



ONLINE BULLETIN ON BULGARIAN EDEN DESTINATIONS, CREATED UNDER THE PROJECT ENTITLED "COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE BULGARIAN EDEN DESTINATIONS – SECOND EDITION", AS IMPLEMENTED BY THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM UNDER A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION NO 699265 OF JAN 18, 2016

(issue 11, January 2017)

EVENTS FROM THE EDEN DESTINATIONS

Winter holiday "Semkovo - Belitsa" 2017

At the heart of southern Rila, in the oldest Bulgarian winter resort "Semkovo", on 12 February for the second consecutive year, will be held WINTER HOLIDAY - "BELITSA - SEMKOVO" 2017.

In 2016, the urge for the future development of Belitsa and Semkovo mobilized all the people and institutions from Belitsa Municipality, stakeholders, the Rectors of the Technical University and the University of Architecture and Geodesy, academic youth and their teachers to elevate tourist destination Belitsa to its proper place in national and international tourist market. After a long break, on the 2th February 2016, winter holiday was revived in the famous resort.

This year winter sports lovers will have the opportunity to participate and experience winter sports, cultural and entertainment program, organized by Belitsa Municipality.

For more information: <http://www.belitsa.com/bg/news/361/65/v-nachaloto-na-fevruari-vi-ochakva-zimen-praznik-semkovo---belitsa-2017>

PRESENTATION OF EDEN DESTINATIONS

According to tradition, for presentation a Bulgaria EDEN destination in each bulletin, now we are preparing to get you familiar with Kyustendil EDEN destination

Kyustendil

Kyustendil - well known as the town of the mineral springs, the cherries and apples, the birthplace of one of the greatest Bulgarian painters, Vladimir Dimitrov – the Master. The town is situated in the West-most parts of Bulgaria, a place with unique relief variety - cut by wild mountains, which enclose a series of fertile plains and picturesque valleys and through which rivers run like silver lines. In V-VI BC, the Thracians discovered the healing qualities of the hot mineral water, later on for the same reasons the Romans turned the town into a fortress as well as a

health spa resort, calling it Pautalia - one of the largest ancient cities in the province of Thrace.

Late ancient and medieval fortress "Hisarlaka" is located on the highest plane of "Hisarlaka" hill, rising about 2 km southeast of Kyustendil. The fortress was built at the end of IV century - the beginning of V century. Repaired in VI century, it sustained through the First and Second Bulgarian Empire. The interesting constructions, the combination of different building techniques and materials as well as the excavated archaeological monuments from different historical periods define the Hisarluka fortress as one of the most important ones in Bulgaria.

With its 40 mineral springs, Kyustendil is famous as a **center for balneotherapy**. The thermal area is located in the city and from it springs hot springs with healing properties. Springs numbered 40 and are captured in a single tank. In catchments, the mineral water temperature is 74 °C, making it one of the hottest in the country. Thanks to its mineral content, water is particularly appropriate for treatment of effeteness, infertility, musculoskeletal system diseases, and traumatic, orthopaedic, and neurological diseases.

Evidence that the city was significant resort in antiquity are Roman baths, a symbol of the city. The dating of the baths of Pautalia is within the II-IIIC.

Kyustendil is the starting point for **hiking trails** with different length and difficulty. Mountain Osogovo is close, accessible and passable, and climbing its champion Rouen is a real pleasure. There are three ski runs, which provide excellent conditions for skiing and snowboarding for beginners and advanced alike. Kyustendil is the entrance point for the Bulgarian section of the European biking route "Iron Curtain Trail".

Main contact information for the destination:

Tourism Department of the Kyustendil Municipality
Kyustendil 2500, 1, Velbazhd Square
Tel./Fax: + 359 78 551166; + 359 78 551004
E-mail: tourism@kustendil.bg

Regional Historical Museum "Academician Yordan Ivanov"
Kyustendil 2500, 55 "Bulgaria" Blvd.
Tel.: +359 78 55 00 95;
E-mail: rmuseum.kn@abv.bg
Web: www.kyustendilmuseum.primasoft.bg

Kyustendil - most popular and upcoming events

Kyustendil's Spring (21.03.2017)

The tradition of selecting girl "Kyustendil Spring" dates back half a century. In 1966, the competition is patented in the Patent Office of the Republic of Bulgaria. This makes it the first official competition in the country for most beautiful girl.



The holiday is associated with a selection of beautiful young girls as a symbol of gentle step to spring came, as a symbol of youth and new hope.

Cherry fest (01-02.07.2017г.)

Two days of the month of July are devoted to the celebration of cherries that are associated with Kyustendil's reputation as the Fruit Garden of Bulgaria.

In 1896, Kyustendil received the title "Mother of the Bulgarian Orchard", when the first national orcharding exhibition was founded.

The celebration includes exhibitions of various sorts of cherries, which are cultivated by agriculture growers in the region.

The guests can taste local specialties prepared with cherries - cakes, desserts, jams and syrups.



