

# ETC

## International Theatre Conference

### 05 - 08 NOV. 2026

Useful info  
for your stay in

**Sofia**

## INDEX

### **MAIN LOCATIONS ----- p. 3**

“Ivan Vazov” National Theater  
Hotel Rila  
Sofia Balkan Palace  
Grand Hotel Sofia

### **TRANSPORT ----- p. 5**

Sofia Metro Map  
Night Public Transport  
Tickets  
Alternative options

### **LANDMARKS ----- p. 8**

### **GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS ----- p. 10**

### **FOOD RECOMMENDATIONS ----- p. 11**

### **CAFES AND RESTAURANTS NEARBY ----- p. 13**

### **CONTACTS ----- p. 14**

# MAIN LOCATIONS

## “Ivan Vazov” National Theater



ul. “Dyakon Ignatiy” 5, 1000 Sofia Center, Sofia

## Hotel Rila



Sofia Center, ul. “Tsar Kaloyan” 6, 1000 Sofia

**Hotel Rila** is proud with its unbeatable location in the center of Sofia. In the heart of the capital, meters away from the hotel are the Presidency Building, the National Theater, the Archaeological Museum and Vitosha Blvd. Many of Sofia’s sights include the National Opera, the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, the Russian Church, the National Palace of Culture and many others. We are surrounded by museums, theaters, banks, restaurants, bars, discos and shops.

The hotel opened its doors in 1962. This was the most luxurious building of that time. Access to the building was granted only to the members of the government. Eyewitnesses tell about the tunnels linking Hotel Rila with all the important state buildings in the area, and the hotel’s restaurant has built a lab for food research of the ruling.

All high-ranking guests and government delegations were accommodated here. In the 1960s and 1970s guests of the government hotel were Yuri Gagarin, the actor Vyacheslav Tichonov, the painters father and son Roerich, Devika Rani and others.



## Sofia Balkan Palace



Sofia Center, 5, pl. "Sveta Nedelya" Square, 1000 Sofia

**Sofia Balkan Palace Hotel** is a luxurious hotel located in the heart of Sofia. The hotel boasts an impressive combination of modern facilities and timeless elegance, making it a popular choice for both business and leisure travelers.

Sofia Balkan Palace is one of Bulgaria's most iconic hotels, having hosted world leaders, top diplomats, and royalty such as Baroness Nadine de Rothschild over the decades. Today, its famous "Royal" ballroom continues to host high-level diplomatic delegations, prestigious fashion galas, and landmark cultural events.



## Grand Hotel Sofia



General Gurko №1 St str, 1000 Sofia

**Grand Hotel Sofia** is a deluxe five-star hotel that has been home for international business travelers, high-profile events and cosmopolitan society since 2004. Situated in the heart of Sofia, the hotel overlooks the colorful City garden and the beautiful National theatre "Ivan Vazov", and is in close proximity to the main metro station "Serdika".

The Grand is also home to the classic Bulgarian Shades of Red restaurant, renowned for its traditional exquisite cuisine, and to the spectacular Grand Café and its summer garden. Art connoisseurs will truly appreciate the hotel's unique collection of over 400 original oil paintings all by Bulgarian artists.





## TRANSPORT



### Arrival / Departure - Sofia Airport

- It takes around 30 minutes with the M4 line to get from the airport to Serdika station in the city centre
  - **Keep in mind** that the **metro only goes to Terminal 2** of the Sofia Airport. If you happen to arrive at Terminal 1, there are free shuttle buses every 30 minutes that can take you from Terminal 1 to Terminal 2 and vice versa.  
If you land at Terminal 2, just head left past Departures to the metro's entrance at one side of the terminal. The station is called Sofia Airport (Летище София) and this is where your journey begins.
  - The first metro train from the airport is at 05:27. Once inside the metro trains, electronic signs and voice announcements mark the current and next stations, as well as line connections.
- You can also use apps such as Moovit or Google Maps to navigate the public transport in Sofia.**
- **You can use the virtual metro map**



- It is also possible to reach the city centre from the airport by bus - there are two bus lines, which stop at the centre - E84. The bus schedule is from 5:10 AM to 23:45 PM from Terminal 2. It runs every 40 minutes until 8 AM and after that, it's roughly every 30 minutes.



