

PTO Welcome Booklet 2024/2025



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[Classlist](#) sign-up

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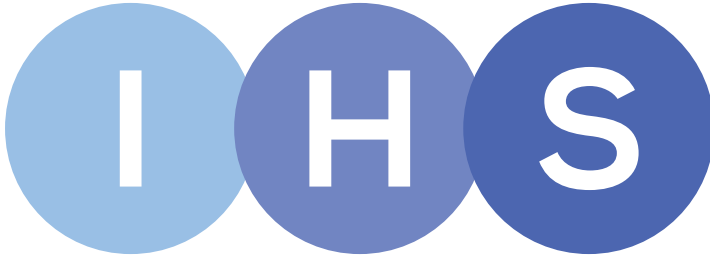
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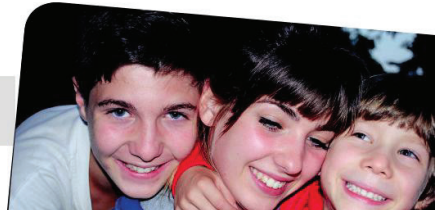
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PTO Welcome booklet

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WELCOME TO BULGARIA AND THE ANGLO-AMERICAN SCHOOL OF SOFIA!

Dear Parents and Teachers,

On behalf of the Parent Teacher Organisation (PTO), I would like to extend to you a very warm welcome to the Anglo-American School of Sofia. If you are new to AAS, we wish you a great start and may you enjoy every moment. If you have been here a while, we are delighted to welcome you back!

We have prepared this booklet with suggestions that we have been collecting from AAS parents and teachers. The booklet has recommendations for family activities, shopping and restaurants, hospitals, medical and veterinary contacts, including what to do in case of an emergency. It also includes information on special events at AAS throughout the school year.

The PTO hopes you will find it useful as you adjust to life in Sofia or simply to expand your information resources. Through Classlist, Facebook, Instagram, AAS newsletter and bulletin boards we will keep you posted about events and initiatives. And please don't forget to share your experiences with us!

I wish you a wonderful AAS experience!

Radostina Rashkova
2024–2025 PTO President

PARENT TEACHER ORGANISATION, AAS SOFIA

WHO WE ARE

The Parent Teacher Organization is an integral part of the life of the Anglo-American School of Sofia, functioning to aid and enhance AAS programs and activities. The PTO also has an important role in fostering and supporting a community composed of students, parents, educators and others supporting AAS.

All parents of AAS students are automatically members of the PTO and as such, have the right to be active in the organization.

From all PTO members an **Executive Board** is elected yearly, which for the school year 2024–2025 is as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| President: | Radostina Rashkova |
| Vice President: | Gergana Moskova |
| Treasurer: | Milena Mattingly |
| Room Parents Coordinator: | Roberta Paz |
| Teacher Representatives: | Beth Burnett and Elena Ivanova |

In addition to the executive board, many parents serve as class liaisons (Room Parents) from Pre-K to Grade 12. The Room Parent serves as a valuable link between the teachers, other class parents, and the PTO.

WHAT WE DO

The objectives of the PTO are:

- To provide an avenue for communication for all involved in the educational process.
- To support extra-curricular and enrichment activities for students.
- To organize fundraising and other special events.
- To coordinate parent volunteer support as needed.
- To foster positive communication between the AAS Board of Directors and parents.
- To extend charity outreach to the AAS community and beyond.

WHY GETTING INVOLVED

Getting involved enhances one's experience in a place, not only at school, but in the community in which we are living. There are talents to be shared and experiences to be exchanged.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Join our PTO Chat meetings, join us on [Classlist](#) and get connected with all AAS parents; keep an eye on our [Facebook Group](#) and [Instagram](#); don't miss the PTO session on the AAS weekly newsletter; send us an email (pto@aat-sofia.org); or come for a coffee and a chat at our office, located inside the Library @ Atrium!

PTO MAIN EVENTS

PTO INFOMARKET and WELCOME BACK BBQ for all families

Saturday, 24th August, 2024

On the first Saturday of the school year we proudly invite you to our annual info market and Welcome Back BBQ. This is a great opportunity to meet and greet AAS staff members and other families. Local businesses and services who can help you settle down in Sofia will be there, all recommended by the AAS Community.

PTO HALLOWEEN

Saturday, 26th October, 2024

A fun, colorful and scary family event of dress-up, games, and lots of treats!

PTO WINTER MARKET

Saturday, 13th December, 2024

Cold days, warm hearts! Join us for this festive celebration!

EASTER EGG HUNT

Wednesday, 06th April, 2025

A fun game for all ES/MS/HS students and an overload of chocolate!

INTERNATIONAL FAIR

Saturday, 14th June, 2025

A festive, fun-filled day for the entire family! Fun games and activities for the kids, culinary specialities from countries all over the world and much more! A day not to be missed!

ADDITIONAL PTO ACTIVITIES

- Welcoming and supporting all returning and new AAS families
- Chat meetings, an opportunity to meet the Director and Principals
- Bake Sales
- AAS Merchandise sales at both physical and online stores
- English books sales (new and second-hand) at various times throughout the year

PTO IS FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED BY

- Fundraisers
- Sponsors
- Entrance tickets to events
- Book sales
- Bake sales
- Merchandise sales
- Raffle tickets
- Spontaneous donations

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Hard to believe, but just a few years ago, grocery shopping in Sofia was an all-day affair driving from mini-market to bakery, to butcher, to marketplace. Now, there is a still growing number of [supermarkets](#) with a wide variety of goods. The following supermarkets all stock a good selection of local as well as international brand name products. The choice is yours!

You can also find amazing fresh fruits and vegetables on [local open air farmers' markets](#). It's worth shopping there.

The number of [shopping malls](#) in Sofia is increasing each year. You will find clothes of various international brands there as well as restaurants and cinemas.

SUPERMARKETS

MAGITALIA — 8.00-20:00, 7 days a week. Italian supermarket offering food, drinks, detergents, cosmetics, and home goods, made in Italy. Spanning 2500 sq.m, MAG Italia caters to both retail and wholesale. Tsarigradsko Shose 425, www.magitalia.bg

BILLA — 8.00–22.00, 7 days a week, Austrian chain. Appreciated for its fresh bread selections baked in-house. Nearest location to school is in Mladost. A flagship store on Blvd. Bulgaria, near Boyana, a new store beside Coca Cola. Cherni Vrah inside Paradise Mall, www.billa.bg

FANTASTICO — 24 hours/7 days a week (some stores), Supermarket with various locations in Sofia, the two nearest schools are located in Mladost (see map). There are also 2 stores located in Dragalevtsi, just off the ring road and on Simeonovsko Shosse near Maxi hotel (map). Offers a nice variety of meat, cheese, vegetables and fruits, organic section and good range of food and non food items. Website Fantastico: <http://ff-bg.net/en/>

HIT — 8.00–22.00, 7 days a week, German Chain, with a large assortment of (international) food and non-food items. Appreciated for its big variety in fresh fruits and vegetables. It also has a good organic section near the cashier. Located on Alexander Malinov street in Mladost 4, www.hit-hypermarket.bg

KAUFLAND — Mon-Sat 7.00–22.00, Sun 8.00–21.00, A German grocery chain. Their motto: Guaranteed good grocery shopping and cheap. www.kaufland.bg

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

LIDL — Mon-Sat 7.00–22.00, Sun 8.00–21.00, A German discounter with a good basic assortment (all you need), good freshly baked bread, and a weekly rotation of various food and non-food selections on offer, closest shop to school is in Okolovrasten pat 99, Gorubliane www.lidl.bg

MAKS — 24 hours, 7 days a week. Supermarket in the “suburbs” with some fresh products and a modest selection of household articles. There is a cafe upstairs with a play area for kids. It is located in Dragalevtsi on 53 Zahari Zograf, the “upper ring road.” <https://supermarketmaks.com>

METRO CASH AND CARRY — 24 hours, 7 days a week. German bulk-shopping store for food and non-food. Children under 7 are not allowed in (for safety reasons: forklift trucks roam the store stacking shelves). You need a membership card or you just get a day pass (you need an ID) at the desk when you enter. Good pharmacy outside. Location is Tsarigradsko Shosse Blvd, 1784, www.metro.bg

SHOPPING MALLS

Sofia Ring Mall — next to IKEA, opened November 2014. A shopping center of a new generation, with two hundred stores representing over 400 brands 100 of which are completely new to the Bulgarian market. The shopping center has the largest indoor amusement center; the largest indoor karting track in the country with an area of 7,500 m²; the largest department store, extending to 6,500 m²; a free parking lot with a total of 3,500 parking spaces and VIP parking lot with 100 places: www.sofiaring.bg

Bulgaria Mall — Just beneath its wonderful glass roof, Bulgaria Mall offers a lovely atmosphere, comfortable interior, quality selection of unique for the Bulgarian market fashion brands such as Debenhams, Desigual, Esprit and a wide range of entertainment options for kids and adults including Play ark, Laser Park, Arena Deluxe, Arena Deluxe 5D and weekly family events. For more information visit www.bulgariamall.bg and www.facebook.com/BulgariaMall.

Park Center Sofia — Between Cherni Vrah Boulevard, Vitosha boulevard and Boulevard Bulgaria. Several good gift shops and fashion shops inside. Open but under the reconstruction now, for actual information see www.parkcenter.bg

Mall of Sofia — On the corner of Stamboliyski Boulevard and Opalchenska Street. Mostly clothing and shoe shops (Benetton, Bata), but also has gift shops, Happy Bar and Grill, a McDonalds. This is also where the cinema city is located, www.mallofsofia.bg

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Paradise Center — On Cherni Vrah. The main conceptual idea is the synergy between man and nature, embodied in the logo of the project and in every single detail of the building. It is a very complete mall with many shops, food court and lots of entertainment for children,

www.paradise-center.com

Serdika Centre — Serdika Center is located on Sitnyakovo Blvd. It has 210 stores with a commercial space of over 51,000 square meters on three levels. Serdika's main focus is shopping, and it has more upscale shops than other malls. It has coffee shops and restaurants, but it will not be marketed as a recreation center, hence the lack of cinemas, www.serdikacenter.bg

Sofia Outlet Centre — The Centre is located on Tsarigradsko shosse, next to Technomarket and METRO and opposite the EXPO Center. This is a large discount mall for over 70 worldwide brands including Diesel, Converse, Tommy Hilfiger, Max Mara, Sisley, Triumph and Rollmann, www.sofiaoutletcenter.bg

The Mall — 115, Tsarigradsko Shosse, open Mon–Sun, 10:00–22:00. The largest shopping center in Bulgaria with 178 stores featuring international brands, a 9000 sq meters Carrefour hypermarket, the ten-screen Arena Cinema, various entertainment venues, a fitness center, restaurants and cafes. This combination of world famous brands, services and places of recreation and entertainment makes The Mall an exciting place to shop. Find out more at www.themall.bg

Business Park Sofia — Includes several physician's offices, a dry-cleaner, 100 grams, Subway, some nice cafes, hairdresser, florist, Arena movie theater, two small supermarkets, pharmacy, copy center. The Holiday Inn hotel is also located here. Please note that shops are only open during the week until 6 pm. Parking is free in the area for the first 2 hours.

<http://www.businesspark-sofia.com/en/page/65/Amenities>

Princess Outlet Centre — Located on Alexander Malinov street in Mladost 4, just behind Hit Supermarket. Clothing, shoes, toys, restaurant, café, photo service, bowling alley and arcade. <http://www.sofiaoutletcenter.bg/en/>

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

OPEN MARKETS

Note that markets in Sofia open later than in many other countries, some after 10am, but they do tend to stay open later in the evening.

Graf Ignatiev — The row of fruit and vegetable stalls on ul. Graf Ignatiev in the centre of the city adds plenty of character to this tram-only thoroughfare. Fresh fruit and vegetables, nuts and dried fruit as well as honey and honey-based products. In season you can also buy boiled corn on the cob, roasted pumpkin and chestnuts. Prices are higher than the other markets but so is the convenience. The stalls usually pack up around 9 p.m. [Graf Ignatiev Market - location map](#)

Mladost 1 — Open air market that is located closest to school on bul. Andrei Saharov, close to Mladost 1 underground station and relatively close to Billa supermarket in Mladost. Great choice of seasonal fruits and vegetables. [Mladost Open Air market map](#)

The Hali — Located on Maria Luisa Blvd., opposite the Mosque. Restored and modernized, this is the oldest covered market in Sofia. There's a bit of everything inside. If the pay parking is full, an option would be to park across the street at the TZUM and use the pedestrian underpass to cross the street. [Tsentralni Hali - location map](#)

"Rimskata Stena" (Roman Wall) Market — Located on Stara Stena Street near Hristo Smirnenski Street in Lozenetz neighborhood. A charming, smaller sized market, offering a variety of good fruits and vegetables, flowers and knick-knacks. There really are Roman ruins along the back of the market. Park where you can along the street, and watch out for the trams. [Rimskata Stena - location map](#)

Sitnyakovo Market (Pazari Iztok) — One of the most expensive but also the best well-kept outdoor markets in Bulgaria. Located next to the Romanian Embassy on the Shipchenski Prohod Blvd. This open-air market caters to the international crowd and offers the best variety of fruits and vegetables anywhere in Sofia, including radicchio, endive, Napa cabbage, and many exotic fruits. It's also considered the most expensive. Open year round, there are many areas to this market: the newer, covered, produce market, where some of the shopkeepers speak some English; the older, smaller, produce open-air market; and a small shopping area for hard-to-find alcoholic beverages, household wares, flowers, plants and typical pottery. [Sitnyakovo Market - location map](#)

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

“Zhenski Pazar” (Women’s Market) – is the biggest outdoor market in Sofia. Located behind Maria Luisa Blvd. across from the Mosque, behind the Hali. Sofia’s largest and most culturally interesting market although not all will like it. Offering mostly local fruits and vegetables. You can find dairy products, ethnic food shops, butchers, bakeries, herbs, flowers, plants, shoes and clothing, hand-made tools, woolen blankets and sweaters and locally made pottery. It is a very busy open-air market, especially crowded on weekends. Parking on the tiny side streets is a challenge, and we would suggest using the parking either at the TZUM or the Hali and walking. [Zhenski Pazar - location map](#)

Pazar Ivan Vazov - located on 24 Petko U.Todorov Blvd. (between Juzhen park and Bulgaria Blvd). Open air market with a variety of vegetables, fruits and flowers. Also some cheap clothes, shoes, home goods. Pazar Ivan Vazov - [location map](#).

SPECIALTY FOODS / BEVERAGES

BAKERIES – From Bread to Birthday Cakes:

100grama-Sladki — 10.00–20.00, 7 days a week. A chain that sells all kinds of sweets and some savory. Looking for a birthday cake? This is a good option. They serve all kinds of pies, tarts, cakes and even Italian macarons (not to be confused with macaroni). Order a birthday cake of your choice by email [Neda at neda@100gr-sladki.com](mailto:Neda@100gr-sladki.com) or info@100gr-sladki.com, www.100gr-sladki.com

Met cake — Cherni Vrah 175 and Bigla 2 str. Offers a variety of cakes and sweets. <http://metcake.bg/en/home-1/>

JoVan The Dutch Bakery — Mon–Sat 08.00–20.00, Sunday closed. Selling healthy and delicious bread, and trying the real dutch apple pie! 37, Angel Kanchev Str, and 1, Hristo Belchev Str., (corner with Graf Ignatiev St.) Sofia. Tel: 00359 885 886 190. www.jovan.bg

Grand Foods — in Paradise Mall (-1 floor) and in 11a Saborna Str. Centre for Italian deli, food & wine. www.Grandfoods.bg/en

HleBar — 14 Vasil Aprilov Street. You can find artisan bread, hummus, sandwiches and banitsas with a twist. They also make special Easter bread, [Hle Bar Facebook page](#)

Ishy — bakery and sweet shop on “Upper Ring road” between Dragalevtzi and Boyana just opposite Leo’s Rustico. Facebook: [Ishy](#)

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Kostas — Greek Bakery, Cupcake Shop and Dessert Shop. You can find breakfast, brunch, lunch, desserts and more here. 109 Oborishte Str. and 15 Knyaz Alexander Dondukov Blvd. Sofia.

Ma Baker — 8 Sheinovo Str. Sofia. Offer handmade selection of bread and sweets and good coffee drinks. Ma Baker Facebook page: [Cafe Ma Baker](#).

Pain de Paris — Mon to Fri 08.00–19.30, Sat & Sun 8.00–19.00. There is a French baker in town! Some families try to beat each other on the weekend for the Pain-au-chocolat! There are many shops in Sofia, one is located on Simeonovsko Shosse, next to Maxi, opposite Fantastico supermarket, 0879 230 297 <https://paindeparis.wordpress.com/>

Sun Moon — Mon to Sat 08.00–22.00, Sun 12.00–21.00. Sun Moon is a small vegetarian bakery & restaurant, where you can see the whole process of bread making in front of you. They sell wholemeal bread, sourdough bread, ciabatta and gluten-free breads. Located at 18B W. Gladston Str. (corner of Kniaz Boris), 0895 648 477, www.sunmoon.bg

Take a Cake — Mon-Fri 08:00-20:00, Sat-Sun 09:00-20:00. For the real cupcake lovers! Sofia is following the European trend with its first cupcake shop. They make cupcakes for special occasions or branded one's logo for corporate customers. Shop locations 6 G. Benkovski Str. and 1 Tulovo Str, Online orders at www.take-a-cake.eu

Vega cakes — 70 Gen. Yosif Gurko Str, Tel 0878 856 888. A small enterprise producing a small quantity of natural products. Cakes by your choice can be ordered online, by phone or at the shop, www.tortivega.com

Tea Sweet Shop (sladkarnica) — This place is always crowded because they just simply have the best cakes in town! Located in the Iztok area. <http://www.tortitea.com/>

Confetti — 4 Graf Ignatiev Str., For sure the best ice cream in town! See the restaurant section for more details. www.facebook.com/CONFETTIgelateria/

Chill BOX — For frozen yoghurt with lots of toppings, fun to pick, several places in Sofia: 151 Rakovski Str., Mall of Sofia, Ring Mall, Paradise Center, The Mall <http://www.chillboxfrozenyogurt.com/>

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Gelateria Naturale — they make wonderful ice cream with only natural ingredients, no palm oil, no artificial additives. 12A Tsar Ivan Shishman Str., <http://gelaterianaturalesofia.com/en/>

Хляб и Soul (Bread and Soul) - A small family bakery for handmade craft bread and healthy delicious pastries. Sofia, 1 Porto Lagos Str. Tel: 0878806808. <https://m.facebook.com/breadnsoul/>, email: breadnsoul@gmail.com

DELI / GOURMET PRODUCTS / IMPORTED FOODS

Bakalia — 104 Knyaz Boris I, Tel: 02 443 0007. Greek and cypriot delicatessen, <http://www.bakaliathegreekdeli.com/>

Dobrev Cheese — 31 Fr. Nansen Str., very close to NDK and five other locations in Sofia. For your convenience, DOBREV offers a new service – delivery of products in the city of Sofia. They also operate “Cheese and wine for friends” Deli and Bakery - on ul. Parchevich 31, www.dobrev-cheese.com

Don Des Dieux/Dar ot Bogovete (also known as The President Shop) — 17 Cherni Vrah Blvd. and larger store on Bulgaria Blvd. heading towards Boyana on the right hand side just past Billa and the intersection, Tel: 02 988 4432. Offers a wide selection of imported cheese, fresh baguettes and cut meats. They will make you a tasty baguette sandwich to take away. <https://darotbogovete.bg/bg>

I Sensi — Italian deli store, their sweets are made by restaurant Capaninna, downtown, Sofia, 17A Aksakov Str., www.isensi.bg

Sokoni — Indian and British food shop. Stocking a vast range of Indian foods, spices, ready meals and ayurvedic cosmetics, you can find British food items there, [Sokoni food store - online delivery](#)

The Butcher — Shop at 27A General Yosif V. Gurko Str., in the centre. High quality butcher shop offers delivery for only 3 BGN, <https://butcher.bg/bg/>

Puglia Italian Deli Offers same-day delivery. Address Puglia 1: Motopista, ul. “Kostenski vodopad” 45, Mon-Sun 10 AM–9 PM, Phone: 088 240 9006
Address Puglia 2; bul. „Andrej Sakharov” 247, Mladost 2 272B, Tel. +359 884120322, <https://www.puglia.bg>

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

AlexFish - higher-quality shops for seafood and sushi. Address: Dragalevtsi Vitosha, ul. "Paprat" 6A, 1415 Sofia

<https://alexfish.bg/?website=main&language=en&content=home>

Cafe Mania — Located on 25 Cherni vrah Blvd. Premium coffee, capsules for Nespresso, Tchibo, Caffitaly, Senseo, Tassimo and Pad machines, fresh roasted coffee, ground coffee, coffee beans, coffee pads, pods, e.s.e. pods and many others. On-line order and free delivery for orders over 100 BGN, <http://kafemania.bg/>

Vivenda — high quality meat delivery www.vivenda.bg

HEALTHY FOOD STORES

Balev Bio Market — Ground floor of The Mall, Tel: 0885644500. Well stocked health food store with baby food, fresh fruits and vegetables, some meat, dairy products, breads, jams, vitamins, and sushi ingredients. Worth exploring, www.balevbiomarket.com

Biomag — 1 Journalist Square, Lozenets, Tel: 088 621 9191. In Biomag you will find almost all organic products available in Bulgaria, plus many exclusive organic products that are purchased for their stores, www.biomag.bg

Farmhopping — The go-to place for every busy city person, looking for fresh and healthy food, sustainably produced in local farms. Farmhopping producers create and manage their own online storefronts allowing customers to easily order a variety of products and receive them all in one convenient delivery, either straight to their doorstep or to a pick-up location of their choice. In order to guarantee the excellence and freshness of the products while at the same time reducing food waste, Farmhopping doesn't operate with stock availability. The core focus is on sustainable produce grown under stringent quality requirements and picked by the farmers right after an order has been placed. Contacts: info@farmhopping.com, Phone: 0700 20 080, Website: <https://farmhopping.com/en>

Gimel — This brand you find in most organic shops, some supermarkets. It now has its own shops Healthy Zone Sofia, 23 Arsenalski Blvd. www.gimel.bg

Mlekarnica ot Selo — Yanko Sakazov Blvd. Dairy from village, milk products from small eco dairy farms, honey, bio herbs, <https://bg-bg.facebook.com/MlekarnicaOtSelo>

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Zoya bg Organic & Natural — several shops in Sofia: 12 Dobrudzha Str., 63 Ne-ofit Rilski Str., 22 Aksakov Str. (near Crystal garden) Bio cosmetics, bio food, raw and superfoods, natural supplements. Also you can order online www.zoya.bg

WINE

Apollowine — apollowine.com is an ONLINE WINE SHOP with a distinguished selection of top Bulgarian wines!

