



Bulletin

European Destinations of Excellence

ONLINE NEWSLETTER

FOR THE BULGARIAN EDEN DESTINATIONS LAUNCHED

UNDER THE PROJECT "COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE BULGARIAN EDEN DESTINATIONS - SECOND EDITION" IMPLEMENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM IN AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR GRANT No. 699265 OF 18th JANUARY 2016.

(issue 1, March 2016)

The Ministry of Tourism begins to send regular information about the implementation of the project 'Communication Campaign to Promote Bulgarian EDEN Destinations – Second Edition'

WHAT IS EDEN?

EDEN is the acronym for European Destinations of Excellence (best European destinations) – a project popularizing the models of sustainable development of tourism throughout the European Union.

EDEN is an initiative of the European Commission and it consists of two types of projects: national competitions on a topic set by the EC, within which 'the best tourist destination' is chosen at a national level for each participating state; popularization of already singled out best EDEN destinations (winners and runners-up)

The initiative attracts the attention to the values, diversity and the common characteristics of the European tourist destinations, and creates a platform for exchange of good practices and promotes networking between the successful emerging/ unpopular European tourist destinations.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME ARE:

To overcome the seasonal nature of the tourist destinations at a national level and present non-traditional and unpopular alternative forms of tourism;

To create conditions for reducing the overloading of the main tourist destinations through deconcentration of the tourism flows toward tourism by interest;

To provide sustainable development of tourism on the basis of distinctive peculiarities of the destination in terms of culture, way of life, etc;

To raise the possibilities for economic development of the regions on the basis of tourism entrepreneurship;

To create conditions for the environment protection in compliance with the European standards for ecology on the part of tourism entrepreneurs;

Awareness and promotion at a European level of the new opportunities for holiday and tourism.

The Ministry of Tourism won European financing for implementation of the project: 'Communication Campaign to Promote the Bulgarian EDEN Destinations – Second Edition'. The project cost is nearly 70 thousand Euros. It is financed under the COSME 2014 - 2020 Programme of the European Commission and its duration is 18 months.

The project aims to develop further a project on the same topic, implemented during the 2011 – 2012 period. Its main objectives are to promote the Bulgarian EDEN destinations on national and foreign tourist markets. Some of these destinations are the municipalities of Silistra, Lukovit, Sandanski, Kyustendil, Belogradchik, Belitsa, Sapareva Banya, Kavarna, Vratsa, Strandzha, Kazanlak and Kardzhali.

SANDANSKI

Gallery: see <http://www.edenbulgaria.eu/sandanski>

Video: see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gem3RZHfV_4

Common text about the destination:

Sandanski is a piece of paradise where the eyes and breath enjoy clean nature, healing water and air. Lands with millennial history, which have preserved traces of prehistoric, Thracian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Turkish and National-Revival presence. A region rich in sunshine which the people have continued to keep for centuries in the heavy wine of Melnik and in the delicious dishes – a mixture of traditional Bulgarian and Mediterranean recipes.

Sandanski is located in South-Western Bulgaria and is surrounded by a number of mountains. It is only an hour from the Aegean Sea. Thermal springs with different temperature (42-81°C), low mineralisation and rich chemical composition gush from these lands and, combined with the temperate Mediterranean climate, average annual temperature of 14°C and the great number of sunny days, they provide a wonderful possibility for recreation, SPA, relaxation and treatment of a number of diseases. It is no accident that Sandanski is known as the best natural public health station for diseases of the respiratory system in Europe.

