

# SPICE ROADS

## CYCLING



### HIGHLIGHTS OF BULGARIA BY BICYCLE

Tour Code  
**BGR-BBH**

**10** DAYS  
**9** NIGHTS

	Destinations	Bulgaria
	Tour Meets Tour Ends	Sofia, Bulgaria Sofia, Bulgaria
	Fly in to Fly out of	Sofia Airport (SOF) Sofia Airport (SOF)
	Group Size Minimum Age	2-16 riders 18 (on scheduled departures)

### ACTIVITY PROFILE



<b>7</b> Cycling days	<b>390</b> <sub>km</sub> Total cycling distance
<b>56</b> <sub>km</sub> Avg distance / day	<b>861</b> <sub>m</sub> Avg climbing / day

### PRICING



Price  
Bike Hire (Mountain Bike)  
Single Supplement

US\$ 2,850  
US\$ 285  
US\$ 375

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Snacks and drinks

### WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Airport pick up
- ✗ Airport drop off
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

### DEPARTURES



20 July - 29 July 2025  
31 August - 09 September 2025  
05 October - 14 October 2025  
24 May - 02 June 2026  
19 July - 28 July 2026  
30 August - 08 September 2026  
04 October - 13 October 2026

## TRIP PROFILE

The tour uses roads that are all sealed and have a good surface, some totally new. There are a couple of harder days on the tour, but the support vehicle allows you to do as much cycling as you wish. Choose which bits you want to ride; get a lift to the top of a hill to cycle down the valley if it suits you. Your leader will suggest how you can get the most out of the trip for total enjoyment.

We all ride at different speeds, and this varies depending upon how we feel on the day. The guides tend to ride through the group, but stop on the top of passes to regroup. It is not essential that you try and keep up with everyone. Just ride at your own speed and enjoy it. If you are having a bad day, you will be supported. Remember, the vehicle is there for you, always driving behind the group.

**Suitability:** This trip is suitable for anyone with a reasonable fitness level. This trip is not too arduous, but there are climbs every day, so the fitter you are, the more you will enjoy it.

**Biking Conditions:** This tour follows a mixture of good sealed roads. No off-road riding experience is required. A support vehicle is almost always available to help you, and you will always have your guides with you at all times.



### Day 1 Arrive in Sofia

Welcome to Sofia, Bulgaria's laid-back yet dynamic capital city! Make your way to our hotel and, in the late afternoon when it starts to cool down, we will take you to soak up the sights and sounds of historic Sofia on a walking tour. Once we've worked up a bit of an appetite, we'll have a welcome dinner in a traditional Bulgarian restaurant.



Eurostars Sofia City Hotel



Dinner

### Day 2 Yablanitsa - Ribaritsa Village

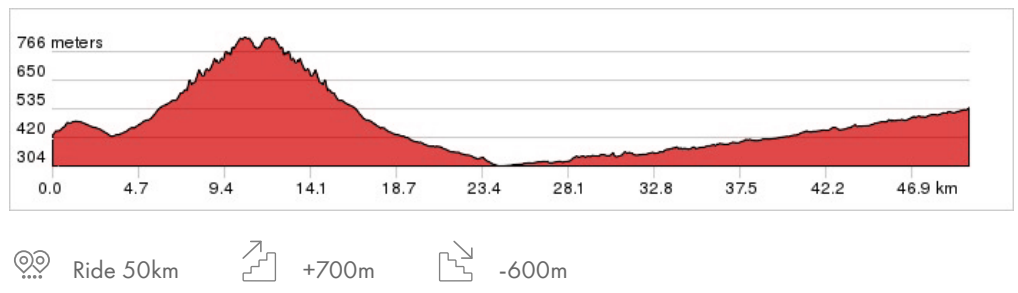
Today, we transfer from Sofia to start our ride at Yablanitsa town, famous for producing Turkish delight. From the north foothills of the Balkan mountains we slowly wind upwards to the small village of Malak Izvor and on to the picturesque Glozhene Monastery. After lunch, we ride downhill and then on to a rolling road with a gradual ascent bringing us to charming Teteven town. After a short rest in town, we keep on biking upstream alongside the Beli Vit River to our overnight stay in the charming mountain village hideaway of Ribaritsa.



