

About SERBIA and BELGRADE



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ABOUT SERBIA

A SHORT HISTORY OF SERBIA

Serbia has a long and rich history. The traces of the first settlements on Serbia's soil are dating back to 40000 BC to Palaeolithic period.

There is the archaeological evidence that civilization in present-day Serbia dates to between 7000 and 6000 BC. One of the oldest cultures in Europe in 6500 BC in Mesolithic was the Lepenski Vir culture in the Đerdap Gorge, on the river bounds of the Danube, followed by Vinča culture near Belgrade in Early Neolithic in 4500 BC.

The first known inhabitants were the Illyrians, followed by the Celts in the fourth century, and the Romans a century after that.

Slavic tribes, whose descendants today form most of the population of the region, arrived in the 6th century. From the 11th, century Serbia was under Byzantine cultural and state influence. Serbian kingdom was finally proclaimed in the 12th century and, simultaneously, the autocephaly of the Serbian Orthodox Church was established.

At that time, Serbia was ruled by the Nemanjić dynasty that is remembered as a ktitor of the most beautiful Serbian monasteries and churches. That was the peak of Serbia's cultural and economic development in the Middle Ages. In the 14th century, during the reign of emperor Dušan, Serbia was the most powerful country in this part of Europe, spreading from the Danube in the north, to Athens in the south and to the Adriatic Sea in the west.

After the clash in The Battle of Kosovo and due to the upcoming mighty Ottoman Empire and, later, in the mid-15th-century Serbia fell completely under Turkish domination. That was the turning point when the golden age of Serbian Empire was completed.

Only at the beginning of the 19th century, after a gathering of people in the village of Orašac, The First Serbian Uprising against Turkish rule began under a chosen leader – Karađorđe. After The Second Serbian Uprising led by Miloš Obrenović, Serbia finally obtained autonomy within the Ottoman Empire and was recognized as an independent country in 1878. In 1912, after the first Balkan wars, Serbia's main territories were liberated after long Turkish domination.

At the end of the First World War, an idea to unify and create a country of south Slavic people was strongly supported. As a result, The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians was created on the former territories of the two huge empires, the Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman Empire.

Becoming a republic after the Second World War, within the Yugoslav federation under the rule of Tito, Serbia gained its independence after the dissolution of the country and civil wars at the end of the 20th century.

Today, Serbia has a goal of joining the EU by 2020. In January 2014 Serbia opened formal negotiations with the EU for accession.

GEOGRAPHY

Location: Serbia is landlocked country in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula between Macedonia and Hungary in Southeastern Europe.

Area: 77,474 km² (29,912 sq. mi.)

Terrain: Varied; rich fertile plains in the north; limestone ranges and basins in the east; mountains and hills in the southeast



CLIMATE

Continental, with a gradual transition between the four seasons (warm summers, with temperatures up to 40°C and cool, snowy winters, with temperatures from - 5°C to 10°C).

THE WEATHER

Predicted weather forecast in the period from September 5th – 12th 2017 is between **14.0°C** lowest and **24.7°C** highest. Those predicted temperatures are over the average for this time of the year. So, it seems we will have nice weather.

PEOPLE

Nationality: Serb(s) -noun; Serbian - adjective.

Population: 7.2 million (2016)

Ethnic Groups: Serbs (66%), 37 other nationalities: (Albanians 17%, Montenegrin 5%, Hungarians 3,5 %, followed by Romanians, Croats, Bulgarians and others)

LANGUAGE

Languages spoken: Serbian; Romanian, Hungarian, Slovak, and Croatian (all official in Vojvodina province);

Literacy: 96%

The official language of Serbia is Serbian, member of the group of south Slavic languages. The Cyrillic script is in official use, while the Latin script is also widely used, since both are taught in schools. The Cyrillic of Serbian has 30 letters – one letter per each phoneme, making it unique among scripts following the principle of "write as you speak and read as it is written".

SOME USEFUL PHRASES IN SERBIAN

English	српски / srpski (Serbian)
Welcome	Добродошли (Dobrodošli!)
Hello (General greeting)	Здраво (Zdravo)
Yes	Да (Da)
No	Не (Ne)
Do you speak English?	Да ли говорите енглески? (Da li govorite engleski?)
Excuse me/Sorry	(Izvinite se)
Please	Молим вас (Molim vas)
Thank you	Хвала (Hvala)

SERBIAN TRADITIONAL MUSIC

The Serbian folk music is both rural (izvorna muzika) and urban (starogradska muzika) and includes two-beat dance called kolo, which is the waist, accompanied by instrumental Music made most often with an accordion, but also with other instruments: frula (traditional kind of a recorder), tamburica, or accordion.



The Kolos usually last for about 5–13 minutes.

Suggested for watching is **"Una Saga Serbica"** unique combination of traditional and modern dance .Enjoy! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T9fQ7vfohug>

MONEY

The Serbian Dinar is the currency of Serbia. The earliest use of the dinar dates back to 1214. Currency code for Dinars is RSD, and the currency symbol is РСД.

Money may be exchanged in all banks and post offices, as well as in authorized exchange offices.

Dinar is issued in denominations of 10/20/50/100/200/500/1000/5000.

