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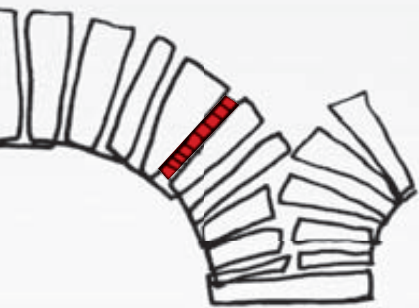
Archeology, History and Culture



Senses are gates of our souls



Kokino



How can such a small place so suggestively testify to life that extends through thousands of years: from Neolith, to the Iron Age, through the Antique Period, and up to the medieval period?

In Vinichko Kale you will find numerous and diverse treasures and discoveries: you will find buildings from different periods of time - remains of a Roman temple, ancient residences spanning many periods, possible ecclesiastical residences (from the 4th and 6th centuries), and a completely preserved rampart of the fortress, complete with eleven towers. However, even now, not everything that is hidden on this site has been discovered, so it still remains an archeological enigma.

The most important finding on Vinichko Kale site, which aroused huge interest and curiosity around the world, is the world's first and largest collection of terra-cotta reliefs with iconographic representations, known as terra-cotta icons. These valuable Christian treasures originate from the 5th or 6th century AD, and are among the most authentic of archeological discoveries. Today, these and many other artifacts discovered during the exploration of this site can be seen in the museum of Vinica.

Visit this magnificent place to fully appreciate the old adage that we are both the seeds and offspring of eternity at the same time.



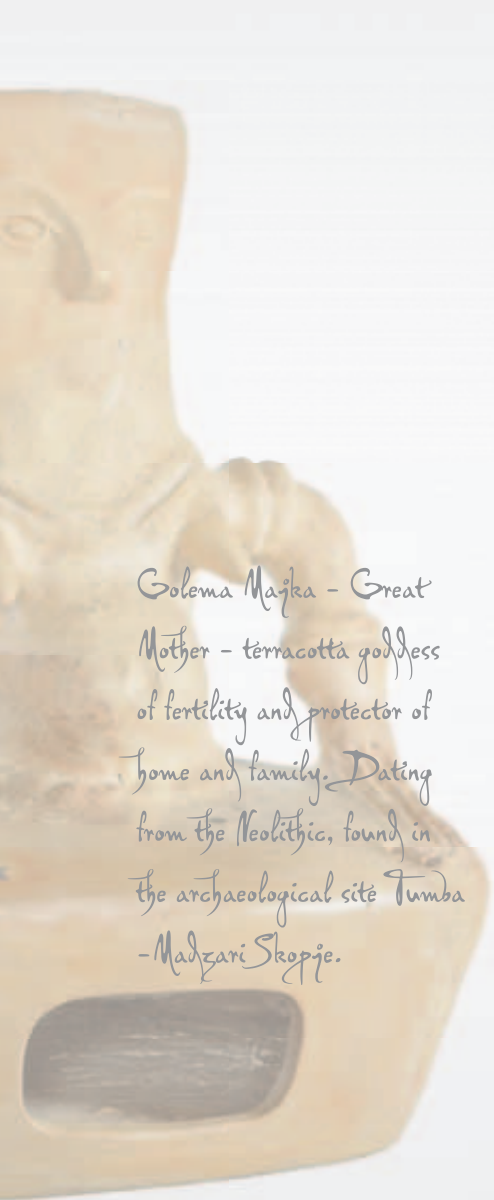
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Terracotta reliefs - ceramic plates from the period of 5-6 century, shaped by mold in more replicas, found in Vinichko Kale. They reflect early Christianity in Macedonia and are one of the greatest archaeological enigmas in this region.



Vinica fortress



Golema Majka - Great Mother - terracotta goddess of fertility and protector of home and family. Dating from the Neolithic, found in the archaeological site Tumba - Madzari Skopje.



Stobi is undoubtedly the most attractive, most impressive, and most famous ancient city in the territory of Macedonia. Situated in the heart of our country, this site is a must-see for anyone who wants to experience an archeological adventure, appreciate the cultural benefits of the ancient world, and enjoy the view of beautiful nature.

The numerous unearthed monuments, which are uniquely beautiful, are silent witnesses to life in the prehistoric and Hellenistic periods, and the objects and buildings are a proof that Stobi was an important urban, military, administrative, trade, and religious centre of the Roman and early Byzantine Empires.

Because of its geographical position, throughout the centuries Stobi was a crossroads of the ancient world and here we find many cultural influences from South and North alike.

In Roman times, Stobi became the capital of the province of Macedonia Secunda, and it had its own mint. Later it became an important Christian centre and the main seat of an Episcopacy.

The Episcopal basilica, the Antique theatre, the Palace of Theodosius, the House of Policharmus, the great bath, and many other relics of rich historical wealth of this ancient city will not leave you unsatisfied; they will envelop you in the arms of history and their beauty will take your breath away.