Hotel Vezhen



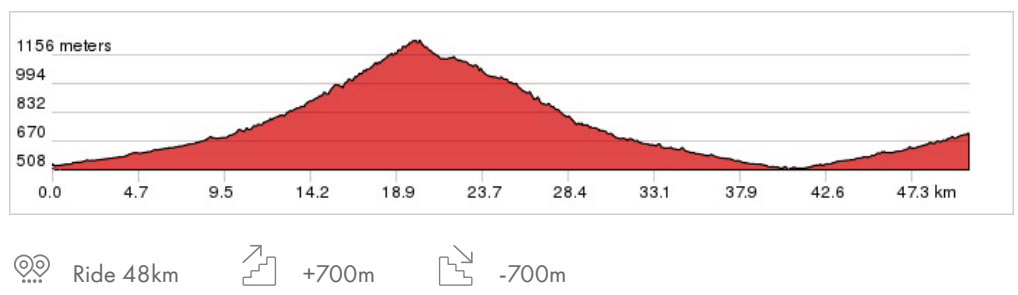
Breakfast Lunch Dinner



### Day 3 Bogoi Pass - Chiflik

A stimulating morning of riding as we ascend from Ribaritsa (630 m) to the highest point for the day – the Bogoi pass (1,185 m). It's a challenging 12-km ascent to the summit, but the riding is through idyllic countryside making for a scenic climb. We have a glorious descent and lunch in a small spa resort set amidst pine trees. We end our ride at the spa town of Chiflik and recommend taking to the warm waters to relax your legs.

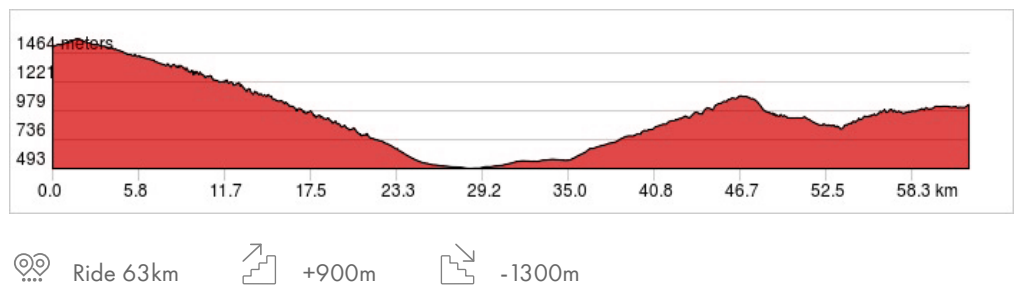
Hotel Freya   Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



### Day 4 Chiflik - Koprivshitsa

After breakfast, a short transfer takes us to the highest pass in the Balkan Mountains: the Beklemeto Pass at 1,500 m. This was the ancient Roman Via Trayana (Trajan road), and some Roman remains can still be seen. We make a short ascent to see the Arc of Liberty, symbolizing the liberation of Bulgaria in 1878 from the Ottomans during the Russian-Turkish War, then it's time to freewheel down into South Bulgaria and the Valley of Roses. In May, the fields are blooming, and the petals are picked early in the morning and distilled into rose oil. We take a short off-road section along a stream for some variety. After a picnic lunch next to a river, it's on to Koprivshitsa, the best preserved 19th century Bulgarian town studded with characteristic architecture and a vivid revolutionary past.

Gozbarov's House   Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



### Day 5 Koprivshitsa - Hisaraya

After breakfast, we visit two famous 'house museums' to learn more about this Bulgarian town, steeped in literary, political, and philosophical history. We then saddle up and pedal through rolling terrain among the vast meadows that frame this land. A long descent into Strelcha town passes the "Crooked Beech Tree" and some interesting rock formations once used by ancient Thracians for their sacred rituals. On the way, we visit an ancient Thracian cult temple from the 5th

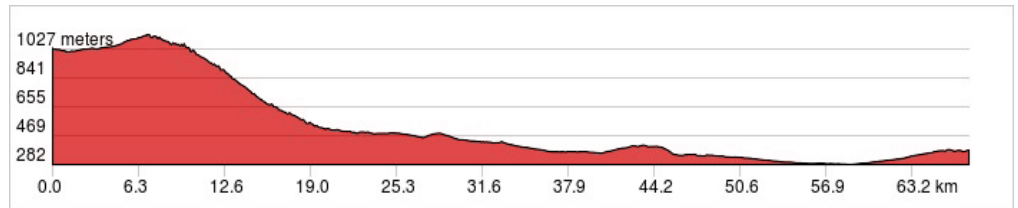
century B.C. and have lunch at a local winery. From here on, the road rolls calmly all the way to our next destination – Hisarya, famous for its thermal springs and Roman ruins. End the day with a relaxing soak.



