

# Application for the IRU City Trophy



# SKOPJE

A CITY TO BE DISCOVERED !

A warm welcome to all who come to Skopje  
and we invite you to join us in an  
exciting adventure, which we will call:  
**SKOPJE, A CITY TO BE DISCOVERED !**





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A warm welcome to all who come to Skopje and we invite you to join us in an exciting adventure, which we will call:

## SKOPJE A CITY TO BE DISCOVERED !

*Macedonia is safe. The water is delicious. The people are endearingly hospitable. And the country is a unique and fascinating mix of adventure, history, culture, and religion. Who wouldn't want to visit the world's oldest civilization and one of the youngest countries?" - Melanie Alexander .*



By visiting Skopje you are on:

- journey through the history, civilization and place to taste the multicultural style of living,
- the border where the oriental culture is touching the European, and
- the place where time creates the spirit of tolerance, understanding and culture of living.
- the renaissance in public transport with huge renewal of the bus fleet: 200 double-deckers, 17 tourist double-deckers; sightseeing, 80 single buses and 16 minibuses.

Skopje is a modern city with population of almost one million and proudly presents Macedonia's major political, economical, educational and cultural center. It continues to be a focus for new residents, economic development, construction and refurbishment. Skopje is steadily becoming a vital regional route for international flight operators. Optimism regarding Skopje's future prospects is proving positive and grand, as it may be evidenced by the surge from major foreign investors. The city's growth can only add up to its long and illustrious history of culture and commerce. Skopje is a vibrant center that is dedicated to become a sustainability capital in the Western Balkans.

The 200 double-decker city buses are tourist attraction because there are old fashion model as they were used in early 60s. The public transport is most popular transport mode and in 2012 about 50.000.000 passengers used it. Supported by the City of Skopje subsidies free traveling for persons over 62/64 age and for children up to 6 also. The inner City is zone 1 with ticket price 35 denars in the JSP buses and 25 denars in the private buses. You can buy the one way ticket, weekly or monthly pass in the JSP ticket outlets or in the buses. More info can be found on [www.jsp.com.mk](http://www.jsp.com.mk).

Centrally located coach parking facilities and drop off/pick up points directly outside the main tourist attractions are at the heart of a well-designed coach parking scheme and provide an excellent basis for a leisurely exploration of the city.

In order to make Skopje's city centre more attractive, and due to the increasing importance of coach tourism, the supply of coach parking and coach stops is being steadily expanded to meet the needs of the coach tourism industry. Coach parking is available in central locations and will continue to be in future, guaranteeing visitors comfortable access to and from their coaches.

Skopje is an attractive, multi-faceted travel destination that always strives to provide good service and high quality while supporting innovation in both tourism and coach tourism.





## BACKGROUND

In its 2,500 years of existence, Macedonia's welcoming capital city has had many different embodiments. All of them – from Roman to Byzantine, from Ottoman to Yugoslav – have left permanent traces on the city as is evidenced by Skopje's varied architecture and its mix of cultures. Yet in addition to its strong historical associations, Skopje is a forward-looking city offering an abundance of modern amenities and attractions. Here one can find sleek modern hotels above the cobblestoned Ottoman streets, outstanding neoclassical homes right around the corner from grand old Yugoslav-era buildings, red-bricked Byzantine churches and rounded Turkish mosques, chic cafés, shopping malls and brightly-colored new offices.

The concentrated complexity of Skopje today attracts visitors offering a great variety of things to see and do, constantly reminding the public of the city's storied past. Chief among sights to see are the Stone Bridge crossing the River Vardar, the Ottoman-era Old Bazaar (Stara Charshija), and the Kale Fortress walls. In the sloping narrow streets of Stara Charshija one feels the spirit of the old city with its small shops, mosques with their ceramic tiled interiors, the outdoor bazaar and hamam that continues to exist from Turkish times. A short climb up to the Kale Fortress is well rewarded; from this hilltop where Skopje's masters ruled for centuries one enjoys a commanding view of the city and its surroundings.

The world's greatest cities boast at least one secluded natural escape. Skopje has two – a long, tree-lined park along the river and the forested hills of Mount Vodno which overlooks the city from the southwest and offers excellent hiking and wilderness serenity. It is within walking distance of downtown Skopje. The summit of Mt. Vodno is also crowned with the enormous Millennium Cross that presides over the city. One gets even more magnificent views of Macedonia's capital from this point.

Macedonia's capital suggests something to suit all modern tastes and appetites. It features well-established hotels, restaurants and cinemas, as well as shopping malls with all the latest fashion, and usually at lower prices than in Western countries. The city is a major regional center for concerts, theatre performances, dance and sporting events, all of which frequently feature well-known celebrities from abroad as well as the best in the neighboring countries.





Skopje owns a public transport network and taxis, as well as a plethora of modern internet cafés if one wants to keep in touch with the folks back home. Hotels operating to the highest standards are centrally located, the water is eminently drinkable and the food hearty and nourishing with all international tastes represented - in addition to the excellent local cuisine, of course! Also, it is one of the safest cities in Europe.

A warm welcome and good hospitality are vital ingredients in any well- performing destination. Skopje's ambition is to give its visitors a complete catalogue of services from a-z. All participants play an important role, from bus drivers and shop assistants to hotel receptionists, guides and waitress. Good hospitality and good internal cooperation strengthens the attractiveness of the destination.

# STATISTICS

Skopje with its surrounding region is one of the most popular areas to explore, especially during summer. However, local business and companies are firmly dedicated to creating and packaging attractive travel experiences all year around. There are many reasons to visit Skopje as many as there are for your stay, and just as many to make you want to come back!

Group travel, with a special focus on coach tourism, plays an important role in the development of Skopje as a tourist destination. Local businesses are constantly striving to offer well-packaged experiences for group travel all year around- from art exhibitions, wine festivals, music and cultural festivals and events.

The Skopje's share in the total number of foreign tourist who attended our country in the past four years, amounts to an average of 43%, while the share of foreign sleeper's is smaller and amounts to an average of 37%.

Tourist's characteristics: Small and declining contribution to the overall economy (1.03% of GDP in 2010), Regional comparison: a medium-term goal of 2%, and widening the tourist offer. The country records a positive net balance in travel services, on the balance of payments (export of 197.3 mil. US\$ in 2010, and import of 92 mil. US\$), the industry is dominated by small companies (99.7%) .

In first half of 2011, number of foreign tourist arrivals increased by 21.4 per cent (overall increase of 6.6%)

Characteristics of the Tourists : About 60% of tourists stay in hotels (foreign tourists dominate), Domestic tourists more likely to visit spa resorts, mountain and lake areas, whereas foreign tourists dominate in visits to Skopje and non touristic areas. The main categories in tourism turnover in 2009 were: Food (44%), Lodgings (20%), Beverages (5.9%), Beer (5.8%).