Casavino — 91 Alexander Malinov Blvd, tel: 088 69 09 661 and in Maxi complex, 110 Simeonovsko Shose, tel: 088 67 02 348. order directly with FREE delivery. There are a few more shops in town www.casavino.bg

La Cave — 59 Dimitar Hadjikitzev, Lozenetz, Tel: 0888 356 213. Offering wine imported directly from France, www.lacave-bg.com

Avanti - A big choice and variety of wines and alcohol at a good and reasonable price <https://avanti-bg.com>

Vinopoly- wine shop & bar retail chain dedicated to offering the best in the wine, coffee, gourmet. <https://vinopoly.com>

HOME, BOOKS, ETC.

ART & CRAFT SUPPLIES

The Union of Bulgarian Artists Building — 6 Shipka Street. On the ground floor of this building is a mall, with shops offering a good selection of high quality, professional artist supplies, framing services and galleries. www.sbhart.com/en/

Hobby Art & Creative Shop Mosaic — In Mladost 4, 426-A Atanas Moskov Str. You will find everything you need for your arts and crafts on their 2 floors and it is relatively close to school, www.hobbyart.bg

Art Service — 4B Trapezitsa Str, close to Serdika metro station. A large variety of hobby and craft & artist materials, good prices and professional advice. Tel: 0893665808, www.artservicebg.com

Slanchogled — 13 Ivan Vazov Str. If you like painting, drawing, origami, etc, you can find all your materials in here, www.slanchogled.com

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Impresia store — Rich variety of art and craft supplies. Located on 26 Krakra Str. (near Shipka street). Impresia is an official representative of the Marabu and Faber-Castell Art & Graphic for Bulgaria. www.impresia.bg Tel: 02/ 943 89 06.

Jumbo — You can find almost everything you need (and often even more) from stationery, toys, decorations, and home items for a very good price. First place to visit if you are looking for seasonal decorations or Halloween costumes! <http://jumbobg.info/> They have 3 shops in Sofia now.

Some book shops such as **Orange Center** (www.orangecenter.bg), BookTrading (www.booktrading.bg), Knigomania (www.knigomania.bg), or **Greenwich Book Center** (www.greenwich.bg) also offer a variety of craft supplies.

BBQ

Great Western Barbecue — Showroom 36 Ring Road Pearl Park Mall Tel: 878 870 784 (Chris speaks English). As it is not easy to find a good barbecue, this is the place to go to: from the traditional charcoal to propane BBQ. They also sell the Outdoor Chef, often called the Weber of Europe! www.gwbbq.net.

Big green egg showrooms and dealers here: [green egg dealers](http://greeneggdealers.com)

BOOKS

You can find a selection of foreign language books in Sofia, mainly English but some French, German and Spanish, for example at the following bookstores. The PTO sells English and Bulgarian-language books several times a year as well!

Helikon — Carries a large selection of books in English and German, www.helikon.org

Booktrading Ltd. — 50 Graf Ignatiev Str. (near Slaveikov Square) and 8 more shops, located mainly in the malls. Adult and children's fiction and non-fiction in English, plus some children's craft kits, puzzles, birthday cards, and stationery, www.booktrading.bg

Colibri — 36 Ivan Vazov Str. A quality bookstore with titles in many languages, www.colibri.bg

Elephant bookstore — 31 Tsar Ivan Shishman Str. The Elephant Bookstore has the largest selection of second-hand English books in Bulgaria. It also has some nice gifts, www.elephantbookstore.com

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Greenwich Book Center — 37 Vitosha Blvd. Open also during the weekend. Large selection of books for children and adults, albums, gifts, hobby supplies, a small coffee shop available inside with some outdoor seating, www.greenwich.bg

Knigomania — 28 Vassil Levski Blvd., (just up toward NDK from the British Residence). Also in City Center Sofia, Serdika Mall, Mall of Sofia, Paradise centre. Has English fiction and children books, Lonely Planet and Rough Guides and other travel guides. You can order online as well, www.knigomania.bg

Orange Centre — 18 Graf Ignatiev Str. Sofia's answer to a Virgin Megastore. On 4 floors, with stationery, a small range of books in English, toys, music and a cafe. They have more shops in town and in the main malls. The one closest to school is located in Business Park, www.orangecenter.bg

Sofia Book Market — On Slaveikov Square, outdoor tables selling all types of books and software. [MAP](#)

English Book Center, 99 Knyaz Boris I Str., [English book center](#)

Bayard Educational Children's Magazines — Subscribe and receive 10 monthly issues addressed personally to your child through the letterbox! In each issue your child will find a beautifully illustrated story and more: animal world, nature and science topics, games and fun activities, comic-strips... Bayard magazines provide support with the subjects children learn in school. The magazines are absolutely advert-free. For more information visit: www.bayard-magazines.co.uk. Also a large choice of French titles; discover more on: www.bayard-jeunesse.com As a local agent I guarantee the best price on the market for your subscription. Renata Vincendon, Representative of Bayard & Milan in Bulgaria, (+359) 0885 017 306, renatav.magazines@gmail.com

DO-IT-YOURSELF

A lot of small shops around town for specific items if you look carefully. Big retail chains have their shops in Sofia:

Bauhaus — 17 Istoriya Slavyanobalgarska Blvd. 17 is a German do-it-yourself chain that has opened its first hypermarket in Bulgaria. www.bauhaus.bg

Baumax — 83 Vladimir Vazov Blvd, www.baumax.bg

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Mr. Bricolage — Tsarigradsko Shose Blvd. close to The Mall, or Evropa Blvd. on the Lyulin side. Follow the signs on the motorway. A new shop opened inside the Ring Mall Sofia, www.mr-bricolage.bg

Praktiker — 323 Tsarigradsko Shose Blvd., on the left side as you head out of town, past Metro. The largest and newest do-it-yourself megastore, well-stocked with everything you would expect to find in this type of store, www.praktiker.bg/en/

ELECTRONICS, AUDIO-VIDEO, HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

Metro — Relatively near school on Tsarigradsko Shosse Blvd., or on the other side of town, on 182 Evropa Blvd., www.metro.bg

Technopolis — In the Business Park Sofia, relatively near AAS, also in the malls around Sofia, www.technopolis.bg

Techno Market — A new, multi-level superstore with several locations: One on Evropa Blvd., near Metro on the west side of town, one next to Metro just off Tsarigradsko Shose Blvd., on the east side, and also in Sofia Ring Mall — www.technomarket.bg

Zora — chain of stores www.zora.bg

FABRICS

Shops are numerous and tend to change location frequently, but they're usually concentrated on the following streets:

Alabin Street — near Vitosha Blvd. crossing.

Coats Bulgaria — Tsarigradsko Shose Blvd, Tel: 089 24 73 802. Cotton fabric and a wide assortment of knitting yarns and embroidery thread, www.coatsbulgaria.bg

Ekzarh Josif and Pirotska Streets — on either side of the Synagogue.

On **Ulitsa Tsar Simeon** close to Zhenski Pazar there are 2 shops called **Cacadu** - one with the leftovers for a few stotinki, the other one with high quality fabrics. Huge selection in both.

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

FLOWERS

Flower stalls and shops can be found in abundance on nearly every main street and in the shopping centres. The quality and variety changes often so just have a good look around. DIY stores mentioned above also have well stocked garden centres.

Flora Commerce — Online store only, Tel: 02 95 31 682/95 32 623. They import synthetic flowers, dry flowers, glass, ceramic souvenirs, accessories for weddings, candles and gifts. The firm has its own studio for decorating hotels, restaurants, offices, private homes and parties, www.flora-com.com

Open air market **Pazar Dimitar Petkoff**, very low prices. Best selection. Open early in the morning till noon.

Cvetalia — small shop, very close to school on 50 Samokovsko Shose, they usually have nice selection of flowers, www.cvetalia.com

Elfite — In Iztok area, 2 Nikolay Haitov Str., always fresh flowers, delivery as well, www.elfite.net

FURNITURE / HOUSE WARE

AIKO — On the ring road just before the Cherni Vrah roundabout. Very similar to IKEA, full of goods and decor for every area of the house. Facade of the building is deceptively small! Go inside to find 3 floors of furniture, linens, dishes, baskets, pots & pans, toys, infant furniture, and probably everything you're looking for. They do curtains as well for reasonable prices! www.aiko-bg.com

DOMKO — Large chain of stores in Bulgaria for carpets, rugs, parquet and laminate floor coverings, vinyl floor coverings, wallpaper fabrics, lighting, bed linens, blankets, towels, bathrobes, synthetic flowers, ceramic and glass accessories for home decorations. The nearest store is located on the ring road number 145 between Simeonovsko Shose and Cherni Vrah, www.domko.com

IKEA — On the Ring Road as you head towards Mladost and the school. The Swedish chain which has everything you could possibly need for your home. There is also a large restaurant, free play centre for small children, and a small grocery section selling (frozen) foods, www.ikea.bg/

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Jysk — In Hit shopping center, Mladost. Garden furniture, office furniture, as well as practical things for the living room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. This is also one of the few places in Sofia from which to purchase a trampoline, www.jysk.bg

Yavor — several shops in Sofia, f.e. in Ring mall, next to Mladost Arena Cinemas, www.yavor.bg

Kare — 257 Okolovrasten put (ring road), this shop has glamorous trends and the latest special offers to make your home your passion, www.kare-sofia.bg

GIFTS

Center of Folk Arts and Crafts/Souvenir Shop — 4 Paris Str. and 2 Knyaz Alexander I Square (inside The Royal Palace). They sell over 3,600 traditional hand-made Bulgarian souvenirs and represent more than 300 prominent Bulgarian Craftsmen, www.craftshop-bg.com

Genesis — 186 Vitosha Blvd., Tel: 02 400 1766 . Great for special gifts or styling your house: from nice vases, Bodum articles, to special shower curtains but also wallpaper etc. You can also find special plastic containers for the microwave (ben-to box), BPA free, www.genesis.bg

Kreo — You can find nice home accessories and decorations there. Shop in CCS, <http://kreo.bg/shops>

Zona Urbana — Has very unusual and unique bags, belts, wallets, and jewelry made from recycled materials. Prices are reasonable, great gifts. You can get a super cool clutch made of waxed newspaper in Cyrillic letters for 50 leva, www.zurbana.com

Laika — They sell beautiful cups and tea mugs made by Ekaterina Lachova, Bulgarian artist. Visit their shop in Sopharma building, 2nd floor or www.laika.bg

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

House of the Rising Force — 117 Knyaz Boris I Street and 9 Todor Alexandrov Blvd. A huge selection of musical instruments, www.hotrf.eu

Kamerton — 3 Rusalka Street, Tel: 02 946 1726. For purchase or rental www.camerton99.com

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Ultra music — www.ultramusicbg.com

Piano Tuner — Mr. Zlatin Georgiev works all day at the academy of music, but can be reached in the evenings after 9:00pm. Tel: 0856 7664. Speaks English. Can also help you choose a piano to buy or rent.

MMG — 117 Pernik Str., www.mmg-music.com

SOUVENIRS

If you want to get something typical from Bulgaria, you should buy either nice wine, rose cosmetics (there is an entire shop in Paradise Center Mall) or traditional pottery (several stalls with great choices can be found at Zhenski Pazar). Some more recommendations follow:

Flea Market at Alexander Nevski Cathedral — Icons, antiques, jewelry, Russian hand-painted boxes, and lots of cool junk too. Fun for outdoor browsing!

Museum Shop at the History museum — 16 Vitoshko lale Str., www.historymuseum.org

National Gallery for Foreign Art — Next to Alexander Nevski Cathedral. National gallery for foreign art The underpass between the Presidency building and the Council of Ministers.

Center of Folk Arts and Crafts/Souvenir Shop — 4 Paris Str. and 2 Knyaz Alexander I Square (inside The Royal Palace). They sell over 3,600 traditional hand-made Bulgarian souvenirs and represent more than 300 prominent Bulgarian Craftsmen, www.craftshop-bg.com

Gifted - GIFTED was founded in May 2017 by the architect Valeri Gyurov with the help of family and friends. The space is dedicated to local artists, collectives and brands, who are trying to build the contemporary image of the capital and the country as an attractive touristic destination.
<http://giftedsofia.com/en/shop/page/2/>

Balkansko (Балканско) - bul. "Vitoshka" 4, 1000 Sofia Center, Sofia
<http://balkansko-shops.bg/en/>

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

TOYS

You can find toys all over town, but these are some of our favourite shops:

Jumbo — 51 Boulevard Bulgaria and also close to school on 525 Botevgradsko Shosse. Just off Tsarigradsko Shosse. You will find just about everything for babies and children and a lot of stationery and household items there, <http://www.jumbo.gr/en/home-page>

Komsed/Comsed — 76 Todor Kableshev Str., Tel: 02 958 9915, off Bulgaria Blvd, just past the entrance to Billa on the right hand side of the street, this is the hyper-market. More shops in a few malls. Large assortment of decent quality children's toys including Legos, for all ages and different price ranges, www.komsed.net

Hippoland — Inside the shopping center where HIT and JYSK are in Mladost and in Serdika and Bulgaria Mall. Well stocked with toys, arts & crafts supplies, baby needs (including shoes), and strollers and car seats, www.hippoland.net

SPORT EQUIPMENT

BICYCLES

Bikes Center — Mon to Fri 10.00–19.30, Sat 10.00–18.00, Sun 11.00–17.00. Tel: 089 30 14 314. Selling good quality and affordable bikes. The owner speaks English and is very helpful, www.bikescenter-bg.com

Maxbike Store — Mon to Sat 10.00–19:00 Bike store with mainly Bulgarian Bicycle brands (Sprint) including a repair center. 53 Todor Kableshev Blvd., FRIENDS Trade Center, www.maxcombike.com

Velomania — The Drag Zone brand of stores is based on the concept of a one-stop shop for cyclists. Whatever your age or style of cycling, whether you are an avid biker or just like to go for an occasional ride in the park, you can find everything you need under one roof. Stores also feature in-house repair shops where experienced mechanics are always in demand to make large and small repairs to any bike, not just those bought from us. In the winter months they also turn their hand to ski and snowboard repairs. They operate 4 stores in Sofia. More info: www.velomania-bg.com

SHOPPING IN SOFIA

Second-hand Bicycles — Every weekend. Outside the Vasil Levski Stadium there is an open air flea market where one can find second-hand bikes in the summer and new, second-hand or even antique ski gear in winter, Evlogi Georgiev Blvd.

SPORTS, OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT/WINTER GEAR

There seems to be endless shops along Cherni Vrah Boulevard where they sell outdoor clothing and winter gear. Bogner, Rossignol, Head and some other shops so just have a stroll! And don't forget the flea market on the weekend next to the Levski Stadium: from very old to new ski gear.

Stenata — 5 Bratya Miladinovi Str. and 18 Shipchenski Prohod Blvd. (Galaxy Trade Center), Tel: 02 980 5491. The ultimate outdoor equipment: clothing, shoes, backpacks, tents, climbing gear, etc. Very good advice and selection, www.stenata.com

Decathlon — The French sportswear company has opened its first shop in Sofia. It is located next to Ikea on the ring road (near business park Sofia), www.decathlon.bg

Miras — 56 Cherni Vrah Str.. Tel: 088 77 64 773. Stocks the following brands: Head, Tyrolia, Penn, Arena, Speedo, Converse and Trespass, www.miras-sport.com

Rossignol — 59B Cherni Vrah Str.. Stocks brands such as Dunlop, Slazenger, O'Brien water-ski, Diana adults' swimsuits and Lecoq sportif sportswear, Cebe sun and ski goggles. Useful for kids' swim hats and UV shirts for the summer! www.sls.bg

Sport Depot — In Business Park, behind Como, Paradise center and in Bulgaria Mall. All-round sport shop, also good for ski gear, www.sportdepot.bg

Viva Sport — 121 Evlogi Georgiev Blvd. Tel: 02 846 5439. Tennis equipment, including kids' rackets and sports clothing by Arena and Wilson, <http://m.facebook.com/Viva-Sport-Sport-Shop-112120998928981/>

Max Sport — 81 Bulgaria Blvd. Nice range of brands, www.maxsport-bg.com

Sport Box — different locations, [sport box facebook page](#)

K2 Outdoor — 11 Arsenalski Blvd., climbing, trekking equipment, footwear and many more, www.k2outdoor.bg

RESTAURANTS

RESTAURANTS

The bars, cafés, and restaurants listed below have a good reputation among our community for different reasons. The majority of restaurants in Sofia are suitable for children. This list needs constant updating; therefore we welcome your comments and suggestions. Most of us also use Tripadvisor to find new places!

RESTAURANTS AND BARS

Sofia has so many great restaurants that it is impossible to name them all. Try them out and share your opinion on our facebook page.

Gato restaurant — 8 308 Str., Dragalevtsi, Tel: 0879 696 696. This is a new small hotel-restaurant in Dragalevtsi, on the edge of Mount Vitosha. It is off Leshnikova Gora (highest point), 308 str, no 4,1415 and has parking. We like the food there, although it has a small menu, www.6ato.bg

Annette — 27 Angel Kanchev Street, Tel: 02 980 4098. Here you can relax on the soft pillows, and savour masterfully prepared authentic Moroccan cuisine, original recipes by the owner's mother. Try the specialties of a mysterious land and a selection of wines from around the world, www.annette.bg

Artists Bar & Café — Modern Bulgarian art hangs on the walls of this stylish Sofia bar. Business guests of the Hilton Sofia hotel visit for breakfast while the terrace is popular with locals for lunches of Bulgarian salads and international appetizers. Come at night and sip cocktails or Bulgarian Rakia brandy. To book, please e-mail: rusi.rusev@hilton.com or call: 02 933 5064. www.sofia.hilton.com, www.facebook.com/hiltonsofia

Atelier Sofia — 16 Asen Zlatarov Str., Tel: 088 6 202 717. Very nice restaurant with a unique interior. French cuisine with a twist. Excellent service and a perfect place for a tete-a-tete or dinner with friends.