Spa Hotel Hisar



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 67km



+300m



-900m

## Day 6 Plovdiv City Rest Day

A day for rest and sightseeing as we transfer to Bulgaria's second city – Plovdiv. "The City of the Seven Hills" is one of the world's oldest cities and has a fascinating history incorporating Thracian, Greek, Roman, and Ottoman rule. Plovdiv is among the few cities with two ancient theatres; remains of the medieval walls and towers; Ottoman baths and mosques; a well-preserved old quarter from the National Revival period with beautiful houses, churches, and narrow paved streets. There are numerous museums, art galleries, and cultural institutions. After our lunch, we take a tour of Plovdiv's old town, visiting the Ethnographic Museum and the Ancient Roman Theatre; probably the best-known monument from antiquity in Bulgaria. Our accommodation is in a charming hotel in the old town.



Houtle Doubletree by Radisson



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Day 7 Plovdiv - Rodopi

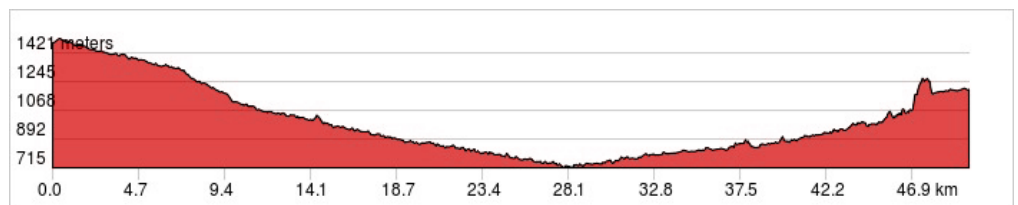
An amazing day awaits us! We transfer up to the Pamporovo Ski Resort in the Rodopi Mountains, stopping on the way to visit Bachkovo Monastery, the country's second largest, with its unique 17th century dining room. We jump on our bikes at Pamporovo and ride down to Shiroka Laka, a village with many authentic Rhodopean houses. These two-storey homes feature a small cellar with a hiding place and thick white walls to conceal its courtyard from outsiders. We have lunch in this quaint town before we continue our ride upstream along the Trigrad River and the stunning marble rock gorge it cuts through. Once we reach the famous Rodopi village of Trigrad, we can enter the thrilling Devil's Throat Cave, featuring a 40-m high underground waterfall. We spend the night at a cozy family hotel and feast on local Rodopi specialties at dinner.



Zdravets Guest House



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 52km



+600m



-900m

## Day 8 Rodopi - Dospat Dam

Today will be nothing short of spectacular! Back on our bikes for a descent back through the 300-m high walls of the Trigrad Gorge, before a gradual incline takes us up into and through Bulgaria's longest gorge, Buinovo. Known by locals as the The Wolf's Leap, the 10-km long gorge narrows to several metres at some points as the river cuts through the marble rock. You'll spot entrances to many caves along the way, and we'll stop to visit the beautiful 5-story tall Yagodina cave, filled with fascinating formations. We continue along rolling terrain filled with

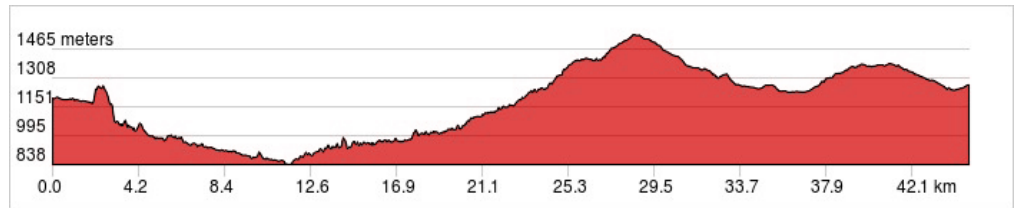
vast meadows and coniferous forests until we reach the picturesque shores of the large Dospat dam, where we stay the night in the nearby town.



