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ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT

NATBIOT PROJECT - "NATURAL HERITAGE - NATURAL/ BIO RESOURCES' SERVICES"

Project Code: ROBG - 356

EU contribution amount: EUR 395,306.31



NATBIOT 4 - ME - DO - VA TRAVEL PACKAGE  
Mehedinți - Dolj - Varshets (Montana) (7 days)



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**NATBIOT**

We invite you on a 7-day cross-border vacation, exploring some of the sights of Mehedinți and Dolj counties and Varshets in the Montana District. Starting points are the cities of Dr. Tr. Severin or Varshets from which interesting routes can depart.

The main objective of this travel package is to delight your body, soul and mind with: spectacular natural beauty, new, interesting cultural objectives, but especially to give you a pleasant, picturesque atmosphere, quality services, enjoying the traditional, natural and organic culinary delights, thus getting to know the hospitality of two neighbouring, befriended peoples.

### WHO IS THIS TRAVEL PACKAGE MEANT FOR?

NATBIOT 4 - ME-DO-VA is meant for:

- ✓ tourists who want to experience new, less known destinations;
- ✓ "healthy" tourism enthusiasts - who love exploring nature, who love "movement", who want to discover new cultural goals and traditions and who want to stay in a friendly environment, benefiting from quality services, understanding by quality also healthy, traditional, natural and / or organic food, both for those who have already approached this lifestyle in their daily life and for those who want to approach a healthy lifestyle at least while on vacation.
- ✓ individual tourists or in tourist groups - families with and without children, seniors or young people, formally or informally organized, companies or other organizations for group activities.



## **WHAT BENEFITS YOU HAVE IF YOU CHOOSE THE NATBIOT 4 - ME-DO-VA?**

- Changing the traditional destinations with some new ones, which will open you new horizons and will get you out of the routine, while maintaining the “comfort”;
- You can have a stay away from the pollution and crowding of the usual destinations, exploring parts of the territory of two neighbouring countries, some less known to the general public;
- Invigorate your body and soul by moving in the appealing nature and by visiting the cultural places that bear the spirituality of two peoples;
- You get to rest in hospitable conditions, benefiting from quality services, being able to choose from a wide variety of accommodation units, hotels, modern and/or rustic guesthouses, rooms for rent in local people’s houses, chalets; you are provided with an updated database of these accommodation units, the number of rooms available and their quality level;
- Easy accessibility at the starting points: the cities of Slatina and Montana considering as entry gates the international

airports of Sofia and Craiova, for both local and foreign tourists (Sofia-Montana distance - 109 km; Craiova - Slatina 54 km - Craiova has an airport where they operate low cost flights.) The travel package also includes the airport transfer;

- Delight your senses with delicious but healthy dishes, benefitting from the local advantage: the use of natural / organic/ traditional agricultural products;

You will have the opportunity to benefit from as many organic products taking into account the fact that both Bulgaria and Romania have registered a spectacular growth in organic agriculture (between 2010 and 2016 Bulgaria recorded the highest growth of organic cultivated areas in the EU, 35%, and Romania is the ninth largest producer of organic products and ranks among the top ten producers with organic production increases, according to the latest FIBL report in 2019.

Thus, the latest FIBL report indicates a 14.2% increase in the ecological surface, the 6<sup>th</sup> place in Europe in terms of growth dynamics and in terms of the collection of ecological honey from the wild areas, Romania occupies the 4<sup>th</sup> place in the world in terms of collection areas (1.8 mil. hectares in 2014). Tour operators are taking advantage of the opportunity to capitalize on organic production.



From the tourist's point of view, here are some of the advantages conferred by the consumption of organic products:

- > no herbicides, pesticides, hormones were used in their production;
- > they do not contain any additives or other chemicals;
- > they are not genetically modified;
- > animal products do not contain traces of antibiotics;
- > they are healthy products, free of toxic residues;
- > they have a balanced content of bioactive substances and minerals;

-> the taste of organic foods is superior to the conventional ones

Natural products have almost the same advantages as organic ones, with the mention that they do not present quality assurance, and their certification is not regulated, relying in most cases on "trust". In smaller communities, however, trust is based on mutual acquaintance between community members, reducing the risk of consumer deception.

