

The Exclusive Sofia Gourmet Tour



Dear Wine & Food lover, join our *Exclusive Gourmet Tour* in Sofia, Bulgaria!

- Taste the local flagship drink **rakia** in a stylish communist-era retro bar;
- Wine and dine in a trendy **gourmet** restaurant for modern Bulgarian food;
- Explore **Sofia**, the Bulgarian capital on a city tour with a licensed tour guide;
- Visit two distinguished **wineries in the Thracian lowland** on a day trip;
- Private transfers, heritage hotel in Sofia city center and much more...

- **Rakia** is a fruit brandy (mostly made of grape, plums, apricots) and should not be mixed with the Turkish anise raki. It has long history – last year Bulgarian archaeologists discovered an 11th century fragment of a distillation vessel used most probably for the production of rakia. Bulgaria cites as an evidence an old piece of pottery from the 14th century in which the word “rakinja” is inscribed... Nowadays rakia is widely spread – from home-produced in the villages to the mighty brands which could be found in every corner shop. Rakia is normally 40% ABV and is mostly drunk by Bulgarians as a starter and not as a digestif...

- **The Thracian Lowland** has been ranked on second place among the “10 Best Wine Destinations of 2017” by Wine Enthusiast Magazine;

Day 1: Welcome to Sofia!



We will pick you up at the airport and transfer you to your hotel. Located in the city center you could choose between strolling through Sofia or simply relaxing in your heritage style accommodation. Free time in the afternoon.



Then it's time for dinner and we will head to the rakish RAKETA RAKIA BAR ("rocket" in English). The interior provides an ironical perspective of the so called communism period and its symbols – you will see original objects which used to be part of almost every Bulgarian home 30-40 years ago. The rakia selection is huge – over 150 different types! The staff is extremely friendly and we will taste rakia just like the locals do – as a starter, accompanied by fresh salads in summer or pickled vegetables in winter, cold cuts and different delicious appetizers. Nazdrave=Cheers!

Day 2 Sofia Gourmet Style

After breakfast we will go for a guided Sofia walking city tour (2-3 hours). Welcome to Sofia, one of the oldest cities in the world! First settlements here date back 6000 years! The first traced inhabitants was the Thracian tribe Serdi, followed by the Romans who set up here in the 2nd century a well-developed and protected settlement called Serdika... We will visit the famous Rotunda Sveti Georgi, built in the 4th Century as a Roman temple; Alexander Nevski Memorial Cathedral – the symbol of the city; St. Sofia Basilika which gave the name of our capital; we will pass by ancient Roman ruins, Neo-Baroque, Secession but also Brutalist-style public buildings, all part of the turbulent Bulgarian history.



In the evening we will enjoy our dinner in the gourmet *star* of Sofia – Restaurant **KOSMOS**. The impressive, futuristic ambience; the chef (with experience in a 3* Michelin restaurant); the state-of-the-art Bulgarian cuisine; the typical, local products; the excellent wine selection, the professional service – top level in every single detail!

We would like to spoil you with an especially prepared pairing 6-course menu depending on the season. All products and ingredients are carefully selected and supplied, some of them directly from their producers. We will only reveal that the master chef of Kosmos used to work as a Pastry chef in the famous restaurant of David Muñoz – „DiverXo“ in Madrid (3 Michelin stars). The meals will be paired with a glass of rakia and 3 glasses of different, carefully selected Bulgarian wines from different wine regions.

Day 3: Thracian wine experience



In the morning we will pick you up from the hotel and drive on the highway eastwards. We will visit two excellent wineries. The first one (2 hours' drive away) is **VILLA YUSTINA**, which is located at the foot of the Rodopi Mountains, in the small village of Ustina. This is a modern and fast-growing winery, that cultivates vines since 2008 – both international and local. Villa Yustina became popular with its red masterpiece “Monogram”, an elegant blend of two indigenous vines. The energy and enthusiasm of the people working at Villa Yustina provide haunting and memorable experience. Our hosts will present the technological stages of winemaking but before that and if the weather is fine, we will walk together through the park-vineyard and their ecological farm with stunning views. The cozy vinoteca and the exquisite lunch (3-course menu) paired with their 3 high-end wines will be the cherry on the cake of our wine experience!



Afterwards (1 hour drive) we are going to visit **MANASTIRA** - a boutique winery, specialised in producing high quality wines, located in a deep valley surrounded by the slopes of Sredna Gora. The region is known for its rich culture and historical heritage. The winery name means “The Monastery” – an ancient one was destroyed by the Turks

who conquered the lands along the middle reaches of Topolnitsa River at the beginning of XV century... After the winery tour we will enchaunt 5 of Manastira's top wines and admire the scenery around from the spacious terrace. The tasting will be accompanied by bread, local cheese and/or fresh season fruits. Let us reveal one small secret: *Mavrud* – the wine symbol of Bulgaria and most popular autochtone variety is the proudly cherished speciality of Manastira Winery. And the outcome is fascinating, believe us...

After 1:15 hour drive, we are back in Sofia. Free time for exploring the city by night on your own.

Day 4: *Dovizhdane (Good bye), Sofia!*



Breakfast and free time in Sofia. Transfer to Sofia airport... *Dovizhdane (Good bye)!*

2018 Prices per person in double room:

- ✓ 499 Euro (valid for a group of 8 people)
- ✓ 479 Euro (valid for a group of 12 people)
- ✓ *Single room supplement 140 Euro

Services Included:

- ✓ 3 nights in 5* hotel in Sofia;
- ✓ All breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners;
- ✓ 2 wine tastings;
- ✓ 1 rakia tasting;
- ✓ Professional English/German speaking tour guide and wine expert;
- ✓ All transfers throughout the trip;
- ✓ Sofia city tour;

Services Not Included:

- ✓ Personal expenses;
- ✓ Tips;
- ✓ Flight ticket to Sofia;