

A PILGRIMAGE TO BULGARIA

Led by the Very Revd Andrew Nunn
17-26 September 2021



An 10 day journey including
monasteries and mountains,
departing from Heathrow



McCabe
PILGRIMAGES



It has a fascinating history, a varied landscape of great beauty and an ever-welcoming people who are still in the process of adapting to life in the EU. In many villages it is common to see people travelling by horse and cart or trekking into the mountains with mules.

Bulgaria produces great red and white wines and 70% of the world's rose oil. Thracian tombs, Roman amphitheatres, royal castles, fascinating museums and lovely 19th century architecture are surpassed by wonderful domed churches and 170 living monasteries, some of them 1000 years old with stunning medieval art.

Sofia is the lively capital, born 7,000 years ago in the green embrace of the Vitosha Mountain. Beautiful Plovdiv is the oldest city in Europe and 2019's European Capital of Culture.

A PILGRIMAGE JOURNEY THROUGH BULGARIA

with the Very Revd Andrew Nunn
17-26 September 2021

One of Europe's oldest nations (founded in AD 681), known for its ski resorts and Black Sea beaches, Bulgaria is also a country that can be a highly rewarding pilgrimage destination.

TOUR INFORMATION

The cost of this 12-day tour is £1595 per person sharing twin-bedded accommodation on a half-board basis (breakfast and dinner each day plus two lunches).

In Sofia we stay at the Anel Hotel, in Sandanski at Pirin Park Hotel, the Trinity Hotel in Bankso, in Plovdiv at the Imperial Hotel and the Grand Yantra Hotel in Veliko Tarnovo; all rooms have private en suite facilities.

Return flights are with British Airways from Heathrow direct to Sofia. Travel through Bulgaria is by coach accompanied by a local guide. All entrance fees and gratuities are included.

We have included most expenses in the tour cost but some items are not included: our travel insurance

premium is £64 up to age 74 and £113 if older (no medical screening is required). Travel insurance is essential but you may have another suitable insurance.

Single rooms are available at a charge of £275. If you prefer to share with someone, please see our note 'Travelling Alone' overleaf.

Please note down any special requirements, such as dietary needs, on the booking form. A deposit is payable now with the balance payable eight weeks prior to departure.

Your final travel documents will be posted to you approximately two weeks before departure.



TO MAKE A RESERVATION

To reserve your place on this tour please complete the enclosed booking form and send it with a deposit of £200 (plus the insurance premium if required) to the tour leader. Please make cheques payable to 'McCabe Pilgrimages'.

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DAILY PROGRAMME



Friday 17 September | TO SOFIA

Our British Airways flight BA890 to Sofia departs Heathrow at 08:05 and arrives in Sofia at 13:15. Transfer to our hotel with time to check in and rest. A short walking tour to introduce the capital followed by dinner with live music.

Saturday | SOFIA

Full day walking tour in Sofia, with its rich and turbulent history; we shall visit the impressive Alexander Nevski Cathedral which dominates the city, the remains of Roman Serdica, St George's Rotunda (the best preserved Byzantine building), the National Archaeological Museum (full of Thracian treasures), more churches as well as a market, synagogue, mosque and government buildings.

Sunday | SOFIA

We attend the liturgy at Alexander Nevski Cathedral and then head to Rila, a 10th century monastery complex and the largest in Bulgaria. We visit the monastery church with its amazing frescoes and the monastery museum. Continue to Sandanski for our overnight stay.

Monday | SANDANSKI

We enjoy a leisurely walk around the spa town of Sandanski and Melnik, the smallest Bulgarian town with a population of 300. We visit the 17th century Kordopulova museum house and enjoy lunch with some local wine tasting (included). Continue to Rozhen Monastery with its pretty courtyard and church. We head to the mountain



resort of Bansko for an overnight with local cuisine and dinner.

Tuesday | BANSKO & DOBARSKO

We take a short walk through the old town and visit the church of the Virgin Mary, as well as the museum house of Velyan Ognev. Lunch is included in Gorno Draglishte today and then drive on to the small village of Dobarsko to look at the very plentiful and exquisite frescoes, some of the finest examples of religious art in Bulgaria. We continue through the mountains to Plovdiv for a two night stay.

Wednesday | PLOVDIV

We start the day with a walk through the old town with its Roman theatre, Ottoman and Revival architecture, some indication of Plovdiv's turbulent history. We visit the Ethnographic Museum, housed in a 19th century merchant's house, the Roman amphitheatre, the church of St Constantine and Helena, the house of Lamartin and the Jumaya mosque. We drive out to visit Bachkovo Monastery, one of the largest and oldest Eastern Orthodox monasteries in Europe.

