



ONLINE BULLETIN ON BULGARIAN EDEN DESTINATIONS, CREATED UNDER THE PROJECT ENTITLED "COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE BULGARIAN EDEN DESTINATIONS – SECOND EDITION", AS IMPLEMENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM UNDER A GRANT FINANCIAL AID AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION NO 699265 OF JAN 18, 2016

(issue 9, November 2016)

NEWS RELATING TO PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The Ministry of Tourism presented the project entitled Communication Campaign to Promote Bulgarian EDEN Destinations – Second Edition during the TTR II (autumn) tourism exchange in Bucharest, Romania.



The Ministry of Tourism's project for promotion of Bulgarian EDEN Destinations was presented in the framework of the Ministry's participation in the TTR II tourism exchange in Bucharest, Romania during the period 17.11.2016-20.11.2016. Presentation of those destinations was another opportunity to introduce them to both the general public and the professionals engaging in tourism (tour operators, sustainable tourism organizations, etc.).

The project's participation during the exhibition is part of the overall campaign for promotion of EDEN destinations and is a prerequisite for efficient advertising of those destinations on the domestic market and for redirecting/generating extra tourist

interest in those destinations.

TTR /autumn/ is among the most significant tourism forums in Romania. The exchange is open to both professionals and the general public, gathering 226 exhibitors from Romania and other countries in 2015 and attracting over 15 000 visitors. The exhibition also has a spring edition, which is even livelier, with Bulgaria being a traditionally strong participant there as well.

Romania is a major target market for Bulgaria, last year it topped the chart in terms of number of international tourists in our country, with over 986 000 visits and a 4% growth. During the period of January-September 2016, our northern neighbour again ranked first in this chart with

over 872 000 visits and an almost 12% increase of tourists. Most in-demand on the Romania market is the seaside and ski tourism, followed by culture routes, city tours, balneo & spa services, which are bundled with the mass-use recreation and vacation packages.

PRESENTATION OF EDEN DESTINATIONS

*According to tradition, we will be presenting to you one Bulgaria EDEN destination in each bulletin issues. For this issue we have planned to familiarize you with the **Lukovit** EDEN destination.*

North of Stara Planina, where the Vit and Iskar rivers flow, is where Zlatna Panega river also flows. Its source spring, Glava Panega, is among the three biggest karst springs in Bulgaria, with the water temperature being constant at 11,5°. The river mouth is close to the source, thus, it never freezes, while in summer its discharge never drops below 1500 l/sec. The high rock obelisks, which have formed along the steep shores of Panega and are called The Dolls by the locals, are both valuable and intriguing. Some 600 caves have been discovered within the destination's zone. In the Karlukovo area the best known ones are Prohodna (passage) – the highest cave vault in Bulgaria /45 m./, Temna Dupka /Dark Hole/, Bankovitsa, Svirchovitsa, etc, and in Bezhanovo – the dry and wet Parnik /Greenhouse/, movement in the latter cave being possible by boat only.

Deserving special attention are Skalnite Arki (Mostove) /The Rock Arches (bridges)/ - which are a genuine "business" card of this destination. The better known ones are those along the Vit river /Dupkata (The Hole) at Uglen village/, Provartenik, west of Iskar river, several at the Parnitsite (the Greenhouses), etc. Apart from the arches, one may also note several bizarre rock formations/phenomena – The Elephant, The Squirrel, The Human, The Eyes, along the Vit river.

Prohodna is among the well-known and easily accessible caves in Bulgaria. It is a natural, 262 m long rock bridge, and has two entrances – a big and a small one. From the small entrance, at a height of some 35 m. a little path begins, passing through the entire cave and exiting through the big entrance. Prohodna is naturally lit by the huge entrances and by the natural apertures in its ceiling – so-called windows. The "windows" are what makes the cave unique. Located one next to another, identically almond-shaped, the "windows" bear striking resemblance to huge eyes, which appear to stare at the visitors. It is not without good reason that the locals call them The God's Eyes and sometimes even The Devil's Eyes. Viewed from a certain angle, they even resemble a face staring downwards, and in humid weather there is the appearance of "tears" falling from the eyes. No guide is required to visit the cave, which is accessible to tourists year-round.

The Iskar-Panega Eco-path Geo-park is 8 km long. It starts at Lukovit and reaches Karlukovo. The Panega portion comprises the Kotlen locality, the bizarre rock formations called The Dolls, and a water-filled cave. The Iskar portion comprises three main sites – the phenomenal caves Prohodna, Zadunen Dol (Dead-end Gully), and the Strupanitsa landslip, and three smaller sites the Temna Dupka, Bankovitsa, and Svirchovitsa caves. Three of these caves, along with the Strupanitsa rock formations, are declared natural landmarks of national significance.

Main contact information for the destination:

Lukovit Municipality

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Zlatna Panega Tourism Association

5770 Lukovit, 32, 10th February St.

tel.: + 359 697 53265

cell phone: + 359 877 242 929

Destination-popular events:

Men's Ring Dance on St. Jordan Day – January 6, 2016.

