

Pocket Guide

# VRATSA

VRACHANSKI BALKAN  
Nature Park





*Nobody is so wise that  
they have nothing to learn from nature*

Edgar Cayce

*Dear Friend,*

*This travel guide might help you assemble – very much like a jigsaw puzzle – a unique picture of the culture, history and the natural specifics of the region of Vratsa.*

*If you happen to love historical past, lifeway and culture, this guide is likely to take you to the most significant cultural and historical sites and monasteries within Vratsa Municipality.*

*Being a nature lover and admirer of striking mountain scenes, you'd find here information about the most scenic tourist and interpretive trails in Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park.*

*Visiting the mountains, you'd enjoy a diversity of rock formations and waterfalls such as the Vratsata Gorge, The God's Bridge, the Skaklia and Borov Kamak waterfalls, etc.*

*If you happen to be interested in traditional holidays and rituals, you'd be taken into the ambience of the Festival of Memories, Where Bulgarian Is National Folk Fair, Mara Vrachanka Old-time City Song Festival, etc.*

*Extreme sports lovers and thrill-seekers will be offered real adventures by the local clubs: rafting down the Iskar River; game viewing; horse-riding; waterfall abseiling; hang-gliding and paragliding, rock climbing, etc.*

*The administration of Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park  
wishes you nice, unforgettable and  
inspirational emotions during your journey.*

## 4 NATURA VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

*Natura Visitor Information Centre is located in the building of the Eski (Old) Mosque, which is a protected historical and architectural site of cultural significance.*

*The Centre is in the immediate vicinity of the Regional History Museum and Hristo Botev Central Square of the city of Vratsa.*

*Visit the centre ...*

### *To see:*

- Unique murals;
- A 3D model of Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park.

### *To have fun:*

- At the interactive children's play area;
- With screenings of 3D movies and videos.

### *To get familiarised with:*

- Karst landforms and biodiversity from the educational exhibitions;
- The ecotrails, natural and cultural landmarks from a digitalized model of Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park.

### *To shop keepsakes:*

- Souvenirs, cards, maps and themed books.

### *The Centre provides:*

- General tourist and specialized information about Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park;

- Relevant information about places for accommodation and entertainment;

- Educational programmes, workshops with children and students on environment-keeping-related topics;

- Tourist guides and professional trekking guides.

Opening hours:

1 April–31 September:

9am–5pm daily.

1 October–31 March:

9am–5pm Monday to Friday. Closed on weekends.

Contacts:

27–29 Pop Sava Katrafilov, Vratsa  
(The Red Square)

phone: + 359 92 66 03 18;

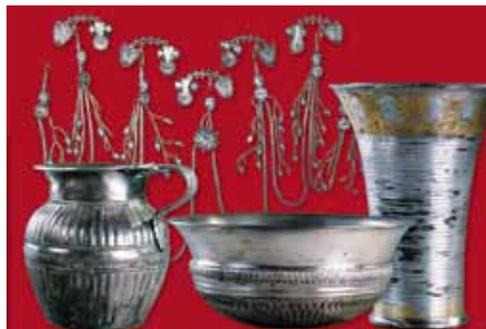
e-mail: [naturacenter@abv.bg](mailto:naturacenter@abv.bg);

facebook:

Environmental and Information Centre Natura.

## 5 CULTURAL AND HISTORIC SITES WITHIN VRATSA MUNICIPALITY

### *REGIONAL HISTORY MUSEUM, VRATSA*



*2 Hristo Botev Square, Vratsa*

*Opening hours:*

*9am–5pm Monday to Friday*

*9am–12; 1pm–5pm on weekends and holidays*

*Contacts: + 359 92 620 220 for information;*

*e-mail: [vratsamuseum@mail.b](mailto:vratsamuseum@mail.b)*

*[www.vratsamuseum.com](http://www.vratsamuseum.com)*

The Regional History Museum, Vratsa is a well-established cultural and research institution in Bulgaria's South West, keeping over 120,00 cultural artefacts of all historical periods both on display and in its vaults. The compound of the museum includes a central building, a lapidarium, *Sophronius of Vratsa* ethnographic complex of the Period of Bulgarian National Revival; *Nikola Voivodov* ethnographic complex of the same period, two medieval residential





and guard towers of the Kurtpashovi and of the Meshchii families with a total of 21 permanent exhibitions presenting the historical development and the cultural heritage between the Stone Age and modern history and an art gallery with 2 halls and over 2,000 classical and modern artworks in all manners and genres in its holdings. The halls have on display artefacts of worldwide importance such as a unique clay altar with skulls and antlers and Early Neolithic in situ funerals from the village of Ohoden, the earliest agricultural civilization in Europe (sixth century BC); the earliest writing system in the world; the Thracian gold treasure from Rogozen (165 pieces of silver and gilded silver vessels dated to the sixth or fourth century BC); the Thracian gold treasure from the Mogilanska Tumulus, Vratsa (sixth century BC); the Thracian silver treasure from Bukiovtsi (fourth century BC); the Thracian gilded treasure from Galiche (second century BC); the sole in Bulgaria and second in the world part of St Cyril's vestment; the Tetraevangelion from the Monastery of Cherepish and silver-gold churchware of the sixteenth or seventeenth century, etc.

The exhibitions at the central building of the museum are accessible to disabled people.

## THE TREASURE FROM ROGOZEN

The find is among the largest single collections of ancient treasure ever found in South-Eastern Europe. The hoard of 165 pieces of gilded silver weighs 20 kilograms. There are three groups of utensils: 108 phialai, 54 jugs and 3 chalices.

The treasure belonged to generations of local *kings*, who reigned over the Thracian tribe of Triballoi, who lived in the north-east lands of Thrace. This family dinner set has been amassed between the late sixth and the fourth century BC.



## THE TOMBS FROM THE MOGILANSKA MOGILA

The tombs from the Mogilanska Mogila (Tumulus of Mogilanovo), located in modern downtown Vratsa are among the most significant archaeological finds in South-Eastern Europe. The offerings of rich funeral gifts found inside are kept at the Regional History Museum and the site of the tumulus has been remade into a public park.

The tumulus was explored in the autumn of 1965 and the summer of 1966. Three burial facilities dating back to the fourth century BC were found, containing burials of Thracian kings, who reigned in the lands of modern northwest Bulgaria. One of the tombs featured the skeleton of a young woman in her twenties. During the ritual an offering was made and she was buried with a gold tiara and earrings, supposedly wearing a veil with gold flakes stitched to it. A silver kneepiece with gold coating shows that her husband, a prince has been symbolically buried in the tomb, being probably killed in a battle and buried on the battlefield. The kneepiece features the face of the Great Thracian Goddess accompanied by her sacred animals.



## SOPHRONIUS OF VRATSA ETHNOGRAPHIC COMPLEX

2 David Todorov Street, Vratsa

Opening hours:

1 October–31 March:

9am–5:30pm Monday to Friday

9am–12; 1pm–5:30pm on weekends and holidays.

Contacts:

phone: + 359 92 624 573



*Sophronius of Vratsa* ethnographic complex of the period of Bulgarian National Revival, Regional History Museum Vratsa is an architectural ethnographic site, built between 1972 and 1987. It comprises three houses of the period of Bulgarian National Revival and the *Ascension* school neighbouring the Orthodox Cathedral of Sophronius, Bishop of Vratsa in downtown Vratsa.

