

A GUIDE TO THE MONASTERIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA








MACEDONIA
TIMELESS

Edition:

Dejan Metodijeski, PhD
Nako Taskov, PhD
Nikola Dimitrov, PhD

Reviewers:

Nikola Panov, PhD
Milena Taleska, PhD

Translation:

Kostadin Golakov
Tatjana Ulanska

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Photography:

Irena Jovanovska

Cartographic processing:

Goran Jolovikj
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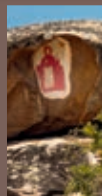
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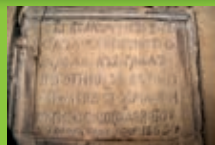
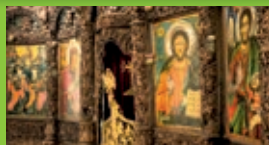
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Despite its European location, the Republic of Macedonia is still surprisingly unexplored country, abundant in natural beauty, history and culture. The monastery tourism in this country, from a historic perspective, has a long tradition being supported with evidence of the hospitality of the monasteries in accommodating travelers. A typical monastery complex was built quite vividly, including multi-storey lodgings with spacious balconies, bulwarks, bell towers, a variety of commercial facilities, mountain pastures, cellars for storage of wine, home-made brandy and winter food supplies stored in basement cellars. The monasteries had their own crops, woods and meadows, pastures for the stock, vineyards and orchards, private properties and livestock like sheep, goats, cattle as well as apiculture. Macedonian monasteries have always been welcoming all passengers, travelers, all good people passing by to have a meal, rest or spend the night before they carry on with their journey. Monasteries have remained the place to help the needy and the feeble. Apart from leading monastic lives there, monasteries have always represented important literacy centers. Monasteries have been creating groups of icon painters, wood carvers and builders to meet their own needs, which have been decorating monasteries even outside the Macedonian borders and these are probably the best groups of icon painters, wood carvers, craftsmen and builders throughout the Balkans.

There are more than 270 monasteries in the Republic of Macedonia today. Around 150 of these are well preserved with a local character and approximately 120 destroyed or partially destroyed. However, a great number are of special interest to the visitors, having regional, national,

travelers, all good people passing by to have a meal, rest or spend the night before they carry on with their journey. Monasteries have remained the place to help the needy and the feeble. Apart from leading monastic lives there, monasteries have always represented important literacy centers. Monasteries have been creating groups of icon painters, wood carvers and builders to meet their own needs, which have been decorating monasteries even outside the Macedonian borders and these are probably the best groups of icon painters, wood carvers, craftsmen and builders throughout the Balkans.

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vand some even international significance.

This vividly illustrated guide aims to provide you with every information you might require to visit and discover any monastery complex in the country. Apart from the tourism related information regarding the historical background of these monasteries, this guide includes description, accommodation possibilities and food, cartographically presented colour maps of the monasteries and their surroundings, contact information, places of significance in their surrounding, recommended tours and other important information. It includes all relevant information for visitors, regardless of the purpose of their visit, whether it would be for religious obedience or purely for tourism.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who participated and assisted the preparation

of this guide, primarily to all monks for giving their support and required information, as well as the employees from the Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics at the University 'Goce Delcev' Stip, the researchers collecting all relevant literature and electronic sources, priests from the Macedonian Orthodox Church – Ohrid Archbishopric, the photographers, the map draftsmen, the designers of the guide and all remaining who willingly gave a sincere contribution for this edition.

Being the first edition, it might unintentionally lack some important moments from the monastery tourism in the Republic of Macedonia. We are most certainly open for suggestions, for which we would be extremely grateful and take all into consideration for printing a second edition of this guide.

From the authors



SOME PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR VISITING MONASTERIES >>>>>>>>>

Monasteries have been an inseparable part of the Macedonian history and cultural heritage, most of which being cultural monuments protected by law.

Reservations for a visit to the monasteries should be made in advance. Each monastery complex is usually visited by a great number of visitors, especially in the summer period or during the monastery saint's feast day celebration, hence making a reservation is not only rec-

ommended but also highly required.

If you plan to stay in a monastery but not attend the liturgies and the religious service, do include that information in the reservation. Each monastery has their opening hours to visitors, mostly from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. as well as their own typical conditions and required behavior that needs to be followed by visitors, including: appropriate clothing, speaking silently, forbidden smoking, consumption of drinks and food,





forbidding or restricting photography, prior notice of organized tour groups, blessing for spending the night, etc.

Prices given in this guide are valid for the moment but they can be subjected to changes. Most monasteries do not provide the option for credit card payment so be prepared to pay cash. The prices vary from the visitors' personal wish up to 100 euro in a hotel complex within the monastery.

Most monasteries are situated outside urban area, in a beautiful nature, often with no available public transport; therefore you would need a personal vehicle or a taxi.

The rooms in the monasteries are typically clean, comfortable and plainly furnished. Do not expect

modern appliances or devices, such as a phone, radio, TV set or a computer. If you use a sound producing device, use headphones. Food for visitors is offered in most monasteries, as well as the opportunity to prepare your own personally.

This guide will assist you to choose which monastery to visit or stay at and it will provide you with the opportunity to make a close contact with the Macedonian nature, history, culture, art, religion, architecture and local traditions. We do hope that this guide will lead its readers to the holy places throughout Macedonia where they can experience the hospitality in the monasteries and their way of living, find spiritual peace and be closer to God.