## POLICIES, MEASURES, SPECIFIC PROJECTS

In the last few years City of Skopje adopted several policies like Sustainable Urban Transport Plan, Sustainable Energy Efficiency Action Plan, Sustainable Development Plan, where a different measures are defined. The coaching tourism, park and ride , free emissions vehicles, sustainable access to cultural- historical and other items of interest of tourists, defining tourists bus lines, timetables, designating tourists maps and their promotion, departure points, on-the-way places of interest and route signalization are the measures which are ongoing and implement in a near future.

A coherent strategy for integrating high-quality group tourism with other interests was adopted in 2012 by the Government of Macedonia. Future developments will be achieved by introducing an offer based upon the comparative advantages of Macedonia, mostly referring to eco-tourism, coaching tourism, cultural, lake, winter, sports, hunting, congress, spa, monastery, archaeological, rural, mountain and winery tourism. In this regard, the following projects will be realized:

- Reducing Value Added Tax (VAT) from 18% to 5% on tourism for tourist services and accommodation (overnight); bed and breakfast; full board and lodging ;
- Creating an integrated tourist information system with web-portal;
- Investments for improving tourism infrastructure and stimulating transit tourism;
- Continue to subsidize the foreign organized tourism turnover with a subvention of 20–70 Euros per tourist.





## SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Skopje can offer both fantastic experience for travelers and excellent facilities for coaches and drivers.

## ACCESIBILITY

Since the 1990s, Skopje's standing as a major Southeast European transportation hub has increased. The city is situated at an intersection of two main European transport corridors – Corridor VIII (east-west) and Corridor X (north-south).

This significance of the city is being enhanced by the construction of new highways on the two transversals, a new Skopje ring road, and the Skopje Alexander the Great Airport.

The E75 highway connecting Vardø in Norway and Crete in Greece runs just east of Skopje, thus linking most of Europe with the Macedonian capital. The E65 highway runs through the northern and western edges of the city and is part of the 26.5 km long Skopje Northern Bypass. Skopje can be accessed by Railway and it is a hub of north- south SEE line. It joined Cargo 10, a joint venture with other railways in the Balkan region. The Skopje Central Railway Station is approximately 2 kilometers east of the city centre. It is part of the "Transportation Center" complex.

The main Skopje bus station is 2 kilometers east of the city center and is located in the Transportation Center. City buses run through the entire city, connecting different neighborhoods as well as the smaller surrounding towns. The Transportation Center station is also the hub for intercity and international bus routes. A number of bus lines connect Macedonia with all neighboring countries and other European cities. Buses are frequent, and offer relatively inexpensive fares and professional service.





