

NATURE OF SERBIA

HOLIDAY ON THE MOVE



NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION of SERBIA





Dear readers, travellers and friends,

*Y*ou can acquaint yourself with Serbia in countless ways: actively, leisurely or by exploring its sights whilst on the move, with eyes wide open to the country's dramatic and varied landscapes and a host of wonderful treasures. The nature of Serbia remains largely undiscovered and almost untouched, while its diverse and attractive landscapes offer a full spectrum of activities, unforgettable experiences and adventures: sailing on the broad flowing waters of the Danube; mountaineering on the rich peaks of Serbia – home to a hidden world of flora and fauna; watching rare and protected birds, enjoying recreational fishing on the calm waters of the plains or on fast-flowing mountain rivers which in turn, reveal beautiful panoramic views. For those looking to experience the landscape in their own time, there are also many cycle routes to suit all levels of ability which pass through the majority of Serbia's many tourist attractions. Throughout this publication we will present you with some truly grand active holiday possibilities, packaging them with our most beautiful locations and protected natural sites. We will guide you through all of our national parks, over thirty nature parks and special reserves, mountains, interesting tourist centres and natural wonders including gorges, canyons, caves, waterfalls, stone bridges, cascades, rivers and lakes – numerous sites of outstanding natural beauty and natural marvels which are all protected conservation areas. Whatever your preferred choice, the hardest part will be deciding on what tour to do - as there is so much to see and do on offer. Holidaying in natural environments encourages us



to care for the environment. In order to understand how to preserve nature, we must familiarise ourselves with it. As such, we have endeavoured to present at least some of our rare and protected plant and animal species, some of which represent unique national treasures. A responsible attitude towards nature, waste disposal, energy usage and the protection of our cultural and historical heritage will enable future generations to enjoy Serbia's wealth of natural and cultural diversity.

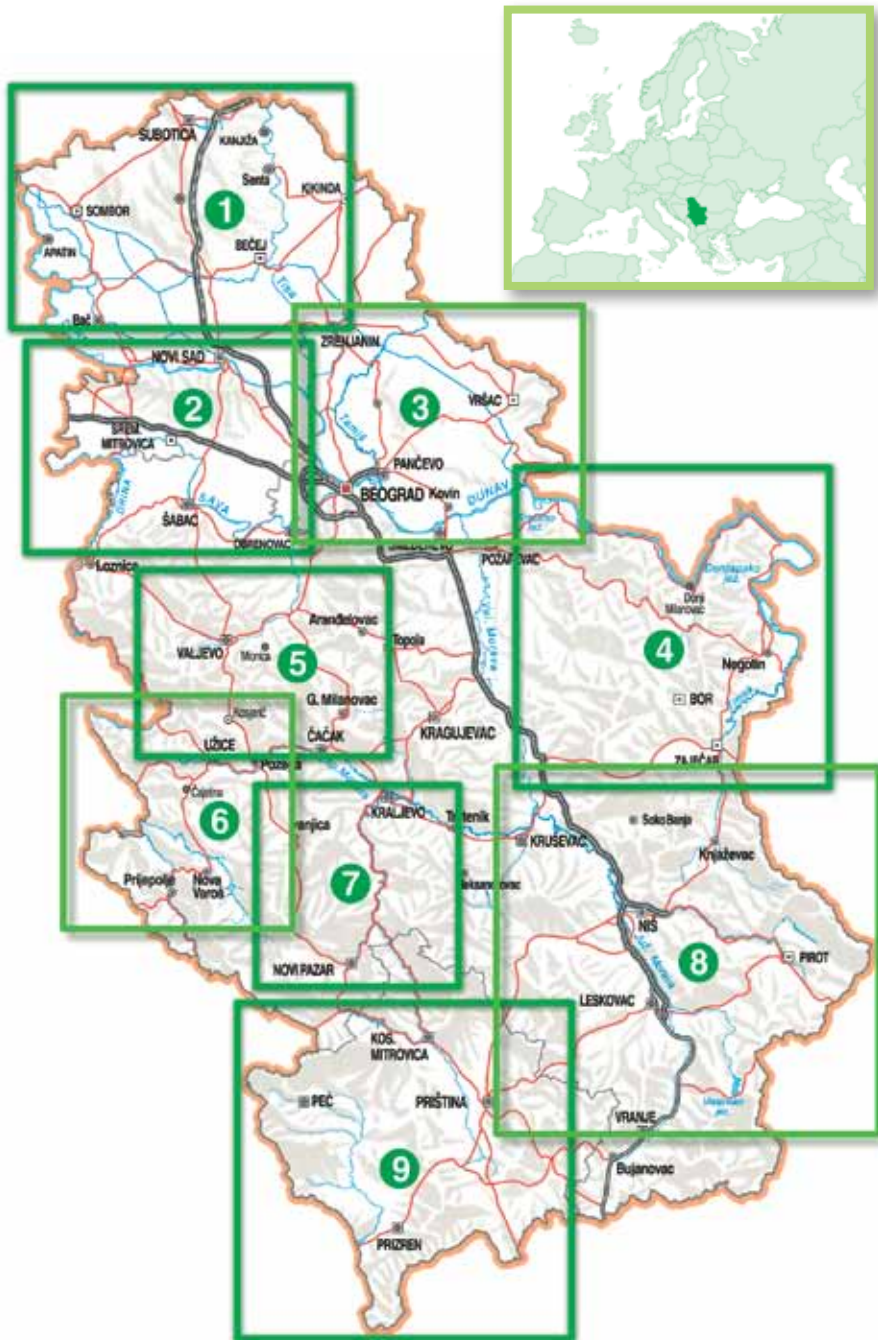
The "hero" of this story is nature and its inhabitants – plant life, birds and other wildlife. Infinite greenery, forests and meadows; the power of the rivers of mountains and plains, canyons and lakes, remnants of a rich cultural and historical heritage, accommodated under rustic roofs of rural households, with the scents and tastes of traditional home cooking. We know that we will provide you with genuine pleasure, relaxation and recuperation whilst exploring the uniqueness of nature in Serbia.

We believe that we will convince you why you must visit Serbia, discover the country, its warm and hospitable people and experience unforgettable moments of active holidaying in the country.

We look forward to seeing you in Serbia!

Gordana Plamenac

Director of the Tourist Organisation of Serbia



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- ① territories covered within the chapter;
- natural phenomena;
- caves





*P*alic and Ludas are not just ancient lakes, they are known as the ‘pearls of the plains’ with their meandering streams and backwaters. The Upper Danube River Basin provides a special backdrop which touches both the water and the sky which captures the imagination as its history and unique nature unfolds.



NORTHERN LAKES AND THE UPPER DANUBE RIVER BASIN

Touch of water and sky

Nature park

PALIC

Palic Nature Park offers something new, unique and inspiring at any time of year. A harmony of nature and architecture, this is an ideal destination for an active break, with a myriad of sporting activities through endless walks or bicycle journeys along the sides of azure waters. No wonder, then, that in the early 20th century Palic was considered a resort as fashionable as the likes of Carlsbad (Czech) or Opatija (Croatia). What is more, Palic provides a perfect place to relax. The lake's creation lies in the "deep, dark recesses of the past". It is known to have naturally drained and refilled several times. This shallow lowland lake is more than five kilometres long. As soon as it was discovered that the lake's water and mud had healing properties, a park was built in 1840. The natural spa environment of the Great Park was initially landscaped on a small area of around nine hectares, but today it occupies an area of 19 hectares. The warmth and mildness of this green oasis is home to many



trees like the Sycamore, Ash, Elm, Oak, Locust, Linden, Platanus, Chestnut, Poplar, Red Pine and Swamp Cypress. The grand flowerbeds are landscaped in a Baroque style, planted with seasonal flowers. The spring masters of the lanes are the Tulip, Viola, Daisy and Turkish Carnation, while in

the autumn months, the floral performance belongs to the Austrian Sage, Salvia, Begonia and Petunia. The park is landscaped in a traditional English garden design. Instead of the classical straight and symmetrical lanes, the Palic alleyways are linked by winding tree-lined paths. One of them, the central



Landscape of exceptional distinction

SUBOTICA SANDS

The Subotica Sands stretch across the far north of Backa. Today's undulating sand dunes are a result of the great movement of sand caused by excessive cattle grazing. The planned forestation of the Subotica Sands began in the late 18th century. Today's mix of forestland, steppes and swamps, coupled with the banks of the River Kires, make this area the most vulnerable sand-steppe habitat of its type in Europe.

Traces of primeval vegetation from the Sands offer valuable testimony to the plant life of the ancient Pannonian Plain. Among the preserved natural rarities of note is the Meadow Saffron (*Bulbocodium versicolor*), a plant synonymous with the flora of the Subotica Sands, as the only site in Vojvodina and, indeed, Serbia where the plant grows. The presence of rare species of rodent has also been recorded – most notably the Lesser Mole Rat (*Spalax leucodon*), while a total of around 170 species of birds have been recorded in the area of the Subotica Sands, which is why it is part of the international IBA (important bird areas) conservation programme.

pathway, leads to the Water Tower at the very entrance to the park, beside the Grand Terrace facing the lake. The Great Park is also an important habitat for forest animals and is also home to numerous species of birds. Palic Lake is renowned for its bird islands, which are home to nesting marsh birds. The most striking sounds of the islands are the noisy colonies of herons and gulls. For the past few years, the islands have been home to nesting Mediterranean Gulls (*Larus melanocephalus*), making this the only site in the country where this black headed bird currently resides.

▼ *Great White Egret*



Palic's lakeside beach is a spot of great tranquillity, beauty and relaxation, with its beaches, promenades, hotels and strong, enticing Secessionist architecture that draws attention with every step. The Palic Zoo is not only a sanctuary where animals live in the tradition of their natural habitat, but also boasts fine botanical gardens.

The Grand Terrace's ballroom hosted the

Special nature reserve

SELEVENJ HEATH

This region has never been urbanised and remains in tact as a beautiful wilderness area. Spacious pastures stretch beyond the horizon, casting long silhouettes of the odd manor or farmstead.

Today this Pannonian heath type reserve covers 10 areas criss-crossed with orchards, fields and vineyards and is primarily used for botanical conservation. Protected species of orchid and iris abound, while this is the only location in Serbia where the Desert Soap Wart (*Gypsophila arenaria*) grows. There are also living species of international importance, such as sand lizards, bats and rare birds nesting on the salty meadows.

Selevenj's marked trails lead visitors through the area's most interesting forest habitats and with the guidance of a ranger, you will learn interesting stories about this unique region.

first tennis match ever played indoors on the territory of the former Yugoslavia back in 1937. And much earlier, before the end of the 19th century, Palic hosted a veritable mini Olympics, with international sporting events including, as evidenced by existing photographs, gliding with sailboats on the frozen water of the lake. Each piece of magic that once attracted guests to Palic is still here today – waiting to be rediscovered.



WHITE-TAILED EAGLE

The White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus Albicilla*) is Europe's biggest eagle and the only species of the genus *Haliaeetus* living in Europe. With a large beak and impressively broad wings, it can glide for hours on warm air currents. In Serbia, the white tailed eagle largely inhabits the flood zones of large rivers.



Special nature reserve

LUDAS LAKE

All the beauty of the landscape shimmering in high-reed lakes at every turn, is offered at Ludas. The Ludas steppe lake is unique in Serbia. Its shallow lake bed is formed through winds blowing across the Subotica Sands and Backa's Loessial Plateau. Ludas Lake, and its surrounding flood plains, represent a unique wetland habitat. The lake is renowned for its many bird species, as well as being an important resting point on the eastern migratory route of birds.



Future protected areas

LOAM KRIVAJA RIVER VALLEY

The branch system of the loam Krivaja Valley, cut into the fertile loam soil of Backa, preserves remnants of former vast steppes. From early spring to late autumn, the valley is a carpet of colourful flowers. The landscape is dotted with small woods and reservoirs, where visitors can seek shade under ancient trees in the stylish parklands that surround the luxurious manors of Pannonia and Krivaja.

Zobnatica represents an integral part of this space. Zobnatica is synonymous to the general public with stud farms for various horse breeds and has a tradition dating back more than two centuries. Visitors to the Zobnatica Hippodrome can attend the region's most famous horse races, while there is also a museum of equestrianism. This green, cultivated area is also home to the Zobnatica Lake - a favourite oasis for lovers of course fishing.

GREAT BUSTARD PASTURES

The Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*), one of Europe's largest and most beautiful birds, is threatened with complete extinction. Serbia is home to only around 30 of these stunning birds, which live on the pastures between the villages of Mokrin, Jazov and Sajan, as well as near Banatsko Arandjelovo Village. We are actively safeguarding this small part of the prehistoric Pannonian region for future generations to enjoy and experience the enthusiastic dance of the male great bustard during the spring awakening of colours and sounds on the plains.



The most famous representatives of Ludas's bird world are the marsh birds, whose presence have seen the area included on the list of wetlands of international importance.

Among the lake's marsh birds are the Red and Yellow Heron, Bittern, Moustached Warbler and Bearded Reedling/Tit, which nest in the lake's reed beds.

The area's special residents include otters, turtles, rare species of dragonfly and

butterfly, but also endangered plant species, such as wild orchids and the sea trident. Apart from the rich natural treasures, the banks of Lake Ludas are also home to an important cultural heritage.

Special Nature Reserve

SLANO KOPOVO (SALT MINES)

Birdlife and brackish vegetation are the main natural features of Slano Kopovo, which often resemble an other worldly landscape when viewed in some aerial photographs. The geological composition of the soil testifies to the fact that this desert is an



JEGRICKA NATURE PARK

The Jegricka is a Backa river, with a course running 64 kilometres and, as such, is often lyrically referred to as “the umbilical cord of the Backa wetlands.” The Jegricka Nature Park covers the area along the river’s banks and runs through four municipalities: Backa Palanka, Vrbas, Temerin and Zabalj. Jegricka’s banks are renowned for having the most beautiful “carpets” of white water lilies. The river has an abundance of rich and diverse wildlife with many species of fish, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. It also represents an oasis for water fowl and importantly, is also home to the endangered species – the Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroka*).

oxbow lake area that was once a route of the meandering River Tisa. Over time, the river changed its course, leaving stagnant pools, ponds and swamps behind. Slano Kopovo is one of the few preserved salt pool areas in the region. Its numerous bird species and rare flora make the reserve very interesting. At the end of the 20th century, Slano Kopovo was declared an Important Bird Area (IBA) and, to date, more than 200 different species have been recorded. During autumn, the reserve attracts as many as 20,000 cranes - a number only matched in very few locations in Europe. Slano Kopovo was the final nesting place of the White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*) in the country, which vanished from these parts four decades ago. A few bird watching hides have been installed for visitors to observe the unique bird life of the salt mines.



▲ Educational trails – Ludas

▼ Bearded Parrotbill



Special Nature Reserve UPPER DANUBE RIVER BASIN

Great rivers have always been determined by fate. On the upper course of the Danube in Vojvodina, within the river’s flood zones, a network of meanders, oxbow channels, river islands and banks sprawl the Upper Danube river basin region. Imagine an isolated island surrounded by fields and villages, the area continues to preserve and nurture an extremely large number of plant and animal species. Among the most important and valued residents of the Upper Danube basin are the White-tailed Eagle,



◀ *Islands on the Danube river*

BLACK STORK

Very few people can proudly claim to have seen a Black Stork, a very shy bird that's wary of humans. The black stork has one peculiarity: unlike the White Stork, which has no vocal cords and communicates by clapping its bill, the black stork has a rasping song.

Black Stork and various species of freshwater fish that find ideal conditions for spawning in the warm shallows and backwaters of the river. You can also find rare and endangered mammals, such as otters and wildcats. Additionally, there is also one of the last populations of European Roe Deer to be found in its natural, fen environment. The area offers favourable conditions to support the lives of more than 280 species of birds, primarily marsh wading birds, as well as a number of cormorants, herons, ducks, geese, gulls and terns. The entire area is intersected by Danube channels, ponds, swamps and large reed beds. The low-lying areas are home to vast, sprawling meadows of high windflower, while the water is covered with white and yellow water lilies and Water Caltrop. Rare species of plants also grow in abundance here, such as the Water Violet, Common Mare's tail, Common Water-crowfoot, Siberian Iris and Lady Orchid. The Upper Danube basin region is home to the Black Hawthorn, while the towering Black Poplar is also an interesting sight as it reaches some 40 metres up. This fen area is a thriving location for oak and linden trees, in addition to providing a home for fen deer.

Palic

General information

Tourist Organisation of Subotica

Tel. +381 24/670-350

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Tourist information

Subotica Tourist Information Centre

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tic.subotica@eunet.rs

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Palic Tourist Information Centre

Tel. +381 24/ 753-111,

info@palic.rs

www.palic.rs

Active break

Palic offers many options for a holiday on the move: paved cycle paths, running tracks in the Great Park, tennis courts, a mini-golf course and mini bowling alley. Activities can include fishing, horse riding and beach volleyball. In season you can enjoy one of three beaches. The lake itself offers rowing boats for hire and you can sail catamarans or sailing boats. Bird watching and photo safari programmes cater for nature lovers, while lovers of extreme sports can try their hand at motorised hang gliding.

Ludas

General information

Tourist Organisation of Subotica

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Ludas Visitors' Centre

Tel. +381 24/ 758-370

jp.ludas@eunet.rs

www.ludas.rs

Active break

In order to offer visitors a true environmental experience, the Ludas Visitors' Centre organises a variety of eco-camps and educational nature workshops. Visitors to Ludas can walk along educational trails, ride a boat or canoe, swim, watch birds or just listen to bird song.

Kelebija

JSC Kelebija

Tel. +381 24/ 789-063

ergela@lipicaner.com

www.lipicaner.com

Active break

The Kelebija stud farm is famous for its breeding of Lipizzaner horses. Visitors generally come to Kelebija to ride and see the beautiful horses. The stud farm organises excursions and nature schools.

Great Bustard Pastures

Mokrin – Hunting Association Perjanica

Tel. +381 23/ 061-162

perjanica@panline.net

www.mokrin.net

Active break

Under the slogan "We're saving the great bustard", the wardens of this special nature reserve organise

bird watching expeditions to witness the reserve's rich birdlife. The area's most extraordinary and unusual attraction is Europe's largest bird - the Great Bustard, which resides in the uninhabited pastures of the northern Banat plain. A visitors' centre is under construction.

Okanj marsh

okanj.elemir@gmail.com

www.okanj.org.rs

Active break

Okanj Lake is of international significance to the protection of birds and is cared for by a local society for environmental protection. Bird watching represents the lake's main tourist attraction.

Slano Kopovo

Tourist Organisation of Novi Becej

Tel. +381 23/ 772-320,





sonovibecej@novibecej.rs
www.novibecej.rs

Active break

The local tourist organisation offers organised excursions to the lake that legend has it is the last remains of the once mighty Pannonian Sea. At Slano Kopovo visitors can see more than 200 different species of bird.

Loam Krivaja River Valley

General information

Tourist Organisation of Backa Topola

Tel. +381 24/715-310 ext.106
koczan@stcable.com
www.btopola.org.rs

Tourist organisation of Mali Idjos

info@tourism-mi.rg.rs
www.tourism-mi.org.rs

JSC Zobnatica

Tel. +381 24/ 715-641
zobnatica@open.telekom.rs
www.zobnatica.rs

Active break

The forests, old parks and reservoirs of this area are ideal for hunting and fishing. Krivaja and Pannonia have complexes of outdoor sports terrains for sporting and recreational tourism. Zobnatica is famous for its stud farm and equestrian sports centre.

Upper Danube River Basin

General information

Public company Vojvodinasume (forestry)

Woodland holdings Sombor

Tel. +381 25/463-111
direktorsg@sgsombor.co.rs
www.sgsombor.co.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Sombor

Tel. +381 25/ 434-350
info@visitsombor.org
www.visitsombor.org

Tourist Organisation of Apatin

Tel. +381 25/ 772-555
apatintours@mmnetkds.com
www.turizam.apatin.com

Local community Backi Monostor

Tel. +381 25/807-504
so.mzbmonostor@neobee.net
www.backimonostor.org.rs

Active break

The huge sprawling expanse of the Upper Danube Basin consists of several separate constituent parts – the Monostor fen, Apatin fen and the Strpce areas of Kozara and Karapandja – and provides countless possibilities for active holidays in an unspoilt

environment at the heart of nature. This place is an inspiration to fishermen and bird lovers, while the Upper Danube Basin is also on the international list of important bird areas (IBA). Two scenic cycle lanes pass through the expanse of the reserve – The International Danube Route and the regional trail “Pannonian Road of Tranquillity”.

Jegricka

General information

Public Company Vode Vojvodine (water management)

Tel. +381 21/4881-888
office@vodevojvodine.com
www.vodevojvodine.com

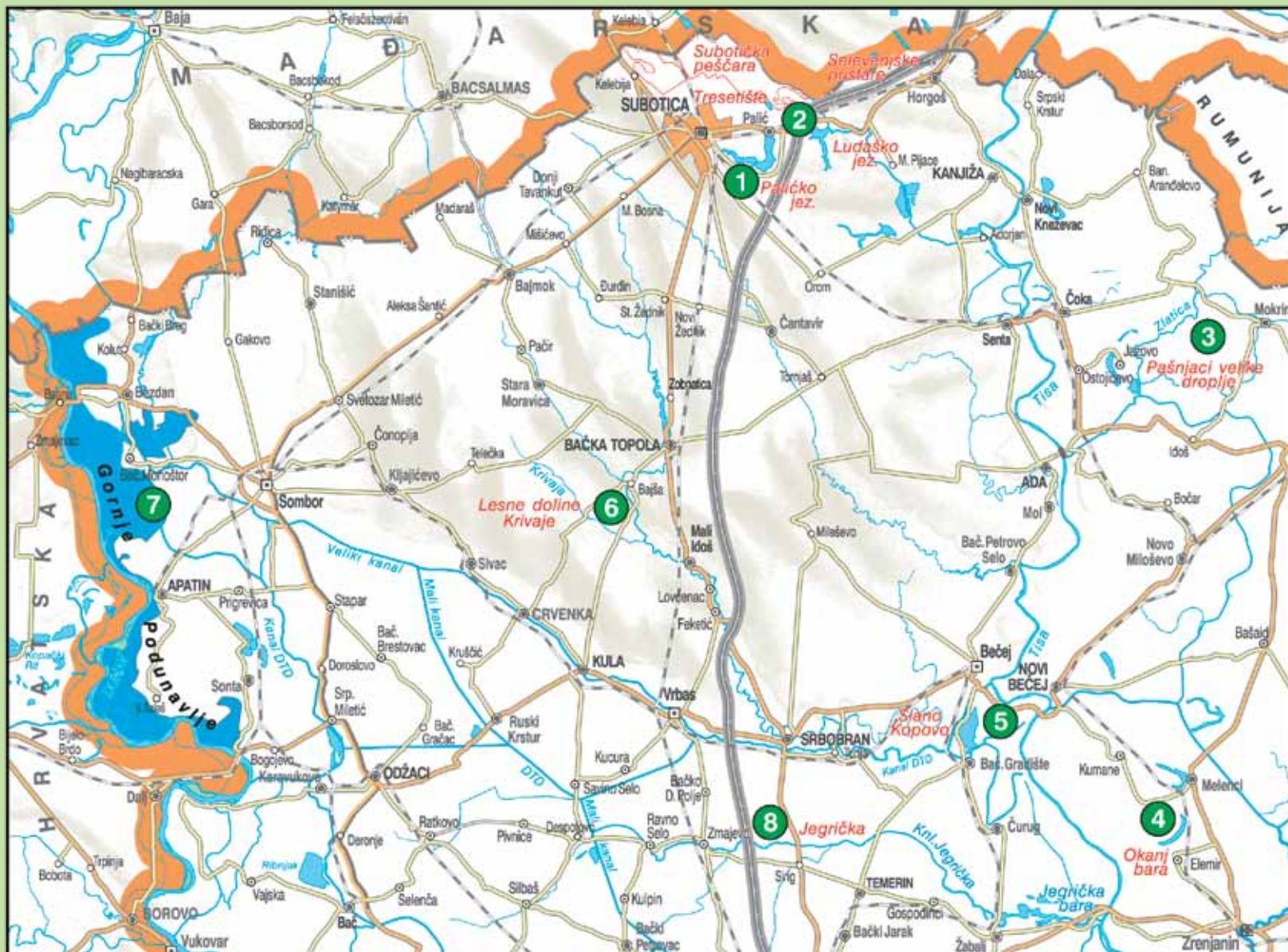
Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Zabalj

Tel. +381 21/831-688
info@zabalj-tourism.org
www.zabalj-tourism.org

Active break

The beautiful landscapes of Jegricka can be enjoyed in many ways. There are three landscaped recreational trails; various cycle trails, a number of observation sites and bird watching hides. Tourists can also hire wooden dinghies. Jegricka is also a very attractive destination for lovers of hunting and fishing.



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4 OKANJ MARSH

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*I*t is only through direct contact with nature that man can feel its immense power - through hiking, bird watching, cycling, fishing, sailing, conquering peaks or exploring other hidden sites, where an intimate encounter with the great outdoors creates a moment that somehow trivialises our seemingly insurmountable everyday problems and puts us where we belong - in the places where the purpose of the gift of life is clearly visible. Fruska Gora, Zasavica, Obedska Marsh – these are just some of the places for such moments.



The miracle of life

National Park **FRUSKA GORA**

Fruska Gora was once an island in the Pannonian Sea. Today it is a green mass rising out of the vast plains, with its highest peak, Crveni Cot (539m), surrounded by the multi-coloured carpets of the Srem plains, vineyards and monastery spires. Gentle slopes, centuries-old forests, renowned vineyards and numerous monasteries are synonymous with the area.

The Fruska Gora massif is composed of various rock types dating back to the Palaeozoic, Mesozoic, Tertiary and Quaternary periods. Such a complex geological structure enriches the unique fossilised flora and fauna which has been preserved in layers of rock from the former Pannonian Sea, dating back from between two hundred million years ago and fifty million years ago. Thanks to the many fossilised records it harbours, the former Pannonian Island is now a window into the geological past. This is also one of the greatest natural treasures helping to rank



Fruska Gora among one of Europe's greatest natural splendours in addition to being rich in bio-diversity of its marine life.

Among the rarest and most important plants of the park are the *Daphne laureol*, *Notholaena marantae* fern, European dwarf cherry, Black hawthorn, Dutchman's pipe

and more than 30 species of orchid. The park's forests are mixed and varied. One unique peculiarity is that more than 30 per cent of the Fruska Gora forest is covered by the lime/linden tree. Herbaceous vegetation is characterised by ancient meadow-steppe areas that include a number of rare steppe



◀ *Strolling on the Fruska Gora*

species: Adonis Vernalis, Greater Pasque Flower and Feather Grass. The fungi world is represented by 400 species of mushrooms and toadstools. Known edible mushrooms include the Parasol mushroom, the Golden Chanterelle fungus, the St. George's mushroom and Boletus edulis.

