



Climbing in Bulgaria

A English Companion for Climbers

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Introduction

Bulgaria is a land of contrasts, both geographically and culturally. There are extensive mountain ranges, medieval cities and stunning coastlines. Bulgaria is well known for its Black Sea coastline and mountain ski resorts but for the climber it also holds many other hidden gems. The mountains obviously have many excellent routes but there are also amazing limestone outcrops that rise, seemingly, out of nowhere! Bulgaria is a destination that will excite almost any climber. Whether you are in search of long multi pitch alpine adventures, hard sport routes or a travelling climbing holiday, Bulgaria may just have the answer.

Whatever type of rock climbing you are seeking, finding the information to make it a stress free and an enjoyable trip is crucial. This ebook aims to provide you with invaluable in country knowledge but from a travellers perspective. It's often the little things that a local may take for granted that are the most valuable to a traveller. This year I spent the summer travelling and climbing in Bulgaria, so through research both online and through my experiences I hope to provide you with all the information you need to decide where to go, what to do and how to do it.

Finding information about climbing in Bulgaria is both easy and difficult. It is easy because there is a very comprehensive website for all climbing in the country. However, it is in Bulgarian, and although google translate can sort much of this problem, translations are not always accurate and the website is aimed at Bulgarians, so there is little information about travel, accommodation or other useful logistics. As ever, with 'Climbers Companions' ebooks, the aim is not to replace existing guidebooks or sources of information but to work alongside them. This ebook is a companion to the topos and route descriptors available online giving you up to date information about travel, accommodation, maps, routes and rest day options.

Bulgaria is a vast country and there are a surprisingly large amount of areas that have some kind of climbing development. This ebook will cover most of the key climbing spots and direct you to valuable sources that can give you information about other areas. Throughout the ebook you will find links to various websites. They are all hyperlinked so just click the links to be directed to the relevant web page. The links are also all presented on page 28 for your ease.

I hope you find the information in this ebook useful for planning and enjoying your trip.

Happy Climbing!

Climbing Areas in Bulgaria

Rila Mountains

The Rila Mountains are a beautiful range located a couple of hours south of Sofia. It includes Bulgaria's highest peak, Mussala (2925m) and many other worthy peaks. It is an area highly popular for walkers and has an extensive collection of marked walking routes. For the climber, you will immediately see the appeal, large granite towers, rocky outcrops and clean faces of surrounding peaks. The climbing potential is endless and there are many areas that have been developed. Much of the climbing in the mountains is traditional and they tend to be long routes with long walk-ins. But there are also sport routes that have been put up a little closer to paths or even roads that are worth a look and give you a more restful option.

What to do here:

- Climb at Malyovitsa Hut
- Seven Rila Lakes Walk
- Climb Borovets
- Mussala walk
- Mountain Biking

Where to stay:

You may choose to head straight up into the mountains but if you wish to spend a little more time in the area and need a base in the valley I would recommend Borovets. It is a ski village in the winter and accommodates summer tourists, walkers and mountain bikers. There is a small campsite, many hotels and on the outskirts, two Bulgarian style holiday parks.

- [Hotels in Borovets](#) – this page gives details of hotels ranging from 3* to 5* and has a booking system.
- Camping – located on the main road into Borovets. It looks like someone's back garden and has no obvious sign. But ask at HRIMA HOUSE which is a snack bar on the right hand side of the road as you enter Borovets from Beli Iskar. It is opposite Brexa 3* Hotel. It is small, but is secure and has new and clean toilets and showers. Cost: 7 BGN (Bulgarian Leva) per person per night (pppn)
- Yagoda and Malina are marked on the map with a camping symbol. This is where there is a divide in the meaning camping. Bulgarian camping can mean small wooden chalets. There will often be no facilities for camping in a tent. Even the universal hand signal for tent gets misconstrued because this is the shape of the wooden chalets. If you want a miniature self contained chalet you are looking at 80 BGN in the summer.

Local amenities:

- Supermarkets – there are a couple along the high street. Good to tide you over but limited and inflated prices. If you need to do a big shop try T Market in Samokov – on road heading towards Borovets.
- Cafés, Restaurants and Pizzerias – all in abundance. Café Elite next to the Gondola is a nice afternoon stop off. Two beers and cheesy chips = 7BGN
- Internet – there is an internet café on the high street and free wifi throughout town.