Thursday | STAROSEL & KAZANLAK

We head to the Balkan Mountains, stopping en route in the village of Starosel to see the Thracian Tomb. Continue to Kazanlak, Valley of The Thracian Kings and Valley of Roses where we visit a replica of the old Thracian beehive Tomb of Kazanlak, and a rose distillery including tasting rose jam and liqueur. Two night stay in the town of Veliko Tarnovo.



Friday | ARBANASSI

Veliko Tarnovo was the former capital of Bulgaria in medieval times. We visit Tsaverets Hill and walk through the cobblestone streets of Samodovska Charshiya. Continue to Arbanassi and the Konstancalieva House and Church of Nativity. Nearly every inch of the walls and ceilings here are covered in 17th century frescoes and paintings.

Saturday | SOFIA

We head back to Sofia, stopping en route to see the 16th century Troyan monastery on the river, surrounded by forest. We arrive back in Sofia, visiting the beautiful little medieval Boyana Church on the outskirts of the city. We have time to relax before dinner.

Sunday 26 September | HOME

A leisurely morning before we depart for the airport and our return **British Airways** flight to Heathrow. Flight BA891 departs at 14:20 and arrives at 15:50.

Flight times are correct at the time of printing but may be subject to schedule changes.



OUR PILGRIMAGE

The McCabe Educational Trust

For many, meeting the 'Living Stones' of The Land becomes a real highlight of their pilgrimage. The McCabe Educational Trust is an independent registered charity with the aim of helping inspiring people we meet on pilgrimage. On your pilgrimage you will meet some of these people. As 'the haves' encounter the 'have nots' the Trust has become a practical tool for one to help the other.

We invite you to become partners in this work and so we add a £15 voluntary donation to each invoice. *Every penny raised in this way is given in full to the projects the Trust supports.* The money raised is then matched by McCabe Pilgrimages, effectively doubling the value of your contribution. This scheme is voluntary and confidential with nobody put under any pressure to participate. You simply don't include the £15 when you make your final balance payment.

TRAVELLING ALONE

Many of our passengers travel alone and object to expensive single room supplements. McCabe Pilgrimages will accept individual bookings on a 'guaranteed share' basis. We charge the basic price and accommodate you with a person of the same sex also requesting shared accommodation. If we do not find someone to share with you, you will be accommodated in a single room at only 50% of the usual single room supplement. For single travellers who do require single accommodation this should be requested when booking and, if available, the normal supplement will be payable.

PASSPORTS, VISAS AND HEALTH

Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least six months after the time of this pilgrimage. If you need a new passport apply early as there can be considerable backlogs at the passport offices. A visa is issued free of charge on entering Bulgaria. If you are holding a non-British passport, or require further advice, please consult the McCabe office. No inoculations are required but we advise you to consult your doctor regarding your own personal requirements.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is arranged by **Global Travel Insurance Services Ltd** for **McCabe Travel Ltd**, an Appointed Representative of Global Travel Insurance Services Ltd, authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Our status can be checked on the FCA Register by visiting www.fca.org.uk or by contacting the FCA on 0845 606 9966. This Insurance is underwritten by ERV. ERV is authorised by the Bundesanstalt für Finanzdienstleistungsaufsicht (BAFIN – www.bafin.de) and the Prudential Regulation Authority and subject to limited regulation by the Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority.

It has been specifically designed so that it covers all McCabe holidays; protecting you in full if you have to cancel and providing you with the very best and most effective protection if you are unfortunate enough to require medical attention whilst away.

A unique feature of the policy is that you will not need to call a medical help line to discuss health issues. Most pre-existing health conditions are covered as long as your doctor agrees that you are fit to travel.

Standard exclusions apply and are listed on the summary document. Please check that you are not affected by the Main Health Exclusions. You will not be covered for any ongoing tests or treatment of an undiagnosed condition, or for any terminal illness, or if you claim as a result of a condition arising within the past twelve months.

Please note: you will pay an excess of £1,000 on any claim that results directly from a pre-existing medical condition. In our experience, very few claims result from pre-existing medical conditions. With this policy you are covered with no declaration of health required.

A full policy wording will be sent to you with confirmation of your booking, or ask us and we will send you a copy now. Full details are also on our website. If you would like more information or are unsure of any details, please call Global Travel Insurance Services Ltd for further advice on 01903 235042.

This insurance is only available to people who reside permanently in the UK.

AITO Quality Statement

McCabe Pilgrimages is a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators. The Association represents Britain's leading independent tour operators and encourages high standards of quality and service. McCabe abides by the Association's Code of Conduct and adheres to the AITO Quality Charter which can be viewed on www.aito.co.uk. Visit the website to find out more about the Association or call 020 8744 9280.

This pilgrimage is ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority.