The forests of Fruska Gora are also home to the European wildcat, the Beech marten, the Hazel Dormouse, and various types of bat. The area's steppe habitats are home to many colonies of European ground squirrels, which in turn, are an important source of food for birds of prey. To date, ornithologists have identified 211 species of birds on the Fruska Gora. Among them, the rarest and most vulnerable are the birds of prey: the Eastern Imperial Eagle, the Lesser Spotted Eagle, Saker Falcon, White-tailed Eagle and Bonelli's Eagle. The area is particularly rich in insect life, boasting many species that are natural rarities in Serbia.

The periphery of the Fruska Gora National Park is home to some 16 Orthodox monasteries, built during the 15th and 16th centuries. The most outstanding among them are the Grgeteg Monastery, Krusedol Monastery, Novo Hopovo Monastery, Beocin Monastery, Vrdnik Monastery and Rakovac Monastery. These monastic complexes, most of which were renovated during the 18th century, combine to form a unique cultural and historical example of Serbian Baroque art,

UMBRA KRAMERI – EUROPEAN MUDMINNOW

In Serbia the Umbra Kramerii, "European Mud minnow", "blackfish" or, as the French call it, "fish dog" can only be found in the waters of the Zasavica or the canal network around Backi Monostor. The mud minnow is a small fish that inhabits slow-moving or still waters in the northern hemisphere. It lives in mud pools and marshlands and is able to swallow air. It has an elongated dorsal fin located towards the back of the body, a round head with a relatively large mouth that is downturned to resemble a frowning expression, hence the name in Serbian 'Mrgud' (from 'frown'). The mud minnow, a spring spawning fish, is classed as a vulnerable species across Europe and falls under the strict protection in Serbia.

▼ *Fossilized shell from the Pannonian Sea*





which appeals to both tourists and spiritualists alike. Due to the many monasteries, Fruska Gora is often referred to as 'Serbia's Holy Mountain'.

The Fruska Gora National Park welcomes a large number of tourists and hikers every year. The park's most important excursion destinations are the Cortanovci wood, Strazilovo, Glavica, Popovica, Andrevlje,



◀ *Steppe cherry*

Lezimir and Lipovaca. The territory of the park is also home to two nature schools (Letenka and Testera) and six mountaineering centres. Hiking tours allow visitors to familiarise themselves with the natural and cultural treasures of Fruska Gora National Park – offering a wide variety of plant life and game animals, insects and birds. Hiking, cycling or fishing provides a memorable experience close to nature.

Special Nature Reserve **KARADJORDJEVO**

The Karadjordjevo Military Establishment, hunting grounds were established in 1885 as a national estate of the Habsburg monarchy and a stud farm of the famous Hungarian Mezöhegyes Stud Farm. Its rare plant and animal species, saw part of the Karadjordjevo area was protected as a special nature reserve. The reserve consists of Bukin Fen, Vranjak and Gumnista. Bukin fen stands out as an exceptional site –with the remnants of the fen woods beside the Danube consisting mainly of poplar and willow trees. Home to many rare plant species, this area is a habitat for Pannonian sub endemic black hawthorn, yellow water lily and sweet flag (*Acorus calamus*) – all species on Serbia's flora 'Red list'. Bukin Fen is also a haven for wildlife, thus representing a centre for the genetic preservation of wild game. It is also a habitat for rare and endangered mammals: otters, wildcats, martens and marshland birds: the White-tailed eagle, Black stork and



the Black kite and rare Red kite. Guests can take advantage of organised excursions to the stud farm. There guests can enjoy horse riding and take a tour of Bach Fortress and Bodjani Monastery. The Karadjordjevo Military Establishment, has a long tradition of hunting. There are native species of game animals, such as the deer and wild boar of Bukin Fen, the Vranjak and Gumnista areas are populated by Fallow deer, Mouflon and the American



preservation of native ecosystems, wealth of fauna, more than 170 bird species, 50 species of fish, various game animals and particularly rare and scarce species, are all indicative of the extraordinary importance of the biological diversity of this area. The Kovilj-Petrovaradin Fen was declared an Important Bird Area (IBA) in 1998, as a reflection of its natural wealth. It was established as a special nature reserve in 2004 and included on the list of protected areas dependent on water and relevant to the Danube basin (ICPDR), while in 2010 the reserve was nominated for admission to the list of Ramsar Convention wetland sites.

Excursion destinations and fishing sites, which can be easily reached by car, include Tikvara, Slajz and Arkanj. Arkanj is home to the widely acclaimed

BEGECKA JAMA

Begecka Jama Nature Park, a small fishing haven, is a hidden tourist gem. Everybody who has taken the time to cast their line here in years gone by, remembers the place for its majestic pair of swans, Pera and Maria, who were forced towards the Futog fish farm by their offspring so they could take advantage of the abundance of fish to ensure their survival. However, today at Begecka Jama a whole flock of swans can be found, as well as other bird species: the Common Pochard duck, Ferruginous duck, Great Cormorant, Coot among others. Begecka Jama Lake is a real treat for nature lovers and connoisseurs of rare plant and animal species.

traditional riverside restaurant Na kraj sveta (At the end of the world). The Krcecin river island boasts vast wet meadows that are home to grazing horses, cattle and Mangulica pigs.

Located on the riverside areas beside the communities of Kovilj and Petrovaradin, Kovilj village boasts the house where famous local poet Laza Kostic was born. The village is also home to the Kovilj Monastery, built in the early 14th century, and the church of St. Petka, which has an oak partially ingrown into its superstructure and is often used by nesting storks – thus symbolising the unity of nature and the cultural heritage of this area. The sprawling fen is populated by a great number of Black storks, which circle over the fen during their migration period, as



◀ *Small Pasque Flower*

white-tail deer (aka the Virginia deer).

Special Nature Reserve KOVILJ-PETROVARADIN FEN

The Kovilj-Petrovaradin Fen is a network of ponds, islets, canals, oxbow lakes and marshes. This area is a Danube floodplain, downstream from Novi Sad, which includes Petrovaradin Fen, Kovilj Fen, Krcecin Island and part of the Gardinovacki oxbow. The

well heron and spoonbill that visit the Krchedin river island in search of an evening meal. The four-leaf fern (*Marsilea quadrifolia*), a strictly protected species in Europe, grows in abundance in the shallow depressions on Krchedin Island.

Special Nature Reserve **ZASAVICA**

Throughout history, between the shifting courses of the Sava, Drina and Zasavica, through the Macva Plain, opposite the town of Sremska Mitrovica, there has been a swamp nurturing all manner of unusual flora and fauna.

The changing landscapes coupled with the wealth of plant and animal species, traditional way of river life and an historic heritage dating back to ancient times – all offer visitors the chance to experience Zasavica’s attractive and unique year-round attractions.

Moreover, the rare and unusual residents of Zasavica give the area “specific weight” as a special nature reserve.

The River Zasavica empties into the Sava, but is supplied by the cold waters of the Drina. These conditions are ideal for the Mud minnow (*Umbra krameri*), the symbol of Zasavica. The reserve’s waters are home to more than 250 species of algae and attract 38 per cent of all amphibians and reptiles in Serbia.

This wetland is also a haven for birds.



▼ *Views over Zasavica* ▲





◀ *Obedska Marsh*

According to the first study, carried out in the late 19th century, there were about 220 species of birds. Today, there are believed to be around 180, of which 120 nest in the area. In the late 18th century, Zasavica was home to a large colony of beavers. However, they were all but wiped out in the last century. In 2005, though, several pairs of beavers were returned and a considerable colony is already thriving. Beavers only live in clean water, employing their unique building skills to dam rivers. At Zasavica they have constructed four dams, the largest of which is 50 metres long and required 30m³ of wood.

Other almost extinct breeds of domestic animals have been reintroduced: the black mangulica pig, Podolian ox, Balkan donkeys and the bare necked chicken.

Thanks to its biodiversity, ancient, endemic and rare species, this area is extremely interesting and suitable for scientific and technical research. Recreational fishermen are able to take advantage of special areas, where they can lay in wait and, with a bit of luck, catch of wild carp or pike. The Zasavica Visitors' Centre represents the reserve's main tourist spot. Erected as a wooden building with a tower 18 metres high, visitors can ascend to the top and enjoy views of the widest and most beautiful part of the River Zasavica. Dinghies or the Umbra tourist boat a unique photo safari - where nature never leaves us feeling indifferent.

MOROVIC-BOSUT FOREST

Due to the large oak forests dividing the three rivers of Sava, Studva and Bosut, Morovic is an ideal location for wildlife of various species. In addition to abundant populations of European Roe and Fallow deer, these forests are home to many animals including wild boar and hare. Vast forests intersected by current river channels and oxbow lakes, provide ideal conditions for many species of birds, the most important of which nationally are the White-tailed eagle, Honey buzzard, Lesser Spotted eagle, Black stork, Black woodpecker, Middle Spotted woodpecker and Collared Flycatcher. The nearby Brak Canal, which connects the Studva and Bosut, provides excellent conditions for fishing and is rich in freshwater fish - especially carp, pike, Silver Prussian carp, bream and Grass carp.



Special Nature Reserve OBEDSKA MARSH

One of Serbia's oldest natural reserves, it has been protected since the end of the 19th century. The ruling Austria-Hungary Habsburgs first proclaimed the marsh a royal hunting ground in 1874, and from 1919 it became a hunting ground of the Karadjordjevic dynasty. A seasonal floodplain of the River Sava, Obedska is an oxbow lake surrounded by forests of oak, willow and poplar. The largest pond is an authentic complex of stagnant tributaries,

marshes, reed beds, wet meadows and forests. It is home to dormice, water voles, rabbits, hedgehogs, wild boar and roe deer, as well as a large number of insects. The most



outstanding examples of the marsh's plant life are perhaps the white and yellow water lily, the water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) and bladderwort. There are around 180 species of fungi at Obedska marsh, including the *Boletus edulis*, Golden chanterelle, Giant puffball and Parasol mushroom. Among the amphibian residents there are the Danube Crested Newt, the Smooth or Common Newt and Eastern Spadefoot Toad, while reptiles include the European pond terrapin, European Green Lizard, slowworm, Aesculapian Snake, Grass snake, and the common European adder. The marsh is also home to many species of birds.

◀ *Grey heron*



▲ *Ravanica Monastery – Vrdnik*

Fruska Gora National Park

General information

Fruska Gora National Park

Tel: +381 21/463-666, 463-667

natlpfg@eunet.rs

www.npfruskagora.co.rs

Fruska Gora National Park Information Centre

Tel: +381 22/463 004

natlpfg@eunet.rs

www.npfruskagora.co.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Sremski Karlovci Municipality

Tel: +381 21/882-127, 883-855

info@karlovci.org.rs

www.karlovci.org.rs

Tourist Organisation of Novi Sad – TONS

Tel: +381 21/421-811, 021/421-812

tons@turizamns.rs

www.turizamns.rs

Tourist Information Centre Modena

Tel: +381 21/ 6617-343, 6617-344

info@turizamns.rs

www.turizamns.rs

Active break

The Fruska Gora National Park has a truly diverse tourist offer. If you are interested in the plant world, you can visit in spring or summer, select one of three

proposed trails and, with professional guidance, familiarise yourself with natural rarities and extraordinary plant communities. If you're hoping to see the forest's inhabitants up close, you can walk the Vorovo hunting reserve trail and view deer, wild boar, mouflon among others. Bird lovers can choose one of three bird watching programmes. The most attractive programme in this offer includes a Danube boat trip that allows visitors to follow the flights of birds across the water through binoculars. 'The Amazing World of Insects' is an unusual, yet interesting tour on offer at the Fruska Gora National Park. There are also special schools for survival in nature and eco-camps. If you are familiar with the plant world, you can tour meadows and forests, collecting the gifts of nature: herbs, forest fruits and mushrooms.

Fruska Gora is a special destination for lovers of walking, hiking and cycling – you can do all of those things independently, but you can also choose one of the tailored programmes in the offer of this national park. Hiking trails are mostly marked – some don't require too much effort, while others demand substantial fitness.

If you are a lover of recreational fishing, you can visit one of three reservoirs - Sot, Bruje or Moharac and, of course, we should not forget the opportunity to fish the waters of the mighty River Danube.

The national park boasts numerous picnic areas and tailored excursion sites, the most well known of which are the Cortanovci forest, Strazilovo, Partisan way, Iriski Venac, Hopovo, Glavica, Popovica, Zmajevac, Letenka, Hajduk Hill, Andrevlje, Testera, Lezimir, Rohalj baze and Lipovaca... In addition to picnic areas, there are landscaped sites offering beautiful views, such as the viewing point above the village of Vrdnik. An integral part of this unique Pannonian mountain is its many monasteries: you should not miss the chance to visit at least one of them during your stay on Fruska Gora.

Karadjordjevo Stud farm

General information

Karadjordjevo Military

Tel: +381 21/765-114, 767-660

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Backa Palanka

Tel: +381 21/753-734

direktor@toobap.rs

www.toobap.rs

Backa Palanka Information Centre

Veselina Maslese 8

Tel: +381 21/6041-336

koordinator@toobap.rs

Tourist Organisation of Bac

Tel: +381 21/772-222

turizambac@eunet.rs

www.turizambac.org

Active break

Karadjordjevo is primarily known as an exclusive hunting ground and prestigious stud farm. Whether you're a fan of hunting, horse riding, or just want to get to know a place carrying the "blue blood seal", here in the circle of settlements and horse farms you can find a variety of opportunities – including carriage rides in the summer months or winter sleigh rides. Thanks to its extraordinary beauty, Karadjordjevo was a favourite daytrip destination and hunting ground for members of the Serbian Royal Karadjordjevic dynasty and later Josip Broz Tito, the former president of Yugoslavia. The famous stud farm has its own museum, race stallion stables and hippodrome. Here you can try your hand at riding while your children take a gentle pony ride. If you want to spend a day in nature – the Vranjak hunters' restaurant is an excellent venue intended for tourists.

One of the great pleasures of staying at Karadjordjevo is the chance to fish on the isolated sandy beaches of the Danube, its river banks and backwaters.

Kovilj-Petrovaradin Fen

General information

Vojvodinasume, Lumber Camp Novi Sad

Tel: +381 21/557-408, 557-412

vsgns@sbb.rs

www.vojvodinasume.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Novi Sad – TONS

Tel: +381 21/421-811, 021/421-812

tons@turizamns.rs

www.turizamns.rs

Modena Tourist Information Centre

Tel: +381 21/ 6617-343, 6617-344

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www.turizamns.rs

Active break

You can best acquaint yourself with the beautiful nature of the fen from the vantage point of the water. Bring your binoculars and a camera for the river cruise and enjoy the views of the beautiful countryside and the many species of birds flying above. You might spot a Grey Heron, Little Egret, small Squacco Heron among many others. Visit the beach at Arkanja, take a dip in the Danube backwaters or meditate while your fishing rod sits suspended above the water. Nature lovers organise ecological summer camps for youngsters, while the Nature Conservation Movement of Novi Sad runs an



▲ *Umbra tourist boat*

international volunteer camp in the context of the Return to Nature project.

Zasavica

General information

Conservation Movement, Sremska Mitrovica

Tel: +381 22/614-300

zasavica@zasavica.org.rs

www.zasavica.org.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Sremska Mitrovica

Tel: +381 22/618-275

turistorgsm@yahoo.com

prsm.tanja@gmail.com

www.tosmomi.rs

Active break

In order to familiarise yourself with Zasavica you can first climb to the top of the visitors' centre



observation tower and enjoy the all-encompassing views. Then you can enjoy an indispensable and attractive trip on the Umbra tourist boat, which provides an excellent way of getting to know the world of this reserve. The Umbra sails from Valjevac to Sumareva Cuprija, passing through the most beautiful part of the reserve along the way. Travelling on the Umbra, you will be able to watch birds in flight and view the white and yellow water lilies on the crystal clear river water. One of the reserve's main goals is to cultivate endangered old species of domestic animals. As such, here you can find fields of grazing Srem Swallow-bellied mangulica pigs or the Podolian ox. There are interesting tours for visitors to observe and familiarise themselves with the beavers and their often «creative constructions». The Zasavica reserve is also at the disposal of walkers, offering a variety of walking routes, while an interesting ethnographic and historical exhibition of archaic household and agricultural items is offered at the Zasavica Visitors' Centre.

Obedska Marsh

General information

Public company Vojvodinasume (forestry)

Lumber Camp Sremska Mitrovica
Tel: +381 22/622-111, 600-516
sgsm21@open.telekom.rs
www.vojvodinasume.rs

Tourist information

Tourist hotel complex Obedska Marsh, Obrez-Pecinci

Tel: +381 22/488-622
ageo@eunet.rs
www.obedskabara.net

Active break

Many tourists spend days photographing white and yellow water lilies, wetland orchids, the Banat peony and the Lady Orchid. The oldest protected reserve in Europe is enjoyed especially by visitors from the east, who have a deeply

◀ Cyclists on the Fruska Gora

entrenched consciousness of the priceless beauty of nature. The Obedska Marsh has a bird watching tower that invites you to familiarise yourself with the unique bird kingdom. A seven kilometre path encircles the marsh, inviting you to walk, cycle or jog in nature, while rowing, canoeing and fishing are common sights at Obedska marsh. Since you are already in the vicinity of Pecinci, we would also recommend you visit the village's unique Museum of Bread.

Morovic

Morovic-Bosut Forest

General information

Public company Vojvodinasume (forestry)

Lumber Camp Sremska Mitrovica
Tel: +381 22/622-111, 600-516
sgsm21@open.telekom.rs
www.vojvodinasume.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Sid

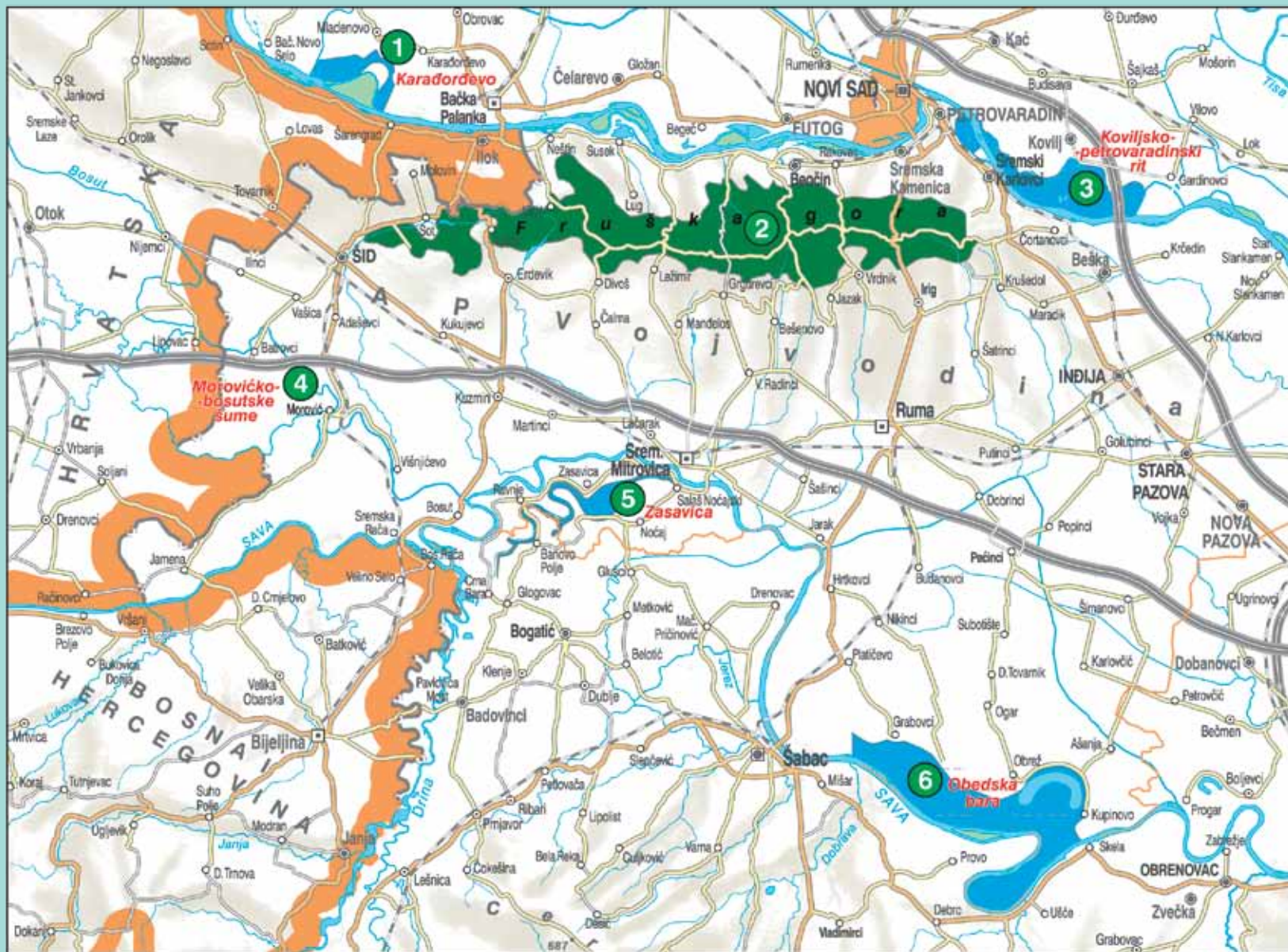
Tel: +381 22/ 710 661
tourismsid@gmail.com
www.tourismsid.rs

Morovic Military Establishment

Tel: +381 22/736-033, 736-026

Active break

Morovic is a popular hunting ground located in the Morovic-Bosut Forest of old Slavonian oak. The area is traversed by three rivers – the Sava, Studva and Bosut. The nearby Brek Canal, is a top spot for fishing with waters so bountiful that it is almost unheard of for a fisherman to go home empty-handed. The Morovic Tourist Complex has landscaped trails for hiking, while visitors can also play football, tone up their body on the trim fitness trail, go riding, visit the hunting grounds or take a boat ride along the Brek Canal.



- 1 KARADJORDJEVO
- 2 FRUSKA GORA

- 3 KOVIJ-PETROVARADIN FEN
- 4 MOROVIĆ-BOSUT FOREST

- 5 ZASAVICA
- 6 OBEDSKA MARSH



When all the minds of the world open like a flower and all of human wisdom provides the final answers, we will have to go back to something that we skipped” – wrote poet Miroslav Antic in ‘The Myth of the Bird’. After all, it was only the birds that he envied. The heavens of the Imperial Swamp and the Deliblato sands, high above the mountains of Vrsac and Avala, are an endless expanse of blue – where the birds are the masters.



CARSKA (IMPERIAL) SWAMP, DELIBLATO SANDS,
VRSAC MOUNTAINS & GREEN BELGRADE

The Myth of the Bird

Special Nature Reserve **STARI BEGEJ – CARSKA BARA (IMPERIAL SWAMP)**

Carska Bara, the Imperial Swamp, earned its title thanks to the various rulers of the past who have visited it, among them Austro-Hungarian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and Serbian King Aleksandar Karadjordjevic. The richness of flora and fauna, diversity of habitats (wetlands, forests and meadows), and particularly the presence of a truly vast number of different bird species, have all helped to see this area classified as the Stari Begej Carska Bara Special Nature Reserve. The Reserve's website offers an interesting introduction:

“If we were to draw a straight line on a map of Serbia between Belgrade, Novi Sad and Zrenjanin, we would find a blue area of irregular shapes very close to the geometric centre of the resulting triangle. Of course, this is a way of cartographically denoting water surfaces. Indeed, somewhere in the centre between the three cities lies a spacious and



clean blue mirror decorated with a narrow strip of cane and reeds, steppe and willow groves. This is the imperial swamp.“
This well known meeting place for birds lies between the rivers Tisa and Begej.”

Today the nature reserve area is dominated by the wetland habitats of Tiganjica, Imperial Swamp and Perleska Swamp, with the oxbow of the Old Begej. The special natural value of this area is represented by its impressive



skater, the lesser stag beetle, musk beetle and ladybird, while the rare mammals resident here include endangered species such as otters and wildcats. The reptile world is represented by the European marsh terrapin, Water snake, Meadow lizard and the Aesculapian Snake. The parts of the reserve that are permanently under water and the areas that occasionally flood, represent vast areas for the natural reproduction of fish, which come here to spawn and feed in the Old Begej. Fish life is rich and diverse here, with as many as 20 fish species from seven families, including pike, perch, carp, roach and bream. The reserve is also home to fish that are listed as of natural rarities in Vojvodina. One such species is the European Bitterling, whose presence is a natural indicator of high water quality.

The variety of natural phenomena, wealth of species and ecological processes, coupled with scenery of incredible and unusual beauty of naturally painted watercolours, represent the backbone of the tourist offer of the Imperial Swamp.

Special Nature Reserve

DELIBLATO SANDS

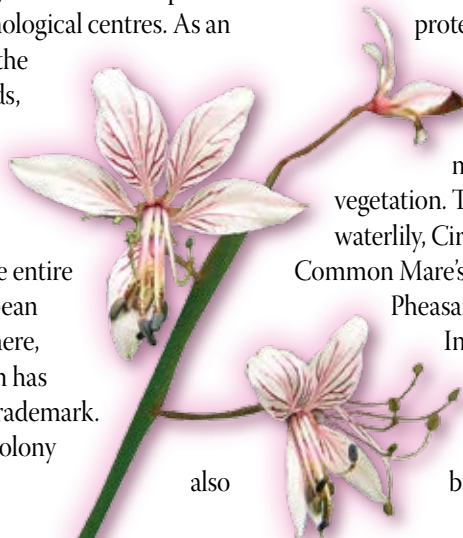
The largest continental desert in Europe, Deliblato Sands is also known as the European Sahara. This special, uncommon area has vast deposits of sand, with sand dunes averaging a height of 70 to 200 metres, and covers an area of 35,000 hectares.

Deliblato Sands is located in southern Banat.

bird colonies, covering about 250 species – 140 of which are year-round residents and 110 migratory, making this one of Europe's most important ornithological centres. As an important pit stop on the route of migratory birds, some species spend barely ten days at the reserve, while some, like wild geese from Siberia, spend the entire winter. All eight European species of heron nest here, which is why the heron has become the reserve's trademark. This rich and diverse colony of birds

includes many pelicans, White-tailed eagles, Western Marsh-harriers, Montagu's harriers and cormorants. Some rare and protected species of plants have also found their home among the habitats of the mosaic layout of forest, meadow, steppe and marsh vegetation. These include the White waterlily, *Cirsium brachycephalum* thistle, Common Mare's Tail, Yellow iris, Yellow Pheasant's Eye, Early Marsh orchid.

Interesting insects have found an ideal home among the willows, poplars, ash, wild roses and bramble bushes: dragonfly, water
 ◀ *White Dittany*



also

The landscape of Deliblato Sands

Thanks to its origin, climate, specific plant life and wildlife, which offer a constantly changing palette of colourful flowers and leaves, this is a unique and beautiful landscape. Entering the world of the sand dunes is like entering a prehistoric site that tells the story of the origins of the world.

