Saint Petersburg State Ballet on Ice to Tour Bulgaria

Tough enough in street shoes and dance slippers, these women are about to embark on a cultural tour-de-force performing ballet through Bulgaria in ice skates; on ice; in tutus!! The venues in Burgas, Varna, Veliko Tarnovo, and Sofia will be undoubtedly sold out, standing room only, because Europeans love the Western cultural canon, or women on ice skates in tiaras, or no NFL games carried live on Bulgarian cable. Something. http://www.novinite.com/articles/164683/Saint+Petersburg+State+Ballet+On+Ice+To+Tour+Bulgaria

Sofia Synagogue Ranked Among the Most Beautiful

And we’ve been. We visited the Sofia synagogue before renovations began in 2009 and then again in 2012 and 2104 after renovations had been completed. And beautiful it is. The
renovation was lovingly done with donations from around the world and is now truly a valuable piece in the cultural heritage of Eastern European Jewry.

http://www.novinite.com/articles/164722/Sofia+Synagogue+Ranked+Among+World%27s+Most+Beautiful+Temples

**Burgas Selected European Capitol of Sport for 2015**

![Burgas and Varna port side by side](image)

Burgas, along with Varna, lies on the coast of the Black Sea and is one of Bulgaria’s principal cities for trade, tourism, and culture. Non-stop flights from European capitals bring northern Europeans on holiday to the Black Sea coast. You haven’t experienced a Black Sea summer until you’ve seen German tourists decked out in their skimpiest short shorts and halter tops. And the women are even worse! But all that helps the Bulgarian economy which remains one of the poorest in the European Union. Poor, schmoor; most Bulgarians would agree that better to be a poor Bulgarian than any kind of Romanian at all.


**Tsvetana Pironkova, Bulgarian Pro Extraordinaire**

![Tsvetana Pironkova](image)

You’ve heard of Grigor Dimitrov if you follow pro tennis. One of the best in the world. Ms. Pironkova is the distaff version; one of the best women in the world playing tennis. How does a small country with 7 million people manage to pump out star tennis athletes with
regularity? How do the Kenyans win glittery marathons in every part of the world? Why is the sky blue and why do the stars sparkle? Why do the birds sing so gay? Why oh why do fools fall in love? Love may be a losing game according to Mr. Lymo but these two Bulgarians have demonstrated what it takes to win, win, win. 

http://www.novinite.com/articles/164138/Tsvetana+Pironkova+Reaches+Quarterfinals+in+Moscow

**Rhodope Mountain Region to Become Part of European Re-Wilding**

The global perception of Europe as the cradle of Western civilization is essentially true. We got Greeks, we got Romans, we got Notre Dame, Chartres, the Magna Carta, the Renaissance, the Age of Enlightenment, Paris, Florence, Venice, Queen Victoria, Robert the Bruce, Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite, Viennese chocolate, Sacher tortes, high tea, wars to end all wars, the D-Day landings; we got Mr. Stradivarius, the Goldberg Variations, and Coco Chanel. We got everything except a few of the natural places that reflect what Europe was like before the Neanderthals decided to exit their tribal caves. Now we got the Rhodope Mountain region in southwestern Bulgaria. Now, maybe, we can preserve the wild things that allow us to breathe and experience quiet, and reflect on where we have come over the past 200,000 years. Ahhhh.

http://www.novinite.com/articles/164745/Bulgaria%27s+Rhodope+Mountains+Become+Part+Of+Rewilding+Europe+Initiative

**Lara Fabian in Sofia**

No, I never have, but maybe you have. Sings in French and songs include Je t’aime, Tu t’en vas, Si tu m’aime, Deux ils, deux ells. About love. I think the Communist Chinese had a better handle on the human condition in crafting songs about worker’s being united, and
marching lock-step to the socialist paradise that awaits. Love can’t infuse everything human, or purporting to be human, can it?  
http://www.novinite.com/articles/164136/Lara+Fabian+To+Sing+In+Sofia

**Plovdiv to Become European Capitol of Culture 2019**

Wait a minute. We’ve been at exactly this spot in Plovdiv’s old city. The Bulgarian Revival houses; the cobblestones with 50% more cobbled than those gimpy French versions that started the Revolution, the Mercedes in the driveways; the crystal clear blue sky. Yup; at this very spot the rebellion against the Ottoman Turks was fomented. Or was that Veliko Tarnovo? No matter we visit both places in our summer Bulgaria program. Come along with us.  
http://www.novinite.com/articles/164119/Plovdiv+to+Receive+BGN+20+M+to+Implement+2019+European+Capital+of+Culture+Program

That’s it for this time. We hope you decide to do summer study abroad with us in Bulgaria in June 2015. We have spaces available. Compare our $2950 program fee with any other four week program to Europe and you’ll be astonished. How do we do it you wonder? Bulgaria hasn’t adopted the Euro as yet and we have strong connections in Bulgaria. For more information and program application please go to my website at:  
http://itc.gsw.edu/faculty/pszmedra or contact me at: philip.szmedra@gsw.edu; 229-931-2122.

Until next time.  
Dovizhdane,  
Philip Szmedra