

Tourism Bites

As in all other fields of the social life in tourism there is fashion too. Indeed many people undertake a certain trip just because it is fashionable to do so and go there for that particular time of the year. These hot-cou-ture tendencies change every year and vary in different countries and periods. In Bulgaria, for example, for last year rural tourism was really modern, the year before last was the time of winter tourism and this year it looks difficult to assess.

At the beginning of the summer tourism period the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (a newly established state body) allotted 2.8 million leva (approximately 1.43 million euros) for the improvement of the infrastructure at prominent cultural landmarks-including the ancient religious complex of Perpericon (in the Rhodops Mountains), the Madara Horseman (carved in stone low relief near Shumen), the medieval Aladzha Monastery (cut into the rocks near Varna), the Rozhen Monastery (a medieval monastery in Pirin Mountains) and the gallery of the legendary painter Vladimir Dimitrov also called The Master, in the western town of Kyustendil. Tourism potential was the main criterion for sponsoring the sites as the Ministry would like to promote cultural tourism.

For the last four years museum and cultural tourism proved much

more profitable than sea and ski holidays. The main reason is that people on a cultural tour usually need special transport and guides and thus spend 100 times more money than those simply lying on the beaches. Bulgaria is to turn into a favorite destination for tourists and will become a European leader in cheap traveling, according to specialists.

However it is always worth trying to promote alternative kinds of tourism which most of the time turn out to be really profitable. Such type of traveling is the hunting tourism as the number of tourists who visited Bulgaria for sport hunting has doubled on a year-on-year basis, according to official data presented at the International Nature, Hunting, Fishery Expo in Plovdiv (south Bulgaria) this year. Nearly 5.000 people hunted in Bulgarian forests last year, compared to 2.400 the previous one. The return from hunting tourism, standing at about 1.8 million euros, has been reinvested in the sector so that innovations are made in order to promote further the field.

Specialists hope that new types of tourism, like cultural, museum and hunting tourism will become much more fashionable this year. Thus the country will not only gather a substantial turnover but also show to the world that there is a lot more to be seen in Bulgaria besides the sea.

Bulgarian Beauty

Bulgarian women are outstanding in their beauty and grace and they prove it not only in everyday life but also at numerous local and world pageants. A Bulgarian model was crowned Miss Tourism of the Planet in Greece. Elisaveta Nikolovska competed against beauties from 23 countries and the 18 year old brunette had just finished high school. Her professional career as a model started the previous year when she ranked third in the Miss Bulgaria contest. It actually is typical for Bulgarian girls to start taking part in beauty pageants at a very early age. Maria Ivanova aged 13 not only took first place in the 'Visages Mini Models 2005' contest, a prestigious Bulgarian beauty competition, but also won

the international children's beauty pageant 'Little Miss Europe 2005' in Turkey. Maria overcame the rivalry of 16 other little girls coming from different European countries. Before being crowned with a 200 Swarovski stones crown the little beauty also won the special jury award 'Little Miss Press'. The other contestant from Bulgaria-10-year old Konstantina Lyubomirova was also awarded at the pageant. She received a special award for most professionally presented dress.

These professional little models are not only starting a glamorous career but also making many people in Bulgaria proud with their success.

Support

Bulgarian business ladies receive greater support from their families than female entrepreneurs in other EU countries. That was the main conclusion from a survey, conveyed as part of the project "the Place of the Bulgarian Woman in United Europe"- among the units of the communication strategy for the forthcoming accession to the EU. The survey itself was the first of its kind and on such a wide scale to be held in Bulgaria. About 850 Bulgarian women (aged 20-55) involved in the field of business have taken part in the research. According to the report the average Bulgarian business woman is married, has children and is well educated. Families have been rendering support to 77% of the enquired Bulgarians and for the rest of Europe that percentage is only 43. Ladies running their own businesses made for 33.4% of the enquired and 85% of them pointed out that they work more than 50 hours weekly, while only 62% of their European counterparts are that busy. As the survey was conveyed in 12 major towns

in the country it can be said to be showing the present situation in all of Bulgaria. Although it sounds encouraging that so many women of different ages are taking a significant part in business and entrepreneur in Bulgaria, there still is a lot left to be done for equal social and business conditions for men and women to be provided. As all European countries Bulgaria also has its problems in that particular matter but the necessary steps are made toward equality and better business environment.

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