



Communication campaign to promote EDEN destinations in Bulgaria
(BG EDEN Campaign III)

**ONLINE BULLETIN
FOR BULGARIAN EDEN DESTINATIONS CREATED FOR THE PROJECT
“COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE EDEN DESTINATIONS IN BULGARIA –
THIRD EDITION”, IMPLEMENTED BY MINISTRY OF TOURISM UNDER THE GRANT
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COSME PROGRAMME
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The on line bulletin is developed under the Communication campaign to promote EDEN destinations in Bulgaria (BG EDEN Campaign III) project will introduce to you related project news, interesting events in EDEN destinations as well as presenting the selected in various edition Bulgarian EDEN destinations.

EDEN is the acronym for European Destinations of Excellence - an initiative promoting sustainable tourism development models across the EU.

For more information about EDEN initiative visit <http://www.edenbulgaria.eu/>, as well as the DG GROW website https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/eden/about_en

The project aims to further develop the previous two projects on the same topic, implemented during the 2016-2017 and 2011 – 2012. Its main objectives are to promote the Bulgarian EDEN destinations on national and foreign tourist markets. Up to now Bulgaria has selected the total of 17 destination of excellence during 4 competitions for selection of destination held in 2017, 2010, 2009, 2008 and, namely Yambol, Mezdra, Dragoman, Ardino, Chavdar, Silistra, Lukovit, Sandanski, Kyustendil, Belogradchik, Belitsa, Sapareva Banya, Kavarna, Vratsa, Strandzha, Kazanlak and Kardzhali.

For more information visit: <http://www.edenbulgaria.eu/>



NEWS

20th International Masquerade Festival Kukerlandia – Yambol

At its 20th anniversary edition in the beginning of March 2019, the Festival welcomed over 80 masquerade groups from all over Bulgaria, as well as guest groups from abroad.

Kukerlandia is the first ever countrywide masquerade festival to be held in the country since 2000. At its core are the typical Kukeri traditions characterized by its specificity and, at the same time, a rich variety of costumes, characters and games in different settlements. Over the years, the Kukerlandia Festival has grown and established itself as one of the most spectacular and big events in our country's cultural calendar, attracting tens of thousands of participants and audiences from home and abroad.

The specific element and favorite attraction of the Kukerlandia is the Giant Masks Alley. A total of 20 artistic installations present in stylized form typical of the Kukeri masks.

The masquerade festival Kukerlandia represents a synthesis of centuries old traditions, customs, sounds, shades of light... It would be difficult to put into words the emotions evoked by the celebration of vernal purifying. Monsters and creatures, accompanied by the pounding the of bells attached to their belts, perform rituals to chase away phantoms and evil spirits. This is how with the coming of Spring the spectators of the kukeri take a communion, immersing themselves in the tumult, wealth of colour, and sorcery of fertility rites.





ARDINO MUNICIPALITY

Ardino is a mountain municipality situated on the border between the Eastern and Western Rhodopes with rich cultural history, natural phenomena, landmarks, and favorable weather conditions for recreation. The area is accessible and has good conditions for almost all kinds of alternative tourism - cultural, ethno-cultural, eco, natural, hunting, fishing etc.

History of Ardino Municipality is rich and varied. It has its beginning from ancient times. Over the millennia this region has been inhabited by different ethnic groups and communities. As a result of the coexistence of different cultures, cultural pluralism has been established over the centuries.

The cultural heritage of Ardino is combined with the exceptionally beautiful and healthy natural environment with outstanding ecological qualities. The development of the tourism is an alternative way for developing the local economy and achieving higher living standard for locals.

Devil's Bridge

The main attraction, with the largest tourist flow on the territory of Ardino municipality is the Devil's Bridge over the Arda River. The National Institute for Immovable Cultural Heritage declares the site as an architectural and cultural monument of national importance.