Kukeri celebration –February Tangle – in February

Traditional celebration Holy Martyr St. George the Victor – patron saint of Lukovit – May 6

Regional folklore fair With Music and Dance, Each Autumn at Daben village - September

Recommended site-seeing:

Zlatna Panega



The Glava Panega spring is located close to the small village of Zlatna Panega, Yablanitsa Municipality. The water temperature ranges between 8,4 and 15,4° C. The spring is the source of the Zlatna Panega river. It consists of two elliptical catchment lakes – eastern one (the larger) and western one (the smaller), with the asphalt road to Brestrnitsa village passing in between. The water colour in both lakes – it has acquired a delicate blue-green colour due to the dissolved calcium carbonate. This is why the locals call the source spring Siniloto. The area around Glava

Panega has attracted human attention since prehistoric times. In the early 1900's archaeological excavations took place here, finding evidence that a Roman shrine once existed here.

http://bulgariatravel.org/bg/object/324/Zlatna_Panega_karstov_izvor

Iskar – Panega geo-park

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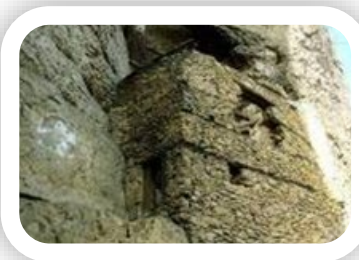
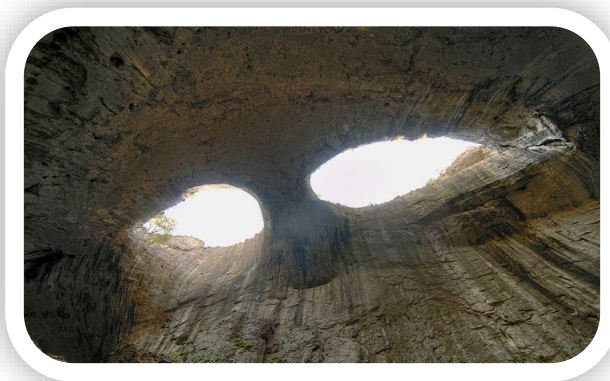
<http://www.geopark.lukovit.bg>

Prohodna cave

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http://bulgariatravel.org/bg/object/199/Peshterata_Prohodna



St. Marina rock church

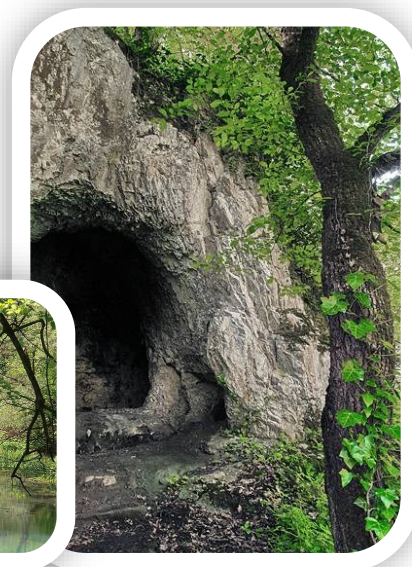
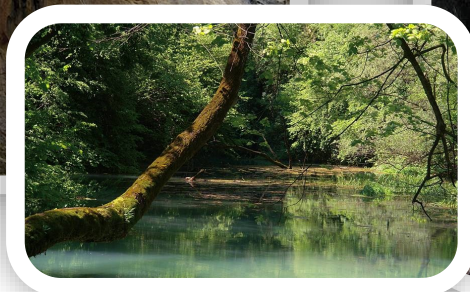
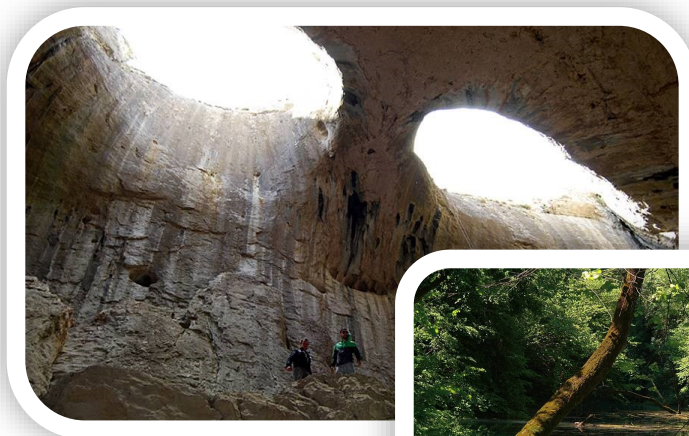
St. Marina rock church dates back to the late 13th – early 14th century. It is located on the right bank of the Iskar river, opposite the Karlukovo monastery. The exterior of the western and southern temple wall, along with its entire interior, used to be covered with murals. The church was built on an inaccessible stone platform, in a niche some 20 m away from the river's level.

<http://npdkarlukovo.wixsite.com/lukovit/----ciy5>

Assumption of St. Mary church - Karlukovo

The Assumption of St. Mary church was built in the 16th century and was declared a national historical monument in 1927 and a national monument of culture in 1969. The decorative system follows an inscription tradition typical of the 16th-17th century. The decorative iconostasis dates back to the 18th century's 1st half. Several icons of Dimitar Zograf (the Icon-Painter) date back to 1834.

<https://opoznai.bg/view/tzarkvata-uspenie-bogorodichno-lukovit>



This material was created within the framework of the project entitled Communication Campaign to Promote Bulgarian EDEN Destinations – Second Edition, under a Grant Financial Aid Agreement No 699265 of Jan 18, 2016, as implemented with the financial support of the EU's COSME (2014-2020) program. The contents of this material presents the views of the Ministry of Tourism only and is the latter's full responsibility; this document should not be deemed to represent the official opinion of the European Commission and/or the Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency, or any other EU body. The European Commission and the Agency bear no responsibility for the benefit, which will be created out of the information contained in the document.