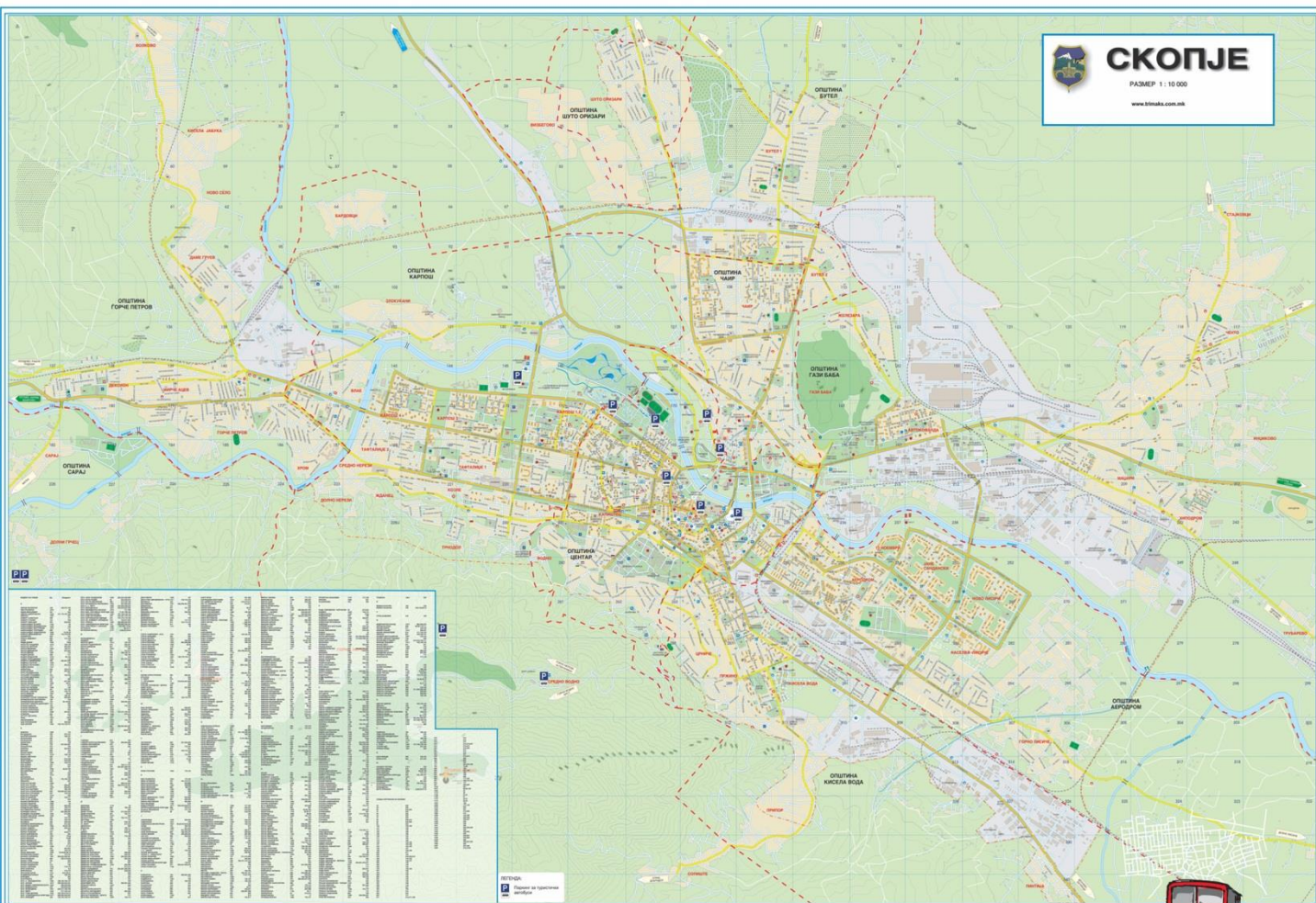
# TURISTIC COACH PARKING

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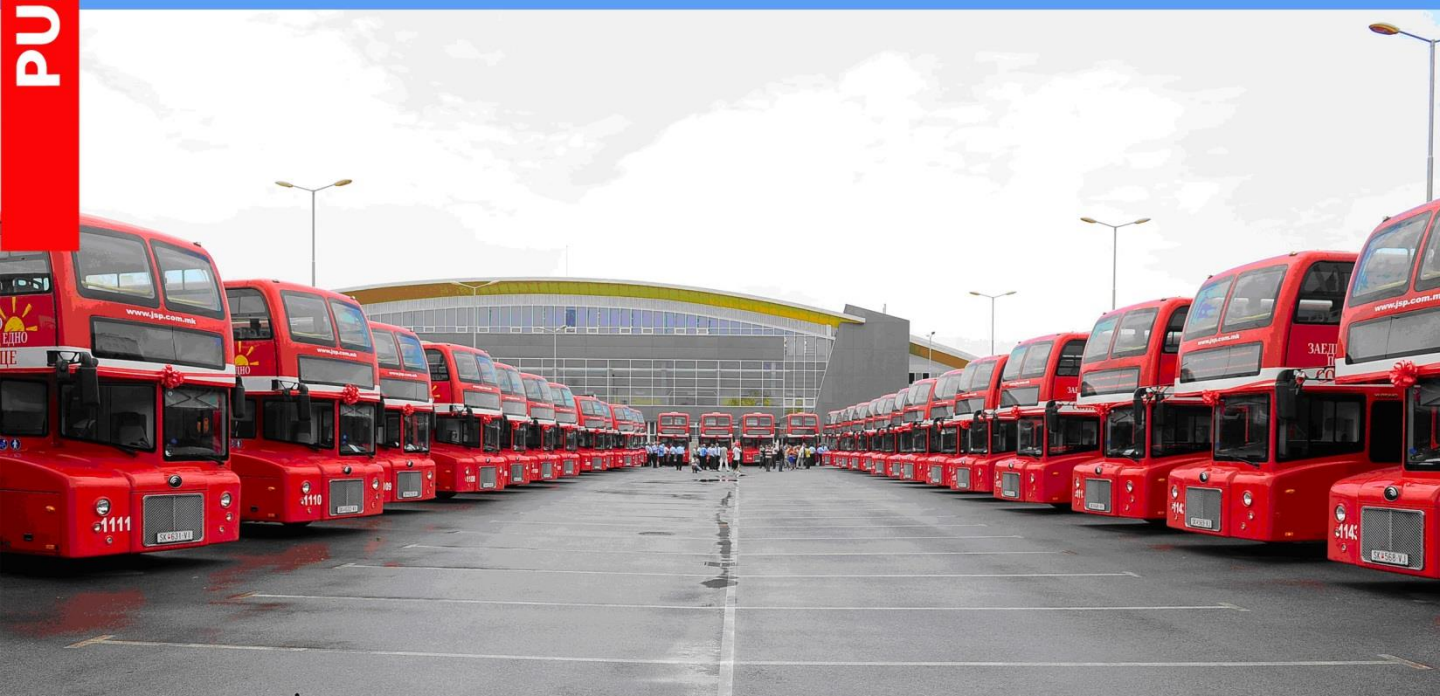


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In 2011, the public transport lives its renaissance, the old city buses were replaced with 84 new buses, built in Ukraine. Later that year, the 220 double-decker city buses for local transport in Skopje were bought. It is tourist attraction because there are old fashion model as they were used in early 60s. The public transport is most popular transport mode and in 2012 with about 50.000.000 passengers. Supported by City of Skopje there is free traveling with public transport for persons over 62/64 age and for children up to 6 also. The inner City is zone 1 with ticket price 35 denars in the JSP buses and 25 denars in the private buses. You can buy the one way ticket, weekly or monthly pass in the JSP ticket outlets or in the buses. More info can be found on [www.jsp.com.mk](http://www.jsp.com.mk).





## COACH DRIVER HELPLINE

We are going to implement Transpark application in a near future. It will set up a dedicated helpline for coach drivers to get advice on parking and driver facilities.





The City of Skopje Tourist Info centre offers various types of services for arrangers of group travel. Many of the services are free of charge. Many tourists web pages offers practical information about Skopje for tour operators and travel agents promoting visits to Skopje. Very popular sites are:

<http://travel2macedonia.com.mk>; <http://hotels-in-macedonia.com/>;  
<http://www.visitmacedonia.mk/>, <http://www.exploringmacedonia.com/>,  
<http://www.skopjehotels.mk/skopje-city-tours>.

Here you can find contact details and practical information about suitable hotels and restaurants for groups, attractions, events, arranged tourist's trips and tours, excursions, etc. These web sites are constantly improved in order to meet the needs and requirements of the tour operators

For those who want to hire an official tourist guide, there are currently 80 licensed Skopje guides working in 10 different languages. (Association of tourist guide, Address: Dame Gruev, Block. 3, Phone: + 389 2 3118 498 Phone/Fax: + 389 2 3230 803).



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# SKOPJE CITY TOUR

A City tour in the centre is organized by City of Skopje with official tourist guide. It is a tourist sightseeing on a double Decker bus. It is organized twice a day, at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. The ticket is 100 denars (1,50 euro). The route takes about 50 minutes, starting from the Gate Macedonia.





## SKOPJE, promoting the environment



Skopje has a vision – that by 2020 it will be a viable, energy-neutral and attractive town existing in harmony with its inhabitant and in balance with nature.

Tourism is a field in which it is important that Skopje continues to develop as a sustainable destination. This is why Skopje has embarked on projects to make it easier for visitors to make environmentally friendly decisions during their stay. By promoting activities and campaigns that take the environment into consideration, and also by focusing on sustainable, transportation solutions, we hope to be able to inspire visitors to make environmentally acceptable choices. The offers we give into possibility to use rent a bike system, pedestrian zones, and recreation zones on the banks of river Vardar, which make attractive and environmentally friendly city.





## RENT A BIKE

The city may be discovered using system for rent a bike. It is located on city square and other 5 bike points. It is about 10 denars (0,16 euro) per hour.



## PEDESTRIAN ZONES

The City centre is a pedestrian zone where the City square, Macedonia Street, and many tourist's attractions and cultural sites are located.



