

A WALK THROUGH THE CITY OF POETRY

STRUGA

TOP 10

1 Bazaar

The Struga Bazaar is a compulsory place in town for everyone that visit it. It is in the utmost central part in Struga and it is considered to be a walking area, especially during summer months when it is full of people.

2 Kalishta

The beautiful Monastery St. Bogorodica is below the village Kalishta, on the very coast of Ohrid Lake. The icon of Bogorodica is to be found there and it is said that it has some miracle powers and it cures people.

3 Eel

The eel that lives in Ohrid Lake is in the critically endangered species with a protection status. This unusual type of fish has a very interesting reproduction process that takes longer path, even to the Sargasso Sea.

4 Radozda

The fishermen village is the last stop in Macedonia before one enters in the Albanian part of the Ohrid Lake and it is a great destination for a romantic lunch or dinner near water.

5 V. Kodzoman's House

The house of the artist Vangel Kodzoman is turned into a museum where one can see the pictures of the founders of the contemporary art in Macedonia.

6 Bridge of Poetry

On a glorious manifestation, each year in August, this bridge is the place where the official opening of the Struga Poetry Evenings takes place, one of the most eminent poetic events in the world.

7 Miladinov's House

Struga can feel proud of one of the greatest writers in Macedonia who come exactly from there. Their house is turned into a museum which is open for visitors.

8 Vevcani Carneval

One of the oldest carnivals with masks in the world is the real attraction which welcomes the Orthodox New Year and that attracts many tourists.

9 Struga Poetry Evenings

The poetry manifestation which attracts approximately 200 poets from all around the world every year and the prestigious award "Golden Wreath" is given.

10 River Crn Drim

The River divides the city in two parts. The quay is decorated and prepared for night walks or refreshing times in the coffee bars whose tables are set right next to the river.

There is
NO OTHER PLACE
like **STRUGA**

On just 171 km from the capital Skopje and 15 km from the Balkan Jerusalem, Ohrid, there is a city called Struga, the smooth cradle of poetry in the splendid valley of the Struga field, spreading on both sides of the River Crn Drim, which, as a golden thread embroiders and flows out of the waters of the Ohrid Lake.



NUMBERS and FACTS

Area:
507 km²

Population:
16.559

Elevation:
698 metres

Phone code:
+389 46

Closest airport:
St. Apostol Pavle, Ohrid, 9 km

Average annual temperature:
12 °C

Old name of Struga:
Enhalon

Web:
www.struga.gov.mk

Important historical dates:

3000 BC – registered as the first Neolith settlement, and the ancient name of the city is Enhalon.

334 BC – Philip II conquered Enhalon.

148 BC – Enhalon became part of the Roman Empire. One of the most important roads of the entire Empire that linked Tsargrad and Rome – Via Egnatia, passed through Enhalon.

VI century – the Slavic tribe Bereziti inhabited this region and founded what today is known as Struga.

1670 – the famous travel writer Evliya Celebi noted that Struga is one of the places where the Ottomans took most of the tribute in blood.

EVENTS' CALENDAR

JANUARY

Vevcani Carnival

AUGUST

Struga Poetry Evenings

JULY

DrimOn Festival

SEPTEMBER

Struga musical autumn



STRUGA

OHRID AIRPORT

KALISHTA

RADOZHDA

BORDER LINE

ALBANIA



BROTHERS MILADINOV MEMORIAL HOUSE

BAZAAR

BEZISTEN SHOPPING MALL



CRN DRIM
CRN DRIM RIVER QUAY

POETRY PARK

CULTURE CENTER STRUGA

PLIVALISHTE

POETRY BRIDGE




WOMENS' BEACH



OHRID LAKE


DRIM HOTEL

CENTRAL PARK



There are two legends about the name Struga, one of which says that Struga got its name due to the geographical position of the city – a places with winds (struze means blows winds). The other legend, though, says that once upon a time the Macedonian Slovene, Brsjaci and Mijaci in the Struga region worked with farming and sheep, and they took the sheep for cutting on the flow out of the Ohrid Lake. To cut the sheep in Macedonian is “strize”, meaning it is close to Struga. The old name, yet is Enhalon meaning “eel” in the Old Greek language.

Ever since the time of the Neolith, there has been an inhabited area where the road Via Egnatia passed, connecting the Western and Eastern Roman Empire, which is the reason why a big amount of fortune was earned there. Struga has always been represented as a guild city with numerous shops, which are not to be found in such a great number nowadays, yet the bazaar still remains to be the street whisperer who sings some nostalgic song about the life of Struga’s craftsmen and merchants.