**In order to access the travel package NATBIOT 4 - ME-DO-VA, resort to a tour operator because:**

- it organizes the entire stay according to your preferences for the accommodation, meals, program, without you looking for the optimal options by yourselves, making sure that the established program is complied with;
  - it ensures full-time transportation, including pick up and return from your locality;
  - it ensures reservations and negotiates the best price for you
- Vă invităm să urmăm traseul oferit de **Pachetul turistic NATBIOT 4 - ME-DO-VA** pornind din orașul Dr. Tr. Severin.



For the tourist's convenience, security and to ensure the observance of the vacation schedule and any adjustments, consider the purchase of the package from a tour operator, road transport insurance (car, minibus, coach), providing assistance, guide (on request), for groups of tourists, differentiated, according to their number.

We now take you on the route of this travel package, departing from the city of **Dr. Tr. Severin**, with incursions in the **Porțile de Fier Biosphere Reserve** and to the **Mehedinți Plateau, Calafat, Varshets**.

**Dr.Tr.Severin** city was and is a city with an important strategic location, which is located at the intersection of land and water roads leading to the north and south of the Danube. Once here, you can spend the night in Dr. Tr. Severin where you have 9 hotels, 12 guesthouses, 5 hostels, 3 motels or you can spend the night on the routes we recommend you to take in the **Porțile de Fier Biosphere Reserve** and **Mehedinți Plateau**. The entire database with accommodation possibilities, quality

standards and availability for natural / organic food is at your disposal. You just have to choose!

In Dr. Tr. Severin we invite you to visit **the Medieval Fortress of Severin and the Heroes Monument of the First World War**.

**The Medieval Fortress of Severin** - The name of Severin name has several possible origins: one of Latin origin from the name of the emperor Septimius Severus, one of Slavic origin from the word "severnâi", meaning Nordic, or a religious one from Saint Severin de Noricum, a saint considered to be a protector of the Catholic church in the Middle Ages, as the Catholic missionaries from Upper Austria (Noricum) considered.

However, there is data showing that the walls of a fortress were erected here in 1233, bearing the name Severinopolis, after the name of the Emperor Septimius Severus, who turned the city into a colony. The Hungarian king Andrew II transformed the old fortress into this defence fortress, which he handed over in 1247 to the Ioannite Knights.

It seems that at that time, in the courtyard of the fortress there was also a gothic church, built with materials taken from the Roman castra Drobeta. Being strategically erected on the Danube, its conquest would have meant a great victory for anyone and a step forward for other conquered territories. Thus, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the Severin Fortress often was the target of the Bulgarian, Tatar, Turkish and even Hungarian cannons (when the Hungarians wanted Oltenia with great fervour).

Only at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, for example, King Stephen of Hungary had five wars with the Bulgarians to defend the fortress.





After a troubled history, in 1406 the Fortress of Severin is held by Mircea cel Batrân, which was at that time Ban of Severin. The walls of the fortress witnessed the treaty of anti-Ottoman alliance signed by Mircea cel Batrân and the Hungarian king Sigismund of Luxembourg.

In 1524 the fortress fell into the hands of the Turks (Suleiman the Magnificent), so that two years later it was demolished, and its stones used to build other cities south of the Danube. Only a tower, named by the locals, the Tower of Sever, stood in the old citadel, in memory of the one who had erected the old citadel. The reconstruction of the fortress lasted almost 300 years.

Much later, in 1936, following some archaeological excavations, the original plan of the fortress was discovered: it had a rectangular shape, two walls built of river stones, three towers and was surrounded by a deep defence ditch. Admiring the ruins

of the fortress and knowing the interesting history of the medieval fortress you will certainly not regret the time spent here!

Take a leap in time and reach the **Heroes Monument of the First World War**, located in Rozelor Park. Constructed between 1930-1933 by the sculptor named T. Burca, which was inspired by the architect State Bolosin, the monument has four marble columns. The monument is made in a Roman-Byzantine style in combination with the Romanian one.



In the plan, it was intended to house two burning candles, a Christian sign of remembrance of the dead. Above the columns two brick urns were placed (designed for incense), on which scenes from the Dacian-Roman wars and the reunion of the

people were engraved. Between the two stands there was the locket of King Ferdinand and Queen Mary, and next to them, the faces of Traian and Decebal. Above the columns you can see two eagles bearing the Commemorative Cross in their claws, as a tribute to the deity and sacrifice of the heroes. The monument was inaugurated on June 4, 1933.

