

Serbia & Montenegro



RAFAEL ESTEFANIA

Serbia & Montenegro

Although the two countries may soon no longer be one, Serbia and Montenegro together currently make an interesting and diverse whole.

Landlocked Serbia has Belgrade as its beating heart, with everything you'd expect from a gritty, kicking capital: arts and culture, food and wine, and great nightlife. To the north, flat Vojvodina is where the Balkan and Hungarian cultures mix. The plains of Fruška Gora hide numerous monasteries amid peaceful vineyards. Serbia's sleepy south is filled with stories of former rebellion, with the forts of Topola and Niš keeping the memories alive. Nestling under the heights of Kopaonik is the Sandžak region, with the small kasbah-like town of Novi Pazar. This is a good base for forays into Kosovo, a UN-NATO protectorate since 1999, and still a part of Serbia.

To the southwest, amid harsh mountains, river canyons and by the beautiful coast of the Adriatic lies Montenegro. Its coast, bordering with Croatia in the north, is just as stunning as its better-known neighbour. The Bay of Kotor is dotted with gems: the walled town of Kotor is like Dubrovnik's smaller sister; the tiny town of Perast is a perfect slice of the Mediterranean. Further down is Budva with its fortified old town, and seductive seaside towns such as Petrovac or the curious holiday island of Sveti Stefan. Inland is Cetinje, the old capital that crowns the country at 800m above sea-level. There is skiing and trekking in the heights of the mighty Durmitor range and rafting on the foamy whirls of the Tara River Canyon.

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 102,350 sq km
- **Capital** union and Serbian capital – Belgrade; Montenegro – Podgorica
- **Currency** Serbia – dinar (DIN): €1 = 85.2DIN; US\$1 = 71.1DIN; UK£1 = 124DIN; A\$1 = 53.4DIN; ¥100 = 63DIN; NZ\$1 = 48DIN; Kosovo and Montenegro – euro (€): US\$1 = €0.82; UK£1 = €1.5; A\$1 = €0.63; ¥100 = €0.75; NZ\$1 = €0.58
- **Famous for** Monica Seles, basketball players
- **Key phrases** Serbian *zdravo* (hello), *doviđenja* (goodbye), *hvala* (thanks); Kosovar Albanian *allo* (hello), *lamturmirë* (goodbye), *ju falem nderit* (thanks)
- **Official language** Serbia and Montenegro – Serbian; Kosovo – Albanian
- **Population** 7.5 million excluding Kosovo (estimate 1.9 million)
- **Telephone codes** country code ☎ 381; international access code ☎ 99
- **Visas** not required by most European, Australian, New Zealand, American and Canadian citizens; see p324 for details



HIGHLIGHTS

- Belgrade is notorious for partying, its mighty **Kalemegdan Citadel** (p277) that dominates the landscape, and plentiful culinary offerings in the city's many restaurants
- The quiet town of **Novi Sad** (p291), with smart café-lined streets and the baroque Petrovaradin Citadel that goes wild every year in July when it hosts the Exit music festival
- The walled, dramatically beautiful labyrinthine old city of **Kotor** (p316), proudly sitting at the helm of southern Europe's biggest fjord
- Sharp mountains – veined by the Tara River Canyon, over one kilometre deep – shelter pretty lakes in **Durmitor National Park** (p320); tons of winter and summer activities
- The former medieval capital of 'Old Serbia', **Prizren** (p307), dominated by the old castle, Turkish-influenced architecture, riverside bars and cafés

ITINERARIES

- **One week** Two days of partying and culture in Belgrade, a day trip to Novi Sad, then head south for sightseeing in Cetinje, and down to Budva's beaches and gorgeous Kotor.
- **Two to three weeks** The above plus Subotica and Novi Pazar, relax in the natural beauty of Žabljak, find peace in the tiny village of Rijeka Crnojevića, and walk the long beach at Ulcinj before spending a day or two by the sea in Perast or Petrovac.

CLIMATE & WHEN TO GO

The north has a continental climate with cold winters and hot, humid summers. The coastal region has hot, dry summers and relatively cold winters with heavy snowfall inland.

The Montenegrin coast is at its best in May, June and September, but avoid July and August, when accommodation becomes quite scarce and expensive. The ski season is generally December to March, with January and February providing the best sport.

HISTORY

Celts supplanted the original inhabitants of the region, the Illyrians, from the 4th century BC; the Romans arrived in the 3rd century BC. In AD 395 Theodosius I

HOW MUCH?