Avrasia Gardens — 42 Hristo Botev Blvd, Tel: 02 950 61 59. Turkish restaurant, recently opened and tried by a few parents who said they would definitely go back, www.avrasia.bg

Azahar — Spanish Restaurant, Address: 84 Krum Popov Str., Lozenets, 1421 Sofia, Phone: 088 802 0020, Open 12–11pm, <http://azahar.bg/home/>

RESTAURANTS

Bodega Tapas & Wine — ul. "Tsar Asen" 6, 1000 Sofia Center, Sofia, Tel: 087 982 4002. Tapas and wine, a nice atmosphere and decor with well presented, tasty food at non-exorbitant prices. Spanish life music Thursday to Saturday.

Bonita's Restaurant and Bakery — Sofia Residential Park, complex, block 16-V, Tel: 0879 50 66 88, <https://www.facebook.com/bonitassofia/>

Boom! Burgers & Steaks — 15 Karnigradska Street, very close to Vitosha Blvd., Tel: 0894 420 440. Over the years there have been several attempts to produce good burgers in Sofia and I would say Boom has come close to producing the perfect burgers in a great setting, <http://www.boomburgers.com/>

Bubble Tea — an interesting coffee, tea place. Refreshing and attractive beverages, <http://bg-bg.facebook.com/bubbleteabg>

Captain Cook — 100 James Bouchier Blvd., Marinela Hotel, Tel: 088 299 9001. In Captain Cook you will enjoy the best seafood specialties that can be found in Bulgaria. The seafood restaurant offers more than 50 types of fish. The friendly staff provide a highly professional service. Sushi has recently been added to the menu, www.captaincook.bg

Catch'A maK soul food restaurant — 62 Neofit Rilski Street (10m from Rakovski street) Tel 890 121 012. <https://www.facebook.com/CatchAmaK/>

Perfetto Restaurant — 27 Ivanitza Danchev Str., Boyana, Tel: 088 863 0630. Served up by attentive staff, the Bulgarian and modern European dishes are prepared with a high standard. There is an impressive list of international wines, although it is the huge selection of whiskies that really makes this place famous, <http://perfettobg.com>

Chef's — Lyubata Str., 1407 Sofia, Tel: 0896 723222, www.chefs-bg.com

Cinecitta — Osteria, Italian restaurant, Boyana ul. Kumata 75, Tel: 0885 760 160, www.cinecitta.bg

Confetti — 4 Graf Ignatiev Str., tel: 02 988 4444. Not only is this the best place in town to buy an ice cream, it is also wonderful for lunch or dinner. You can enter from 2 sides: front is ice cream, back has a great terrace in the summer.

RESTAURANTS

Die Alte Lampe/Fenerite — 2B Kotel St., tel: 02 964 0386. Very nice address offering a good alternative to German cuisine without forgetting that it is in Bulgaria, www.fenerite.com

Edo Sushi & Teppanyaki — 96 Georgi Rakovski Street, Sofia. Tel: 0878 92 0100. Offers a great selection of traditional Japanese dishes, sushi menu and authentic teppanyaki show. There is also a restaurant in Sofia Ring Mall, <http://edosushi.bg/>

Ego Club & Restaurant — 12 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd, Tel: 02 980 8989. Trendy and cool place with good food, a bit on the expensive side for Bulgarian standards. Lovely garden, reservation needed. <https://www.facebook.com/myegoworld>

Esterhasi Bar — 21 Blvd. Tsar Osvoboditel, tel: 0884 441441. Good food and service in this modern place, <http://www.esterhasi.com/>

Fish & Grill Restaurant — 4 Arsenalski Str. Tel 02 866 65 16. Fresh fish for any occasion, www.fishandgrill.bg

Forno Cipollini — 36 Oborishte Str; 48 Hristo Smirnenski Str; tel: 0887 77 8464. Italian restaurant with pleasant atmosphere and a chef from Tuscany, focusing on pizza. There are two locations, <https://www.facebook.com/FornoCipolliniOborishte/>

Gurkha — Indian & Nepal cuisine. Tel: 02 865 02 16/ 088 49 39 100, www.gurkhabg.com

The Corner (KO) Bar & dinner — 35 Nikola Vaptsarov Blvd. Tel: 088 455 5444, The Corner Piano Bar is a great place with a great view to have lunch, dinner or a drink. The staff are gracious and accommodating. Bulgarian/Fusion kitchen, <http://www.thecorner.bg/>

Happy Sushi — In Paradise Mall, 2nd floor, 35-37, Alexander Malinov Str. and at many other locations. For reservation call 0700 20 888. <http://www.happy.bg/>

Kashtata s Chasovnika — 15 Moskovska Str. Tel: +359 2 932 7595. This elegant restaurant is a place where old meets new, Bulgarian international food, a wonderful garden and a place where the presentation of the food itself is a delight to the eye, <http://clock.bky.bg/>

Kelari — Greek Cuisine, 220 Cherni vrah Blvd., just above Fantastico, phone 0876 226 226. <https://sofia.zavedenia.com/3757/Kelari.restorant.gradina/>

RESTAURANTS

Krim Restaurant — 17 Slavyanska Str. (Oborishte). Tel: 02 988 6950. Have dinner in this lovely place. The atmosphere is elegant but not formal, extremely chilled and quiet, and if the weather is good you can enjoy the beautiful garden. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Russian-Restaurant/Krim-Restaurant-297098022754/>

Kumbare — 14 Saborna Str. Tel: 088 250 6050. The restaurant has ample seating and a terrace on the sidewalk. If you like seafood, Greek meals and Greek music, you should try Kumbare. <https://www.facebook.com/Kumbare2021/>

Lavanda Restaurant — 12 Tzar Ivan Shishman Str. Tel: 0882 24 97 40. Cozy and interesting place. Fusion food style. They have really high ratings on Tripadvisor, www.facebook.com/lavandarestaurant/info

Lazy — 197-ta 25 Street. Tel: 0882 305 060. This trendy restaurant next to the Simeonovo Cabin lift is a favourite place for lunch or dinner. Kids enjoy the pizzas. <https://lazy.bg/>

La Capannina — 9 Narodno Sabranie Sq., next to the InterContinental Hotel. Tel: 02980 4438. The best Italian restaurant in town! This elegant restaurant overlooks the Bulgarian Parliament and the Alexander Nevsky cathedral. It's worth noting that it imports most of its ingredients from Italy, and the quality shows. <https://www.facebook.com/pages/La%20Capannina/156090171828439/>

La Pastaria — 56 Bigla Str. Tel: 02 962 327 5089 / 550 0606. Italian restaurant La Pastaria has the atmosphere and comfort of a typical trattoria. The restaurant has a garden area where you can escape from the noisy urban environment. They have opened a new restaurant in Sopharma Towers shopping Mall. Nice pasta place for family, friends or couples, www.lapastaria.net

Lebed — 82 Samokovsko Shose, in Pancharevo. Tel: 02 992 1111. Situated on the shore of the Pancharevo lake, just a few minutes past the turn-off to AAS. The garden with view over the lake makes it a nice place for relaxation in the summer season, www.restaurantlebed.com

Leo's Pizza & Trattoria — 57 Nikola Y. Vaptsarov Blvd. Tel: 028624819 The 2nd Restaurant of TV Star LEO from BIG BROTHER Bulgaria is next to the Maleeva tennis courts for the best pizza in town. Outdoor seating overlooks a well-manicured park area and the clay tennis court, leospizza.bg

RESTAURANTS

Leo's Pizza "il Rustico" — Recently opened at the upper Ring Road on the way from Dragalevtsi to Boyana. Healthy food, pizza is served with a whole grain dough. Tel: 02 470 98 18, leospizza.bg

L'Etranger — 78 Tsar Simeon Str. Tel: 02 983 1417. Located in an anonymous side street just off bustling Blvd Maria Luiza, this intimate, family-run French bistro is worth checking out. Whether you're here for a quick lunch or a multi-course meal, the food is excellent and authentic. Delicious desserts and a carefully chosen list of French wines add to the experience, <http://www.bistrotletranger.com/>

Lime — 40 Graf Ignatiev Str. Tel: 02 421 9703. Healthy fast food: great for salads and sandwiches, take out or stay. <https://www.instagram.com/lime.grafa/>

Made in Home — 30A Angel Kanchev Str. Tel: 0876 884 014. This is a very sweet place for lunch or dinner downtown. Homemade food, good vegetarian options. Small exhibitions also in the restaurant, www.facebook.com/MADE-IN-HOME-351358010611/

Manastirska Magernitsa — More than just an ordinary Bulgarian restaurant, they serve traditional Bulgarian cuisine, <http://magernitsa.com/>

Mediterraneo — 9b Oborishte-Str. Tel: 02 944 95 82. Classical Mediterranean Cuisine, prepared in a homemade style. Enjoy a hot summer evening in the cozy yard under the green branches, www.mediterraneo.bg

Memento — 32 Vitosha Blvd. Tel: 02 980 0605; 106 G.S. Rakovski, Tel: 0882 422 928. This is the perfect place for your early morning coffee and paper, afternoon tea with friends, or a glass of wine after work. A fine selection of coffees and teas, as well as wines, aperitif and cocktails, a small bite in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, <https://www.facebook.com/MementoCafe/>

Mezze — 12 Nikolay Haytov Str. in Iztok residential and business district, close to the Interpreted World Trade Centre, Tel: 0897 889 185. This restaurant offers 'mezze' (appetizers such as olives, taramasalata, etc), pasta, fresh fish from Thessaloniki and other Mediterranean specialties. Always busy, you may need to make a reservation. Outdoor seating on the terrace, <http://www.mezze.bg/>

Mr Pizza — Great place with a playground outside. Several locations, www.mrpizza.bg

RESTAURANTS

Club MOTTO — 18 Aksakov Str. Tel 02 987 27 23. Great place to meet with friends. Breakfast, lunch, dinner. Fusion food style. Nice garden. Follow the website, they organize some events (like candle light dinners every Wednesday), motto-bg.com

Panorama Restaurant — Marinela Hotel, 100 James Bourchier Blvd. Tel: 02 969 2222. This restaurant, with a touch of the old socialist times, has an amazing view, very good international food and the Tiramisu is delicious,
<http://www.hotel-marinela.com/en/dining-en/panorama-restaurant-en.htm>

Pastorant — 16 Tzar Asen Str. Tel: 02 981 4482. This was a dream come true by 5 friends. The result is a cozy and welcoming atmosphere, simple nice Italian “just good food” and reasonably priced,
<https://www.facebook.com/Pastorant-108768147489/>

Pod Lipite — 1 Elin Pelin Str. Tel: 02 866 5053. Traditional Bulgarian menu in a beautiful setting ‘Under the Lime-trees’, www.podlipitebg.com

Fairouz — Lebanese restaurant, 1 Knyaz Boris No 77. Tel: 0876 482 420.

Pure Chefs Grill — 7 Iskarsko Shose Blvd. Tel: 02 419 99 09. High quality food in a wonderful atmosphere. Really fresh ingredients and fine wine selection. You can visit with your children, with friends, www.purebg.com

Raffy Bar & Gelato — City Center, 11 Angel Kanchev Street., tel: 089 551 5045. Second address: 18B Vitosha Street, tel 089550 41. On Vitosha street there is also a terrasse bar. Nice for nightlife, <http://raffy.bg>

Rakia Raketa Bar — 17 Yanko Sakazov Blvd., next to Zaimov Park. Really nice place to go for lunch, retro interior, friendly service.
[Map https://www.facebook.com/RaketaRakiaBar/](https://www.facebook.com/RaketaRakiaBar/)

Sage Bistro — 63 Stefan Stambolov, 1444, Bistritsa, tel: 02 992 7140. The combination of great food and vibrant atmosphere makes Sage Bistro a very popular venue. The menu features traditional and Italian favourites combined with the freshest available products. Combine a beautiful walk or sledging in Bistritsa with a late lunch at Sage (Friday and weekends only)! Remember the pizza for take out or delivery from 12:00! www.sage.bg

Samer Grill House — Byala cherkva Str. Tel: 087 777 9828. Turkish and Middle Eastern restaurant, at the entrance of South Park, with good food and extensive menu (Byala Cherkva Street). <https://samergrillhouse.com/bg/>

RESTAURANTS

Sasa, Asian “Fast food” Restaurant — two locations in Sofia, Paradise Mall and Blvd “James Bourchier” [100, http://sasa.bg/contacts](http://sasa.bg/contacts)

Seasons Restaurant & Terrace — 1 Bulgaria Blvd. Don't miss the award-winning international and Bulgarian cuisine at Hilton Sofia. The Hilton Sofia hotel's signature restaurant features a new design concept and a menu that is ready to satisfy even the most discerning palate. Enjoy a business lunch in this contemporary, air-conditioned restaurant or indulge on the outdoor terrace and marvel at the spectacular Vitosha Mountain views. In the evening, sip wine by candlelight and sample a variety of menu options designed to create a modern and elegant dining experience. Combining breakfast and lunch dishes, the all-time classic Sunday brunch at Seasons restaurant has been the favorite habit of the Sofia citizens for many years. To book, please e-mail: rusi.rusev@hilton.com or call: 02 933 5062. Website: www.sofia.hilton.com, www.facebook.com/hiltonsofia

Smuggler's Diner — 29 Hristo Belchev Str. Tel: 087 784 4531. American cuisine with a swing rhythm! <https://www.facebook.com/smugglersdiner>

Spaghetti Company — 150 Vitosha blvd. and 3 more locations. Spaghetti kitchen - Italian Food American Grill www.spaghetti-company.com

Taj Mahal — 11th August Street, tel: 087 660 0776. This 3-floor restaurant near the National Opera offers flavorful and aromatic meals typical of traditional Indian cuisine. Home delivery available, www.tajmahal.bg

Talents — 9 Petar Beron Street, 1000 Sofia. Tel: 02 421 90 68, www.restauranttalents.bg

The Red House Center for Culture and Debate — 15 Lyuben Karavelov Str. Tel: 02 988 8188. Center for culture, bed & breakfast, and restaurant, www.redhouse-sofia.org

Turquoise Restaurant — 90 Bukston Blvd. Tel: 02 855 1100. Nice place to go for some traditional Turkish food. There is a nice garden to sit in the summer, with a play area outside, <http://www.turquoise.bg>

Victoria Restaurants — Family friendly Restaurants in Sofia. Villa Victoria in the Loven Park (Simeonovsko Shose) is a great place to go. Tel: 0889 800 099, <http://www.victoria.bg/>

RESTAURANTS

Vodenitzata — Dragalevci, park Vitosha. Tel: 02 967 1058. Good to visit with kids, as you can walk in the woods nearby or take the chairlift up Vitosha or visit the nearby Dragalevtsi Monastery. Big on traditional décor with stuffed animals, a working water-mill and fish swimming in the watercourse. The dancing is top-notch, and the summer folk program includes dancing on coals, after dark, www.vodenitzata.com

Yamas Greek Restaurant — 15 Doyran Str. Tel: 089 822 8980. Greek music and Mediterranean cuisine. The variety of starters, salads and dishes on the menu will live up to the expectations of even the most demanding of customers, www.yamas.bg

PUBS

Halbite ("The Beer Mug") — 72 Neofit Rilski Str. Tel: 087 8737 786/02. One of the best beer houses in the city. It's one of the few places in Sofia where you can enjoy not simply the Bulgarian beers but also try some from all around the world, www.halbite.com

J.J.Murphy's — 6 Karnigradska Street, tel: 02 980 2870. One of the city's leading Irish pubs, has live music on weekends and real imported Irish food items. It's a popular meeting point for sporting occasions. They have a nice beer garden at the back, <http://jjmurphys.bg/>

HEALTHY FOOD

JoVan The Dutch Bakery — 37, Angel Kanchev Street, Sofia and 1, Hristo Belchev Street, (corner with Graf Ignatiev Str.), Mon–Sat 08.00–20.00, Sunday closed. Selling healthy and delicious bread, and try the real Dutch apple pie! Tel: 0885 886 190, www.jovan.bg

Kring Healthy Vegetarian Restaurant — 72 Tsar Simeon Str. Tel: 02 983 43333. Health food restaurant with carefully selected recipes from all over the world. The restaurant operates a policy of no smoking and serves alcohol free drinks only, www.kring.bg

Sun Moon — 18B William Gladstone Str. (corner of Kniaz Boris) and 39 6th Septemvri Str. Tel: 0895 648 477. Vegetarian restaurant & bakery with gluten free baked goods as well, www.sunmoon.bg

RESTAURANTS

Tea House — 11 George Benkovski Str. Tel: 088 7051080. Shop, Café, Vegetarian snacks and cuisine, live jazz, cultural and children events. They also host children's birthday parties and children's workshops (candles, creating with recycled materials, baking, etc) for groups in the Tea House or at home. They also started to make beautiful and healthy birthday cakes for children, www.teahousesofia.com

FOOD ON THE GO/DELIVERY

By now you will find almost all international fast food chains in and around Sofia: Burger King, Dunkin' Donuts, Kentucky Fried Chicken, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Spaghetti Company, Subway, etc. Listed below are a few, mainly Bulgarian, alternatives:

Domino's Pizza — Kids love it. Easy online ordering in Bulgarian and English and delivery to most of Sofia, www.dominos.bg

Food Panda — Food delivery for popular cuisines all over the country. Easy ordering both online at <https://www.foodpanda.bg/en/> and from the mobile application. Delivery to your house or office.

Happy Bar and Grill — They have several restaurants in Sofia now. Popular place with fast service and wide selection. Great for delivery, www.happy.bg

Pizza Victoria — Several locations: 75 Cherkovna Str., in Sofia Ring Mall, Villa Victoria in Loven Park. 986-32-00. Fast, friendly and great pizza. They deliver! Delivery tel: 0291100, <https://www.victoria.bg/>

Takeaway — Food and beverage delivery service direct to your home or office. Traditional, exotic and healthy cuisine from all the top restaurants in Sofia, online at <https://www.takeaway.com/bg-en/> or from the mobile application.

CATERING/HOME COOKING

Home Cooking Chef — Rumén Mitev, is an ex-chef of the Sofia Sheraton Hotel. He now offers home cooking services as well as catering for special occasions. Tel : 0897 873 868 or Email: rumenccs@gmail.com or find him on facebook: [Home Cooking Chef BG](#)

Laura Catering — www.lauracatering.com

RESTAURANTS

NIGHTLIFE

A few bars we really like, more info about them on www.programata.bg

Bar Me — Cosy bar, 9 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd., in the “Army club” building, entrance from Rakovski street. Tel: 088 989 9171.

<https://www.facebook.com/BarMe.Sofia/>

CAMINO Piano bar — 70 Neofit Rilski Str. Tel: 089 667 7688. Live music, mostly 80s, and some Bulgarian songs. Capacity for over 250 people. Everything is new and elegant. The notes from the walls will immerse your life for at least one night in the music. The unique atmosphere distinguishes Camino from other bars. Great party mood is guaranteed by well-known musicians and excellent service. Do not miss the opportunity to become a part of the Camino factor, make a reservation. Working time: 20:00–05:00. <https://www.facebook.com/pianobarcamino/>

Mancó Bar & Club — <https://www.facebook.com/mancobarclub/>

Sense Rooftop Bar — 16, Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd, 1000 Sofia. The sky-high bar presents breathtaking views, relaxing atmosphere, unique spacious terrace, endless feeling of sky and stars along with premium spirits, wine collection and culinary highlights. <https://sensehotel.com/en/rooftop-bar.html>

Carrusel Club — Disco club, bar. 108 Rakovski Str. Phone: 087 707 8080, <http://carruselclub.com/>

:PM — Night club, Disco club, Bar. Loud music, hip hop, live music, DJ. The club stays open until the morning. Address: Pozitano Str., Tel: 089 867 0600, <http://www.pmclub.bg/>

Sofia Live Club — NDK, tel: 088 666 1045. Live music, good program, www.sofialiveclub.com

Once Upon a Time Biblioteka - Dance and Night club, bul. “Vasil Levski” 88, 1504 Doktorska Gradina, Tel: 088 681 1614, www.facebook.com/onceuponatimebiblioteka

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

Below we list locations and activities we have tried with our families and return to again and again.

