

Sea Is Not Enough

For many years now Bulgaria has been widely accepted as the country by the Black Sea, Bulgaria is also well known for its beautiful beaches, delicious food, good service, and relatively low prices. The fact that it is easy to reach by common means of transport and is a peaceful region, have unexpectedly turned Bulgaria into a fashionable tourist destination. But these things proved to be insufficient in the last few years and tourist agencies have started adding to this list the mountains, the culture, the agrarian tourism, the historical sites, the museums as well as good family conditions, sampling of wines, studying crafts, and other attractions.

But that is not enough!

The world tourism market is changing very quickly and Bulgaria, being a tourist destina-

tion, has to adjust to the new tendencies. That is why a lot of effort is made to promote some different places to visit-Plovdiv, Nesebur, Koprivshitsa, the Rila and Bachkovski Monasteries and many more. Tourists react very quickly to changes in prices as well as to unfulfilled promises and bad service, and tend to 'punish' the destination. That is why Bulgarian tourist agents do their best to overcome and do away with the problems from the past season, offering the best possible discounts at the same time.

So, now it is clear that the sea alone is not enough for Bulgaria to gain a leading position within the world tourist market. The good news is efforts are being made and improvements are happening all the time to bring Bulgaria to the forefront in world tourism.

Bulgarian Golden Treasure Goes To Spain

The unique Thracian treasure of Panagyuriste leaved the country for an exhibition in some of the biggest cities in Spain. It consists of nine utensils with rich decoration unearthed accidentally by workers in 1949. It is made of solid gold, weights 6.164 kg and includes items

of different shapes (horn, animal, women's heads and phial-shaped). It is most likely that the set was used for drinking wine in religious context or in the everyday life but some suggest it was designed for ritual purifying of a liquid, probably pouring it from one utensil into another. So far, the Panagyuriste treasure has visited several countries abroad, including Japan, Belgium, and Switzerland.

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Birds Have Come to Save Us

It is not a secret that Bulgaria's hope for survival is the tourism sector. Most Bulgarians believe it to be our one and only way to a better future and that is why a lot of effort is made to keep the sector working as successfully as possible. It has always been very important for Bulgaria to be competitive at the world tourism market and there are resources other than the famous Black Sea.

Bulgaria has the unique opportunity to develop ornithology tourism offering tourists the chance to observe more than 200 bird species. That includes 20 of the rarest birds that can be seen only here and nowhere else in the whole world. This sector even has the potential of extending the summer season at the sea side through tourist tours for observation and research of birds as autumn is the

time of migration. Another important feature is the fact that Bulgaria stands on the routes of bird migration. So, if you feel like watching rare birds you will not be disappointed as most of them are already here in Bulgaria. To mention but a few examples: the Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*), the Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*), the Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*), the vanishing Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*), the Spotted Eagle (*Aquila clanga*), the Paddy-field Warbler (*Acrocephalus agricola*) and many more.

Ornithology packages have been offered in Bulgaria for 15 years now and all bird lovers can use specialised transport and well trained guides. So, if you are looking for a 'bird' adventure you just might have come to the right place.

Bulgaria's Eco Push

Although there has been huge investment in the package-holiday resorts around the Black Sea in the last few years, Bulgaria has already identified eco-tourism as a cornerstone for future tourism development. In the hinterland, away from the resorts, there are enormous amounts of natural supplies; a well-developed network of national parks and protected areas, over 2,000 hot springs, nine Unesco world heritage sites, and an agricultural system based primarily on small organic farms (which surely equates to good, healthy food). Marketing specialists believe these features are the very beginning of a successful new tourism sector in the country.

Bulgaria's Newest Treasure

The National History Museum displays this month the Unseen Thracian Gold Treasure from Plovdiv. It consists of 150 objects discovered in 2001 near

the village of Kaloyanovo, just outside Plovdiv. The treasure belonged to a Thracian king who lived during the 5th century B.C. and includes the heaviest solid-gold Thracian breastplate ever found on the Balkan. The unique piece-weighing 250 grams of 24-carat gold-has an ornament portraying Medusa Gorgona, the Greek goddess of horror.

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