- **Short taxi ride** 200DIN/€3
- **Internet access** per hour 80DIN to 150DIN/€1.50
- **Cup of coffee** 100DIN/€1
- **Bottle of plum brandy** 500DIN/€7
- **Postcard** 30DIN/€0.50

LONELY PLANET INDEX

- **Litre of petrol** Serbia 66DIN, Kosovo €0.80, Montenegro €0.88
- **Litre of water** 70DIN/€1
- **Half-litre of beer** 60DIN/€1
- **Souvenir T-shirt** Serbia 600DIN
- **Street snack (burek)** 30DIN/€0.50

divided the empire, with Serbia passing to the Byzantine Empire.

During the 6th century, Slavic tribes crossed the Danube and occupied much of the Balkan Peninsula. In 879 Saints Cyril and Methodius converted the Serbs to Christianity.

Serbian independence briefly flowered from 1217 with a 'Golden Age' during Stefan Dušan's reign (1346–55). After Stefan's death Serbia declined. At the pivotal Battle of Kosovo in 1389 the Turks defeated Serbia, ushering in 500 years of Islamic rule. A revolt in 1815 led to de facto Serbian independence and complete independence in 1878.

On 28 June 1914 Austria-Hungary used the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand by a Bosnian Serb as a pretext to invade Serbia, sparking WWI. After the war, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Vojvodina, Serbia and its Kosovo province, Montenegro and Macedonia formed the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes under King Alexander of Serbia. In 1929 the country was renamed Yugoslavia.

In March 1941 Yugoslavia joined the fascist Tripartite Alliance. This sparked a military coup and an abrupt withdrawal from the Alliance. Germany replied by bombing Belgrade.

The Communist Party, under Josip Broz Tito, assisted in the liberation of the country and gained power in 1945. It abolished



the monarchy and declared a federal republic. Serbia's size was reduced; Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia were granted republic status but Kosovo and Vojvodina were denied it and became autonomous provinces.

Tito broke with Stalin in 1948 and Yugoslavia became a nonaligned nation

(ie belonging to neither of the post-WWII power blocks led by the USA and the USSR), albeit bolstered by Western aid. Growing regional inequalities pushed demands by Slovenia, Croatia and Kosovo for greater autonomy to counter Serbian dominance.

By 1986 Serbian nationalists were espousing the idea of a Greater Serbia, a doctrine

adopted by Slobodan Milošević, the Serbian Communist Party leader. This horrified the other republics, which managed to gain independence by 1992.

While the violent collapse of Yugoslavia resulted in wars in the neighbouring Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the remaining parties of Serbia and Montenegro formed the 'third' Yugoslav federation in April 1992. The new constitution made no mention of 'autonomous provinces', infuriating Albanians in Kosovo, who had been stripped of their autonomous status by Milošević and had long been brutally repressed by Serbia. Violence in Kosovo erupted in January 1998, largely provoked by the federal army and police.

This incited a storm of protest from the international community, plus an arms embargo. In March 1999 peace talks in Paris failed when Serbia rejected a US-brokered peace plan. In reply to resistance in Kosovo, Serbian forces moved to ethnically cleanse the country of its Albanian population. Hundreds of thousands fled into Macedonia and Albania galvanising NATO into a 78-day bombing campaign. On 12 June 1999 Serbian forces withdrew from Kosovo.

In the September 2000 federal presidential elections the opposition, led by Vojislav Koštunica, declared victory, a claim denied by Milošević. Opposition supporters took over the streets, called a general strike and occupied parliament. When Russia recognised Koštunica's presidency, Milošević's last support evaporated.

Koštunica restored ties with Europe, acknowledged Yugoslav atrocities in Kosovo and rejoined the UN. In April 2001 Milošević was arrested for misappropriating state funds and extradited to the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

In April 2002 Yugoslavia was replaced by a loose union of Serbia and Montenegro. The EU-brokered deal was intended to stabilise the region by settling Montenegrin demands for independence and preventing further changes to Balkan borders. The union will be tested in a referendum in 2006.

In March 2003 Serbia's first democratically elected prime minister since WWII, Zoran Đinđić, was assassinated. He had been instrumental in handing over Milošević to

MONEY MATTERS

During the 1990s economic sanctions and gross mishandling of the economy led to severe hyperinflation, the highest in European history. It became cheaper to use banknotes to paper walls than to buy the wallpaper. At one point a 500 billion dinar banknote was issued, making every Serb an instant multimillionaire.