Struga
is sung in the
popular folk song which
says that “There is no other
place like Struga”. This sentence
kept being transferred from one to
another and nowadays it holds a
status as unofficial slogan
of the city.

Nevertheless, Struga possesses this special, natural beauty experienced when strolling down the Ohrid Lake coast while the sun mirrors its crystal clear surface and the smell of grilled eel, belvica, Struga dish, Macedonian zaviok or shin with diverse salads invites you to dine in some of the restaurants and taverns on the banks of the River Crn Drim.

It is known that through the flow of the River Drim, the eels start their journey, the so called “wedding trip” to the Sargasso Sea where they spawn. On the way there, they pass through the Adriatic Sea, the River Drim forms two artificial lakes, Globocica and Shpilje.





What is Hugo for France and Gogol for Russia that is Miladinov brothers for Macedonia.



So, walking down the kaldrma in the bazaar or the town streets, you shall run into one name that echoes in your ears, "Miladinov Brothers". Dimitrija and Konstantin Miladinovi are the greatest cultural enlightenment figures, poets and collectors of folk tales and they were born in this city of art. They had left an outstanding educational and cultural sign on the overall Macedonian heritage and obliged this city for eternity to glorify their deeds and be proud of them. Due to that, on the street named after them, you will find their old, city house where they used to live and work. That is a kind of a museum that you really have to visit once you are there.

In
Macedonia,
there is no such person
that does not know the song
“T’ga za Jug” (Longing for the
south). This anthological song
has around 70 versifications
on 50 languages.

CAPITAL of WORLD POETRY

When you enter in their memorial house, you will read their song “T’ga za jug” (Longing for the south), the symbol of home warmth and love for the country. The author Konstantin Miladinov wrote this song while he was staying in the cold Moscow, far away from home, implying in it all the nostalgic feelings that he had felt and the hope to go back home, remembering the beauties of this city. By reciting this eminent and important song, on the Bridge of Poetry on the River Drim, each year in August starts the opening ceremony of the most famous poetic event in the world “Struga Poetry Evenings”, which has been continually held since 1961. Every year, the city is a host of approximately 200 poets from all over the world, and only one gets the special award “Golden Wreath” for best poetry work. Amongst the winners of Golden Wreath are distinguished names like Pablo Neruda, Miroslav Krleža, Margaret Atwood, Ko Un, Huste Horhe Pardon, Nancy Morehon...



Struga
is the second
largest city on the coast
of the Ohrid Lake, and after
Ohrid, it is the most visited
destination for lake tourism
in Macedonia.







The lines of “T’ga za jug” are rooted in the Macedonia identity, and the same name is also put to one of the Macedonian red wines. The name of the wine was given by Trajce Elenov 40 years ago and it was exactly on the occasion of the ten-year anniversary of Struga Poetry Evenings, when part of the guest poets visited the winery and asked for a high quality wine of Macedonia that could be purchased so that their friends in the world could try it. Trajce as a good enologist and manager of the winery at that time, inspired by Konstantin Miladinov’s poetry and due to the jubilee of the poetry festival, gave an order for printing brand cards with the name T’ga za jug stuck on the frontal side of the bottle whereas the text of the song was placed at the back. It was a special honour and privilege for all the poets and participants on the Struga Poetry Evenings.





First **MUSEUM** in **MACEDONIA**

Despite being the cradle of poetry, which is known in the entire world as a main location where in a few days time you may hear many poems in different languages, poems which have no need of translation since by the emotions they were wrought of are simply recognizable, Struga is famous for art as well. This is the home town of the famous artist Vangel Kodzoman, whose house is also protected and a kind of a museum. Actually, Struga can be called "a museum city" if we are to mention the fact that ever since 1928 the Russian doctor Nikola Antonovic Nezlubinski opened the first museum collection, establishing the foundations of the today's National Museum of Natural Science and the first museum and museology generally in Macedonia.

Impeccable in its concept and exhibited objects, most of which are collected, the taxidermies and the things exhibited by Nezlobinski himself; the collection, as time goes by, has not lost any of its authenticity and originality, on the contrary, the collection has become more valuable on behalf of the historical documented treasure for one past time, for a different Struga and a different eco-system which is, unfortunately, lost forever. Today, the Museum in Struga is a contemporary institution where despite the biological department, the archeological, ethnological, historical and art department are also in function with the gallery of Vangel Kodzoman.