A sculpture of Sophronius of Vratsa has been erected at the entrance to the complex by Krum Damianov. The complex features the traditional way of life, crafts and culture of the population in the region of Vratsa between the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth century. An invaluable collection of icons some of which painted by Zachary Zograph and Dimiter Zograph and by icon-painters of the Art School of Debar is kept at the church.

The exhibition at the *Ascension* school of the same period focuses on



the founder of wind music in Bulgaria's Northwest, Diko Iliev. Wind and percussion instruments used by his orchestra, Iliev's personal effects and photos as well as the Key to the City, presented to him posthumously, when he was declared Honorary Citizen of Vratsa are put on display.

One of the old houses hosts the sole in this country exhibition themed Child's World.

An outhouse in the compound shelters some of the carriages manufactured at the first ever cab factory in this country founded and run by Mito Orozov.



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES: VRATSATA GORGE AND GRADISHTE LOCALITY

Gradishte locality is located west of Vratsa in the immediate vicinity of Vratsata Gorge. Archaeological excavations have unearthed the best part of the fortress wall of the ancient town, the medieval fortress and three churches, testifying to the religious life of the locals. The city life of the Thracians since the sixth century BC well until the fourteenth century AD is evidenced by the finds. The explorations have shown that the history of the modern city has initially commenced and developed in the vicinity of the Vratsata Gorge spanning 27 centuries. The vestiges of a Thracian city show that here the seat of the rulers of a vast territory (the lands of modern Bulgaria's Northwest) has been. In the Late Antiquity it evolved into a religious centre. The sixth-century basilica, unearthed by the archaeologists, provides evidence of early Christianisation. In the medieval period, the ancient fort developed into a hub of economic and cultural life, named Vratitsa. A walking heritage trail, *Ancient and Medieval Vratitsa* with wooden stairs, handrail and picnic tables leads to the excavations.



## ***A SETTLEMENT AND A SANCTUARY AT THE VILLAGE OF OHODEN, VRATSA REGION***

Vestiges of houses, burial and religious facilities of the so-called monochrome Neolithic phase (the late seventh and the early sixth millennium BC) were found in the prehistoric Ohoden–Valoga. The most interesting of these are Early-Neolithic burial facilities with individuals of different ages buried in them; a sanctuary to the Sun with kilned stone foundations, containing many discs with a dot in the middle (the earliest sun symbols) and a large clay altar with three deer skulls arranged in a special order with highly branched antlers. Deer with its antlers was among the most powerful solar symbols of manhood and fertility. These cult facilities are grouped within the settlement, forming Europe's sole early Neolithic sacral sector. The unearthed human remains show that in the late seventh and the early sixth millennia BC various human populations have lived in peace and harmony with nature.

The archaeological site is 1km west of the second-class road Vratsa–Oriahovo indicated by a road sign and accessible to visitors. Two of the most attractive human skeletons and the altar with antlers are put on display in an unusual way at the Archaeology Hall, Regional History Museum, Vratsa.



## ***THE TOWER OF THE KURTPASHOV'S FAMILY***

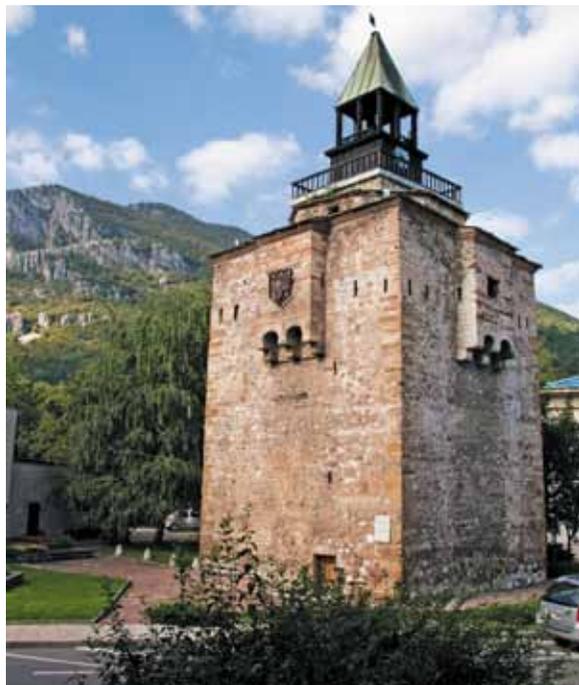
Though small, the tower gives an impression of a medieval castle with its unique contours. It is one of the few such towers built under the Turks. It was a fortified residence of a local feudal lord, dating from the seventeenth century. Still, its elements and building manner show continuity of the construction of forts in mediaeval Bulgaria of the sixteenth century.

The tower is open to visitors and has a souvenirs and exhibition centre.



## THE TOWER OF THE MASHCHII FAMILY

An emblematic city sight, built as a 13-m-high regular stone prism. The basement was used as a storehouse, while the three storeys were private premises. The tower is believed to date back to the sixteenth century. At the time, local ayans (district governors) were granted special status, playing an important role in social life, setting the tax rates, intermeddling more often than not with the relations of non-Muslims with the highest authorities. Those for whom the Tower of The Mashchii family was built were supposedly such local notables. In that time of troubles, frequent mutinies, uprisings, wars and brigandage were a regular and serious threat to the local ayans and law enforcers. In the late nineteenth century the tower was rebuilt into a clock tower to be reconstructed in 2006. A new clock face and coloured lights were installed.



## HIZHATA: AN EMBLEM OF VRATSA

*Vestitelia* (The Harold) complex, popularly known as *Hizhata* (The Chalet) is a favourite recreational place for the citizens of Vratsa. This was the place where Russian soldier Petlak heralded the city's freedom on 9 November 1877.

The citizens volunteered to lay out and afforest the park in 1924. The monument to the Herald of Freedom is in the immediate vicinity of *Hizhata*. On Sundays and holidays a solemn tune is played there at 12:30 sharp.

*Hizhata* is within walking distance, starting from Hristo Botev Square climbing 420 stairs or taking the asphalt road past the hospital.

*Chelopek village**Opening hours:**9am–6pm Monday to Sunday**phone: + 359 92 625 269;**+ 359 886 964 793*

The village of Chelopek is the birthplace of the character depicted by great Bulgarian writer Ivan Vazov in his short story *A Bulgarian Woman*. The writer visited the village in 1899 and was told the story of her exploit. About 105 years later, a house was built to commemorate her. The building with its pretty authentic design was erected next to her own home. In 2003 the house opened doors to visitors.

It shelters a rich and remarkable collection of old articles of daily use, furniture, carpets, national costumes typical of the region, etc. The genealogical tree of the famous Bulgarian woman piques tourist interest.

The house is in the very centre of the village on the road to the legendary Mount Okolchitsa.



## VRACHANSKI BALKAN NATURE PARK

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park is a very popular nature park in Bulgaria, captivating visitors with the rugged beauty of its cliffs, unique caves, stunning waterfalls and species diversity of flora and fauna. It is the second largest nature park in this country, spanning 28,803.9ha.