Many state industries were unable to pay their employees; they were paid in kind or issued worthless shares in the company. When a multinational bought up the local brewery in the small town of Apatin, the locals found their shares to be worth a fortune. Apatin is now one of the richest municipalities, per capita, in Serbia.

the International War Crimes Tribunal and had been trying to purge politics and business of crime and corruption. His alleged killers were crime bosses and Milošević-era paramilitary commanders.

At the end of his term in January 2003, the Serbian president Milan Milutinović surrendered to The Hague tribunal to plead not guilty to charges of crimes against humanity. Between 2003 and 2004 three attempts to elect a new president failed, due to low voter turnout. Parliamentary elections in December 2003 were inconclusive but saw the resurgence of nationalism, worrying the rest of Europe. A series of power-sharing deals installed Koštunica as head of a centre-right coalition that now relies on the support of Milošević's Socialist Party. Finally, in June 2004, Serbia and Montenegro gained a new president in the pro-European Boris Tadić.

PEOPLE

The last full census was taken in 1991. Only Serbia took a census in 2002, revealing a population of estimated an 7.5 million. Estimates for Montenegro are 651,000 and Kosovo 1.9 million.

These figures split into Serbs 62%, Albanians 17%, Montenegrins 5%, Hungarians 3% and other groups 13%.

Vojvodina is more multicultural, with perhaps 28 ethnic groups and sizable populations of Hungarians (25%), Ukrainians and Romanians.

Central Serbia is predominantly Serb Orthodox and the southern region of Sandzak is mainly Muslim.

There are large Slavic Muslim and Albanian minorities in Montenegro and southern Serbia; Belgrade has about 10,000 Muslims.

Serbs and Montenegrins have always seen eye to eye but in Kosovo things have never been easy, particularly so since the late '90s conflict. Minority Serbs live in Kosovo Force (KFOR) protected ghettos. Relations between Albanians and Serbs remain extremely tense.

RELIGION

Religion and ethnicity broadly go together. About 65% of the population is Orthodox; Roman Catholics, who are Vojvodinan Hungarians, comprise 4%; and Albanian Kosovars and Slavic Muslims make up 19%. The remaining 12% are 'other', including Romanians, Croatians, Bulgarians, Roma and Vlachs.

ARTS Literature

The oral tradition of epic poetry was the most important way of recording historical events and figures in both Serbia and Montenegro (and other parts of former Yugoslavia) for centuries. None of it was written down and the singers composed the poems as they performed them, having to confine themselves to the rigid form of 10 or eight syllables per line. Accompanying it was the sound of the *gusle*, a one-stringed instrument held upright like a cello. Poems most often depicted battles and brave kings, or tragic love stories.

With the arrival of the 19th-century writer and linguist Vuk Karadžić epic poetry was first written down. Karadžić not only collected and wrote down the epic poems, but he went on to reform the language and formalise the rules of Serbian grammar. The epics were translated into English, French and German by the likes of Goethe and Walter Scott. A good read on the subject of oral verse is *The Singer of Tales* by Albert B Lord (Harvard University Press).

On the Montenegrin side, Petar II Petrović Njegoš (1813–51), a poet and a prince, produced one of the country's most impor-

tant works of literature *Gorski vijenac* (The Mountain Wreath), a verse play depicting the Montenegrin struggle to maintain Orthodox Christianity under Ottoman rule. Njegoš was and still is one of the most popular and revered figures in Montenegrin history.

Another significant figure in late 19th-century Serbian literature was Jovan Jovanović Zmaj (1833–1904), who wrote a large volume of works of poetry, fiction and essays. Contemporary writers include the poet Vasko Popa, whose work has been translated into English and many other languages. Other interesting reads are *In the Hold* by Vladimir Arsenijević, *Words Are Something Else* by David Albahari, *Petrija's Wreath* by Dragoslav Mihailović and *Fear and its Servant* by Mirjana Novaković.

Bosnian-born, but a past Belgrade resident, Ivo Andrić was awarded the Nobel prize for his *Bridge over the Drina*. The excellent works of Danilo Kiš are available in English. *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* is recommended.

The perennial *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon* by Rebecca West is always a good read for those wishing to get a taste of pre-WWII travels around the Balkans.

A relatively new and popular portrait of the life of a Serb in Yugoslavia, and later the UK, is Vesna Goldsworthy's memoir *Chernobyl Strawberries* (Atlantic, 2005).