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Stobi





The ancient city Heraclea Lyncestis is considered to be the cultural treasure of the Balkans. The remains of the city are in the southern periphery of the city of Bitola, at the foot of Baba Mountain. This important archeological site is rich in many findings, and represents a real postcard of the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Heraclea extended to the northwest border of the Macedonian area Lyncestis, and it was one of the main and most developed military-strategic centers in the Balkans. The city is widely considered to have been founded by the great Macedonian Philip II in the middle of the 4th century B.C., although some claim that the founder was Philip V.

Through the centuries the city accumulated different cultures – this social and cultural center was taken by the Romans, attacked by the Goths, fell into the hands of the Byzantines, and finally became an eminently Episcopal centre.

The theatre complex has unique beauty. The architecture of the theatre was perfected by the strict canons of Vitruvius and according to the proportions of the Roman theatres. You will be amazed by the sacred objects discovered in Heraclea, both large and small, including the tomb basilica and the Episcopal residency.

A major master-piece of early Christian art is the mosaic on the floor of the narthex in the main basilica. The floor of the basilica is filled with thousands of small stones placed in perfect harmony where flora and fauna with illustrated messages from the Bible are presented.

Heraclea's beauty is to be appreciated both visually and viscerally – and you are sure to experience both sensations in this sacred place.

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Hieraclea
Lyncestis



As you approach Ohrid, from a distance you will be welcomed by a view of the hill where the fortress lies, behind whose walls once lived the ancient people of this city.

This place was first mentioned by the ancient historian Livy in the 3th century B.C. as the city Lychnidos, and bigger more expansive description dates from the 5th century, when the fortress was defended from tribal attacks during the Great Migration period.

The fortress was used in the Roman and Byzantine periods, and it was extended and enlarged during Samuil's empire. Today the form of the fortress dates from Tsar Samuil's time, even though there is some data that the fortress was destructed and repairs were made by the Turks and the Byzantines. Today 18 towers and 4 gates are preserved, and it represents a symbol of Ohrid.

In the fortress many important objects, ornaments made of precious materials, and a Hellenistic necropolis from the 5th century BC have been discovered.

The amphitheatre in the old part of the city speaks in the language and in the spirit of the ancient. It is thought to have been built in the 3rd century BC. Many artifacts from this era and from the Middle Ages are preserved here. Today the amphitheatre is a place where many events are held, like the events of the Ohrid Summer Festival.

If you visit Ohrid during the summer, do not miss the opportunity to see a play in the theater, or else you will miss the unique opportunity to share this experience that with an audience which sat on the same spot thousands of years before you.

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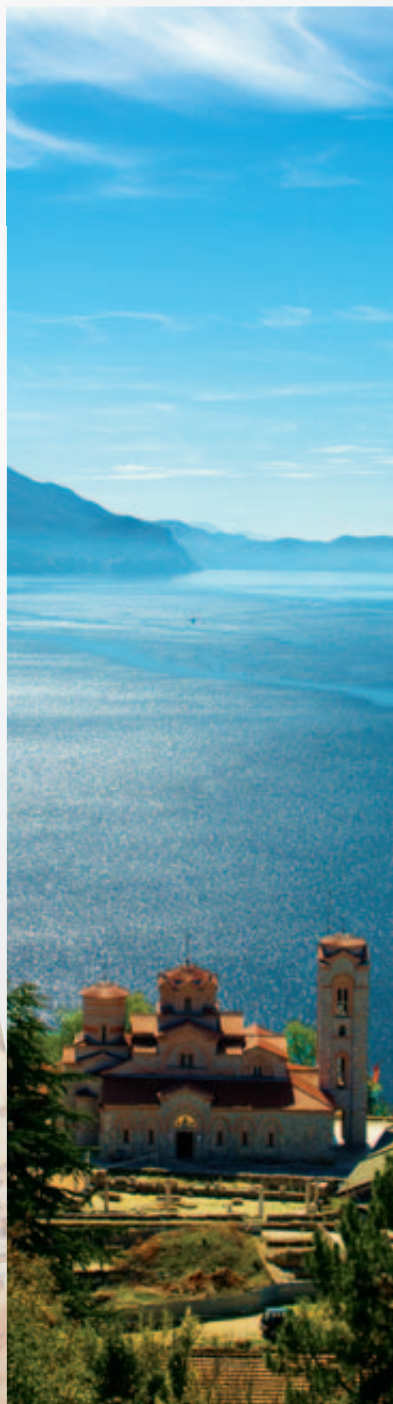


Samuil's fortress





*Codex Assemanius- Oldest
Macedonian verb manuscript
from the early 17th century,
containing 158 parchment
papers and optional weekly
service — Aprakos.*



The archeological complex of Plaoshnik is the heart of ancient Ohrid and one of the most sacred places in Macedonia. There are many archaeological findings which show that this space has been inhabited since the beginning of time – beginning in the late Bronze Age and throughout the late medieval period.

In ancient times in this area was the city of Lychnidos, and there were several temples on Plaoshnik, including the temple dedicated to the God Dionis. In the 4th and 5th centuries, Lychnidos was the Episcopal centre of the Macedonian-Roman province New Epirus, and on the ruins of the old pagan temples new early Christian basilicas were built.

