

BULGARIA - BALKAN RIDES - BALKAN NATIONAL PARK

ITINERARY

Day 1

Return transfers from Sofia are included at set times. Flights should arrive between 12:00 noon and 16:00. The transfer vehicle will depart once everyone has arrived, but no later than 16:00.

Your return flight should depart after 11:00. If you have an evening flight, you can be dropped off in Sofia city centre where there is a luggage storage area while you explore.

Hotel collections and drop offs are also available on the first and last day.

If your flight times do not fit with the standard times, then it is possible to have a private transfer at extra cost.

Overnight Incanto Hotel. Arrive in Sevlievo and settle into your hotel.

Later meet your guide over dinner and learn about the week ahead.

This is a circular trail, with six nights in hotels/guest houses and one night in a mountain hut with shared bedrooms.

Located in the central and higher regions of the Balkan Range, the Central Balkan National Park lies in the heart of Bulgaria and is one of the largest and most valuable of protected areas in Europe. The terrain is varied and the weather is suitable for the hottest summer months.

This trail is for riders who want a challenge that takes them into more remote areas.

The following is the proposed itinerary but it is subject to change due to local conditions. Riding times and distances are approximate. Sometimes it is necessary for the horses to overnight a short distance away from where you are staying and then you transfer to and from the horses by vehicle.

The Incanto Hotel is a family run hotel with a sauna, hot tub and turkish bath. Massage treatments can also be arranged locally.

All the rooms have air-conditioning and en-suite bathroom.



One of the bedrooms at Incanto Hotel

Day 2

The Alfa Riders equestrian centre is a few kms from the town of Sevlievo.

Breakfast in the hotel before transferring to the riding centre just outside Sevlievo. Meet the horses, saddle up and prepare for the ride.

Set off riding from the stables and ride along beautiful green hills. Lunch in the shade in the open fields, with amazing views. This day gives you the opportunity to canter in the beautiful area at the foot of the Balkan Mountain, from where you can see the whole central Balkan range and its majestic peaks.

Later arrive at the pretty village of Kastel where you stay the night. Dinner in the guesthouse with delicious homemade food.

About 28 km/5 hours riding.



Overnight Kasapite. This small guesthouse only has 4 bedrooms, located in the beautiful gardens with mountain views. There is WiFi available in public areas.



A bedroom at Kasapite

Day 3

After breakfast at the accommodation, you ride through the mountains to a lovely picnic spot next to the Rositsa River.

After lunch, and during the hottest hours of the day, you relax by the river, with the opportunity to swim if you wish.

After a relaxing afternoon you have a short ride to your guesthouse in the village of Valevtsi.

After dinner, if you wish, you can visit the Bedouin Summer Bar for a lively evening and perhaps a swim in the river.

About 15 km/3.5 hours riding.



Overnight Prolet Guest House. Riders usually stay at the Prolet Guest House but may also stay at the Valevtsi or Balkan guest houses.

Comfortable guesthouse with a pool in the village of Valevtsi.



A typical bedroom at the Prolet Guest House.

Day 4

After breakfast you ride uphill towards the heart of the Central Balkan National Park.

The ride takes you deep into the forest alongside 100 year old beech trees next to the Rositsa River. If it's hot you may wish to swim in the river's natural pools.

Picnic at a wooden shelter in the forest.

Ride on and later you arrive at the Mazalat Hut (1,520 m) which is situated under the natural formation known as the 'Singing Rocks'. When the horses are settled, you may choose to take a walk up Mazalat Peak, from where you can see for 60 km in every direction.

Tonight you sleep in the hut in shared bedrooms (for 3, 5 or 8 people) in made up beds. A shower is available in the hut (own towel required).

Dinner at the hut.

About 25 km/5 hours riding.



Overnight Mazalat Hut. Built on the main ridge at 1,520 m in the Kalofer Mountain, this simply accommodation has a washroom and shared bedrooms.



Mazalat Hut

Day 5

After breakfast at the hut, you ride uphill and across the crest of the Balkans. Enjoy lunch at the Partizanska Pesen Hut with beautiful views.

Later in the afternoon, ride down through the forest and beautiful meadows near the town of Gabrovo.

Arrive at the hotel situated on the shore of the lake and enjoy the swimming pools and sauna if you wish.

About 30 km/6 hours riding.



Overnight Complex Sinkevitsa. Located under the mountains and a few kilometres from Gabrovo, this hotel has a number of outdoor pools to enjoy.



The outside at Complex Sinkevitsa

Day 6

This morning, after breakfast at the hotel, you ride beside the rocky chain 'Vitata Stena' (702m). There are some opportunities for nice canters.

Picnic under the rocks before riding towards the village of Novakovtsi.

About 20 km/3.5 hours riding.



This afternoon you are taken by car to visit Etara.

Situated near to the town of Gabrovo the Etara Folk Museum is a beautifully rebuilt and restored village from the 19th century which illustrates the main trades of that time. The machines are powered by running water and the craftsmen produce craftwork that is available to buy.



Etara Village

Overnight St. George. Every room has an en-suite bathroom, air-conditioning and WiFi. Some rooms have a balcony view of the mountains.



A typical bedroom at St. George

Day 7

The trail today completes the full circle.

You picnic next to the village of Bogatovo, before continuing back to the riding stables. There are plenty of opportunities for nice canters today.

Farewell dinner.

About 26 km/4.5 hours riding.



Overnight Incanto Hotel.