sofia has cool cred to rival any major metropolis, and lively Black Sea resorts teem with modern-day pleasure pilgrims.

When to Go

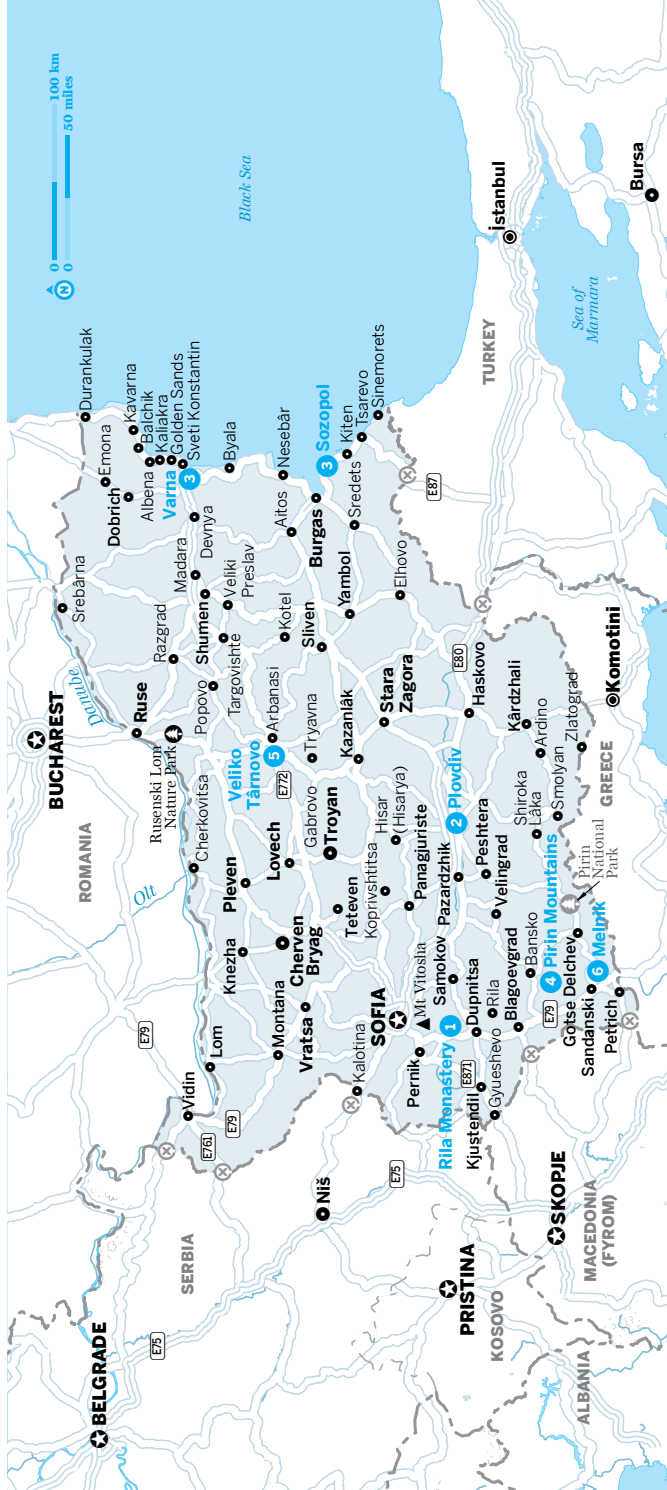
Sofia



Feb Pop your cork at Melnik's Golden Grape Festival.

Jun Celebrate the sweetest harvest at Kazanlŕk's Rose Festival.

Jul-Sep Spend lazy days on the Black Sea beaches and nights at Bulgaria's best clubs.



Bulgaria Highlights

- 1 Rila Monastery** (p237) Exploring artistic and religious treasures.
- 2 Plovdiv** (p000) Soaking up the city's ancient ambience and revitalised artistic quarter.
- 3 Sozopol** (p247) and **Varna** (p244) Sun-worshipping or clubbing all night long at Black Sea resorts.
- 4 Pirin Mountains** (p237) Skiing or hiking among the 2000m peaks.
- 5 Veliko Târnovo** (p242) Visiting the Tsars' medieval stronghold in this monumental, riverside town.
- 6 Melnik** (p237) Sipping a glass or three of Bulgarian *vino* in this photogenic wine town.