The central figure connected to this place is the Slavic episcope St. Clement, who, at the end of the 9th century rebuilt the old church, and built a new one dedicated to St. Panteleimon. St. Clement led the Ohrid Literary School, and it is considered that he founded the first Slavic University in Europe, which dates from the 10th century.

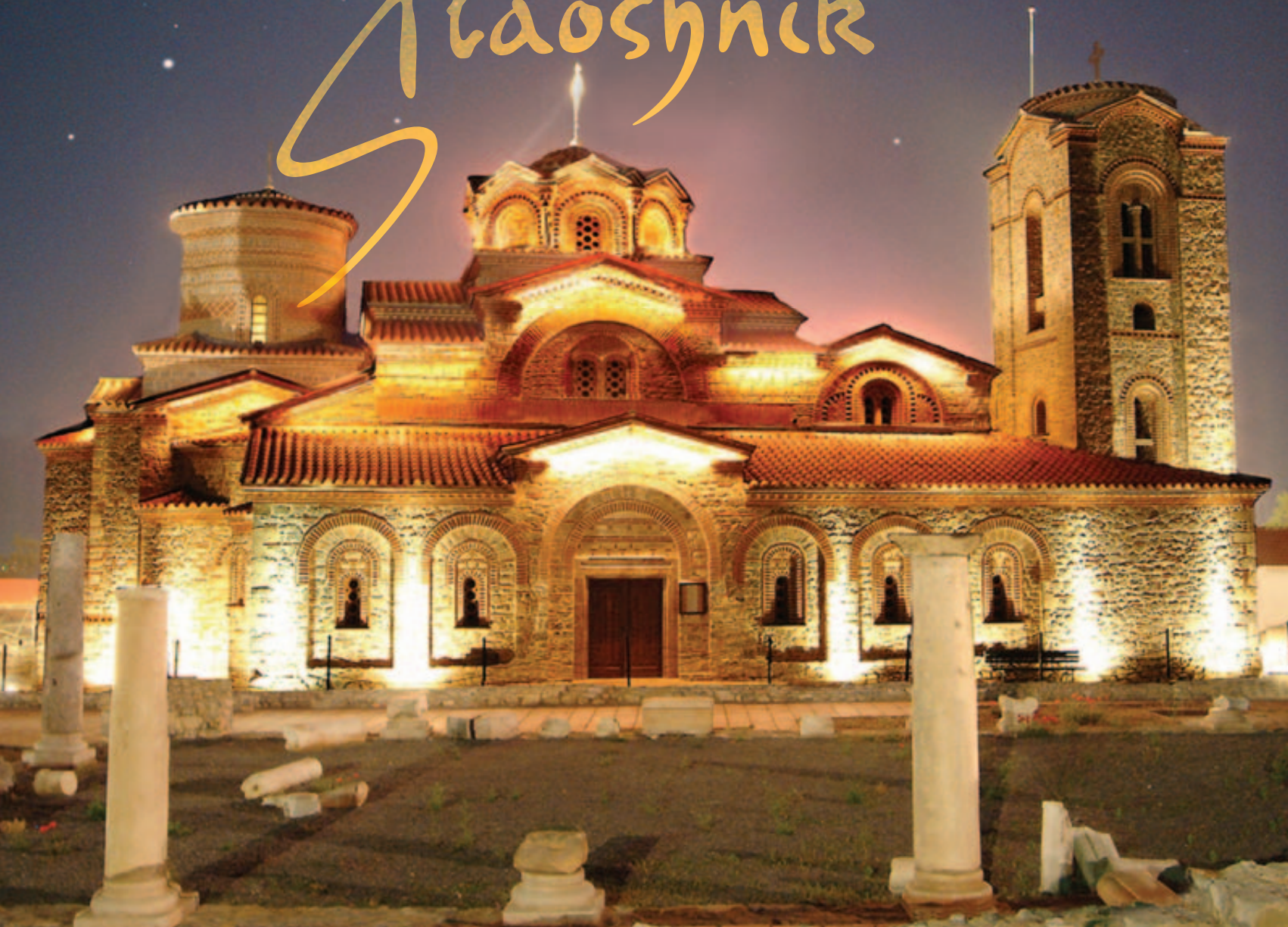
The church that you will see in the centre of Plaoshni is in fact the restored Clement's church. The renewal of the church was made on the foundations of the old church from the 9th century, and the same original materials were used. The remains of St. Clement have been transferred to this church. In the interior, among other things, there are preserved frescoes from the 11th and 12th and 13th and 14th centuries, as well as remains of older phases on the floors.

Enter into this temple and feel like you are returning to the time of the old Slavic educators, who were fascinated by the same perfectly clear water of Ohrid Lake that remains today.



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Plaoshnik





The greatest symbols of Skopje are the Skopje Fortress and the Stone Bridge. The fortress sweeps over the city and peacefully watches over it, while the bridge connects the “Macedonia” central square and the Old Bazaar.

Archeological findings reveal that the area of Skopje fortress was inhabited beginning in the Neolith and Early Bronze periods. The fortress dates from the time of Emperor Justinian I (535). At the end of the 10th century, the Skopje Fortress was a medieval city centre, and was occupied in the time of Tsar Samuil. At the end of the 11th century, the fortress was even governed by the Normans. The Turks, in conquering the city, destroyed part of the fortress, and according the report of Piccolomini from 1689, the Skopje Fortress remained half-empty and poorly defended.