## Arrival / Departure - Sofia Central Railway/Bus station

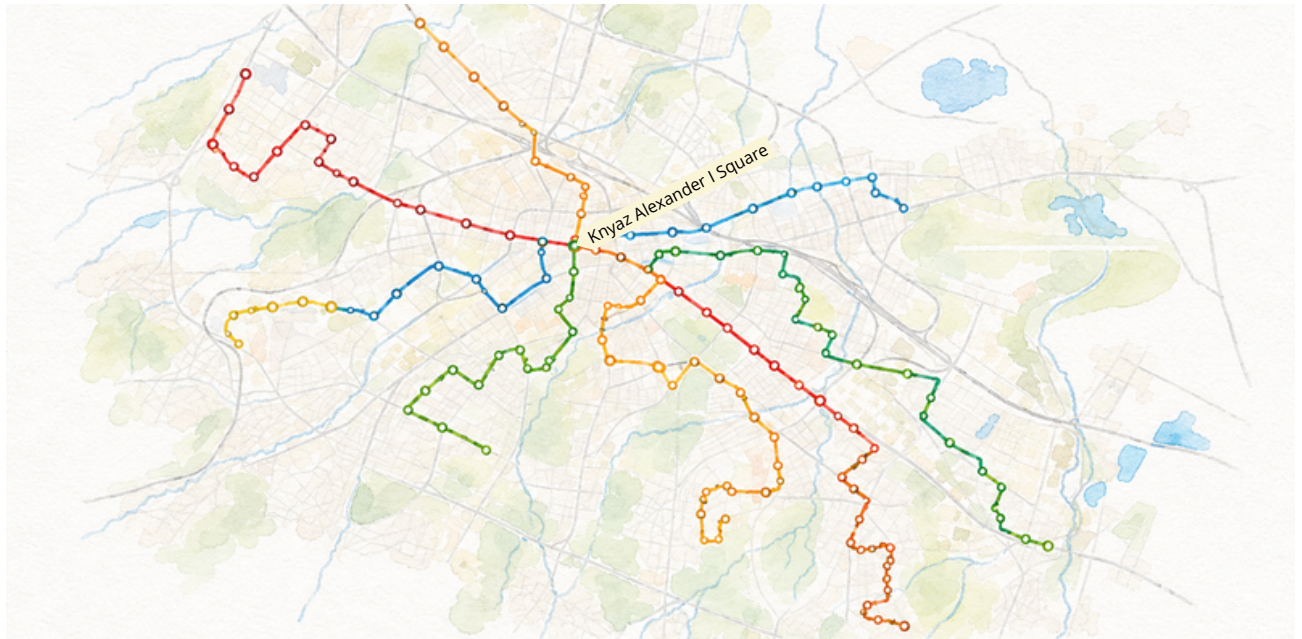
- It takes around 8 minutes with the M2 line to get from the Sofia Central Railway or Bus station to Serdika station in the city centre

## Sofia Metro Map



## Night Public Transport

- Sofia operates a night bus network every night, providing a safe and convenient way to travel after the metro has stopped running.
- The network consists of four night bus lines (N1–N4), all connecting at Knyaz Alexander I Square in the city centre, allowing easy transfers between routes.
- Night buses generally depart every 60 minutes between midnight and 4:00 a.m. The same contactless payment methods used on daytime public transport are also valid on the night buses. Night buses operate under a separate fare system and require a €1.00 night ticket, which can be purchased on board
- **Good to know:** The Sofia Metro does not operate overnight. If you're travelling late at night, the night buses are the city's main public transport option.



## Tickets

- The price for a one-time ticket is 0.80 EUR.
- You don't need a ticket for your luggage.
- Sofia's public transport network uses a single ticketing system for the metro, buses, trams and trolleybuses. Tickets can be purchased from ticket machines, ticket offices or by simply using a contactless bank card or mobile wallet.

**All your travels during the day would be added up and you won't be charged more than the price of a daily ticket – 2 EUR.**

### Recommendation:

For most visitors, the easiest option is to use contactless payment - there is no need to buy paper tickets or travel cards. Simply tap the same bank card or mobile wallet throughout the day, and the fare capping system will automatically ensure you receive the lowest applicable daily fare.

## Alternative options



**Yellow Taxi Company** is the official taxi company of Sofia Airport.

Look for the Yellow! cars at the main taxi ranks or request the service at the offices of Yellow! in the Arrivals of Terminal 1 and Terminal 2.

- You can order a car by calling the mobile phone: +359 2 9 11 19.
- You can also use the Yellow mobile app to order a taxi quickly.

More information at: [www.yellow333.com](http://www.yellow333.com)



**SPARK Car Sharing** - Bulgaria's pioneering all-electric car-sharing service. At the user-friendly SPARK app you can choose your vehicle and you're ready to go! All you need is a category B driver's license, a bank card, and 1 year of driving experience.

Charges are based on the time you drive and the distance you travel, providing you with a flexible and cost-effective solution for every journey in a few easy steps.

