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multimedia



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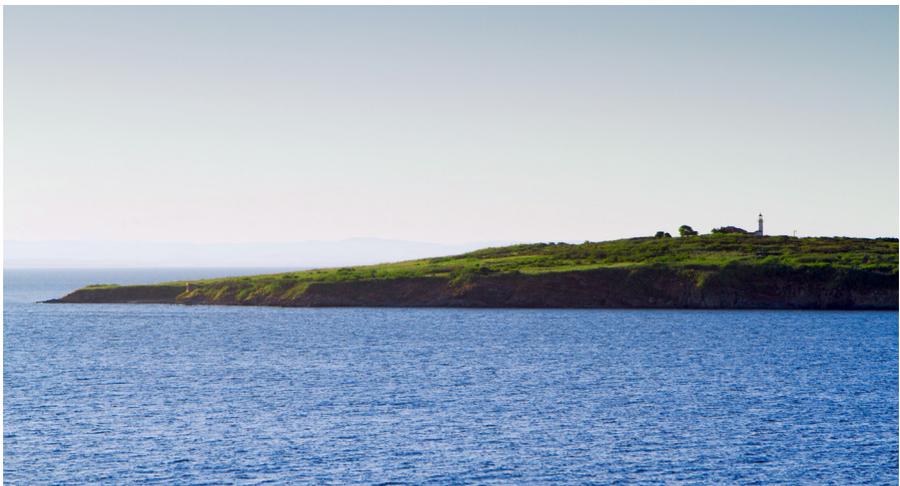
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GENERAL INFORMATION



Bulgaria is a country of wonders! It has collected a wealth of extremely beautiful natural landmarks and cultural monuments of world significance on its small territory.

In 2010 a team of archaeologists made an unheard discovery - a small marble reliquary that preserves the relics of St. John the Baptist was found on the Sozopol island St. John. This news spread in Bulgaria and

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around the world for a few hours and once again made the Bulgarians extremely proud of the legacy left by their ancestors.

A discussion on the cultural heritage of the country and its future was held in the Bulgarian public space with the support of the national daily newspaper Standard during the months that followed the discovery. Parallel to these debates was held an open Internet voting, which was intended to select the 10 wonders of Bulgaria and to show how the Bulgarian people would determine the most significant cultural and natural attractions.

On 9 March 2011, after over a million Bulgarians voted, the 10 wonders of Bulgaria were announced. This initiative revealed the vision of the Bulgarian people about the future of the cultural heritage of the country and drew new cultural routes for those wishing to explore it.



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10. VELIKI PRES LAV



The remains of the second Bulgarian capital - Veliki Preslav - are situated at a distance of 20 kilometers from Shumen and 30 kilometers from the first capital Pliska. The town was founded in the 9th century by Prince Boris I

(852-889) and in 893 his successor, Tsar Simeon I (893 - 927) named Preslav the new capital of Bulgaria as a symbol of a break with paganism and the embracing of the Christian religion.

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The scale and magnificence of this Bulgarian capital can be seen even nowadays. Due to its beautiful architecture and many churches, Preslav was recognized as one of the most beautiful medieval cities in Europe.



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9. RILA MONASTERY

Rila Monastery is the largest Christian center in the country. It is one of the symbols of Bulgaria. It was founded in the tenth century and during its millennial history it has always been the most

important spiritual and cultural center of Bulgaria.

The monastery complex includes more than 300 rooms. It also has a museum where visitors



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can become familiar with the long history of the monastery.

The Rila monastery is located in the Rila Mountain, within the Natural Park Rila Monastery. It was included in the UNESCO List of Global Heritage in 1983.





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8. TSAREVETS AND TRAPEZITSA



Both Veliko Tarnovo hills - Tsarevets and Trapezitsa and the fortresses situated around them, represent the power and majesty of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (1185 - 1393). The fortress Tsarevets is nowadays one of the most visited landmarks in the country. The fortress complex includes

the Royal Palace, the fortress wall, the Patriarchal church and Baldwin's Tower, named after the Latin Emperor Baldwin of Flanders, captured during the Battle of Adrianople in 1205 by Tsar Kaloyan. According to the legend, Baldwin was imprisoned in this tower after the battle and died there.