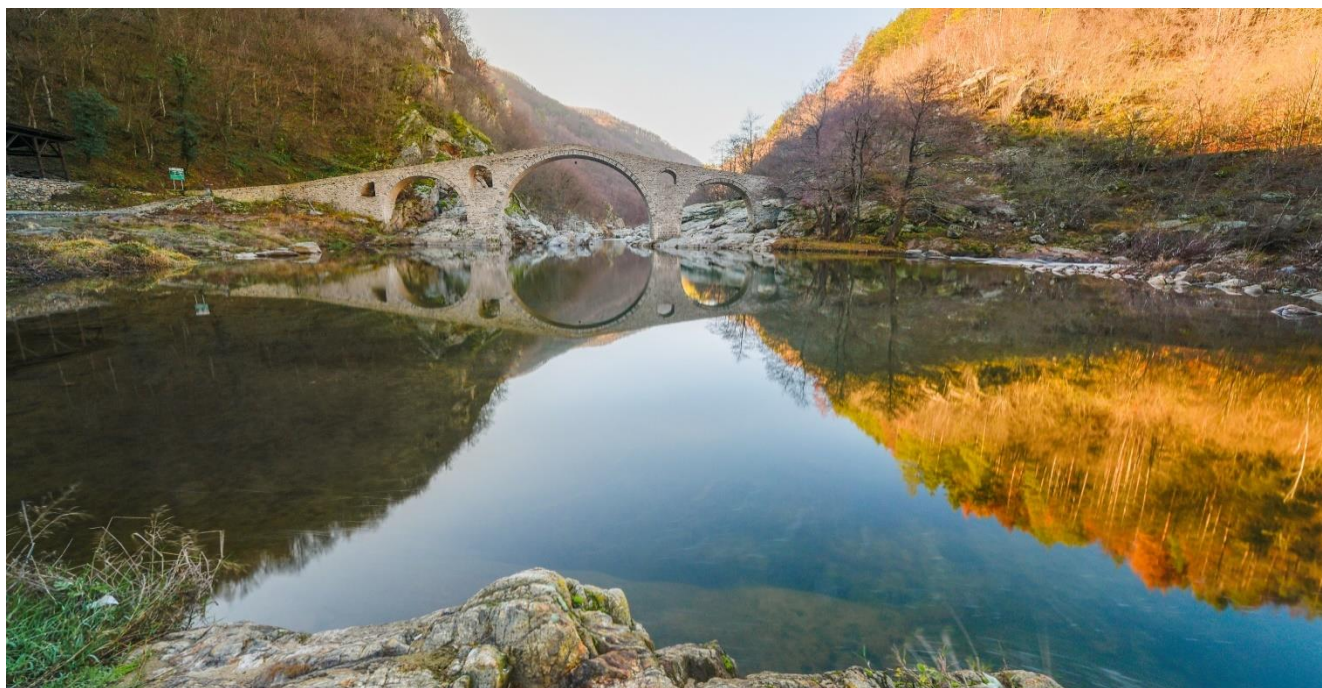
Devil's Bridge is the largest and most magnificent bridge in the Rhodopes, an emblem of Ardino municipality and one of the wonders of medieval building art in the Balkans - due to its amazing architectural elegance but also as an engineering and technical achievement. It is also one of the very few architectural structures in Bulgaria dating back to the early XVI century, preserved in its integrity so far. The bridge was built by order of Sultan Selim I Javaus as part of a road linking the Upper-Thracian lowland with Aegean Thrace and Aegean Sea.

The bridge is located in an indescribably beautiful narrow gorge, connecting the eastern and western coasts along the middle part of the Arda River, where it forms a canyon with large meanders.

Its length is 56 meters, the width is 3.5 meters, three-arched, and the arches of its lateral ribs are made with holes with semicircular drainage pipes for draining the water. The height of the central vault is 11.5 - 12 meters, and on the edge is preserved a stone rail with a height of 12 cm.



Actually, the landscape and the site are marvelous. The bridge provides a strong experience for its visitors, motivating them to come back repeatedly.



Orlovi Skali

Only 3 km south of Ardino is located the Thracian sanctuary "Eagle Rocks". In 1977 the sanctuary has been declared as a historic site in a natural landmark by the Committee for the Protection of the Natural Environment. In 2011 the Ministry of Culture changed the type of the site to "archaeological center" and the category was changed to national importance.

Orlovi Skali are a group of prominent volcanic rocks (rheolites and tracheolites), 762 m above sea level, situated on a slope with west exposure. The height of the rocks reaches 25 m from the surrounding terrain. On the most prominent rock of the massif there are more than 100 trapezoidal niches, of which 97 are now preserved. The largest part of the niches - 55 are oriented to the west, to the south are oriented 35, to the north - 5 and to the east - 6, which are almost completely omitted. The niches are 8-12 cm deep. There are two niches on the lower rock, located 35 meters southwest of the high. Under the rocks there are traces of chutes, altars and other rock-cut structures.



The cultural complex "Orlovi Skali" is the most significant megalithic monument with hollow niches, preserved in the Rhodopes and in the Balkans in general.



The Historical Museum

The Museum is built in the end of 18th century and till 1912 it was used for headquarter by the Turkish army. The brief historical reference reveals the rich variety of archaeological sites and cultural and historical values found on the territory of Ardino Municipality.

Ethnographic collection - the Historical Museum of Ardino is dominated by the movable ethnographic monuments and collections of separate historical and household objects and technical complexes from the Ottoman period and the epoch of the revival, which characterize the economy, culture and household life.

Archaeological Collection - archaeological surveys conducted on the territory of the municipality are still in their initial stages. Five real estates have been studied through the methods of archeology, only



one of which has been thoroughly studied, namely the prehistoric sanctuary in the Adata area, the Paspal neighborhood, the village of Byal izvor. The movable archaeological sites discovered in the field studies - mass ceramic material, flint and stone tools are located in the museum's repository at the Municipal Center. The foundation of the Archeology Fund was established. Apparently, many pots can be separated and consolidated among the massive ceramic material of the Adada locality.