Over eons, specific environmental conditions have spawned distinctive steppe vegetation

BEEKEEPING

Deliblato Sands is rich in acacia woods, which are beneficial to the development of beekeeping. The traditional Beekeepers Congress tourist event is held during the last weekend of June at the Devojacki Bunar (Girl's Well) resort. During the acacia blossoming period, a large number of beekeepers gather to share their experiences and display their honey and honey products.



and rare plant species, such as the Banat peony, Feather Grass and the Dwarf everlast. About 40 of Deliblato Sands' plant species are considered natural rarities. This semi-desert area was originally a forest-steppe landscape, while today's environment has been significantly shaped by human intervention. The planting of foreign species of trees began at the Deliblato Sands during the time of Austro-Hungarian Empress Maria Theresa, while today more than 60 per cent of its area is covered by these plantations. The most common are the Black locust and white and black pine.

Among the area's rare animal species are: desert ants, antlions, Saker falcon, Southern Birch Mouse, European ground squirrel, Lesser mole rat, European polecat and others. For some of these species, Deliblato Sands represents their only, or one of their only, remaining habitats in Serbia. The reserve is also a specific and vital habitat for the wolf population of Vojvodina. Wolves live in a pack led by an alpha male and female. Only they mate and the whole pack is obliged to take care of their offspring. The wolf was declared a pest in the literature of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, while the entire 19th century was



▲ *Bela Crkva Lakes*

▼ *Cyclists on the Deliblato Sands*



marked by an organised hunt of wolves that led them to the brink of being eradicated. It is estimated that Deliblato Sands is home to around 40 Banat wolves (*Canis lupus L.*). This protected natural reserve also includes the Labudovo okno area, part of the Danube with fenland and river islands, which is home to many rare species of nesting birds. The waters are rich in fish and, because the fact

BELA CRKVA LAKES

The Bela Crkva lakes are located in southern Banat, in the vicinity of the town of Bela Crkva (White Church), and as many as seven of them are perfect for swimming. The main lakes, which represent a unique tourist offer within Vojvodina are: Glavno Lake, Vracev Gaj Lake, Saransko and Sljunkara lakes. These lakes are a result of the quarrying of gravel from the bed of the long-lost Pannonian Sea. The gravelly bed and sandy shores of the lake give the water a translucent green colour. Glavno Lake's shoreline is partially paved and landscaped, offering various sporting activities, recreation and sailboats for hire. The beaches of the other lakes are completely natural. Visitors can also swim at the nearby Nera and Karas rivers, while the Danube and Danube-Tisa-Danube Canal complement the unique natural environment. For guests who prefer to indulge in activities other than swimming, excursions to sites around Bela Crkva are organised in conjunction with local guides, including tours of Vrsac, Mesic and Gudurica, while boat and course fishing are organised on the lakes and on the canal. The mountain air from the slopes of the Carpathians, coupled with a large number of sunny days a year, provide additional benefit to the Bela Crkva lakes.



that the reserve provides a winter habitat for a great many water birds, the whole area has been declared an international Important Bird Area (IBA). This is the nesting place of the Little egret, Squacco Heron, Ibis and Sand martin. The Pygmy Cormorant – universally threatened species in Serbia – has a stable nesting area here. The Sand martin is a special attraction, as it bores holes in the entire stretch of sand banks, forming unusually interesting shapes. Here the sandy banks of the Danube host Europe's largest colony of sand martins, with about 15,000 pairs.

The Sands are characterised by large fluctuations, day-night and summer-winter, of

air temperature, amplitude and surface soil. The Kosava is the predominant wind, which often blows at hurricane speeds of up to 180 km per hour.

The natural characteristics and uniqueness of this region make Deliblato Sands suitable for different types of recreation. Devojacki Bunar (Girl's Well) is a popular resort, offering well tended sports fields, an outdoor swimming pool, walking trails and a log cabin church unique in Vojvodina, dedicated Ognjena Marija (Fiery Mary). The experience of the Sands is completed by organised activities such as horse riding in the dunes, photo safaris or a horse & cart ride.

Nature Park

VRSAC MOUNTAINS

Just like Fruska Gora, the Vrsac mountains also rise suddenly out of the seemingly endless flatlands of the Vojvodina plains. Their Guduric's Peak, at 641m/asl, is Vojvodina's highest point. Nestled against the Carpathian mountain range, the Vrsac mountains are a natural link between the flora and fauna worlds of mountain and plain landscapes. Known for its diverse flora, especially medicinal herbs, and mild climate, the area is conducive to all kinds of relaxing and recreational activities. The area's forests are mostly populated by oak, linden, acacia, common beech, sycamore and European black pine. Linden and acacia forests, which give the mountain area special aromatic characteristics when blossoming, provide a pleasant environment for visiting tourists and the collection of medicinal herbs. Structured walkways dating back around 200 years pass through this picturesque forest environment. The forest areas are home to European Roe and Fallow deer, wild boar, hares, wolves, foxes, wildcats, badgers and skunk, but

Wildcats ▶





GREAT WAR ISLAND

Great War Island is home to two oxbow lakes known as Big and Little Galijas, which are covered with swamp vegetation. The area is home to the protected European White Waterlily. The plant's Latin name, *Nymphaea alba*, is derived from a legend known since the time of the Roman poet Ovid. Namely, Greek legend has it that a nymph named Lotis, daughter of Poseidon, turned herself into a white waterlily to escape the unwanted sexual advances of the minor fertility god Priapus. Later, also according to legend, the White waterlily was seen by Dryope, who tried to pick it and was herself turned into a lily.

also pheasant, partridge, quail, dove, wood pigeon, wild duck, woodcock, Common Kestrel, Barn Owl, raven and jay. The natural position and altitude of the area offers endless views over the town of Vrsac and nearby Romania, but primarily over Vrsac's famous sprawling vineyards. The cultivation of grape vines, with particular emphasis on white grapes – is one of the area's preserved traditions. Vrsac hosts traditional annual events like Grozdjenbal (Grape fair), the Days of the Environmental Protection of Vrsac Mountains and many other tourist events. Vrsac Hill is the

area's main tourist and excursion destination.

Green Belgrade

AVALA

One of the first distinguishing features of Belgrade is that it is a city sprawled along the banks of two rivers. However, Belgrade is also distinguishable as a city completely surrounded by greenery.

Avala, the mountain that lies beside Belgrade, peaks at 506m/asl and is adorned with dense forests of mostly deciduous trees. It is an ideal

location for picnics, excursions, cycle trips, hiking tours and – once upon a time – skiing. The only mountain in the vicinity of Belgrade, this protected green area has a long and tumultuous history. The Monument to the Unknown Hero at its peak is just one sign of its past, while the Avala Tower, a symbol of Belgrade, has only just completed its latest entry in the annals of history – from creation, to destruction, to restoration.

▼ *Monument to the Unknown Hero*



Stari Begej – Imperial Swamp

General information

Ecka Fish Farm

Lukino Village, Zrenjanin

Tel: +381 23/884-645, 884-028

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www.ribnjakecka.com

Tourist information

Tourist Centre of the City of Zrenjanin

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www.zrenjanintourism.org

Tourist Information Centre Zrenjanin

Suboticeva 1

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www.zrenjanintourism.org

🌿 Active break

If you are determined to familiarise yourself with this special nature reserve, you must first decide how to explore it: by water or via land trails, or by combining these two exploratory options. If you opt for the waterways you are offered a variety of methods of navigation. You can climb aboard the tourist boat that sails whenever there are enough interested passengers. Alternatively, if you prefer more intimate exploring, you can hire a canoe or dingy and tour the reserve alone or accompanied by one of our tour guides. If you prefer land routes, you can tour this “empire” via the marked health trail. The reserve’s management also organises bird watching programmes, while photo safari trips are a popular way of recording memories of the rare and valuable residents of Carska Bara (Imperial Swamp).



The Ecka Fish Farm boasts attractive hunting terrains. Recreational fishing is also available on the territory of the reserve, in accordance with the area’s wildlife protection measures. Moreover, recreational anglers can take advantage of the biggest natural fishpond in Europe: Joca Lake.

Deliblato Sands

General information

Public company Vojvodinasume (forestry)

Woodland holdings Banat Pancevo

Tel: +381 13/342-899

sgpa@banatsume.rs

www.vojvodinasume.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Kovin

Tel: +381 13/745-860

too@kovin.info

www.tookovin.info

Tourist Organisation of Alibunar

Tel: +381 13/641-520

turistickaal@madnet.rs

www.tooalibunar.org

Tourist Organisation of Bela Crkva

Tel: +381 13/851-777

toobc@neobee.net

www.belackrvato.org

Tourist Organisation of Kovacica

tel: +381 13/660-460

office@took.org.rs

www.took.org.rs

🌿 Active break

The most developed form of tourism on the vast Deliblato Sands is hunting. This desert area is also an invaluable ornithological zone, which provides for interesting bird watching programmes that can be found in the various programmes of specialist travel agencies. Parts of the Deliblato Sands are also traversed by international cycle routes, while the settlement of Devojacki Bunar (Girl’s Well) stands out for its stunning beauty.

Vrsac mountains

General information

Varos Vrsac Public Enterprise

Tel: +381 13/821-614

varos@neobee.net

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Vrsac

Tel: +381 13/838-050, 832-999

toovrsac@yahoo.com

www.to.vrsac.com

Active break

The Vrsac mountains are the perfect destination for lovers of pleasant forest walks and hiking. If you are a mountaineer and you make it to the summit of the Guduric Peak you will be able to say that you have conquered at least one of the highest peaks – as you will find yourself at the highest point in the whole of Vojvodina Province. The Vrsac mountains boast as much as 200 km of landscaped cycle lanes. There is also an archery range where visitors can perfect their archery skills in a forest environment or even try, for example, to shoot an apple. Other things to do in the forest include paint balling, rock climbing and horse riding all under the guidance of a professional instructor/guide. If your wish is to replace all of these possibilities with something more dynamic, you can experience paragliding or motorised hang gliding. Both of these adventurous activities provide fantastic views of Vrsac, the expanse of the vineyards and the Vrsac mountains. The area's diverse tourist offer is made complete by the local hunting offer. Vrsac Hill is managed by a public company offering services on this excursion and recreational zone. It is also home to the Vrsac Tower, which invites you to

ascend and experience the breathtaking views of the landscape, taking on the area's greatest vineyards.

Bela Crkva Lakes

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Bela Crkva

Tel: +381 13/851-777

toobc@neobee.net

www.belacrkvatourism.org

Active break

The Bela Crkva Lakes provide a variety of activities. The main lake is located near the town centre and has an equipped, landscaped bathing area. Here visitors can sail, snorkel and dive. Vracev Gaj Lake is less developed, but is the right choice for those who like to camp in nature. Sljunkar Lake is renowned for its wide beach, small island and isolated bays of untouched nature. Saran, the last of the four lakes, is not developed for tourism, but we recommend it for fans of recreational fishing.

Mount Avala

General information

Public company Srbijasume (forestry)

Woodland holdings Belgrade

Forest Management Avala

Tel: +381 11/3906-626, 3906-619

suavala@srbijasume-sqbgd.co.rs

www.srbijasume.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Belgrade - TOB

Tel: +381 11/3061-410, 3061-400

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www.belgrade-travel.rs

www.tob.co.rs

Tourist information centres

Tourist Information Centre Belgrade – Beoizlog

Knez Mihailova 6

Tel: +381 11/3281-859

bginfo.knezmihailova@tob.co.rs

Tourist Information Centre Sava Pier

Karadjordjeva street

Tel: +381 11/3288 246

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March–November

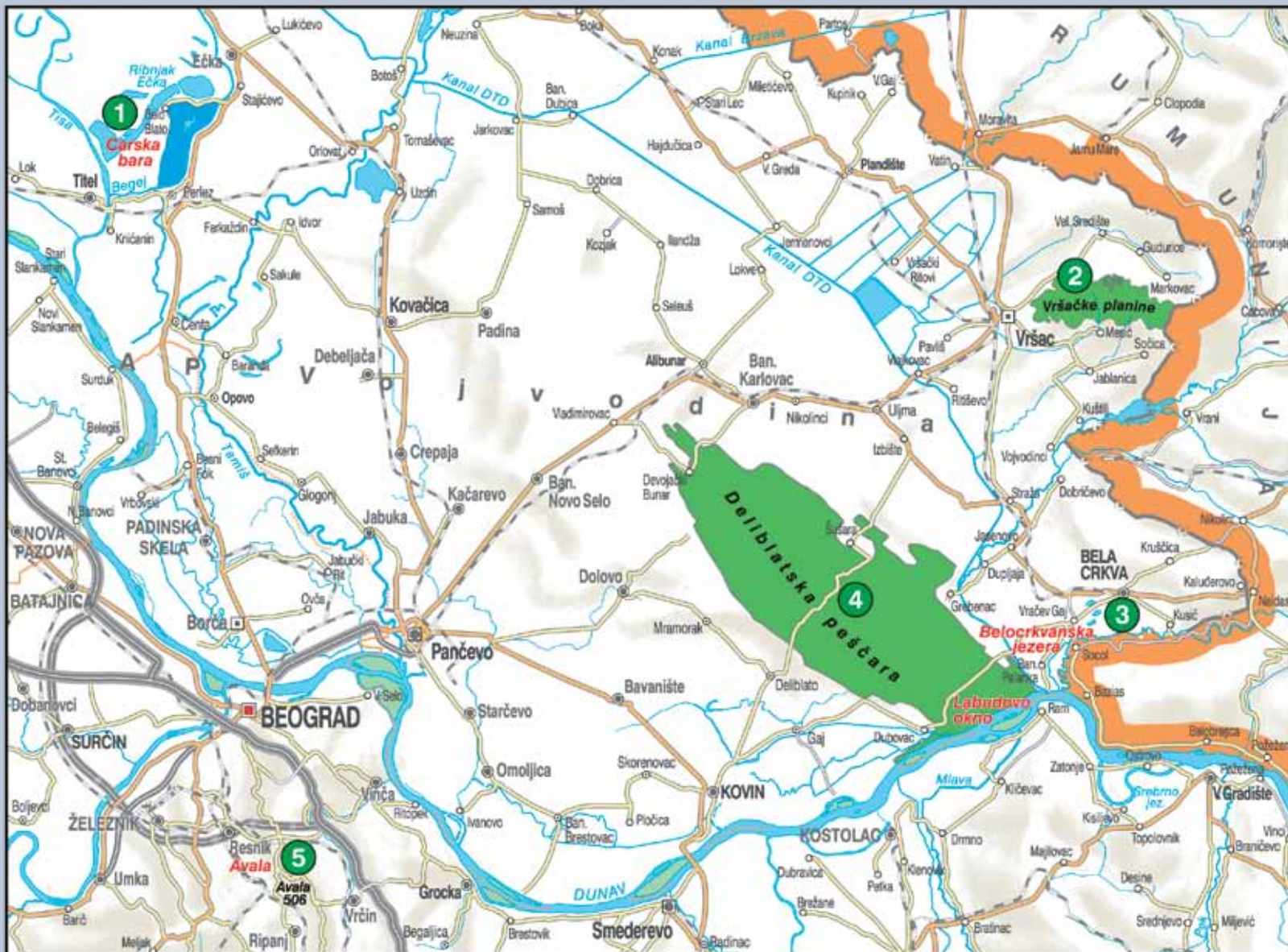
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Active break

We recommend Avala Mountain, just 15 km from Belgrade, as an excursion destination for all lovers of nature. The word 'avalá' is of oriental origin and is derived from the Arabic havale, meaning 'obstacle' or 'shelter'. During Roman times there was a military fort at the top of this mountain. On the same site the Serbian town of Zrnov sprouted up in the Middle Ages. Today it is home to the Monument to the Unknown Hero – marking a spot that must certainly be included in the itinerary of any exploration of Mount Avala. The mountain has marked hiking trails and each year hosts a now traditional mountain camp. In addition to mountaineering and hiking, visitors can spend a day riding a bicycle, learning about the art of wilderness survival or orienteering. An essential part of any introductory visit to Mount Avala is the famous TV Tower, which once again became available to tourists as of spring 2010.



1 IMPERIAL SWAMP
2 VRSAC MOUNTAINS

3 BELA CRKVA LAKES
4 DELIBLATO SANDS

5 MOUNT AVALA



A favourable climate, abundant hunting and fishing territories, coupled with a love and need for the river and its banks, all served to ensure the establishing of a permanent, pre-historic settlement at Lepenski Vir. The art of its residents, in the shape of stone sculptures of fish-like deities, both surprised and impressed the world. The rich and meaningful lives of prehistoric people at the Djerdap 'Iron Gate' Gorge, is only the first, prehistoric, evidence of the benefits and beauty of this area – upon which that same mystic power relates to the Homolje, Beljanica and Kucajske mountains...



DJERDAP & THE MOUNTAINS OF EASTERN SERBIA

Mystery of space

National Park

DJERDAP

The Djerdap 'Iron Gate' Gorge has been a challenge for thousands of years for travellers, traders, warriors and peacemakers. Its Iron Gate connects two important cultural and economic parts of Europe, making Djerdap a strategic place with enormous importance, both in times of war and peace, as witnessed by a large number of historical monuments. Djerdap is the biggest river gorge in Europe, created where the mighty Danube broke through the Carpathian Mountains and some 90 kilometres long. It is made up of four gorges: Golubac, Gospodjin Vir – which has a tourist centre at Lepenski Vir, Kazan (the deepest stretch of the river at 90 metres) and Sipska, as well as three ravines: Ljupkovska, Donja Milanovac Ravine and Orsavaska Ravine. Being such a powerful and intensive centre of life from prehistoric times to the present day has served to make Djerdap National Park the largest in Serbia. This protected area includes ten nature reserves, ten sites of natural heritage, history and



beauty, with the great river passing Lepenski Vir, Great and Small Strbac with Trajan's Tablet, Golubac Fortress, the Bosman-Sokolovac nature reserve, Coka Njalta with Pesaca nature reserve, Bojana, Tatar Heights,

Mount Somrda, Ciganski (Gypsy) Stream and Boljetin River Canyon – Greben Cape. The Djerdap area has always been characterised by an exceptional variety of wildlife, as evidenced by the records of numerous travel writers.



▲ Djerdap Gorge ▼ The sailing Cup on the Danube



Monuments of Nature

RAJKO'S CAVE & CEREMOSNJA CAVE

In terms of speleological treasures, Rajko's Cave is one of the most beautiful in Serbia. Under its towering ceilings we meet an entire world of different forms and shapes, from Hedgehog halls, via Winter fairytales and Crystal forests to Tremulous ponds. In particular contrast to other caves is the very noisy stream that flows through the cave and is known as Rajko's River. The cave was first explored by Serbia's greatest geographer, Jovan Cvijic, in 1894.

According to legend, the cave is named after Hajduk (Highwayman) Rajko, who held up and robbed travellers in this area, hiding his stolen loot in the cave. Following his trail, many treasure hunters visited the cave to dig for loot. On the north-western slopes of Homolje Mountain lies Ceremosnja Cave, which is rich in cave ornaments, stalactites, stalagmites and cave pillars, like the pillars of "the eternal guard" which are a recognisable mark of Ceremosnja. Within the cave the remains of a bear that lived around a hundred thousand years ago have been discovered.

That diversity has been maintained to this day, with the area's ancient beech and oak forests still offering excellent natural habitats for the lynx, wolf, jackal, white-tailed eagle, eagle owl and black stork, but also deer, wild boar, badger, marten, hare, wood pigeon and dove, among others. Furthermore, the rocky outcrops of the Djerdap Cauldron are home to

chamois, eagles and falcons. The River Danube and Danube Lake, broad waters with subtle vortexes and powerful rapids, are a haven and habitat for various species of fish. Thus it's no surprise that the ancient inhabitants of Lepenski Vir chose a fish-like deity – worshipping the very creatures that they depended on and which assured their survival. The Iron Gate Gorge and its many secrets offer great possibilities for even the most ardent followers of commercial and recreational fishing with species including trout, sturgeon, perch, catfish, carp, pike and bream. The challenges are great for anglers who may want to try their hand in the Danube whirlpools.

A distinctive historical development, very pleasant climate, complex network of gorges, canyons and deep ravines all serve to define this area as a unique European reserve of tertiary flora, fauna and vegetation.

Djerdap's plant world is not merely characterised by diversity and richness, but also by its distinctive prehistoric relic characteristics. The territory of the park has thick forests that are home to more

◀ *Lynx*



▲ *Golubac Fortress*

than 1,100 plant species. Just within the area of the Lepenski Vir reserve, many plant species of scientific relevance have been found, among the rocks. The many herbaceous plants that inhabit the forests, meadows, rocky outcrops and cliffs represent a botanical story of their own, which is especially important in the case of the Djerdap Tulip (*Tulipa hungarica*). As many as four nature reserves are located in the municipality of Golubac (Golubac Fortress, Bojana, Bosman-Sokolovac and Tatar Heights). They are home to many plant species that are endemic to the entire Balkan peninsula. The richness of animal life is well recorded. Among them are the logged and brown long-eared bat,

edible Dormouse and Golubac fly. Golubac Fortress, which was first mentioned in 1335 as a Hungarian military fortification, adds a distinctive mark of history to this part of the park. Thanks to its diversity and rarities, Djerdap National Park is a real centre of scientific research in nature. The Great and Small Strbac Nature Reserve, one of the most interesting parts of the National Park scientifically, as well as one of its most attractive tourist regions, has extremely diverse and extensive prehistoric relict vegetation. It also boasts a Roman inscription, known to science as the Tabula Traiana, which is located at the very exit from the Iron Gate Gorge. The inscription dates back to around 100AD and commemorates the



▲ *Silver Lake*

completion of Trajan's military road through the Lower Gorge. The Coka Njalta along with Pesaca Reserve represents a typical refuge for ancient relic and rare species of trees and their communities, while Mount Somrda provides a habitat for evergreen shrubs of the *Phillyrea latifolia* genus. On the territory of the Ciganski (Gypsy) Stream Reserve lies a unique authentic walnut forest, which is surrounded by a mixed composition of beech and walnut and is a true rarity of natural indigenous forest walnuts. Djerdap National Park offers some of the most beautiful health walk tracks in the region, as well as famous viewing points like Okmejdan, Venac (Wreath) and Crni Vrh (Black Peak).

Because of the specific crossed winds and width of the Danube, this area is a veritable yachting paradise, which is why

Golubac is the
Eight Winds



VIAHS & RUSALII

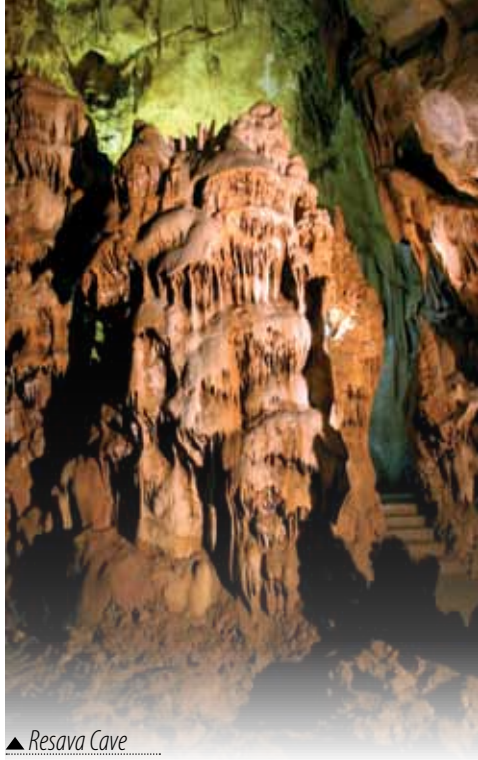
The Vlah people settled on the Balkan Peninsula before all others, bringing with them their belief in the evil Rusalii fairies, which are celebrated to this day. Magic is an essential part of Vlah life and customs, while everything that they believe is marked by magic in some way. Relations between men, saints and evil spirits remain an integral part of modern Vlah magic and their pagan mythology. Rusalii are supernatural beings that take the form of long-haired beautiful young girls and dance through the meadows on nights of a new moon, crowned with green wreaths. They are hostile towards people. These are, in fact, the spirits of dead girls, generally those that have drowned. On the Sunday after Pentecost they rise from the water. It is dangerous for anyone to venture into a river or lake during that week, as the Rusalii may drag them down to the depths of the river bed.

Serbian sailing.

STONE GATES & WHITE SOURCE

The virtually inaccessible River Vratna Canyon has been long known for its stone gates and unusual whirlpools, which are true miracles of nature. During its course of just twenty kilometres, the picturesque Vratna stubbornly bursts through three natural stone arches, or gates, leaving





▲ *Resava Cave*

behind it wonders that geologists refer to as outgrowths. These Small, Large and Dry outgrowths were described by Austro-Hungarian Felix Kanitz, a famous naturalist, geographer and Balkanologist, as well as a great friend of the Serbian people. One of them even conceals within a small lake of unusual beauty. Suplja (Hollow) Rock is another magnificent stone bridge that the river formed with its powerful flow. However, the list of geomorphologic wonders of this region does not stop there. Near the Hollow Rock, from the darkness of the cave, flows a small river known as the Beli Izvorac (White Source), which flows over cascading rocks, creating waterfalls of outstanding beauty.

SILVER LAKE

In the mysterious, undulating, fairytale area near Ram Fortress, where the Danube is more than two kilometres wide and its waters lap against river islands, local fishermen toast the benefits of the river with wine and the river, in turn, gives them life – and it is here the Silver Lake found its place. In the late afternoon hours, when the sun has dipped behind the Carpathians, millions of sparkles of light make the surface of the water shimmer and shine like silver. This extraordinarily beautiful lake has been a popular regional tourist centre, dubbed the Serbian Sea, since its creation in the 1970s, when a narrow

Danube channel along one side of a river island was dammed to create the Silver Lake. Tailored beaches, rich fish life, comfortable accommodation and good restaurants provide everything you need for a totally relaxing holiday. The view from the nearby Ram Fortress reveals the unusual island on the Danube, which is there for a moment, then disappears. Ada Cibuklija is a river island on the Danube that sunk below the surface after the construction of the hydroelectric dam at Djerdap. Ada Cibuklija has an interesting history of its own, as the place of enjoyment for the commander of Ram Fortress, who kept his harem there.

▼ *The white rocks of Beljanica*





◀ *Great Hot Spring*

HOMOLJE

The River Mlava flows through Homolje – the mountain region of north east Central Serbia. It originates in Zagubica and part of its course runs through the famous Gornjak Gorge. This canyon is named after the fresh Gornjak wind, which blows along the river through the ravine surrounded by mountains. Visitors are amazed at the very entrance to the gorge by the ruins of the Blagovestenja (Annunciation) Monastery, which seem to float in front of the vertical rock face it was built into. On the other side of the river, just a hundred steps from Annunciation Monastery, rises another jewel of this area: Gornjak Monastery, the endowment of Serbian Prince Lazar.