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Trapezitsa Hill is located northwest of Tsarevets. The second fortress of the old Bulgarian capital is situated here. Archaeological studies here continue and new important finds are constantly discovered.





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7. THE ROMAN CITY DEULTUM NEAR DEBELT



17 kilometers south of Burgas, near the village of Debelts, are located the ruins of the Roman town of Deultum, founded in the first century AD by the veterans from the 8th Legion of Augustus.



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This is the only colony of free Roman citizens in today's Bulgarian territory. The town had a port which was situated at Mandrensko lake.





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6. THE MADARA HORSEMAN AND THE SHUMEN FORTRESS



The sixth position in the rankings was given to the Madara Horseman and the Shumen Fortress. The distance between the two attractions is only 18 kilometers.

The unique rock formation called the Madara Horseman is situated in the northeast part of the country, 10 kilometers south of Pliska. It is an image of a horseman in his full height,

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carved in a 23 meters high vertical wall. His master is unknown, as well as the personality of the rider. Due to its uniqueness, the Madara Horseman was included in the UNESCO List of Global Heritage in 1979.

The remains of the Shumen

fortress are located 3 kilometers from the center of Shumen. It is believed that the first fort in this area was built 3,200 years ago, making it one of the oldest fortresses in Bulgaria. The Shumen fortress was conquered and destroyed several times, but it revived for new life and existed until 1,444.





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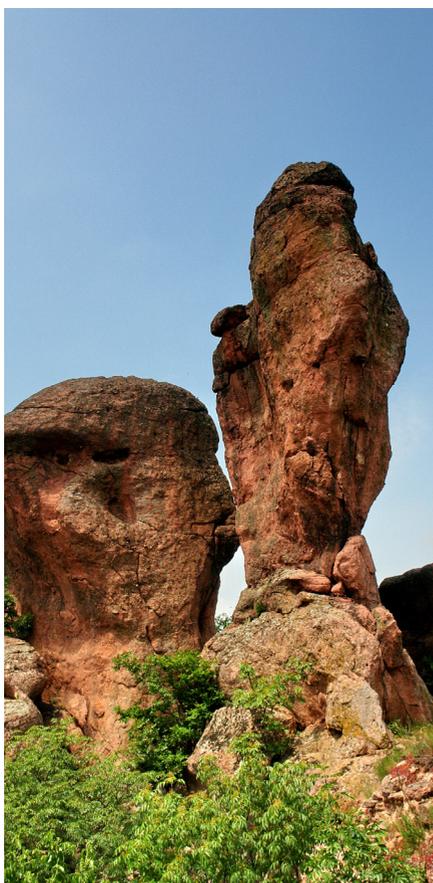
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5. THE BELOGRADCHIK ROCKS AND THE BELOGRADCHIK FORTRESS



The Belogradchik Rocks are one of the most amazing creations of Nature not only in Bulgaria but also around the world. They had been sculptured by the natural elements for more than 200 million years. Their reddish tint is due to their iron oxide content. They are varied in shape and size and cover an area with length of about 30 kilometers and 6-7 kilometers width near the town of Belogradchik.

The ancient Romans built a fort among the Belogradchik rocks

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which was later used by the Bulgarians and the Ottoman Turks. The Belogradchik Fortress

is equally popular among the tourists as the Belogradchik rocks.



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4. THE THRACIAN SANCTUARY NEAR THE VILLAGE OF TATUL



One of the most majestic megalithic monuments found in the Bulgarian lands is a Thracian sanctuary near the

village of Tatul. It is located only 200 meters from the village and about 15 kilometers from Momchilgrad.