It also contains a crypt in which the remains of the Severin and Mehedinți soldiers who died on the battlefield during the First World War are placed. It is a monument that, for any tourist, reiterates, demonstrates the courage, the courage and the faith of the Romanian people, who has never conceded defeat! Beyond its architectural beauty and significance, the monument can awaken the sense of duty towards generations that have sacrificed their lives for a noble creed.

Loaded with the history of the place, we invite you on a hiking in **Porțile de Fier Biosphere Reserve** and **Mehedinți Plateau**.



**The Porțile de Fier Biosphere Reserve** - subscribes to the territory of the **Porțile de Fier Natural Park** and it is located on the left bank of the Danube, in the southwest of Romania, between the towns of Buziaș and Gura Văii, standing on the administrative territories of two counties: Caraș-Severin and Mehedinți, covering over 115,000 hectares and comprising 18 nature reserves, the most fascinating of which is the **Natural Reserve Cazanele Mari** and **Cazanele Mici of the Danube**, located on the territory of Dubova.

At Cazane, the Danube runs through the narrowest and most grandious area of the Danube Gorge, Cazanele Mari being separated from Cazanele Mici by the Dubova Bay. Upstream, immediately after the Dubova bay we find Cazanele Mari, which have a 3.8 km length and a 200 - 350 m width.

**Cazanele Mari** consist of the Ciucaru Mare Hill (318 m), whose



steep walls border the left side of the river and from the Stirbatul Mare Hill (768 m), located on the Serbian side. Downstream, between the Dubova bay and Ogradena we find Cazanele Mici. With a 3.6 km length and 150 - 350 m width, it runs between the Ciucaru Mic Hill (313 m) on the Romanian bank and the Stirbatul Mic Hill (626 m) on the Serbian bank.

**We propose some hiking routes through Pořile de Fier Natural Park that you will not regret.**

**The eco-touristic route Dubova - Ciucaru Mic**

The access on the route is achieved from the national road DN57, from Dubova bay, about 24 km away from Orşova locality to Moldova Nouă (Dr. Tr. Severin - Orşova 30km). The eco-touristic route is located on the administrative territory of Pořile de Fier Natural Park, passing on mountain paths, among oak, beech forests and numerous grasslands, with a landscape specific to a gorge.



It is reached through the **Cazanele Mici Plateau**, where there is 140-million-year-old limestone, pebbles and tertiary shingles from the warmer interglacial periods. Also here, if you arrive in spring, you can admire the yellow Cazane tulip, as the only place in the world where it grows. The route of about 9 km can be travelled in about 4 hours of walking (without longer stalls), it has a degree of average difficulty, which does not involve special training, but, depending on the season, it is recommended to use appropriate equipment (boots, waterproof clothing, about 1 l of water / person, rod used for support but also as protection against vipers).

You will be accompanied by the rangers of the Natural Park Pořile de Fier, as well as on all the trails in this park, because here you walk among natural elements of priceless value for the geology, flora and fauna of Romania, but also of Europe. The marking is a yellow equilateral triangle with a white border.



**Ciucaru Mare Circuit:** it starts near Dubova, directly from DN57 (route marked with a yellow triangle near a football field) and takes you on the Ciucarul Mare above **Cazanele Mari**. It does not require special equipment, only equipment suitable for hiking, depending on the season and of course, drinking water.

Although it starts a little steeper, through the woods, once you reach the top, you can admire the fascinating view from above the cauldrons (cazane). After about 40-50 minutes of walking on a flat portion you will reach the edge of a ravine, and below you will admire the Danube. Continuing the road following the sign, you will reach Dubova bay, a spectacular viewpoint, and from there back to the starting point.

The specific element of vegetation encountered is represented by Cazane Tulip (*Tulipa Hungarica*). This is visible especially from the water, because its habitat is represented by the rocky walls of the Ciucarul Mare. As fauna elements we find deer, wolves, wild cat, specifically we find Hermann's turtle, and the horned

viper on the sunburned rocks. The circuit lasts about 3 hours, but of course, you can enjoy the scenery for as long as you want.

From Dr. Tr. Severin to the north, we invite you to the **Mehedinți Plateau Geopark**.

