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Walking in Bulgaria - The Villages of Rhodopes, 4 days

Highlights:

- Four days of hiking through the **green pastures and forests**, exploring the **lush nature** of Western Rhodopes.
- Visit to the **Trigrad Gorge**, **Devil's Throat** and **Yagodina** caves, the architectural reserve of **Shiroka Luka**, The highest ridge of Rhodopes – **Perelik Ridge**.
- Stay in **local villages** where we'll explore the **culture, traditions and cuisine** of the inhabitants of the Rhodopes.

Itinerary:

Day 1: In the morning of the first day we will meet in Devin – a town in Western Rhodopes, reachable for about 2 hours by bus from Plovdiv, 3,5 hours from Sofia. Devin is famous for its thermal pools, so it's best to arrive on the previous day and spend an evening there.

We take 30 min. transfer to Yagodina Cave, crossing the gorge of Yagodina. After visiting the cave we start walking towards Yagodina village (about an hour)

where we'll have lunch in a local restaurant or in some local family. Another two-hours hike takes us to the area of Trigrad. First we visit the famous [Trigrad Gorge](#) and we enter the big cave at its bottom – Devil's Throat Cave, than we are accommodated in the village. There is a choice between a number of guest houses and small hotels in the village. Total about 3 hours walking for the day, 9.5 km, +470/-280m.

Day 2: Today we'll do one of the most beautiful walks in Western Rhodopes – from the village of Trigrad to the area of Perelik ridge. On the way we will pass near Chairite Lakes, many green pastures and forests. Accommodation in the remote village of Mugla – rustic accommodation in a local guest house. About 6 hours total, 17km, +850/-680 meters.

Day 3: Today we will climb the highest ridge in Rhodope Mountains – Perelik ridge. We'll climb the second highest summit – Mount Karluk, because the highest point is not accessible for tourists due to the military base on the top. Then we will descend to the village of Gela at 1500 meters on the other side of the mountain. About 6,5 hours total, 14 km, +900/-800 m. Accommodation in a hotel in the village.

Day 4: Short walk today – we cross Gela village and for about 2,5 hours descend to [the village of Shiroka Luka](#) – an architectural reserve with many old stone houses and a beautiful church. We also pass near Gela monastery on the way. From here we can take a bus either to Devin and visit the mineral pools there, either to Smolyan – the biggest town in Rhodopes, with connections to Plovdiv and Sofia. End of the program.

A second option for this day is to visit the famous [Miraculous Bridges](#), to walk up to the biggest waterfall in the Rhodopes – [Slivovdolsko Padalo Waterfall](#) – 2 hours of walking, to stop at [Bachkovo Monastery](#) and to arrive in Plovdiv by the end of the day.