PLACES TO GO WITH CHILDREN

Area 52 — Sofia's largest and newest trampoline park. Located in the Sofia Ring Mall (floor 0), it is easily accessible from school and a great place for children to spend the afternoon burning energy! Definitely a unique experience for every child. <https://area52.bg/en/>

Borisova Gradina — Sofia's largest natural park. A great place for riding bikes, rollerblading or riding scooters. There are also some lovely playgrounds. Within the park is Kokolandia, the rope course. See more information below.

Circus Balkanski — Different locations performing April to June and during the Christmas season. This is circus the way all children should experience it, www.circus-balkanski.eu

Earth and Man Museum — 4 Cherni Vrah Blvd. Tel: 02 865 6639. Open 10–6. Admission: 2 lev for adults. Kids like the giant crystals, precious jewels and gold. Earth and Man Museum website <http://earthandman.org/>

Funtopia — Paradise Center, Level +3, an interactive adventure zone where you can experience the thrill of jumps and climbs in a safe environment. Tel: 0700 20 867. Working hours: Mon to Sun 10.00–22.00, <http://funtopiaworld.com/sofia/>

Fun City Bowling Bar — 77 Alexander Malinov Blvd., Mladost 4, next to supermarket HIT in Princess Outlet center. Tel: 02 885 7081. Bowling fun for all the family. There is also an entertainment zone with air hockey machines and slot machines and rides for smaller children next to the Bowling Bar and billiards downstairs. <http://www.princessbulgaria.com/bg/entertainment/bowling/>

Joy Station Bowling, Restaurant and Stage — Studentski grad, 3 Akad. Stefan Mladenov Str. The modern bowling equipment has a unique programming that provides great pleasure and convenience. In the evening when the program is switched on and all the lights are shining, the game turns into an extremely fun process. For customers who do not bowl, the center offers 5 billiard tables, 5 electronic darts and many other games. There is also a nice restaurant downstairs. For more info visit <http://joystation.bg/>

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

Kokolandia — In Borisova Gradina, an obstacle course laid out between the branches of large leafy trees. Tel: +359 8999 66 970 - telephone in the park; Birthday reservations. Great for kids over 6. You may want to think about packing a little picnic lunch or snack. They also organize birthday parties, www.kokolandia.com

Laser Park — Bulgaria Mall level 3, fun for the entire family. In this magical kingdom, kids can enjoy playtime in the wild Jungle Park or the exhilarating Laser Park, while parents relax at the spacious Terrace Café. For the smallest visitors, ages 0 to 2, Baby Park awaits with many fun games and discoveries. For more information please visit: www.playpark.bg

Mount Vitosha — Rising above Sofia's southern suburbs, the granite massif of Mount Vitosha provides Sofia with an easily accessible recreation area. The top of the mountain is relatively smooth, making it the ideal terrain for easy hikes. Acres of beech forest cover Vitosha's lower slopes, while spruce and pine predominate further up. The mountain's highest point, Cherni Vrah (Black Peak), is surrounded by a plateau covered in grassland, juniper bushes and bogs. Protected as a nature park since 1934, Vitosha is a natural habitat for martens, deer, wild boar, and occasionally, brown bears. When the cable car runs from the pleasant suburb of Simeonovo to Aleko it provides excellent views over the city. The Aleko hut is a popular starting point for hikers in summer. In winter, Aleko becomes the center of Mount Vitosha's ski scene. Visit Skivitosha.com for more info on weather or ski conditions.

Muzeiko — New interactive museum designed for kids. Muzeiko is a 2,000 sq.m space with over 130 interactive games created for children and curious adults. The entire content of the museum is designed to inspire children to learn, discover, and explore the sciences, while helping children, their families and educators spend time together actively and effectively. For more info visit <http://muzeiko.com/en>

National History Museum — Vitoshko Lale Street, off the Ring Road in Boyana, Tel: 02 955 4280. Open 9:30–5:30. Admission: 10 leva. Bulgaria's largest collection of historic artifacts. The 4th-century BC Thracian gold treasures from Panagyurishte are the highlight but there is plenty more to see in this slightly eclectic collection, Historymuseum.org

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

Natural History Museum — 1 Tsar Osvoboditel Blvd. Tel: 02 987 4195. Open 10–6. Admission: 4 leva adults, 2 leva children. An enjoyable, if rather old-fashioned museum, strong on geology and European fauna. Beginning with rows of rocks and crystals on the ground floor, stuffed birds and mammals on the first and second floors and glass cabinets filled with butterflies and insects on the third, <http://www.nmnh.com/>

National Museum of Military History — 92 Cherkovna Str. Tel: 02 946 1805. Great for boys! This museum displays the history of Bulgaria's wars. The chronological exhibition will lead you from a helmet dated 5th century B.C. up to the recent NATO times, www.militarymuseum.bg

Opera and Ballet — On the corner of Vrabcha Street and Rakovski, Tel: 02 800 6266. You can find their program at Operasofia.bg

Park Bobby and Kelly (former Patilantsi) — Relatively near the school, just around the corner from McDonald's, Mladost II. Caters to the under-10 crowd, with supervised play jungles and a variety of rides, slot machines and games, indoor and out. A popular place for birthday parties and after-school playdates. Expect to spend around 10 leva per child for an hour or two of rides and activities. <https://www.parkbobykelly.bg/>

Puppet Theater — 16 Gurko Street and Yanko Sakasov. Tel: 02 980 8802. Performances are in Bulgarian, but are very well done and entertaining, Sofiapuppet.com

Rope Gardens at Aleko — Take a gondola lift to Aleko Hut and walk towards the ski slope Vitoshko Lale. After some 200 m you will see Hotel Moten and the rope course on your right. <https://www.motensport.com/aleko/>

Sofia Karting — Open 10am – 10pm. Tel: 0899 907 981. Inside in Sofia Ring Mall for prices and more info visit: <http://sofiakarting.com/>

Sofia Zoopark — On Simeonovsko Shose, turn left at Sveti Lazarov maternity hospital. Large park area is safe but could use some loving care. The animals include tigers, lions, bears and elephants, among many others. It's never crowded. Open year-round, <http://www.zoosofia.eu/>

South Park (Yuzhen Park) — Great park, contains several playgrounds, merry-go-rounds, and bouncy castles, etc. Good for riding bikes and trying the pedalos with the family.

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

University Botanic Garden — 49 Moskovska Str. Tel: 02 988 1797. Tucked away in a side street behind the Aleksander Nevski Memorial Church, Sofia University's Botanical Garden has a small but inviting collection of Mediterranean flora, and a fragrant rose garden. There is also a glasshouse where a humid atmosphere has been created for the cultivation of such exotic species as palms, banana trees, and coffee bushes. The garden's shop has a range of seedlings for sale, www.ubg-bg.com

Museum of Illusions Sofia - Boulevard Maria Luiza, 16.
<https://museumofillusions.bg/en/>

Regional History Museum Sofia - <http://www.sofiahistorymuseum.bg/en/>

National Polytechnic Museum - Home of 22 000 exponents in different collections: clocks, transportation, photo and kino cameras, optics, audio recording and audio playing, radio and TV, digital devices, musical instruments, geodesy devices, home devices, sewing machines, typewriters and much more.
<http://polytechnic-museum.com/en>

PARTY IDEAS AND PLAY AREAS

Capella Play — In several malls, The Mall, Mega Mall, Park Center. This is a big indoor playground. It lets you do some shopping or have coffee or lunch in their restaurant. They organize birthday parties, www.capellaplay.bg

Everland — Kozyak str, close to James Bourchier Blvd. Indoor play area for small kids and a nice café for the parents. Good spot for birthday parties, www.everland.bg

FUN Ring Park — Sofia Ring Mall, tel: 0883 999 039. The biggest entertainment park for kids in Bulgaria. Designed for kids between 3 and 11 years old. The attractions are regularly changing; thematic decoration turn the park into a fairylend, <https://sofiaring.bg/en/tenants/fun-ring-park/>

Funtopia — Paradise Centre, Level +3. Climbing walls for all ages. Funtopia organizes unique Birthday Parties that combine physical games and socializing with friends. For more information Tel: 0884 013 937, <http://funtopiaworld.com/sofia/>

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

Karting — Sofia Ring Mall. The Track Sofia Karting Ring (SKR) is the largest indoor karting track. It covers an area of 7 acres in Sofia Ring Mall, Level 1. Sofia Karting Ring will challenge all karting fans with dimensions of total length 620 m and width 7.60 m., <http://sofiakarting.com/>

Karting, Dunev Motor Sport — Studentski Grad, outside, well maintained. Kids love this place, <https://corporate-office-77933.business.site/corporate-office-77933/>

Kokolandia — In the Borisova Gradina, an obstacle rope course is laid out between the branches of large leafy trees. Great for kids over 6. You may want to think about packing a little picnic lunch or snack. They also organize birthday parties, www.kokolandia.com

Laser Park & Play Park — Bulgaria Mall. Play Park is a great indoor activity centre, not only for the youngest but also for the older children, teenagers and adults. It consists of three park areas: Jungle Park, a wonderful play area with climbing frames, slides, stage and dress up corner. Laser Park is for older children and adults. A battle in Laser Park is exciting and challenging. For the smallest there is Baby Park with play houses and fun toys. Play Park also has its own cafe, Terrace Cafe, with a beautiful terrace overlooking Sofia city. A great place for birthday parties! www.playpark.bg

Lion King Play Area — Monastery Meadows, 14, Levski Rid Str. Tel: 0885 324 212 / 0889 216 060. Children's party and play area. Themed parties available and cake provided, www.lionking-bg.com

Marietta and Marionetta Birthday Club — Tel: 0888 922 648 or 02-987 2268. A puppet theater and café for children. They'll organize birthday parties, carnivals and masked parties. Also a carnival shop on 150, Rakovsky str., www.marioneta.org

Morsko Konche — 1 Charkoriya Str., close to Park Zaimov, Tel. 0879291113, 0878 117 716, 0878 285 889, Facebook: Morsko Konche. Party area for children. Themed parties available, for more information visit www.morskokon4e.net

Paintball Sofia — Both indoor and outdoor paintball and parties. <http://paintballsofia.com/>

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

Partyhouse — 30 Tzar Samuil Street, ground floor, tel: 02 981 6250. Partyhouse is an event management company offering a wide range of activities for both adults and children. They can provide a whole package for whatever event you wish to organise, birthdays, parties, including decoration, www.partyhouse-bg.com

Playground — The Mall and in Paradise Center. Perfect place to celebrate a Birthday Party. The club has the most modern bowling lines and is equipped with 2 children tracks that are suitable for children up to 9. There is also a beautiful playground for the smaller kids, www.playground.bg

Royana Art Studio — 22 Tzar Samuil Street, tel. +359 898 419775. Art classes for adults and children: pottery, glass staining, oil painting and watercolors, decoupage, silk painting. Birthday parties (art) for children and also for adults, as well as creative meetups for groups, both at our or your location. Art camps for children during school holidays. English speaking tutors. www.royana-bg.com

SPARK Sport and Social Club — Sofia Residential Park, Building 16/3. Parties at the pool. The pool size is 16m x 10m. The water is purified using sea salt that extracts the natural chlorine. They are able to organize birthday parties, including refreshments and animations. For more information: info@spark-bg.com or www.spark-bg.com

Tea House — 11 George Benkovski Str. Tel: 0887 051 080. A teahouse with vegetarian cuisine, hosting children's birthday parties and children's workshops (candles, creating with recycled materials, baking, etc) for groups in the Tea House or at home. They also started to make beautiful and healthy birthday cakes for children, www.teahousesofia.com

Trinity Kids — 1-A Sultan Tepe Str. Tel: 0884 113 980. Specialized in organizing parties for the younger kids and special workshops in which they are able to develop or discover their talents. Parents can have a drink at the nice coffee shop, www.trinitykids.bg

Wonderparty — Each party that they organize, places in the center the communication between kids so that they actively participate and create new games and ways to have fun. It can be at your house or another location, with or without food. That's why we try to transfer each Wonder Party into a real source of pleasurable emotions and fantastic atmosphere, and happy memories for the smaller player, with enough freedom and autonomy, but under expert guidance and supervision; along with joy, celebration, and tranquility for parents, <https://wonderparty.eu/with-what-we-distinguish/>

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

CINEMAS

Movies are left in their original language with Bulgarian subtitles, but children's cartoon movies are dubbed into Bulgarian. Ticket prices are very reasonable. PTO has organized children's movies in English at the Arena Complex in the Business Park every month. For more information check the AAS newsletter, the notice board at school or Facebook!

Cinema City — IMAX, Paradise Center and The Mall of Sofia, was the first 3D IMAX cinema on the Balkan Peninsula. For more information

<http://www.cinemacity.bg/>

Cine Grand — Sofia Ring Mall and Park Center Sofia Mall. Very modern cinema complex, in Sofia Ring Mall. All 10 halls are equipped with super comfy seats (you can transform them into a sofa bed), www.cinegrand.bg

Kino Arena — Bulgaria's largest and very modern movie theatre. They have complexes located at The Mall on Tsarigradsko Shose and at the Bulgaria Mall www.kinoarena.com

Art House Movies — can be found in cinemas downtown: Dom na Kinoto - there is Costa Coffee in the same building, <http://domnakinoto.com/>, Euro Cinema or G8 Cultural center. They have a really nice bar there, <http://www.g8cinema.com/>

MUSIC VENUES

Joy Station — A new generation multi-functional entertainment center on two levels. The bar-club is fully equipped with a concert stage with regular performances of some of the best known Bulgarian and international top artists. The second level of JOY Station hosts the largest bowling hall in Bulgaria equipped with 20 AMF bowling alleys. There are also arcade games, simulators, billiard tables, as well as a restaurant with a large garden and an open space playground for children. The Sofia International Open Bowling tournament is hosted there every year, www.joystation.bg, www.facebook.com/joystation.bg, Tel: 02 862 2967.

Swingin' Hall — 8 Dragan Tzankov Blvd. Tel: 0896 840 180/161. Currently the best place in town to catch local rock, blues, jazz and world-music acts, with a six-day-a-week program of live music. It's a great place for a night out whoever is on the bill. Friendly party-inclined atmosphere, <https://www.facebook.com/swinginhall/>

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

DAY TRIPS

Always nice to try out with your family and/or friends. Bulgaria Travel is an official tourism portal of Bulgaria where you will find information about most interesting places in Bulgaria including pictures and maps. <http://bulgariatravel.org/>

TRAVEL AGENCY SPECIALIZED IN BULGARIA:

Lyuba Tours — 22 Tsanko Tserkovskt Str. Can always help you to organize the trip of your desires, www.lyubatours.com

INTERESTING PLACES RELATIVELY CLOSE TO SOFIA:

Bansko — Less than a three-hour drive from Sofia, the most modern ski resort in Bulgaria. Nice and well maintained ski slopes. Beautiful village, if you can see past all the new hotel and apartment construction, <http://banskoski.com/>

Belogradchik — The small hillside town of Belogradchik is surrounded by some of the most dramatic rock formations in Bulgaria. The hill above the town is crowned by a particularly dramatic circle of rocky pinnacles. The inner stronghold commands stunning views of the surrounding landscape.
<https://goo.gl/maps/FZwQyr2qozJj196CA>

Borovets — This ski resort is only an hour or so out of town. It is crowded with not-so-charming hotels, and restaurants tend to be smoky and expensive, but you can take the gondola up the mountain and then hike to the “hidja” (hut) and the lake for spectacular views, fresh mountain air and a picnic. You can hike the highest bulgarian peak Musala (2925m) from Top station of the gondola. For more information, weather, lifts, prices etc., go to www.borovets-bg.com

Boyana Church — Just outside of Sofia, in the suburb of Boyana, is a tiny, well-hidden church containing outstanding frescoes dating from the 11th century. The site is on UNESCO’s World Heritage List. It’s well worth booking a personal guided tour by calling: 02 959 0939, or online at www.boyanachurch.org

Hydropark The Windmills — great for families and companies. There is a big lake for fishing, water zorb balls. Attractions for kids, pools, small zoo centre, horse riding, sports. You can book in advance a place for fishing and a table next to the water. There is a hotel, www.melnicite.bg

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

Koprivshtitsa — A one and half hour drive from Sofia, off the Bourgas highway, this town is of special interest for its well-preserved National Revival Style architecture, ornate and decorative. Some of its houses are museums, which depict life as it was during the 1800's. Lots of walking up and down cobbled streets. <https://goo.gl/maps/8xkv44crspZ7PfFHA>

Melnik — The approximately 3-hour drive from Sofia to Melnik follows the Struma River Valley with views across to the Pirin Mountains. The landscape then changes drastically as you near the town, and you find yourself surrounded by white, sandy cliffs. You may like to try the red wine, reputed to be the best in Bulgaria, from the unique Melnik grape. Melnik is just off the highway to Kulata, so it makes an ideal place to visit on the way to or from Greece. If you are interested in a wine tour, contact Villa Melnik <http://www.villamelnik.com/>

Plovdiv — Located about an hour-and-a-half drive from Sofia, Plovdiv's old town attracts many visitors with its cobblestone streets and wonderful architecture and its numerous antique shops. The Roman amphitheater dates from the 2nd century and is incredibly restored. Music festivals are held here during the summer.

Rila Monastery — The beautiful road to the monastery runs beside the River Ril-ska and through wooded mountain slopes. The drive will take you about an hour and a half or two from Sofia. The monastery itself is breathtaking and it's not hard to understand its place on the UNESCO World Heritage List. If you get a chance, pay the entrance fee to the museum, just to marvel at the miniature cross sculpted by a monk with a needle. He finished it after 12 years, but by the end had lost his sight. No wonder; the work contains 1,500 tiny human figures depicting 140 biblical scenes! More info about the monastery: <https://rilskimanastir.org/en/> On the way to Rila Monastery you will see the sign to Stob's pyramids. It is a beautiful rock formation worth visiting.

Rila National Park — Bulgaria's largest national park. A network of hiking paths crisscrossed the park, reaching the imposing peaks of Musala and Malyovitsa and the Seven Rila Lakes. The lakes, formed by melted glaciers, are set at ascending levels. <https://rilanationalpark.bg/-1.html>

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

The Stob Pyramids — You can hike trails to see these natural rock formations found above the village of Stob, which is the village just before you reach Rila. The road leading up to the beginning of the trails is well marked through the town and there is a small concession hut plus portable toilets available when you arrive at the site. Admission into the site is minimal (2 leva for adults and 1 leva for children) but includes a tour guide. Well worth trekking on a beautiful weekend.
<https://goo.gl/maps/ma9zHr8vhcCUfzPU6>

Tsari Mali Grad (Tsar's little Town) — Located in Belchin village, an ancient fortress located approximately 1 hour from Sofia in the direction of Bistritsa and Zheleznița. The fortress on top of the hill was renovated recently. You can get there either walking (15 minutes) or you can use a cable car. There is a nice and big playground behind the Fortress.
<https://goo.gl/maps/wy33fVnV8X52> <http://www.carimaligrad.com/>

Veliko Turnovo — With a picturesque hillside setting, fine architecture and a wealth of historic sights, Veliko Turnovo is one of Bulgaria's most beautiful cities. Tall, narrow houses teeter on sheer cliffs that rise high above the meandering Yantra River. To the east are the ruins of the majestic fortress of Tsarevets with a fantastic light show with a rousing soundtrack, during the summer months.

Western Rhodopes Caves — The area is excellent for hiking, mountain biking and bird watching, and pony-trekking tours can also be arranged from Trigrad. The most popular cave is Devil's Throat cave.

Wineries — Bulgaria has great wines and it might be interesting and fun to visit one of the wineries for a day. For example: Chateau Copsa, www.copsa.bg, Todoroff wine cellar, www.todoroff-wines.com, Edoardo Miroglio Winery www.e.miroglio-wine.com, Villa Melnik <http://www.villamelnik.com/>

Waterfalls — There are many beautiful waterfalls in Bulgaria. The closest to Sofia is Boyana Waterfall that can be reached easily from the "Kopitoto". Depending on the pace, a walk around in this the picturesque place lasts about an hour and a half, for most of the trail is smooth. The last stretch is more difficult—rough, rocky terrain—which leads steeply to the top of the waterfall.