**Mehedinți Plateau Geopark** is a protected area of national interest, located on the territories of Gorj (5%) and Mehedinți (95%) counties. The natural area is in the northern part of Mehedinți County (on the administrative territories of Bala, Balta, Bâlvănești, Cireșu, Godeanu, Ilovița, Isverna, Izvoru Bârzii, Obârșia-Cloșani, Podeni and Ponoarele and Baia de Aramă) in the northwest of Gorj County, on the territory of Padeș township.

In the Mehedinți Plateau Geopark, 10 tourist routes are approved. You can find them on the website: [www.geoparcmehedinti.ro/cat/trasee-turistice/](http://www.geoparcmehedinti.ro/cat/trasee-turistice/).

Of these, we recommend Route 2 - LA VARNIȚĂ - GAURA LUI CIOCÂRDIE, with access from Tr. Severin on DJ 607B to Cireșu (28 km), then to Marga about 3 km to Varniță.

The marking is a red triangle. The estimated time is  $\frac{3}{4}$  h, it has medium difficulty and it is accessible all year round. The necessary equipment is the usual one, for mountain hiking. The route is: La Varniță - șaua Găurinți - V. Lunca cu Lileci - cracul Rășița - V. Topolniței - Gaura lui Ciocârdie. From La Varniță meadow (info panel and arrows), the path goes through the meadow to the NW, it crosses a forest and reaches a lap.

Atop, on the left, there are lookout points. The path descends on a valley with thick bordered by limestone walls until it reaches a wide and forested valley. On the right (N), there is a lap from where you can descend to the entrance of Găurinți of **Topolnița cave**. We follow the path to the left, through the forest, on the

valley framed by walls and steep ditches, we pass through a meadow, then we climb the right slope to a peak. Here we find an old road that comes right from Rășița peak.

Our path descends to the S through the forest, to the Topolnița riverbed, which, followed upstream, takes us shortly to Gaura lui Ciocârdie, the place where the river comes out of the cave. You have some lookout points where you can take spectacular photos: the rocks above La Varniță meadow, the view towards Lunca Pețimii, Cornetul Prosăcului, Mehedinți Mountains and Plateau. From here you have connecting routes: the road on Rășița peak to Cireșu; Topolniței Valley up to the Topolniței Monastery; Gura Prosăcului and the Women's Cave (**entrances to the Topolnița Cave**); Epuran Cave over Cornetul Prosăcului. Even if you do not follow the recommended route, do not miss 2 caves in the Mehedinți Plateau Geopark.

**Topolnița Cave** located 35 km north of Dr. Tr. Severin between the localities of Cireșu and Marga, in the central part of the Mehedinți Plateau is a destination in itself if you are in the area, on the celebration day of the cave where it is open to the public, as the rest of the time it is closed for research. There is only a small active part of the cave that can be visited at any time. Topolnița cave is one of the most unique speleological reserves in Romania, unique in the world, declared a monument of nature. The waters of the Topolnița river that reach the underground have managed to form gigantic and extremely spectacular galleries.

Overall, the cave has a length of about 11000 m. Therefore, it is the second in size in Romania and the 17<sup>th</sup> in the world. The galleries created are divided into five floors, but of all, the most impressive from a speleological viewpoint is Racovița Gallery. The galleries have huge halls, waterfalls, unusual forms of relief from where the names come from, such as the large Candlestick

(Marea lumânare), the Great Stalagmitic dome, the Crystal (Lacul de Cleștar), the Candle Forest (Pădurea cu lumânări) and so on. About the cave it is known that besides the title of giant, it has several galleries full of fossils and sub-fossils. A first attempt at advanced exploration belonged to Professor Sever Popescu from Turnu Severin. He discovered "Culcușul Vidrelor" in 1956. As for the systematic exploration, it is known that it was made by specialists from the "Emil Racoviță" Institute of Speleology of the Romanian Academy. Even though the works started in 1962, until now 11 kilometers have been explored. For example, in the Topolnița - Epuran area, two caves are joined by six galleries and no one has gone though there so far. For the introduction into the tourist circuit and in order to increase the degree of accessibility, improvement works were completed: concrete tracks, electricity, railings and stairs. These are required for uneven areas leading to the main points of attraction.