Hotel Panorama



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 64km



+900m



-1000m

## Day 9 Dospat Dam - Velingrad

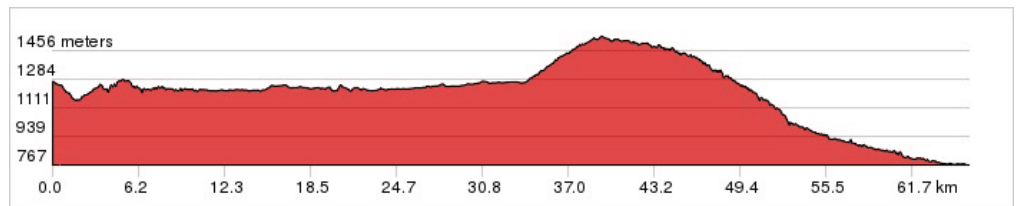
Today, we ride among three beautiful dams, a centuries-old coniferous forest, and vast meadows, finishing in Velingrad, Bulgaria's spa capital. After riding on so many quiet back-roads, the last 10 km into town are a bit busier than we are used to, so we have the option to transfer, if we wish. There are over 90 curative and preventative springs and another natural phenomenon as well as the Kleptuza, the biggest Karst spring in Bulgaria, with an average discharge of 1,200 litres of ice-cold water per second. Relax in the thermal water pools to recover and reflect on a great ride before our farewell dinner.



Spa Hotel Dvoresta



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 65km



+700m



-700m

## Day 10 Sofia Departure

Transfer back to Sofia for your departure flight or for another night exploring Sofia.



Breakfast

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

## NUTS & BOLTS

### Bikes

Because some people can't imagine going on a trip without their own beloved bicycle, we do not provide them as part of this tour. However, you can hire bikes locally for the price listed in the tour pricing section.

If you bring your own bike, please make sure it is a mountain bike, preferably with front suspension, in good mechanical order.

## **Bike Repairs**

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

## **Safety**

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

## **Guides**

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

## **THE NITTY GRITTY**

### **Passports and Visas**

Travellers from Australia, the United Kingdom, US, EU and all foreign nationals who have a valid multi-entry Schengen visa, type "C" or "D", or a valid residence permit in one of the Schengen member states do not need a visa to Bulgaria for a visit of less than 90 days. Click [here](#) for the list of countries that are exempt. Please check with the [Bulgarian Embassy](#) for further details.

### **Health**

No vaccinations are not considered necessary however you may wish to consider cover for Typhoid & Hepatitis A. Fountains in town parks and outside monasteries and churches provide fresh drinkable water as well as the Cheshma (water spouts), found along main roads, which also offer constant supplies of fresh, delicious and safe water.

### **Weather**

Bulgaria enjoys a temperate climate with hot, dry summers and cold, wet winters, often with heavy snow. Sofia's climate is generally favourable, with average daytime highs of around 28°C in July and August and 3°C from December to February. Rainfall is highest in the mountains and rural life is often disrupted in winter by huge snowfalls. Southern Bulgaria and the Black Sea coast can be very hot and sunny from mid-June to early September. A fleece and long trousers for the evening are recommended. Rain is a possibility, therefore you will need to bring a waterproof jacket and pants. Sun cream is a must, as is a covering for your head.

### **Food**

Bulgarian food shares characteristics with other Balkans cuisines. Most dishes featured vegetables, herbs and fruits. Rich salads are served at every meal also a variety of hot and cold soups, an example of a cold soup being tarator. Bulgarian cuisine is also noted for the diversity and quality of dairy products and the variety of Bulgarian wines and local alcoholic drinks such as rakia, mastika and menta. There are many different Bulgarian pastries as well such as banitsa to indulge in.

### **Drink**

Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water, some energy-restoring local fruit and soft drinks are included in the tour price while riding. Soft drinks and other beverages during meals are not included. But you may also want to bring electrolytes in powder or tablet form. Alcoholic drinks are available everywhere, but are NOT included in the price.