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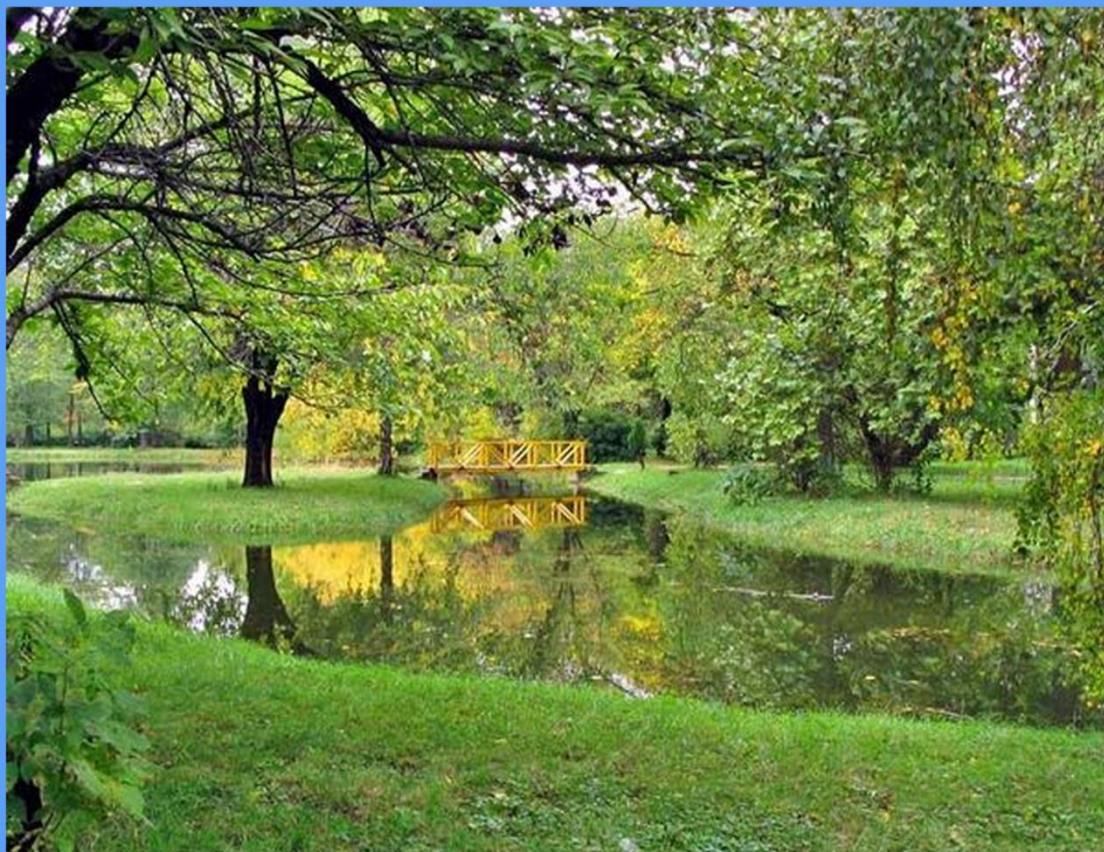




## RECREATION ZONE AND CITY PARK

On a right bank of the River Vardar is 7km long recreation zone for biking, rolling, running, which pass through city centre.

City Park laid out at the end of the 19th century, to the north and northwest of the city centre is a large and extremely popular place during the warmer months of the year, especially in the spring and autumn. Good for walking or picnicing, the northern edge of the park runs alongside the Vardar, which has a long path popular with the city's cyclists and rollerbladers. There's a large sports hall and tennis courts, and a small stage close to the zoo putting on a varied programme of performances during the summer weekends.





## CABLE CAR

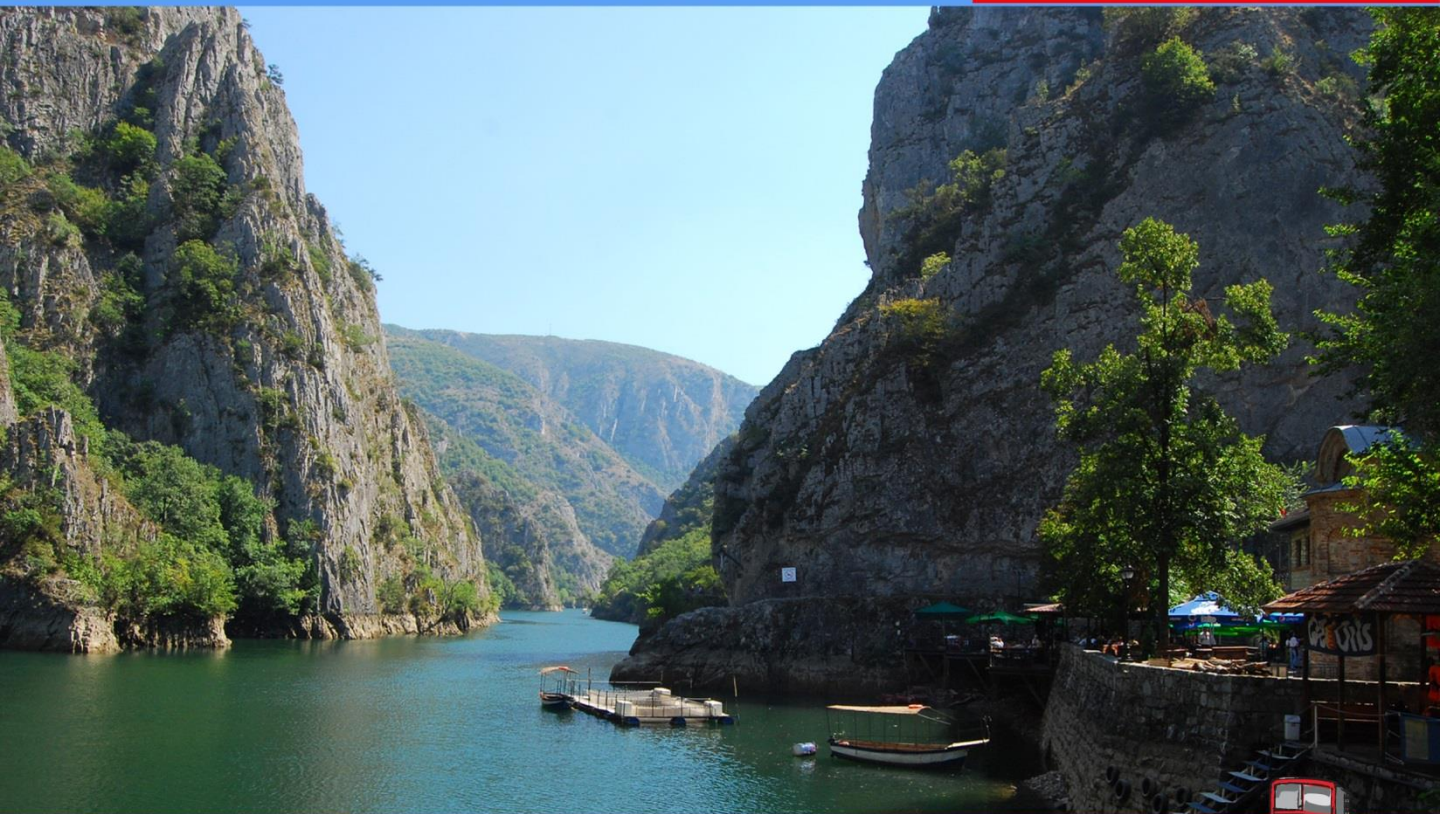


The millennium cross on the top of Vodno Mountain can be visited by a cable car. The cable car is working from 9 a.m. in the morning until 8. p.m. in the evening. The ticket costs 100 denars ( 1,5 euro).