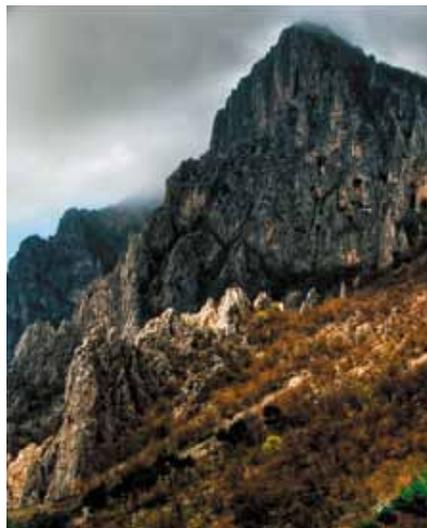
Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park was declared a protected area in 1989 and granted National Park status. With the adoption of the Protected Areas Act, it was re-categorized as a 'natural park', which is one of the six categories of protected areas, managed for the purpose of maintenance of biodiversity, provision of opportunities for pursuit of scientific research, education and recreation, development of tourism, sustainable use of renewable natural resources while preserving traditional forms of livelihood.

Manager of the protected area is Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park Directorate, established in 1996, and directly reporting to the Executive Forest Agency, Ministry of Agriculture and Food.



Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park spreads over the best part of the Mountain of Vratsa and the Rocks of Lakatnik massif. The Mountain of Vratsa is located in-between the northern slopes of the Balkan Mountain and the Balkan Range proper, towering majestically with its rocky slopes south of the city of Vratsa and the plane of Vratsa and neighbouring to the south the canyon-like Iskar Gorge and the Druzhevka Saddle to the west. The 30-km-long and 10–15-km-wide mountain range is oriented northwest to southeast. Its isolated massif stands in stark contrast to the neighbouring mountains.

Three rivers, taking their sources in the mountain, Leva, Cherna and Zlatitsa divide it into three parts: Beglichki (South-western), Stresherski (North-western) and Bazovski (Eastern), of which Beglichki is the largest one with the highest peak Beglichka Mogila (1481.7m).



### *GEOLOGY*

Shallow karst landforms such as hollows, whirlpools, sink-holes with vast forests of beech trees in their periphery covering extensive areas. The depth of the limestone is of about 1,300m. Very interesting caves and chasms totalling about 600 are found within the park.



A specific combination of abiotic factors (climate, soils, terrains, water, etc.) results in the specifics of the living elements of the nature within Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park, very well shown in the region's biodiversity. The look of the plant formation is defined by natural, primary beech and oak woods. Phytocenotically, very interesting are the ecosystems of Montpellier maple (*Acer monspesulanum*), walnut, beech, Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra*), *Centranthus kellereri* and these with Balkan maple (*Acer hyrcanum*), silver lime (*Tilia tomentosa*), etc. Sixteen of the established habitats within the park are protected under the Biodiversity Act and the EC Habitats Directive, which makes them species of national and European importance. Typical of the region of the park are chasmophytes dwelling on limestone rock slopes, hard water springs and tuft-like formations, limestone screes and limestone shale screes, natural eutrophic lakes with vegetation, various beech, Downy oak (*Quercus pubescens*), silver lime woods, etc.



Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park is of significance to preserving 1,082 species of higher plants, 103 species of lichens, 185 species of fungi, 186 species of moss and 178 species of algae. 37 species of higher plants have been granted international conservation status and 35 species are protected under the Biodiversity Act. There are six Bulgarian endemics within the park: *Campanula jordanovii*, *Centranthus kellereri*, *Cerastium tomentosum*, *Chamaecytisus kovacevii*, *Slene velcevii*, etc. The distribution of all of these is limited across the country. The habitat of *Centranthus kellereri* is nearly half of the global population of this species and the habitats



of *Slene velcevii* within the park are 50% of the national population of this species.

Established Balkan endemics and relict species are: Greek yarrow (*Achillea ageratifolia*), carum graecum, spurge-laurel (*Daphne laureola* L.), *daphne oleoides schreber*, etc. 343 species of medicinal plants and 184 species of melliferous plants are found within the park.

Critically endangered plants within the park are *Asplenium lepidum*, *Centranthus kellereri*, *Chamaecytisus kovacevii*, *Juniperus sabina*, *Lilium jankae*, *Slene velcevii* and *Traunsteinera globosa* (L.) Rchb.

Of 1,507 species of animals within the park, 276 are vertebrates and 1,231 are invertebrates. Vrachanski Balkan is an important nesting place for 120 bird species, some of which found in high density: black stork, long-legged buzzard, golden eagle, common kestrel, common scops-owl, green woodpecker, Eurasian skylark, common rock thrush, red-backed shrike, etc. Over 170 are European species of conservation concern and 157 species are protected under the Biodiversity Act. A



European flyway for migrating birds, Via Aristotelis migratory route passes over the park.

As for the mammal fauna, Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park boasts a fairly great species diversity. A total of 36 mammals dwell here with forest dormouse, eastern hedgehog, badger, otter, European polecat, wildcat and roe deer among many others.

The old deciduous woodlands here are the most important home to the rare Bechstein's bat and barbastelle. 22 bat species are known within the park of a total of 33 species established across Bulgaria.

Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park is part of the national Natura-2000 network of nature protection areas established under Birds Directive 2009/147/ EC and EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park is one of the most important areas for butterflies in Bulgaria.



*Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park Directorate builds and maintains various interpretive trails within the park seeking to familiarize visitors with the natural, cultural and historical heritage of the region combining all this with nice tourist walks in a funny and visualizing way.*



### *Voivodin Dol–Skaklia*

*Voivodin Dol–Skaklia–Vratsa*

*Duration: 2.5 h*

*The trail reveals a typical part of the Karts of Vratsa Reserve with its characteristic landforms and rare species of flora and fauna.*

The starting point is at 20m from Vratsata Gorge, on the right bank of the Leva River. The trail climbs on Voivodin Dol in fascinating beech woods. There is a vertical cliff face to the left, with a lot of caves and formations. There are two rest points. After the second one, the slope gets steeper with climbing to the ridge. On the ridge, there is a shelter and 100m south of it, a fountain.

The trail then follows the ridge, where once there was a village and the vertical wall of Skaklia Waterfall is within 10 minutes walking distance. Here the trail goes round the upper part of the waterfall from the east and a steep descent down the ravine begins. Vratsa, i.e. the city's hospital is within one-hour walking distance.



### ***Mountaineering for Beginners interpretive trail***

***Duration: 3 hours***

The trail is built in Ledenka locality; starting point: the restaurant. Information boards along it provide visitors with basic knowledge of mountain safety and skills so that to have a nice and risk-free time: information about walking and navigational techniques, mountain equipment, types of bivouacs, tourism marking, mountain equipment, mountain safety advice and the basic principles of first aid. The trail is fraught with marvellous views and opportunities to watch rare species of flora and fauna and has rest points and a picnic area with a fountain. The route has both summer and winter marking.



### ***Karst and Biodiversity***

***Duration: 2 hours***

The trail has been built in the immediate vicinity of Ledenika Cave and Prilepa Visitor Centre. Walking, visitors get familiarized with karst landforms, the typical flora and fauna and their interrelation. Information boards provide visitors with information about the Karst of Vratsa Reserve, the frontier of which is followed, about the surface and underground karst landforms, about the specific flora and fauna and the protection of the karst massifs. There are rest points along the trail.

