
10TH CEI REGIONAL FORUM FOR HEALTH, WELLNESS & SPA INDUSTRY

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**Spa through the lens of heritage in
Macedonia**

CULTURAL HERITAGE OF MACEDONIA



Macedonia is an ancient and biblical country, with long and turbulent history. Great empires like Ancient Macedonian, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman, have left indelible traces both in terms of the spiritual and material culture of the Macedonians. These rich and diverse layers of history have determined the Macedonian cultural heritage as: multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious.



ROMAN BATH BANSKO, STRUMICA



At 12 km from the town of Strumica, at the northern part of Mount Belasitza, strong hot water springs with a temperature of 72 ° C are located. The source is located in the village of Bansko, which is the main reason why water baths once got the present name. Near the source "Parilo" a Roman bath, is located which was built in the II century AD. This area covers more than 1500 m² and is one of the largest baths in the Balkans.

- 11 rooms have different functions and are mainly built of brick and stone combined with the mortar;
- Heating inside was designed and constructed with a special system in which hot water was used to heat the floors and walls;
- The bathroom is designed like most Roman buildings;
- The main place was occupied by the baths and tub pool whose depth was about 1.5 m, and the pool was gained by stairs;
- Destruction of this bath happened in VI century AD.

ROMAN BATH BANSKO, STRUMICA



ROMAN BATH BANSKO, STRUMICA



YENI HAMMAM, BITOLA



There is no data from historical sources or any other written documents, or inscriptions on the object itself when the hammam was built. It is assumed that Yeni hammam was built in the XVII century or early XVIII century. It gets its name because it was one of the newer if not the last hammam in Bitola (yeni - meaning new) (hammam-bath) or a new bath.

- The main purpose of the bath was to enjoy a steam-filled room;
- Has a marble surface with heater installed, for massage and peeling;
- Built of stone and brick;
- Has five groups of rooms: shadirvan (wardrobe - square shape), kapaluk (adaptation room – rectangle shape), halvet (bath area) one square space that can accommodate several smaller rooms, hazna (water tank) and a kjulhan (fireplace).

YENI HAMMAM, BITOLA



YENI HAMMAM, BITOLA



ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE STOBI



The old city of Stobi “...Stobis, vetus urbs...”, as the Roman historian Livy named it, at the confluence of rivers Crna and Vardar, was the largest city in the northern part of the Roman province Macedonia, later capital city of the Roman province Macedonia Secunda.

- It was an important urban, military, administrative, trade and religious center of two large empires: Roman and Early Byzantine.
- The town of Stobi was built in the Hellenic period, some time before the rule of the Macedonian king Philip the Fifth.
- There is a complete urban picture of Ancient Stobi, its architectural structure and organization of life, which speaks of a highly developed urban society with a high level of cultural development. Considering these facts and according to some additional sources, the beginnings of Stobi were much earlier, in the VII and VI Century BC.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE STOBI



The **Large Bath** was built at the end of the III century AD. It was excavated in 1931 – 32 and conserved in 1960.

- The apoditerium (dressing room) occupies the western part of the building and it is the largest room. The walls, on three sides, are lined with low benches made of stone and the whole room was divided in two by an arcade.
- From the apoditerium one can enter the frigidarium (room with cold water) and the caldarium (room with hot air). Inside the caldarium there were small baths filled with hot or warm water.
- The water was supplied in the caldarium through a water line supported by an arcade.
- To the north of the caldarium there were an open court and a latrine (toilet) under which the drainage channel was located.

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE STOBI



The lack of archaeological data puts the **Small Bath** in the broad chronological frames between the IV and the VI century AD.

- At the west side of the apoditerium there is an entrance to an apsidal room which is probably the frigidarium. To the south there are three other apsidal rooms. The first room is a tepidarium and it has a small pool.
- From this room one can enter the other two which are heated by the hypocaust system.
- The fireplace is located below the third apsidal room and it can be reached from the apoditerium.
- To the east of the dressing room there are two other rooms. The one with the draining channel is thought to be the latrine (toilet).

ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE STOBI LARGE BATH



ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE STOBI LARGE BATH



ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE STOBI SMALL BATH



ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE STOBI SMALL BATH



TRACES OF SPA IN OTHER HERITAGE IN MACEDONIA



- Old Bitola Bath, Bitola – known in history through the writings of Evliya Çelebi, the famous Ottoman explorer.
- Heraclea Lyncestis, Bitola - ancient Greek city in Macedon, ruled later by the Romans.
- Gevgelija Hammam, Gevgelija – build in XIX century, restored in 2013.
- New Hammam, Debar - the only hammam in Macedonia that retained its function for the longest time, i.e. it was in operation until 1992.
- New Old Hammam, Skopje - it was built in the XV or XVI century. It is located in the immediate vicinity of a group of buildings at the University of “St. Cyril and Methodius“.
- Daut Pasin Hammam, Skopje - built between 1489 and 1497.
- Bargala, Stip, - byzantine fortified town constructed between the IV and VI centuries.
- Hammams (Dojran, Ohrid, Prilep, Tetovo, Skopje)

CONCLUSION



- In need of conservation of all type's cultural heritage, regarding spa heritage involving protection and restoration;
- Bring spa heritage to the surface;
- Creation of new promotion, new brand for North Macedonia as spa wellness tourist destination (i.e. existing operating baths);
- Enriching the offer beside the wellness possibilities with cultural and historic elements.



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