Going further north, in the Mehedinți Plateau, you reach **Izverna Cave**, which became famous and sought after by foreigners, after Jacques Yves Cousteau made, in its galleries, a film which he presented in the section "Explorations of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" from the Smithsonian Museum in Washington. Izverna cave is located near Izverna commune, in the Cave Hill of the Mehedinți Mountains, at an altitude of 390 m. It is a cave over 1.5 km long covered by an underground stream.

The cave is also famous because it has the longest network of underwater galleries in Romania. The intervention of the scientist has increased the interest in the cave of adventure-seekers, who are looking for treasures in the area people speak about. Legends of the place say that the Izverna Cave would house a silver deposit of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, hidden at the order of the Austro-Hungarian Empress Maria Theresa. Also, in the depths of the Izverna Cave it is said that they buried the Serbian thesaurus, when in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the two

crown princes, Milan and Mihail Obrenovici, disputed their throne. The karst spring with the highest flow in Mehedinți County starts from the cave. Today, the spring supplies drinking water downstream. Underneath, in the main gallery, that is, it enters from the outside through a gate 4x3 meters in size.

A few potholes can be climbed, then you reach through a corridor to several lakes with infiltration water, 75 cm deep. After walking about 50 meters, a real lake appears before your eyes, with waves, called Lacul Verde (the Green Lake), which gives you the feeling that you have reached another realm, in a parallel world. You can only go through this with a pneumatic boat, say speleologists. The Izverna cave exerts a special fascination. The very clear water from the underground lakes, which allows very good visibility and the underwater galleries, make it an ideal place for underwater diving, photography and filming.

After visiting these fascinating caves, return to Dr. Tr. Severin where you cannot miss **a museum that concentrates the characteristics of the area, the Porțile de Fier Museum**. In its current form it was opened in 1972 with two sections, history and the natural science, an aquarium. Subsequently, the ethnography and art sections were created. Here you can admire the history section - documents, archaeology (including a Roman-era lapidarium), numismatics, Romanian plastic art (works by Luchian, Petrascu, Pallady, Tonitza, Dimitrescu, Sirato, Iser, Ressu).

The exhibition of the natural sciences presents the physical and geographical conditions of the Porțile de Fier Gorge (room 1), the terrestrial fauna and flora of the Gorge (room 2), the Danube river gorge of Porțile de Fier (aquarium), the flora and fauna specific to the aquatic environment of the Porțile de Fier area (room 3). You have thus the complete picture of the area where you went hiking in Mehedinți and Porțile de Fier area. And if you

have not been able to capture in your travelling the rural specificity of the area, you have the opportunity to do so by visiting the ethnography and folk art section. From Dr. Tr. Severin go to Calafat (Dolj), Varshets, Bulgaria. On the way, go past some vineyards and we invite you to have short stops to enjoy the "enchanted liqueur", for example at the vineyards in Rogova, Vânu Mare (Mehedinți), Cetate (Dolj).

Rogova commune is framed by the Starmina hill and the homonymous forest to the west. Starmina Hill offers a story-like view, as far as the eye can reach you have the homonymous vineyard from where the grapes take the "wine route", and after less than 9 km, you arrive at Vânu Mare, where the plains are joined by the hills where the vine reigns in the sun, again.

Here you will find refined wine centers. The wines from the Vânu Mare Orevița vineyards were given a place of honour on the tables of the rulers, metropolitan bishops and great governors of Wallachia, including in the imperial chamber of Vienna for over five centuries and have received international recognition since the first economic exhibition in from London in 1862, where they enjoyed special appreciation.

The Vânu Mare domains are increasingly drawing on their status as a producer of natural, organic wines, in which any taster can find a bit of Romanian tradition and specificity from the first sip.

Before crossing the Calafat-Vidin bridge, take a short stop in Calafat to visit the **Museum of Art and Ethnography in Calafat** (distance Dr. Tr. Severin - Calafat 99 km - 1h41min).



**The Museum of Art and Ethnography in Calafat** is housed in the impressive Marincu Palace. The building was built between 1906 and 1908 and it is the work of architect Constantin Rogalski in the French neo-Baroque style, with special decorative elements made of travertine and marble, marble columns and artistically painted walls. The palace courtyard has an area of 8,333 sqm and was designed by the Italian designer, Adotti. The owner of the building was the landlord Ionița Marincu. Since 1927, various administrative and educational institutions have been operating in the building.