### *In the footsteps of Botev*

*Duration: 1.5 hours*

In the Footsteps of Botev-led militant group historical trail loops back to its starting point, seeking to familiarize visitors with the formation and the course of the militant group led by Bulgarian revolutionary and great poet Hristo Botev from Kozloduy on the Danube to their last battlefields. The walking trail leads to the death place of Hristo Botev telling the stories of his militants after the death of their leader.

This themed trail features information boards with photos and maps, illustrations and life stories of the most prominent militants.

The trail was built by *Vratsata* informal group.



## HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL TRAIL

### *Heritage Trail Ancient and Medieval Vratsitsa*

*Duration: 1 hour*

This loop-back trail was built in Gradishte locality, in the immediate vicinity of Vratsata Gorge, where the city of Vratsa was once established according to historical records.

There was a Thracian village here in the Early Hellenistic Period (the second half of the fourth century BC). It was established to guard the road to the copper mines in the Balkan Range.

The trail familiarizes visitors with the archaeological excavations, with the functions of each of the sites and their historical and cultural importance. Visitors are shown photos of the tools and jewels found on the site.

The trail is easily accessible and suitable for all ages.



### Health Trail through the Woods

*Duration (with the worko  
about 45–50 min*

The trail is an excellent opportunity for visitors to combine outdoors fitness training with a nice walk in the mountain. There are five grounds with various fitness facilities along the trail and guides informing visitors about the recommendable exercises and proper amounts of training load.

Up the highest point of the trail, there is a relaxation and meditation area.

The path connects the Forest Lodge with the Villa of Kozloduy NPP and is roundtrip.

It was built with the financial support of Kozloduy NPP, Vratsa Municipality and Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park Directorate.

*The trail is easily accessible and suitable for all ages.*



### Griffon Vulture in Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park

*Duration: 2 hours*

The trail reveals the mysterious world of an almost unknown in Bulgaria birds, vultures. It takes you to an aviary for adaptation of griffon vultures (*Gyps fulvus*), imported from Spain to reintroduce the population of these birds in the Mountain of Vratsa.

Providing you with interesting information, the trail affords meetings with griffon vultures in their natural environment from an observation point built for the purpose and from other watching places.

Starting at the village of Dolno Ozirovo, the trail climbs up to the aviary and ends in Izvoro locality in the foothills of Kotlia rock massif, where there is a place to take a rest and refresh with cold mountain water.



## TOURIST AND CYCLING TRAIL

### Staro Selo–Svrazhen

*Duration: about 3 hours on foot  
about 2 hours of biking*

The trail starts at Svrazhen neighbourhood of the village of Milanovo and cuts across Vlaovi Vodenitsi locality with all the ruins there smothered in greenery and a marvellous view of Rusinov Dol locality.

Climbing further up takes you to Staro Selo neighbourhood and the Church of the Most Holy Mother of God, built back in 1492. From this point it takes 30 minutes to walk to the village of Milanovo or 2 hours to Parshevitsa Chalet.

Information boards along the trail tell the stories of the locality and the men who used to live here.



## TOURIST AND EDUCATIONAL TRAIL

### Vratsa–Ledenika Cave

*Duration: 2 hours (one way)*

Starting at Vratsata Gorge, it climbs up over the Garvanets rock arch offering fascinating views of the Mountain of Vratsa. After the steep way up, the trail then descends easily and nicely to Ledenika Cave. On the way you will be furnished with interesting information about cave formations, about all the Bulgarian show caves and the most popular caves across the world and the types of threats they face.

There are rest points along the trail and cold mountain water in the Mlechnoto Kladenche (Milky Well). All you need is a camera in your rucksack and being in good spirits, of course.



## TOURIST AND EDUCATIONAL TRAIL

### *Ledenika Cave–Gorno Ozirovo village*

*Duration: 4–5 hours (one way)*

Starting at Lednika Chalet, the trail runs through varied natural terrains, from clearings to marvellous beech woods. During your walk you'd get familiarized with the ten nature parks in Bulgaria and receive interesting information about their biodiversity and the opportunities for tourism each of these provides. Along the trail, there are rest points and a shelter in case of bad weather. The trail runs by Barki 14 cave, believed to be among the most challenging in this country.



## TOURIST TRAILS

*The park features over 20 purpose-built trails with the top ten of these included in the guide. It is the Bulgarian Tourist Union that marks and maintains the trails.*

### *1. Ecotrail of Vratsa*

*Vratsa–village of Zgorigrad–Borov Kamak Waterfall–Parshevitsa Chalet*

*Duration: 4 hours*

One of the most attractive and popular ecotrails in this country, which starts in Lagera locality beyond the village of Zgorigrad and follows the canyon of the Leva River. Six wooden footbridges, a number of handrails and stairs lead to Borov Kamak Waterfall (63m).

The trail runs in the immediate vicinity of the bottom of the waterfall up a wooden staircase on to a fascinating clearing in the foothills of Mount Borov Kamak. Then you have to take on the right climbing a steep path through centenarian beech woods to reach the road in Chervenica Zavoi locality and Parshevitsa Chalet is within 30-minutes walking distance. Other possible tracks from the clearing at the waterfall: Tsarevo Livage Locality–Mount Okolchitsa; Zebrets locality–Skaklia Waterfall–Vratsa.





## 2. Vratsa–Garvanets locality–Ledenika Chalet

*Duration: 3 hours*

Starting from *Natura* Visitor Information Centre the trail follows the road to the village Zgorigrad and passing Vratsata Gorge, turns to the right onto the road to Ledenika Cave. The path winds steeply through meadows and pastures cutting across turns of the road, then leaves the road, quickly gains speed northward on a woody ridge to lead to the cliff face in Garvaneshki Kamak locality. Continuing westwards, it leads to a pasture on a ridge with a big pen in Kravia locality. It crosses a limestone pavement and the road to Ledenika Cave to then follow a wide pathway in the woods down to the road, which leads to Ledenika Chalet.



## TOURIST TRAIL

### 3. Vratsa–Skaklia Waterfall–Mount Okolchitsa

*Duration: 3 hours*

Down the street of the Fire Brigade past Hristo Botev General Hospital you reach the outskirts of the city at Zora nursing home for the elderly. The path takes you past an old limestone quarry and turns left crossing the bed of a small rivulet falling from the waterfall. Then it climbs slightly and leads to a karst spring, where it crosses the rivulet once again and goes steeply up to the waterfall. Reaching its bottom, it makes a sharp left turn, climbs a very steep section past the entrance to a large but shallow cave and leads to a vast meadow in the upper part of the rock arch, where there is a rest point with benches and a table. The path turns right to the southwest across limestone pavements and leads to vast pastures with pens in Patleina locality. Up the rivulet it leads to a big karst spring with another rest point.