Cinema

Cinema is a thriving industry in Serbia, but not many of the films made in the country ever get past the borders of the former Yugoslavia. If you are really keen on seeing some of these, you can find DVDs or videos of the Serbian cinema classics with English subtitles in Serbia. Titles to look out for are *Ko to tamo peva?* (Who's That Singing Over There?), *Petrija's Wreath* and *Balkan Express*.

The award-winning film *Underground*, by Sarajevo-born director Emir Kusturica, is worth seeing, as are his other films. *Underground* is told in a chaotic, colourful style, reminiscent of Fellini's movies. Bosnian director Danis Tanović's *No Man's Land* superbly deals with an encounter between a Bosnian soldier and a Serb soldier stuck in a trench on their own during the Bosnian war.

Music

Serbia's vibrant dances are led by musicians playing bagpipes, flutes and fiddles. Kosovar music bears the deep imprint of five centuries of Turkish rule, with high-whine flutes carrying the tune above the beat of a goat-skin drum.

Blehmuzika (brass music influenced by Turkish and Austrian military music) is the national music of Serbia, with an annual festival at Guča in August. This type of music is most commonly played by Roma, and traditionally at weddings or funerals. One of the most popular recordings of this music is the soundtrack to the film *Underground* and albums by the trumpet player Boban Marković.

Modern music covers anything from wild Romani music to house, techno, blues, jazz, drum'n'bass. Two of Serbia's favourite modern bands are Darkwood Dub and Eyesburn.

Ethnic folk updated and crossed with techno is the rather painful 'turbofolk' that the visitor will doubtlessly come across in Serbia and Montenegro. The queen of turbofolk is Svetlana Ražnatović 'Ceca', the heavy-bosomed wife of the late war criminal Arkan. She attracts sell-out numbers not only across Serbia and Montenegro, but even in the supposedly more 'civilised' Slovenia. Wars may rage, but in the Balkans some things never change.

Serbia and Montenegro entered the Eurovision hall of fame by coming second in 2004 with a haunting love ballad that effectively blended Serbian and Turkish influences. Its 2005 entry with the Montenegrin No Name boy band didn't fare as well.

Architecture

Serbia and Montenegro displays the architecture of those who once ruled the country. Towns in the south bear a Turkish imprint whereas the north has a dominance of 19th-century imperial Austro-Hungarian style. In Vojvodina, especially in Subotica, there are some magnificent buildings of the Hungarian Secessionist period. Montenegro is all Socialist blocks in Podgorica, and gleaming-white Mediterranean marble houses along the coast. Cetinje's architecture is an interesting collection of mansions and palaces remaining from its days as a royal capital.

Overlaying all are the post-WWII buildings bearing the modernist imprint of concrete and central planning.

Visual Arts

Artists in Serbia and Montenegro have been happy to follow European trends in art, although there is a significant interest in icon painting. Galleries throughout the country present an eclectic range from landscapes and figurative art to abstract work.

The works of the Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962) are ubiquitous and you will notice them in several places around Belgrade, most notably the *France* and *Messenger of Victory* statues in the Kalemegdan Citadel and the war memorial in Avala. The Munich-educated impressionist painter Nadežda Petrović (1873–1915) produced some wonderfully energetic portraits. Her earthy 'Serbian period' (1903–10) paintings show a change in perception from the earlier, more impassioned 'Munich period' (1898–1903). Her final and perhaps most accomplished paintings come from the 'Parisian period' (1910–12) shortly before she died of typhoid, which she contracted in a Serbian WWI hospital where she worked as a voluntary nurse. Her paintings are displayed in Belgrade's National Museum (p279) as well as in Cetinje's National Museum (p310).

ENVIRONMENT

Vojvodina is pancake-flat agricultural land. South of the Danube the landscape rises through rolling green hills, which crest at the point where the eastern outpost of the Dinaric Alps slices southeastwards across the country. In among these mountains lie the vales of Kosovo.

The Land

Deravica (2656m) in western Kosovo is the highest mountain; Bobotov Kuk (2525m) in the Durmitor Range is Montenegro's. Zlatibor and Kopaonik in Serbia, and Durmitor in Montenegro provide the winter snow playgrounds.

Montenegro's mountains are mainly limestone and carry the features of arid karst scenery, craggy grey-white outcrops, sparse vegetation and, beneath, caves. To the east the vast Lake Skadar, an important European bird sanctuary and pelican habitat, spans Montenegro and Albania.