The most beautiful waterfalls are "**Krushuna**" waterfalls (**Maarata**) located near the village of Krushuna, Letnitsa municipality, Lovech, approximately 2 hours from Sofia. This is the biggest water cascade in the country, with many travertine stages, and rich in plants and animal species. There are many more in Bulgaria, for more information, visit <http://waterfallsbg.info/en>

FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT

Ecotrails — You can find a network of specially devised, most often circular trails traveling through beautiful and well-preserved areas all around Bulgaria. The series of wooden structures, such as bridges and platforms, make it possible for people to view otherwise inaccessible natural phenomena: gorges, extraordinary rock formations, waterfalls and many more. The trails are created in accordance with selected criteria concerning the choice of place and design. The closest and really beautiful one is Beli Iskar, another one is close to the village Tran. For more information visit http://www.en.baret-bg.org/ecotrail_e/enecotrails.html

The Lakatnik (Elbow) Cliffs - located on the left slope of the Iskar Gorge in the Stara Planina (Central Balkans), above the Lakatnik train station. Justly famous among climbers – there are 6 separate climbing areas with more than 350 routes of varying difficulty. <https://bulgariatravel.org/en/the-lakatnik-cliffs/>

The Vratsa Balkan Nature Reserve - Declared a national park in 1989. <https://bulgariatravel.org/en/the-vratsa-balkan-nature-reserve/>

Thracian monuments

All around Bulgaria you can find amazing Thracian tombs and sanctuaries that are worth visiting. Two Thracian temples can be found close to Starosel village (Plovdiv area), at least two typical tombs are open to the public close to Shipka village (Kazanlak area), and the world-renowned complex of Perperikon, as well as the sanctuary of Tatul can be found in the Kardzhali area.

SERVICES

SERVICES

APPLE

Creative Center Sofia — 65A, Cherni Vrah blvd., phone: 0700 20 915 and ul. Tsar Kaloyan 7, phone: +359 885 81 45 90

Have problems with your iPhone, Mac or iPad? This is the place to go. They have a great exchange service: broken phone? www.creativecenter.bg

iSTYLE — There are several stores in Sofia now. www.istyle.eu

iRepair™ – Apple Repair Specialists – Sofia Center, ul. Stara Planina 10, phone: 02 950 66 55, mobile: 089 764 30 30, www.irepair.bg/en/

COPYING, PRINTING, SCANNING

Office One Superstore — more than 20 locations in Sofia, some relatively near-by the school (Business Park Sofia) with a focus on all printing jobs and some office furniture. Larger outlets on Tsarigradsko Shosse and in Lozenets on James Bourchier Blvd., here they have a selection of luxury pens and watches as well, www.office1.bg

Imagination Print — ul. Dimitar Hadjikitzev 8, Lozenets district, (near CCS). phone 0878 99 2009, 0876 47 4203. Offers copying, printing, calendars, posters, cards, catalogs, t-shirts. Open 7 days a week, <https://copylozenec.com/>

DRY CLEANERS

Quite a few small ones all over town, one in the HIT shopping center, as well as in all shopping malls.

5aSec — This French dry cleaning chain is the world's leading retailer in textile care and treatment and is found at the following locations: bul. "Patriarh Evtimiy" 63, Sofia centre; ul. "Aleksandar Paskalev" 405, Mladost 4 District, supermarket Fantastico; blvd. "Simeonovsko Shose" 104; ul. "Nikolay Haytov" 2Д; ul. Sevastokrator Kaloyan 63, Boyana District, next to the supermarket Nova Familia. <http://www.5asec.com/en>

SERVICES

CLEAN ZONE Dry Cleaning — Clean Zone is one of the largest Bulgarian dry cleaning chains, established in 1996. They take and return your clothes to your home, www.cleanzone.info/en/dry-cleaning-sofia/

Dry Cleaners — in HIT Supermarket center, convenient location. Melros (Marina Racheva) — Dry cleaning, laundry, drying, VIP service- courier service, pick up and delivery at a convenient time, www.melrosbg.com

EXPAT SOCIAL CLUBS

International Women's Club of Sofia — The club is a valuable support to women who come here as non-working spouses offering group activities, excursions and charity projects, www.iwc-sofia.com

GUIDED TOURS IN SOFIA

Free Guided Tours — Starting at the Palace of Justice, every day at 10 and 11 am, and 2 and 6 pm, the free English-language sightseeing walking tour of Bulgaria's capital is done by enthusiastic young people and really worth doing, www.freesofiatour.com

Free Sofia Bike Tour — From April until November, every day at 11 am and 5 pm, starting at National theater "Ivan Vazov", explore Sofia – one of the greenest capitals in Europe on a bike! Get a bike and join the free - guided Sofia bike tour. See all famous landmarks and green parks with a local guide. See more at: www.sofiagreentour.com

Sofia Guide — plan your trip or tour through Sofia, www.sofia-guide.com

HOME AND GARDEN

ET Svina — They provide all garden services from project supplies to maintenance, ul. Sveta Magdalena 8, mobil 088 830 9775, www.svina-bg.com

СЕРВИЗ ДЖОТЕКС — Reliable company that will fix your washing machine, dishwasher, stove, dryer etc.; phone 02 928 4374, mobile 089 562 9381, www.djotex.com

SERVICES

PLUMBER, Alfa Vodoprovodchik — Vasil Vasilev, phone 089 470 8071. Vasil is responsible and reliable and speaks basic english as well. He will come to fix your boiler or anything with water or heating in your house, alfavodoprovodchik@gmail.com, <http://alfavodoprovodchik.com/>

“Nika Build” — Windows, Conservatory Sunrooms, Sliding door systems, Doors, Glass partitions and shower cubicles; phone: 0899 850 143, 0899 170 165, www.nikabg.com

RELOCATION AND IMMIGRATION SERVICES

Orbit — International forwarding and moving www.orbit.bg/

Allied Pickfords — www.allied.bg/

Santa Fe — Moving, shipping, storage, and visa and immigration services www.santaferelo.com

Pirgroup Bulgaria, Partners in Relocation Group — Can organise business visas, work permits, resident permits, local registration, renewal permits, and legalisation of documents. For full range of services www.pirgroup.com

INTERIOR DESIGNERS

Furniture Designer Matthew Martin — Designs and makes custom tables, benches, stools etc. His intent is custom work, so each piece is based on an existing pattern design (stool, side, slab, deck) and the client’s needs. For more information www.revolutiontables.com

Independent Interior designer Lyubomira Rangocheva — Does a great job and really helps you to design but also oversees the placement of it all. She speaks Bulgarian, English and German. phone: 088 9413 419, www.facebook.com/illusionslab.interior.design/

SERVICES

INTERNET/TELEVISION/TELEPHONE

There are large national and international companies like A1 or Bulsat but also smaller local ones who really do a good job. The advantage of the bigger provider might be a bigger and faster service network, the smaller companies may know your house and all the cables around it.

Bulsat — All over Bulgaria, you can also arrange your TV here, www.bulsat.com

NetIP — In Dragalevtsi, if you come from the square and cross the main road, go down, it's on the corner. Tel: 02 491 1650. Great service, very good internet connection and very good price! www.netip.bg

A1 — former Mtel, is a leading company on the telecommunications market in Bulgaria with a 20-year long history. Here you can also buy your electronic vignette. www.a1.bg/bg

Telenor — www.telenor.bg

Vivacom — www.vivacom.bg

NANNY SERVICE/BABYSITTER

Wonder Nanny — Part of Wondergroup with an English kindergarten, nanny service and party service. It is a professional organisation that supports many AAS parents in caring for their children. They provide hourly and all-day daycare for the youngest, employing educated nannies and a strict system of control and feedback. Nannies are competent, responsible and motivated. Most of the time they come with arts and crafts for the children. Please contact them at: ab@wonder-nanny.eu, phone: 089 8603693, <https://www.facebook.com/partyandnanny>, www.wonderparty.eu

PETS

KENNELING AND PET BOARDING

Champion — They offer various services - dog hotel, training, grooming, dog taxi service to pick up and deliver (since they are located in a town just outside Sofia). They do some breeding too, phone: 088 527 4258, <http://champion-bg.com/>, vdachevski@abv.bg.

SERVICES

Veterinary clinic “Blue Cross” — 1 Chereshova Gradina, Pancharevo. Conveniently located on the road to our school. They also offer grooming and kenneling. phone: 02 979 0935, www.bluecrossbg.com

Dogland Hotel — in Boyana, they are responsible and nice to dogs, ul. “Vasil Chekalarov” 23, Belovodski pat, Sofia, phone: 0878 928 470, 0899 528 877, www.doglandhotel.com

Pet Shipping Company/Bulgarian Animal Transport — Institute for Air Transport, fl.1, of.104, 1540 Airport Sofia, phone: 02 945 9005, 0889 135 079. They take care of ALL the details for the transporting of your pet, IPATA member, email: office@bat-bg.com, www.bat-bg.com

PET SHOPS

Zoo Center — Pet store in Hit shopping Center, Bulgaria Mall, Mega Mall and Sofia Ring Mall. They have a good variety of quality food, much better than the ones you usually find at the supermarkets, <http://www.zoocenter-bg.com>

Pets&U — 25A Cherni Vrah Blvd. (across CCS); 35 Neofit Rilski Street, 91 Alexander Malinov Blvd and pl. “Petko R. Slaveykov” 9. Really good pet store, friendly staff, pet grooming and care, vet, www.petsandyou.bg

Dr Stefanov - Several shops around the town, offering variety and good prices - at least for cat food - and a discount card <https://zoomagazin.eu/>

VETERINARIANS

Veterinary clinic “Blue Cross” — 1 Chereshova Gradina, Pancharevo. 24/7 hour small Animal Hospital, conveniently located on the road to our school. This clinic is clean, well-organised, staffed by a group of young, knowledgeable and caring professionals. Prices are listed on their website. They also offer grooming and kenneling phone: 02 979 0935 or call Dr. Borislav Georgiev who speaks English, 0898 766 335., www.bluecrossbg.com

Central Vet Clinic — 25B Chavdar Mutafov Street, next to Sofia Zoo. 24hrs, 7 days a week. Highly equipped, professional and friendly staff. It is a real clinic. Home visits also, www.centralvetclinic.com

Zoo Center — Pet shop in HIT supermarket. Also has VET clinic and they do grooming as well, <http://www.zoocenter-bg.com/>

SERVICES

PHOTOGRAPHY

PhotoPlace (ФотоМясто) — Blvd. Hristo Smirnenski 16, phone: 02 866 3976; opposite the University of Architecture, close to Journalist square. They sell all the good gear but also can print anything you want in any size you can imagine and scan old films at a very good price, <http://fotomiasto.com/>

Photo Synthesis — Blvd. Vasil Levski 17, phone: 0888 024 999, close to the Starbucks. Everything from buying a professional camera to processing your photos. Here is where you get your favourite pictures on canvas, www.photosynthesis.bg

Unikalni Podaraci (Unique Gifts) — Ul. Tsar Asen 11 phone: 0 886 449 493, 0889 444 216. They can do any photo gift you need from mugs to mousepads, t-shirts or engraved pens, <http://www.unikalni-podaraci.com/>

POSTAL SERVICES

Post Offices (poshta/поща) around town have varying hours, 7.30 / 8 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday and 8 am to 1 pm on Saturday. Post offices have separate counters for buying stamps (marki), sending letters (pisma) and dispatching parcels (koleti), so check that you are in the correct queue. Post boxes are bright yellow in color and hard to miss. Postage stamps can also be bought at most shops that sell postcards. Mail sent to destinations in Europe takes about seven days to arrive. Mail to North America takes about two weeks, www.bgpost.bg

If you want fast delivery, use **courier services**:

Speedy - transports shipments not only within Bulgarian borders, but also around the world.

Econt - Express courier services to every destination in Bulgaria

REAL ESTATE

Iristrade property advisors — www.iristrade.net.
phone: 02 963 24 60, 0888 623 553, 0888 323 173

Unlimited Real Estate Solutions — Bellissimo Business Center, 102 Bulgaria Boulevard. phone: 0898 212 121. They really understand what you want! <http://www.unlimited.bg/>, email: info@unlimited.bg

SERVICES

Yavlena — Ul. Gen. Gurko 76A, floor 1, phone: 02 810 50, 0889 262 606; Was founded in 1992 and is one of the first and most important real estate agencies in Bulgaria. The company is entirely Bulgarian owned and is focused on the local market, aiming to provide to its clients individualized quality servicing.

<http://www.yavlena.com/>

Real House Estate Agency - Blvd. Bulgaria 53, phone: 0899 15 40 51. Is an independent real estate agency based in Sofia, but dealing with many properties in Greece and especially in the beautiful seaside outskirts of Kavala and Halkidiki. We are "Your Choice for Summer Vacations" in Greece. Real House agency specializes in Purchase, Sale, Renting per day or long term, www.realhouse.bg, office@realhouse.bg

SHOE REPAIR, COSTUMES

Multimaistor.BG — The Mall, level -2. For shoe repair, key cutting, watch repairs and battery replacement, tailoring, engraving services, etc.

<http://themall.bg/en/store/multi-maistor/>

Similar store — Keys, shoe repair etc. also in Serdika Mall, level 1 (shoes, bags, zippers), Paradise Mall, level 0

Carnival for You — Costumes, Blvd. Patriarch Evtimiy 3, fl. 1,

www.carnivalforyou.com

Party House — Ul. Tzar Samuil 30, ground floor, phone: 02 981 62 50, decorations, costumes, planning and organizing of events,

www.partyhouse-bg.com

MEDICAL INFORMATION

MEDICAL INFORMATION

In case of illness or accident, most expat families contact the physician they have come to know through a recommendation, whether from an employer, embassy or friend. If you need a specialist, the Sofia medical network is quite small and your physician can point you in the direction of a specialist clinic, lab, or person who can treat you.

CLINICS AND GENERAL PRACTITIONERS

Eye Hospital and Clinic — "Academic Pashev", ul. Em. Vaskidovich 51, kv. Suhata reka, building of XVIII-th hospital, 1st floor (opposite the main entrance), 1517 Sofia. Tel: 02 948 79 01, 0700 20 266, www.sobalpashev.com

Greenberg Medical Center — Druzhba 2, 23A Copenhagen Blvd., Tel: 02 41 70 519, 089 877 6812, 02 97 44 933. Twenty-four hour service and house calls. Very close to school. English speaking staff. <http://greenberg.bg/>

Medical Center "St Panteleimon" — Blvd Alexander Stamboliyski 15, Tel: 0700 17 012, 02 954 9588, 02 952 1841, 02 951 5162, . Twenty-four hour service and house calls. Many different specialists. Some speak English, French or German, www.medicinabg.com

Purva Detska Konsultativna Klinika (First Children's Consult Clinic 1DKK) — Pediatrician clinic, Blvd. Bulgaria 51, Tel: 02 401 78 78, 0887 550 322. Highly recommended, doctors speak English. <http://1dkk.bg/welcome/>

Poliklinika Bulgaria - Doctors for both kids and adults. Caters to international families. English speaking staff from reception to doctors. English website. There is an official waiting room where they call your name, which is different from other clinics. 02 401 78 78, Boulevard "Bulgaria" 51, 1404 Motopista, Sofia. <https://poliklinikabg.com/>

Robert Koch Medical Center — 16 B Haga Str., 1407 Sofia. Tel: 02 480 50 88, e-mail: office@robert-koch-clinic.com, specialized private clinic in internal medicine (endocrinology, gastroenterology, cardiology), dermatology and psychology. The clinic was founded by Assoc. Prof. Theodora Temelkova-Kurktschiev and Assoc. Prof. Dimo Kurktschiev, who gained their clinical experience during 15 years of practice in leading university hospitals in Germany, where they obtained their clinical and academic degrees. It has been entrusted with medical consulting service for the Embassies of Germany, Austria and Switzerland. <http://www.robert-koch-clinic.com/index.html>

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Thorax Clinic 1 — 57 Alexander Stamboliyski Blvd., Tel.: 02 91 285, mobile 0887 59 49 02, 087 516 25 81, Twenty-four hour service and house calls. Some doctors speak French or German. Clinic has different specialists including pediatricians, <http://thorax.bg/>

Thorax Clinic 2 — ul. Prof. Fritof Nansen 21, Tel: 02 980 7886, 0885 430 889. For x-rays and outpatient surgery only, <http://thorax.bg/>

Vita Hospital — Twenty-four hour service and house calls. Different specialists including pediatricians. Some doctors speak French or German.
Vita Patient Building 1: 9 Dragovitsa Str., Tel: 02 960 49 50 - 52, 02 943 43 98, 0888 991 003. Vita Patient Building 2: 10 Filip Kutev Str., Tel: 02 45 22 000, 0888 992 200 (new opened in 2018), www.vita.bg

HOSPITALS

For a serious medical emergency, go directly to the emergency room at the Pirogov Hospital. If your Bulgarian is poor, take someone to translate. If you can't drive, dial 150 (State) or 02 - 4034112 (Tokuda) for an ambulance and be prepared to describe the problem (in Bulgarian would be a big advantage). You'll be asked to give the patient's age, address and phone number.

Military Medical Academy — 3 St. Georgi Sofiyski Str., Tel: 02 922 6000 Emergency: 02 9225 543. Mon to Fri 8:00–17:30. Different specialists. Some speak English or German, www.vma.bg

Pirogov National Institute for Emergency Medical Services — 21 General Totleben Blvd., Tel: 02 915 4411, Emergency call 02 9154 213. The entrance to the children's hospital is beside the main entrance. Modernised rooms are available for a price, should you need to stay. The medical staff are highly qualified; speak little English. Especially for burn accidents it is the only place to go. Not very welcoming but guaranteed treatment, <http://www.pirogov.bg/>

University Hospital "Sofamed" —

Building 1: 16 Dr. G.M. Dimitrov Blvd., Tel: 02 465 00 00,

Building 2: 10 Dimitar Mollov Str., Mladost Tel: 02 465 00 02

Emergency call: 0890 123 150, <http://www.hospitalsofamed.bg/>

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Acibadem City Clinic, Tokuda Hospital — 51B Nikola Vaptsarov, (the entrance is from "At. Dukov" str.), Tel: 02 403 4000 (call center), 02 915 9402, 02 915 9417, 02 915 9401. Emergency 02 403 4112.

24-hour medical care and ambulance service. A comprehensive scope of medical departments covering the main medical disciplines with modernly equipped clinics and medical sectors in compliance with Japanese clinical and treatment standards. Very good services and pleasant, <https://www.tokudabolnica.bg/en/>

Acibadem City Clinic, Cardiovascular Center — 127 Okolovrasten pat Str., Tel: 0700 13 127, Emergency heart and vascular care: 0700 13 112, <https://acibademcityclinic.bg/en>

DENTISTS AND ORTHODONTISTS

MASTER DENT — Head Office: 53E, Slavovitsa Str. (corner with 49 Bulgaria Blvd.), Tel: 02 958 48 41

The combination of US-trained dentists, latest technology, dedicated and friendly staff will ensure gentle, pain-free dentistry in a relaxing environment. Specialized in preventive, cosmetic, restorative, pediatric, implant, micro and laser dentistry. English, French, Italian, Spanish and Russian speaking staff.

Email: office@master-dent.com, <https://master-dent.com/>

Smile Point Business Park Dental Clinic - Close to AAS at Mladost 4, [Blvd. Alexander Malinov 91](#), Tel: 089 367 4708 Dr. Ivaylo Petrov and his team are fluent in English, German and Greek. The clinic is modern and uses the latest technology. Highly recommended professional team for all of your dental needs!! The clinic also specializes in Invisalign retainers (invisible orthodontics) for children and adults. <https://www.smilepoint.bg/>

Swedent Dental Clinic – Marinela Hotel, suite 110, Blvd. James Bouchier 100, Tel: 02 969 2272, 088 8703821, 089 5474573, Email: swedent@gmail.com

Dr. Dean Mihailoff is an EU licensed DDS from the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm. He is a very good dentist, will bring in an orthodontist if needed as well: great service. He's wonderful with children. <http://www.swedent-bg.eu>

Center for Advanced Dentistry — 20 Tsvetna Gradina Str., Tel: 02 4917 171, 0897 300 297. Dr. Veselin Shumantov, Deyan Yordanov, and Pavel Todorov. Practice offers the latest in the field of invisible orthodontics, metal-free cosmetic, and implant dentistry. They enjoy providing creative solutions to simple and complex cases, <http://www.dentistbulgaria.com>

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Confident Dental Clinic - Dentist for kids and teens. Very clean, friendly, and modern dentist. English speaking staff. Ul. "Angel Kanchev" 5.

