



The Danube & Northern Plains

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Best Museums

- » Ruse Regional Museum of History (p433)
- » Sveti Sofronii Vrachanski Ethnographical & Revival Complex (p427)
- » Archaeological Museum (p439)
- » Historical Museum (p432)
- » Transportation Museum (p433)

Best Places to Stay

- » Hotel Drustar (p440)
- » City Art Hotel (p434)
- » Hotel Madona (p429)
- » Pelican Lake Guesthouse (p439)
- » Lopushanski Monastery (p428)

Why Go?

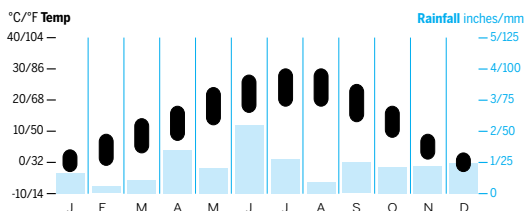
Much of northern Bulgaria is quiet, off-the-beaten-track territory and sees very few foreign visitors. It's a rewarding part of the country to explore, though you'll need plenty of time, patience or, most usefully, your own transport, to visit its more rural corners. Unspoilt mountain landscapes, wild nature reserves and peaceful monasteries are waiting for you to discover. The mighty Danube River shimmers along most of the country's border with Romania, and the urbane riverside city of Ruse, famed for its Viennese-style architecture and brimming with cafes and museums, is the gateway to Bucharest.

The enigmatic rock churches and rich wildlife of the vast Rusenski Lom Nature Reserve and, further east, serene Lake Srebarna, home to numerous rare bird species, are well worth visiting.

Away from the Danube, the bizarre rock formations at Belogradchik, the remote, charming monasteries at Lopushanski and Chiprovtsi and the dramatic hiking country around Vratsa are sure to delight outdoor enthusiasts.

When to Go

Vidin



Mar–May Spring days are warm and pleasant, and festival season begins.

Jun–Aug Summers are hot and dry, and it's a great time for hiking and birdwatching.

Nov–Jan Winters can be harsh, but the countryside looks picturesque in the snow.

The Danube & Northern Plains Highlights

- 1 Marvelling at the wonders of **Belogradchik Rocks** (p429)
- 2 Going for a hike in the stunning countryside around **Vratsa** (p427)
- 3 Learning about the Russo-Turkish war in the museums of **Pliven** (p431), or enjoying the city's bars and cafes
- 4 Viewing the beautiful icons in the serene **Lopushanski Monastery** (p428)
- 5 Taking a look round the **Baba Vida Museum-Fortress** (p430) in Vidin
- 6 Discovering the elegant architecture, parkland and fine museums of **Ruse** (p432)
- 7 Visiting the unique rock churches at **Rusenski Lom Nature Park** (p437) and keeping an eye out for wildlife
- 8 Spotting rare waterfowl at **Srebarna Nature Reserve**
- 9 Enjoying the views of the Danube and exploring the Roman and Byzantine ruins in **Silistra** (p439)