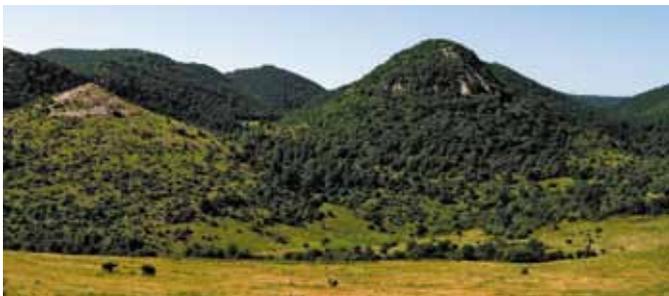
A cart track takes you from here, climbing lightly up to the southeast to a fork in the road: a path leads to Parshevitsa Chalet to the west-southwest and you have to keep the way onwards that climbs up to Tsarevo Livage locality and through Izbata and Kleno localities leads to the road to the monument on Mount Okolchitsa within ten-minute walking distance.



#### 4. Vratsa–Medkovets Quarter–Mount Okolchitsa

*Duration: 3 hours*

From the centre of Medkovets quarter you have to reach the highest part on the outskirts of the quarter, then turn to the left and cross the stream in Medkovski Dol. Here a stony cart track begins, turning and twisting and shortcutting the turns in the road, leading to the ravine in the foothills of Mount Sveta Gora. The track enters a wood and past several pens leads to a karst spring. The path now runs through pine-woods and crossing a vast clearing with young pine plantation leads to a cart track in Tsarevo Livage locality. Walking through Izbata and Kleno localities, you'd reach the monument on Mount Okolchitsa.



#### 5. Vratsa –Iolkovitsa locality– Mount Okolchitsa (Botev's route)

*Duration: 3 hours*

The trail starts near Vratsa–Sofia road at the fork leading to the village of Pavolche, climbing up a woodland path to a small terraced clearing in Kurdovitsa locality. The path meanders to take you to a vast meadow, Taushanitsa locality, then again enters the woods and up a brook leads to Leskovoto Kladenche. Here the trail turns left climbing steeply through beech woods, leading to fascinating meadows on the ridge in Vola locality and then to Izbata locality, a vast sloping pasture with a big drinking water fountain. From here, you have to take a stony cart track, which you have to leave after the turn to tread a path leading to Botev's death place in Iolkovitsa locality. From here, the monument on Mount Okolchitsa is within 20-minute walking distance.



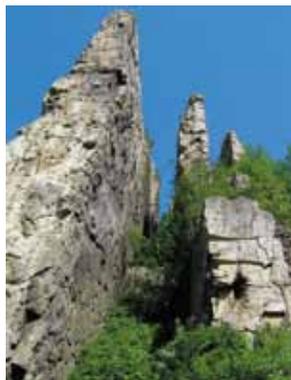


### ***6. Mount Okolchitsa–Pogledets locality– Rashov Dol locality–Lutibrod village***

***Duration: 3 hours***

From the monument on Mount Okolchitsa you have to go down the road to Vratsa. In about 40 minutes you have to turn to the left and through a vast limestone pavement with a pen, the path goes down to Pogledets locality, where there is an arbour. Climbing further down through Krivulio locality past Pogledets shelter, it turns to the right at a hairpin bend of the meandering road (Pankov's Curve). Then it continues to Promkata locality, from where it descends steeply to Rashov Dol locality. A broad pathway leads to the road from the village of Lutibrod to Vratsa, crosses the railroad and past the Ritlite rock formation climbs down to the village of Lutibrod.

It is Botev Memorial Complex that maintains the trail.

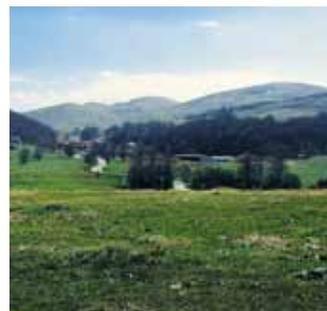


## ***TOURIST TRAIL***

### ***7. Parshevitsa Chalet– Borov Kamak locality–Mount Okolchitsa***

***Duration: 4.5 hours***

Walking from the chalet to the north takes you to the road to the old mine. After a 10-minute walk on the road, reaching the Red Turn, the trail starts climbing down through beech woods to a vast clearing over Borov Kamak Waterfall. Then it continues to the east-northeast through old beech woods, crosses Lokvite locality, vast pastures on the ridge in Zebrets locality and past a pen leads to a cart track. The track takes you through Tsarevo Livage, Izbata and Kleno localities to the monument on Mount Okolchitsa.





### 8. Ochin Dol village–Parshevitsa Chalet

*Duration: 4 hours*

A steep pathway leads from the village square up to Presvetitsa locality to the north end of the village, where vestiges of an early Christian church of the fifth or sixth century has been unearthed, climbing further up on the road through Rachova Poliana to Padesh locality. Now the trail takes to the north on the ridge of Tomovski hillside, passing through Goren Kliuch locality with a small stone shelter. Crossing the east side of Mount Ostra leads to the broad Kuzmanishki Hollow. On the left, the cliff face of Kobilini Steni is seen and on the right, Mount Beglichka Mogila, the highest peak of the Mountain of Vratsa. A 30-minute walk down takes you to Parshevitsa Chalet.



## TOURIST TRAIL

### 9. Vratsa–Lokumcheto locality– Zambina Mogila locality–Parshevitsa Chalet

*Duration: 4 hours*

The trail starts at *Natura* Visitor Information Centre, following the road to the village of Zgorigrad and turning to the right after Vratsa Gorge takes the road to Ledenika Cave. After the first sharp turn in the road it turns to the left on a beaten cart track. Then a mountain path takes you to the main road again to turn to the left at the next sharp turn. The path then crosses a ravine with a running stream and through marvellous beech woods climbs up Lokumcheto ridge to reach the main road once again. Walking about one kilometre on this road, you have to turn to the right and come to the labour service men's fountain in a ravine. From the fountain you have to continue uphill, crossing the meandering road to reach the fork in the road to Ledenika and Parshevitsa Chalets. Here you have to go to the left, passing by the sanatoria in Uchitelska Kolonia locality and turn to the right taking a beaten path. The trail crosses the meandering road, climbs up Zambina Mogila to only return on the road again, which crosses Forest Lodge locality and reaches Parshevitsa Chalet.





## 10. Lakatnik railway station–Milanovo village–Parshevitsa Chalet

*Duration: 5 hours*

This trail starts at Zhitlub karst spring across off Lakatnik railway station. A pathway with handrails and rest points winds along the Chernata Stena leading to Alpiiska Poliana, where there are shelters and rest points. A broad pathway to the right leads to the Chernata Stena. Atop the cliff, an alpine shelter, Orlovo Gnezdo (Eagle's Nest) has been built on girders. The trail takes onto a pathway to the right, leading to the monument commemorating the revolutionaries killed in September 1923. Here the trail goes northwards on the ridge, crossing old hamlets and leading to the village of Milanovo. From the centre of the village you have to take the road to Vratsa. The path crosses the meandering road on more than one occasion going through the woods, Korita locality to take you to Kalichina Bara locality and Parshevitsa Chalet.



## MONASTERIES



### *MONASTERY OF ST JOHN OF RILA*

The Monastery of St John of Rila is located in the foothills of the Mountain of Vratsa, 6km west of the city of Vratsa, over the Bistrets quarter.

A legend has it that there has been a Thracian sanctuary in the vicinity of the monastery. The inscriptions on the murals in the rock arch over the monastery make it clear that the cloister has been restored in 1540 by Dimiter Dubov.