Cultural Forum "Panagia" - exaltation of bread" (14-15.08.2017)



"Panagia" - exaltation of Bread" is a forum for Bulgarian tradition, Orthodox art and culture, which is held every year in churches and chapels, called St. Mary (Sveta Bogoroditsa). The forum is accompanied by a unique exhibition of "Virgin Mary cakes" for various types of bread in central garden of Kyustendil. On August 15th, traditionally women in Kyustendil knead bread with a prayer for good, decorate them with sculptures from the dough expressing the most important ideas of life and bring them into the temple of gratitude to Mary.

In the beautiful order of the ritual bread is woven faith, mastery and authenticity - as they are transmitted from mothers and daughters of all generations.



A celebration of fertility - October 2017



Nature is given a well-deserved winter rest. The celebration of fertility is a kind of grand finale for the series of public holidays. Beautiful themed arrangements of fruits and vegetables revive the autumn picture and the rich artistic program makes the holiday unforgettable.

"The celebration of fertility" is a contest with prizes for the best and most attractive presentation of the participants, by which are encouraged the producers. On the feast, of fertility Institute of Agriculture in Kyustendil represents between 150-200 varieties of apples.

Sites that we encourage you to see when you visit Kyustendil:

Art Gallery "Vladimir Dimitrov - the Master"

The gallery stores the largest collection of works by the world-renowned artist from Kyustendil – 1357 in number. The peculiar style of the Master is hard to describe in words. He stands in vivid artistic works of all time.

In the art gallery you can see works of other prominent Bulgarian artists. Over the years there has been presented original works of worldwide artists.



Regional Historical Museum



Archaeology, Numismatics, Ethnology, History of the Bulgarian lands (XV-XIX century) - these are just some of the exposures presented in the museum. Here you can see well-preserved parts of a Roman chariot minted coins and archaeological artefacts from VI-VII BC.

House museum "Dimitar Peshev"

Restored in 2002, the house museum is a replica of the home of Dimitar Peshev - politician, known for his role in the rescue of Bulgarian Jews. The permanent exhibition gives an idea of the events of March 1943 and the process of saving 50 thousand people - Bulgarian Jews from Nazi death camps.



Medieval church "St. George"

The medieval church "St. George" is the oldest preserved medieval church in Kyustendil and across south-western Bulgaria. It dates from the end of X - beginning of XI century. The type of the church is "inscribed cross" and there are preserved fresco in three layers - from XII-XIV c., XV-XVI c. and the late nineteenth century.



Showroom mosque "Ahmed Bey"

The mosque is an impressive building, built in the middle of the fifteenth century. According to legend, it was built on the foundations of medieval Bulgarian church "St. Nedelya".

Nowadays, mosque "Ahmed Bey" is an exhibition hall at the Historical Museum in Kyustendil. Good acoustics of the room makes the former Islamic temple favorite place for concerts of chamber music performers.



Pirgova tower

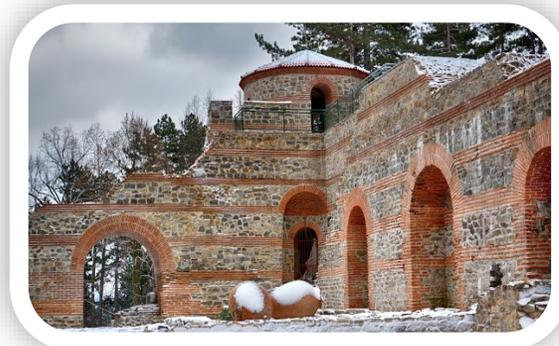


The medieval defence tower in Kyustendil is located in the central part of the city next to the Roman baths. The name comes from the Greek word - "Pyrgos" which means tower. It has an almost square plan and a height of over 15 meters. It consists of a ground floor and three more floors. The ground floor served as a warehouse. On the first floor is a vaulted entrance from the north, stone fireplace to heat the south wall and two holes. The second floor is organized for continuous habitation with fireplace, niche, 3 vertical and 2 round loopholes and gallery space for hygiene purposes. The third floor is for circular defence.

Acropolis of Pautalia

Antique and medieval fortress in Hissarluka was built at the end of IV - beginning of the V century and was used until the fifteenth century until its destruction by the Ottoman conquerors.

The castle has an area of less than 2 hectares. It was ensured by 14 different shaped towers located in strategic sectors of the fortification system. The discovered archaeological sites from different historical periods define the stronghold of Pautalia as one of the most significant in Bulgaria.



Roman baths

The combination of different architectural solutions and construction techniques makes the Roman baths one of the most interesting monuments of the Roman era in Bulgarian lands and the undisputed symbol of Kyustendil.



Baths were built in II - III c. AC. and are part of a large complex - Asclepeion, the fifth largest in Europe with alleged area of about 3000 square meters. The antique bath is an architectural monument of national importance.



This material is part of the project "Communication campaign to promote EDEN destinations in Bulgaria – second edition" which has received funding from the European Union's COSME Programme (2014-2020). "The content of the material represents the views of the author only and is his sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains."