

Bulgaria and Greece – trekking in the home of the Slavic and Greek mythology!

Mountains of Pirin, Rila in Bulgaria and Olympus in Greece .

1.In short: this itinerary will allow us to enjoy the 2 highest mountains and authentic villages of Bulgaria and impressive home of the Greek mythology – Olympus mountain.

2.Accommodation: hotels and family run guest houses / 2 nights in huts with shared rooms and toilets in Olympus mountain

3.Daily activity: treks between 5 and 8 hours and denivelation gain between 700m and 1100m

4.Difficulty: good physical condition required; 2 days include short scrambling sections ;

5.Timetable:

	LOCATION	TREKKING	CULTURE	ACCOMMODATION
1	Sofia	-	Sofia city tour	***hotel in Sofia
2	Bansko, Bulgaria	Belmeken peak trek +650 m/ - 650 m	Church of Dobarsko village	Family run guest house
3	Bansko, Bulgaria	Polezhan peak trek + 600 m / - 600 m	-	Family run guest house
4	Bansko, Bulgaria	Vihren peak trek + 1000m / - 1000m	-	Family run guest house
5	Hut A, Greece	Trek to Hut A + 1000 m	Archeological park Dion	Mountain hut
6	Hut Apostolidis, Greece	Trek: Hut A – Mount Mytikas – Hut Apostolidis + 1100m / - 400m	-	Mountain hut
7	Paralia village, Greece	Trek: Hut apostolidis – Gortsia - 1500 m	-	***hotel in Paralia village
8	Sofia, Bulgaria	-	Village of Melnik and Rila monastery	***hotel in Sofia
9	Departure	-	-	-

DAY 1

Arrival of the group. Get together dinner. Accommodation in Sofia.

DAY 2

We start with a transfer towards the high dam of Belmeken(2 h). On the way we can enjoy the authentic villages of the Pomak population of Bulgaria. The trek for the day starts from Belmeken dam and will take us up to Belmeken

peak, located at the eastern edge of Rila mountain with great views towards Pirin – our destination for the next days. Afterwards we descent back to the vehicle and another transfer will take us to the village of Bansko. Accommodation in Bansko and dinner in the center of the town. OPTIONAL: visit of the church in Dobarsko village, famous for its unique murals

Trekking: +650m / - 650m, 4h

DAY 3

Transfer to the Gotse delchev hut and ride with the lift up to Bezbog hut and Bezbog lake. Here we start our trek to Polezhan peak – a pyramid with 360-degree view. Firstly around the lake and afterwards climbing up on a panoramic trail. The last meters up the peak are following the steep SE ridge of the peak. We descend back to the hut on the same trail and further down with the lift. Optionally, we can finish the day in the mineral pool of the village. Accommodation in Bansko and dinner in the town.

Trekking: +600m / - 600 m, 4h

DAY 4

After a short transfer (0.30 min) to 1900m we will start our ascent of Mount Vihren(2914m). Before summiting we will take a deviation on the famous marble ridge in order to pass through the knife-sharp ridge of the Foal. Once we get to the top of Vihren than we will descent on an alternative route back to Vihren hut, where we have left our vehicle. Accommodation in Bansko and dinner in the town.

Trekking: +1000m / - 1000m, 8h

DAY 5

Long transfer to Olympus mountain (5h). Before we start our ascent to Hut A, we will visit the interesting agrological park Dion, where ruins of temples of Zeus and other Greeke gods are preserved. Afterwards we go to 1100m by car to Prionia. Here we start out ascent to Hut A, firstly through the deciduous forest of lower Olympus and later higher in the alpine zone where the hut is located at 2000m.

Trekking optional: +900m, 3h

DAY 6

Early start towards the peak. All the way up is a constant ascent following firstly a wide ridge and later climbing up the southern slope to Skala. Here starts the final stage of the ascent of Mytikas that includes several scrambling section. Once on top, we can enjoy the amazing views towards the Aegean sea. We start our descent back on the same way, 400m beneath the peak we take a deviation on the spectacular Zonaria footpath that will take us to the Plateau of Muses and Apostolidis hut(2700m). Accommodation in the hut.

Trekking: +1000m / - 400 m, 7h

DAY 7

A day of long and beautiful descent. Firstly crossing the Plateau of the muses with great views towards Stefani peak. Afterwards we continue the descent down to Gortsia parking through the well preserved forests of lower Olympus mountain. Once we get to the car we go down to the sea to celebrate the ascent of Mytikas with a refreshing swim in the Aegean sea. Accommodation in the village of Paralia.

Trekking: - 1500 m, 4h

DAY 8

A day of relax and cultural visits. A transfer back to Sofia(5h) On the way we will make to stops for cultural visit. First, in the village of Melnik, famous for its wine, architecture and sandstone pyramids. And second, in the Rila monastery – the biggest Bulgarian monastery that served as main cultural and religious center in the medieval period.

DAY 9

Departure

