BULGARIA

BULGARIA AND KERKINI LAKE (NORTHERN GREECE) BIRDWATCHING TOUR (9 DAYS)

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On this tour we will expect to see more than 200 bird's species but also a large number of rare and endemics plants, butterflies and also a historical and cultural places. On this tour we can visit many different areas for birdwatching in Bulgaria and Greece. We will visit the National Park – Pirin (in the World Heritage list) and The Lake Kerkini (in Greece) and many other protected natural sites in both countries. During this tour you can observe a large number of birds*: Black Stork, White* and *Dalmatian Pelicans, Glosy Ibis, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Long – legged Buzzard, Levant Sparrowhawk, Black, Syrian* and *Grey-headed Woodpeckers, Pallid* and *Alpine Swifts, Rock and Blue Rock Thrushes, Sombre Tit, Alpine chough, Nutcracker, Rock Bunting, Alpine Accentor, Ring Ouzel, Crag Martin, Rock Nuthatch, Masked Shrike, Subalpine, Orphean* and *Bonelli's Warblers* and many others.

Day by day Itinerary

Day 1
Arrival at the Sofia Airport and we will travel to the mountains of Rila and Pirin and we will explore the slopes near the Belmeken Dam. Late in the afternoon we will arrive to our hotel close to the town of Bansko. We will spend two overnights there.

Day 2
We will spend a day in the Pirin Mountain near Vihren Peak (2914m). We will make a short walk from Vihren Hut to Bunderitsa Hut and there we can observe many interesting birds*: Alpine chough, Nutcracker, Rock Bunting, Alpine Accentor, Ring Ouzel,* etc. Afterwards we will return to our hotel for a second overnight.

Day 3
After breakfast we will travel to the South part of Bulgaria. We will spend the time exploring the Kresna Gorge and the Struma River Valley. This gorge is a part of the famous bird migratory corridor called Via Aristotelis. In Tissata natural reserve, a landscape with predominantly Mediterranean Flora we can observe many birds, and especially *Rock* and *Blue Rock Thrushes, Somber Tit, Red-rumped Swallow, Syrian Woodpecker, Barred, Subalpine* and *Orphean Warblers, Lesser Grey, Red-backed* and *Woodchat Shrikes* and many others species. We will also visit the biggest monastery in Bulgaria included in the Unesco list of World Heritage - The Monastery of Rila. Late in the afternoon we will arrive in the town of Melnik - a picturesque historic village famous for its locally produced wines. We will spend at this town two nights.

Day 4
On these days we will explore the region around the town of Melnik and the Rozhen Monastery. We expect to see many birds: *Sombre Tit, Roller, Bee-eater, Hoopoe, Rock Sparrow,* many warblers. Late in the afternoon we will return to our hotel. We will visit a typical wine cave and we will taste some regional wines. We can also visit the beautiful monastery of Rozhen

Day 5
On this day we will make a short transfer to the lake Kerkini in Greece (around 50 km.) We will explore the region around the lake. We expect to see many birds like *Dalmatian* and *White Pelicans, Pygmy Cormorant, Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, Black Kite, Long-Legged Buzzard, Levant Sparrowhawk, Red-footed Falcon*, many warblers, etc. Late in the afternoon we will arrive in our hotel close to the lake of Kerkini. We will spend two nights there.

Day 6
A second day to explore the region of the lake Kerkini. In the morning we will take a boat and we will explore the lake.

Day 7
Today we will make a transfer to Bulgaria. On road we will stop for birdwatching on many places. We expect to observe birds *like Rock Nuthatch, Masked Shrike, Roller*, etc. Late in the afternoon we will arrive to our hotel close to the famous Trigrad Gorge in Bulgaria.

Day 8
After breakfast we will visit the famous Trigrad Gorge. This spectacular gorge is one of the best places to watch the *Wallcreeper* in Europe. We can observe also *Peregrine Falcon, Golden Eagle, Pallid* and *Alpine Swifts, Crag Martin* etc. Late in the afternoon we will arrive in the town of Sofia for the last overnight.

Day 9

Depending of your departure flight we will stop for birdwatching in the Mountain of Vitosha near Sofia and expect to observe: *Common Crossbill, Coal Tit, Goldcrest and Firecrest, Alpine Accentor, Nutcracker, Black Woodpecker, Pallid Swift.* If time permits we can also visit the Dragoman Marshes near the town.

Group size:	4-12 persons	875 EUR
Individuals:	2-3 persons	1.050 EUR
Deposit:		200 EUR
Single room supplement:		155 EUR

Price includes: Transport with comfortable bus and coach, boat trip on Lake Kerkini, accommodation in good hotels with private facilities, full board, professional guide and all entrance taxes.

The price does not include: Airfares, travel insurance, alcohol drinks and cigarettes, room service, telephone calls.