1. Register in the app.
2. Choose an electric car:
  - The map in the app shows you all the electric cars and details about them. Choose the one you want and reserve it.
3. Unlock and drive:
  - With one click in the app, you unlock the car and drive as long as you need: a few minutes, hours, or days.
4. End your trip:
  - Park the car in a SPARK zone marked in the app and lock it with a click.
  - To stop for a short time, use the car key, then continue to your final destination.

## LANDMARKS

### Alexander Nevsky Cathedral

Sofia Center, pl. "Sveti Aleksandar Nevski", 1000 Sofia



The "Alexander Nevsky Cathedral" is Sofia's most famous landmark and one of the largest Eastern Orthodox cathedrals in the world. Built between 1882 and 1912, the cathedral's impressive gold-plated domes dominate the city skyline, while its richly decorated interior features marble, mosaics, murals, and one of Europe's finest collections of Orthodox icons. It remains an active place of worship and is one of the most photographed sites in Bulgaria.

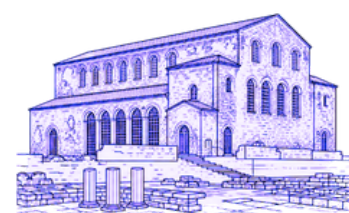
## Rotunda of Saint George



Sofia Center, "Knyaz Aleksandar Dondukov Blvd" 2, 1000 Sofia

Hidden within the courtyard of the Presidency and surrounded by modern government buildings, the "Rotunda of Saint George" is Sofia's oldest preserved building. Dating back to the early 4th century, it was built during the Roman Empire when the city was known as Serdica. Originally constructed as a Roman public building, the rotunda was later converted into a Christian church. During the Ottoman period, it served as a mosque before being restored as a church once again. Inside, visitors can admire beautifully preserved medieval frescoes dating from the 10th to the 14th centuries.

## Saint Sofia Basilica



Sofia City Center, Parizh Street 2, 1000 Sofia

The "Saint Sofia Basilica" is one of the oldest churches in Bulgaria and the building that gave Sofia its name. Constructed in the 6th century during the reign of Emperor Justinian I, it stands on the site of several earlier churches and an ancient Roman necropolis.

Simple yet elegant, the basilica is a remarkable example of early Christian architecture. Beneath the church, visitors can explore archaeological remains, including Roman tombs, mosaics and burial chambers, offering a fascinating glimpse into Sofia's ancient past.

## Boyana Church



ul. Boyansko Ezero 3, Sofia 1616 Bulgaria

Located at the foot of Vitosha Mountain, Boyana Church is one of Bulgaria's greatest cultural treasures and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The church consists of three sections built between the 10th and 19th centuries.

Its greatest treasure lies inside: the remarkable frescoes painted in 1259. These masterpieces are considered among the finest examples of medieval European art. Created more than two centuries before the Italian Renaissance, they demonstrate an artistic style far ahead of their time.

# GALLERIES AND MUSEUMS

## Regional History Museum

Sofia Center, pl. "Banski" 1, 1000 Sofia



The Regional History Museum – Sofia tells the story of the city from ancient Serdica to modern-day Sofia. Housed in the former Central Mineral Baths, the museum presents archaeological discoveries, historic photographs, royal objects, traditional clothing, and everyday items that reveal how Sofia has changed through the centuries. It is one of the best places to understand the city's unique history and character.

## Bulgaria's National Gallery

Sofia Center, ul. "19-ti Fevruari" 1, 1000 Sofia



"Quadrat 500" is the main building of Bulgaria's National Gallery and one of the country's most important art museums. Its extensive collection features Bulgarian art alongside works from Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas, spanning several centuries and artistic traditions. The museum offers visitors a broad introduction to Bulgarian visual culture while placing it within a wider international context.

## The National Archaeological Museum

Sofia Center, ul. "Saborna" 2, 1000 Sofia



The National Archaeological Museum is the oldest archaeological museum in Bulgaria and is housed in one of Sofia's oldest surviving buildings, a former Ottoman-era mosque. Its collections showcase the country's rich ancient heritage, including Thracian treasures, Roman artifacts, medieval objects, and remarkable finds from across Bulgaria. It is an essential stop for anyone interested in the civilizations that shaped the region.

## The Red Flat

Sofia Center, ul. "Tsar Ivan Shishman" 21, 1000 Sofia



The Red Flat is an immersive experience that recreates an ordinary Bulgarian home during the socialist period. Visitors can explore authentic furniture, household objects, books, and everyday details while learning about how people lived, worked, and spent their free time under communism. It offers a personal and accessible way for foreign visitors to understand one of the most important periods in Bulgaria's recent history.

## The National Art Gallery

Sofia Center, pl. "Knyaz Alexander I" 1, 1000 Sofia



The Palace is housed in Sofia's former royal palace and is one of the country's leading institutions dedicated to Bulgarian art. Its collection covers works from the Middle Ages to the present, including paintings, sculptures, and other forms of visual art. The historic palace itself, with its elegant architecture and connection to Bulgaria's royal history, adds another layer to the visit.