**Matka Canyon**, (twenty minutes outside of Skopje). Features a lake and a hydrodam. Climbers enjoy a variety of tours of varying difficulty there.

## PROTECTED AREAS



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### **Kadina Reka Hunting Site,**

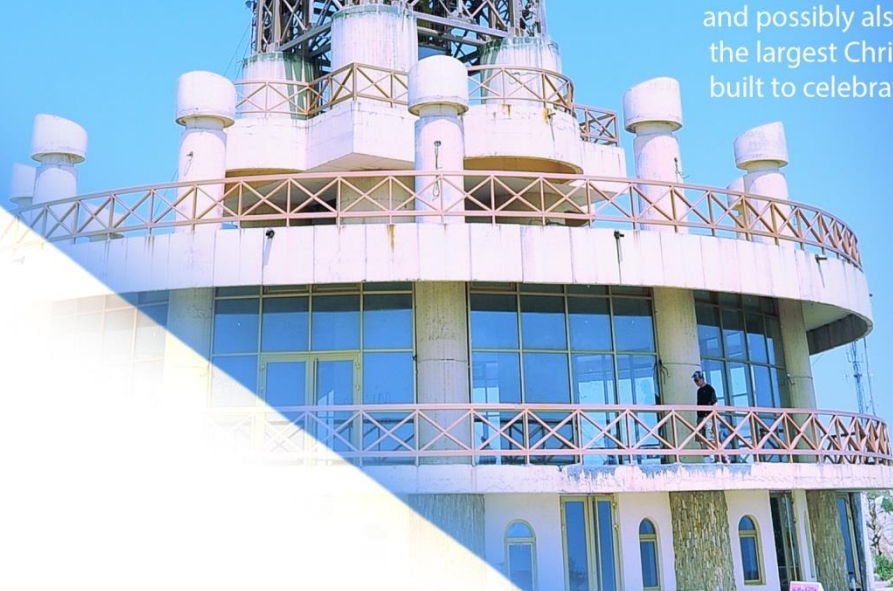
*(25 km from Skopje, On the mountain massif of Mountain Karadjica, part of Mountain Jakupica, Dautica and Aliagica). 21.100 Hectare area.*

The relief of the mountain massifs in the hunting area is characterized with heterogeneousness and significant differences in altitude of 2240 m, which enables zonal distribution of the game.

### **Vodno Mountain,**

*(the largest mountain to the south of Skopje).*

Climbing this mountain will give the best views of the city and the valley which Skopje is in. You will also be able to see close up and possibly also climb the Millenium Cross, the largest Christian cross in the world, built to celebrate 2000 years of Christianity.





## INVESTMENTS IN NEW TRAFFIC SYSTEM AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

As part of the development work carried out by Skopje towards a more sustainable town a larger public transport network, extensive investments have been made in the new bus vehicles, implementing Adaptive traffic management system, prioritizing the public bus lines, automatic bus vehicle location system, lines scheduling, etc. Although these investments are primarily aimed at facilitating public transport in general, they will also, to a substantial degree, have a positive effect on coach tourism.

## MARKETING AND PROMOTION

In close co-operations with the local tourism industry and other partners, City of Skopje take active part in all the major travel fairs and workshops and support tour operators and agents promoting Skopje. Offline and on line campaign are run in selected markets.

## SKOPJE “ Tourism Fair” - Skopje Travel market 2013

From 25.04 to 27.04.2013 Skopje Travel market 2013 was organized on ERA CITY Skopje fair, presenting big tourism offer and promotion of domestic and international tourism market. Within the Fair 25.04.2013 in Hall 1 the State Championship of Barman from R. Macedonia was organised in cooperation and organization with the Association of the Republic of bartenders.

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## SMART MOVE CAMPAIGN

The Mayor of Skopje, Koce Trajanovski, has launched an innovative promotion of the Smart Move campaign by using public space to effectively make known, through visually attractive advertising screens, all the advantages of bus and coach transport, namely: safety, environmental and user friendliness, affordability and efficiency. This promotional initiative was implemented jointly with Smart Move's Macedonian partner AMERIT.



## TOURISTS INDUSTRY AND SUBSIDIZES

Tourists incentives and subsidizes are defined by reduction of Value Added Tax (VAT) from 18% to 5% on tourism for tourist services and accommodation (overnight); bed and breakfast; full board and lodging, and with subsidize the foreign organized tourism turnover with a subvention of 20–70 Euros per tourist.

## BUS REAL TIME INFORMATION DISPLAYS

System for real time information on bus stops in Skopje is installed during 2011. It covers 3 long public bus lines. The system is supported by the EU 7<sup>th</sup> framework program as attractive sustainable traffic measure.



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Valorization and popularization of the Skopje cultural heritage is presented in signalitic and tourists signs. Signalitic sends text and picture messages on beautifully designed billboards set in places where they would be available to the citizens of Skopje and visitors.



The tourist's signs are placed on pedestrian zone and present the information about direction to sites.

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# OUR VISION



Skopje is a developed cultural, historical, conference, and sporting-recreational touristic center, inhabited by people of high ecological awareness.

Our strategic goals are:

1. Increasing of the touristic offer by essential improvement of the tourist attractions, events and activities in Skopje
2. Introducing a more intensive touristic promotion and marketing of the City of Skopje
3. Improvement of the touristic infrastructure in the City of Skopje
4. Strengthening of the touristic branch's human resources
5. Larger diversity and more quality touristic services

With improving, Skopje will be more convenient, more comfortable and safer for traveling. In Skopje we are well aware that coach tourism plays an important part in our success as a travel destination. This awareness encourages sensitivity to the needs of the business for good infrastructure and accessibility. We also want to continue acting as a sounding body in product development and innovation within the coach tourism industry; to an even greater extent than we do today; so we can strengthen our role as a visitor destination and contribute to the success of businesses that arrange visits to our city.