<https://www.confident.bg/>

DDK Deutsche Dental Klinik — 9 Kniaz Aleksandar Dondukov Blvd.,
Tel: 089 90 77 916, Highly recommended (from Germans not just because of the name)! www.ddk.bg

Medical Dent — 114 James Bouchier Blvd., Tel: 02 473 87 92, 02 963 07 37. English and German speaking staff. Adult and pediatric dentist, orthodontist.

<http://www.medicaldent.bg/>

ProvyDent Dental Clinic — 12A Vezen Str., Lozenets. Tel: 087 980 6077,
Dr. Victor Zhechkov 088 841 4121, email: zcheckhov@provydent.com,
www.provydent.com

iD Dental Clinic — 18 Ami Boue Str., Tel. 0888 553 503, Everybody at the practice is extremely friendly and professional, making you feel very relaxed and comfortable. This is the perfect place for anyone who hates going to the dentist,

<http://www.iddental.bg/>

Dr. Victoria Gurgurieva - Orthodontist office of Andreeva Ortho. Excellent service with an orthodontist who is diligent, attentive and speaks English. 23 Gogol Street, 1504, Sofia/+359 888757597, +35929449270. <https://zdravenregister.com/>

OTHER SPECIALISTS

Eirene Counselling, Coaching and Training — Tel: 088 437 8847 (Gisli) or 088 437 8852 (Nora). They have the purpose to help and support adults and children with transition issues and other life challenges. Using a variety of methods, psychodynamic, creative, CBT and Gestalt, Gisli and Nora help to have a clearer understanding of what is going on and how to develop new skills to work through the issue, www.eirenecounselling.com

Dr. Diana Indjov, Psychologist — 10 Lavele Str., Tel: 02 9817855, 02 9873002 or 0888 619 226. She has a Ph.D. from the US, US Mental Health Department licensed clinical counselor. Experience in a very wide range of serious psychological issues for adults and children. Email: Dindjova@gmail.com

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Dr. Ivan Gerov, Orthopedist — He works at Pantaleimon Hospital - 63 Alexander Malinov Blvd., Tel: 02/9741000 and Dkk Clinic - 25B Chavdar Mutov Str., Tel: 02/4017878. Head of Orthopedics Department in UNI hospital – Panagurishte. Dr. Gerov is Specialist in Orthopedics and Traumatology. He is certified by AO Europe for advanced treatment of fractures, arthroscopy and major joint replacement surgery. He is licensed to practice medicine in the UK. Fluent in English and Russian. Dr. Gerov has a great reputation and is well known in the expat community. He has wonderful manners with children and parents.
Email: dgerov@abv.bg, Mobile: 0888 361 218.

Physio.bg - Garitage Park, buil. 2, ul. Donka Ushlinova Tel.: 0889 218 848, 088 768 9680. Therapy center with highly qualified specialists in physiotherapy/kinesiology, own pool for recovery, gym 1000m2 and the latest generation of technical equipment (medicine). Well known in the international community. Specialized in sports injuries. Therapists are very experienced, super friendly, English speaking and specialized in various treatment methods like acupuncture, kinesio taping, etc.

MEDICAL CENTER AVITSENA SVS — Physical therapy for all ages; Kinesio taping, Neurology and Orthopedic consultants, Bowen therapy, Yoga and Prenatal yoga, Med. Cosmetics, Aesthetics, two centers in Kriva Reka, Sofia - 0878 53 1717, ask.svs@gmail.com and Razsadnika-Konyovitsa Sofia, 0877 531 719, physio.svs@gmail.com, www.SVSBG.com

Petar Ninov, Chiropractor — 11 Bulgaria Blvd., 1st floor, Tel: 02 859 8009, mobil: 0888 577 380. Excellent English, office@petarninov.com, www.petarninov.com

Peter Petrov, Physiotherapist, Kinesitherapy — Tel: 0886 929 127. He does kinesio taping, massage, ultrasound, muscle stimulation and he will come to your home. He is also working in "Pilates atelier" in Dianabad. Email: p.petrov.kt@abv.bg

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

Dr. Elly Mishkova-Serafimova, Homeopathic practitioner — Dianabad, building 14, Tel: 088 78 77 115, 02 952 592 39. She is a graduate of the British Institute of Homeopathy and CEDH-France and has 14 years of practice on an international level of alternative medicine. She is fluent in English and Russian and is available for home visits. elimishkova@gmail.com, www.dr-mishkova.business.bg

Dr. John Zhang, Chinese Medicine — Tel: 088 627 8230. He does acupuncture and Chinese massage (Reflexology). He speaks English and Italian and comes to your home for treatment.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

PHARMACIES / ORTHOPEDIC SUPPLIES

You will notice many small pharmacies (apteka) everywhere. If you are looking for special items like braces, crutches, etc., the pharmacies around Pirogov hospital have special items you cannot find in the normal aptekas.

Medea — Big chain of pharmacies around Sofia, open 24 hours, online pharmacy, www.aptekamedea.bg

Subra — Big chain of pharmacies in Sofia and Bulgaria, online pharmacy, <https://subra.bg/bg/>

Orthoshop — 38 Lyulin planina Str. Tel: 02 952 3180, 0887 817 323. Exclusive distributor in Bulgaria for the neurological, orthopedic, and phlebological ranges of the French firm Thuasne, as well as the acquired by Thuasne in 2008 German company Thamert and Spanish company Fresco, www.orthoshop.bg

Orthoteh — All kinds of bandages, braces, and help for full recovery, www.orthoteh-bg.com

Sopharmacy — Big chain of pharmacies around Sofia, online pharmacy, <https://sopharmacy.bg/bg/>

SPORT ACTIVITIES

SPORT ACTIVITIES

Here is a list of some recommended places where you and your family can enjoy the following sports:

ADVENTURE TOURISM/EXTREME SPORTS

Adrenalin Extreme Sports — Tel: 0896 856 343. Bungee jumping; Parachute jumping; Paraglider flight; Rafting, www.clubadrenalin.com

BikeArea — Mountain biking in Bulgaria, www.bikearea.org

Karting — Sofia Ring Mall. This track is the largest indoor karting track in Bulgaria. Opening hours Mon to Sun: 10.00–24.00. For more information Tel: 0899 907 981, <http://sofiakarting.com/>

Karting, Dunev Motor Sport —Bulevard Asen Yordanov, 4 Sofia. Kids love this place, www.dunevmotorsport-r21.com

Krasna Poliana Karting Speedway — Vardar Blvd. No:1-3, Septemvri Stadium. Tel: 02 920 1447 Working time: Monday to Friday :12:00–21:00 - Saturday & Sunday : 10:00-21.00. The whole karting track may be rented under separate agreement for one hour or one day in case of promotions, amateur racing, celebrations, games, entertainment, etc., www.karting-bg.com

Walltopia Climbing Center — professional climbing hall, even lots of fun for kids, Blvd. Tsarigradsko Shose 111V, Tel: 0888 038 835 www.walltopiaclimbingcenter.eu/

BOWLING

Galaxy Bowling — 1 Bulgaria Blvd. Tel: 0889087577, www.galaxybowling.bg

JOY Station Bowling, Restaurant and Stage — Studentski grad, 3 Akad. Stefan Mladenov Str. The modern bowling equipment has a unique programming that provides great pleasure and convenience. In the evening when the program is switched on and all the lights are shining, the game turns into an extremely fun process. For customers who do not bowl, the center offers 5 billiard tables, 5 electronic darts and many other games. There is also a nice restaurant downstairs. For more info visit <http://joystation.bg/>

SPORT ACTIVITIES

Playground & Bowling — Paradise Center and The Mall. Equipped with 2 children tracks that are suitable for children up to age 9,

<http://www.paradise-center.com/bg> and <http://www.playground.bg/en/>

CHESS

Chess Teacher, Assenia Dimitrova — A very good chess instructor, speaks perfect English and knows how to work with kids of all ages. Private lessons or small groups. Highly recommended! Cell: +359 883549443

DANCE

Dance teacher and choreographer, Zhenya Zhivkova — Tel: 0886 817 479, 02 958 2880, email: djenia@abv.bg. Private or group lessons can be arranged. Specialises in dancesport and ballroom dancing, both international and social style. Speaks English very well.

The Electra Dance Studio — 98 Bulgaria Blvd., building Astra, tel: 088308401, electradancestudio@gmail.com. Lessons for children in all genres of dance, including ballet.

Dance Station in Paradise Center — Tel: 0887 597 476 - Street, Zumba, Latino, Swing, Ballet, Folklore. <http://dancestation.bg/>, info@dancestation.bg

FITNESS CENTERS

Pulse Spa & Fitness — In Sofia there are 7 Pulse Spa & Fitness Club. You can find the addresses in the webpage, Tel: 070044044, email: corporate@pulsefit.bg, www.pulsefit.bg

360 Health Club, Marinela Hotel — 100 James Bourchier Blvd.
Tel: 0885897860. www.hotel-marinela.com

Atama Wellness Club — Located on Blvd. M. Eminescu, opposite the Rumanian Embassy. Well-equipped fitness center and they also offer a large variety of classes from yoga to pilates or zumba, <http://club.atama.bg/>

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Sofia — Fitness & Spa — 111 Alexander Malinov Blvd. (near Sofia Business Park), Tel: 0800 30 028. English speaking staff and swimming instructors, fitness center, gym equipment, sauna. <https://www.ihg.com/crowneplaza/hotels/us/en/sofia/sofbg/hoteldetail/amenities?fromRedire>

SPORT ACTIVITIES

[ct=true&qSrt=sBR&qIta=99502222&icdv=99502222&qSIH=SOFBG&setPMCookies=true&qSHBrC=CP&qDest=111%20Alexandar%20Malinov%20Boulevard%2C%20Sofia%2C%20BG&srb_u=1](#)

Orange Fitness — In Paradise Center. Has modern facilities and quality equipment. The club offers a fitness room, rooms for group sessions, a spinning room, and squash courts. There is also a 25m swimming pool. Tel: 02 476 6666, 0889664410, www.orangefitness.bg

Yoga/Ball Class at Maleeva Tennis Club — 57 Nikola Vaptsarov Blvd., near the Tokuda Hospital, tel: 0878622282, <http://maleevaclub.com>

Studio 7 — Pilates, functional training, Aqua gymnastic, Ul. 6-ti Septemvri 14, center Sofia, tel: 0878 840 369. It is a small, private, kind of familiar studio. perfect choice if you don't like the big studios with impersonal care. In two different places (very close to each other) they offer Pilates (with Reformer), Functional training always as private lessons with personal trainers. Kinesitherapy with certified physiotherapists. Teachers speak English www.studio7.bg

Dream training / Pilates studio - Pilates reformer studio and personal training. Teddy who is the owner and instructor is an English speaking lady who is an expert in Pilates reformer. She is helpful and understanding and most of all she is friendly and caring. Mladost 3 BL 325, phone # 0885731167. dreamtrainingbulgaria@gmail.com

FOOTBALL

Tereni Sports Football Club — <https://tereni.bg/lozenets>

Olympia Soccer Club — Our after-school-activity football coaches are from there! <http://www.olimpiafc.com/>

GOLF

Air Sofia and Golf Club — 2,050 Ihtiman (50 km outside Sofia, just off the Plovdiv motorway). This one is public, not as well maintained as others. Driving range, 18-hole golf course, outdoor pool, tennis courts, www.golf-bg.com/

Pirin Golf and Country Club, Bansko — 27-hole golf course close to Bansko, 1,45 min. drive without traffic (151 km) from Sofia, www.piringolf.bg

SPORT ACTIVITIES

Riu Pravets Golf Resort and Spa — Just 65 km away from Sofia. Easily accessible with a 55 minute drive on the Hemus highway (towards Veliko Tarnovo). Tel: 029024103. A nice day trip or weekend away. Beautiful resort with pool and spa complex, riupravets.bg

St. Sofia Golf Club and SPA — Elin Pelin, Village of Rovno Pole. Tel. 0889783888, 024760530. Nearest course to Sofia, 18-hole golf course and driving range, www.stsofiagolf.com

HIKING

Bulgaria has amazing opportunities for mountain lovers. This relatively small country abounds in mountains – big and small, high and not so high. In the alpine type mountains, such as the Rila Mountains and Pirin Mountains, pyramidal peaks and steep aretes divide magnificent corries with cobalt blue glacial lakes. There are many Eco trails , most of them suitable even for children, http://www.en.baret-bg.org/ecotrail_e/enecotrails.html

Odysseia-In — Tel: 02 989 0538. Hiking and tourism company.

Email: odysseia@omega.bg, www.odysseia-in.com

PTO Hiking group — Bulgaria is paradise for hikers. Most hikers will find their way but if you want to get to know the area around Sofia, join the friday hiking group from school. You can find more information on the weekly howl which sends it every Friday to the parents by email.

Walking Bulgaria — Guided and self-guided walking tours in Bulgaria. Scheduled and anytime departures, www.walkingbulgaria.com

Free “Boyana Hiking Tour” — Organized by Sofia Green Tour every day in front of Ivan Vazov National theater, <https://sofiagreentour.com>

HORSE RIDING

Adgor Stable — Western riding and natural horsemanship. English speaking contact: Alex Penev Tel: 0899014423. It is 25 km from Sofia, but worthwhile going to. Very nice horses and riding through the country. From Sofia drive to Bistritsa and follow the road to Zheleznitsa. Keep driving on the road (about 8km) until you see a yellow sign with KOHE (means horses in Bulgarian), www.adgor.bg

SPORT ACTIVITIES

Gen. Krum Lekarski — This horse stable is located in Bozhurishte, just outside Sofia to the West. Two English speaking trainers and one also speaks German. This stable has both inside and outside arenas, the facility is only a few years old, and it is the first pony riding club in Bulgaria, making it an ideal place especially for children. They have very good and qualified trainers as well as very good school horses, www.konnabaza-bozhurishte.com

Han Asparuh Riding Centre — 28 Hajdushko Izvorche, Ovcha Kupel. Close to Slavia soccer/ice skating complex. Large facility consisting of many riding clubs and independent instructors. Indoor and outdoor arenas, restaurants and tack shops on premises, <http://krasimirsimeonov.com/bg/контакти/>

Sportna-Sofia Horse Club — 1 Dragan Tzankov Blvd., Borisova Gradina, Tel: 08657156. The manager, Hristo Marangozov, can be reached at 0886 216669. Pony rides are also available.

ICE SKATING

Ariana Lake Ice Rink — Outdoors but covered (only during winter), in Borisova gradina, right at the beginning of the park near Orlov most. They are open 24 hours a day and you can rent skates there. Biggest of its kind in the Balkans.

Slavia Stadium — Ovcha Kupel district.

Winter Palace — Zimen dvorec in Studentski Grad. There are some public skating hours but you need to go there and check the schedule. Tel: 0888505923.

Sofia Ring Mall, Funtasy Park — Indoor ice skating rink the whole year round.

The Mall — The parking lot at the main entrance on Tsarigradsko Shosse is usually transformed into a public skating rink during the winter months. Skate rentals are available.

SCUBA DIVING

Diving Course — Open water scuba certification is available with the Professional Association of Dive Instructors (PADI www.padi.com). The course consists of class, pool and open water sessions. Class session dates are flexible but pool sessions are available only on Saturday. Open water sessions are completed in the Black Sea or Greece. Also, referrals can be given to complete the Open Water portion at a resort of your choice.

SPORT ACTIVITIES

SKIING and SNOWBOARDING

*It is nice to be able to ski in your "backyard" on **Vitosha Mountain on Vitoshko Lale** slope. It is a small area and during the weekend it tends to be very crowded. The lifts are relatively old. But it is nice to decide in the morning if the weather is nice on www.skivitosha.com and go there just for a couple of hours. If you want more, then **Bansko**, **Borovets**, and **Pamporovo** are the three proper and well- developed ski areas in Bulgaria.*

Bansko Fun Holidays - in Bansko by the main ski gondola lift. Highly professional and friendly staff that speaks English and Russian. Offers ski and snowboard equipment and lessons. <https://www.banskoskifun.com/en/contact-us/>, Address: st. Pirin 92 A, 2nd Floor, Bansko; E-mail: banskofun@abv.bg, Tel: +359 898 629 201

Ski Instructor, Elena Savova — Very professional and a very nice person. She is also very busy so book her in advance! Email: hellan72bg@abv.bg or tel: 0885337393.

Ski Instructor in Borovets, Ms. Pepa — Tel. +359 88 8723474.

Ski Instructor in Borovets, Mr. George — Tel. 0887623274, offers private skiing lessons at Borovets and is good with children. He can also arrange ski rentals.

Ice Angels hotel — In Borovets, 1 hour driving from Sofia.
www.iceangelshotel.com/ski-snowboard-club

Rila Hotel — In Borovets, 1 hour driving from Sofia,
<http://www.rilaborovets.com/>

SQUASH

Maleeva Tennis Club — 57 Nikola Vapzarov Blvd., near the Tokuda Hospital. One squash court. Owned by the famous Maleeva sisters,
www.maleevaclub.com

SPORT ACTIVITIES

SWIMMING

Garitage Sports Center - 2 „Donka Ushlinova“ Str. Tel: 02 474 0404

Monday – Friday: 7:00 – 22:30 Saturday – Sunday: 8:00 – 22:00

<https://sportscentergaritage.com/en/pool-and-spa/>

360 Health Club, Marinela Hotel — 100 James Bourchier Blvd. Tel: 0885897860.

www.hotel-marinela.com

Aqualand in Plovdiv — <http://aqualand.bg>

Belchin Garden Pool — Two mineral pools in Belchin Garden Hotel,

<http://belchin-garden.com/>

Berlin Park Vitosha Hotel — Georgi Rilski Str., Tel: 02 895 0000. It has a beautiful indoor pool and hot water all year, an option for swimming lessons. It has an excellent spa with a large jacuzzi.

Bistritsa Pool — Part of Spaggo restaurant, so you can combine with lunch or dinner. Beautiful view over the Vitosha mountain, www.spaggo.com

Dianabad Sports complex — 1 Nikola Gabrovski Str., Dianabad district. One large 50m Olympic size pool. Open 7.00–18.00. Admission 8 BGN, you can come any time a day and swim in lanes 6 and 7 which are designated for public use. Monday through Thursday they have a kids swimming group with a coach starting from 6 PM. You can call swimming coach Atanas Marinov 0888 404 149, 0885 709 104.

Korali Mineral Pool — Pancharevo district, 3A Samokovsko Shose Str. Beautiful setting, on the banks of the Pancharevo Dam. Children's pool available. Tel: 0885 685 354. Hours: 9am–7pm. <http://koralite.com/en>

Maxi Water World — In Maxi complex, 110 Simeonovsko Shose. For information and reservations please call: 02 892 0033 - SPA Reception. Great pool for younger children, www.maxisofia.com

Ramada Sofia Hotel — 131 Maria Luisa Blvd. Indoor pool, open to non-guests for a small fee. Good for little kids, <http://ramada-sofia.hotel-rn.com/>

Spartak — 4 Arsenalski Blvd. Tel: 02 865 6471. A modern sport and relaxation facility with a spinning complex, multifunctional gym, spa center, meticulously maintained tennis courts, pools and cozy restaurant with healthy menu, www.spartakbg.com

SPORT ACTIVITIES

TAEKWONDO

Sports Club Taekwondo Fitness — Sports club of our after-school-activity coach Dimitar. Tel: 0892299817 and 0899552723. The club conducts Olympic Taekwondo training at all different ages and levels. One of the leading taekwondo clubs in the country. Head master Mr Dimitar Avramov, Ph.D., taekwondo-fitness.org, <http://www.facebook.com/taekwondofitness.org>

TENNIS

Bulgarian National Tennis Center — Borisova Gradina Park, Tel: (02) 8703078, bntc@bgtennis.bg. They have several Indoor and outdoor courts. There is a nice pizzeria in the center, <http://bgtenniscenter.com/>

Cherry Tennis Courts — Very close to our school in Pancharevo on Samokovsko Shose. In summer, from Monday to Friday until 17:00. Tel: 0878 868 811. Outdoor swimming pool.