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The sanctuary is a rock massive, and its top is a truncated pyramid. The complex consists of two sarcophaguses, a rectangular bed for the main altar and a three-meter well. It dates back to the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 4th century BC





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3. ANCIENT NESEBAR

The ancient Nesebar with all its charm and unique preserved wealth attracts the attention of many tourists from all around the world.

In 1983, the archaeological reserve was included in the UNESCO List of Global Heritage. The ancient Nesebar is located on a small peninsula,



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connected to the mainland by a narrow isthmus. The seaside town keeps countless evidences of its 3,000-year history, many of which are kept in the Archaeological Museum in the town.

An important part of the reserve are the remains of fortress walls, early Byzantine baths, the temples St. Stefan, Mary Eleusa, Christ Pantocrator, St. Spas, etc.



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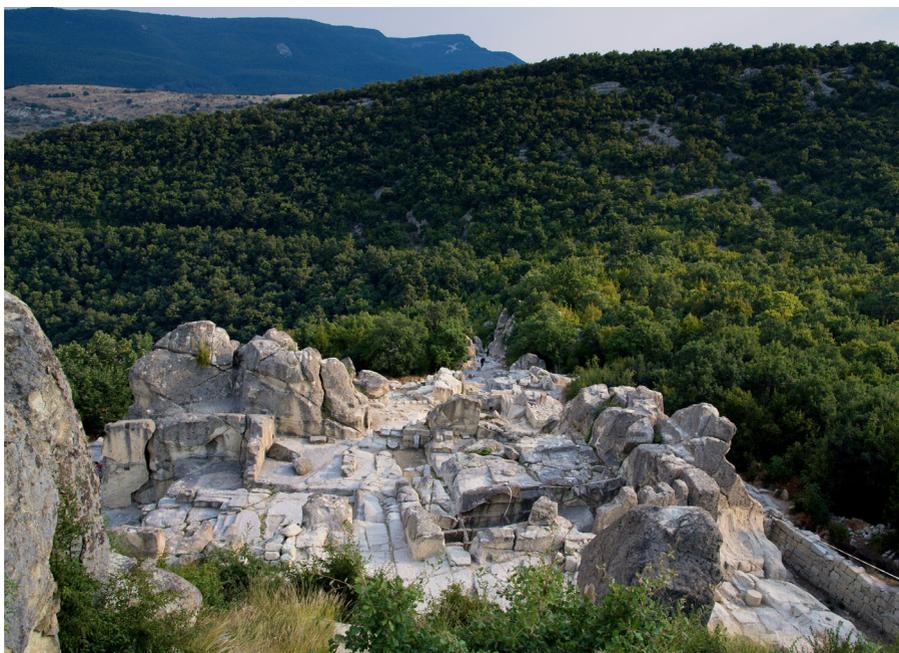
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2. PERPERIKON



The medieval archaeological complex Perperikon is one of the oldest megalithic monuments, carved entirely in the rocks. It is located in the Eastern Rhodope

mountain, 20 kilometers northeast of Kardzhali. The Rock City stands on a cliff top with a height of 470 meters. At this sacred place was

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the long sought by archaeologists temple of Dionysus. According to the legend, two crucial prophecies were made by the altar of this temple. The first predetermined great conquest and glory for

Alexander the Macedonian and the second, made several centuries later, predetermined power and strength for the first Roman Emperor Gaius Julius Caesar Augustus.





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1. THE ANCIENT SOZOPOL AND THE REMAINS OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST



Totally unprecedented, this discovery took first place in the rankings. The precious relic was brought to worship in the temple-monument St. Al. Nevski in Sofia, and attracted thousands of pilgrims. It was

later returned to Sozopol and is nowadays kept in the temple St. Cyril and St. Methodius in the seaside town. Old Sozopol shared first place in the rankings with the relics of St. John the Baptist.

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The architectural and archaeological reserve Ancient Sozopol preserves valuable cultural monuments from various periods of the town's millennial history - the remains of fortified walls, medieval churches, and Bulgarian Revival houses.





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