Wildlife

Around two hundred species of birds live in the woods of Fruška Gora in Serbia, including a rare species of imperial eagle (*Aquila heliaca*). Wild boar, wildcat, lynx and mouflon are among the mammals. The golden eagle and crossbill are the rare birds, and the uncommon species of the viviparous lizard crawls around the Kopaonik mountain. Birds such as the griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvius*) fly above Tara National Park, and hopefully you will not encounter the brown bear, wildcat and chamois, who all live in its woods.

Among the mammals that live in Montenegro's mountains are chamois, fox and hare. Bears and wolves are a very rare sight. Grey mountain eagles, white-headed vultures and falcons can be spotted in the skies above the peaks.

National Parks

The major national parks of Serbia include: Vojvodina's Fruška Gora, which stretches over 10,000 hectares of orchards and vineyards on the plains and takes in maple, oak and linden forests in the hills.

Kopaonik, in southern Serbia, is a mountainous area slashed with canyons of the Ibar, Jošanica, Toplica and Brzeća Rivers. The famous ski slopes are part of the national park, and outside of the resorts are some of the most important centres of biodiversity in the Balkans. Kopaonik houseleek, Kopaonik violet and Pančić cuckoo flower are among the endemic species of flora.

The Tara National Park in western Serbia spreads over 20,000 hectares in width, and varies between 250m and 1500m in altitude. Mountain peaks and deep river gorges make for spectacular and dramatic scenery in this park. Most impressive is the gorge of the Drina River, the park's main waterway. Among the endemic species of the Tara and Zvijezda mountain ranges are the Pančić spruce and Pančić locust.

Other parks in Serbia are Šar National Park in Kosovo and the Đerdap National Park in eastern Serbia.

Montenegro's most interesting and popular national park is Durmitor, a truly magnificent place for nature-lovers. Spread over 39,000 hectares, the mountain peaks reach over 2200m. The Tara and Piva Canyons take

your breath away, glacial lakes mirror your soul, and springs of clear mountain water quench your thirst. Tara, the longest river in Montenegro, is raftable and is hidden in the deepest canyon in Europe (1300m at times). Durmitor is under Unesco protection as is the Tara River. There is plenty of choice for cave-lovers, with Ice Cave (Ledena Pećina) being the most notable. At 2100m at Obla Glava on the north face of Bobotov Kuk, the cave is reachable from a mountain path.

Lake Skadar National Park has one of the largest lakes in Europe, taking up 391 sq km of the 40,000-hectare parkland. Surrounded by mountains from three sides, the lake borders on Albania (where it is called Lake Shkodra), has 40 different kinds of fish, and counts as one of the largest bird reserves in Europe, with rarities such as the Dalmatian pelican residing on its shores.

Environmental Issues

Sewage pollution of coastal waters, air pollution around Belgrade and rubbish dumping out in the countryside are the environmental issues the country has to face. Some of the remains of the NATO bombing campaign in 2000 are ecological hazards, such as the destruction of the petrol factory in Novi Sad. Destroyed bridges over the Danube have also caused heavy river pollution.

FOOD & DRINK Staples & Specialities

The cheapest and ubiquitous Western Balkan snack is *burek*, a filo-pastry pie made with *sir* (cheese), *meso* (meat), *krompir* (potato) or occasionally *pečurke* (mushrooms), most commonly consumed with yogurt. It's a great breakfast filler, especially if not greasy and made *ispod saća* (baked on hot coals, in a covered tray). A finger-licking midday meal might consist of soup or *ćevapčići*.

Serbia is famous for its grilled meats, such as *ćevapčići*, *pljeskavica* (spicy hamburger), *ražnjići* (pork or veal kebabs). Another speciality is Karadžorđe's schnitzel, a long tubular roll of veal meat, stuffed with *kajmak* (curdled, salted milk). *Duveč* is grilled pork cutlets with spiced stewed peppers, courgettes and tomatoes on rice.

For dishes that have more than just meat, although they still contain meat, try

musaka (layers of aubergine, potato and minced meat), *sarma* (minced meat and rice rolled in sour-cabbage leaves), *kapama* (stewed lamb, onions and spinach with yogurt) and *punjene tikvice* (courgettes stuffed with minced meat and rice).

Regional cuisines range from spicy Hungarian goulash in Vojvodina to Turkish kebab in Kosovo.

Pivo (beer) is universally available. Nikšičko *pivo* (both light and dark), brewed at Nikšić in Montenegro, is terribly good. Many people distil their own *rakija* (brandy), made of grapes or out of plums (*šljivovica*). There are other varieties such as *orahovača* (walnut), *kruškovača* or *viljamovka* (pear) or *jabukovača* (apple). If you ask for *domaća rakija* in a restaurant, you will be offered homemade *rakija* made of a choice of fruit.