## FOOD RECOMMENDATIONS

### Tarator

A refreshing cold soup made from yoghurt, cucumber, garlic, dill and walnuts. Particularly popular during the hot summer months, it is one of Bulgaria's signature dishes.



### Shopska salad

This fresh salad combines tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, onions and local grated white cheese - sirene.



### Sirene

A soft white brined cheese. Sirene is used in many traditional dishes, including banitsa and Shopska salad.



### Banitsa

A beloved Bulgarian pastry made with layers of flaky filo dough filled with white cheese and eggs. Traditionally enjoyed for breakfast, it pairs perfectly with a glass of ayran - a refreshing Bulgarian yoghurt drink.



### Kebapche and Kyufte

Grilled minced meat specialties seasoned with traditional Bulgarian spices. Both are commonly served with fries, fresh salad and bread.



### Lyutenitsa

A thick vegetable spread made from roasted peppers, tomatoes, carrots and spices. Bulgarians enjoy it on fresh bread or as a side dish with grilled meats.



## Bulgarian Yoghurt

Famous worldwide for its unique *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* culture, Bulgarian yoghurt is creamy, slightly tangy and an essential part of the national cuisine. It is enjoyed on its own, with honey, or as an ingredient in many dishes.



## Desserts

Tikvenik – A delicious pastry filled with pumpkin, walnuts and cinnamon, especially popular during autumn and winter.



Garash Cake – A rich chocolate and walnut cake created in Bulgaria that remains one of the country's most famous desserts.



## Rakia

Bulgaria's national fruit brandy, traditionally made from grapes, plums or apricots. Rakia is usually served before a meal alongside a Shopska salad and is an important part of Bulgarian hospitality.



## LOCAL TIP

If you would like to experience authentic Bulgarian cuisine, look for a Mehana - a traditional Bulgarian tavern serving regional dishes, local wines and live folk music in a warm, rustic atmosphere.



## Hadjidraganov's Houses Restaurant

Sofia Center, pl. "Banski" 1, 1000 Sofia

Discover the flavours of Bulgaria at Hadjidraganovite Kashti, where traditional recipes, local wines and National Revival architecture come together for a truly authentic dining experience.

## Manastirska Magernitsa

Sofia Center, "Khan Asparuh" 67, 1000 Sofia

Manastirska Magernitsa combines authentic Bulgarian cuisine with the charm of a historic National Revival house. Inspired by traditional monastery recipes and paired with carefully selected Bulgarian wines, it offers a truly memorable taste of Bulgaria.

## CAFES AND RESTAURANTS NEARBY

### Inside the Theatre

There is a cafe in the theatre's parter floor/1st floor where you can get some basic snacks and soft drinks. There is a restaurant on the 6th floor of the theatre where you can find some good options for lunch and dinner.

### Cafes in the area

#### COSTA

ploshtad "Knyaz Aleksandar I" 4, Sofia Center, Sofia



#### STARBUCKS

ul. "Saborna" 1, Sofia Center, Sofia



#### CICCIONE

Gen. Yosif V. Gurko 9 Str., Sofia Center, Sofia



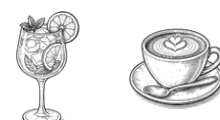
#### SUN MOON

ul. "6-ti septemvri" 39, Sofia Center, Sofia



#### LIME

40 Graf Ignatiev St., Sofia Centre, Sofia



### Restaurants in the area

#### DIVAKA

ul. "Hristo Belchev" 16, 1000 Sofia Center, Sofia

#### LA BOTTEGA ALL'ANGOLO

ul. "William Gladstone" 58, Sofia Center, Sofia

#### UGO

ul. "Han Krum" 2, Sofia Center, Sofia

#### MADE IN BLUE

ul. "Yuri Venelin" 6, Sofia Center, Sofia

#### Q-FTETARIA

on the second floor, ul. "Angel Kanchev" 1, Sofia Center, Sofia

# Contacts

## Emergency

The national emergency phone number is 112

## Ivan Vazov National Theatre's team

If you have any questions or need any help, please do not hesitate to contact our team:

- Mladen Alexiev - Head of International Department: + 359 889 224 885
- Ina Doublekova - International Relations Expert: + 359 889 616 143
- Bogdan Dimitrov - International Relations Expert: + 359 878 239 957
- Alexandra Dietz - International Relations Expert: + 359 884 492 701
- Lachezar Yordanov - Specialist Festival Activities: + 359 892 755 704



*We wish you a pleasant stay in Sofia!*