Of the formerly imposing fortress, today only 121 meters of the wall remain, as well as three towers and a huge treasure of the historical findings, including a bronze coin of Alexander III.

It is considered that the very first Stone Bridge was built in the 6th century, though it had a difference appearance than today’s bridge. The bridge was damaged and destroyed numerous times, and the most significant reconstruction happened in 1579. During the Second World War the bridge was saved from destruction, despite an attempt by the fascist military to dynamite the structure.

The bridge today stands in defiance of its turbulent past, and its most important role is to connect the two shores of the river, thus merging the people of Skopje and its multiplicity of cultures.

Venus Rudjika - almost completely preserved life-size sculpture, made of fine-grained white marble originating from II century. Found in large thermal facility at the archaeological site Skupi.



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Skopje Fortress & the Stone Bridge





Built on a high rocky cliff over the shore of the most southern point of Ohrid Lake is one of the most beautiful monasteries in Macedonia, which also represents one of the first monuments of Slavic church architecture and art in the Ohrid region – this is the Monastery of St. Naum.

The founder of the monastery is the medieval writer and teacher Naum, who is one of the founders of the Slavic and Macedonian literacy and education tradition. The view around the monastery will make you feel that in this area the heavenly beauty really came down to the earth.

The Church of the Holy Archangels is the central part of the monastery complex. Its foundation has the shape of a clover. Here St. Naum was buried, and for centuries this place attracted worshippers from various religions, who paid respect to the relics of the Saint whose remains laid in a separate chapel on the south side of the church.

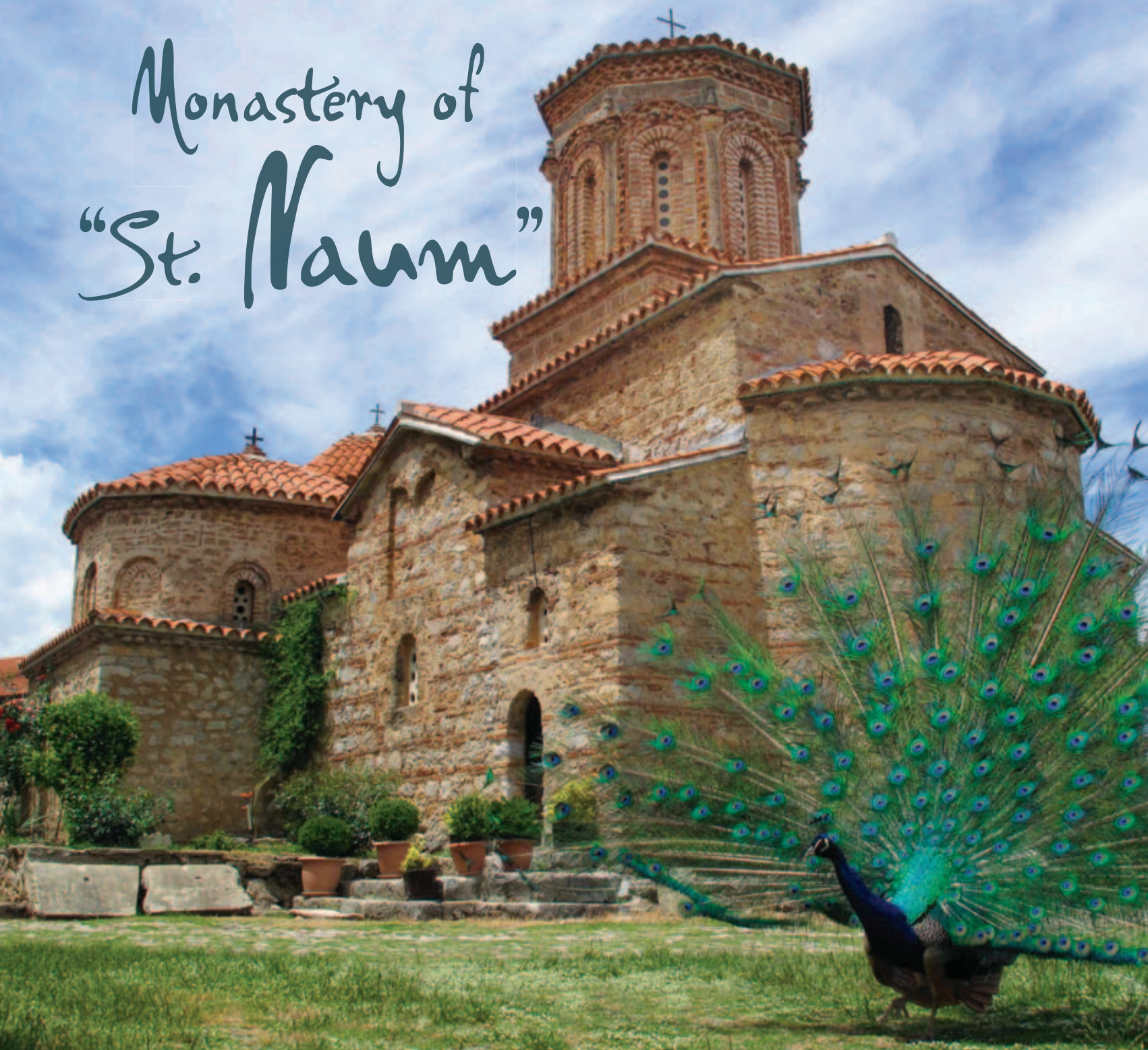
The church was fully destroyed between the 10th and 13th centuries, and today's church was built on the original foundations in the 16th century. It has been built up and extended in several phases, and the last significant restoration was made at the end of the 18th century. The icon of the Holy Assumption of St. Naum stands with its beauty and significance, which is the oldest representation of this theme. The monastery church is known for its characteristic wood carving, which dates from the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries.