Dema — Near to Billa (same side) in Mladost. Indoor and outdoor courts, demasport.com

Gorna Banya Diplomatic Club — Outdoor courts. Membership, www.gloriapalace.net

Maleeva Tennis Club — 57 Nikola Vapzarov Blvd., near the Tokuda Hospital. Outdoor courts and fitness center. Owned by the famous Maleeva sisters, www.maleevaclub.com

Maxi Sports Center — 110 Simeonovsko Shose. Tel: 02 892 0000. Tennis club MAXI hosts many prestigious tournaments. With its 3 open-air courts, the club is an appropriate location for training, www.maxisofia.com

Tennis Klub Diana — Tintyava Str., in Dianabad, Tel: 0894 606 224, www.tennisdiana.com

Tennis Club Pro Sport — National Sports Academy, 22 St. Kliment Ohridski Blvd. Please contact Stefan Yordanov, Manager. Tel: 0892 334 040 for individual or group lessons. Great place to play tennis for the whole family. They have long experience teaching children and they have great summer camps for children from beginner to advanced. Coaches speak english. Lutfiye Velieva : 0890502602

Vitosha Park Hotel - 1 Rosario Street, Outdoor courts, www.vitoshaparkhotel.com

HAIR AND BEAUTY

HAIR AND BEAUTY

With the busy lives we live today, we can never do enough to pamper ourselves. Everybody deserves to be pampered and preened, and not just on special occasions. Where do you go?

HAIRDRESSING

Daisy Salon - At Daisy Beauty Salon you can enjoy a variety of beauty procedures: facial treatments, waxing, manicure, pedicure, spa treatments, hairdressing and makeup. Good location with parking spaces and mountain view. Personal respect and concern for detail. We speak English. Leave yourself in our hands. Address: bul. "Bratya Buxton" 81 (garden center building) Phone numbers: 088 964 5544, 02 444 5545 email: politoni_ood@abv.bg. <https://www.facebook.com/>

Butterfly Beauty and Spa — 3 Zornitsa Vitoshka Str. section 4, Dragalevtsi, complex Aquarius. Tel 02 4720436 / 0893494422/ 0897033999. This spa offers all treatments from hair to toes including facials and solarium, and organizes kids parties. It's a very fresh place with a good location (opposite Fantastico, other side of Cherni Vrah) if you live south of the ring road, www.butterfly-bg.com

Cheveux Sofia — In Metropolitan hotel, Tsarigradsko Shose, both hairdressers speak English and do really good job, www.facebook.com/cheveuxsofia/

Petio VeleV Hairdresser — 9 Praga Blvd. Tel: +359 2 851 01 63, mobile: +359 888 235 039, Petio VeleV has more than 20 years' experience, has many rewards, and is excellent with color. He has just opened his own hair salon, modern, and light. He is great and his prices are reasonable. petio.velev@gmail.com

Puzzle Kids — 38 Flower Garden Str., Lozenets. Tel: 0893 446 636, Haircut, styling, braiding. Especially for kids. Only bio products used, but they speak only very simple English, www.puzzlekids.biz

Salon "Nouhau" — Georgi Rakovski Str. Friendly and professional staff with good English. For men, women, and children. Also good place for manicure, www.nouhau.co.uk

HAIR AND BEAUTY

BEAUTY SALONS

Daisy Salon - At Daisy Beauty Salon you can enjoy a variety of beauty procedures: facial treatments, waxing, manicure, pedicure, spa treatments, hairdressing and makeup. Good location with parking spaces and mountain view. Personal respect and concern for detail. We speak English. Leave yourself in our hands. Address: bul. "Bratya Buxton" 81 (garden center building) Phone numbers: 088 964 5544, 02 444 5545, email: politoni_ood@abv.bg. <https://www.facebook.com/>

Antoanette Beauty Studio — Opposite Mall of Sofia, Alexander Stamboliyski Blvd. 84-86, Tel: 02/ 489 31 88, The hair & Beauty business, Limited English, antoanette.com

Butterfly Beauty and Spa — 3 Zornitsa Vitoshka Str., section 4, Dragalevtsi, complex Aquarius, Tel 02 4720436 / 0893494422 / 0897033999. This spa offers all treatments from hair to toes including facials and solarium, and organises kids parties. It's a very fresh place with a good location (opposite Fantastico, other side of Cherni Vrah) if you live south of the ring road, www.butterfly-bg.com

Magic Line — 83-85 James Bouchier Blvd., opposite Marinela, Tel: 02 952 19 35. Much appreciated address for facials and hair lasering or anything else your skin needs! Professional, friendly and good English, combine it with a nice sushi lunch in Marinela Umami Japanese Food & Garden, www.magicline.bg

MG Beauty salon — In Sofia Residential park, building 16B opposite S-park. Conveniently located. Every treatment for your face, nails, feet and hair. Tel: 088 999 6910, [Facebook: MG Beauty Salon](#)

Ovaya Center — Manastirski livadi B district, bl. 66, en. B (Behind hotel Festa on Bul. Bulgaria), Tel: 0887 37 22 70. "Ovaya" center is a specialised office for physical therapy, anti-cellulite procedures, massage and home rehabilitation. Apart from that they offer hair removal with the latest Laser technology, www.ovayabg.com

Via Medica — Visit one of the leading aesthetic medical clinics in Sofia. A very experienced team, combined with high quality equipment and materials guarantee to offer you best results for your cosmetic needs. Try their Laser treatments with the Cutera Laser device of highest and latest technology for hair removal and skin rejuvenation, www.via-medica.com

HAIR AND BEAUTY

Rudraksha Massage Gallery — C. Sofia, 15 Shipka Str. The place for deep relaxation and recharging. Here you may fully enjoy a selection of traditional and Eastern massages and therapies; of healing, purifying, and detoxifying programs; of cosmetic and beautifying procedures. A very cosy place, where the staff is highly qualified and care individually for each client, http://www.rudraaksha.net/?page_id=643&lang=en

Beauty place (Kerastase) – 27-29, Kozyak Str. Tel: 02 962 5885. Beauty Place is a beauty salon where hair services, facial and body treatments, manicures and pedicures are provided. Professionals in the salon will meet you with a smile and professionalism to advise you on your desires. E-mail: beautyplaceoffice@gmail.com or <http://beautyplace.bg>

EDUCATION AND CHURCHES

EDUCATION AND CHURCHES

ENGLISH SPEAKING SCHOOLS

ABC Kinder Care Centre — www.abckinder.org Caring for children aged 2-6. ABC has developed an excellent reputation as a fully English speaking, all year round, high quality preschool. It appears to be a special place, created to serve a unique community among the diplomatic and foreign families. There are children from eighteen nations at the moment enrolled in three locations: ABC NDK, ABC Lozenets and ABC Dragalevtsi. The Educational Program is based on IPC (International Primary Curriculum). The Program is specially tailored for international schools.

ABC is a member of COBIS (Council of British International Schools) which comes to show that it covers the same academic standards as AAS. Working time: 8:30-18:00, Mon-Fri. For more information call +359 889 229 666 or contact e-mail office@abckinder.org

International Children's Creativity Centre — 36 Vaklinets Street, Dragalevtsi, Tel: 02 967 3112; 0879403677. ICC, founded in 1997 is a non-profit preschool, advised and legally run by a parent-volunteer board of members. It is the oldest and most popular English-speaking pre-school amongst expats in Sofia. The focus of its internationally recognized curriculum is to provide a healthy balance of active learning through thoughtfully planned activities, play and sports. The program puts an emphasis on learning by doing activities such as planting a vegetable garden every spring, conducting recycling projects and going on exciting field trips throughout the year, Ski Week every winter and Green School in spring. Activities such as karate, dance, and music are held on a weekly basis. The school offers half-day (8:00-13:00) and full-day (8:00-18:00) sessions for children between the ages of 2 and 6 years old. www.iccf-bg.com.

Bright — Childcare and development centre: office@bright-care.net, Tel 0888 558 997, <http://bright-care.net/>

Eco Sunflower Kids — Working time: 8.30–14.00, Mon to Fri. It's a place with a nice home-like atmosphere, located in the suburb of Dragalevtsi, where children are free to experiment and explore with natural materials and spend most of their time outside, but at the same time are mindfully guided by up-to-date pedagogues in their social and emotional growth. It is a small community not only for children, but parents too, for exchanging ideas about upbringing and education, spending quality time together and making new friends. In this multicultural

EDUCATION AND CHURCHES

place, English is the main language and children learn it easily. During vacations the center also organizes hikes and outdoor activities for 6–10 year-old children. Weekends and non-working days the space can be rented for parties and other occasions. Website: ecosunflowerkids.com, e-mail: info@ecosunflowerkids.com, phone numbers: 0898 226 345, 0898 225 211.

Little Steps Kindergarten — N16 54th Street, Simeonovo quarter, Sofia, tel.: 02/961 49 06; 0895 700 605; 089 664 5504, e-mail: office@littlesteps.bg Kindergarten is located in Simeonovo, in a beautiful spacious house with garden. Little Steps provides an English-speaking environment and programmes for preschool care and education. They offer full-day and half-day childcare programmes for children from two to seven years of age. Children are divided into groups according to their age. Activities like Karate, Yoga, Dancing, PE are included in the daily programme. They are open from 8:30 am to 18:00 pm, all year round. They close only for public holidays, one week for Christmas and two weeks in August. They offer special programmes during summer, such as green weeks, trips, sport activities. The meals are prepared by an outside catering company and there is also the possibility of a bus transport, <http://littlesteps.bg/>

The American College of Sofia — Sanders Hall, Floyd Black Lane, Mladost 2, Sofia 1799 Tel: ACS Reception Office (359-2) 434 1008, 434 1010, 434 1011, Mailing Address: P.O. Box 873, Sofia 1000, Bulgaria. Accredited in Bulgaria by the Ministry of Education. Grade 8 through 12. Teaches an American curriculum to Bulgarian and International Students, www.acs.bg

The American University in Bulgaria (AUBG) — Located in Blagoevgrad, about 100 kilometers south of Sofia. The University teaches a four- year liberal-arts curriculum. It was founded in 1991 as a cooperative venture of the University of Maine and the governments of Bulgaria and the U.S. The University of Maine extends its accreditation to the academic programs of the AUBG. Admission is competitive and based on high school transcripts, SAT and TOEFL scores, a required essay and letters of recommendation. admissions@aubg.edu, www.aubg.bg

Wonder World — Tel: 02/9532486, 02/9549276, email: wonder.world@wondergroup.eu. A bilingual English-Bulgarian kindergarten for children from 2 to 5 years-old. The kindergarten follows the Bulgarian educational requirements and applies innovative methodology in the educational-teaching process. Preparatory Group ("mnogoznaiko") prepares children for first grade. At Wonder World, the children grow calm, cuddled with a lot of love, attention and respect for their personality. They organise regular events for further education, entertainment and sports: ski school, green school, theatre, additional sports.

EDUCATION AND CHURCHES

TUTORS

One of the advantages of living in Bulgaria is not only the affordability of private lessons, but also the high level of professionalism of the instructors. Many of these instructors will come to your home or office and are willing to tailor their lessons according to your needs.

LANGUAGE

Excellence Language Learning — 36 Iskar Str., floor 4, Tel: 02 983 49 50 / 0878 39 23 51; Email: info@excellence.bg. Excellence Language Learning is a new language training centre located in a beautifully restored building in the centre of Sofia. We offer high-quality English, Bulgarian and Dutch language courses. Small groups, dynamic teachers and modern, well-equipped classrooms, located only 5 minutes from Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. See our website for more details: www.excellence.bg

Berlitz Bulgaria and Romania — 15 Graf Ignatiev Str., Sofia www.berlitz.bg, Tel: +359 897 807817, +359 2 8517090.

IH Sofia — Two centers, one on 39a, “Sitnyakovo Blvd.”, the other one ulitsa Bregalnitsa. They offer group and also tailor-made language courses, www.ihsofia.

Study in BG — A contemporary educational centre. They offer Bulgarian for foreigners, English, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian. They offer group or individual sessions, even via Skype. Contact: <http://studyinbg.com/>

The UK and US Embassies — Contact the CLOs of these embassies for lists of recommended Bulgarian teachers.

MUSIC (INSTRUMENTS)

AAS has been running a **PIP (Private Instrumental Program)** for eight years now. The teachers selected for this program are all professional musicians and experienced teachers of the highest quality and with English proficiency. For a complete and updated list of tutors, please visit [https:// www.aas-sofia.org/our-community/pip](https://www.aas-sofia.org/our-community/pip).

National Music School “Lubomir Pipkov” — Milka Miteva, director, tel: +359 2 943 00 03. Musicians are trained here so you can always call them if you need a tutor for a certain instrument. They don’t all have fluent English, www.nmu-bg.org

EDUCATION AND CHURCHES

RockSchool — 89 Hristo Botev Blvd., RockSchool is a music lesson school, rehearsal room and a recording studio in Sofia and Varna. We teach guitar, drums, bass, piano, singing, heavy vocals, violin, studio recording and music theory. We also provide options for online lessons. RockSchool is a project of “Music for Bulgaria,” a non-profit organization, <https://rockschool.bg>

Music Studio — Daniela Videva ,tel: 0878 144 804; 0899 166 891; danielavidev@hotmail.com; Piano, vocal and music theory classes. She teaches in Bulgarian, English and French.

XS Artists — Look for XS artists on FB. Our kids take piano lessons there. There is also guitar, beatbox, singing etc.

<https://www.facebook.com/xsartists/info/?tab=overview>

CHURCHES

Alexander Nevsky Memorial Church, Bulgarian Orthodox — Tel: 02 980 2902, Daily Services: 8:00am and 5:00 pm. Closed on Monday. Saturday: 6:30pm / Sunday: 9:30am. During the winter months, hours are 7:00am to 6:00pm. Summer hours are 7:00am to 7:00pm. Weekend services last about two hours. Go early to hear the bells ring before the service. The professional choir that sings the Bulgarian Orthodox liturgical music is famous in Bulgaria. People stand and walk in and out of the church during the services.

Anglican Services in Catholic Annunciation Chapel — 5 Oborishte Street, Doctor's Garden. Enter by large gates next to Macedonia Cntr. one block from British Council & Sofia Uni. Holy Communion service in English at 10:00 am, one Sunday a month. For more information, contact Bob and Becky Faber, 02-866-9409. Please leave a message.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints — 21 Marin Drinov Str. Tel: 02 946 3329, 0888696142. Services held in Bulgarian (with translation via headsets into English) on Sunday at 10:00am. Free English classes Thursdays at 6:30pm, www.mormon.org

Ecumenical Service in German — Christliche Kirche “Ökumenische Zuflucht” Deutschsprachige ökumenische Kirche. Office: 6f Elemag Str. Tel: 02 963 2050, evkirchesofia@web.de

International Baptist Church of Sofia — 91 Pirin Street (near Billa Supermarket in Borovo), floor 3, tel: 02 971 1750/0888 736 150. Pastor: Roy Miller. Services are held in English every Sunday at 11:00am. A children's church catering for pre-

EDUCATION AND CHURCHES

schoolers to age 10 runs concurrently with the church service. There is also an active youth group that meets biweekly and weekly adult Bible studies that meet in various locations. At the Pirin Street location, there are also services for the Bible Baptist Church (in Bulgarian) 3pm Sundays and the Borovo Baptist Church (in Bulgarian) 5pm Sundays, ibcs Sofia@yahoo.com

Jewish Worship at the Sofia Synagogue — 16 Exarch Yossif Street. Tel: 02 983 1273. Services are held every day at 8:30am plus Fridays between 5:00-7:30 pm depending on the season and Saturdays at 9:45am. A small Sephardic community meets in a side room of the main synagogue located not far from the Mosque near TZUM.

Jewish Worship at Chabad Sofia — 38 Stara Planina Str. Tel: 088-879-7833, <http://www.chabadbulgaria.org/>

Mladost Baptist Church — 219B Prof. Dr. V Zlatarski Street, across from Block, Mladost 2, Sofia. Tel: +359 882 579 995; ebcmladost@icloud.com Services are in English and Bulgarian, <http://ebcmladost.com/>

St. Joseph's Catholic Church — 125 Knyaz Boris 1 Str. Tel: (+359) 3 981 55 48. Mass is held every Sunday at the following times: 9:00 am in Polish, 10:00 am in Bulgarian; 11:30 am in Latin and 5:30pm in Bulgarian. The Bulgarian Franciscan priests serve this church and give services in French from time to time.

Holy Trinity Church — Bulgaria Blvd next to Billa, Sofia. Services held in Bulgarian with translation into English via headsets. Pastor Grozdan and his wife speak English fluently. Great kids program for all ages. Lively songs and music, gently charismatic style. If interested, please contact by email: s.l.stoevska@gmail.com Pastor Grozdan & Slavica (089-689-0641).

The Bulgarian Lutheran Church — 4 Kapitan Andreev Str., 2nd floor, Lozenetz, Metro: Vasil Levski, Tel: 02 963 4244. Email: blcofc@bgcell.net Pastor Strahil Naidev. English Services: Sunday mornings at 9 am. The Church is on the second floor.

St Nikolai Miracle maker, Russian Orthodox Church — 3 Tzar Osvoboditel Blvd. Tel 02 980 07 73, www.podvorie-sofia.ru

Zoe Church — One block from Starbucks, 10.30, at NDK, downstairs. A weekly Bible service with Australian and US visiting preachers. Bulgarian music, but English sermons, "HILLSONG" branch. All are welcome. Contact Andrea or Noah for more information 088-674-5544.

TRANSPORTATION AND MONEY

TRANSPORTATION AND MONEY

CARS, DRIVING AND PARKING IN SOFIA

DRIVING TIPS

As in any other new city, it will take time to get accustomed to the local driving style. A few of the situations you may encounter include speed traps when going through villages.

Speed limits are 50 km/h within the city, 90km/h outside cities and 130 km/h on motorways, unless indicated otherwise.

Legal Alcohol limit is 0.5 per mil.

Seat belts must be worn by all passengers. All cars must carry a first aid kit, fire extinguisher and reflective jacket. At all times you need to drive with your headlights on.

VIGNETTE (VINETKA) — You need to buy a “vinetka” to be able to use most of the roads outside towns in Bulgaria (so not only highways but also 1st and 2nd class roads). More info and prices can be found online at <https://www.bgtoll.bg/e-vinetka>. In force as of 1 January, 2019, electronic vignette was introduced for the use of the paid road network. Electronic vignettes can be purchased in several easy ways:

- Through a mobile application
- Through self-service terminals in retail outlets and in the offices of the Road Infrastructure Agency
- At cash desks at the points of sale and in the regional offices of the Road Infrastructure Agency

ROAD ASSISTANCE

Road assistance for BG — 24 hrs service, call center service by calling 146 from a mobile phone

Road assistance - <https://roadside-assistance.bg/>

Union of Bulgarian Motorists — 3 Pozitano sq. Tel: (+359) 2 935 79 35,(+359) 2 981 61 51. <http://www.uab.org/> No repairs but if you are stuck with a flat tyre (Sofia Area) they will get you to a garage.

TRANSPORTATION AND MONEY

PARKING IN SOFIA

Sofia city centre has two parking zones: Blue and Green. You can tell whether you are in the Blue or Green Zone by the street signs. Updated information can be found on Sofia Urban Mobility Center website: www.sofiatraffic.bg/en/parking

Blue Zone — send your license plate to the number 1302 for parking between 08.00 and 19.00 on working days and 08:00 and 14:00 on Saturdays. A maximum stay of 2 hours is allowed.

Green Zone — send your license plate to the number 1303 for parking between 08.00 and 19.00 on working days only. A maximum stay of 4 hours is allowed. Free on weekends.

IN CASE OF A CAR ACCIDENT - call 112 or 146

In the event of an accident, the traffic police (KAT) must be called and an accident report will be filed. This is essential for any insurance claims. If the damage is minor, the matter can now be settled between parties without the long wait for the traffic police.

AUTO SERVICE AND REPAIR

Keep in mind that most new car dealerships in Sofia have service centers.

D&N Auto Service — Same street as Arena Theatre in Mladost, just a block past it. 251B Okolovrasten Pat Str. Tel: 0886880671. It is a great place for your car service needs, [https://www.facebook.com › Automotive-Repair-Shop](https://www.facebook.com/Automotive-Repair-Shop)

Margel — They have car service on 52 Simeonovsko shose Blvd., in The Mall, 18 Alexander Malinov Blvd. They do an excellent job and you do not need to worry to go there even if you only need to change a bulb. They also change tyres, so if you choose the ones in malls, you can just leave your car there and go shopping, <http://www.margel.info/>

Auto Mechanic Top Motor — Owner Emil (+359 888 147 818) speaks English, so do some of the mechanics. Top Motor provides auto electrical diagnostics and mechanical repairs and service for all makes of cars and will install the parts you provide, www.topmotorbg.com

TRANSPORTATION AND MONEY

CAR WASH

There are many small car washes around the town. If you do not wish to wait there, use one of the car washes in Shopping Malls.