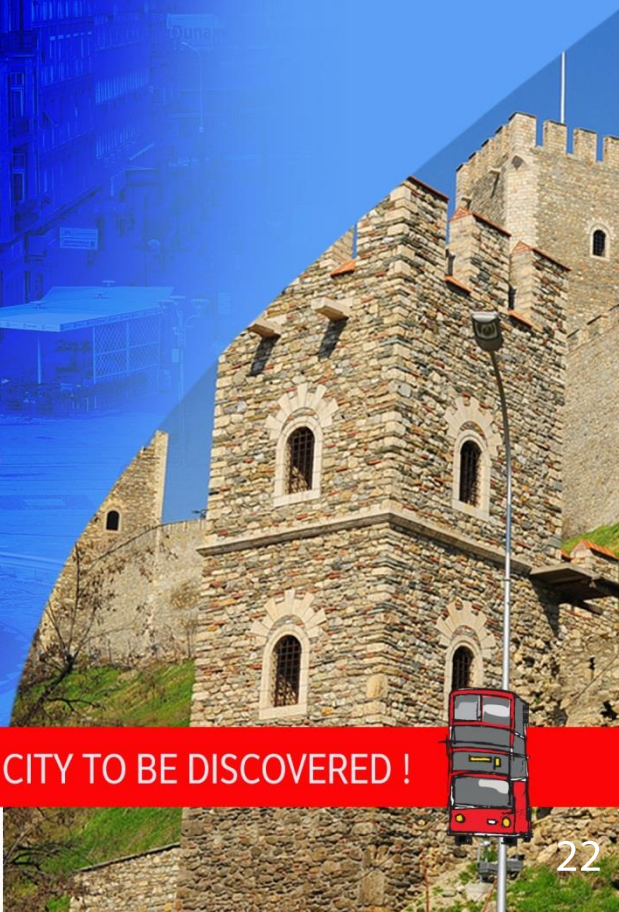


# WHAT TO SEE



**Warrior on a Horse.** Perhaps the main symbol of Skopje is the Warrior on a Horse (Macedonian: Воин на коњ) statue and fountain in the centre of Macedonia Square. It is typically thought to depict Alexander the Great, though it is not officially named for him.

**Kale Fortress.** The Kale Fortress stands on the highest hill in the Skopje valley and offers great views over the city. The oldest section of the fortress is within the present day fortifications.



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# WHAT TO SEE

**Stone Bridge.** The Stone Bridge was built in the 6th century by the Byzantine emperor Justinian. Since then it has been the symbol of the city and every ruler tried to leave a mark on it, even Skopje's last major who has been restoring it for 10 years now.



**Porta Macedonia.** Porta Macedonia (Macedonian: Порта Македонија), Gate Macedonia is a triumphal arch located on Pella Square.



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# WHAT TO SEE

**Parliament Building**, (*Parliament Building*). Built in 1933 by Viktor Hudak in modernistic style.

**Feudal Tower**, It is not known when was it built or what its purpose was. It probably served as a defence tower on a property of a Turkish aristocrat.

**Double Hamam**. The Double Hamam was built in the middle of the 15th century by Isa beg. It was used as both male and female bath, but unlike Daut Pasha Hamam where both parts go parallel to each other, here the heating room is in the middle and the entrances are on the opposite sides.

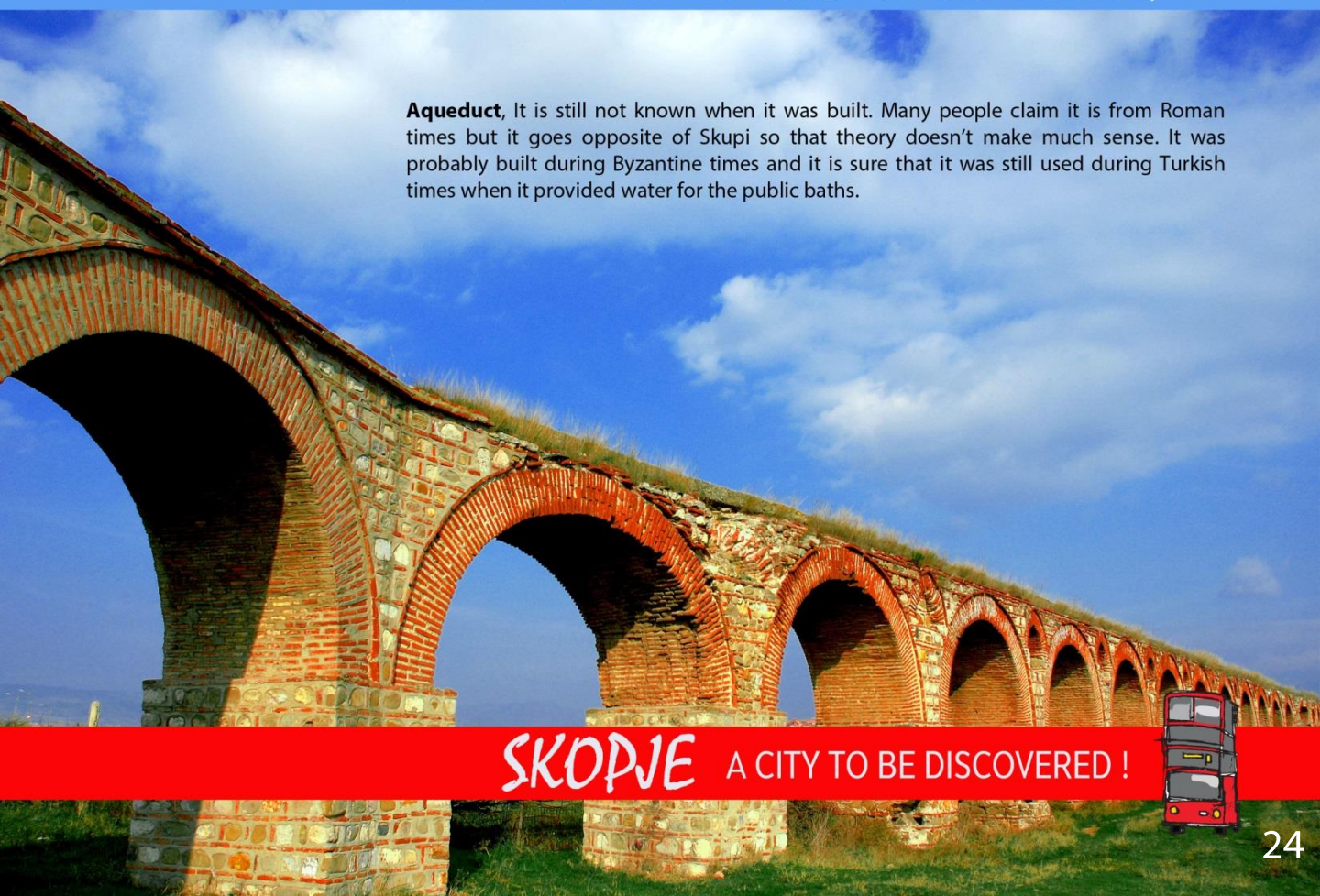
**Bedesten**. The most precious goods, like silk, spices, jewelry and perfumes, were sold in the bedesten, an object within the old bazaar, with gates which were closed in the evenings so the goods would be protected. Evlija Celebija who visited Skopje during the 17th century wrote that the only bigger and more beautiful bedesten from the one in Skopje was the one in Damascus