In the period of Bulgaria's National Revival, the monastery hummed with literary and educational activities; such men of letters as Joseph Bradati and his disciple Theodore of Vratsa worked here and a monastery school opened doors.

The cloister had its own goldsmith's workshop and in 1822, the first in Bulgaria printmaking workshop was set up. Monks, who maintained relations with Russia, delivered prints to Russian monasteries.

The latest restoration work on the monastery was carried out between 2005 and 2009.

The church is the best-preserved building of the entire complex.

## 46 MONASTERIES

Next to nothing has survived of the old building and the rest of the adjoining buildings have been erected during the latest renovation.

Vestiges of three paint layers are extant in the church. Recent researches date the earliest one to the eleventh century. Remarkably, in these earliest murals the images of the saints are not arranged in accordance with the Orthodox iconographic canon. A frieze over the apse features unique representations of intertwined snakes, which is an uncommon detail in wall painting.

Next to the monastery, there is a rock arch with a karst spring gushing at its foot. On its backside, there are extant wall paintings featuring five scenes from the life of St Demetrius. Further upwards in the cliffs, there is a hermitage, where supposedly St John of Rila used to live.

*How to get there? Taking the marked road from the main road to Montana.*



## THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD MONASTERY OF CHEREPISH

*The Dormition of the Mother of God Monastery of Cherepish dates back to the days of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom. It was built under King Ivan Shishman (1371–1393). Under the Ottomans, the cloister has been reduced to rubble and ashes on more than one occasion. In the late sixteenth century, it was reconstructed by St Poemen of Sofia. In the period of Bulgarian National Revival, the monastery evolved into an educational hub with a monastery school. Books, vitae and gospels were written and copied here such as *The Gospel of Cherepish*, bound*





in 1512 with gold boards and illuminated with biblical scenes; a *Gospel* by Monk Daniel and a *Book of Apostles* by Monk Jacob. In 1797, St Sophronius of Vratsa found refuge here. In 1872–1876 members of the Revolutionary Committee of Vratsa and of the Bulgarian Revolutionary Central Committee used to stay in the cloister. Nearby, in Rashov Dol locality, a unit of Botev's detachment, led by Georgi Apostolov waged its last battle against the Turks. In 1889 and 1907 great Bulgarian writer Ivan Vazov visited the cloister. In 1897 satirical writer Aleko Konstantinov also dropped in during his tour of these places to then publish his popular travel notes *A Bulgarian Switzerland*.



## OTHER LANDMARKS

### NATURE LANDMARKS

#### Vratsata

Vratsata Gorge, called Vratitsa in the medieval period, is emblematic of the city of Vratsa and is associated with its name. Its site of 2ha was declared a nature landmark in 1964. The road to the Ledenika Cave, to Parshevitsa Chalet and the village of Zgorigrad passes here. The gorge is a rock massif of rare beauty and grandeur and in-between its cliff faces is the canyon of the Leva River. The vertical cliffs of Vratsata are the highest in the Balkan Peninsula at this altitude (over 400m) and the most popular alpine-style mountaineering site in Bulgaria. The cliffs are divided into the Central Wall, Eastern Massif and Zgorigradski Massif. Over 140 climbing routes have been laid out with different difficulty grades, with some of these being emblematic of Bulgarian mountaineering: Ogledalata, Vinkela, Kucheshkia Zub, etc.

There are extant vestiges of the medieval Vratitsa fortress dating from the tenth to the twelfth century in the gorge.

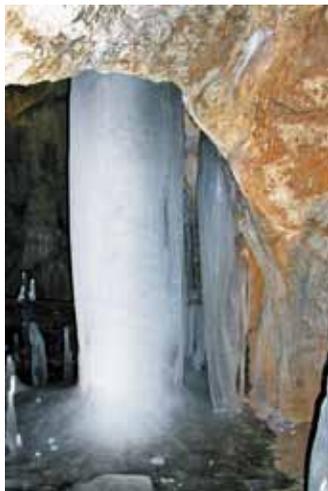


**Ledenika Cave**

The Ledenika Cave, located in the Stresher Part of the Mountain of Vratsa, is the most popular of Bulgarian show caves. Its entrance is at an altitude of 830m. It welcomed its first visitors in 1961 and was named Ledenika (Icy) due to the magnificent icy decoration of a variety of speleothems such as stalagmites, stalactites and columns, forming in the two initial halls in winters.

The cave is about 300m long and contains ten separate halls. The biggest one is the Concert Hall as concerts are held there on a yearly basis. The temperature in the cave varies between  $-7\text{ C}$  and  $15\text{ C}$ . The air humidity is 92%. With its many formations, dripstones and draperies it is among the most beautiful in this country and is open to visitors all year round. Prilepa Visitor Centre, Ledenika Chalet, *Mountaineering for Beginners* and Karst and Biodiversity interpretative trails are in the cave's immediate vicinity.

*How to get there? Taking the road to Parshevitsa Chalet 16km away from Vratsa.*

**Skaklia Waterfall**

Skaklia is the highest intermittent waterfall in Bulgaria and the Balkans (141m). It is located 1.5km south of Vratsa, behind the Kaletto Hill. Remains of the medieval Bulgarian town of Patleina have been unearthed in its close proximity. Marvellous in all seasons and offering stunning views of the city and the plain of Vratsa. Observable from downtown Vratsa, it is the several hiking trails intersection.

*How to get there? Following the marked track Vratsa–Skaklia Waterfall– Mount Okolchitsa.*



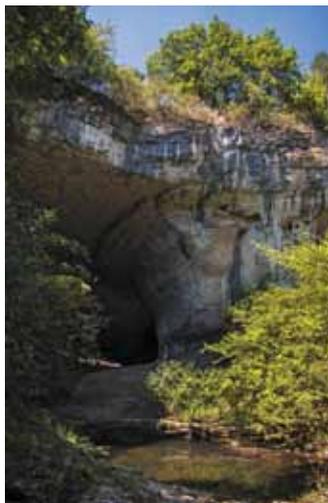
### *The God's Bridge*

Bozhiat Most (The God's Bridge) is a natural rock bridge in the Chirensko-Liliashki karst terrain. It is about 20m high and about 25m wide, while the tunnel along its principal axis is about 100m long.

The bridge was declared a nature landmark on 5 February 1964. The cave Ponora is also here with its underground river with small waterfalls.

The water of the last of the lakes and the river is siphoned off into the scenic karst spring Zhabokrek. Caving requires special equipment and a professional guide. The remains of the medieval Bulgarian fortress of Gradishte are in its immediate vicinity. Archaeological excavations have established that it used to be a stronghold in the Late Roman and the early medieval periods.

*How to get there? Taking the road to the village of Chiren at about 15km north of Vratsa.*



### *Mount Okolchitsa*

Mount Okolchitsa towers southwest of Vratsa over the village of Pavolche, where an octagonal cross, symbol of Bulgarian volunteers was mounted on the occasion of the 50th anniversary since the heroic deed of Botev-led militant group. In a decade, the Botev Committee of Vratsa initiated the construction of a monument designed by architect P. Dogramadjiev and engineer N. Novoselski. The place to erect the monument was chosen for being „...prominent, accessible and close to the battlefield...“ The monument is a 36m-high octagonal cross of stone standing there to this day. In the foothill of the mount, traditional commemorations are held on 2 June on a yearly basis. In close proximity to Mount Okolchitsa is Iolkovitsa locality, Botev's death place.

