



VIA PONTICA TOURS

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TOUR INFO

BULGARIA

JULY BUTTERFLIES TOUR (12 DAYS)

DATES: 16 – 27 July 2024

Suitable period: End of July – early August



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The Bulgarian Lepidoptera fauna is one of the richest in Europe - more than 3000 species of butterflies and moths. On the tour it can be seen more than 100 species of butterflies, including some typical Bulgarians sub-species. In addition to the butterflies you can enjoy many beautiful landscapes and see interesting birds.

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Day by day itinerary

Day 1

Arrival at Sofia Airport. Short transfer to our hotel, close to the Bulgarian capital. Diner and overnight. A short walk near the hotel. We will spend two nights here.

Day 2

Day at Vitosha mountain. Here we can see *Lulworth Skipper*, *Chequered Skipper*, *Dusky Grizzled Skipper*, *Balkan Clouded Yellow*, *Large Copper*, *Eastern Baton Blue*, *Chequered Blue*, *Green-underside Blue*, *Mountain Alcon Blue*, *Large Blue*, *Dusky Large Blue*, *Zephyr Blue*, *False Eros Blue*, *Woodland Ringlet*, *Water Ringlet*, *Marsh Fritillary*, *Lesser Spotted Fritillary*, *Nickerl's Fritillary*, *Twin-spot Fritillary*. Diner and overnight.

Day 3

Today we will make transfer to Gotse Delchev town. Butterfly stops at Dolni Pasarel and Kresna gorge. At the first stop we hope to see *Berger's Clouded Yellow*, *Lesser Purple Emperor*, *Southern White* and *Poplar Admirals*, *Common and Hungarian Gliders*, *Map Butterfly*. In Kresna gorge among the common species we can see also *Sandy Grizzled Skipper*, *Inky Skipper*, *Southern Festoon*, *Mountain Small White*, *Krueper's Small White*, *Grecian Copper*, *Eastern Baton Blue*, *Chequered Blue*, *Green-underside Blue*, *Meleager's Blue*, *Chapman's Blue*, *Oriental Meadow Brown*, *Southern Grayling*, *White Banded Grayling*, *Freyer's Purple Emperor*, *Little Tiger Blue*, *Zephyr Blue*, *Nettle-tree Butterfly*, *Southern Comma*, *Common Glider*, *Lattice Brown* and *Balkan Marbled White*. In the late afternoon we will continue our trip in direction to Gotse Delchev town. We will spend three nights there. Diner and overnight.

Day 4

After the breakfast we will explore the mountain of Alibotoush surrounding the village of Petrovo, an exceptionally rich butterfly area. We can see here more than 70 species of butterflies. Here we expect to see a wide range of species including *Sandy Grizzled Skipper*, many blues such as *Phalakron Blue*, *Mountain Alcon Blue*, *Meleager's Blue*, up to three species of *anomalous blue*, *Osiris Blue*, *Escher's Blue* and *False Eros Blue*, *Cardinal*, *Oriental Meadow Brown*. Picnic lunch. In the afternoon we will explore Roupite and Kozhoukh Volcanic Hill for some attractive Mediterranean species: *Mediterranean Skipper*, *Inky Skipper*, *Oriental Marbled Skipper*, *Orbed Red Underwing Skipper*, *Yellow Banded Skipper*, *Oberthur's Grizzled Skipper*, *Eastern Wood White*, *Eastern Pale Clouded Yellow*, *Powdered Brimstone*, *Eastern Dappled White*, *Krueper's Small White*, *Large Copper*, *Purple-shot Copper*, *Lesser Fiery Copper*, *Long Tailed Blue*, *Lang's Short Tailed Blue*, *Little Tiger Blue*, *Osiris Blue*, *Short Tailed Blue*, *Provençal Short Tailed Blue*, *Eastern Baton Blue*, *Zephyr Blue*, *Lattice Brown*, *Eastern Rock Grayling*, *Delattin's Grayling*, *Freyer's Purple Emperor*, *Lesser Spotted Fritillary*, *Marbled Fritillary*. Late in the afternoon we will return to Gotse Delchev for a second overnight.

