

# The Rose Festival Tour

**TOUR DURATION: 7 DAYS/ 6 NIGHTS**  
**AVAILABLE: JUNE**

Bulgaria is one of the largest producers of rose oil in the world. The rose oil is called "the liquid gold" of Bulgaria, because it is a very expensive product - 3 times more expensive than the real gold. The Bulgarian rose oil production is popularized every year during the Rose Festival in Kazanluk. If you choose to go on this tour, you will witness three very interesting events during the festival - the beauty contest, called "The Rose Queen", the harvesting ritual in the rose gardens and the parade along the streets of the town. You will visit some very beautiful places in Bulgaria, you will enjoy the celebrations, and you will certainly have fun!

## Day 1 – Sofia

Arrival at Sofia airport. Transfer to the hotel. Dinner with a folklore show at a traditional Bulgarian restaurant. Overnight.  
(D)



## Day 2 - Veliko Tarnovo – Etara – Shipka – Hisarya

After breakfast, you will depart to Veliko Tarnovo, famous as the historical capital of the Second Bulgarian Empire. One of Bulgaria's primary tourist destinations, Veliko Tarnovo boasts many historical monuments and landmarks. You will take a guided sightseeing tour of the town – you will see the royal and the patriarchal palace on the Tsarevets hill, the St Demetrius of Thessaloniki Church, the Samovodska Charshiya Street in the Old Town, the St Forty Martyrs Church, and numerous Bulgarian National Revival buildings with their typical architecture. In the afternoon, your journey continues to Etara Architectural-Ethnographic Complex. It is a unique open-air museum that presents the Bulgarian customs, culture, and craftsmanship. You will visit some typical Bulgarian revival houses and you will have the chance to see how local master craftsmen, following the old traditions, represent around 20 characteristics of the regional crafts such as wood-carving, pottery, coppersmith etc. Next, you will head to the Shipka Monument Complex, dedicated to the Russian, Ukrainian and Bulgarian soldiers who gave their lives for the liberation of Bulgaria in the Russo-Turkish War. There you will see the Shipka Memorial and the Memorial Temple of the Birth of Christ. The church's bell tower reaches a height of 53 m. and its bells, the heaviest of which weights 12 tons, were cast from the cartridges that were collected after the battles. You will continue to Hisarya – a small resort town, founded thousands of years ago. Dinner and overnight.  
(B, D)



### Day 3 – Kazanlak – Hisarya

Breakfast. Departure to the world famous Bulgarian Rose Valley. You will have the opportunity to take part in the rose-picking ritual that takes place in the rose fields near the town of Kazanlak. It is performed along with authentic folklore dances and songs from the region. Next, you will witness an original rose oil distillation in Kulata Ethnographic Complex. A special picnic with typical specialties of the region and Bulgarian folk dances will be organized especially for you. Later you will visit the Rose Museum in Kazanlak, where you will have a very interesting lecture on rose oil manufacture. You will also visit the Kazanlak Thracian Tomb - a masterpiece of the Thracian architecture and painting. It dates back to the 4th century BC and has been on the UNESCO protected World Heritage Site list since 1979. In the evening, you will go back to Hisarya, where you will overnight.  
(B, L)



### Day 4 – Plovdiv – Bachkovo – Hisarya

After breakfast, your journey continues to Plovdiv – the second largest city in Bulgaria, famous for its ancient and diverse culture and millennial history. Plovdiv is one of the oldest cities in Europe. It is a contemporary of Troy and Mycenae, and older than Rome, Athens, and Constantinople. You will take a guided city tour – you will see the Roman theatre (early 2nd century AD), the Stadium (late 2nd century AD), The Old Town of Plovdiv (known for its unique Bulgarian Renaissance architectural style), the St. Constantine and Helena Church, Tsar Simeon's Garden and the Singing Fountains. In the afternoon, you will proceed to the Bachkovo Monastery Complex- important monument of Christian architecture and one of the largest and oldest Eastern Orthodox monasteries in Europe. There you will visit the Cathedral Church of the Virgin Mary (where a valuable icon of the Virgin Mary Eleusa from 1310 is kept), the Saint Archangels Church (painted by the celebrated National Revival artist Zahari Zograf) and the museum of the monastery. In the evening, you will return to Hisarya, where you will overnight.  
(B)



### Day 5 – Rila Monastery – Sofia

Breakfast. Continue to the Rila Monastery - the largest and most famous Eastern Orthodox monastery in Bulgaria. The monastery complex, regarded as one of the foremost masterpieces of Bulgarian National Revival architecture, was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983. You will take a guided tour of the monastery including the main church with its gold-plated iconostasis, the monastery museum (famous for housing Rafail's Cross) and the "Magernitsa" (the monastery kitchen, noted for its uncommonly large vessels). In the afternoon, you will continue to Sofia, where you will overnight.  
(B)



### **Day 6 – Sofia**

After breakfast you will take a guided sightseeing tour of Sofia – one of the oldest capital cities in Europe, blending its past and present in a remarkable architectural style. You will see many interesting places – the golden-domed St.

Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (one of the world's largest Orthodox churches), the Sts. Cyril and Methodius National Library, the Ivan Vazov National Theatre, the former royal palace, the late Roman Church of St. George (4th century). Afternoon at leisure. Overnight.

(B)



### **Day 7 – Sofia**

Breakfast. Transfer to the airport for your flight back home.

(B)

**PRICES ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**