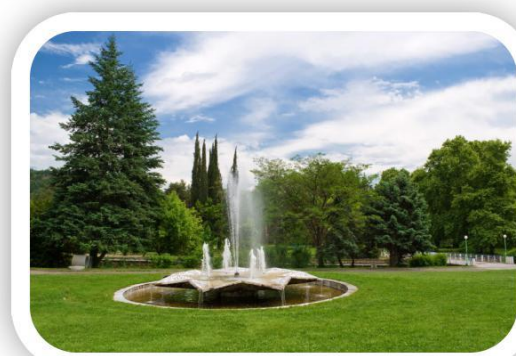
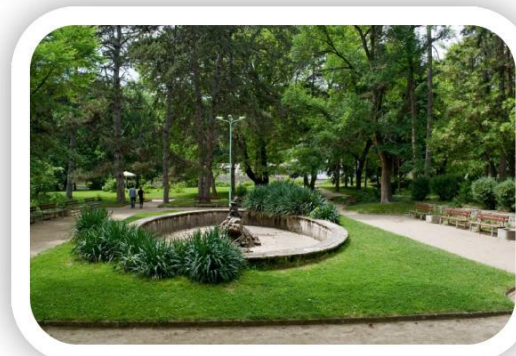
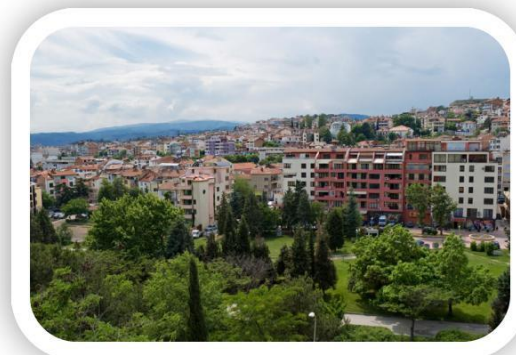
Under the modern town of Sandanski are the ruins of an ancient town which emerged near mineral springs during the II millennium B.C. Spartacus, the leader of the biggest uprising (74 A.D.) in the Roman Empire, came from the Thracian tribe of Maedi, which inhabited the surroundings of the town.

The town was one of the first Episcopal centres in Bulgaria until the 6th century. At the end of the 6th century it took the name of Sveti Vrach (Saint Doctor), in memory of the two holy brothers, Sts. Bezsbrenitsi (moneyless) Kozma and Damian. Valuable monuments from these ancient times are: an early Christian Basilica from the 2nd century and a complex of ancient buildings located outdoors and freely accessible, which continue being investigated and restored.

Southeast of Sandanski is the natural landmark the 'Pyramids of Melnik' – Pliocene lake formations located on an area of about 1 165.6 ha, reaching 100 m of height. The town of Melnik, which is a monument of the Bulgarian medieval and National-Revival architecture, is situated among the landscape of the sand rock pyramids of Melnik.

The Rozhen Monastery and the Melnik Pyramids have been declared a Nature and cultural-historical reserve. The region is known for the Melnik wine, which was admired even by Churchill. It is preserved in cellars dug deep into the rocks. During the National Revival, the fame of the wine crossed the borders of Bulgaria and reached towns like Venice and Genoa.

Only 16 km from Sandanski is the area of Rupite – a protected area known for its healing mineral springs with temperature of 74°C. One of the two main bird migration routes through the territory of the country, Via Aristotelis, passes here, which allows watching 201 bird species in the region. The Memorial Temple St. Petka of Bulgaria, which was built in 1994, is located in the area of Rupite. The area is known mostly for being a place related to the



prophetess Vanga, which attracts thousands of pilgrims and tourists.

An eco-trail crossing the Melnik Pyramids leads to the village of Zlatolist. It is known for the monastery of St. George, where the church is dug deep into the ground. At the beginning of last century, Reverend Stoyana, a nun and prophetess who helped the people, lived there.

Main contact information:

Tourist Information Centre, Sandanski

Address: town of Sandanski, No 28 Macedonia Str.

Tel/fax: 0884 898976, 0882 050176

E-mail: tic.sandanski@gmail.com

Services offered:

Provision of information about accommodation facilities in the town and the region; restaurants, taverns and other catering and entertainment establishments; shops, pharmacies, policlinics, medical centres, banks, currency exchange bureaus, petrol stations; services offered by the travel agencies in the town; timetable of the public transport services from and to the town of Sandanski; natural sights, cultural, historical and archaeological sites, tourist attractions, events and cultural activities, conditions for sport, pedestrian, cycle and eco routes.

Association of Hotel and Restaurant Keepers and Tour Operators

Town of Sandanski 2800, No 1 Macedonia Str.

Tel/ fax: +359 746 3 19 79

Mobile phone: +359 898 700 192

e-mail: ahrt_sandanski@abv.bg

www.ahrt-sandanski.com

On your visit to Sandanski, we recommend to you to see:



The archaeological museum in the town of Sandanski

The museum is located 'in situ'. i.e. on site, over the ruins of the early Christian Basilica of Bishop John.