### **Solo Travelers**



SpiceRoads does not require you to pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

### Extra Expenses

We recommend that you tuck away a few extra euros for possible incidentals that might arise. It is always wise to have some paper currency in case of ATM absence or credit card problems. This will save you a lot of unnecessary worries. It is also customary to tip local tour guides and drivers; however, the amount you give should be dependent on the level of service you receive.

### Money

The local currency is the lev (plural: leva) ATMs that accept major credit cards can be found in all sizable towns and cities. It's best to use credit cards as a backup for cash in case an ATM swallows your card - more likely if the card is issued outside Europe. There are many foreign exchange offices in every city and town and at major attractions. The best currencies to take are Euros, GB Pound Sterling and US dollars.

### Be Aware

Overall, the level of petty crime is much less than in most Western countries. However, take the usual precautions about avoiding rowdy political demonstrations, not flashing money around and being aware of pickpockets in crowded places.

## GENERAL BOOKING INFO

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place:

### FLEXIBLE BOOKING CONDITIONS

Booking a SpiceRoads cycling adventure is easy and we try to do everything possible to make sure you have full flexibility and peace of mind. We do not require a deposit to hold your place on a tour and once full payment has been made your money is protected in our client account and you have the flexibility to cancel or change your booking if needed.

### CONFIRMING YOUR BOOKING

Just complete our online booking form or send your booking details offline (email or post), and we will confirm your participation. No deposit is needed to confirm your place on a SpiceRoads tour.

You are advised to read our [Booking Conditions](#) in full before you make your payment and should you require further clarifications of any of the conditions below, please [email us](#) or call our office.

### TRIP STATUS

There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2) required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If the trip status is 'Limited' will mean we have only a small number of spaces available for booking. If you are unsure about the trip status, please [email us](#) or call our office.

### BOOKING ONLINE

From the tour page, click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. For the next steps, you'll need to know the names of the people travelling. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height (for bike hire), or you can add that later by logging into [Manage My Trip](#) (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). Our system will contact you from time to time to fill in the missing information, as it will be required before departure. However, if the trip that you are booking offers a child discount, you will have to fill out the date of birth of each rider (so we can calculate the appropriate discount).

If you are having any problems [please send us an email](#), or give us a call (+66 026 3295) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

### BOOKING OFFLINE

Just call us or send an email indicating which trip you want to join and we will happily send you a list of questions and process your booking for you.

## DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS

We do not require a deposit or full payment to book a place for you on a tour.

The balance of the tour's cost (final invoice) will need to be paid 60 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights.

In the case where a booking is made when there are less than 60 days until the tour departure date, the tour's cost should be paid in full within 72 hours of receiving an invoice from SpiceRoads. Payment can be made by credit card using our online payment gateway or by bank transfer. When making payment online you will need to confirm that you have read these booking conditions during the "checkout" process, which equates to agreeing to the terms of services and stipulations as indicated in this document.

In all cases, tour fees need to be paid "in full" before participation in a tour. No person(s) will be allowed to join a tour without fully settling their invoice and receiving a confirmation number from SpiceRoads.

The exception can be made for last-minute miscellaneous fees that can be paid locally (visas, additional local hotel bookings, etc.) can be settled on the day of arrival.

## FULL FLEXIBILITY FOR TOUR CANCELATIONS

If the tour is cancelled or postponed by SpiceRoads because we didn't make the trip numbers and the tour can't run, we will make a full cash refund (by bank transfer or on your credit card).

If the tour is cancelled for any other reason, including due to Covid related travel restrictions, we will give you a full credit (with no deductions for admin or any other small-print item) to use on any SpiceRoads tour with no time limit. (Exceptions being flights, special permits and other non-refundable items and these will be advised when booking the trip).

Before paying for your tour, you can cancel your booking with no charge and up until 40 days before departure, you can change your booking to another travel date or move your booking onto another SpiceRoads tour with no charges.

If you need to cancel after you have made full payment, please see our [cancellation policy](#).

## Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us, we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for a loyalty discount.

## International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your [travel insurance](#) that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

## Newsletter

Our adventure travel [e-newsletter](#) is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

The information in this document is given in good faith, and covers the average range of conditions likely to be found on this trip. Please note that the itinerary is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances, however, we will always do our best to adhere to this original itinerary

## CONTACT US

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