CHANGING TYRES

Winter tyres, summer tyres: to change them is a must even with a four wheel drive. You can do it at many spots but here are two of our favorite addresses.

Diana Tyres for You — Everything connected with tyres including hotel for tyres. 268 Tsarigradsko shose, 350 Botevgradsko shose, next to Shell gas station, Ring Road 110 (between Simeonovo and Dragalevtsi), www.diana-ltd.com

Motoexpert — Express service for most car repairs and changing and storage of tyres, or get your technical approval for the year, Cherni Vrah 179B, opposite Fantastico supermarket in Dragalevtsi, www.motoexpert.bg

Margel — They have car service on 52 Simeonovsko shose Blvd., in The Mall, 18, Alexander Malinov, Blvd. They do an excellent job and you do not need to worry to go there even if you only need to change a bulb. They also change tyres, so if you choose the ones in malls, you can just leave your car there and go shopping, <http://www.margel.info/>

CAR HIRE

Most of the car rentals have their stalls at the Sofia Airport.

Avis — Tel: +359 2 945 92 24 (www.avis.bg)

Budget — Tel: 02 937 3388 (www.budget.bg)

Europcar — Tel: 02 931 6000 (www.europcar.bg)

Sixt — <https://www.sixt.com/car-rental/bulgaria/sofia>

Hertz — <http://www.hertz.bg/en>

TAXI

Several private companies run fleets of taxis in Sofia. All licensed taxis are yellow, and have a sticker displayed on the windscreen or side window indicating their rates in Bulgarian leva (Lv). Check the rates carefully as some charge more than others (especially outside shopping malls). Taxis can also be ordered by phone, and it is usually easier to ask the reception staff at hotels/restaurants to call one for you.

TRANSPORTATION AND MONEY

OK Supertrans — Tel: 02 973 2121 [OK taxi](#)

Yellow Taxi — Tel: 02 91119 [Yellow taxi](#)

Euro Taxi — Tel: 02 962 2226 [Euro taxi](#)

Radio CB Taxi — Tel: 02 91 263 [Radio CB Sofia](#)

Green Taxi — Tel: +359 02 810810, +359 878 810810. Eco friendly cars/ Wifi provided, [www.greentaxi.bg](#)

M-taxi — Tel 02 910 50, 10 50 (from Mobile). GPS secured bills They have also drink & drive service, [bgwww.mtaxi.bg](#)

TaxiMe — Smartphone app [www.taxime.to](#)

Volt Premium Taxi the only premium taxi service in Sofia - 087 577 7555 <https://taxivolt.bg/en/>

DRINK AND DRIVE

You Drink and We Drive — Tel: 0887 733 733. working hours from 20.00 until 2.00. In the comfort of your car with a guarantee for a quality service, to immediately respond to your call and send our driver, an experienced and professional driver with good manners, who will ensure a smooth and safe ride in the comfort of your automobile, [www.youdrink-wedrive.eu](#)

DRIVERS

VIP Transfers — Tel: +359 878 878 700. Excellent English, safe and pleasant. A great way to be picked up from the airport, go to a concert, bring your guests home after a party, etc, [www.transport-bg.eu](#)

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Metro (underground) - All tickets cost 1,60 lev per journey.
<https://www.metrosofia.com/en/maps>

Trams, buses and trolley buses provide adequate, if at times, slow transport all over central Sofia and out to the suburbs. Services run from 5 am to 11.30 pm daily. A unified ticketing system applies to travel on trams, buses and trolley buses (but not metro). Tickets (bileti) can be bought from kiosks near major bus and tram stops and newspaper kiosks or inside the vehicle. Most trams and trolleybuses have ticket machines from which you can buy a ticket that you do not need to punch. The ticket is only valid for the journey on that vehicle. If you change, you need to punch/buy a new ticket. All tickets cost 1,60 lev per journey
<https://www.sofiatraffic.bg/en/>

TRANSPORTATION AND MONEY

AIRPORT — 02 937 2211

Sofia Airport has two terminals, the newer one being Terminal 2. Most of the low cost airlines fly from Terminal 1 (old one). For arrivals, departures and delays check the website: www.sofia-airport.bg

RAILWAY

Train Information — Bulgarian State Railways, www.bdz.bg

International Rail Travel — “The Man in Seat 61,” www.seat61.com This is the best source of information in English on train travel to Bulgaria, a website run by train travel enthusiasts.

BUSES

Buses — www.centralnaavtogara.bg

MONEY & PAYING BILLS

The currency of Bulgaria: the lev (plural: leva), 1 BGN is divided into 100 stotinki.
EURO: Bulgaria aims to join the eurozone. There is a fixed exchange rate:
cca 1 EUR = 1,95 BGN

You will quickly learn where the ATM /cash machines (“bankomats”) are. There is one at school upstairs by the administration office, another at the OMV service station near school, on the corner of the Ring road and Samokovsko Chosse.

You may want to advise your visitors to bring their bankcard to Bulgaria and not Traveler’s Cheques, since these are very difficult to change in Sofia, and cash points are increasingly common. Credit cards have become widely accepted, but there are still some places which will only accept payment in cash.

Paying bills: EASY PAY AND E-PAY

You can get internet banking through your local bank, but if you don’t want to go through the hassle, **Easy Pay** is a great solution for all your electricity, mobile, water etc bills. You will find Easy Pay counters in Fantastico, Billa supermarkets. Another alternative is to register at ePAY.BG. You can easily pay for Electricity, Water supply, phones, internet or even school cafeteria from home.

Tavex — With offices in several malls, a currency exchange for Euros, Dollars and virtually all European currencies, www.tavex.bg

BULGARIAN TRADITIONS

BULGARIAN TRADITIONS

Bulgarians are a fusion of distinctly separate ancient peoples: the Slavs, Thracians and Protobulgars, each differing in race, religion and culture. Together, over a period of thousands of years, they have contributed to the immense richness of Bulgarian folk customs and traditions. These vary from region to region, and are more closely followed in rural areas than in Sofia, but you'll probably come across these major ones during your time here. We've also included some tips on local social etiquette that may come in handy when you interact with people from your host country.

ETIQUETTE

Bulgarian Orthodox Church — It is customary for both men and women to remove their hats while in church, and not to put their hands in their pockets or cross their arms.

Birthdays — On their birthday, Bulgarians take a box of chocolates into work or school to share with friends and co-workers in celebration. When attending a birthday party, it is appropriate for guests to bring a gift and flowers.

Cocktail Parties or Receptions — Usually begin in the early evening and last two hours or more. To arrive early would be discourteous. One should arrive at the time mentioned on the invitation. Up to 15 minutes late is permissible.

Death Notice — These formal announcements of a death in the family are usually sent by Bulgarians to all acquaintances. It is correct to respond with a note of condolence. If you attend a funeral, you should bring an even number of flowers.

Flowers — When invited to dinner either at a restaurant or to a home, particularly for the first time, you should take flowers to the hostess. Avoid chrysanthemums, a symbol of mourning. Also avoid giving an even number of flowers (except for a funeral or memorial service). If the party is given in your honor, you should have the flowers sent with your personal card, either earlier in the day, following the dinner, or during the reception itself.

Greetings — The man generally offers his hand first. A Bulgarian person may be addressed as "Gospozhitce" (Ms.), "Gospozho" (Mrs.), "Gospodin" (Mr.) without the last name. A greeting or farewell is always accompanied by a handshake. When you become friends with a Bulgarian, you may kiss lightly on both cheeks upon meeting and parting.

BULGARIAN TRADITIONS

New Babies — If you plan to take a gift to the new baby, be sure to call ahead and ask when it would be convenient. Usually a visit to a newborn should not take place earlier than the 40th day after delivery. Something like a baby shower, called the “Pogacha” (round bread), is held 40 days after the baby is born, and is usually attended only by women. A round bread, “pogacha” or “pitka”, is one of the meals served. On that occasion it’s usual to bring a gift for the baby and flowers for the mother.

Nodding the Head — Most Bulgarians will confirm by moving the head from left to right and will reject by moving it up and down, which is the opposite from typical Western body language. If you have trouble adjusting to this standard, then try not to use your head at all when you say “da” or “ne.”

Smoking — Not allowed in public places, all work places, restaurants, bars, public transport, all hotels, near administrative buildings, day care centres and schools, playgrounds and at outdoor events.

Street Dogs — Despite years of effort, there are still a lot of stray cats and dogs. The Four Paws clinic in Bankia is doing a great job in caring for them. They respond quickly to any emergency call out.

Tipping — At a bar or sidewalk cafe, it is normal to leave a small tip, or simply round up the bill. This would hold true for tipping a taxi driver too. Don’t expect any small change back from the fare.

Wedding Invitations — You may receive a formal invitation to attend a wedding ceremony, reception or both. The later in the day, the dressier the occasion. If you are invited to the reception, you will probably be expected to reply to the invitation and you should probably bring a gift and flowers. Be sure to include your personal card in the gift which you take to the reception. If you are invited to attend only the church ceremony, still send a greeting card or flowers to the married couple.

BULGARIAN TRADITIONS

CELEBRATIONS

Koledari — On Christmas day, December 25th, young men and boys, called “koledari”, visit people’s houses singing special songs for every member of the family, wishing luck, health and success, mainly in small villages. People give them bread, sweets and treats.

Kukeri — The participants in this ritual are called kukeri and they are dressed-up men in handmade costumes and masks, all made of wood, leather, fur and copper and bronze bells hang off them. They dance, play games, make jokes, jump, jingle the bells and roll on the floor. The outcome of these dances and games are that the evil spirits that the winter had brought have been chased away and only good is to be expected from now on. These are held in smaller villages as a tradition, but if you wish to see the masks from all Bulgarian regions, go to Pernik (cca 1 hour drive from Sofia) during the last weekend in January for the Kukeri Festival. It is definitely worth going there! For information and program visit: <http://www.surva.org/>

March 1st and Martenitsas — On this day Bulgarian’s greet each other by saying, “Chestita Baba Marta!”, and present each other red and white “martenitsas” which will be pinned to clothing or tied around a wrist for the entire month of March, or until the first stork is seen. They symbolise health and happiness. Your children will find out exactly who Baba Marta was in their Bulgarian Culture Studies class.

March 8th — International Women’s Day. Men are expected to give flowers to the women at their home and office. This is the closest thing to Mother’s Day, and is taken very seriously.

Name Days — There are numerous religious or folk holidays called “name days.” All people named after a certain saint celebrate their name according to the religious calendar. The person celebrating their name day provides food and drinks, while guests are expected to bring flowers and good wishes. In Bulgaria the celebration of the name day is as important as the birthday and every month has more than 3-4 name days.

Nestinarstvo — Fire dancing, more famous in Bulgaria as nestinarstvo, can be seen in villages around the area of Bourgas, mainly on the holiday of St. Konstantin and Elena (May 21st). Apart from celebrating the two saints and the fire dancing, the holiday symbolizes the transition from spring to summer. The dancers, who are most often women, perform a dance on hot glowing embers whilst

BULGARIAN TRADITIONS

in a trance state. Often during the traditional dance, the fire dancers are said to be able to connect to the saint and through this connection they can interpret omens, give advice, foretell the future, or communicate with the dead.

Rose Picking — The Rose is the symbol of Bulgaria. Rose picking, one of the oldest traditional customs of Bulgarians, has become primarily a tourist attraction. From mid-May till June you can join the tradition in various villages in the Rose Valley town Kazanlak. There is also a Rose Festival held in Kazanlak every year in late May and the beginning of June.

Survakari — On New Year's Day, January 1st, young children tap grown-ups on the back with decorated cherry tree branches for health and good luck, singing Christmas songs. The adults are then expected to give each child a bag with sweets and fruit, or some money.

Velikden or Easter — The Thursday or Saturday before Easter Sunday is used to paint and decorate boiled eggs. An hour before midnight on Saturday, all churches begin the Easter liturgy. Families and friends go together to church, carrying the coloured eggs with them. When the clock strikes midnight, they greet each other with the words "Hristos vozkrese" ("Christ has risen"). The answer is "Voistina vozkrese" ("He has risen indeed"). They then walk around the church three times with candles in hand, led by the priest. The candles are carried back home. On Easter Sunday families get together, they give each other decorated eggs and "fight" with them, tapping each egg against their opponents' until one cracks. It is believed that the person whose egg remains whole will be healthy and lucky throughout the year.

OTHERS

OTHERS

BOOKS ABOUT BULGARIA

Sofia Business & Travel Guide — by Peter Carney and Meri Anastassova. Useful for getting around the city. Available from the American Chamber of Commerce, 19 Patriarch Evtimii Blvd., floor 5, apt. 10. Tel. 981 5950/981-4340. Also available from the AAS Library. <http://www.sofia-guide.com/>

A Concise History of Bulgaria — by R.J. Compton. Provides a detailed history of the region of what is now Bulgaria including the various cultures who inhabit it and changing political boundaries. Available on Amazon and via Kindle.

The Insider's Guide to Sofia & Beyond — by Christine Milner and Paromita Sanatani. Published in 2005, this is the most interesting guide to the city. It's a beautiful book and a great souvenir. There is also the insider's booklet, published quarterly. You can find free copies in just about every hotel lobby. Also online: www.insidesofia.com

Rough Guide to Bulgaria and **Lonely Planet Guide** to Bulgaria — Both of these travel guide books can be found in many of the bookstores we've recommended in the shopping section. <https://www.roughguides.com/articles/bulgaria-things-not-to-miss/>

Vagabond — This is Bulgaria's first and only high-end English monthly magazine. They tell you everything you want to know about Bulgaria. With articles on travel, fashion, sports, politics, real estate, arts and entertainment, plus interviews, listings, reviews and much more, they cater to all the needs of foreigners living in Bulgaria, as well as those living abroad with an interest in Bulgaria. Vagabond is written and edited by a multicultural team of highly qualified journalists based both in Bulgaria and abroad, with contributors in major European cities, www.vagabond.bg

OTHERS

USEFUL WEBSITES AND EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| Emergency general | 112 |
| Ambulance | 150 |
| Fire brigade | 160 |
| Police/Traffic Police | 116 |
| Car breakdown service (Sofia) | 1286 |
| Car breakdown service (outside Sofia) | 146 |
| City Clinic Ambulance | 02 - 403 41 12 |
| Pirogov Hospital | 02 - 915 44 11 |

Bulgarian news

Sofia Globe

sofiaglobe.com

BTA

www.bta.bg/en

Capital

www.capital.bg

Novinite

www.novinite.com

Bulgarian Weather

Local Forecast

<http://weather.sinoptik.bg/>

Local Forecast

www.wunderground.com

Ski Report

www.snow-forecast.com/resorts

Travel in Bulgaria

Bulgaria Travel

www.bulgariatravel.org

Sofia Guide In Your Pocket

www.bulgaria.inyourpocket.com

Bulgaria Inside

<http://www.bulgariainside.eu/>

Bulgarian Monasteries

<http://www.bulgariamonasteries.com/en/>

Eco Trails

<https://www.en.baret-bg.org/>

Eco Trails (in bulgarian, but more info)

<http://pateka.im>

Bulgarian Waterfalls

<http://waterfallsbg.info/en>

Bulgarian Tourism

<http://www.bulgarian-tourism.com/>

Sofia Airport

www.sofia-airport.bg

Travel Warnings

www.travel.state.gov

Maps, Addresses

www.bgmaps.com

OTHERS

Entertainment in Sofia

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Cultural Guide | www.programata.bg |
| Sofia City Guide | www.sofiacityguide.com |
| Tickets BG | www.ticketsbg.com |
| Tickets Eventim | http://www.eventim.bg/bg/ |
| Free guided tour | www.freesofiatour.com |
| New findings in Sofia | www.spottedbylocals.com/sofia |
| City Guide | insidesofia.com |

Relocation/Immigration Services

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Orbit | http://www.orbit.bg/ |
| Allied Pickfords | http://allied.bg/ |
| Santa Fe | http://www.santaferelo.com/bg |

Business in Bulgaria

| | |
|--|---|
| American Chamber Commerce | www.amcham.bg |
| Hellenic Business Council in Bulgaria | www.hbcbg.com |
| International Women's Club | www.iwc-sofia.com |
| International Chamber of Commerce Bulgaria | http://www.icc-bulgaria.bg/ |

Education

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Anglo American School | www.aas-sofia.org |
| International School Services | www.iss.edu |
| European Council of Intl. Schools | www.ecis.org |

Families in Transition

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Interaction | http://www.interactionintl.org/ |
| TCK World | www.tckworld.com |
| Global Nomads Virtual Village | www.gnvv.org |
| Expat Exchange | www.expatexchange.com |
| Berlitz International, Inc. | www.berlitz.com |

BULGARIAN ALPHABET AND USEFUL PHRASES

BULGARIAN ALPHABET AND USEFUL PHRASES

ALPHABET

| | | |
|-----|-------|--|
| А а | : a | sound in father |
| Б б | : b | sound in bat |
| В в | : v | sound in van |
| Г г | : g | sound in gig |
| Д д | : d | sound in dog |
| Е е | : e | sound in red |
| Ж ж | : zh | sound like 's' in treasure |
| З з | : z | sound in zip |
| И и | : i | sound in fit or : ee sound in fee at end of word |
| Й й | : i | sound like 'y' in yes |
| К к | : k | sound in kit |
| Л л | : l | sound in leg |
| М м | : m | sound in mat |
| Н н | : n | sound in nut |
| О о | : o | sound in hot |
| П п | : p | sound in pin |
| Р р | : r | sound in rat |
| С с | : s | sound in sun |
| Т т | : t | sound in top |
| У у | : u | sound in rule |
| Ф ф | : f | sound in fan |
| Х х | : h | sound in loch (aspirated) |
| Ц ц | : ts | sound in bits |
| Ч ч | : ch | sound in chat |
| Ш ш | : sh | sound in ship |
| Щ щ | : sht | sound like end of rushed |
| Ъ ъ | : â | sound like 'u' in run |
| Ь ь | : | softens the preceding consonant |
| Ю ю | : yu | sound in you |
| Я я | : ya | sound in yard |

BULGARIAN ALPHABET AND USEFUL PHRASES

BASIC PHRASES

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Greetings dobro utro Good morning dobar den Good afternoon dobar vecher Good evening leka nosht Good night dovizhdane Goodbye zdraveyte Hi priyaten den Have a nice day | | Days of the week ponedelnik Monday vtornik Tuesday sryada Wednesday chetvurtak Thursday petak Friday subota Saturday nedelya Sunday | |
| Basics da yes ne no molya please you're welcome blagodarya thank you merci thank you (less formal) ne razbiram I don't under- stand izvinete excuse me | | Numbers edno - едно one dve - две two tri - три three chetiri - четири four pet - пет five shest - шест six sedem - седем seven osem - осем eight devet - девет nine deset - десет ten | |
| Eating out smetkata the bill kafe coffee torta cake chai tea maslo butter voda water sladoled ice cream bira beer vino wine | | sirene cheese pile chicken teleshko beef svinsko pork riba fish sol salt piperka pepper zahar sugar led ice hliab bread | |

THANK YOU! MERCI! BLAGODARYA!

THANK YOU! MERCI! BLAGODARYA!

Moving to a new town, a new country starts with organizing a lot of practical things. After you find a nice house and perfect school for your kids, smaller but also important details such as food shopping, finding a new hairdresser, doctor, nice restaurants, sports clubs etc. appears. We all went through this stage and know that it is really helpful to get some recommendations from locals or foreigners who have already lived some time here. This is the main purpose of handing out this **PTO Welcome booklet**.

You can find its digital version also on the AAS website - PTO page.

We make a new version every year with the help of the whole AAS community. Big Thank you goes to all who recommended new addresses and commented on the content of last year's issue. Our world is moving fast so this book will never be complete or finished. Please keep sending your feedback for the booklet to the PTO email address: pto@aas-sofia.org, or filling out our **permanent feedback form** so that we can use it for the next issue!

And a special thank you goes to all the businesses and individuals who, by placing their advertisement, have helped to finance the professional printing job of this PTO Welcome Booklet. THANK YOU! Because of you "Welcome!" is offered free of charge to all AAS staff and families, new and returning.

Have a great time in Sofia!
The PTO team

Notes

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