E-mail: museum_sandanski@mail.bg

Link: <http://www.museum.com/jb/museum?id=2567>



Early Christian Basilica of the 2nd century and an ancient complex, town of Sandanski

Located outdoors and freely accessible, in close proximity of the museum, are the following sites: Episcopal basilica, baptistery, atrium with a colonnade, premises and buildings which continue being investigated and restored.

Link: <http://www.pravoslaviето.com/hramove/sandanski/index.htm>



Monument of Spartacus

The monument is located in the town of Sandanski and it perpetuates the legendary Thracian, Spartacus, who descended from the local tribe of Maedi and was a leader of the largest slave uprising in the history of the Roman Empire.

Link: <http://www.archaeosand.com/bg/patevoditel/gradski-marshrut/pametnik-na-spartak.html>



Town of Melnik

www.melnik-bg.eu

Kordopulov's House

The biggest National-Revival house on the Balkan Peninsula, which was built in 1754 especially for production, storage and trade of wine. Venetian murals, wood carving and stained glass, as well as huge barrels for storage of Melnik wine, arranged in a cellar deep dug into the rocks, are displayed in the house.

Link: <http://www.kordopulova-house.com>



Melnik Rock Pyramids

The natural landmark is located southeast of the town of Sandanski and covers an area of 1 165.6 ha. The pyramids are at an altitude of 350 to 850 m and they themselves reach 100 m of height. Apart from the formations around the town of Melnik, there are also impressive pyramids round the villages of Karlanovo, Rozhen and Sushitsa.

Link: http://bulgariatravel.org/bg/object/23/Melnishki_Piramidi



Rozhen Monastery

The Rozhen Monastery of the Holy Nativity of the Mother of God is the biggest monastery in the region of Ririn and it is one of the few mediaeval Bulgarian monasteries which have been well preserved until today. The first data of it is from the 13th century and it was restored in its current form at the beginning of the 18th century. The monastery church dates back to 1732.

<http://www.pravoslaviето.com/manastiri/rozhen/index.htm>



Rupite

The protected area of Rupite is known for its healing mineral springs with temperature of 74°C and a flow rate of up to 35 l/sec. The climate in the area is transitional Mediterranean, which is a reason for the presence of Mediterranean herbaceous vegetation and some thermophile animal species. Via Aristotelis – one of the two main bird migration routes through the territory of the country – passes here.

<http://bulgariatravel.org/bg/object/372/Rupite>

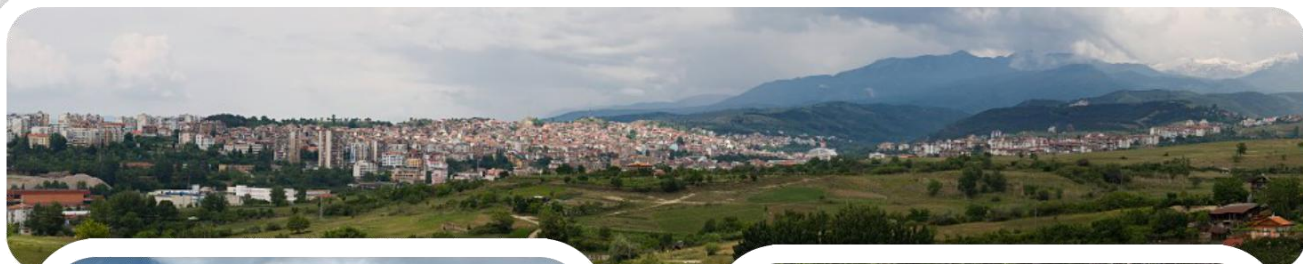


Pirin National Park

www.visitpirin.net

Pirin National Park covers the larger part of Pirin Mountain, which is situated in South-Western Bulgaria. It is one of the three national parks in the country. Because of its unique natural and cultural wealth, Pirin has been declared a site on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

http://bulgariatravel.org/bg/object/53/Nacionalen_park_Pirin



This material has been created under the project “Communication Campaign to Promote Bulgarian EDEN Destinations – Second Edition”, grant agreement No. 699265 of 18.01.2016, implemented with the financial support of the program COSME (2014-2020) of the European Union. The content of this material only reflects the viewpoints of the Ministry of Interior and is within its full responsibility; it should not be considered that this document reflects the official opinion of the European Commission and/or the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises or another EU authority. The European Commission and the Agency do not bear responsibility for the benefit from the information provided herein.