When you come to Macedonia, do not miss the chance to visit the tomb of St. Naum, and to lay your head sideways on his grave. If you wait and focus, you can hear a deep rumble, which any believer will tell you is the saint's heartbeat.

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Monastery of "St. Naum"





One of the most imposing holy temples, the Monastery of St. Jovan Bigorski (St. John the Baptist) is built on the limestone over the canyon valley of the Radika River among the forests of the steep northwestern slopes of Bistra Mountain.

The monastery was built of limestone blocks. It was built in the 11th century, but it has been through difficult times, and several times was devastated, burned, and destroyed all the way to the ground. The icon of John the Baptist is the only element that has remained intact. It is believed that the icon disappeared during each phase of destruction, only to reappear afterwards in the monastery.

The present monastery temple dates from the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The temple's Byzantine architecture evokes spiritual peace. Your heart will tremble and your soul will be filled with peace and goodness when you enter the church dedicated to St. John the Baptist, when you see the vibrant architecture of the complex of monastic buildings, or when you experience the icons and frescoes, many of them made by the famous fresco master Dicho Zograf.

The most beautiful decoration in the church, and what this temple is widely famous for is its iconostasis, which is the final and unparalleled work of the wood carver from the Mijachki region – the famous Petre Filipovski Garkata, with his crew and Makarij Frchkovski. This monumental masterpiece was finished in an astonishing record time, from 1830 to 1835, and is characterized by the specific use of the human figure and the presentation of a significant number of scenes from the Old and New Testaments.

The entire life of the monastery over the centuries, and everything that was created in it, seems to constantly whisper for a continuous strive for God.



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St. Jovan
Bigorski



The Monastery of St. Joakim Osogovski is one of the most famous sacred objects in Macedonia, located 3km northeast of Kriva Palanka, on the slopes of Osogovo Mountain. It was built in the time of the Byzantine emperor Manuel (1143-1180), and dedicated to the hermit and saint for whom it was named.

Preserved manuscripts and writings originating from this monastery which today can be found in many Slavic and European libraries, indicate the handwritten tradition that was preserved here for centuries. The monastery has a difficult history and over the years went through painful times, caught in an economic crisis and devastated by earthquake in 1585, yet nevertheless it survived and remained to fascinate us with its spiritual, architectural, and artistic value.

The monastery complex includes two temples - a large monastery church, and a smaller one. The small monastery church was renovated in the 14th century, and it was built with carved stones and bricks. It is assumed that the old layer of frescoes dates from the 14th century. Some of the frescoes and iconostasis from the 19th century were made by Dimitrie Andonov-Papradishki.

The larger monastery church was built between 1847 and 1851, by the Master Andreja Damjanov, the most famous master builder of the Balkans in that period.