The museum houses objects of contemporary Romanian art: paintings, prints, works by the artists from Dolj County, paintings by Nicolae Grigorescu, Henry Catargi and Teodor Pallady, sculptures by Ion Irimescu, Nicu Enia and George Demetrescu Mirea.





The museum holds a collection of national costumes and clothing, carpets and other objects.

The building also houses the Romanian-Bulgarian Friendship Hall, as a proof of the close ties between the two peoples which also prepares you for the incursion into the neighbouring country.





During your stay in the Mehedinți and Dolj area of Oltenia you will have the opportunity to taste **traditional, natural and / or organic culinary preparations** that will complete the pleasure of your stay before tasting the specific dishes from Varshets, Bulgaria. In Mehedinți we can find preparations not only specific to the Oltenia area, but also some specific to the population of other ethnicities, Serbs, Czechs, Germans, Albanians, who brought the traditions of their people with them. Here are some of the preparations you can taste, and, even if it seems like just a simple list, we hope to arouse your curiosity: Oltenian rolls pumpkin seed, rice and leeks; pie with spinach and eggs; acacia flower rattles, beekeeping seasonal food; corn cake in “țest”; păcele saci/scăzute - broth with rice or noodles, seasoned with egg whipped with cream; eggplant pies; broth and marinated fish, fish rolls, nettle food; bread in “țest”; pepper stuffed with rice; chicken brine; mushroom broth, lentil “drob”, snail brine, sheep or goat pastrami, prunes dish etc.

Among the delights of other nationalities we mention: Albanian - braga and halvița; Turkish - sheep soup seasoned with yoghurt, eggplant moussaka, baklava; Serbian - macania, tomato soup, pljeskavica, patrunike, dumplings with figs; Czech - garlic soup, cumin soup, Fijcky (sweet cabbage with noodles), Knedijky (steamed dumplings) etc.

Depending on the period chosen for your stay, you can enjoy the cultural-artistic events organized in Mehedinți County. We mention only a few of these: in August - the “Fereastra spre noi” ethnic festival - the commune of Svinița, the inter-ethnic festival of traditional songs and dances “Otto Alscher” - Orșova, in October “Cântecele românilor de pretutindeni” - competition of young folklore performers - Dr.Tr.Severin. In Calafat, in October, you can enjoy the “Roadele toamnei” festival or the city days in May.

Cross the bridge Calafat - Vidin to Varshets (118.6 km, 1h 46

min).



Arriving in **Varshets**, you have numerous accommodation places for all tastes and “pockets”, from 5-star to 2-star hotels, numerous guesthouses, houses for rent, over 56 in total.

Apart from its reputation as the oldest (1850) and the most popular resort town in Northern Bulgaria, with its healing mineral springs, Varshets can offer many other attractions. Being located at an altitude of 304 m in the valley of the Botuna river, at the foot of the incredible mountain range “Koznitsa”, just 12 km from the famous peak “Todorini Puppets” (1785 m) and enjoying a mild mountain climate, you can take hikes in which the landscape and the fresh air will comfort your body and give you a good state of mind and soul. Even a short walk on the “**Sycamore Alley**” in the city can be a good start. The city park was created between 1911 and 1912 by the local volunteers, under the guidance of Dr. Damyán Ivanov.

In the park you can admire pine trees, lirovo tree, cedar, duglazka fir tree, Konkolorka fir tree, silver spruce, ginkgo biloba, magnolia and others. The park covers an area of 800 ha and it is the second largest in the country, after the Boris garden in Sofia.



The **Ivanchova Polyana eco-touristic route** offers a pleasant hike for about 3 hours, and its total length is about 6 km. The route starts from the city park (Sun Garden) in Varshets, then, the stone bridge curved over the river, to the **old public baths**. In the park, follow the main lane. There are also indicators. First you will pass through an extended picnic area overlooking the “Todorini Puppets” peaks and continue to the “Ivanchova Polyana” area, famous for parties and entertainment. The end of the path leads to the “Paradise Corner” waterfall, which is an extremely beautiful waterfall in two steps.

The **“Paradise Corner” waterfall** is located 5 km south of Varshets, along the Orloshtica river. The area is forested, with deciduous trees and is a wonderful place to relax and have a

picnic. The waterfall is the most famous of the two waterfalls near the town of Varshets.