*How to get there? Taking the road to the mount 17km from Vratsa at the village of Chelopek.*



**Ritlite**

Ritlite are weird-shaped rock formations rising in the Iskar Gorge, near the village of Lutibrod. The cliff faces on the left slope are more prominent; they rise up to a height of 400m and are up to 7m thick. The formations appeared 120 million years ago, when the area was covered by a sea. Romans used the faces as natural defence facilities against invaders. Part of them was used as a natural extension of the fortress walls of the medieval citadel of Koritengrad. The city once stretched to the river. Archaeologists have discovered the ruins of nine churches in the area.

Rashov Dol historical region is situated nearby. In the spring of 1876, 10 of Hristo Botev's militants were killed here. Today, their bones are kept in a small ossuary in the area.

*How to get there? From the road to Sofia from Vratsa through the Iskar Gorge (96km).*

**Vezhdara**

Vezhdara protected area is located over the villages of Pavolche and Chelopek. It is a cliff, in the base of which there are mostly moving limestone screes. The screes are inhabited by the *Centranthus kellereri*, which is an endemic and a relict for Bulgaria, and is found only in the Vezhdara Protected Site and in the Bansky Suhodol area within Pirin Nature Park. Vezhdara encompasses a territory of 62.6ha. It was declared a protected area with ordinance № 151/21.02.2003 of the Minister of Environment and Water. The area of the protected territory is inhabited by common buzzards, long-legged buzzards, golden eagles, European honey buzzards, common kestrels, Eurasian crag martins, barred warblers, yellow-billed choughs, etc..

*How to get there? Follow the asphalt road to the village of Chelopek. A walking trail starts from the village and leads to the base of the screes.*





### *Lakatnik Cliffs*

The Lakatnik cliffs are located on the left slope of Iskar Gorge between the Opletenska and Proboynitsa rivers. The cliffs are composed of red sandstone and limestone, which makes for a particularly picturesque landscape. In the cliffs, the entrances of two caves are seen clearly, Temna Dupka (The Dark Hole) and the Razhishka Cave. In 1938 the members of the Bulgarian Alpinist Club built the Eagle's Nest shelter, secured with girders and ropes onto the cliffs. Lakatnik cliffs are known as the "cradle" of Bulgarian mountaineering and boast numerous and well-equipped hiking trails with a varied grade of difficulty.

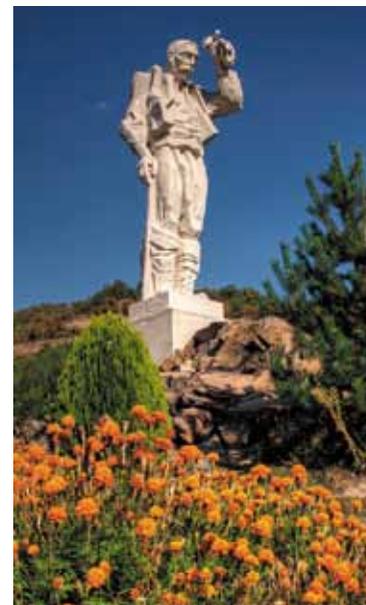
*How to get there? On the road from Sofia to Vratsa through Iskar Gorge (60km).*



### *DIADO YOTSO GLEDA COMPLEX*

The memorial, dedicated to Ivan Vazov's literary character Diado Yotso, is located at the end of the village of Ochindol, on a cliff, overhanging the Iskar River and the railroad, mentioned in Vazov's short story. The monument was designed by sculptors Monika Igarenska and Georgi Tishkov, while the idea and the major part of the funds were provided by Ognian Hristov Petrov, a man born in the village. The monument is 5m tall, made of white local limestone and was erected in 2005. Every year the area around the monument is a venue of the *Where Bulgarian Is* national folk fair.

*How to get there? On the road from Vratsa to Sofia through the Iskar Gorge (72km).*



## LEDENIKA CAVE: TOURISM WITHOUT SEASONS

### Visit Ledenika theme park!

Visit *Ledenika* theme park to spend a couple of relaxing days, packed with emotions and pleasant adventures, meant not only for your kids but for the entire family.

Ledenika Cave will surprise you with its unique light and sound choreography, which is the only one of its kind in Bulgaria. The light shows, combined with a specially selected music vary form hall to hall. You can enjoy watching movies on a water screen as well as *The Volcano* 3D show.



*Prilepa* Visitor Information Centre will provide you with insights in Ledenika Cave, Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park and its attractions, flora, fauna, cultural and historical heritage. You can also enjoy the unique 5D motion theatre where movies, dedicated to nature, are screened.

Do not forget to take some pictures at the Fairy Tale Alley, which features some of the favourite fairy-tale characters of the youngest visitors, and do not miss the cartoon shows in the amphitheatre of the park.

Thrill-seekers can enjoy the ropes course, the artificial climbing wall and the zip line.

*Ledenika Cave Themed Park* was constructed under the Development of Sustainable Tourism in Vratsa Municipality. Ledenika – Tourism without Seasons project, funded by Regional Development Operative Programme 2007–2013, and implemented by Vratsa Municipality and Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park.



## ORGANIZED ATTRACTIONS IN VRACHANSKI BALKAN NATURE PARK

### CAVING IN SEMI-WILD CAVES

A true challenge to speleologists and lovers of caving are the numerous semi-wild caves found in Karts of Vratsa Reserve. Guided tours are organized after a preliminary reservation by:

#### *Streshero Hiking, Climbing and Caving Club – Vratsa*

Phone: + 359 888 220 087;  
+ 359 92 640 126

#### *Veslets Speleological Club – Vratsa*

Phone: + 359 888 220 087;  
+ 359 92 640 126  
e-mail: speleoveslec@abv.bg  
e-mail: t\_tiholov@abv.bg



## HANG-GLIDING AND PARAGLIDING

Suitable for hang-gliding and paragliding are Mount Okolchitsa, the Upper Lift Station, the retranslation tower above the village of Sgorigrad, Kozloduy NPP holiday house, etc.

#### *Vratsa XC Club*

(Hang-gliding and  
paragliding)

*Vladimir Neshev*  
+ 359 899 981 612

*Dimo Dimitrov*  
+ 359 889 999 389

#### *Vertical Dimension Paragliding Club – Vratsa*

*Tsvetan Tzolov*  
+ 359 898 7768 71  
e-mail: ozyline@gmail.com  
e-mail: info@verticaldimension.com

#### *Paragliding and Hang-Gliding Sports Club*

(Okolchitsa Club  
for Powered and  
Unpowered flying))

*Angel Katsarski*  
+ 359 878 180 016;  
e-mail: angel\_kazarski@abv.bg



The climbing site Vratsata Gorge is located 2km southwest of the city of Vratsa, up the Leva River. The cliffs are of varied shapes, which require the application of all types of climbing techniques and a broad range of wedges and devices – chocks, “friends”, and cams. The site is charted into 32 massifs, along which over 330 traditional, alpine and sports trails have been set. Most of the rocks are solid or not very crumbly. The Central Wall is the jewel of the Vratsa cliffs. With its denivellation of 350m it ranks first among the rocks of its kind in Bulgaria (dolomitic rocks of low altitude). It boasts a total of 56 alpine trails, which are among the most challenging in Bulgaria. For more information visit: <http://www.climbingguidebg.com> or contact the local specialized clubs.