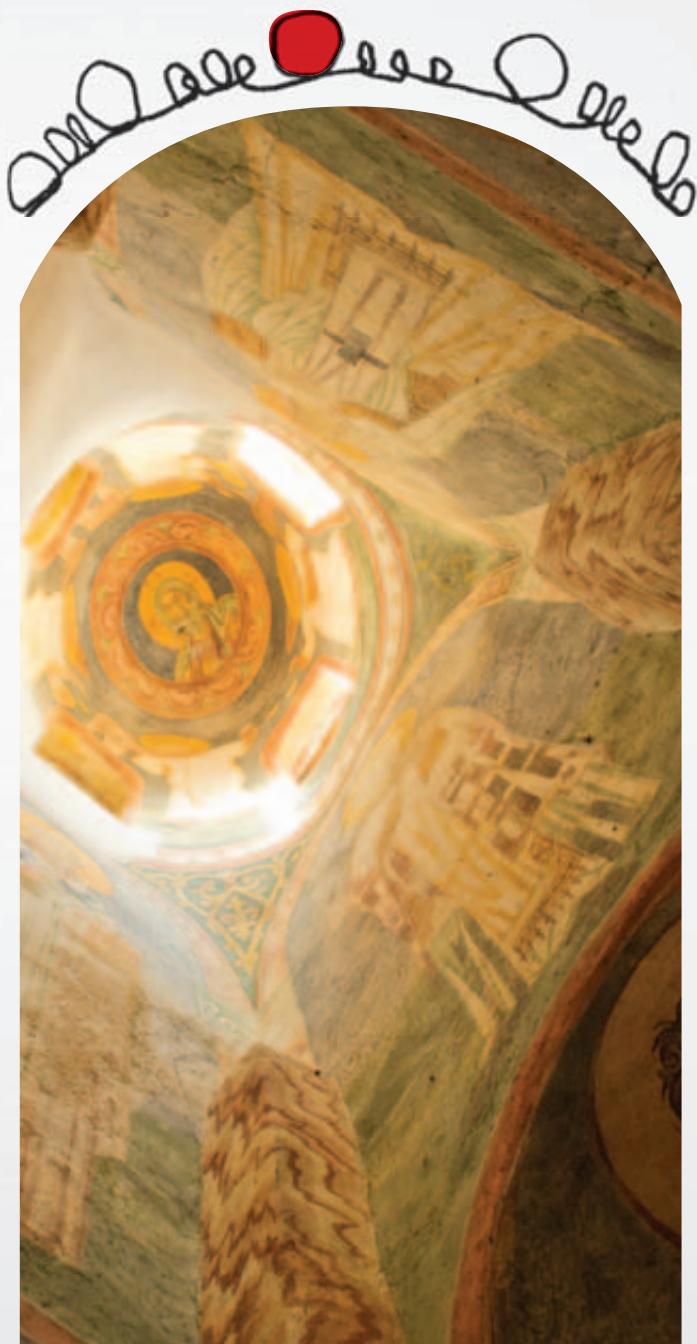
The gates of the monastery are always open. Visit it and feel the supernatural force that glows from this place. You will discover a unique place for rest, spiritual peace, and tranquility.



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Osogovski Monastery





The Church of Saint Panteleimon is a remarkable medieval Macedonian monument, and contains the most famous treasure of Byzantine painting from the time of the Comnenian dynasty. It is on the slopes of Vodno Mountain, in the village of Gorno Nerezi.

The church was built in 1164, with the funds of Alexius Comnenus, and dedicated to the protector of health, St. Panteleimon. It was built in the Byzantine style, using ordinary stone from the surroundings of the monastery as building material. Bricks were used as well, and they have since been skillfully converted into polychrome surfaces. The small church is constructed in the traditional shape of a cross inscribed in a rectangular area.

The frescoes in St. Panteleimon are the work of many masters, and the highest achievement of Byzantine art is the composition called “Lamentation of Christ” by an unknown fresco painter. That’s why you have to visit the church of St. Panteleimon. The uniqueness of this composition, which differs from scenes with similar themes in other monasteries in the Byzantine form, is the explicit representation and highlighting of the life and emotions of the Holy Mother of God, painted as a mother crying over the dead body of her son Jesus Christ. This kind of representation is characteristic of the Renaissance painters from Italy, who would appear hundreds of years later after the creation of “Lamentation of Christ.” Therefore, this composition is considered a forerunner of Renaissance painting.

The frescoes in the Church of St. Panteleimon prove that in art, concepts like time and space often are insignificant - because every artistic masterpiece immediately becomes an important part of eternity.



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St. Panteleimon





A few kilometers away from Debar, after you pass Debar Lake, in the village of Rajchica you will find one of the most beautiful monasteries in Macedonia – St. George the Victory Bringer. This nunnery (female monastery) is part of the Bigorski monastery complex.

The monastery church and quarters were built in 1835. In the church there is an iconostasis wood carving, made in the same year, on which is engraved a cross with Christ's crucifixion dating from the 16th century. The church was later filled with icons and paintings in the period from 1940-1952.

In the church there are parts of the remains of the hand of St George. The remains of this Saint from the 4th century are embedded in gold-plated silver in the form of a hand.

Maybe the most important characteristic of this monastery is the handmade work of the monastic sisterhood. In silence and through praying, the nuns (sisters) make unique, high-quality Orthodox priests' crowns called "mitri" (miters). Each creation is in compliance with the embroidery style and the color of the clothing that the bishop will wear. This monastery is the only place in Macedonia where "mitri" are created, and the created masterpieces are sought by Orthodox churches around the world.

