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trail riding worldwide

The Kingdom of Thracians

Weight limit: 90kg

Nearest airport: Sofia (SOF), Bulgaria

8 days / 7 nights / 6 days riding

The Thracian Valley with its picturesque rose and lavender fields combined with world class frescos and monasteries offers an unparalleled riding experience. Ride past ancient Thracian and Roman ruins, taste delicious wines, canter across the endless open fields of this fertile wine region and at the end of the day treat yourself at the spa. Ideal for those wishing to combine a riding holiday with a bit of pampering.



The Riding

The Kingdom of Thracians offers some fantastic riding in the picturesque Bulgarian countryside. Enjoy long canters across open fields and vast meadows and ride through the famous vineyards of the Thracian Valley. You will ride in all paces each day and there are plenty of opportunities for some long canters.

Guides & Groups sizes

The Kingdom of Thracians trail is organised by a friendly family-run equestrian centre. The maximum number of riders in a group is 8.



Horses & Tack

The horses are the pride and joy of our partners in Bulgaria. They are much loved and well looked after. Their horses are Trakehners, Shagya Arabs and Eastern Bulgarian horses, ranging from 14.3hh to 16.1hh. They are responsive, willing and surefooted on difficult terrain.

The tack used on this trail is English style, mostly made by Wintec, and in good condition.

Accommodation and Dining

The accommodation during the trail is in comfortable hotels. Most hotels will have access to a swimming pool, sauna and spa treatments with healing, warm mineral water. All spa treatments are at additional cost and payable locally.

During the trail riders can enjoy the fresh, local cuisine. Breakfasts and dinners are served in overnight accommodations and lunches are on route picnics or alternatively a packed lunch carried in your saddle bags. The Thracian lowlands come highly recommended as a wine region and the Kingdom of Thracians trail offers you a great opportunity to taste the local wines.



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival

Reception at the airport at 14:00 and transfer about 1h30 (125 km) by minibus to Belashtitsa, a village located only a few kilometers from Plovdiv, considered the cultural capital of Bulgaria. Here you will find traces of civilizations much older than the Romans. We visited the historic city of more than 8000 years,

including the Ethnographic Museum and the ancient theater, one of the best preserved still existing. Dinner and overnight in a very comfortable hotel with a pool and spa.

Day 2: TSARATSOVO – HISAR

After breakfast, transfer to Tsaratsovo village (approx 30 min) where you start your journey. The day's ride offers lovely long canters across flat, open fields and a picnic lunch by a river with BBQ and local wine. Your destination is the thermal centre of Hisarya, the most famous spa centre in Bulgaria with its 22 healing mineral springs. Hisarya is also rich in history, full of archaeological finds from the Thracian times and the Roman Empire. Overnight at a spa hotel with swimming pool, sauna, massage centre and jacuzzi.

Day 3: HISAR – STAROSEL

Today the trail passes by fields, vineyards, beautiful meadows on the side of the hills and oak forests. Visit the tombs of ancient Thracians kings and learn about the mysteries, amazing cultural heritage and historic significance of the Thracians. End the day at Starosel where you'll be spoiled with wine tasting and optional spa treatments.

Day 4: STAROSEL – KOPRIVSHTITSA

Today, the five-hour long hike takes you to the historic city of Koprivshitsa, dating back to the Renaissance. It is located in a picturesque valley along the Topolnitsa River, in the heart of Sashtinska Sredna Gora. The authentic atmosphere of its cobblestone streets takes you back in time. You'll have a guided tour around this amazing village.

Day 5: KOPRIVSHTITSA – STRELCHA

After breakfast, spring on to the saddle and leave Koprivshitsa behind. The terrain today is more mountainous as you climb up towards the ridge of a mountain with fantastic views over the Valley of Roses. The resort of Strelcha awaits at the other side at the foot of the mountain. Enjoy another massage or spa treatment before having dinner at the hotel.

Day 6: STRELCHA – BELOVITSA VILLAGE

After breakfast you'll visit the Thracian ritual temples around the city, from the IV to the VI century BC. Lunch is on the shores of Lake Belovitsa, before leaving for an afternoon in the saddle. Your hotel has a large spa and swimming pool for a well deserved rest.

Day 7: BELOVITSA –TSARATSOVO

The last day of riding once again offers fantastic canters across flat fields. Ride through vineyards and rose fields and take in the wonderful smell of roses before returning to Tsaratsovo. Bid farewell to your trusty steed and enjoy one last dinner with your fellow riders in a 4* spa hotel.

Day 8: Departure

After breakfast, transfer to Sofia ready for your onward flight.



Price includes

- 6 full days of riding
- Trail riding horse, tack and saddlebags
- Shared accommodation
- Breakfasts
- Lunches
- Evening meals
- Wine tour
- Airport transfers
- Local transfers
- Services of guide
- All arrangements for the duration of holiday

Not included

- Flights
- Tips
- Spa treatments
- Drinks outside of mealtimes

Flights & Airport transfers

Do not book flights until you have received the Booking confirmation email from saddletravel.com.

Please plan your flights to/from Sofia as follows:

Arrive at Sofia by 16:00 on the first day of your holiday.

Departure flight on the last day of your holiday should not leave Sofia before 12:00 (midday).

Transfers are included from Sofia airport for flights arriving and departing at set times. Airport transfers outside of these times are at additional cost.



What to bring

We recommend wearing your riding boots when travelling and carrying one set of riding clothing and your helmet in your hand luggage, so should your luggage not make it to the destination you'll still be able to ride.

Please use the packing list as a guideline, bearing in mind the time of year you are riding.

- Your own well-fitted hard hat
- Comfortable jodhpurs or riding trousers
- Riding / hiking boots with good grip
- Chaps
- Riding gloves
- Long sleeved T-shirts to protect against the sun
- Warm layer such as fleece or woollen jumper
- Water- and windproof coat
- Swimwear
- Comfortable clothes for the evening
- Light weight shoes for after riding
- Sun cream & lip balm
- Sunglasses & sunhat
- Plug adapter
- Copy of your travel insurance
- Personal medication

Climate

The Thracian plain has a continental climate with cold winters and hot summers. April and October have average daytime temperatures of 18-19°C with cooler nights at 6-8°C. May-September the temperature is normally between 20°C and 30°C during the day and above 10°C at night. The precipitation is normally between 45mm and 65mm per month. Summer months tend to be mostly sunny with possible cloud coverage and showers in the afternoons.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip.

Country specific information can also be found at National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to Bulgaria for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/bulgaria/entry-requirements>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements.

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

Currency & Tipping

The local currency in Bulgaria is Bulgarian Lev. Your holiday is fully inclusive so we recommend not bringing too much local currency, just enough for buying drinks outside of mealtimes and souvenirs.

Tipping your guide is at your discretion.



Riding declaration

"I am confident and in control at trot and canter out in the open and over uneven ground. I'm able to mount and dismount unaided and have a good level of current riding fitness. I do not suffer from any illness or disability that could prejudice my safety or that of others."

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms

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Holidays are confirmed with 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before the start date of your holiday.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50% 30 days or more - 30%

less than 30 days - nil

Book with confidence – Covid Guarantee:

If the ride operator is closed/you are unable to travel due to lockdown:

1/ The deposit is reissued as a rebooking voucher to rebook anytime.

2/ Any balance payment will be refunded to you in full within 1 week of departure date.

Insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during the booking process.

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