***Vratsa Extreme  
Extreme Sports Club –  
Vratsa***

*Aleksandar Sashev*  
Phone: + 359 887 179 607;  
+ 359 92 640 126  
e-mail: [club.vratsa@gmail.com](mailto:club.vratsa@gmail.com)



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e-mail: [t\\_tiholov@abv.bg](mailto:t_tiholov@abv.bg)



***Streshero Hiking,  
Climbing and  
Caving Club – Vratsa***  
Phone: + 359 888 220 087;  
+ 359 92 640 126



***RAFTING ON THE ISKAR RIVER***

The training takes place in the Iskar River. The campground is located near the Levishte train station in the Iskar Gorge. The rafting trail is about 10km long and takes about 50 minutes to cover.

The guides will provide you with protective helmets and life vests.

***Skaklia Canoe and  
Ski Club***

Phone: + 359 889 250 007;  
+ 359 887 557 007  
e-mail: [canu\\_club@yahoo.com](mailto:canu_club@yahoo.com)  
[www.canuclub.hit.bg](http://www.canuclub.hit.bg)

***The Fairy Tale  
Themed Park***

Phone/Fax: + 359 92 663 695;  
+ 359 888 020 030  
e-mail: [prikazkata\\_vratza@abv.bg](mailto:prikazkata_vratza@abv.bg)  
[www.prikazkata.com](http://www.prikazkata.com)



You will rappel down the Borov Kamak waterfall, located 25km away from Vratsa, in the Mountain of Vratsa. The descent is in the immediate vicinity of the waterfall at just about 3–4m from the water without getting wet. The abseiling takes about 15–20 minutes.

***The Fairy Tale Themed Park***

Phone/Fax: + 359 92 663 695;  
Mobile phone:+ 359 888 020 030  
e-mail: prikazkata\_vratsa@abv.bg  
www.prikazkata.com



***HORSE-RIDING***

Feel the spirit of the ancestors in one of the best possible ways – on a horse back in the mountains, alone or with a good company. What you have is a unique opportunity for an unforgettable adventure. A programme for beginners is also available.

***The Middle Ages Amusement Complex***

Phone: + 359 896 222 555;  
+ 359 896 111 165



Visit the hunting areas in the Mountain of Vratsa, which are inhabited by quails, rock partridges, rock doves, eagles, buzzards, rabbits, badgers, foxes, wild boars, deer, etc.

Photo hunting is possible all year round.

***The Middle Ages Amusement Complex***

Phone: + 359 896 222 555;  
+ 359 896 111 165



***CYCLING TRAILS***

The Mountain of Vratsa offers exciting opportunities for cycling, coupled with majestic mountain scenery and high-levels of adrenaline. The park offers cycling trails suitable both for beginners and experienced mountain-bikers alike.

***Gerak Cycling Club***

Phone:  
+ 359 878 499 829,  
+ 359 898 481 755  
www. <http://velo-vr.org/>



***National Festival of Small Theatrical Forms***

The festival is organized by the Ministry of Culture, Vratsa Municipality and the Drama Puppet Theatre, Vratsa. It is held annually in mid-May.

<http://theatre.vratza.com/>

***Youth Music Forum and Young Listeners Forum***

Organized by Vratsa Municipality and Vratsa Philharmonic Orchestra in October and November.

<http://www.vratza.bg>

***Vratsa Spring International Folklore Festival***

Held from April 29 till May 1 each year.

<http://www.vratza.bg>

***Diko Iliev National Competition for Young Performers***

The competition is held biannually and is organized by Vratsa Municipality and Father Paisius Secondary School, Vratsa.

<http://www.vratza.bg>

***Vratsa Autumn National Students' Plein air***

The event is held in October for students at schools of arts. It is organized by Father Paisius Secondary School, Vratsa.

<http://www.vratza.bg>

***Spring Folklore Festival***

The event is held in October for students at schools of arts. It is organized by Father Paisius Secondary School, Vratsa.

<http://www.vratza.bg>

***Mara Vrachankata Old-Time City Song Festival***

The event is intended to give the floor to the groups for old-time city songs from all over Bulgaria, to revive and enrich the traditions of the old city songs. It is held in the middle of October.

<http://www.vratza.bg>

***Botev's Days***

Held annually from May 27 till June 2, the days commemorate Hristo Botev and his militant group. The days are packed with a rich cultural programme: competitions, recitals, exhibitions and concerts. The events culminate in the tattoo and fireworks on June 1 and the national commemoration of the heroes on June 2, on Mount Okolchitsa.

<http://www.vratza.bg>

***Vreme International Youth Theatre Festival***

The festival is held biannually in June and brings together youth amateur groups from around the world.

[www.youth-house.com](http://www.youth-house.com)



### *Graffiti Fest*

The fest is held in June in Hristo Botev central square. It is co-organized by the Regional History Museum and Youth House, Vratsa. The event is accompanied by hip-hop, beat box and break dance performances.

[www.youth-house.com](http://www.youth-house.com)

### *Rockers' Fest*

Held on a yearly basis in August in the Mountain of Vratsa, near Ledenika Cave.

### *Rockalution International Break Dance Competition*

The Rockalution International Break Dance Competition is organized by Youth Home, Vratsa and MONSTRIBE Break Club, Vratsa.

[www.youth-house.com](http://www.youth-house.com)

### *Traditional Celebration of the resort, the mineral water and the mountain of Varshets*

Held from August 6 till August 12, the event is aimed at celebrating the healing properties of the mineral water and the beautiful nature of Varshets.

[www.varshets.bg](http://www.varshets.bg)



### *GOATMILK – Festival of Memories*

Held in May in the village of Gorna Bela Rechka (Varshets Municipality).

[www.novakultura.org](http://www.novakultura.org)

### *Flower Festival in Varshets*

The festival is held in June.

[www.varshets.bg](http://www.varshets.bg)

### *Where Bulgarian Is National Folklore Festival*

Held in the village of Ochin Dol on May 23.

[www.mezdra.bg](http://www.mezdra.bg)





*EU single emergency telephone number**112*

<i>Vrachanski Balkan Nature Park Administration</i>	+ 359 92 66 58 49
<i>Natura Visitor Information Centre</i>	+ 359 96 66 03 18
<i>Vratsa Municipality</i>	+ 359 92 62 45 81
	+ 359 92 62 45 82
<i>District Administration – Vratsa</i>	+ 359 92 66 10 46
<i>Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water – Vratsa</i>	+ 359 92 62 92 11
<i>Civil Defence</i>	+ 359 92 62 30 00
<i>Vratsa Municipality</i>	+ 359 92 66 11 71
<i>Vratsa District</i>	+ 359 92 66 11 91
<i>Mountain Rescue Service</i>	+ 359 888 47 88 38
<i>Bulgarian Red Cross</i>	+ 359 92 62 44 47
<i>Vratsa Bus Station</i>	+ 359 92 62 25 58
<i>Vratsa Railway Station</i>	+ 359 92 62 44 15

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ДИРЕКЦИЯ НА ПРИРОДЕН ПАРК

ВРАЧАНСКИ БАЛКАН



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