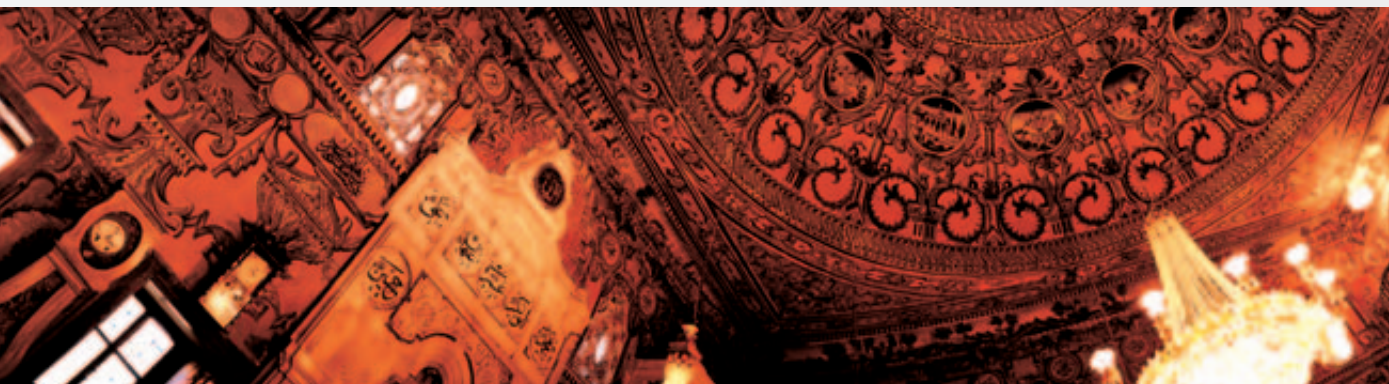
Life in the monastery has a unique rhythm. Feel it, take a deep breath, get closer to nature, admire the calming energy that glows from this temple, and if you are interested in something, simply inquire of the modest sisters– they will answer you with pleasure. Whether you come intentionally or just passing by on your way to Ohrid, this gem by Debar Lake deserves to be seen.



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The Monastery in Rajchica





Menada of Tetovo - bronze statuette that dates from the 6th century BC. Represents companion of Dionysus, the god of wine.



The most recognized monument of Tetovo, and one of the most beautiful constructions in Macedonia, is the Decorated Mosque. It is located in the old part of Tetovo, on the right bank of the Pena River. According to some researchers it dates from 1495, while others maintain it was built in 1564. The inscription above the front door reveals that the present form originates from the first half of the 19th century, when it was built on the foundations of another older building. It is known also as Pashina Mosque, named after Abdurahman-Pasha, a Turkish feudal ruler (lord) in the Tetovo Pashalak who invested in the reconstruction and the expansion of the mosque.

This religious object is unique for its beauty and it figures prominently in anthologies of Islamic architecture. It is a single square room construction, which combines Baroque and Neoclassical Ottoman building styles. The most experienced masters from Debar are credited with the unique and colorful ornaments adorning the mosque.. On the East, North, and South façades vertical fields are painted in fresco technique in four rows, with the most remarkable being the South side facing the main road to Gostivar.

Especially attractive is the depiction of Mecca, a rarity and perhaps the only example of the illustration of the shrine of the Prophet Muhammad in South-east Europe.

The wall decorations in the interior, the colorful geometric and herbal ornaments, and the facades of the Multicolored Mosque contain the characteristics of traditional Turkish decoration, so when you visit it, the architectural richness of the powerful Ottoman empire will strike you for a moment – or longer!

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Multicolored Mosque



If you ask someone from Skopje where you can truly feel the spirit of the capitol, he will immediately tell you to take a walk in the Old Bazaar. There is a unique reason why this is the case – the Old Bazaar is the place where modernity meets tradition, it is the beating heart of the city, where friendships are maintained and expanded, where every step is a piece of history, where you admire every object. The Old Bazaar represents the multicultural society of the city.

The Old Bazaar has existed for more than seven centuries. It stretches from the Stone Bridge to Bit-Pazar and the Skopje Fortress. It was built following the example of other Byzantine metropolises. In the 16th and 17th centuries it became one of the most important oriental bazaars on the Balkan peninsula, and in the middle of the 17th century it had some 2150 shops. Having survived several disasters, like the fire in 1689 and the earthquake in 1963, the bazaar has remained the pride of the city through modern times. Today the Ottoman architectural style prevails, but there are also remains of Byzantine architecture.

Particular attractions are the inns, including Suli An, Kapan An, and Kurshumli An, and the baths such as Chifte and Daut Pasha Hamam – and every one of them has its unique story. Most all structures of historical importance have been converted into museums or galleries open to the public.

Walk the narrow cobbled streets through the labyrinths of the bazaar, get lost in the beauty of the architecture, visit some of the many shops, try lahmadjun, kebab, or burek, try the Turkish Delight, drink some tea...

Take a deep breath of the seductive smells from the past.



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Skopje Old Bazar





The great reformer of Turkey Mustafa Kemal Ataturk finished military high school at the Bitola barracks in 1899; today the barracks building has been converted into the museum of Bitola. Additionally, Ataturk's father was born in the Macedonian village of Kodzadzik.

The Memorial room of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk consists of several pieces from his life, including facsimiles and documents that show his work and his private life, as well as sketches of battles, a library, and more.

In the memorial room there is a letter that is part of one of the greatest love stories of all time. It is a message from Eleni Karinte to Ataturk. Their love remained unfulfilled, and so were known as the Balkan Romeo and Juliet.

Take a picture under the balcony of Eleni Karinte, where lovers regularly exchange vows, enter the room dedicated to one of the most remarkable historical figures who spent most of his youth in Macedonia, and whose words echo today: "Peace in the country, peace in the world."

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Museum of Kemal Atatürk





The Memorial House of Mother Teresa was built in the centre of Skopje in 2009, for the 100 year anniversary of her birthday. This landmark was built to commemorate the life and work of this humanist and winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace.

On this same location once stood the Catholic Church of the Holy Heart of Jesus which was destroyed by the 1963 earthquake and in which Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was baptized. As part of the present building there is an exhibition space, chapel, and amphitheater.