**Clock Tower**. Every bazaar in Macedonia has a clock tower, as muslims had to close their stores five times a day to attend prayer. Working hours were introduced in the old bazaar, and nobody had a chance to work and earn more than the other, so the clock towers were built. Skopje's clock tower is the first one ever to be built in the Ottoman Empire, which show us the importance of Skopje as a trading center. It was built during 1566-72.

**Bey's Tower**. A 14m high residential tower from the 17th century, this is the oldest building in Centar Municipality (central Skopje). Built for defense, with 1.5m thick walls, a high door and small windows on the lower floors, the tower would protect the family living here against all attackers. In the tower are the Mother Teresa memorial and the National Museum shop.

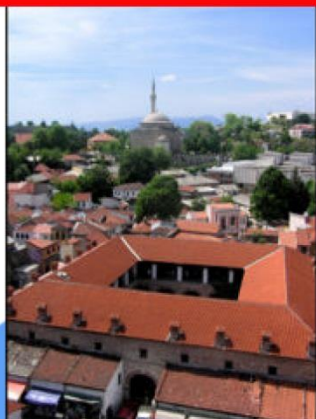
**Daut Pasha Hamam**. Daut Pasha was the grand vesir of East Rumelia in the second half of the 15th century. He was based in Skopje and the legend goes that he built the hamam (turkish bath) for the needs of his harem. Before he left, he donated the hamam to the city.

**Aqueduct**, It is still not known when it was built. Many people claim it is from Roman times but it goes opposite of Skupi so that theory doesn't make much sense. It was probably built during Byzantine times and it is sure that it was still used during Turkish times when it provided water for the public baths.





# WHAT TO SEE



Suli An & Mustafa Pasha Mosque in the old bazaar

**Kapan Han.** One of the three remaining Ottoman caravanserais still standing in the old bazaar.

**Suli Han.** An Ottoman caravanserai built in the first half of the 15th century by Ishak beg.

**Kurshumli Han.** The "Lead Inn" is the largest and the most beautiful of the three remaining Ottoman caravanserais. It was built in 1550 by Mula Musledin Hodza, son of Abdul Gani scientist on the court of Sultan Selikm II.

## Museums



Archeological Museum of Macedonia

**Museum of Archaeology.** The Museum of Archaeology began construction in 2009 and is still undergoing construction. Although the building will primarily serve as a museum, it will also house the Constitutional Court and the National Archive of the Republic of Macedonia.

**Old Railway Station – Skopje City Museum.** The Old Railway Station stands half ruined as a monument to the earthquake of 1963. It was built in 1938 by Velimir Gavrilovik in a modern style with Byzantine decoration.

**Museum of Contemporary Art.** Has a collection of 4,800 artworks, out of which 1,760 are gifts from artists from 61 countries, including Picasso, Aleshinski, Leze, Sulaz, Lui Can, Hartung, Gaitis, Buri, Millares, Kemeni, Kalder, Vasarely, and others. All these artists donated their works to the city after the earthquake in 1963 for the new art museum. The building itself is a gift from Poland.





# WHAT TO SEE



**Museum of the Macedonian Struggle.** is a national museum of the Republic of Macedonia located in the capital city of Skopje. The exhibit covers the fight for Macedonian statehood from the days of the Hajduks against the Turkish occupation during the Ottoman Empire until the declaration of independence from Yugoslavia on 8th September 1991.

**Natural Science Museum, (within the zoo).** made by Stanko Karaman in the 1920s. Here you can see the petrographic-mineralogy exhibition, botanical exhibition, palaeontology exhibition, entomological exhibition, and vertebrates' exhibition, exhibition of indigenous fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and animals. The museum is one of the richest in the Balkans with palaeontology materials of fauna from the Pickering region.

**Macedonian National Museum & Icon Gallery.** Divided in three departments: Archeological, Historical, and Ethnological (the same ticket covers them all). It is highly advise to visit the eyhnological section, since it is a very good one. It has about 70 original national costumes from different parts of Macedonia, all decorated with highly stylised patterns. Look for the wedding dress from Mariovo, it is 40 kg heavy, and the wig that the bride had to wear for a month after the wedding as a symbol of her virginity. Also different customs are explained, and there is also a good presentation of traditional architecture through models and photographs. The archaeological section has a rich collection of objects from the neolithic times 5000 years B.C. up to the 7th century. The gallery of icons is also here, it has icons from the 10th to the 19th century, and even some of them are the best ones from Macedonia (including the Bogorodica Pelagonitisa), but the Ohrid collection is still much nicer and more valuable.

## **Memorial House of Mother Teresa**

The desire to pay respect to one of the most famous persons born in Skopje and Nobel prize winner from Macedonia led to opening of the memorial house dedicated to Mather Teresa. Mother Teresa was born and lived in Skopje until she was 18. The House is located in pedestrian zone in the city centre.





# WHAT TO SEE

## Holocaust Memorial Museum

The museum is dedicated to the Macedonian Jewish who lost their life in the Holocaust. It is located in the heart what was once the city Jewish quarter, in the centre of Skopje.



## Churches

**St. Bogorodica.** This church was built in 1835 and was the cathedral church in Skopje.

**St. Saviour Church,** The church is tiny and it has a pleasant courtyard. It was built in the beginning of 19th century on the site of a church destroyed in the 1689 fire (as you enter, turn right to see remains of the frescoes and the level of the earlier church). The church is famous for its interior and wood carving. The iconscreen is work of Petre Filipovski Garkata and Marko and Makarie Frckovski, the best wood artists in the 19th century in Macedonia.

**The Church of St. Panteleimon** in Gorno Nerezi is dedicated to St. Panteleimon, the patron saint of physicians. It is a small 12th century Byzantine church located in a monastery complex.

