

SERBIA'S REMOTER TRAILS



TOUR DETAILS		Duration
		8 days
HIGHLIGHTS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cosmopolitan café culture of modern Belgrade• Cycle through stunning landscapes• Hike in a remote region of Serbia, explored by few	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marvel at the ghoulish skull tower• Sample local wines, brandies, breads, meats and cheeses	
Off The Beaten Track Rating	● ● ● ● ●	Activity Rating ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

ITINERARY

- DAY 1** You will be met by a Travel The Unknown representative on arrival at Belgrade airport and transferred to your hotel. Overnight in 3 star hotel in the city centre next to the main pedestrian street Kneza Mihaila. Meals: N/A
- DAY 2** Morning tour of Belgrade's highlights. Drive to Sokobanja (250km and 2h30 long). Afternoon relaxing walk to the ruins of Soko Grad. Terrain is gently rolling. Soko Grad was originally founded by the Romans in 1st century though there is little left from Roman town anymore. The more interesting ruins in Soko Grad are of a typical Serbian medieval fortress. Night in simple lodge in Sokobanja. Meals: B, D
- DAY 3** Set off in the morning on your first bike ride; cycle the short distance to the village of Resnik, where we stop and visit the 200 year-old water mill. There may be the chance whilst we are here to sample some of the local produce made in the village - fresh bread, cheese and delicious juice. From here we head to Josanica spa, where we will stop for a picnic lunch, after which you will continue along dirt tracks to the village of Vrmidza. The rest of the afternoon is a leisurely cycle downhill across open terrain back to the lodge where we can avail ourselves of a Turkish bath and relax as the heat washes away any stiffness in our legs. Total cycling distance approx. 38 km rolling terrain with 6km unpaved. Meals: B, L, D
- DAY 4** After breakfast transfer by bus up to "the saddle" between the mounts Ozren and Devica. Then it is a downhill cycle, through forest and farmland, passing through the villages of Jezero, Vrelo, Velepolja and Miljkovac en-route to Nis. Stopping off wherever we like to enjoy our picnic amidst the splendour of this rural landscape. After lunch we then set off across the fertile lands of the South Morava Valley, on our way to the town of Nis. An important trading settlement during Roman times, the town's strategic position on the road to Byzantium has seen numerous armies pass through its streets; Goths and Romans, Huns and Crusaders have all passed this way. Visit the Turkish citadel and the ghoulish skull tower. Transfer to Niska Banja for overnight in a lodge. Meals: B, L

The History of the Skull Tower of Niš - At the beginning of the 19th century it was **crucial that the Serbian state liberate Niš from the Turks**. In 1809, the strong Serbian insurrection army of 16,000 soldiers, created six trenches for defense near Niš. The Turks attacked the main trench on Čegar Hill. The battle lasted the whole day. As one witness stated, "the Turks attacked five times, and the Serbs managed to repulse them five times. Each time their losses were great. Some of the Turks attacked, and some of them went ahead, and thus when they attacked for the sixth time they filled the trenches with their dead so that the living could proceed over their dead bodies and they began to fight against the Serbs with their rifles, cutting their enemies with their sabres and knives". The Turks eventually overran the main trench on Čegar Hill after this fierce fighting. The Serbian General, **Steven Sindelic, realising he was on the point of defeat blew himself up, alongside three thousand Serbian soldiers and about six thousand Turkish soldiers**. The Turks built the grisly Skull Tower ("Ćele Kula" in Serbian) with four walls - each containing **eleven rows of seven Serbian skulls** - as a warning against further Serbian resistance. Many of the skulls were removed - at great danger - by Serbian families and buried, but many remain there to this day. In 1892, a chapel was built over the skulls, which now protects the fifty eight remaining skulls.

Niš Fortress is a complex and very important cultural and historical monument that dominates the urban nucleus of the city. The existing fortification is of Turkish origin, dating from the first decades of the 18th century. It is known as one of the most significant and best preserved monuments of this kind in the Balkans.



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- DAY 5** Transfer to the Sicevo village (10km). Loop hike in the Sicevo Gorge passing through vineyards and orchards of the Sicevo area and narrow walking path on the side of the gorge. Hiking lasts about 2.5 hours on rolling terrain. Return to the lodge in Niska Banja. Afternoon free. Meals: B, L
- DAY 6** Transfer to Sicevo village. Hike to the summit of Gradac (1,052m above the sea level) on Mt. Svrljig. Picnic lunch at the summit. Hike starts on elevation of 300m above the sea level. Hike duration: approx. 4h30. Overnight in lodge in Niska Banja. Meals: B, L
- DAY 7** Short transfer to Bojanine Vode on the slopes of Dry Mt. (860m). Hike to the highest summit of Dry Mountain Trem (1.810m). The Trem summit is easily accessible from its southern side but the northern side is very steep and at the summit one can enjoy a beautiful view while standing at the edge of a steep cliff. Hiking duration: approx. 6h. Transfer to Sicevo Gorge. Traditional rural homestay in the Sicevo Gorge. Meals: B, L
- DAY 8** Breakfast. Transfer to Belgrade airport. Meals: B

PRICE INCLUDES

Airport pick-up & drop-off
Ground transport
Accommodation

Entrance fees to sites on itinerary
Breakfasts and some meals (refer to itinerary for meal plan)

Drivers and guides
Use of well maintained bikes
Climate Care contribution

ABOUT OUR TRIPS

In addition to our scheduled group departures, **private and tailor-made trips** can be arranged that include some or all of the places on this itinerary. Please contact us with your requirements (e: info@traveltheunknown.com, t: 0845 053 0352) and we will happily put together an itinerary for you and your group. No trip is too long or too short.