

ROUTE 1

THE RILA MONASTERY + THE STOB'S PYRAMIDS

Departure from Sofia

First stop –The Rila Monastery

The Monastery lies on the slopes of Rila Mountain - the highest Balkan Peninsula Mountain, in the valley of the Rilska River, 29 km east of the Sofia-Thessaloniki motorway, in Rila Municipality, Kyustendil Province. The Rila Monastery was included in the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List in 1983. Rila Monastery was founded in the 10th century by St John of Rila - a hermit, canonized by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. His ascetic dwelling and tomb became a holy site and were transformed into a monastic complex which played an important role in the spiritual and social life of medieval Bulgaria. Destroyed by fire in the beginning of the 19th century, the complex was rebuilt between 1834 and 1862. A characteristic example of the Bulgarian Renaissance (18th–19th centuries), the monument symbolizes the awareness of a Slavic cultural identity following centuries of occupation. More information can be found at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/216>



Lunch

A trip to the Stob Pyramids

The sandstone pyramids of Stob are among the most popular natural tourist attractions in Bulgaria. The pyramids are located near the village of Stob, Kyustendil Province. They were recognized as a natural landmark in 1964. The pyramids are 30-40 meters high and from 6 to 12 meters (in some places) thick. Some of the pyramids are pointed and needle-like, while others are rounded and topped with sandstone “caps” thus resembling giant mushrooms. Their bases are wide and often joined to neighboring formations. More information can be found at: [http://bulgariatravel.org/en/object/24/Stobski_piramidi#imagePhoto\[image\]/4/](http://bulgariatravel.org/en/object/24/Stobski_piramidi#imagePhoto[image]/4/)



Return to Sofia