

## **WINE TOUR for TRIFON ZAREZAN FESTIVAL 29 January – 2 February 2012**

(Tour Code: TZ)

**PRICE: £695** (Based on a group of 8 or more, a smaller group will incur a supplement).

This tour is based in Plovdiv in Bulgaria's second city, one of Europe's most important cultural heritage centres of the ancient Thracians. Vine growing and wine making have for centuries been a traditional craft and are inseparably intertwined in the life-style of the Bulgarians. Our tour takes place during the Sveti (St.) Trifon festival of vine-growers. We shall visit ancient monuments under UNESCO protection, modern wineries and home cellars in villages, some of which can bid for a Guinness world record for the largest number of wine cellars per head of the population!

The British-Bulgarian Friendship Society has been organising a variety of special interest tours to Bulgaria for over thirty-five years. We shall be happy to introduce you to the country's friendly people, and excellent wine and food. For your financial protection our tour operators, Balkania Travel Ltd. are licensed by the UK Civil Aviation Authority and bonded both by the CAA, ATOL 4465 and IATA, number 91-2 7839.

**Outline Programme** (which may be subject to minor adjustments)

**Sunday 29 January** Scheduled flight from Heathrow to Sofia. Drive to Plovdiv for a four night stay. Walking tour

in the centre of town. Join the *dvizhenieto* (like the Italian *corso*), a traditional early evening stroll.

**Monday 30 January** Sightseeing in Old Plovdiv, explore the steep cobbled streets, admire the picturesque timber-framed houses and take the stage at the spectacular Roman Theatre!

At lunchtime there will be a visit to one of Plovdiv's most popular traditional restaurants. Those who wish to do so can learn how to prepare some Bulgarian dishes from the chef, Ivan Kolev. Or you can just watch while enjoying a drink and local *meze* before your lunch.

Afternoon drive into the foothills of the Rhodope mountains to visit Bachkovo monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, with its wonderful internal and external frescoes. Visit to Assenovgrad winery to taste the wine and hear the story of the Mavrud legend. Return to Plovdiv.

**Tuesday 31 January** Morning drive to Kazanluk in the Valley of the Roses, and a visit to the famous (UNESCO listed) Thracian tomb and the Ethnographic Museum, followed by lunch at the Trout Farm Enina, accompanied by the white wines of the Rose Valley. Return to Plovdiv via Brezovo and Rakovski.

**Wednesday 1 February** Today is the day of Sveti Trifon Zarezan, a major day for vine-growers and wine-makers. There are many rituals and festivities in which you can share at Brestovitsa, including home-made wine, music, and maybe some impromptu dancing! In the afternoon there will be a tour of Purvenets winery, before your return to Plovdiv for a Farewell Dinner.

**Thursday 2 February** Drive to Sofia. There will be time for a sightseeing tour on foot in the centre, before transferring to the airport for your return flight to Heathrow.

#### **OUR PRICE INCLUDES:**

- Return scheduled flights from Heathrow to Sofia. See separate Note about Flights.
- Airport departure taxes.
- Visits to at least four wineries with three wine-tastings.
- Half Board: dinner on 29<sup>th</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February, lunches on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January.
- Accommodation at the famous 4-star Trimontium Hotel with en suite facilities on a twin bedded shared occupancy basis.
- Coach for transfers and excursions.
- Bulgarian guide/interpreter.
- All museum entrance fees.

#### **NOT INCLUDED:**

- Lunches or light suppers (about £4 - 5).
- Travel Insurance (Compulsory). Balkania Travel can advise.
- Drinks and other personal expenses such as gratuities.
- Single room supplement £48.

Please note that from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011, Balkania Travel Ltd. will have a new address: Office 3.08 Avanta Harrow, 79 College Road, Harrow, Middlesex. HA1 1BD. The phone numbers will remain the same.