BELJANICA & KUCAJ

The River Mlava flows from Beljanica Mountain and its hot springs and Krupaj Spring are the most important and probably the largest karst springs in Serbia. On the opposite – south side, below the rocky peaks of amazing white colour, after which the Beljanica is named, you will see one of the most beautiful waterfalls in Serbia. The spring known as Veliko vrelo (Great hot spring) and the waterfall known as Veliki buk (Great Cascades) are both protected as a single natural monument of Lisina. Spraying clear, cold water cascades down into the lake. This fast-flowing water tumbles out of the mist and on sunny days you can often see a rainbow.

Lisina's water flows into the Gornja Resava River, which is inhabited by an extraordinary type of fish, the watermill trout. This clear brook cuts its way through the limestone rocks and the most beautiful part of its course runs through a narrow canyon that also has the status of a monument of nature. The narrowest part of the canyon is called the Sklop – the rocks are high, almost vertical,

▼ *Prskalo Waterfall*



and lean towards one another, separated by just a few metres. The nameless waterfalls, vast forests and untouched wild nature of this region are irresistibly reminiscent of ancient times. The Kucaj Mountains stroke Beljanica. On these mountains is the broad Brezovicka area with a number of karst coves with unusual underground streams and waterfalls. The most interesting is undoubtedly the Prskalo Waterfall – an architectural work of water that deposits into a cavern. The Resava Cave near the town of Despotovac is one of the most beautiful caves in the country. Its luxurious interior is rich in multi-coloured cave ornaments of red, yellow and white. The dominant red comes from iron oxide, the white from calcium crystals and the yellow from clay infusions.

Underground treasures

LAZAR'S CAVE, BOGOVINA CAVE & VERNJIKICA

Lazar's Cave is also known by the name Zlotska. It was one of the first caves in Serbia to gain protected status and is located on the edge of the South Kuceva mountain massif, near the village of Zlot. According to recent research, it would most likely carry the title of the longest cave in Serbia. About two kilometres upstream from Lazar's Cave, in the Lazarevo Canyon, is the dry Vernjikica Cave, which has the largest halls of any cave in the country. Vernjikica and Lazar's cave are both located within the boundaries of the Lazarevo Canyon nature monument. The village of Bogovina, on the south-eastern edge of the South Kuceva,



▲ *Vratna Canyon*

is home to another interesting and valuable cave, Bogovina Cave. It has a typical tiered floor, with channels clearly divided into three levels. The cave's deeper and higher parts are highly decorative with rare and interesting formations.

▼ *Lepenski Vir – Founding Father*



Djerdap National Park

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Active break

The possibilities for an active holiday in the Djerdap area are almost inexhaustible. If you were to visit just part of the twenty or so specially recommended tourist points on the map of the National Park you would need an itinerary of several days. If you are a lover of walking and hiking in nature, you should take to the well-maintained trails that pass through the most interesting parts of the park, with the obligatory accompaniment of a guide. These routes are: The Bosman-Sokolovac route (10 km), Gypsy Stream – Somrd kamen (12 km), Boljetin River Canyon – Greben Cape (1.8 km), Golden Lake – Glavica (5km), Gradasnica Cave (2 km), Burov Abyss, (2.5 km) and the Great and Small Strbac (9 km). The guide service can take you on a tour of some of the special reserves of the National Park: Golubac Fortress, Bojana, the Bosman-Sokolovac nature reserve or Coka Njalta with Pesaca. If you are a keen bird watcher, observation hides have been installed at the locations of Small Strbac

and Small Kazan (Cauldron), which you can ascend to see the birds of the Iron Gate Gorge. There are also many beautiful viewing points on the route between Small Strbac, while the areas of Ploca can be used as observation posts. You will also be intrigued by the place called Golo Brdo (Naked Hill), which is a feeding ground for many species of birds. The number and diversity of fauna provides you with opportunities for the perfect hunting experience in the pristine natural environment of the National Park's hunting grounds. The beautiful gorge, with all its secrets and whirlpools, will be a great challenge if you are a fan of fishing. Djerdap National Park lies along the banks of the Danube, so here you can hire a boat and, with professional local guides, familiarise yourself with the treasures of the park from the river. When it comes to water sports and marine tourism, you can sail, row or take part in various regattas. Apart from an abundance of natural treasures, the territory of the National Park also boasts significant cultural and historical monuments, especially the world famous Lepenski Vir archaeological site. The Ancient Roman civilisation also left its mark here and we recommend you pay a visit to the famous Tabulu Traian and Diana – one of the largest and best preserved Roman forts on the Danube, as well as the medieval heritage represented by Golubac Fortress. You can also visit other interesting sites and monuments of nature in the area: Rajko's Cave, Ceremosnja, Vratnjanske gates, Valja outgrowth, as well as the imposing modern structure that is the Djerdap hydroelectric Dam. This area was once world famous for its unique caviar. An international bicycle route, EuroVelo 6, runs through the territory of the National Park.



Silver Lake & Golubac

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Active break

Veliko Gradiste and Silver Lake are known under the heading Heaven for fishermen. The Silver Lake Tourist Centre has been developed as an ideal place to rest in an environment surrounded by beautiful nature. Besides fishing, here you can swim, walk and

ride a bike, while good local winds provide all of the conditions for sailing and windsurfing. Some 15 km from Veliko Gradiste, near the village of Zatonje, is a launch spot for paragliding. The neighbouring town of Golubac is home to the yachting centre of Serbia. At Golubac the Danube looks like a sea – it is about 6.5 km wide, thus allowing you to sail and enjoy the favourable winds and large areas of water. Parts of the Danube coastline have been developed into beautiful manmade beaches surrounded by almost completely wild nature. If you are a fan of walking, head for the Golubac walking trail, which stretches along the border of the Djerdap National Park. In this area there are a large number of natural observation points with unique views. Do not miss the opportunity to visit the 14th century Tumane Monastery and nearby lake and Ridan Waterfall. To gain a complete picture of this area, no trip would be complete without a sightseeing tour by boat which offers panoramic views of the area. A one day tour of the archaeological sites of Viminacium, Golubac Fortress and the nearby Ram Fortress provides for an interesting excursion. Golubac has also been added to the European cycling maps – with the Euro Velo 6 route passing through the municipality

Beljanica

Lisine, Resava Cave, Mlava Hot Spring

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Active break

One of the starting points for a tour of Beljanica is the mountain house in the village of Lisina. From here the trail leads to the peak – first passing the gentle slopes under orchards and meadows before entering dense beech forests, with the ascent becoming ever steeper. At the foot of the mountain are the Veliko Vrelo (Great hot spring) and Veliki Buk (Great Cascades) waterfall, which represent a protected natural monument. If you are of an adventurous spirit, you will enjoy descending to the foot of the waterfall. This area has unique natural phenomenon: the Krupajsko spring and the lavish, spacious Resava Cave, which is open to visitors year-round.

A jewel of Serbian medieval architecture is the Manasija – Resava Monastery, which is a must for any tour of the Resava area.



Below the northern slopes of Beljanica is the Mlava Hot Spring - another attractive tourist destination.

Kucaja Mountains

**Lazarevo Canyon & Lazar's Cave
Vernjicka & Bogovina caves**

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Active break

The whole area of Kucaj Mountain and its surroundings will prove a real challenge for lovers of caves and caving. Moreover, this mountain is a paradise for lovers of the wilderness, untouched nature. Lazarevo Canyon is one of the most inaccessible canyons in Serbia and will be a challenge for anyone who likes mountain climbing and potholing. The area of the canyon hides more than 70 speleological sites, with the most important

being Lazar's Cave and Vernjicka. Lazar's Cave has been developed to cater for visitors. Here you can enjoy its space, particularly its cave jewellery bearing the interesting names of *Fontana, Imperial Lodge, Conductor and Orchestra*. The nearby cave of Vernjicka is linked to Lazar's Cave by a manmade footpath. It consists of several grand cave halls. The most interesting feature of this cave is the Coliseum Hall – one of the largest and highest cave halls in Serbia, while the Vilingrad Hall will amaze you with its decorative cave ornaments carved out of the most unusual rock formations.

Another underground gem of this region is Bogovina Cave. This is one of the longest caves in Serbia (the length of the channel is about 6 km).

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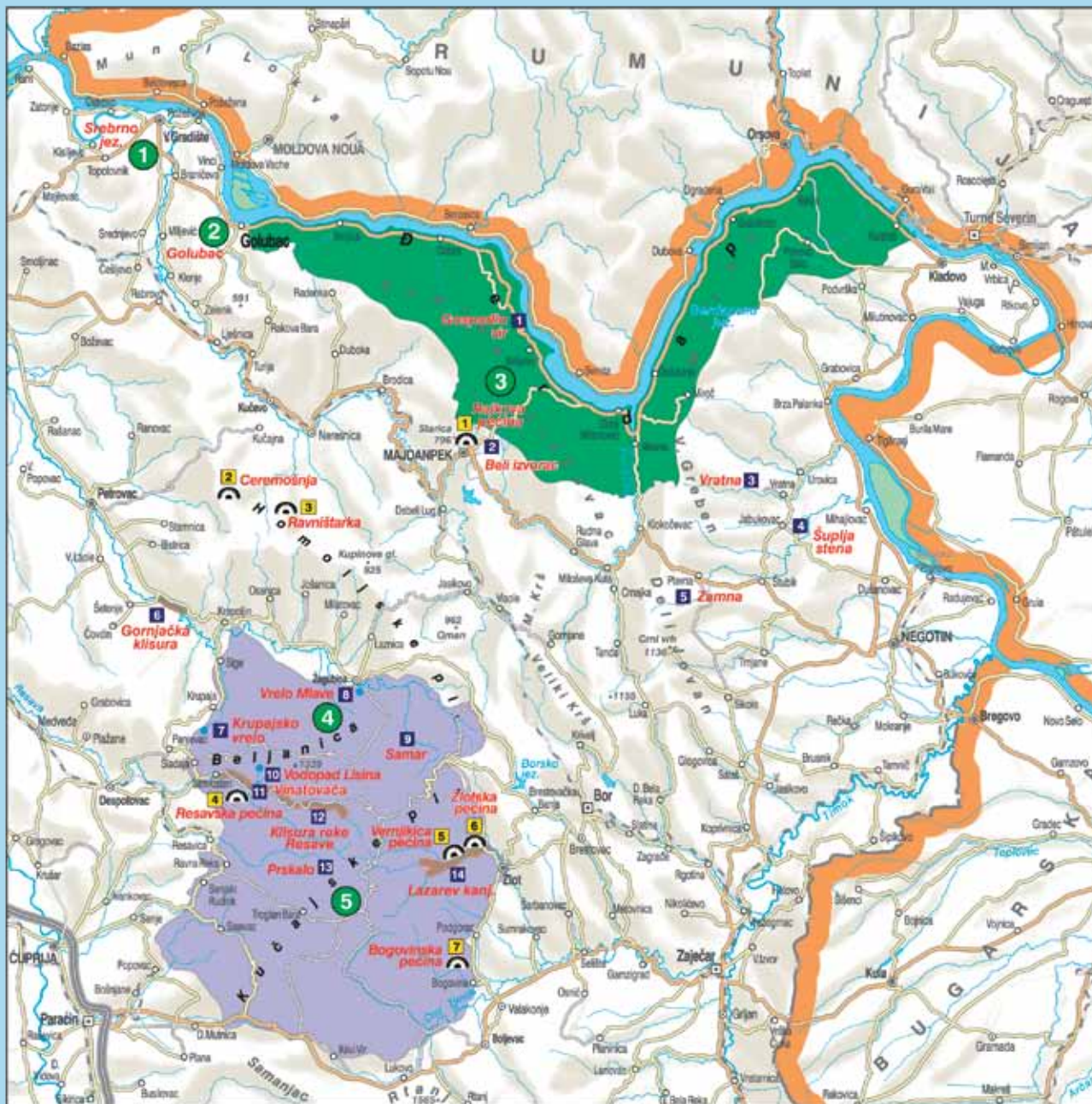
www.toom.rs

Active break

Ceremosnja Cave is located on the north-western slopes of Homolje Mountain, at the foot of the



highest mountain peak: the Great Stubeja. Located around 15km from Kucevo, you will be able to reach the cave via a modern tarmac road. As one of the most beautiful caves in Serbia, it is known for its large halls adorned with various rock ornaments. Ceremosnja has a circular tourist trail, which will offer you a special sense of space. There is a modern road from Ceremosnja Cave to the top of Mount Homolja that will lead you to a spectacular viewing point. The area around Kucevo is known for the golden River Pek, which has been mentioned in many chronicles, travel logs and books over time. The River Pek hides surprising wealth in its bed – small particles of gold. In order to pan for gold in the traditional way and save this precious metal from oblivion, you can take part, which takes place on the banks of the Pek each year and sees participants pan for gold in a traditional way. This can be an especially challenging experience for you and a unique opportunity to really taste the emotions associated with 'gold fever'.



- 1 SILVER LAKE
- 2 GOLUBAC
- 3 DJERDAP
- 4 MOUNT BELJANICA
- 5 KUCAJ MOUNTAINS
- 1 GOSPIN VIR (LADY VORTEX)
- 2 BELI IZVORAC (WHITE SPRING)
- 3 VRATNA CANYON
- 4 SUPLJA ROCK
- 5 ZAMNA
- 6 GORNJAK GORGE
- 7 KRUPAJ HOT SPRINGS
- 8 MLAVA SPRING
- 9 SAMAR BRIDGE
- 10 LISINA WATERFALL
- 11 VINATOVACA
- 12 RESAVA GORGE
- 13 PRSKALO WATERFALL
- 14 LAZAREV CANYON
- 1 RAJKO'S CAVE
- 2 CEREMOSNJA
- 3 RAVNISTARKA
- 4 RESAVA CAVE
- 5 VERNJIKICA CAVE
- 6 ZLOTSKA CAVE
- 7 BOGOVINA CAVE



What shape is taken by the path of time? Sometimes it is hard to figure out. When looking into the past, registering the strange repetition of history, we become aware that despite world changing events, nature stands still and offers a time for reflection on the past, and a pause for the future of our planet. Nature in all its beautiful glory should be something that is preserved for future generations to enjoy.





SUMADIJA, VALJEVO MOUNTAINS, OVCAR & KABLAR

Circles of time

MOUNT RUDNIK (MINE)

In the distant past Mount Rudnik was a site of live mining activity. Before the arrival of the Romans, the area was inhabited by the Illyrians, followed by the Celts. The first Serbian dinar with Cyrillic inscription – the dinar of King Dragutin – was minted at Rudnik. In the 14th century, the people of Dubrovnik and the Saxons had colonies there. Rudnik gained special significance after the year 1441, when the Ottoman Turks conquered Novo Brdo (New Hill). The revered Serbian Despot Djuradj Brankovic had a mint and summer villa there. The mountain's mineral resources (silver, lead, copper) were not the only source of Serbian rulers' wealth. Rudnik was a settlement with developed handicrafts and a buoyant trading post which became a cosmopolitan city with a strong cultural influence that spread to all of Serbia. Mount Rudnik still dominates the Sumadija region today, but its cultural, political and other influences have incomparably diminished. What has not changed though is the beauty of the



landscape. Rudnik's highest peak is Veliki Sturac (1132 m), also known as Cvijic's peak. In addition to this peak, the beauty and height of Medium and Small Sturac, Molitve, Paljevine and Marijanac – all above 1,000m/ asl – stand out. Covered with deciduous mainly beech, forests, clean air and a

favourable climate, Rudnik is suitable for summer and winter health programmes in addition to educational and sports tourism. A network of health paths complement the area's climatic conditions: a high number of sunny days throughout the year, clean air currents with high ionization and unpolluted



▲ Landscape viewed from Divčibare ▼ Taorska hot spring



KOSMAJ

A green oasis in the vicinity of Belgrade is Mount Kosmaj, the penultimate in the series of Sumadijan mountains which slowly descend towards the Danube and Sava rivers. It is situated on the southern border of Belgrade's districts and is a favourite excursion destination from Belgrade. Mostly covered by beech and oak forests, Kosmaj offers opportunities for a variety of activities including hiking, cycling and touring historic and religious landmarks.

nature. Rudnik was recognised as an 'air spa' back in the early 20th century. In addition to all of these advantages, an active break on Rudnik today includes hiking along its ridges.

BUKULJA

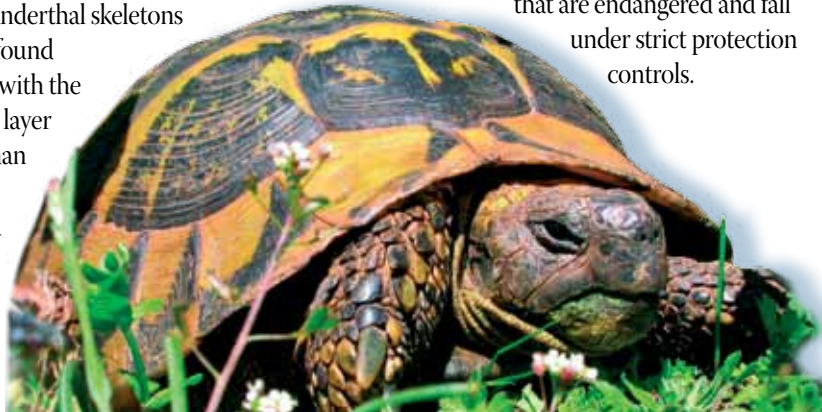
SThe very name Bukulja (from beech) testifies to the rich and ancient beech forests that grow on the mountain. A river of the same name flows down the mountainside, along which two artificial fish-rich lakes that have been man-made. One of them Garas Lake, is a popular day trip destination. From the watchtower at the top of Bukulja one can gain panoramic views covering almost half of Serbia. At the foot of Bukulja is the town of Arandjelovac & Bukovicka Spa. The mountain is also an extinct volcano, as proven by its granite rock faces containing a specific combination of minerals. In addition to beech forests, there are also hornbeam and oak woods. Marked hiking trails lead from

the park at Bukovicka Spa to the top of the mountain and are excellent for conditional training of athletes, as well as recreational walking and running.

Monument of Nature RISOVACA CAVE

The only traces of the life of Palaeolithic people found to date are in Risovac and Gradac Cave near Kragujevac. This physical evidence confirmed the assumed existence of Palaeolithic culture to the south of the Sava-Danube line and provided new information on the life of prehistoric people.

At Risovaca, located in the very centre of Arandjelovac, shaped flint and bone tools were discovered at a depth of 1-1.75 metres. These artefacts had been made in such a way as to suggest that they were the works of troglodytes from the end of the Mid-Palaeolithic period. Their creator has been dubbed Risovaca man - homo sapien neanderthalensis, a rational being and excellent hunter who mastered fire, shaped tools and buried his dead. Unfortunately, the remains of Neanderthal skeletons have not been found because, along with the richest cultural layer in areas of human habitat, they were destroyed during quarrying. Excavations



at Risovacka have revealed numerous fossilised remains of animals, including more than 20 species of mammals: cave bear, cave lion, cave hyena, wolf, fox, wild horse, steppe bison, wild boar, badger, mole rat, beaver, hare... Today Risovaca Cave is home to many species of bats that are endangered and fall under strict protection controls.

MOUNT RAJAC

Many will tell you that Rajac is the most accessible and most beautiful mountain in the vicinity of Belgrade. A relatively easy climb to the peak of the same name (848m), it is even possible for those who aren't super fit and as a reward you are offered a view that is certainly worthy of a frame. This is because as you stand atop Rajac, you will find yourself in line with the peaks of Suvobor, Maljen, Fruska Gora, Avala, Kosmaj, Bukulja, Rudnik, Goc, Kopaonik, Golija, Ovcar, Kablar, Zlatibor - you cannot escape the impression that you are on top of the lofty and serene roof of the world. History tells us that it was here that one of the crucial battles of World

◀ *Eastern Hermann's Tortoise*



War One – the Battle of Kolubara – was fought. This evokes a special emotion if you see the visible trenches dug by the Serbian army in November 1914. Rajac has always had its admirers among lovers of nature. The broad horizon shows a number of meadows and clearings, forests of beech, oak, birch, ash, Turkey oak and, in the highest zone, conifer, fir and pine resembling a tame green oasis. Through the middle of the forest, the slopes of the mountain are traversed by paths with bubbling clear, clean streams and brooks. Water springs are unusually frequent and carry the names of those who plumbed them into fountains. And the water, if such a thing can be said for water, is very tasty. On the heavenly meadows grow a large number of medicinal plants, while the forests are home to pheasant, roe deer, fox, wild boar, hare and tortoise.

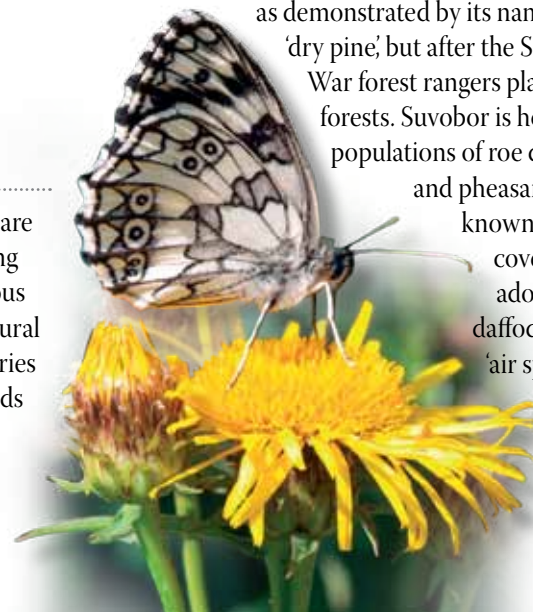
VALJEVO MOUNTAINS

The Valjevo Mountains are an elongated 50km-long belt of hill land-mountainous terrain that represent a natural border between the territories of north-west Serbia towards the south. Because of their position and shape, they are collectively referred to as the Valjevo Beam.

Included in the Valjevo Mountains are: Medvednik (1,247m), Jablanik (1,274m), Povlen (1,346m), Maljen (1,103m) and Suvobor (866m). Povlen, the highest of the Valjevo Mountains, is home to the source of the River Susica and enjoys the status of being one of the most beautiful mountains in the country. From the top of Rajac it is possible to walk along the mountain ridges to Suvobor. This is a walk of only five or six kilometres, through untouched but tame nature, and is a must for lovers of nature and life. At the highest elevation is a glade that resembles an imaginary balcony with a view to infinity. Located between Rajac and Maljen, Suvobor is covered with young oak forests in the valleys and conifer trees that cover most of its slopes. The top of the mountain was bare for a long time,

as demonstrated by its name, meaning 'dry pine', but after the Second World War forest rangers planted conifer forests. Suvobor is home to large populations of roe deer, hare

and pheasant. Maljen, known for its flower-covered meadows adorned with white daffodils, is also an 'air spa', while at its peak is the resort of Divcibare. A mild climate, favourable



TWO RIVER GORGES

The Gradac River Gorge, with its tributaries, is one of the wonders of Valjevo. The gorge is extremely rich in wildlife and has underground formations of karst erosion. The most interesting and most visited resorts and beaches are Livadica (Small Meadow), Ploce (Records/Tiles), Kriva Vrba (Curved Willow) and Sarenlo platno (multi-coloured canvas). Along a 12 km stretch of river there are several water mills and fish ponds. The main railroad from Belgrade to Bar, in Montenegro, passes through the Gradac River Gorge. The crystal clear Tresnjica (little cherry) river flows below Povlen Mountain in western Serbia and, after 23 km, empties into the River Drina near Ljubovija. Just before its convergence with the Drina, the Tresnjica has shaped a limestone gorge that's a few kilometres long, about 500 feet deep and with vertical cliffs that give it the characteristics of a canyon in some places, especially in the area of the confluence of the Tribuca into the Tresnjica. The largest part of the nature reserve is covered in forests and thickets of common hornbeam, Turkey oak, black pine and juniper. Though this is a nesting area for many birds of prey, such as the Golden eagle, Common kestrel, Goshawk and Sparrow hawk, the Tresnjica and River Uvac gorges are best known for their colony of Eurasian Griffon.

geographical position, rich flora and fauna, abundant sources of running water and conifer forests – particularly pine, make Divcibare an attractive winter and summer



▲ *Garasko Lake*





destination. The nearby monasteries of Celijski, Lelici, Pustinja and Jovanjski are sites where one can find spiritual peace. Nature Reserves on Divčibare include the old forest at Velika Pleča (Big Shoulders), Vražji vir (Devil's vortex) on the Crna Kamenica (Black Stone) River, the Canyon of the Crna (Black) River. Of particular interest is the 20-metre-high Skakalo (Jumped) waterfall on the Manastirica (Small Monastery) River. The extreme eastern regions of the Valjevo Mountains, boasting virgin nature, include the peaks of Ravna Gora, Riora and Kostunica. These have become the centre of environmentally friendly agricultural production and eco tourism, based on the

natural and cultural-historical values of this region, under the slogan - *Combining nature and tradition.*

Landscape of exceptional quality **OVCAR-KABLAR GORGE**

In the central part of Serbia, where the Western Morava passes the rocks of Ovcarska and Kablar, is one of the country's most beautiful gorges. There are deeper, longer and more important gorges, but there are few that are as famous, loved and praised by the nation as the Ovcarska-Kablar Gorge. It is characterised by steep, high limestone walls that reveal several caves, while its narrow river meanders are renowned for

their beauty. The animal life of the gorge, including about 150 species of birds, 30 species of fish and more than 600 plant species, represent a special attraction for fans of untouched nature. In the forests of hornbeam, linden/lime, black ash and sumach, live the Hermann's tortoise, European pond terrapin, Aesculapian Snake, Fire salamander, European Pine marten, Beech marten, Grey heron, Peregrine Falcon, Golden eagle and Rock partridge. Springs of hot and healing mineral water and pure drinking water are scattered like jewels throughout the area. *Amidst this natural beauty is hidden a multitude of monasteries, churches and chapels, such as the well-known Ovcarska-Kablar Monastery or the "Mala srpska Sveta Gora" (Little Serbian Holy Mountain; Little Athos).* Little Athos comprises the monasteries and churches of Vavedenje (Presentation), Vaznesenje (Ascension), Preobrazenje (Transfiguration), Sretenje (Candle mass) and Sveta trojica (Holy Trinity) on the right bank of the Morava and Blagovestjenje (Annunciation), Ilinje (St. Elijah), Jovanjski, Uspenje (Assumption) and Nikoljski (St. Nikola) on the left bank. A swimming marathon is organised each August on the Western Morava River near Ovcarska Spa, while the area is also attractive for rafting. Tourists and day-trippers can take advantage of three small artificial lakes: Medjuvršje, Ovcarska-Kablar and Parmenac.



Kosmaj

General information

Public Company Srbijasume (forestry)

Forest management Lipovica

Tel: +381 11/8300-372

sulipovica@srbijasume-sgbgd.co.rs

www.srbijasume.rs

Tourist Organisation of Mladenovac

Tel: +381 11/8244-001

admin@tom.co.rs

www.tom.co.rs

Active break

Kosmaj is a beautiful excursion destination for walks and recreation. On the top of the mountain is a grassed area used for volleyball, football and other sports. Kosmaj is an ideal place for children, as there are specifically regulated sites for play and child recreation.

Bukulja

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Arandjelovac

Tel: +381 34/725-575

office@bukovickabanja.rs

www.to-ar.com

www.bukovickabanja.rs

Tourist Information Centre

Knjaza Milosa 228

Tel: +381 34/715-335

info@bukovickabanja.rs

Active break

Thanks to its extremely favourable climatic conditions, medicinal spa waters and the close proximity of two mountains - Bukulja and Vencac - make Arandjelovac a great year-round destination for holidays and health breaks. If you are a guest of the Arandjelovac Spa, you can take advantage of a variety of options for recreation, including using the spa's sports pitches and a swimming pool, with diving board and sun terraces. Your stay will inspire walks in the surroundings and the spa has a unique exhibition of sculptures made from Vencac marble. The nearby Mount Bukulja has marked hiking paths leading to a mountaineering hut at the top of the mountain. At its highest elevation you can climb to a viewing point from which you can see almost half of Serbia. Bukulja is also the source of a river of the same name, which has two artificial lakes rich in fish, while the foot of the mountain dips into Garas Lake - a paradise for passionate fishermen.

Risovaca Cave

General information

Arandjelovac Museum,

Tel: +381 34/ 712-415

muzejar@ptt.rs,

www.muzej-arandjelovac.org

Active break

Risovaca is a significant archaeological site under state protection. Do not miss the chance to tour this unique museum-cave and view its attractive Archaeological canal,

Channel of Ice Age fauna or so-called 'Optimistic hall'.

Rudnik

Ostrovica

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Gornji Milanovac

Tel: +381 32/720-566, 720-565

togm@open.telekom.rs

www.togm.org.rs

Active break

Rudnik includes many marked trails for walking and hiking, basketball and volleyball courts, football pitches, swimming pools and ski lanes. In summer you can pick medicinal herbs and forest fruits in the meadows. A special treasure is represented by the volcanic rocks of Ostrovica, from which you can enjoy views over the landscapes of Sumadija.

Rajac

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Ljig

Tel: +381 14/3445-242

tooljig@ptt.rs

www.ljig.org.rs

www.selo.co.rs

Active break

Rajac is a well-known and popular resort. If you are a fan of walking and hiking, head along the Uncle Dusko's Rajac trails or Good Water. During the months you can join organised programmes for collecting

mushrooms, herbs and wild fruits. It is also known for the traditional Harvest on Rajac, which is held each July. This mountain provides excellent conditions for various sporting and recreational activities and, among other things, you can try your hand at paragliding.

Valjevo Mountains

Suvobor, Maljen, Povlen, Gradac River Gorge

Tourist information

Suvobor

Tourist Organisation of Mionica

Tel: +381 14/62-080

tomionica@gmail.com

www.mionica.webs.com

Tourist Organisation of Gornji Milanovac

Tel: +381 32/720-566, 720-565

togm@open.telekom.rs

www.togm.org.rs

Tourist Organisation of Valjevo

Maljen & Divcibare

Tel : +381 14/221-138

tovaljevo@open.telekom.rs

www.valjevo-turist.co.rs

www.divcibare.co.rs

Tourist Information Centre on Divcibare

Tel. +381 14/277 252

Active break

Divcibare is a unique 'air spa' and is the main tourist centre of the Valjevo Mountains. Here there are facilities for indoor sports, tennis, mini golf, trim and fitness trails and horse riding, thus offering countless opportunities for recreation. There are hiking trails that take you, when you conquer them, to the viewing points of Golubac, Paljba, Ljuti Krs and Crni Vrh. If are a lover of winter

sports, Divcibare boasts several ski slopes and courses suitable for Nordic skiing fans.

Suvobor Mountain is very attractive to hunters. There is a marked hiking trail from the top of Suvobor to the Divcibare mountaineers hut on the Great field.

Gradac River Gorge

Ecological Society of Gradac

Tel: +381 14/225-188

egrad@ptt.rs

Active break

The River Gradac and its gorge are known as the 'Miracle of Valjevo'. On a 12-km stretch of river there are fish ponds, picnic areas, beaches, caves and watermills.

The fast waters of the river offer perfect conditions for fly fishing. The canyon has so far revealed more than 70 caves, so exploring this area is a great adventure for climbers and cavers. The local Horse riding club organises a riding school and riding trips through the Graca Canyon. A mountain cycling route leads through the canyon and is one of the most attractive in the country.

Tresnjica River Gorge

General information

Public Company Srbijasume (forestry)

Forest management Boranja Loznica

Tel. +381 15/ 876 046

sgboranja@ptt.r

www.srbijasume.co.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Ljubovija

Tel: +381 15/661-050

sgtoolj@gmail.com

www.turistickaorganizacijaljubovija.rs

www.tolj.rs

Active break

The Tresnjica River Gorge is an attractive destination for mountaineers, fishermen and lovers of beautiful nature. The protected part of the reserve is open to visitors from May to October.

Ovcar-Kablar Gorge

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Cacak

Tel: +381 32/343-721

toc@ptt.rs

www.turizamcacak.org.rs

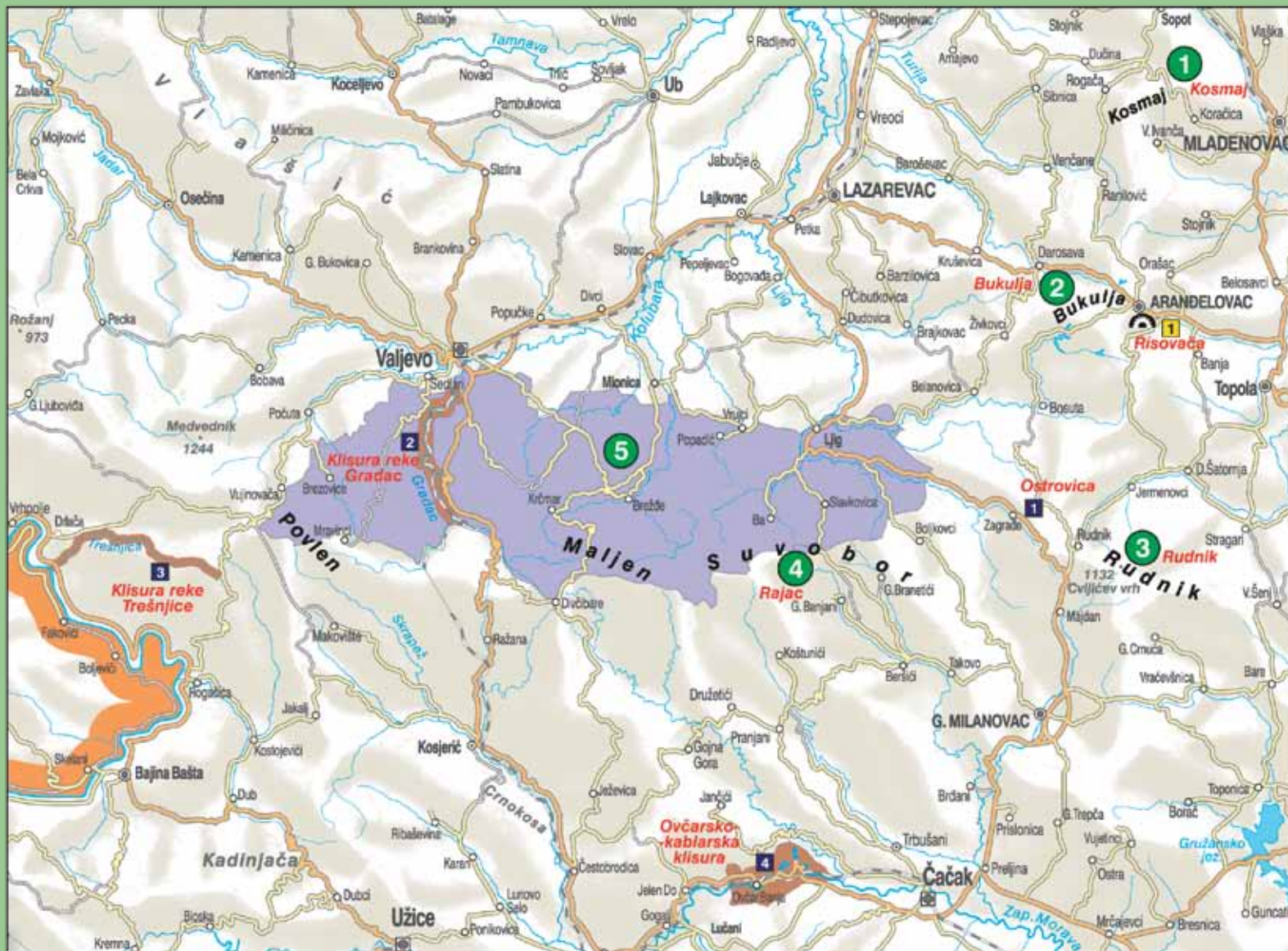
Tourist Information Centre Ovcar Banja

Tel: +381 32/5596-366,

May - October

Active break

The mountains of Ovcar (Shepherd) and Kablar are a great challenge for mountaineering and mountain biking. There are marked trails of varying difficulty and length, though all of them offer fantastic scenic views of the gorge. From the viewing point at the top of Mount Kablar you are able to marvel at the fascinating meanders of the Western Morava. Kablar also has vertical rock faces for free climbing. The river is ideal for rafting, kayaking and canoeing, while visitors can also participate in the annual regatta. Adding to the attractiveness of this region are its many fishing grounds. The artificial lakes of Ovcar Spa and Medjuvrsje (mid-peaks) include large designated fishing areas (800 metres), while a real adventure and close encounter with nature is offered by adrenaline and alternative sporting activities, such as paragliding and long distance horse riding. Visitors can also sign up for a scuba diving course.



- | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| 1 MOUNT KOSMAJ | 4 RAJAC | 2 GRADAC RIVER GORGE | 1 RISOVACA |
| 2 BUKULJA MOUNTAIN | 5 VALJEVO MOUNTAINS | 3 TRESNJICA RIVER GORGE | |
| 3 RUDNIK MOUNTAIN | 1 OSTROVICA | 4 OVCHAR-KABLAR GORGE | |



We are in touch with nature less and less, surrounded by reinforced concrete and our own reality, hardly believing in wonders anymore. They are all the more mythical and fantastical – constantly decreasing as an element of life. However, this does not mean that they don't exist, which is why every encounter with one of these wonders represents the essence of life that we have neglected and are lacking. The wonders of Mount Tara, Mokra Gora, Zlatibor, the Drina canyon and Uvac... they are right beside us; they represent our origins and provide access to the meaning of life.



TARA, MOKRA GORA, ZLATIBOR, ZLATAR...

The World's Palm

National Park

TARA

It cannot be said that Tara is the roof of the world, because there is another, much higher, mountain. Tucked into coniferous forests, intersected by streams, decorated by meadows, both wild and subdued – Tara is like the palm of a hand with an extremely long life line. There, on that palm with the elongated line of life, diverse natural beauty has found a home: mountain streams, canyons, lakes, rare plant life and animals – all of which, thanks to concern, care and man management, have been enclosed in a national park of the same name.

Tara is located in western Serbia and belongs to the inner Dinaric Alps. It is 50 km long, 22 km wide and has an average altitude of 1,200 metres. Tara's highest peak, at 1,591 m/asl, is Kozji Rid (Goat's Hill).

Tara's ecologically preserved natural environment, mountain relief of moderate altitude, winter sports facilities – especially in the Predov Cross area - beneficial climate, proximity to the River Drina and the man-



made Perucac Lake, all serve to make this one of the most attractive regions in Serbia and, in many ways, a unique destination in Europe and indeed, the world.

As much as 80 per cent of the national park's territory is covered by mixed forests

of spruce, fir and beech. In addition to the endemic Serbian Spruce, the local plant world is marked by the Turkish Hazel, Yew and European Holly. Moreover, even if we were just to glance down into the rocky outcrops, crags and many gorges and canyons of Tara,



ZAOVINE - SERBIAN SPRUCE

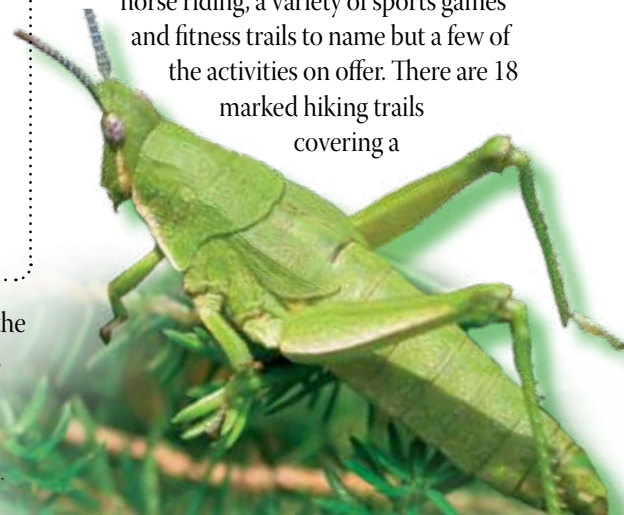
Near the village of Zaovine lies a lake of the same name that was created with the construction of the Lazic Dam on the Beli Rzav River. Zaovine was made famous as the site of the discovery of a prehistoric living tree – the Serbian Spruce. It was back in 1875 in the hamlet of Djurici that famous botanist Josif Pancic discovered this new type of conifer, which was given the name Serbian spruce (*Picea spruce*). Zaovine Lake and the Beli Rzav Canyon are ideal spots for fishing, orienteering and leisurely picnics surrounded by nature, while there are also stunning viewing spots, like Zmajevac (Dragon tree), Bela Voda (White Water) and Gavran prilika (Raven opportunity), which are excellent spots for relaxing after a hike and deservedly enjoying the sights. The area is home to around 600 plant species, of which 55 are on Serbia's preliminary Red List of rare flora and 15 are protected as natural rarities. These include edelweiss, the sub-endemic Nikolic's *Aquilegia dinarica*, *Picea Polis Spruce* and representatives of the Orchidaceae family – confirming the botanical wealth of Zaovine. Ravna Stena (Flat Rock) or Grad (town) in the Beli Rzav Valley has been classed as a monument of nature and a geomorphologic attraction since the time of the Kotromanic Dynasty (13th century). It is also a nesting site for the Peregrine Falcon, a rare bird for the Balkans. Zaovine is also the only habitat of the ancient, endemic Serbian (Pancic) Grasshopper.

we would find genuine botanical rarities of the Balkans, such as Pancic's Serbian knapweed, Nikolic's *Aquilegia dinarica*, St John's wort,

◀ *Serbian Picea Spruce* *Serbian Picea Grasshopper* ▶



Yellow *Corydalis*, *Euphorbia sub hastifolia*, Pancic's Serbian Pheasant's Eye, *Daphne blagayana*, peony and Deer Fern. Tara's forests are also home to the brown bear and mountain goat, while gliding over the heights above are eagles and falcons. In the forests of Tara there are more than 250 kinds of fungi, three of which are poisonous. One of them, the Death cap, is the most dangerous fungus in Europe. The terrain of Tara alone makes the mountain suitable for a variety of recreational activities: gentle slopes favour walking, horse riding, a variety of sports games and fitness trails to name but a few of the activities on offer. There are 18 marked hiking trails covering a





▲ *Lake Zaovine*

total of 120 kilometres. Hiking maps, available from information points across the park, are required to take proper and safe advantage of these trails. Tara is rich in archaeological sites dating from the Neolithic period to the Middle Ages. There are recognisable tombstones, as well as the ruins of the medieval Solotnik fortification. Of particular importance is the 13th century Raca Monastery, founded by King Dragutin Nemanjic.

Nature Park

SARGAN - MOKRA GORA

Travelling across Mokra Gora (Wet Mount) is neither a journey into the past nor into the future. Rather it is a return to one's self. Nestled between two mountains (Zlatibor and Tara) and three rivers (Beli Rzav, Crni Rzav and Kamesina), Mokra Gora has always been a gateway of nations. Irrefutable evidence shows that the area was part of a sea during the Mesozoic era. This

evidence includes fossilised remains of corals, sea urchins, sea snails, clams, sea stars and the occasional shark tooth. The sea, known as the Tethys Ocean, covered the area more than ninety million years ago. Nowadays it is covered in rich coniferous forests of unusual beauty. In a place called Jejinjak grows a giant fir. Among the largest trees in Serbia and probably Europe, this colossal fir is 50.5 metres tall and its trunk has a diameter of 1.7 metres. Mokra Gora gives rise to wonderful springs of unusual and medicinal



◀ *Ethno village on Mokra Gora*

renew that road. Only it will not travel to Visegrad for the needs of travellers and business, but rather will carry people for entertainment, happy recreation and enjoyment.” This, indeed, is the case today. The Sargan Eight is the most attractive tourist heritage railway in Europe, dubbed an architectural masterpiece among the narrow-gauge railways of the world. One of the slopes of Mokra Gora is home to an unusual ethnic village with several names. Whether we choose to call it

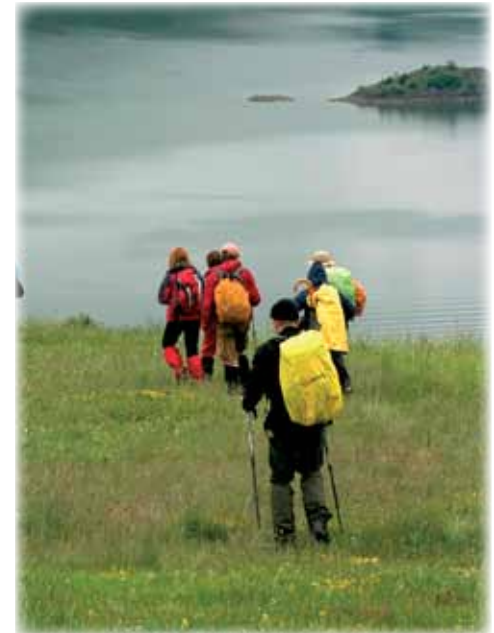


water. Knowledge of the water’s empirically determined healing powers has been passed down from generation to generation, though very few locals talk about it. Water from sources such as Bela Voda (White Water) and Cesma (Fountain) are rich in selenium; from Dulovo Water and Radovan Water the water is salty, while Glisova Water is sulphuric. These waters have all shown impressive results in the treatment of various diseases. The village of Kremna lies on Mokra Gora. The prophecies of one of its residents from the late 19th century, Mitar Tarabic, convinced even the most ardent of disbelievers to reconsider their positions when some of his prophecies came true. One such prophecy concerned the fate of the Sargan Eight narrow-gauge railway, which

didn’t exist in Tarabic’s time: “Many a year will pass, but the people will again remember the iron road and

Landscape of exceptional quality
KAMENA GORA (STONE MOUNT)

In the extreme southwest of Serbia, along the border with Montenegro, lie the rolling summits of Kamena Gora (Stone Mount). At the crossroads of ancient trade routes, with the clear spring waters of Kovcica, Trajan and Kovceg, as well as the well-known “holy pines”, this picturesque mountain gives way to a gorge-like valley of the Gracnica River and reveals the ruins of the Zitin Monastery complex containing many objects of ethno-heritage preserving a traditional way of life.



DRINA CANYON

The Drina Canyon, known as a traditional rafting route, is one of the deepest canyons in the world (in some places delving 1,000 metres). Less known is that it is a haven of rare, even ancient plant species, some of which prosper in hidden, tranquil Drina Canyon tributaries. In addition to Serbian spruce, which has found a perfect “survival tactic” on the steep slopes of the canyon and has become the empress of all endemic species of Europe, there are also other rare and prehistoric relict species such as European holly, black hornbeam, black pine and Centaurea and Dobrunski knapweed. The dense jungle-style forest of Perucica is well known, but it is not so common knowledge that such forests also exist on the edges of the Drina Canyon, such as the Topli (Warm) Do, as well as the beech forest of the Raca Canyon. The Drina Canyon is also a permanent habitat of the brown bears native to eastern Bosnia and western Serbia. Perucac Lake, formed with the construction of the hydroelectric dam at Bajina Basta, boasts beautiful beaches that beckon visitors to swim, fish, sail, canoe or take to a pedalo. Beside the settlement of Perucac runs the river Vrelo (Hot Spring), which is probably the shortest river in the world as it is only 365 metres long

Mecavnik, Drvengrad (Wood Town) or, as the locals themselves often call it, ‘the professor’s village’ – in a creative reference to its creator and famous Serbian director Emir Kusturica – it is a ‘must-see’ destination. As an excursion in itself, or after riding the

The River Uvac Canyon





TICIJA FIELD

In the foothills of Mount Ozren, at about 1,000m/ asl, the Ticija Field has made its home. This place, 12 kilometres from Brodarevo, represents a living ethnographic museum. Tradition is preserved in every corner. Houses under shingles and outhouses with straw roofs, built in the spirit of folk architecture, serve the functions of the lives of local people. In the vicinity lie the medieval monasteries of Davidovica and Kumanica, as well as the impressive canyons of the rivers Lim and Dubocica.

▲ *Zlatibor landscape*

▼ *Holy pine on Kamena Gora*



Sargan Eight, hunting or trying the healing waters of the mountain springs, any visitor should drop in at this unique town, relax and enjoy the atmosphere with a cake or some local fruit juice from the pastry shop. Visitors can fish on the Beli Rzav and Crni Rzav rivers. Of numerous animals living on the mountain, visitors may spot brown bear, wolf, roe deer, Golden eagle, Eurasian Hoopoe or otters. The area is known for beekeeping, with the local honey classed among the best in Serbia. Mokra Gora is also one of the few places where villagers maintain the traditional production of tar.

ZLATIBOR

The fact that Zlatibor Mountain was, and still is, an ideal place to relax was discovered by kings from yesteryear. Above this mountain in the heart of Serbia, air currents from the Mediterranean and

the continent collide, creating an ideal microclimate and offering many sunny days throughout year, as well as a perfect atmospheric pressure beneficial to human health. It is for these reasons that Zlatibor is rightly considered an 'air spa' and guests seeking health and relaxation have visited since the mid 17th century. However, Zlatibor only became a tourist destination when, as is the case with any good story, a king appeared. The start of the development of tourism on this jewel of Serbia's mountains is associated with the visit of Serbian King Aleksandar Obrenovic in 1893. With the king's blessing, the dynamic development of tourism in this area began and, after more than a hundred years, Zlatibor now carries the title of the most developed and most visited Mountain resort in Serbia. With good organisation and ambition, this mountain of extraordinary beauty, pleasant climate, spacious clearings, lush pastures, water-rich mountain streams, meadows and peaks, glades and deep indentions was turned into a tourist resort nestled between the undulating Tara and Sargan, to the eastern slopes of the



▲ *Autumn on Mount Zlatar*

Murtenica and the almost symbolic River Susica and the rapids of Uvac. Mixed forests of white and red pine, spruce, fir and beech are home to the Crested tit, Wood lark, wolf and fox. Close to the village of Rozanstvo, is the famous Stopica Cave, representing a unique monument to nature. The cave is 2,000 metres long and has a ceiling rising to a height of up to 50 metres. It is known for its tuffaceous baths and stone-lined depressions that flood and form a unique cascade waterfall. Staro Selo (Old Village) in the village of Sirogojno is an open-air

museum and one of Zlatibor's magical places. It is indeed difficult to find a mountain that is able to conquer and deceive people like Zlatibor can.

ZLATAR

Thanks to its dense coniferous forests and rich mountain air, Zlatar is rightly referred to as "the factory of red blood cells". Even Greeks and Romans knew of the healing qualities of the air on Zlatar Mountain which is why they chose to build their settlements





▲ *Sopotnica Waterfalls*

▼ *Stopica Cave*



LIM

The origins of the River Lim's name come from the Latin word "limes". In the past, Lim was a border dividing the eastern and western Roman empires, the Ottoman Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Lim emerges from the base of Prokletija Mountain and ends as a Drina tributary. It passes areas of outstanding natural beauty. The route and beauty of the Lim led to it becoming a favourite river for white water rafting. An angry, powerful and wild river in the spring months, a sleeping, mysterious beauty in the warm summer months, Lim invites rafters, but also bathers and holidaymakers to embark upon an exciting journey along it. On the River Sopotnica, a tributary of the Lim, accumulated sediments and cascades have caused the fast-flowing water to shape extraordinarily beautiful waterfalls that are enhanced by old water mills.

there. Moreover, the natural beauties and fruits of Zlatar were also enjoyed by members of Serbia's Nemanjic dynasty, who built the Mileseva Monastery there in the 13th century. Zlatar Mountain is 22 kilometres long and 12 kilometres wide. It lies in the area between Lima, Bistrica, Nova Varos and Pester. Its northern slopes gently descend to the Uvac Valley, while the south side falls sharply into the deep Milesevka River Gorge. This river formed a wild limestone gorge between the mountain massifs of Zlatar and Jadovnik, where very old specimens of red pine are preserved impressively. Zlatar is a favourite destination for fishermen and, thanks to its marked paths, in recent years



▲ *Flight of the griffon vulture*

those seeking long walks and mountain biking have been able to enjoy its charms.

The meanders of the Uvac Canyon provide probably the most beautiful panoramic views of Serbia, while the area is also home to the Griffon vulture, one of Europe's biggest birds. The Uvac Special Nature Reserve was created primarily to protect the breeding and reproduction of this endangered species.

The area around Uvac is rich in various karst rock forms - surfaces, coves, caves and pits. The river itself was reconstructed in three places in the middle of last century, thus forming three artificial lakes: Uvac, Zlatar and Radoinja lakes.

These lakes are rich in fish and offer spawning grounds for brown trout, barbell, chub and lake trout.





▲ *Sargan Eight Railway*

Tara National Park

General Information

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www.nptara.rs

Tourist information

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www.stc-bajinabasta.rs

Information Centre

Mitrovac on the Tara

Active break

Tara offers numerous opportunities to enjoy nature. Walking, hiking, cycling and horse riding. You can plan each of these activities around reaching one of the many landscaped viewing points for which Tara is known. The mountain's most famous viewing points are Biljeska Rock, Banjska (Spa) Rock, Kozja (Goat's) Rock, Crnjeskovo, Zboriste, Sjenic and Omar. There are three arranged walking trails. The Raca trail starts from Raca Monastery and leads along the right bank of the river of the same name, to the entrance of the Raca Gorge Nature Reserve. The Jarevac trail is a light walking path that runs through meadows inhabited by rare plant species, before becoming a steep mountain path that leads to a picnic area at the Jarevac Dam. The Banjska (Spa) Rock hiking-educational path leads from Mitrovac to the 'Pod Gorusica' Reserve.

The River Drina occupies a special place in the tourist offer of this region. Its attractive canyon can be toured via an organised tourist boat or visitors can hire a boat and head out themselves. The Perucac Lake has a landscaped beach and during the summer months, visitors can swim and participate in water sports. The River Drina is also a favourite destination for lovers of fast river fishing, while rafting is a long tradition of this region.

Sargan-Mokra Gora

General Information

Mokra Gora Nature Park

Drvengrad-Mecavnik

Tel. +381 31/315-2219

info@parkprirodemokragora.org

www.parkprirodemokragora.org

Tourist information

Drvengrad-Mecavnik

Tel. +381 31/800-686, 800-680

info@mecavnik.info

www.mecavnik.info

Museum and tourist complex Sargan Eight

Tel. +381 31/800-505

sarganskaosmica@ptt.rs

www.sarganskaosmica.rs





Tourist organisation of Uzice

Tel. +381 31/513-485, 514-761
tours@open.telekom.rs
www.turizamuzica.org.rs

Tourist Information Centre

Tel. +381 31/500 155
infocentar@neobee.net

Active break

Sargan – Mokra Gora, thanks to its unspeakably beautiful mountain peaks, is the starting point of Serbia's most popular and attractive tourist-heritage. Riding Sargan's narrow-gauge track is an indispensable part of the tourism offer. The second 'must do' activity of a visit to Mokra Gora is to visit Drvengrad – a fairytale ethno-tourism complex built by Serbia's famous film director, Emir Kusturica. Less than eight kilometres from Drvengrad, is the Iver ski resort with four tailored ski slopes. There is also an open-air railway museum on Mokra Gora, while the whole area is ideal for strolling. It is also an area of

many invigorating medical springs.

The area of Sargan and Mokra Gora is suitable for various walking tours where the most interesting are: Mokra Gora-Sargan-Brezovice (15 km), Mokra Gora-Iver-Zmajevac-Zboriste (14 km), Mokra Gora-Bela Voda-Jatarice (3.5 km).

There are also opportunities for hunting and cycling.

Zlatibor

General Information

Tourist organisation of Zlatibor

Tel. +381 31/841-646, 848-015
zlatibor@zlatibor.org.rs
www.zlatibor.org.rs

Tourist Information Centre

Tel: +381 (0) 31/845-103
info@zlatibor.org.rs

Active break

One of the most popular forms of exploring the beauty of nature is by walking on Zlatibor. There are a number of marked walking trails en-route leading to the Cigota monument, the Rzav Canyon, Gradina, Oka, Crni Vrh and Ribnica Lake. The mountain's tourist centre offers many sporting terrains, an outdoor and indoor swimming pool, gym and fitness centre offering ideal conditions for recreation and a variety of sports including football, tennis, basketball, swimming. Summer sport camps are organised each year, as are schools for paragliding, tennis and swimming. On Zlatibor you can take riding lessons or fish the rivers and streams of Zlatibor or Ribnica Lake. One of the area's main tourist attractions is Stopica Cave. Zlatibor's Tornik Ski Centre has four ski lanes - Cigota, Tornik, Ribnica and Zmajevac, providing an attractive offer for lovers of winter sports, with good conditions for skiing and cross country skiing. Visitors to Zlatibor can fill their stay riding bicycles, pedalos on the artificial lake or riding horses. They can



swim in many pools and swimming areas, and engage in fishing and photo safaris, while lovers of sporting activities can take advantage of numerous terrains for various sports.

Uvac

General Information

Uvac Reserve

Tel. +381 33/64-198
office@uvac.org.rs
www.uvac.org.rs

Tourist information

Tourist organisation of Nova Varos-Zlatar

Tel. +381 33/62-621
tozlatar@novavaros.rs
www.zlatar.org.rs

Active break

The Uvac Special Nature Reserve attracts visitors primarily interested in observing the rare and endangered griffon vulture. However, Uvac also attracts all other nature lovers

- it is an ideal place for walking, hiking, cave exploration. It is also popular for canoeing and kayaking. Recently the Reserve has introduced tours of the lake on a catamaran. Recreational fishing is also part of the tourist offer.

Prijepolje

River Lim, Milesevka River Canyon, Kamena Gora

Tourist information

Tourist organisation of Prijepolje

Tel. +381 33/710-140
toprijepolje@gmail.com
kontakt@TurizamPrijepolje.org.rs
www.turizamprijepolje.org.rs

Active break

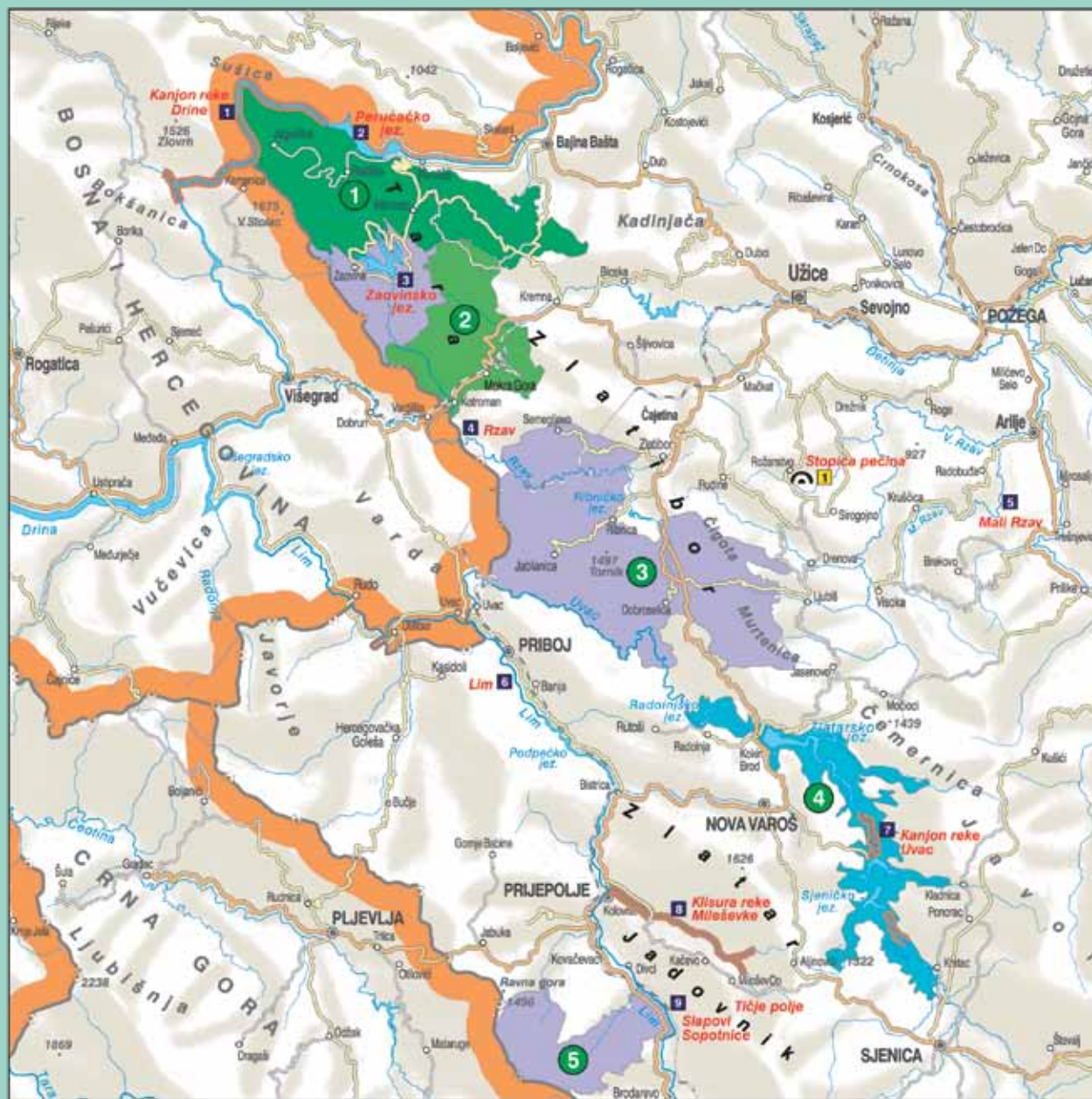
Prijepolje and its surroundings offer a variety of offers to all nature lovers and enthusiasts of adrenaline sports. The River Lim attracts rafting fans and the fast flow of the river is also a lure for fisherman. Attractive natural phenomena in this region include the River Milesevka Canyon, an intriguing destination for hiking enthusiasts.

◀ Rafting on the Lim

The trail is marked for a length of 21.5 km and leads from the River Milesevka's Sopotnica Canyon to the Milesevo Monastery. And in order to ensure you don't have to worry about traversing narrow tracks and obstacles, your exploratory trip can be led by licensed guides. Kamena Gora is another gem of this area that attracts those seeking natural beauty. Kamena Gora boasts 80 kilometres of marked trails, making it an ideal destination for hiking and mountain biking. Prijepolje is also good for paragliding with a number of launch points – one of which is on Kamena Gora. Visitors can also embark on orienteering expeditions and, with the help of special landmark maps and a compass, discover even more beautiful areas of this landscape. This region has ecological camps and camps for extreme adrenalin sports..

▼ Bathing in the Drina Canyon





- ① MOUNT TARA
- ② MOKRA GORA - SARGAN
- ③ ZLATIBOR MOUNTAIN
- ④ ZLATAR LAKES
- ⑤ RIVER LIM
- ① DRINA CANYON
- ② PERUCAC LAKE
- ③ LAKE ZAOVINE
- ④ RIVER RZAV
- ⑤ MALI RZAV STREAM
- ⑥ RIVER LIM
- ⑦ UVAC CANYON
- ⑧ MILESEVO GORGE
- ⑨ SOPOTNICA WATERFALLS
- ⑩ STOPICA CAVE



There is a beauty man can never possess. It is the same, but different. Every time he comes close to knowing, it remains mystical and elusive. Natural beauty relaxes, entices and seduces. Man constantly such beauty. And, if you are lucky, such beauty will always return. To capture and tempt the imagination, we offer you an insight into: Kopaonik, Golija, Goc, Zeljin, Stolovi, Pester, Ibar...



MOUNTAIN TOPS OF SERBIA

Strongholds of beauty

National Park

KOPAONIK

Kopaonik, a mountain of immense beauty, owes its name – meaning place of prospecting – to the great mineral wealth trapped in her bosom. Humans have long since mined iron ore, lead and zinc from the heart of the mountain. Volcanic activity and hot melted minerals of high temperatures and heavy pressure shaped the “Kopaonik mining region” along with reserves of rare metals such as silver and gold, as well as rare minerals like wollastonite and fluorite.

Kopaonik is the largest mountain massif in Serbia, stretching a length of 80 kilometres and reaching a girth of up to 40 kilometres in the middle. Kopaonik has some of the country’s highest mountain peaks: Pancic Peak (2,017 m), home to the mausoleum of Pancic, Karaman (1,934 m) and Gobelja (1,834 m), which is why Kopaonik also has the nickname – ‘the Roof of Serbia’ Another popular nickname that stands out for this massif is “The Mountain of Sun” as the sky over the peaks of Kopaonik, the sky is clear for



an average of 200 days a year. The mountain massif has alternating sharp peaks, gentle meadows, valleys, and mixed deciduous and evergreen forests ...

Because of its relatively low annual precipitation levels, Kopaonik is not a source of major rivers, but because of this there is

a dense network of small streams, which originate from various sources across the surface of the mountain, some of which have medicinal properties, with increased radioactivity and water mineralisation. The most famous springs in Kopaonik are: Marina water, Krčmar water, Pajino preslo, Sycamore



▲ *White cliffs of Mount Kopaonik*

fountain, Kaznovske bacije.

Along the course of the Samokovska River, Kopaonik's biggest water artery, small waterfalls and rapids form, while the Zaplaninska River includes the cascading Jelovarnik waterfall.

The area also has several lakes, with the largest being Semetes Lake. In the vicinity of Kopaonik there are also spas, which only serve to confirm the excellent healing qualities of the mountain itself. The best known spas are Josanicka, Lukovska and Kursumlija. There are organised hiking tours; picnic areas such as Metodje, Kadijevac, Djordjov Bridge; monastery tours – around the medieval

monasteries and shrines of the region: Studenica, Sopocani, Djurdjevi pillars, Gradac; wine tours – around Aleksandrovacka Parish, known for its good wine and brandy; rafting on the River Ibar - with a tour of the medieval city of Maglic.

Although primarily developed as a winter tourist centre, a permanent enrichment of activities ensures that the season here lasts year-round. One of the local treats worth sampling on a visit is the delicious local blueberry conserve, which you will be offered by residents of nearby villages – or alternatively, when in season, embark on your own harvest.



Nature Park

GOLIJA

Primordial beauty, preserved nature, rich flora and fauna, many springs, rivers and streams with extremely clear water; various items of culture and history deeply embedded in the soil – all helped to ensure that Golija Nature Park was declared Serbia's first Biosphere Reserve Golija-Studenica following a decision made by the UNESCO commission. Golija, the highest mountain of southwest Serbia, is shaped in the form of the letter 'S' and has a length of 32 kilometres. Its highest peak, Jankov kamen (1,833 m) was named after Janko Sibirjanin, who, according to legend, placed a stone obelisk at the very top of the mountain during his return from the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. Even if this is not true, it is easy to believe when one stands at the top of the mountain and looks down her slopes. This is because Golija is truly a mountain of primeval beauty. Fairly sparsely populated, with many earth and grass paths intersecting through dense forests to form a seeming spider's web that only the locals

STUDENICA

Since its foundation to this today, Studenica has been ranked as the top monastery in the Serbian Orthodox Church. It is situated above the small river of the same name, which flows into the River Ibar about ten kilometres further downstream. Studenica monastery is on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Consisting of complex architectural and artistic work, technically masterful, this Holy Virgin church boasts decorative stone sculptures, as well as frescoes which represent the highest European art of the time.

can navigate well, Golija is still a bit of a wild, untamed, unkempt mountain. Indeed, that is the source of all of her outer beauty. This so-called 'Mountain of Water' boasts springs throughout its territory, with around 100 recorded. Golija is one of the few mountains in Serbia where glacial phenomena can be observed. It has two peculiar looking lakes: Dajicko and Okruglica. Below the Crepuljak peak lie the Big and Little Kosanin lakes, which were named by the great Serbian botanist and hydro biologist Nedeljko Kosanin, who studied the natural beauty of this area for many years. Golija is adorned with expansive forest cover. These are generally beech forests,



Eurasian Hoopoe ▶



▲ *Goljijski Sycamore*.

while some parts have the characteristics of rainforests. Its slopes are covered with large meadows and pastures. In the spruce forests are preserved peat-land areas with highly specific and sensitive ecosystems with rare and rich, flora and fauna.

The mountain boasts common examples of tertiary flora. Of the approximately 900 plant species, the ones that stand out are endemic and ancient species that have become endangered. Preserved natural rarities on the mountain include sycamore, which is

synonymous with the flora of Golija. In terms of protection of the mountain sycamore and its community, it is very important that this species survived the Ice Age and is still preserved in its original form in parts. Particularly important species also include the holly, Pancic's *Picea bedrenica* and Adamovic thyme – a species of international importance for biodiversity conservation. Significant botanical areas of Mount Golija also include broad leafed coniferous forests in addition to sub-alpine fir. Golija is one of the most important European centres of ornithological diversity. Its forests are home to a recorded 45 bird species belonging to the group of natural rarities and some 90 species that are candidates for the Red Book of birds of Serbia, which further indicates the importance



▲ River Ibar



of Golija as a biosphere reserve for the preservation of rare and endangered species of birds. Fauna consists of species common to the mountains of Serbia and wildlife includes foxes, hares, wild boars and deer. The beauty of this mountain and the entire area surrounding it, proved irresistible to humans even in ancient times. As early as the 12th and 13th centuries, Serbian rulers built here. Cultural monuments of great importance certainly include the monasteries of Studenica (12th century) and Gradac (13th century). Today, Golija is home to people who live in complete harmony with nature. Rare communities of several wooden houses in the meadows, slopes or lowlands are home to people engaged in wood processing, cattle breeding, the production of honey and dairy products. Residents of Golija wisely protect their mountain: "If every man knew which tree was his, he would never cut it down."



RIVER IBAR

The Gorge of the River Ibar, one of the longest and most beautiful in Serbia, is famous for its place as a monument to nature – the wild Black Pine, which is estimated at more than 170 years old. The Pine and stone warrior, a monument dedicated to the wars of 1912 - 1918, stand as guards on a rock above the fast

and freezing River Ibar. Anybody who loves rivers, mountains, nature and experiencing wild waters should first try rafting down the Ibar. The most exciting section is between the confluence of the Ibar and Studenica down to the medieval city of Maglic.

Today, the Ibar Gorge is also known as the Valley of Lilacs.

Serbian King Uros I Nemanjic married Helen of Anjou in around 1250AD. As a sign of welcome for the French princess, the Serbian king ordered that the entire Ibar Valley be planted with lilacs. His wedding reception gesture succeeded in completely binding the princess's heart to Serbia.



GOC

Goc lies between the rivers Ibar and Western Morava, not far from the King's and Vrnjacka spas. Its Black Peak, at 1,543 metres, is its highest.

The mountain boasts around 650 species of plants, many of which have medicinal properties. Its surface is covered with beech and fir forests, while there are also Goc pine, oak, sessile oak and noble broadleaves. These features make Goc an attractive mountain tourism destination. The mountain boasts an unusual beech tree with a triple entwined trunk forming a shape known as the "beech kiss", a phenomenon not recorded for

any beech elsewhere in Serbia. On the slopes of Goc towards Vrnjacka Spa are small sports fields and six hiking trails of different lengths and steepness, while in winter there are ski slopes that are ideal for novice skiers.

Mountaineering, paragliding and fishing complete the activities available on Goc.



STOLOVI & ZELJIN

The name of Mount Stolovi is derived from the Serbian word for table - sto. According to

tradition, 14th century Serbian Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic came to this mountain to hunt deer. His servants made wooden dining tables and benches for the king and his entourage, thus inspiring the name of the mountain.

The lower parts of Stolovi are covered in oak, beech, hornbeam, ash and linden trees, while the higher climbs are home to coniferous forests. The mountain is rich in forest fruits, while a flowering fragrant daffodils are special spring attraction.

Stolovi lacks accommodation facilities, but is an attractive daytrip destination for nature lovers, hunters, cyclists and hikers. Zeljin is another beautiful mountain of the Kopaonik massif. It is covered almost entirely by forests, apart from where its exposed bare rock faces

◀ *Golden Chanterelle Fungus*



▲ *Pester Meadow*

the River Ibar where there is exposed bare rock. Zeljin is popular with visitors looking for mountaineering, thanks to its raw and wild natural landscape.

PESTER

The karst plateau of southwest Serbia rises to a height of 1,100 to 1,250 m/asl. This is the biggest flat high plain in Serbia and is among the highest in the Balkans. The Pester

plateau is used for grazing sheep and also produces renowned for dairy products like Pester cheese. The sparsely populated Pester has a harsh mountain climate and Siberian-style winters. However, even in such extreme conditions, its habitat includes many rare and endangered species. Most significant is the presence of Montagu's Harrier and the Corn Crake bird. With the exception of northern Vojvodina, this is the only nesting spot of the Montagu's Harrier in Serbia. It is also a

feeding spot for the white stork during its nesting and migratory periods. This is an especially important area of aquatic and wet habitats with numerous plant species that are extremely rare in the whole of Serbia – Marsh Clover, Marsh Lousewort and Ruzmarinolisna Urbae. The pronounced biodiversity of this area has led to it being included among numerous areas of international importance for birds, plants and butterflies.

Kopaonik National Park

General information

Kopaonik National Park

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nacparkkop@open.telekom.rs

www.npkopaonik.com

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Raska

Tel: +381 36/736-085, 738-670

office@raska-turizam.rs

www.raska-turizam.rs

Tourist Organisation of Brus

Tel: +381 37/825-185

toob@open.telekom.rs

www.turizamopstinebrus.co.rs

Active break

Kopaonik is the largest and most famous ski resort in Serbia. Skiers can take advantage of over 50 km of alpine tracks linked through a network of 23 lifts with a total capacity of 28,000 skiers per hour. There are also three FIS slopes for slalom and giant slalom. In addition to trails for alpine disciplines, in the area of Ravan Kopaonik there are 20 km of developed cross-country skiing lanes and a park for snowboarders.

Kopaonik can also prove an excellent choice for an active break out of the winter season – this mountain has a vast offer of activities, with schools for basketball, tennis, horse riding, various programmes for children, weight loss and fitness programmes, developed pedestrian routes and hiking tours. Highlights of the hiking routes include the Josif Pancic mountain trail that has both an east and west section. The trail has a total length of 46 kilometres – you can hike along the eastern section for eight to 10



▲ *Studenica Monastery*

hours and the western section for 10-12 hours. You can go in search of Semetes Lake. You can follow the trail for eight to 10 hours and, once you've conquered it, you will be rewarded with a view of the lake and its unusual floating islands. When the winds blow, the islands move on the water, which represents a unique attraction. Another route takes you to Janko's ponds, passing through two nature reserves: Samokovska River and Janko's ponds. The mountain route leads to the archaeological sites poetically named Nebeske stolice (Celestial chairs) which also provides ideal conditions for paragliding, thanks to the great concavity of the area's relief. In the vicinity of Kopaonik and Golija there are also very important cultural and historical monuments

worth visiting. These are, primarily, monasteries and areas that are on the UNESCO list of cultural heritage sites – Studenica Monastery, Stari (Old) Ras with Petar's Church, Djurdje's Pillars and Sopocani Monastery. Other attractions include the monasteries of Zica, Gradac and Pavlica. Visitors can also climb the steep slopes to the fortified medieval town of Maglic, which offers breathtaking views of Ibar Gorge. The area is famous for its healing waters and spas. On Kopaonik itself is Josanicka Spa, while in a radius of just 80 kilometres are the spas of Mataruska, Vrnjacka and Bogutovacka.

River Ibar

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Kraljevo

Tel: +381 36/316-000, 311-192

jutok@tron.rs

www.jutok.org.rs

Tourist Organisation of Raska

Tel: +381 36/738-670

office@raska-turizam.rs

www.raska-turizam.rs

Active break

The River Ibar is best known for its “cheerily down the Ibar” event, which allows enthusiasts to make a rapid descent of the river in any craft, even a makeshift boat. Rafting from the medieval town of Maglic to the city of Kraljevo is another interesting event organised on the river. If you enjoy white-water rafting, kayaking or canoeing, you can test your skills on two river routes: Confluence - Maglic and Maglic - Mataruska Spa.

The River Ibar is also traditionally linked to fishing. Its waters yield all kinds of fish, including carp, barbel, crucian carp and pike.

Golija

General information

Public Company Srbijasume (forestry)

Raska Forestry Department

Tel: +381 36/736-861

sgsumarstvo@open.telekom.rs

www.srbijasume.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Ivanjica

Tel: +381 32/665-085

tooivanjica@eunet.rs

www.ivatourism.org

Tourist Organisation of Raska

Tel: +381 36/738-670

office@raska-turizam.rs

www.raska-turizam.rs

Active break

Golija is a large mountain where tourism is still largely in its infancy. If you want to holiday in places designed for tourism, we recommend you visit Odvracenica. In the winter several ski lifts work here and during the summer you can visit the tourist centre to learn to play basketball, volleyball and handball. Marked health trails lead you directly to Jankov kamen, Golija’s highest peak. The Golijska River is another place that has accommodation facilities and pitches for football and other sports. You can spend your time here walking and hiking on this huge mountain, while also paying a visit to the Ticar and Okruglica lakes or the springs of Studenica and Moravica. If you are a fan of hunting, Golija offers rich hunting grounds with a particularly large population of fallow deer. The mountain is also an ideal place for picking medicinal herbs. You should not miss the chance to visit the Hadji-Prodanov Cave and atural stone bridge over the River Moravica in the nearby mountain town of Ivanjica.

Goc, Zeljin & Stolovi

General information

Municipality of Kraljevo

Tel: +381 36/317-670

office@decjeodmaraliste.co.rs

www.decjeodmaraliste.co.rs

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Kraljevo

Tel: +381 36/316-000, 311-192

jutok@tron.rs

www.jutok.org.rs

Tourist Organisation of Vrnjacka Banja

Tel: +381 36/611-106, 611-107

tsc_vb@ptt.rs

www.vrnjackabanja.co.rs

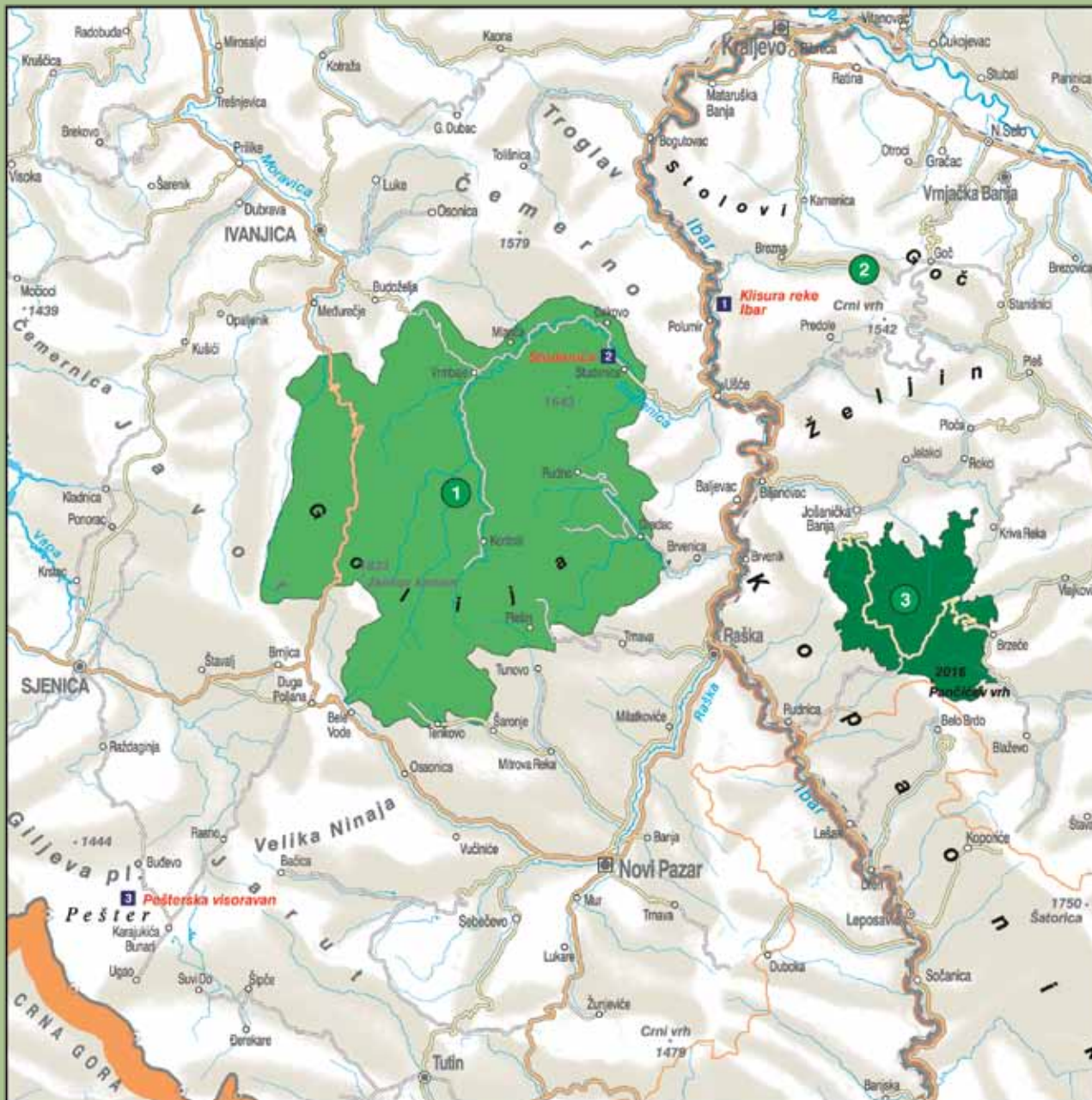
Tourist Information Centre

Vrnjačka promenada bb

Tel: +381 36/611-105, 621-900

Active break

Goc is not a developed tourist centre, but it is precisely for this reason that it is an ideal destination to a holiday for those seeking solitude and a respite from the city. There are six marked hiking trails and while walking you can pick forest fruits and herbs. Goc is known for its springs and mountain brooks, which bubble and ripple with sounds that will enrich your stay in nature. In the winter season, Goc has a single ski lane with a cable lift and two smaller recreational slopes. One of these slopes is lit, thus enabling night skiing. Goc is home to the only ski jump in Serbia, which is thirty metres high. A children’s summer camp has been constructed on the most densely forested and most beautiful part of Goc, at the Dobra Voda (Good Water) site. At the resort a number of sports camps are organised. Stolovi and Zeljin both lack of accommodation facilities, but they are attractive as excursion destinations for lovers of wild nature, hunters, cyclists and hikers. Mountain trails are marked.



- 1 MOUNT GOLJA
- 2 MOUNT GOC
- 3 MOUNT KOPAONIK
- 4 IBAR RIVER GORGE
- 5 PESTER PLATEAU



The power of water is truly amazing in its ability to force and cut its way through rock over time to enigmatically appear and retreat, only to re-establish itself and flow powerfully again. When we look today at some of the canyons and gorges that water has formed, such as the Jerma and Nisava gorges, we are left stunned by that perseverance of water ranging from the smallest creeks to major rivers.



RTANJ, OZREN, STARA MOUNTAIN, SUVA MOUNTAIN...

Power of water

Special Nature Reserve

RTANJ

The Crnorecki (Black river) basin, particularly its mountainous flow offers one of the most beautiful landscapes in the Balkans. Contributing greatly to such a claim is the majestic Rtanj Mountain, which quietly rises from its broad base, naked and noble, to its peak at Siljka. The almost regular pyramidal shape of Mount Rtanj makes it unique. Towards the summit, Rtanj is arid, while on its lower climbs water breaks out in strong springs. Its Siljka peak is 1,570 metres high and in the book Record from our Mountains Ratimir Stefanovic writes: “...When there are beautiful summer days the clouds dance around it; feathery white clouds, driven to the heights by the wind, attaching themselves to Siljka, rolling like waves, visiting him for a time, then detaching themselves and climbing to the heights ... When the thick clouds start to withdraw from the side of Rtanj and climb alongside Siljka, this is a reliable sign that there will be rain. Before the rain falls, a strong wind will



blow; fog will roll in and cover the valleys, descending from the lower peaks. It is not uncommon for the heights of Rtanj to be under cloud cover and rain, while the sun bakes the peak and above the sky is clear. This is one of the features of this beautiful mountain in eastern Serbia.” This feature, and many others, such as the meaning of the name of the mountain, which

is believed to originate from the ancient Artanian warrior civilisation that inhabited the area around Rtanj, planted a belief in the people that Rtanj is a healing mountain. The special healing powers of Rtanj are in its herbs, which aid the healing of wounds and cuts, while rejuvenating the soul. The most famous of these is Rtanj tea and Rtanj mint, which only grows in the Rtanj region. There





◀ Jerma Canyon

▼ Flowering Winter savory



is also a variety of wildlife such as large blue butterflies, short-legged lizards, dragonflies and many species of birds. The northern slopes are covered with wild-growing firs. At the foot of Rtanj is a forest park, which is unique in Europe. Between the two world wars this space was planted and landscaped by the family of Julius Minha, owner of the former Rtanj Mine.

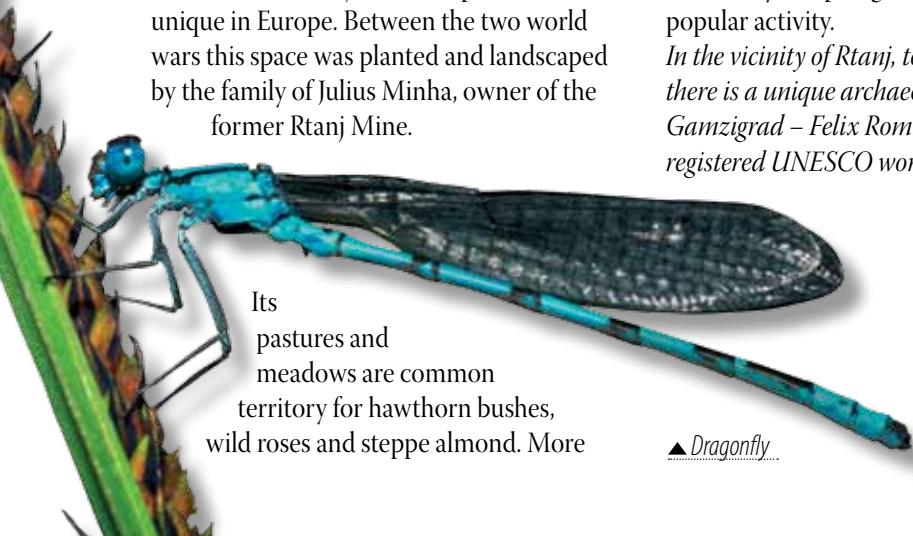
and more mountaineers visit the mountain, accepting its challenge no matter the time of year or weather conditions. In addition to mountaineers, Rtanj welcomes cyclists and in recent years paragliding has become a popular activity.

In the vicinity of Rtanj, towards Zajecar, there is a unique archaeological site called Gamzigrad – Felix Romuliana which is also a registered UNESCO world heritage site.

OZREN

Ozren is home to the 'Stone of Love'. Legend has it that it was here that Hajduk Veljko and Cucuk Stana fell in love. Today it is customary for young lovers to climb onto the stone and kiss, believing that the act seals a vow of eternal love. Ostra Cuka (1,118 metres), is Ozren's highest peak. This place offers spectacular views of the valley through which the River Morava meanders and at the foot of Ozren lies a spa health resort.

Nearby is the Ripaljka Waterfall. In the Sokobanja region they use the word 'ripanj' for 'jump', which is how the waterfall got its name. 17.5 metres high, it was the first natural monument that the state formally protected. The waterfall is on the Gradasnica River and,



Its pastures and meadows are common territory for hawthorn bushes, wild roses and steppe almond. More

▲ Dragonfly



Gradasnica Gorge ▶

according to geographer Jovan Cvijic, is the highest in Serbia. It is located 420 metres above sea level.

The Ozren Meadows offer particularly beautiful landscapes. Within them the Djerdjelez Spring hides. This spring has been known since the time of the Turkish occupation. Apart from that spring, visitors can quench their thirst at the Barudzija and Sopur fountains, which offer cold and clean 'Ozren dew'. At the beautifully landscaped resort of Kalinovica, in a forest-meadow environment, two sequoia trees are a special attraction, while there is also another spring – with cold, bracing water that can quench any thirst. Ozren's walking trails also lead you to the Jermencic Monastery, Tatomir's Town and the Ozren Cave. According to legend, Jermencic Monastery, was built by Armenians – hence the name.

Landscape of exceptional beauty

**LEPTERIJA – SOKO GRAD
(FALCON TOWN)**

The theme of love is the foundation for one more legend, this time in the origins of the name Lepteriya.

The River Moravica Gorge is valued as an area of outstanding beauty, Lepteriya – Soko Grad, thanks to the outstanding diversity of landscapes, attractive geomorphologic form and appearance, rich and diverse flora





◀ *Stara planina (Old Mountain)*

reach a natural phenomenon known as the Virgin Mary in the Rock. Indentations in this rock form the shape of a mother with child and, according to legend, it was here that the Virgin Mary hid with Christ in her arms, fleeing from the Romans. At Lepterija there are two springs (one hot and one cold), as well as swimming and sunbathing areas. Almost the entire gorge is covered by virtually impenetrable oak forests and scrub land. The area's most interesting inhabitants are the Great Crested Newt, White-breasted Hedgehog, Dormouse vulture and Least Weasel. In the Moravica Canyon, on a steep and almost inaccessible hill, lie the ruins of medieval fortifications, erected on the foundations of ancient buildings. The area consists of a lower and upper town. Climbing the cliffs to reach the once impregnable Soko Grad is a real adventure for those who want to look from the ancient fortress's walls and enjoy the magnificent views on offer.

and fauna and the cultural and historical treasures of the ancient Soko Grad (Falcon Town) fortress.

According to tradition, Zupan, son of the owner of a nearby Vrmdzanska Town, fell in love with Lepterija, daughter of the then ruler of Soko Grad. This love story, like that of Romeo and Juliet, ended with the tragic demise of the two lovers. Today there is a popular resort in a clearing near Sokobanja known as Lepterija, while the weir (now a beach) is called Zupan. From Lepterija, over a wooden bridge across the Moravica, we



Nature Park

STARA (OLD) MOUNTAIN

Located partly in Serbia and partly in Bulgaria and comprising part of the Western Balkan Mountains, Stara Planina (Old Mountain) is considered one of Europe's most diverse habitats. Another name for it is the Balkan Mountain, giving birth to the



Stara planina (Old Mountain) ▶

name of the entire peninsula. With nature, interesting history and rich tradition, the mountain is a perfect holiday destination. Babin Zub (Granny's Tooth) Rock is 1,758 metres above sea level and is shaped like an old tooth. It is the trademark of Stara Planina. Other sites of particular interest here are the Valley of the Bigar Stream, Midzor, its highest peak, and the meandering Temstica. The area's nature reserves and natural monuments represent special treasures. They are home to rare and protected species. The mountain's landscape is dominated by rich forests, grasslands and picturesque villages, nestled amongst vineyards. Local residents are known for their traditional rug weaving. Village scenes are like a long-forgotten paradise. The region is populated by a wide variety of species, making it one of the richest mountains in the Balkans. The old mountain is home to 40 different plant species that are natural rarities protected in Serbia. Among them are: pterygoid bellflower, Picea frog grass, bushy alder, Mogu Pine, Steppe Oak, Pasqueflower, Sundews,



Turk's cap lilies, *Iris pumila*, *pindica* orchids etc. The Old Mountain is also home to a variety of medicinal herbs. The area is home to more than 30 species of mammals, among them the European Ground Squirrel, Snow Vole, lynx and bear, as well as 203 species of

◀ *Mountain Crocus*



birds. This is the main habitat of the Long-legged Buzzard and Eurasian Skylark. The area is also known for its indigenous sheep, goats and cattle adapted to survive in the difficult conditions. One of the best cheeses in the world was made nearby until 15 years ago. It was known as Staroplaninski cheese or Pirotski cheese and represented one of Serbia's most important export products. During the 1960s this cheese was even supplied to the Washington's White House.





Special Nature Reserve

JERMA

The picturesque Jerma River Gorge passes one of the most beautiful regions of Serbia. Sourced near the Vlasina Lake, the Jerma, then enters Bulgaria, where it has cut an impressive canyon, before returning to Serbia. It is extremely attractive thanks to a number of unusual shapes found in the gorge, as well as its rich flora and fauna.

Natural Monument

BIGAR STREAM VALLEY

The Bigar Stream, running along the route Knjazevac-Kalna-Pirot, is home to one of the biggest tuffaceous waterfalls in Serbia. Water cascades over two steps, reaching a height of 16 metres before bursting free in two powerful jets down to the valley of the River Stanjinska. A total of 13 water mills were erected in the Bigar Stream Valley in the late 19th century. Today only a few remain.

SUVA (DRY) MOUNTAIN

Suva Planina (Dry Mountain), located in Eastern Serbia and comprising part of the Carpathian-Balkan mountain system, is a massif with exceptional rock formations, as well as rich sediments of different ages. Its peaks – especially the highest peaks of Trem (1,808 m), Djordjina Cuka (1,735 m), Golemo Straziste (1,714 m), Litica (1,683 m), Sokolov Kamen (1,552 m), Golemi Vrh (1535 m) – are mainly bare or covered in very little vegetation. The earth here is rocky and full of depressions,



◀ *Suva planina (Dry Mountain)*

while the lower parts are covered in grassed. On Rakos, below the Tresten summit (1,470 m), is the only spring on the mountain. Springs are very rare on the mountain's higher climbs, but at the foot of Dry Mountain there are numerous springs, most notably in the villages of Ljuberađa, Gornja Dusnik and Mokra. The most notable of the mountain's rare and endangered plant species are the distinguished *Picea Aquilegia* and the Serbian rose, while rare animals include the Great Crested Newt, Hermann's Tortoise and the Horned Viper.

Nature Park

SICEVO GORGE

Seeking its own route, the Nisava River cut one of the most attractive gorges in eastern Serbia: the Sicevo Gorge. Some 17 kilometres long, this gorge is composed of the Prosecka Gorge, Ostrovicka Valley and Gradistanska Canyon. The most attractive part of the gorge is the Gradistanska Canyon, with tightly folded walls that are mostly vertical and gradually cut into stone cliffs. The width of the canyon floor is mainly in line with the bed of the River Nisava. The gorge's cliffs are home to one of the last pairs of Golden Eagles in Serbia.

The exit



from the canyon has an elevated shape. Significantly, this gorge, along with the Jelasnica Gorge, is the only common habitat of two endemic Balkan species – the Serbian phoenix flower and the *Ramonda nathaliae* phoenix. The gorge is also home to sage, wild lilac, wild cherry etc.

Special Nature Reserve JELASNICA GORGE

Rivers can be extremely persistent, powerful and creative when it comes to forging their own route. Bearing testament to this is the limestone Jelasnica Gorge of eastern Serbia. This attractive

KRUPACKO HOT SPRING

The Krupacko Fountain, or hot spring, is one of the richest in eastern Serbia. It breaks out of the limestone rocks of the steep side of Svrljiška Mountain near the village of Krupac and flows down into the Bela Palanka Valley. The water of this spring flows at a height of about 263 m/asl.

area is one of only two habitats of the Serbian phoenix flower and the *Ramonda nathaliae* phoenix. This extremely narrow, steep gorge is the site of different morphological ornaments, with specific types of karst erosion: karst windows, under hangs, cavities and caverns in the rock. In terms of size and beauty, the karst windows of Blackberry and St Elijah are





◀ *Birch forests of Vlasina*

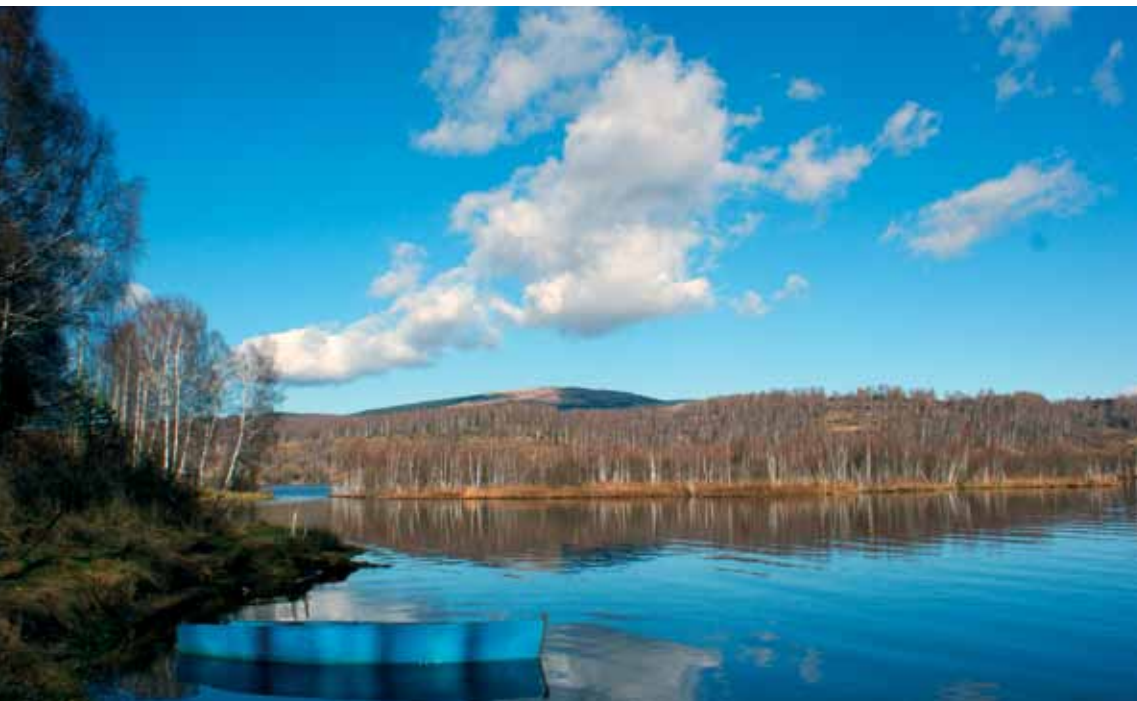
particularly noteworthy. Jasasnica Gorge area as a habitat of relict and endemic species, has great significance in studying the history of the living world of the Balkan Peninsula.

Landscape of exceptional beauty

VLASINA

Vlasina is a plateau in southeast Serbia near the border with Bulgaria. It boasts the largest and highest semi-artificial lake in Serbia - Vlasina Lake. The lake formed on the site of the former Vlasinsko blato (Vlasina mud), one of the largest mountain peat bogs on the Balkan Peninsula and the source of the River Vlasina.

▼ *Vlasina Lake*



Vlasinsko Lake, like a precious stone, alternates with nuances of turquoise tones. With a jagged coastline, two islands and several elongated peninsulas with fens – it resembles a watercolour plateau.

On mountain slopes and ravines, between rich springs and forest groves, are Vlasina's villages, the largest of which is Vlasina Rid. Beech forests once descended all the way to the lake. However, the lake belt has since been cleared, while between the beech trees are saintly trunks that have been enshrined and serve as religious monuments. The record in the village of Polom is a tree with a trunk almost five metres in diameter and a height of around 24 metres. The high quality of water and richness of flora and fauna represent the main values of this landscape.



Natural Monument
DJAVOLJA VAROS
(DEVIL'S TOWN)

Southern Serbia is known for its mineral and thermal waters, which is why one large area of this region is known as Toplica (Hot spa). In the extreme south of Toplica, on the slopes of Mount Radan, there are springs of high mineral content that have no vegetation whatsoever in their immediate vicinity. Wherever there is no vegetation, erosion occurs, and erosion always creates interesting landscapes.

Upon first seeing the peculiar rock formation known as Devil's Town, Dragan Bosnic, photographer and writer, said of his impressions: "On the bare slopes, over an unimaginably long period of time, wind, rain and flash floods have created spirals of loose land. Some devilish dance of loose earth also revealed tough Andesitic plates. These pressed the heavy soil under them and denied the erosive forces. Time passed and these strange pillars slowly grew. People long since avoided these spooky ancient columns and, unable to explain their origins, they created legends. According to one of them, two columns are grooms after the same girl. It is interesting that, when looking at the scene from the nearby hills, you can really see two stone columns. The villagers claim that the spooky columns move, which is





◀ Rosomacki pots



partly true. When the heavy Andesitic plates occasionally fall from the petrified pyramids, rain and wind wash away those pyramids without caps and a new figure is created on the area where the cap fell. Of course, this is a process that far exceeds a human lifetime.” The water that washes the vegetation from the slopes is red from its high iron content, but is also highly alkaline and cannot be used for drinking. Locals, and increasingly tourists too, come to take this water because it is supposedly good for the skin and for gargling. To the medieval Sasi miners the red water was an indication that there were substantial iron reserves nearby and the remains of two old mines are still visible next



CERJANSKA CAVE

Also known by the name Provalija (Chasm), after the name of the streams that flows through it, the Cerjanska Cave is located near the village of Cerje in the vicinity of Nis. The cave's entrance, at an altitude of 515 metres, represents the pit of the Provalija Stream, which re-emerges at the Kravljanski Hot Spring 2,800 metres to the northwest at an altitude of 310 metres. The experimental staining of this water, carried out during the 1970s, confirmed the connection of the pit and the spring. The Cerjanska Cave is characterised by an entrance of small dimensions and a large main channel – at a height generally exceeding 20 metres. The Cerjanska Cave is wet even in summer, when the bed of Provalija is dry and the ponds at the entrance section contain water. The ceilings of some of the cave's channels are composed of an unusual mass resembling crumbling limestone.

to the stream. Today the mines have long gone; dark forces do not scare the people and Devil's Town has become an interesting tourist destination.

RADAN MOUNTAIN

Comprising three massifs – Majdan Mountain, Ravna Mountain and Petrova Gora – Radan Mountain was created by the movement of the old Rhodope territory, which belongs to the group of Rhodope Mountains. Its highest peak is Sopot, at



1,408m/asl. Radan's terrain is dominated by beech forest providing a perfect habitat for wolves, wild boar, roe deer, wildcats, badgers and foxes, whilst its meadows are filled with many herbs. Thanks to the warmer climate of Radan Mountain, several endemic and relict plant species have survived, the most important of which are remnants of forests from the Tertiary period. The Prolom Spa is on the slopes of Mount Radan, while the archaeological site of the Byzantine Caricin City is

nearby. Caricin city near Lebane, known in its time as Justiniana Prima, was built in 535AD using all the knowledge of the then contemporary urban planners and architects. The city was a testament to architecture in its time acting as a kind of world exhibition centre for all of the then known architectural wonders. Justinian Prime is a walled city with images of all types of towers, while the city centre was adorned with eight basilicas.



◀ *Ramonda nathalie*





Rtanj

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Tourist Organisation of Boljevac

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tooboljevac@open.telekom.rs, tooboljevac@gmail.com

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Tourist Organisation of Zajecar

Tel: +381 19/421-521

toozajecar@open.telekom.rs, toza019@gmail.com

www.toozajecar.co.rs

Active break

The scenery of Rtanj Mountain, which itself is shaped almost like a regular pyramid, will be reason enough for you to take to her slopes, while the legend of the origin of its regular geometric shape is perhaps reason enough for the trip. Mountaineers love to visit this mountain, while the cyclists who ride on its peaks revel in the challenge. At certain times of the year visitors can come to pick the famous Rtanj tea, which is believed to be an aphrodisiac. The Rtanj resort includes sports fields, while lovers of nature can hunt down one of the mountain's landscaped picnic areas. On route to Zajecar, do not miss your chance to visit the pearl of Roman architecture that is the Gamzigrad – Felix Romuliana archaeological site a UNESCO protected world heritage site.

Ozren Mountain, Ozren

Meadows, Soko Grad (Falcon Town)

General information

Nis Conservation Department

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Tourist Information Centre

Trg oslobođenja 2

Tel: +381 18/833-988, 833-978

Active break

Due to its extraordinary terrain, Ozren Mountain is suitable for various types of activities in nature:

hiking, walking, mountain biking, free climbing and paragliding .

On Ozren you can head for a number of interesting landscaped excursions: Očno, Ostra Cuka, Ozren Meadows, Kamen Ljubavi (Rock of Love). Choices for trips can include paragliding, the Sopur Spring, Ostra Cuka or the Očno resort destination of Kalinovica and the Ozren Meadows. Although quite a long route, you will not be overstretched by your walk to the Stone of Love which, according to legend, is the site where Hajduk Veljko and Cucuk Stana fell in love. A special attraction of the Kalinovica resort is represented by two sequoia ice water springs. Serbia's famous royal Sokobanja Spa is located at the foot of Ozren. The Sokobanja ravine is dissected by the crystal clear waters of the River Moravica, while its northern

slope reveals the ancient Soko Grad (Falcon Town), a must-see Roman military fortress established in the 6th century AD. The Sokobanja green belt area is also home to the Banjica natural health resort, where a health trail heads through the Moravica Canyon to the excursion destinations of Lepterija and Soko Grad.

Stara (Old) Mountain

General information

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Tourist information

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Tourist Information Centre

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Tourist Organisation of Pirot

Tel: +381 10/320-838, 320-839

top010@open.telekom.rs

www.topirot.com

🌿 Active break

Stara Planina (Old Mountain) is eastern Serbia's largest and most beautiful mountain. It has a lot to offer visitors. The Babin Zub (Granny's Tooth) ski centre offers ski runs in the areas of Konjarnik, Suncana Dolina (Sunshine Valley) and Markova Livada (Marko's Meadows). This ski centre has a new four-seat cable ski lift. Stara planina is under snow cover



for almost five months of the year, yet still boasts a system for artificial snow, in order to enable winter sports in seasons lacking sufficient snowfall. Stara Planina poses a challenge for those who love to conquer mountain peaks. The ascent to Midzor, the highest peak, will prove a tough and fascinating experience. You can also attempt to conquer Vrazija Glava (Devil's Head), Tri Cuka, Bratko Strana (Brother's Side) or Krvava Bara (Bloody Pool). Your days will

be filled by hiking and walking different routes and numerous marked trails.

Through the lens of your camera, you will be able to capture the beautiful landscapes and record rare birds and see many mountain herbs. You can also fill your active break by paragliding, hang gliding or riding one of the mountain bike trails.

One of the most interesting locations on the mountain is Debela Stena (Fat Rock), the site of a fish pond and lake. Visit the archaeological site Timacum Minus or the ethno museum and wine museum in the village of Ravna. If you visit the villages at the foot of the Stara planina, you should certainly try the local culinary speciality known as 'Belmuz', a dish of soft cheese grilled and covered in flour and garlic.

Jerma Canyon

Tourist Organisation of Pirot

Tel: +381 10/320-838, 320-839

top010@open.telekom.rs

www.topirot.com

🌿 Active break

If you are seeking a slice of the Wild West in Serbia, then a visit to the picturesque Jerma Canyon is a must. The canyon is around thirty kilometres from the town of Pirot near the 15th century Poganovo Monastery, which is famous for its mysterious fresco of St. Christopher with a donkey's head. Not far from the monastery is the wonderful Zvonacka Spa.

