

# Bulgaria – Attracting Tourists All Year Round

The people of Bulgaria make many claims: they invented the wheel, the digital watch and the Cyrillic alphabet. But whatever the locals say they have been responsible for in the past, there is no doubt that Bulgaria is witnessing a tourist boom in the present. Recent figures suggest that as many as three million tourists visit the country each year from all over Europe, including Russia, Romania and increasingly Great Britain and Ireland. With spectacular mountain scenery, impressive cities and great Black Sea resorts, Bulgaria has much to offer tourists – both in summer and winter.



The Rhodope Mountains offer a year-round tourist experience with superb skiing and snowboarding in the winter, and hiking and extreme sports in the summer. For winter sport enthusiasts the Bulgarian nirvana is Pamporovo in the Smolyan Province, some 260 km from the capital of Sofia. Surrounded by lush pine forests, the resort boasts modern hotels, great facilities and 25 km of ski runs all at an altitude of a minimum of 1620 metres above sea level. Winters at Pamporovo are not severe and an average of 150 days of snowfall each year allows for an extended skiing season.

Due to its great resort infrastructure that includes many great bars and restaurants, Pamporovo also proves very popular in summer. The region is littered with many natural caves especially around the rivers of Arda, Shirokolushka, making villages there and those close to the town of Smolyan very popular with extreme sports fans.



Black Sea summer resorts at Burgas and Varna are attracting tourists in their droves, especially at the biggest Black Sea resort of Sunny Beach, located between Ravda and Sveti Vlas. Bulgaria holiday villas are in demand in the resort and others around this region such as Golden Sands resort near Varna, next to the national park of the same name. The resort has been in existence since 1957 but in recent years has seen an upgrade in its hotels, restaurants and bars as it attracts more tourists from Germany, Scandinavia and the UK.



The rapid development that the expansion of tourism in Bulgaria has generated has also triggered a property boom. Villas in Bulgaria are becoming a must-have item, not only due to the opportunities afforded for great holidays but also because of their capital value. Whether as a holiday retreat or as an investment and property, accommodation in Bulgaria is in demand and has become the target of many a speculator, with prices predicted to rise exponentially over the next ten years.

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