The old “Barutchinitza” (gunpowder warehouse)

The “Barutchinitza” is the only historical building in the town of Ardino, declared to be an architectural and building cultural property, according to the Cultural Heritage Act. It is an exquisite stone building from the last quarter of the 19th century which is a representative model for the aesthetics of the administrative buildings preserved on the territory of the country since the Ottoman era. The master builder of the building is not known, but its architectural features recognize the style of the Bratsigovo building school.



As it is now, the “Barutchinitza” was located in the very center of Ardino, the former Egi-Dere. It served as a gunpowder and ammunition warehouse of the Turkish army until the end of the First World War, when the settlement finally became a Bulgarian possession, although it was formally annexed to the national territory as early as 1912-13.



Belite Brezi

The only one natural birch forest in the Rhodopes mountain is located in Ardino. The area is called Belite Brezi (the White birches). The healing properties of the fresh air in the area are well known and undeniable not only within Bulgaria but around the world. The area Belite Brezi has a beneficial effect on the treatment of pulmonary and allergic diseases. It is believed that because of the crystal clear air in the area, surgical operations could be performed even outdoors.

The complex has about 14 holiday homes and private hotels with a total capacity of 250 beds.

It is also a center for organized outings and excursions to Mount Alada. In 1961 the Beli Brezi is regulated as a resort of local importance by the Ministry of Public Health.



Meanders of the Arda River

The Arda River is probably one of the most impressive rivers in Bulgaria. It flows from Mount Ardin in the Rhodopes and flows into Maritsa on Greek territory, creating unique meanders on its way (curves of the riverbed in the form of a horseshoe). On its way, the river runs 250 kilometers, filled with water, three of the largest dams, and flows into Maritsa to finish its journey on the territory of Greece.

The Arda River crosses the territory of Ardino Municipality, where it forms wonderful curves (meanders).

Some of the most impressive and easily accessible meanders are those in the area of Kardzhali dam, on the territory of Ardino Municipality. The most popular of them is known as the "Turn". It is situated on the southern slope of the Kardzhali dam on the road between the villages of Ribarci and Star Chitak. There the rivers Borovitsa and Arda gather in one, forming a scenic panoramic view. The other two more well-known meanders of Arda are very close. Nearby is the village of Lyubino, where you can see another beautiful meander. There the river is along the hill, on whose peak was the medieval fortress. Parts of the fortress wall, the battlements and the entrance of the fortress are still preserved.





Medieval fortress in the Asara area, Bashevo village

The site category declared by the Ministry of Culture is of local importance.

It is 1.50 km northwest in a straight line from the center of the Bashevo village. It is built on the ridge of a rocky ridge with steep and vertical, slopes to the north, west and south, bounded by the same sides of the Arda River. The site is most accessible from the east on the ridge, walking along a steep rocky path.

The fortress played a major defensive role in the area of the Arda River. It was built around the 10th century on a picturesque cliff above the river, which forms its famous meanders here. It was supplied with water from the river through an underground tunnel. From everywhere, the fortress is surrounded by tall and picturesque beaches where many villages with picturesque architecture have been laid.

The fortress near the Borovitsa village

The object is declared as immovable cultural property with national importance.

Late Antiquity and Medieval Fortress is located above the mouth of the River Borovitsa during the influx into the Arda River. The alley is located on a typical plateau peak, dominating the surrounding terrain. From the east and south the plateau ends with sheer rocks. From the northeast, the river Borovitsa flows below the summit, and from the south - river Arda. The fortress wall encloses the top entirely from the west and north. It is made of processed stone, bonded with white mortar.

It is built probably in the 10th century to guard the area along the Arda River.

The natural landmark Hladilnika

This is a karst cave in the village of Lyubino. It is located to the north of Ardino, to the mouth of the Davidkovska River when it flows into the Arda River. The cave can be used as a natural fridge.

Its name derives from extremely low temperatures in the hottest summer months. The Hladilnika can be reached by car and in the area there is a small hut for the State Forestry.



Traditional autumn cultural holidays in Ardino

They are held every year in the first half of September. The event lasts for three days. The organizer is the Municipality of Ardino. A rich cultural and sporting program is provided during the day.



Marathon "Devil's Bridge-Ardino"

The route is 7 km long. This sporting event takes place on the International Day of Challenge and National Athlete's Day - May 17th, and the goal of the local government is to become a tradition. Participants from both Bulgaria and other countries are able to take part in the event. The organizer of the event is the Municipality of Ardino.



It takes place in the Devil's Bridge area on the Arda River. The event is a competition on catch of river fish. The organizer of the event is the Municipality of Ardino.

Fish Fest

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