Suva (Dry) Mountain, Jelasnica

Gorge, Sicevo Gorge

Tourist information

Tourist Organisation of Nis

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ton1@open.telekom.rs

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Nis Tourist Information Centre

Vozdova 5

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ton2@open.telekom.rs**Tourist Information Centre “The Fortress”**

Tel: +381 18/250-222

ton2@open.telekom.rs**Tourist Information Centre Niska Banja spa**

Tel: +381 18/4548-588

ton2@open.telekom.rs **Active break**

Be sure to bring plenty of drinking water when you head to the summit of Serbia's Suva Planina (Dry Mountain), so named because it lacks any fresh-water springs. The mountain's climbable peaks are Trem (Porch), its highest point, and Devojacki Grob (Girl's Grave). Marked hiking trails will lead you to the viewing point known as Sokolov Kamen (Falcon's Stone), where there is a picnic area called Bojanina Voda (Bojana's Water), which, as the name suggests, actually does have a spring. During winter this part of the mountain offers skiing on a regulated ski slope, while there are also two novice slopes. Wild horses once lived here in great numbers, but today only a few remain and you can consider yourself extremely lucky if you actually spot one.

The Nisava Valley, which is surrounded by mountain ranges, represents an ideal destination for paragliding fans.

Jelasnica gorge

Below the slopes of Suva Planina lies Jelasnica Gorge, surrounded by the abundant beauty of nature. Only two kilometres long, during Roman times the Via Militaris road was cut through this almost inaccessible area. The gorge is primarily a destination for adrenaline sports – free climbing on natural rocks and other alpine disciplines. More

than 40 climbing routes are available. There is also an artificial rock regulated according to UIAA propositions. Jelasnica Gorge offers something for everyone including those not looking to partake in adrenalin sports but wanting to marvel at its vastness and beauty.

There are several suitable excursion sites between the villages of Jelasnica and Cukljenik.

Sicevo Gorge

This area is home to another very attractive gorge, which is 17 kilometres long and was formed by the River Nisava. The Sicevo Gorge area is home to over 30 churches and monasteries of great historical value. One of the highest quality sage colonies in Europe thrives here, while the area is also known for its endemic flower – Ramonda serbica and the Serbian phoenix flower, which is only to be found at this site. “Passing through the Sicevo Gorge I realised the meaning of history,” said Arnold Toynbee, famous 19th century British historian. Why not follow in his footsteps? walking, hiking, cycling, rafting ...

The 2009 Rafting World Cup was held in this gorge.

Vlasina**Tourist information****Tourist Organisation of Surdulica**

Tel: +381 017/813-712

info@tosurdulica.orgwww.tosurdulica.orgwww.vlasinskojezero.com **Active break**

Vlasina Lake is surrounded by mountains and covered with marvellous and beautiful birch forests. Part of the lakeshore, known as Marickina, is set aside

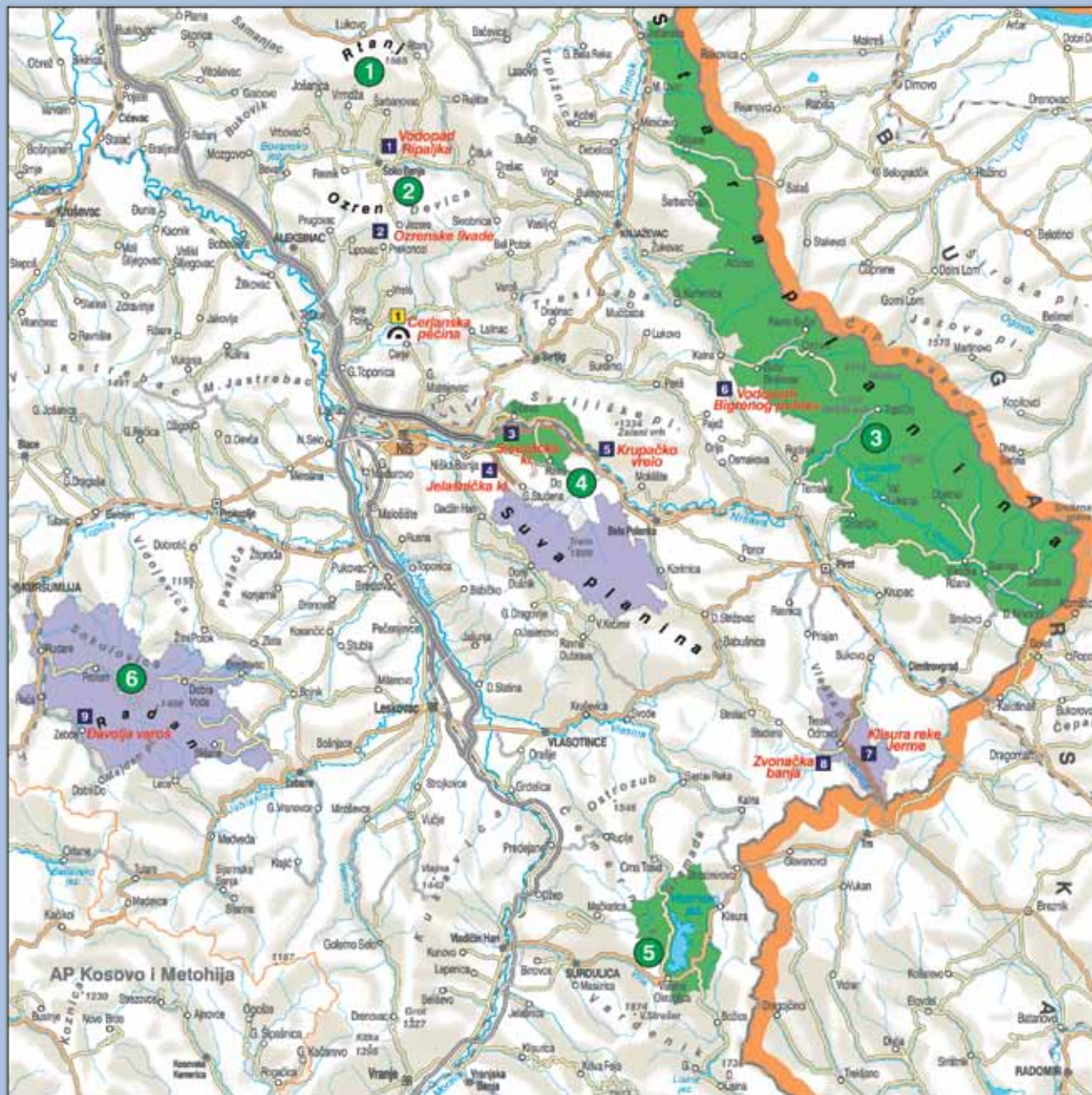
for swimming, which proves enjoyable during the summer months – though the mountain temperature of the water reaches only 23 degrees. You can also rent a pedalo or sailboat. Holidaying at Vlasina will allow you to combine water activities and exploring mountain peaks. The lake is also available for recreational fishing.

Djavalja Varos (Devil's Town),**Radan Mountain****Tourist Organisation of Kursumlija**

Tel: +381 27/380-963, 385-881

tokursumlija@open.telekom.rswww.tokursumlija.rs **Active break**

A landscape of two hundred mystical earth figures with stone caps on their heads in the unreal and harsh landscape of the Radan Mountain foothills is certainly worth seeing. Along with the columns of earth figures in Devil's Town, make sure you also tour the spring of water with amazing properties – Devil's Water and the Red Spring. Incidentally, Devil's Town was on the shortlist of candidate sites for the new Seven Wonders of the Natural World. Radan is known for its wealth of springs around 200 recorded, and its slopes are home to the popular Prolom Spa. The mountain includes many hiking trails and one which is popular is the landscaped pedestrian trail leading from Prolom Spa to Devil's Town. On the south-western slopes of Radan, near Lebane, you will find the terraced plateau of the complex Caricin city, Justiniana Prima, an archaeological site from the 6th century. Be sure to visit this jewel of Roman architecture!



- 1 RTANJ MOUNTAIN
- 2 OZREN MOUNTAIN
- 3 STARA (OLD) MOUNTAIN
- 4 SUVA (DRY) MOUNTAIN
- 5 VLASINA
- 6 RADAN MOUNTAIN
- 1 RIPALJKA WATERFALL
- 2 OZRENSKA MEADOWS
- 3 SICEVO GORGE
- 4 JELASNICA GORGE
- 5 KRUPAC SPRING
- 6 BIGREN STREAM FALLS
- 7 JERMA GORGE
- 8 ZVONACKA SPA
- 9 DJAVOLJA VAROS (DEVIL'S TOWN)
- 1 CERJE CAVE



The diverse beauty of the landscape is to be found all around us and while some panoramic views have the effect of invigorating or soothing the soul, there is also another kind of beauty – wild, disturbing and cruel, yet beautiful. It is this beauty that thrives on the Sar and Prokletije (Damned) mountains.

SAR MOUNTAIN, METOHIAN PROKLETIJE MOUNTAINS, GAZIMESTAN, GRMIJA...

The beauty of wildlife



National Park

SAR MOUNTAIN

At the southern tip of Serbia, along the border with neighbouring Macedonia, the Sar Mountain range rises upwards. These unusual mountains of wild and harsh beauty, with about a hundred peaks exceeding over 2,000m/asl, are the water-rich Balkan mountains, with streams flowing into three sea basins, with rich and diverse flora and fauna and a large number of endemic species. With such diversity the area has now been declared a national park.

Sar Mountain is like a glacial museum under an open sky.

The colliding of Mediterranean and continental climates along these high peaks has led to the occurrence of differing microclimates. While the foothills and valleys of the Prizrenska Bistrica and Lepenac rivers enjoy a warm Mediterranean climate, on the highest peaks it is cold and harsh, truly alpine, with snow cover present for up to 280 days a year. It is not rare for all four seasons to be felt during the course of a single day on



Sar.

All these features of Sar have led to an unrivalled richness of flora and fauna. Special treasures of Sar's plant life include a number of local endemic species, among them the King Alexander's Yarrow, Bornmuellerantha, Sar Mountain Crocus

and the Sar Mountain Carnation. The peculiarities of the National Park include: *Narthecium scardicum*, Burnet Saxifrage, Macedonian oak, yew, Macedonian and Bosnian Pines. The forests of oak, beech and fir, high-altitude shrubs and herbaceous plants are home to 147 species of butterfly,



▲ *Sar Mountain*

which is why Sar Mountain has been declared among the wealthiest such regions of Europe. More than 200 species of birds complete the mountain's living world.

The area is also well known for its authentic breed of dog: the Sarplaninac - Yugoslav Shepherd Dog - famous for its courage, strength and endurance.



▲ *Western Capercaillie/Wood Grouse*

All of the lakes located in the Sar Mountains, are a result of glacial erosion. They lie in cirque, recesses that once housed mountain glaciers. They are known for their beauty by the name 'mountain eyes.' Depending on weather conditions, all lakes can be covered with snow and ice from November to May. There are a total of seven lakes: Livadicko, Lower Blatesticko, Upper Blatesticko, Large Vir, Small Vir and the Minor and Great Jazinacko lakes. These completely clear and icily beautiful lakes do not offer pleasant living conditions and, as such, only Livadicko Lake and Great Jazinacko Lake are brought to life by the introduction of brown trout, which are unable to reproduce here because of the harsh living conditions. The cultural and historical heritage of the Sar Mountain National Park is characterised by its abundant and diverse nature and the area represents special significance to the Serbian identity and the country's national history. In addition to medieval fortresses, villages and bridges, there are 45 Serbian medieval churches and monasteries, such as the 13th century

hermitage of Saint Petar Koriski or the 15th century St. Archangel Monastery in the

Serbian monasteries of Kosovo

ENDANGERED HERITAGE

In addition to the Decani Monastery, the list of world natural and cultural heritage sites (UNESCO) includes the Patriarchate of Pec, Gracanica Monastery and the Church of the Virgin Ljevska in Prizren. All of these monuments, immediately following their admission to the list, were added to the list of endangered world cultural heritage sites.

▼ *Decani Monastery, feature*



Prizrenka-Bistrica Canyon near Prizren – the medieval Serbian capital city at the foot of Mount Sar.

PROKLETIJE

The Prokletije (Damned) mountains are wild and harsh. The single greatest mountain massif of the Dinaric Alps, Prokletije encompasses about 40 separate mountain peaks, and includes imposing sheer cliffs and almost impassable ridges. It is dissected by wild mountain streams that have cut an unusually beautiful gorge that is more than a thousand metres deep in parts. The geomorphologic and climatic features make them the most inaccessible mountains in the country and, after the Alps, in the whole of Europe. There are areas of preserved primeval beauty, like the Pec Gorge and Decanska Bistrica River. Because of its exceptional biodiversity and

many rare and endangered species, Prokletije, along with Sar Mountain, belong to one of six European centres of bio diversity. They are known for their chestnut, oak and hornbeam woods, as well as high-altitude pine forests which include endemic species like the Bosnian Pine, Macedonian Pine and Mountain Pine. Just as in the Sar Mountains, the Prokletije range is home to a huge number of species of butterflies, while other attractive species include the Alpine Salamander, Alpine Newt, Black eagle, Western Capercaillie, martens, otters, wolves, chamois and wildcats. *In addition to natural and cultural-historical heritage sites, the area also boasts monuments of Serbian medieval culture that are under UNESCO protection – the Decani Monastery and the Pec Patriarchate. The oldest protected tree in Serbia, the black mulberry, also known as 'Sam-dud', is located in the courtyard of the Pec Patriarchate.*



Landscapes of exceptional quality, reserves and natural monuments

**RIVER MIRUSA,
GAZIMESTAN, MARBLE
CAVE, MOUNT GRMIJA...**

The River Mirusa, flowing through a region of outstanding beauty, is renowned for its canyon that has a series of 16 lakes each separated by waterfalls, cascades and rapids. The glistening river descends into the Metohija Valley, flowing through a waterfall 250 metres high. At the top of the river are limestone cliffs known as the Red Rocks, which house two caves known as the 'Small and Large church', where Serbian monks hid during the time of the country's Ottoman occupation. The Marble Cave, a natural monument located near Lipljan in the village of Donja Gadimlja, is formed of marble and, along with a few permanent lakes, is the largest cave of its kind in the world. Her unique wealth

is very rare aragonite, which has never been found in such volume and in so many different forms anywhere else in the world. One of the major battles in Serbian history, the Battle of Kosovo, took place on the area of today's Gazimestan Nature Reserve in 1389 and the site now has a memorial to the fallen. According to legend, the Kosovo peony flower, a protected

symbol of Gazimestan, grew out of the ground bloodied by the Kosovo heroes. The Red peony is a symbol of conscious sacrifice, the victory of life and eternity.

The area's plant life is complete by endemic Balkan species: *Crocus neapolitanus*, *Helleborus odorus* and barley grass. In addition to the Kosovo peony, the reserve's other natural rarities for Serbia include yellow pheasant's eye and the Dwarf Russian Almond. Mount Grmija Nature Park is located on the eastern edge of the Veliko Kosovo Valley near Pristina. It boasts many amenities and is a main daytrip destination for the population of Pristina.

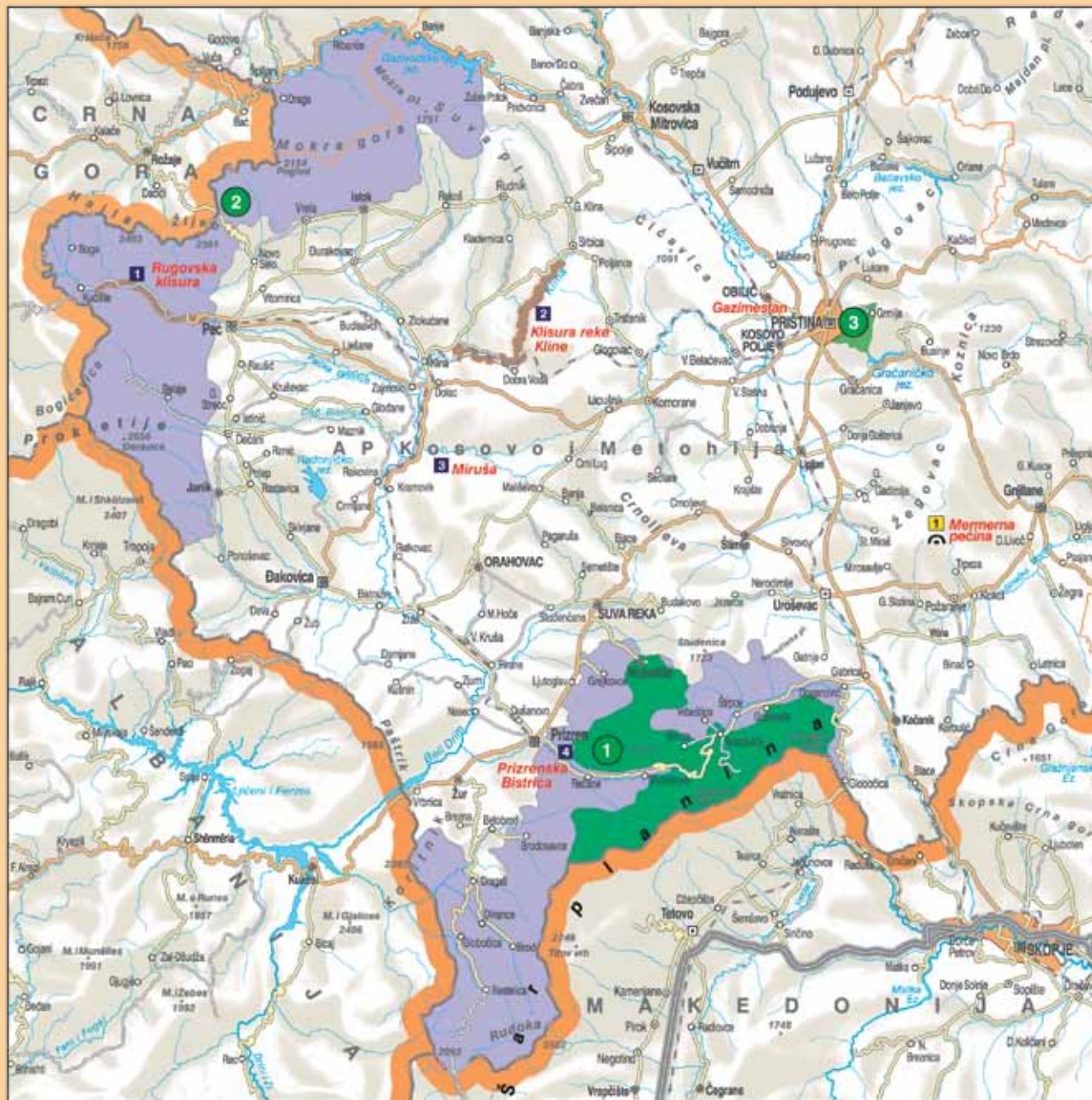
Its most beautiful sites, particularly in terms of plant and animal life, are the gorge of the River Klina and Rugova Canyon, which have been declared natural monuments in recognition of their beauty.

Note: Sar Mountains, Prokletije and a long list of natural and cultural treasures are located on the territory of Kosovo, which is under UN administration.



▲ *Prokletije (Damned) Mountains*

◀ *Rhododendron*



- 1 SAR MOUNTAINS
- 2 PROKLETIJE (DAMNED) MOUNTAINS
- 3 MOUNT GRMIJA
- 1 RUGOVA GORGE
- 2 RIVER KLINA GORGE
- 3 RIVER MIRUSA
- 4 PRIZRENSKA BISTRICA RIVER
- 1 MARBLE CAVE



*B*icycle tourism is conducted with eyes wide open and ears pinned up; with inquisitive minds eager to acquire new knowledge and a heart hungry to form impressions. Someone once wisely said: “geography makes little sense until we’ve been to the place” and when this notion is coupled with another true statement - that “by car we’re in contact with the road and on a bike we’re in contact with people” - we won’t be able to avoid coming to the conclusion that the world that travels on two wheels has deeper enjoyment and gets to know the places it passes through and the people it meets along the way.



DANUBE BICYCLE ROUTE THROUGH SERBIA

Geography with sense

The Danube bicycle route in Serbia is part of the EuroVelo Route Six, which connects the Atlantic to the Black Sea. Riding along the Serbian section of the Danube is a specific and dynamic experience: the wheels of our bicycles along the route like light and filigree adjusted looms, will weave a tapestry of colourful memories for us that will not fade even after many years.

To the west, where the Danube knocks on Serbia's door, we are awaited by an interesting mosaic of fens and hidden corners of Amazonian vegetation. The special territory of the Upper Danube Nature Reserve best encapsulates the essence of what the nature of this area has to offer. Next on the route is Backa Palanka, a destination with a pleasant atmosphere, while the city of Novi Sad, with its Petrovaradin fortress, is the cultural and historical jewel of northern Serbia. On the other side of the river the long, forested Fruska Gora rises out of the plains and is bejewelled with many historical monasteries.

Next comes Sremski Karlovci, an unavoidable old town that is certain to captivate us for a while, as we build the energy to overcome the first of only three high climbs along the Danube route through Serbia. This is the hardest rise, but it's not too tough: 4.5 km long, rising just 180 metres. The road then leads us to the nation's capital



and heavily urbanised zones. In the old part of Belgrade we will have to deal with city traffic, but this doesn't need to shake us from our explorations – the city is magical, albeit in its own strange, selfish, stubborn way.

Heading further eastwards we will roll along the edge of a special nature reserve – Deliblato Sands. The reference to sand in the name should not concern us: this is an interesting, large and beautiful expanse that was forested during

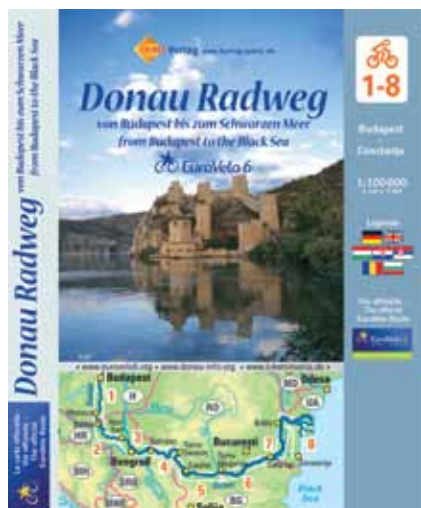


the reign of Austro-Hungarian Empress Maria Theresa. It is still one of Serbia's protected natural treasures that we will have the pleasure of learning about as we traverse it on two wheels. Our next destination is the village of Stara (Old) Palanka. Here we will cross to the right bank of the Danube, taking advantage of the local ferry, to reach the village, which is nestled below a fortress of the same name. The Nearby Silver Lake offers an excellent opportunity to take a break: good accommodation, a campsite, beach ... these are certainly sufficient reasons to spend the night.



Travelling around 120 kilometres between the pleasant little town of Golubac and the colossal Djerdap hydro-electric dam, we will pass through the Djerdap 'Iron Gate' Gorge on the territory of the Djerdap National Park. This is one of the most beautiful stretches of the entire course of the Danube.

Immediately after the town of Golubac we will pass the majestic Golubac Fortress, built in the early 14th century, and forty kilometres after that we will arrive at the archaeological site and museum of Lepenski Vir. Here there are



8,000-year-old remains of prehistoric settlements, whose unique stone sculptures of human faces on fish heads are examples of the oldest forms of artistic sculpture in Europe. After visiting the museum we will tackle the second ascent of our section of the Danube River (two km long, rising 125 metres). The reward is a wonderful descent – and once again we find ourselves cycling beside the great river.

Passing through the spectacular Small and Great Kazan (cauldron) canyons, we will be awestruck by the most attractive dance of nature on the whole length of the Danube: the river runs silently between the dizzying cliffs that seemingly scrape the heavens. The distance between the cliffs barely exceeds 150 metres at some points. After the 'cauldrons' we will conquer the third and final climb on our section of the Danube: four km long, rising 180 metres. And after passing the towns of Kladovo and Negotin we will almost immediately arrive at the border with Bulgaria, thus ending our cycling adventure through Serbia – we hope it was as nice for you as it was for us.

Jovan Erakovic

Welcome to Serbia
We wish you a nice ride and the wind at your back :)

The Danube cycling route in Serbia:

- total distance on main route (Bački Breg-Bregovo): 665km
- web guide: www.danube-info.org
www.ciklonaut.com

Signposts along the route:

- main route** (most quiet & beautiful but includes unpaved stretches)
- alternative** (always goes on paved routes)
- detour** (interesting & nice local rides)

Signposting system corresponds to this printed map by Huber Cartography

Project implemented by GTZ on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in cooperation with Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development

The complete Danube bicycle route through Serbia is marked with signposts that conform to the standards of the European cycling federation. It is officially part of the European route EuroVelo 6, which runs from the Atlantic Ocean to the Black Sea.

Detailed guide for the Danube route in Serbia:

- In Serbian: www.ciklonaut.com/dunav/dunav.htm
- In English: www.danube-info.org
- In German: www.donau-info.org/donausradweg



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LOVE NATURE - PROTECT NATURE - RESPECT NATURE

We belong to NATURE and it belongs to us!

National parks, protected natural reserves and nature in general are the true wealth of any nation. Protected resources are cared for by managers tasked with preserving natural and cultural treasures for both present and future generations. Please help us to ensure that our natural and cultural heritage, particularly our protected natural treasures, remain oases of untouched nature. The personal examples and responsible behaviour of each of us contributes to protecting the environment. So PLEASE READ the following tips and rules of conduct CAREFULLY:

- Recognise that protected reserves are the habitats of endangered plants and animals and are clean water areas, and that those areas are set aside precisely to protect our natural resources and cultural heritage;
- When visiting a national park or any other nature reserve, do not act in any way that could threaten the natural ecosystems or violate the basic properties and features of nature;

- Follow the rules of behaviour, especially in protected areas. They are regulated by special legal documents. Failure to comply with the rules is a dereliction of your personal responsibility;
- Respect the forests, plants, animals and natural phenomena (gorges, waterfalls, caves, cliffs, fossils etc.). Enjoy them quietly; take memories with your eyes and the help of a camera;
- Do not break branches in the forest, especially those of saplings that will develop into centennial trees;
- Flowers are at their most beautiful when viewed in their natural environment. Do not pick them;
- Do not disturb animals, destroy nests etc. Do not pollute rivers, lakes, streams or springs;
- Use the rubbish bins provided and if there are none please take your waste with you. Leave behind a natural environment as clean as when you found it;

- Fire is one of the most devastating enemies of natural areas. Do not light fires and carefully handle any flammable items (cigarettes, glass etc.). Fires may only be lit in areas designated for that purpose;
- Remember that noise pollution is not part of the natural environment. Enjoy the sounds of nature;
- Do not stray from the paths and trails that are marked and moderated;
- Only camp in specifically designated campsite areas or, in some cases, specially designed zones;
- Keep your dogs on a lead to ensure that they do not disturb birds, other visitors, plant life or other animals;;
- Park your vehicle in designated parking areas and drive slowly when passing pedestrians and cyclists;

FUTURE GENERATIONS - OUR CHILDREN - HAVE THE RIGHT TO ENJOY A PRESERVED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT!

If you would like to join the Clean Serbia campaign and/or report any problem in your natural environment, please call the Green Phone +381 (0) 11 0700 100 800 and contact the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Serbia