Among the artifacts the birth document of this great humanitarian - issued by the Church of the Holy Heart of Jesus - stands out, as does her sari (traditional women's clothing), her handwritten prayer, rosary, and the crucifixion, and some of the awards that Mother Teresa has received.

The interior of the exhibition space is enriched with authentic furniture, so you can feel the ambience of a city house in Macedonia from the early 20th century, which is when Gonxha Bojaxhiu once lived here. The chapel is located over the exhibition space, where missions are held. The basement is a multimedia space, where very often promotions, screenings, exhibitions, and educational projects related to the life and work of Mother Teresa or humanitarian work by people from all over the world are held.

In front of the Memorial-House you will be welcomed by a monumental sculpture of one of history's greatest humanitarians, the only winner of the Nobel Prize from Macedonia, and the ambience when you will enter will recall her words: "Let us always welcome each other with a smile because the smile is the beginning of love."



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Memorial House of
Mother Teresa



Caption

1. St Panteleimon (Skopje) *
2. Archaeological site of Skupi (village of Zlokukjani, Skopje)
Roman and Late Antique city; its Antique theater built in 2nd century BC is one of its most prominent structures.
3. Kale Fortress and Stone Bridge (Skopje)*
4. Old Bazaar (Skopje)*
4. Mustafa Pasha Mosque (Skopje)
Built in early Constantinopolitan style as a testament of Mustafa Pasha.
4. Kurshumli Inn (Skopje)
Impressive inn from the Ottoman period whose purpose changed over time.
5. Memorial House of Mother Teresa (Skopje)*
6. Skupi - Zlokukjani
7. Monastery of Leshok (village of Leshok, Tetovo)
This complex includes the Church of the Holy Mother of God and the Church of St. Athanasius. It is also the site of Kiril Pejčinović's Memorial Room and the site of his burial.
8. Multicolored Mosque (Tetovo)*
9. St. John the Baptist (Gostivar/Debar)*
10. Monastery of St. George the Victorious (village of Rajčica, Debar)*
11. Memorial room of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (Bitola)*.
12. Samuil's Fortress and the amphitheater (Ohrid)*
13. Plaoshnik (Ohrid)*
14. St. Sofia (Ohrid)
Medieval cathedral church housing one of the richest collections of Byzantine frescoes in Europe.
15. Holy Mother of God Peribleptos (Ohrid)
An important medieval monument characterized by its exceptional architecture.
16. Monastery of St. Naum (Ohrid)*
17. Markovi Kuli (Prilep)
Fortress (4th century BC to 14th century), King Marko's residence.
18. Monastery of Zrze – Church of the Holy Transfiguration (village of Zrze, Prilep)
Monastery complex composed of four churches and several hermit cells carved in limestone rocks.
19. Monastery of Treskavec – Church of the Assumption of the Holy Mother of God (Prilep)
An important medieval monastic and literary center. The most inaccessible and most concealed monastery in Macedonia.

20. Heraclea Lyncestis (Bitola)*
21. Jeni Mosque (Bitola)
Mosque with minaret 40 meters high.
22. Monastery of Slepche, Church of St. John the Forerunner and Church of St. John the Theologian / St. Nicholas (village of Slepche, Demir Hisar) One of the most important literary centers in Macedonia and school of wood carving.
23. Golem Grad (Prespa Lake, Prespa)
The only island in Macedonia and site of remains from the Neolithic to Early Christianity.
24. Church of St. George (village of Kurbinovo, Resen)
Church whose symbol is the fresco known as the Angel of Kurbinovo. It is decorated with lavish fresco paintings, including the first portrait of St. Methodius in Byzantine art.
25. Monument „Ilinden“ (Krushevo)
Known as Makedonium, officially opened on the 30th anniversary of The Second Session of ASNOM, also marking 71 years since the Ilinden Uprising.
26. Archeological site of Stobi (Gradsko)*
27. Archeological site of Vardarski Rid (Gjeverjelija)
Site inhabited from the late Bronze Age until the arrival of the Romans. Rare finds of coins of the first Macedonian king Alexander I.
28. Church of St. George (village of Staro Nagorichane, Kumanovo) Zenith of Byzantine Classicism, with still fresh and vividly colored frescoes.
29. Kokino (Kumanovo)*
30. Monastery of Osogovo (Kriva Palanka)*
31. Vinichko Kale (Vinica)*
32. Medieval Towers (Kratovo)
Towers built from high-quality carved stone, once inhabited by wealthiest people in the region.
33. Monastery of Lesnovo (village of Lesnovo, Probishtip)
Monastery of extensive literary and scriptorial activity in the past.
34. Monastery of Vodocha (Strumica)
It contains rare examples of medieval Byzantine church art, the place where Ss. Cyril and Methodius started their mission.
35. Monastery of Veljusa (Strumica)
Architecturally unique, built with bricks and mortar, displaying remarkable ceramic and sculpture-like decoration which has not lost its freshness and vividness.

*Find more on these sites in the brochure.



Touch has a memory.

John Keats



macedonia
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