If you happen to visit Struga in the summer time, you may catch some manifestations, besides the Struga Poetry Evenings, the parade of folk clothes is held here as well and you ought to see the Macedonian folk treasure of clothes, customs, songs and folk dances, and, since recently there has been a five-day, pop and cultural festival organized outdoors, "DrimOn", whose motto is to include young people in diverse creative workshops and social and cultural debates, as well as artistic, to connect and educate them through fun, a place where they can independently express their opinions.



RELIGIOUS PEACE

The villages Radozda and Kalishta are ideal for all those who are looking for a rural tourism, a bit of a scout tourism, a mixture with nature, yet treasuring spirituality. The monastery Kalishta is in the same-called village as well as other 15 cave churches, among which the most famous is St. Bogorodica, where there are eremitic monks' cells and one of the rarest icons of the Holy Mother and Jesus in Europe (there are only 450) painted in black colour. This icon is considered to be healing. During the Second World War, the occupation army tied the icon in iron chains and threw it couple of times in the lake in order to sink it and destroy it, yet the icon constantly released from the chains and came back to the coast in front of the monastery. The sisterhood there works hard creating incense after the original recipe from Mount Athos, sunk by the tears of the numerous god-loving prayers as well as some extract from another plant.





In a rock over the Lake, in the village Radozda, there is an old cave church "St. Archangel Michael" dating from the 11th century, considered to be the oldest cave church. This church has preserved 12 frescoes from the 12th century, one being "The Miracle of Hona" – a scene enlisted in the oldest representations of the wall artistry in the entire Christian art. The art in this cave church is one of the oldest remaining traces of those masters of art from the Ohrid Fine Art School of the 14th century. The admiration of the place of the church, hidden in the arms of the rock shall increase the beating of your pulse and you can't help but visiting it. Once you are there... the breaths would be the only thing breaking the silence, sinking into the glorious and sacred beauty.



Mustafa
Çelebi Mosque is
located near the city center
of Struga. It is a monument of
culture built in the 16th century
and regarded as a major
religious temple of the
Muslims in
Struga.

REPUBLIC within REPUBLIC

Near Struga, 800 metres above the sea level, there is a village called Vevcani, the only one in Macedonia that belongs under a separate municipality Vevcani, and the people in it have even proclaimed themselves as a micronation, i.e., an Independent Republic of Vevcani. It is unique even after many other things. There is a special Vevcani passport, which can only be bought there, and there is also a coat of arms, a flag and a special currency, the licnik, which can be purchased as a souvenir. All these curiosities make Vevcani interesting and attractive for numerous tourists that want to see something totally different or to hear the stories by Vevcani people, but all that jazz remains as a privilege that can be found only there, as part of the Vevcani adventures and “laws” they have created on their own.

The Vevcani Springs are one of the most beautiful, which, as a bridal veil, spread in front of your eyes while the crystal clear water warbles, a place where you can wander and let go of everything and find yourself again at the end. In case you wine and dine in some of the local restaurants and try the delicious cheese pie, you will never wish to leave this place again.

The locality Vevcani Springs is a protected area and proclaimed to be a nature's monument in 2012. The Springs are enlightened and practical for long walks in daylight and at night.





The **OLDEST** CARNIVAL

A unique attraction that happens every year on January, 13th-14th is the holiday Vasilica, and Vevcani is the very place where the famous Vevcani Carnival takes place. The carnival, which is under the auspice is the Ministry of Culture, is visited by people that come from different places and they fulfill the village and the area just to become part of that festival and comic atmosphere when the whole village mocks the home and foreign political and social happenings through sarcastic masks and scenes. According to some archeological findings, this carnival is around 2200 years old and it is a form of a unique embedding of pagan and Christian customs. Traditionally, the participants avoid modern elements and masks, the reason why this carnival is different from any other carnival in the world. In this way, the Orthodox New Year is celebrated, and the old one is sent away.

According to its specific characteristics, this carnival is different from any other in the world. It ends on January 14th, by dancing Vasilica folk dances and burning the masks in the centre of Vevcani.





It is inevitable as well, when in Vevcani, to visit the house of the world-known and distinguished scientist Mihajlo Pupin, who was born here and his house is turned into a mini-museum in which the first floor serves as a tavern with Vevcani specialties. How important this person was can be stated by the fact that a crater on the Moon is named after him.

Struga and the other villages in its area are really special in their own way. It takes very little to get into their essence and discover their irresistible charm. They are a true inspiration for those that want to see what is below the surface and feed on that beauty.





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