**St. Andrey's church** is located in the Matka canyon along the west slope of the Vodno Mountain. The medieval church was constructed in the 14th century.

**St. Dimitrija Church** was built in the 18th century and relegated in 1886-95. It is certain that a church had existed on the present grounds from the 13th century. According to an old myth, some Ottoman pasha disrupted the church and converted it into his harem. This was Macedonian orthodox cathedral church before the construction of the present-day cathedral church of St. Kliment Ohridski.

**St. Kliment Ohridski Church** - cathedral church -The construction of the Macedonian Orthodox cathedral church, designed by Slavko Brezovski, began in 1972 and was consecrated on 12 August 1990, on the 1,150th anniversary of the birth of the church patron, St. Clement of Ohrid.





# WHAT TO SEE

## Mosques

**Mustafa Pasha Mosque.** Stands on a plateau above the old bazaar and is one of the most beautiful Islamic buildings in Macedonia. It was built in 1492 by Mustafa Pasha, vesir on the court of Sultan Selim I.

**Sultan Murat Mosque.** The biggest mosque in the Balkans. It was built with money donated by the Sultan himself and when ever adjustments or repairs were needed it was his responsibility (Sultan Suleiman the Great donated money for the repairs after the fire of 1537, and Sultan Ahmet III for the repairs after the fire of 1689). It was built in 1436.

**Ishak beg Mosque, (on the end of Bit Pazar).** built in 1438 by Ishak beg, a commander in the Turkish army.

**Isa beg Mosque.** Built in 1475 by Isa beg. It is the only seljuk mosque in Europe. The difference of this mosque is that it has two main domes (two joined rooms).

**Jahja Pasha Mosque, (in the beginning of Čair quarter close to the Bit Pazar).** Built in 1504 by Jahja Pasha, a commander in the Turkish army and son in law of Sultan Bajazit II and vesir on his court.

## Events

**Skopje Summer Festival.** The epithets such as the most abundant, the most various, the longest and, according to many authorized marks, one of the most qualitative cultural manifestation of international character which is held in Macedonia, characterize Skopje Summer. This manifestation has even received an acknowledgement of its reputation outside the Macedonian borders which is verified by the membership of the International Festivals & Events Association - IFEA.

**Offest,** This festival takes place on several locations in Skopje, such as the Universal Hall, Skopje Square, the Youth Cultural Center, and many attractive night clubs in the city. June.

**Skopje Jazz Festival,** For one week every October, Skopje hosts eminent jazz musicians from all over the world. The Skopje Jazz Festival is considered to be one of the best of its kind in Europe. October.

**May Opera Evenings.** The May Opera Evenings have been one of the most visited events in Skopje. Over the years, the stage of the Macedonian Ballet and Opera Theatre has hosted a number of ballet performances, operas, and many concerts. This event represents a true professional challenge for the artists and a wonderful musical experience for the audience.

**Autumn Music.** November. Organized to enrich the music life with its genres and themes in accordance to its conception and to provide another place for the performances of the native and foreign artist. There is the classical music as a base of this manifestation's programme, yet it always leaves space for the other types of music genres such as jazz, popular song, ethno music etc.

**VINO SKOP - Skopje Wine Festival.** October. Wine tasting, vineyard visits, live musical entertainment from international artists in the heart of the city.

**BuskerFest,** May/June for 10 days. Street performers Festival. Tours Macedonian cities, as well as Budva, Montenegro and Sibenik, Croatia.

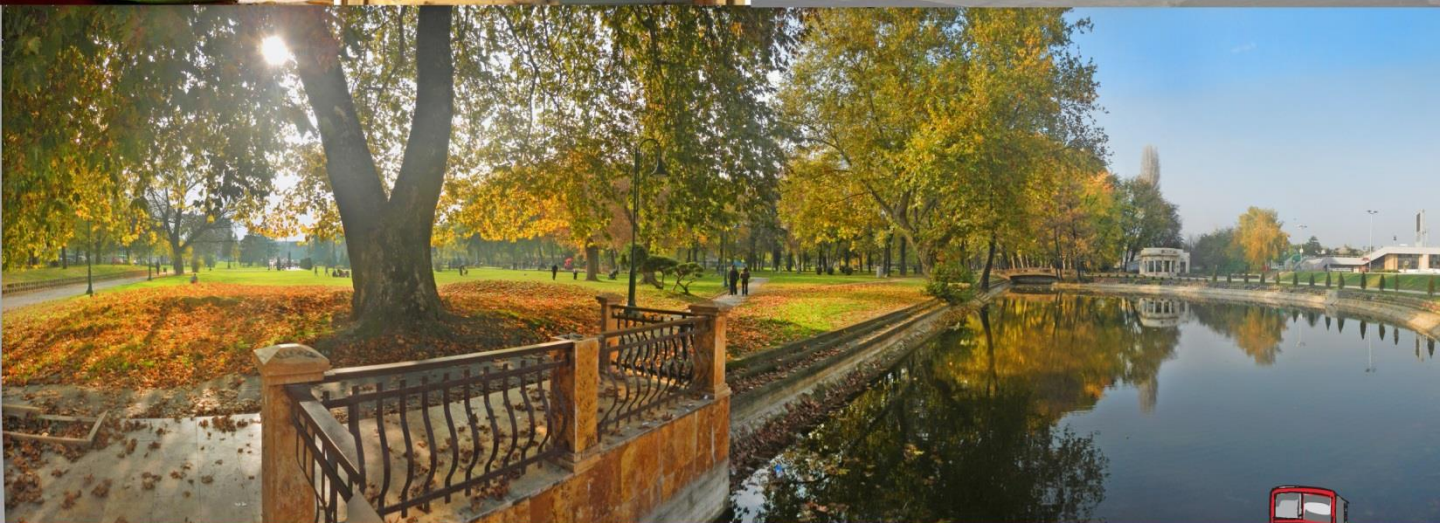
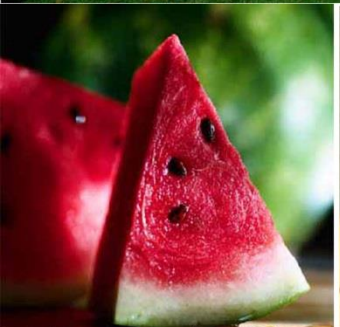
**PIVOLEND.** August/September. Gourmet weekend with beer.

**Vasilica (New Year).** 14th January. Celebrated in the home.

**Herdelezi / Djurdjevden.** 8th of May. Spring festival celebrated at home and in public. Usually crowned by a great open air concert. After Herdelezi the wedding season begins.







**SKOPJE** A CITY TO BE DISCOVERED !

