

**“June in Bulgaria”
with Iliana and Todor
15th to 28th June 2016**

15.06. (Wednesday) – Arrive in Sofia. Travel to Pazardzhik. Accommodation for 1 night.

16.06. (Thursday) – In the morning, visit the Professional Folk Ensemble “Pazardzhik”. In the afternoon, we travel to Panagyurishte in West Thrac and visit the local museum to see the famous Thracian Golden Treasure. The same evening travel to Velingrad and stay there for 3 nights.

17.06. (Friday) – A morning dance class with Iliana and Todor, then, at 15:30, we travel to Kostandovo and visit a small carpet weaving company. At 17:30 a concert with 3 authentic folk ensembles – from Dorkovo, Kostandovo and Rakitovo. In each of these towns there are an interesting mixture of people - namely Bulgarian-Christians, Bulgarian-Muslims and Armani-Vlachs. This place is an interesting amalgam of three folk areas - Pirin, West Thrac and West Rhodopi mountains. After dinner, a singing class with Iliana and Todor.

18.06. (Saturday) – Free morning for the spa, walking and shopping in the town. At 16:00 we travel to Draginovo village to see a wedding ritual named “Talyosvane”. Besides that they will present a small exhibition of hand made parts of their traditional folk costumes. You can buy everything you like from the masters. Afterwards, their authentic folk ensemble will sing and dance for us.

19.06. (Sunday) - At 9:00 we leave Velingrad and travel to Dobarsko in the Rila mountains. We will meet their singing group for a picnic lunch. Afterwards we visit the 17th century chapel in the village. Late in the afternoon we travel to Bansko – at the foot of the Pirin mountains and stay there for 3 nights.

20.06. (Monday) – A dance class in the morning followed by a visit to an icon exhibition and the biggest church, “Sveta Troitsa”, in Bansko. Free time for discovering the town. Then meet the local folk groups.

21.06. (Tuesday) – Travel to Dobrinishte and the chair lift nearby. It will take us up 2,239 metres to Lake Bezbog. We have a picnic lunch there before walking in the mountains. After dinner – a singing class with Iliana and Todor.

22.06. (Wednesday) - After breakfast we travel to Sandanski – another famous spa resort in southwest part of the Pirin folk area. This town is in a valley between four mountains - Pirin, Belasitsa, Slavyanka and Ograzhden. It has the softest climate in Bulgaria, the most sunshine and healthy air for asthma sufferers. This combines with its mineral water spa. We meet the folk groups from the Cultural center “Otets Paisiy” in Sandanski, then dinner in the Mehana “Chevermeto”. We stay here for three nights.

23.06. (Thursday) – Visit Melnik and it’s famous sand pyramids. We will see Kordopulova kashta – the most interesting old house in the town. We then have a picnic lunch near Rozhen monastery. It is a wonderful place! Return to Sandanski and a singing class after dinner.

24.06. (Friday) – A dance class in the morning before a free afternoon to enjoy the spa and relax. In the evening we visit the Folk Ensemble “Gaitan” in Parvomai for a concert.

25.06. (Saturday) – In the morning, our last dance workshop. We leave Sandanski after lunch and travel to Blagoevgrad. Accommodation for 3 nights. A concert for us by the children from the Art Centre in Blagoevgrad – groups “Veselina”, “Biseri” and “Pirinche”.

26.06. (Sunday) – In the morning, we visit the local museum which specialises in the archaeology, flora, fauna and history of the area. After lunch, free time for sightseeing in Blagoevgrad. Dinner in the mehana “Vodenitsata”, then our last singing workshop.

27.06. (Monday) – In the morning, we visit the Rila Monastery – the most famous in Bulgaria – and have a picnic lunch there. Late in the afternoon, a concert for us by the professional folk ensemble “Pirin” from Blagoevgrad. Our last dinner – at the hotel.

28.06. (Tuesday) - Travel to Sofia airport.