1 EUR = 120,33 RSD

The current exchange rate may be checked on the website of the [National Bank of Serbia](http://www.nbs.rs/internet/cirilica/index.html)



TIME ZONE

Belgrade and Serbia are located in the Central European time zone region – GMT +1 and/or GMT +2 as of the last week in March until the Saturday prior to the last week of October month.

ELECTRICITY

As in most cities of Continental Europe, the electricity voltage in Belgrade is 220V. Electrical outlets are standard European. Our UK participants should bring adapters.



WATER

Tap water in Belgrade is safe to drink.

DRIVING

Driving in Serbia is on the right hand side of the road, so be aware of this fact when crossing a street (especially our UK participants).

FOOD

Serbian traditional cuisine is characterized by highly diverse, solid and spicy food, which can be roughly described as a mixture of Greek, Bulgarian, Turkish and Hungarian cuisine.

The use of meat, dough, vegetables and dairy products is predominant in it.



Skadarlija street

For many of the Serbian national cuisine specialties there isn't a right word in the foreign language dictionaries, nor is there a taste they can be compared to. Therefore it is best that you come and taste them yourself.

Some traditional Serbian food to taste:

Burek is the most famous breakfast food in Serbia. You can choose from various fillings: meat, cheese, mushrooms etc.

Gibanica is a cheese pie with ingredients and size depending only on your desire, gibanica is a trademark of this region.

Pljeskavica is made from a mixture of ground meats, usually lamb, pork, beef or veal. The meats are grilled with onions and served on a hot plate with side dishes.

Sarma is usually made of sauerkraut, minced meat and rice. A mixture of meat, rice and spices is wrapped in sauerkraut leaves and then placed in a pot, in which it simmers for a long time.

Ćevapi is a grilled dish consisting of minced meat and served like a kebab.

Kajmak is a thick creamy dairy product with an unforgettable smell and taste. It is made of fresh cow milk and it will possess all your senses at the very first bite.

Ajvar can be consumed as a bread spread, a side dish, or as a salad. It is made principally from red bell peppers, with eggplant, garlic and chili pepper.

Palačinke is crêpe-like variety of pancake common in Central and Eastern Europe. In Serbia they are a very popular sweet, served with Chocolate cream, ground walnuts, ground biscuit, or honey. There are many palačinkarnice (pancake shops) where you can buy them.

A plum, considered a **national fruit** in Serbia, out of which a well-known **rakia** – Šljivovica is brewed, has, in a way, become one of the symbols of Serbia.

ABOUT BELGRADE

Belgrade is capital and the largest city of the Republic of Serbia. In Serbian the city is called Beograd.

The name (meaning white city: beo – white, grad – city) is the Slavic version of its old Celtic name, Singidunum.

It is located at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers, where the Pannonian Plain meets Balkans.



The historical core of Belgrade, Kalemegdan Fortress, lies on the right banks of the both rivers.

Belgrade is one of the oldest cities in Europe and since ancient times has been an important focal point for traffic, an intersection of the roads of the Eastern and Western Europe.

The main street is Knez Mihailova, which is pedestrian zone and it is protected by law as one of the oldest and most valuable landmarks of the city. Also, Knez Mihailova is a common meeting point for Belgraders. Thousands of people stroll along the street every day as it is the shortest path from Terazije to Kalemegdan Fortress and park.



As tourist destination, Belgrade is also famous for its nightlife, gastronomy and excellent restaurants. The official language is Serbian, but most people also speak fairly good English. The city has a population of around 1,7 million and it is the city of youth. More than 40% of its citizens are between 15 and 44 years of age. Belgradians love to talk of the spirit of the city and they are open minded, outgoing, generous, hospitable people always happy to meet new people and have guests over. Many of them will claim to be true hedonists by knowing all there is to know about good food, rakia and music.

TOP 10 THINGS TO DO WHILE IN BELGRADE

1. Discover the **Kalemegdan fortress** featuring some of Belgrade's top landmarks.
2. Discover the **downtown: Knez Mihailova street**, the **Orthodox cathedral**, **Kosančićev Venac** , **Savamala** and **Dorćol** neighborhoods.
3. Spend an **active day** at **Ada Ciganlija**: swimming, water skiing, bungee jumping...
4. Dine in **Skadarlija**. Try **ćevapčići** (grilled minced meat) with onion, or any other grilled specialties.
5. Visit **Nikola Pašić square** with the **National Parliament** and the **Old and New Royal Palaces**.
6. Explore the most important (open) **museums** to learn a bit more about the local culture, history and tradition. We suggest the **Ethnographic museum**, **Military history museum**, **the SANU gallery**, **the Frescoes (Medieval art) gallery**, **Nikola Tesla Museum**.
7. Take a free walking tour from Knez Mihailova street all the way to **St. Sava church**.
8. Visit **Cardoš - Tower of Sibinjanin Janko** in **Zemun**, and have a dinner or simply an evening along the Danube.
9. Take a tour of Belgrade by bike (rent a bike or paid bike tours of Belgrade).
10. Enjoy the nightlife at the world-famous **splavs** – floating clubs such as Freestyler, Sound, H2O...

Emergency numbers:

Police: 192

Firefighters: 193

Ambulance: 194

Useful apps:



Plan Plus



Belgrade talking



Moovit



Maps me

OUR CONTACTS

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