

The Wild Land of Bulgaria, Bulgaria

Itinerary

This circular trail starts and finishes at the horse farm near Sevlievo, and takes you to the north side of the Balkans. This is a great introduction to the area and ideal for the hot summer months, or for guests not wanting so many hours in the saddle.

This itinerary is designed to introduce you to Bulgaria and its many faceted history, with castles, towers, monasteries and fortresses from the Middle Ages, together with the old houses and traditional crafts.



Riders should be happy at walk, trot and canter. Subject to the wishes and capabilities of the group, there will be some long canters on wide open spaces (4 - 5 hours riding each day). Accommodation is in hotels and guesthouses.



Saturday

Arrive at Sofia Airport (before 4pm). If you arrive early in the day then the guide will meet you and take you for lunch before collecting more people from the airport. If there is time when everyone has arrived,

you will be taken on a tour in the centre of the capital before being transferred 190kms northeast of Sofia to the town of Sevlievo.

Your first night is in the Hotel Niks in Sevlievo.

Ride briefing over dinner.

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.

Sunday

After breakfast you are transferred to the horse farm to meet the horses, saddle up and prepare for the ride under the guidance of your guides. Have an introductory ride of about 2 hours through hills and forests.

Return to the riding centre for lunch and then in the afternoon another ride of about 2 hours.

Dinner and overnight at Hotel Niks in Sevlievo.

About 18 km / 4 hours riding.

Monday

Having packed your bags for the start of the trail, you leave from the horse farm and ride to the small village of Zhivko. The route takes you along the foot of the famous rocky chain "Vitata Stena" (10km long and more than 120m high) which is also a nature reserve.

Picnic next to the village of Armenite, situated in the middle of the Vitata Stena.



Dinner and overnight at a traditional guesthouse in Zhivko village.

About 25km / 4.5 hours riding.

Tuesday

After breakfast you are taken by car to visit the folk museum of Etara which is near to the town of Gabrovo.

Etara is a beautifully rebuilt and restored village from the 19th century illustrating the main crafts of that time. The machines are powered by running water and the craftsmen produce souvenirs for you to buy (take some money with you – there are some interesting things to buy).



After a picnic lunch you set off riding from Zhivko towards the village of Gesha, crossing the Yantra River and riding through the wilderness of the valley.



Dinner and overnight at Gesha. This guesthouse has a swimming pool.

About 21 km / 4 hours riding.

Wednesday

After breakfast at the hotel you visit Dryanovo Monastery and the cave “Bacho Kiro” above it.

The monastery survived the bombardment of the Ottoman Army in one epic battle with the rebels during the biggest Bulgarian uprising against the Turkish occupation in 1876.

After visiting the monastery, you set off riding towards the village of Vetintsi, stopping for a picnic lunch on the way.

Dinner and overnight at a country hotel with a swimming pool.

About 25 km / 4.5 hours riding.



Thursday

After breakfast, walk on foot along the eco path through the Emen Canyon of the Negovanka River. Later you ride through hills and beautiful forests with small creeks and lakes before stopping for a picnic lunch near the village of Burya.

Dinner and overnight in a hunting lodge on the shore of the lake in the village of Skalsko.

About 25km / 4.5 hours riding.

Friday

Your last ride takes you through wilderness and beautiful meadows back towards the horses’ base. After a picnic lunch you arrive back at the farm near Sevlievo and say a fond farewell to your horses.

Dinner and overnight at Hotel Niks in Sevlievo.

About 20 km / 4 hours riding.



Saturday

After breakfast you are transferred to the airport in Sofia for your flight home. Flights should depart after midday.

Accommodation

During the rides you stay in hotels and guesthouses – the best available in this area of rural Bulgaria.

Rooms are mostly twin rooms with en suite loo and shower. Swimming pools and saunas are available on some nights. Please note that during the autumn months of September, October and November, the outdoor pools are likely to be closed.