The other waterfall near Varshets is Zanozensky. It is located on the Orloshtitsa River and can be found in the area on the outskirts of Zanozhene (former village), about 3 kilometres southwest of the centre of Varshets. There is also an arrow to point to the waterfall. From this place, the waterfall is already heard and seen. The waterfall is particularly picturesque, with waters flowing from one level to another, forming a pond at each level. The waterfall is about 10 meters high.

There, at the foot of the waterfall, you will see that there is a bridge over it. To get to the bridge and look at the waterfall from the top and across the river, you must return to the table and benches and go above them. For 2-3 minutes sit on the bridge above the top of the waterfall. From there, the view is completely different. When you reach the other bank, you will see a narrow, steep and short path that goes down to the lake under the first fall.

Varshets City can also delight you with a few cultural sites that we invite you to visit and we are sure you will not regret it: **Varshets History Museum, Art Gallery, Dr. Damyan Ivanov Memorial.**

**The history museum of Varshets** was founded in 1999 and it is housed in a building with a unique architecture, built in the 1930s, as a private house. In the museum, you will see four thematic exhibitions - "Antiquity", "Archaeological digs and coin collections", "Balneology" and "Ethnography". Evidence of the Thracian and Roman civilization, a rich ethnographic collection, consisting mostly of clothing and household items from the region are exposed to the public.

The recent history of Varshets as a spa resort presents a rich documentary collection and numerous archive photographs. The most valuable exhibit of the museum is a unique bronze sculpture from the second century AD of the Thracian boy-god Telesphorus, who is the symbol of the city today.



**The Art Gallery** is housed in the old secondary school building, built in 1872. The gallery has 664 paintings and 27 sculptures made of wood, clay and gypsum. Exhibitions of Bulgarian and foreign artists are shown, including artists from Germany, Vietnam and others. During the "Mineral and Balkan Water" Festival, organized in the second week of August, temporary exhibitions are organized and the existing collections are supplemented with new donations. The tradition of organizing the festival dates back to 1937.



**Dr. Damyan Ivanov Memorial** - Dr. Damian Ivanov is the first Bulgarian balneologist and the first governor of the state mineral bath in Varshets. He graduated from medicine in Austria and applied all his scientific knowledge in medicine, balneology and his European multilateral culture to turn Varshets into a spa resort famous at European level. As a token of appreciation, his fellow citizens erected a monument in the city centre - at the beginning of the park area.



The stay at Varshets will be complemented by the specific gastronomy of the area, but not necessarily the Bulgarian one. Traditional Bulgarian cuisine is considered one of the healthiest in Europe, not only because of the ingredients used, but also because of the way they are prepared. Gastronomy is influenced by the Turkish and Greek ones, but that does not mean that it does not offer unique characteristics. Bulgarians rank first in terms of culinary preferences sheep meat and fresh vegetables. Famous for the rich salads that accompany every meal, Bulgarian cuisine is also noted for the diversity and quality of dairy products, wines and spirits such as wine, mastic (aniseed liqueur) and peppermint liqueur. Hot or cold soups and pastry products abound on Bulgarian tables.

Traditional products include: sour milk, shopska salad, moussaka, hotchpotch, pita, cabbage rolls, sweet bread, lamb, bean soup, halva, baklava, stewed fruit, etc. The Bulgarian dishes are very light, prepared with sunflower oil so that the ingredients maintain their natural qualities. Do not say no to pickles, which are exceptional. Yoghurt and hotchpotch occupy a prominent place. As a curiosity you need to know a lesser-known fact: the means of preparing yogurt was discovered right on the territory of Bulgaria. As you know yoghurt is a dairy product obtained by fermentation and the main microorganism participating in this process is *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and it is found only on the territory of Bulgaria. We hope we have aroused your interest in the culinary side too!

You end your cross-border stay in Varshets, returning home (the package may also include transportation to your locality), probably recalling the unique moments of your vacation and why not, dreaming of your next **NATBIOT** cross-border vacation.

**Enjoy the travel package  
NATBIOT 3 - MO-PL-O!**













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The “Natural heritage - natural/ bio resources’ services” Project is co-financed by the European Union through the European Fund for Regional Development within the Romania-Bulgaria Interregional Program V-A

Project Title: „Natural heritage - natural/ bio resources’ services”

Material Editor: Mișcarea Română pentru Calitate

Date published: October 2019

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