Day 5

After the breakfast we will explore the surroundings of Orelek Peak and Papaztchair. Here we hope to see *Apollo*, *Clouded Apollo*, *Camberwell Beauty*, *Balkan Copper*, *Higgin's Anomalous Blue*, *Balkan Gavarnie Blue*, *False Eros Blue*, *Tufted Marbled Skipper*, *Turquoise Blue*, *Escher's Blue*,

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Northern Wall Brown, Eastern Large Heath, Great Banded Grayling, Pearl Bordered Fritillary and several ringlets including *Bright-eyed Ringlet* and *Woodland Ringlet*, among many others.

Day 6

Today we will continue our trip in direction to our next base – Dobarsko Village. We will cross the Valley of the river Mesta where we will have a short stop. We expect to see many butterfly species today including two species of *Swallowtails*, *Black-veined White*, *Large Copper*, *Eastern Baton Blue*, *Map Butterfly* and many *fritillaries* including *Lesser Spotted Fritillary*, *Nickerl's Fritillary* and *Twin-spot Fritillary*, *Eastern Rock Grayling* and *Great Banded Grayling*. We may also see the elusive *Freyer's Purple Emperor*. Late in the afternoon we will arrive in our hotel. We will spend four nights there.

Day 7

Day in the Pirin mountains near Vihren Peak (2914m). Short walk from Vihren Hut to Bunderitsa Hut. Here we expect to see a range of alpine and sub-alpine species including *Clouded Apollo*, *False Eros Blue*, *Mountain Alcon Blue*, *Pearl-bordered Fritillary*, *Balkan Fritillary*, *Northern Wall Brown*, *Eastern Large Heath*, and several ringlets including *Ottoman's Brassy Ringlet*, *Silky Ringlet*, *Black Ringlet*, *Nicholl's Ringlet* and an endemic undescribed yet species of *Anomalous Blue* as well as *Arran Brown*, *Woodland Ringlet* and *Large Ringlet*. Picnic lunch.

Day 8

Day spent above Dobrinishte with a possibility to met 2300 m with a chair lift (Bezbug Lake). There are plenty of options here, but if we going up high can expect to see *Dusky Grizzled Skipper*, *Cynthia's Fritillary*, *Balkan* and *Shepherd's Fritillaries*, and several ringlets, including *Nicholl's Ringlet*, *Black Ringlet* and *Bulgarian Ringlet*. Above Dobrinishte we can see *Scarce Copper*, *Meleager's Blue*, *Great Banded Grayling*, *Purple-shot Copper* plus several other species.

Day 9

Travelling to Treshtenik at over 2000m in the Rila mountains and walking up to Granchar Lake (2200 m). Another high altitude trek but with a good easier option available. Here we expect to see, among others *Dusky Grizzled Skipper*, *False Eros Blue*, *Eastern Large Heath*, *Balkan*, *Cynthia's* and *Shepherd's Fritillaries*, and several species of ringlet including *Bulgarian Ringlet*, *Water Ringlet*, *Nicholl's Ringlet*, *Bright-eyed Ringlet*. Diner and overnight.

Day 10

Travel to Belmeken for a two-night stay in the heart of the Rila mountains stopping at several places in the Cherna Mesta river valley on the way. We expect to see many butterfly species today including *False Eros Blue* and many *fritillaries* including *Lesser Spotted Fritillary* and *Twin-spot Fritillary*. Diner and overnight.

Day 11

Day spent above the Belmeken dam starting at about 2000m by the hotel. There we can expect to see *Dusky Grizzled Skipper*, *Eastern Large Heath*, *Cynthia's*, *Balkan* and *Shepherd's Fritillaries*, *Balkan Clouded Yellow*, and several ringlets, including the *Dewy Ringlet*, *Water Ringlet*, *Bulgarian Ringlet*, *Nicholl's Ringlets*, *Black Ringlet* and *Bright-eyed Ringlet*.

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Day 12

Early in the morning we will continue our trip to the town of Sofia (about 200 km). Depending of your departure flight we will stop around Sofia.

Group size: 4-14 persons	1 380 EUR
Individual: 2-3 persons	1 620 EUR
Single room supplement	180 EUR
Deposit:	200 EUR

Price include: Transport with comfortable bus and coach, 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.