Montenegrin red wine is a rich drop. Vranac is the most popular wine and is widely available.

A bittersweet aperitif, *pelinkovac*, a herbal liquor that tastes just like medicine with a kick, is currently popular in Belgrade. A more upmarket and less bitter version of this is the German variety, Jägermeister, also available in bars.

Coffee is usually served Turkish-style, 'black as hell, strong as death and sweet as love'. Superb espresso and cappuccino can be found but mostly in the north. If you want anything other than herbal teas (camomile or hibiscus), then ask for Indian tea.

Where to Eat & Drink

The country abounds with eating options, so you won't go hungry. You might well go hungry though, if you want to eat anything that does not have meat as the main ingredient. Meat in pastry, meat with potatoes, meat on its own, and meat stuffed with meat is ever-present. Some love this, others do not.

Many locals eat on the go so there are plenty of hole-in-the-wall counters, kiosks and bakeries that offer *burek*, pizza, *ćevapčići* or sandwiches. Plenty of small restaurants offer cheap, satisfying but limited menus. Many can be found around the bus and train stations.

Hotel restaurants also figure in providing fine food. Resort areas have fewer restaurants, as the hotels capture their clients with half- and full-board accommodation.

The distinction between café and bar is blurred. Cafés usually sell alcohol except in Muslim areas; the more upmarket ones add cocktails to their range.

Vegetarians & Vegans

Priroda (p286) is the country's only vegetarian restaurant, but top-end restaurants will have some vegetarian dishes. In general, eating in Serbia and Montenegro can be a trial for vegetarians and almost impossible for vegans. There's always the ubiquitous vegetarian pizza. Satisfying salads are *Srpska salata* (Serbian salad) of raw peppers, onions and tomatoes, seasoned with oil, vinegar and maybe chilli, and *šopska salata*, consisting of chopped tomatoes, cucumber and onion, topped with grated soft white cheese. Also ask for *gibanica* (cheese pie), *zeljanica* (cheese pie with spinach) or *pasulj prebranac* (a dish of cooked and spiced beans). If you're happy with fish, then there are plenty of fish restaurants.

Habits & Customs

People tend to skimp on breakfast and catch something on the way to work. Work hours are usually 7.30am to a 3.30pm finish that then becomes the time for lunch; this slides dinner back to 8, 9 or 10pm if eating out.

SERBIA СРБИЈА

The most exciting spot in Serbia (Srbija) is undoubtedly its capital, Belgrade. Vojvodina's flat plains and the tranquil Fruška Gora monasteries provide an effective antidote to urban chaos, and the northern cities of Novi Sad and Subotica are an interesting combination of Hungarian and Balkan life.

Serbia's central and southern towns are quiet and good for those interested in the country's history. Snow fun can be had at the country's ski resorts of Zlatibor and Kopaonik.

The Unesco-protected Sopoćani Monastery sits on the hills outside the lovely little town of Novi Pazar, where minarets scrape the sky, in the predominantly Muslim southern region of Sandžak that mixes mosques with monasteries.

All the way south is Kosovo: administered as a UN-NATO protectorate, but still part of Serbia. This is a disputed land torn by

different interpretations of history. For Serbs it is the cradle of their nationhood, for Kosovo Albanians it is their independent land.

BELGRADE БЕОГРАД

☎ 011 / pop 1.58 million

It's been described as 'hip', 'hot', 'urban', 'underground', 'gritty', 'pulsating'. Aptly so. For Belgrade is a ragged party capital that is quickly gaining a reputation as the Bad Boy of the Balkans. And if Serbia's tourist attractions have been largely unsuccessful as tourist magnets, Belgrade's culture and nightlife are drawing in night owls from across the globe.

Picturesque it is not. Belgrade's architecture is a mishmash of grandiose old build-

ings that speak of a better past, and weary Soviet-style concrete blocks that look like they might collapse into a cloud of dust before your very eyes.

Still, the city holds some real gems. Perched over two rivers, the Danube and the Sava, Belgrade's central crowd puller is the ancient Kalemegdan Citadel. Knez Mihailova street is dotted with fascinating historical buildings. Dozens of museums and galleries will quench the thirst of the culturally parched.

But Belgrade's ultimate appeal is its nightlife. It's easy never to go to sleep in this city for there's always another place to go to: underground clubs, apartment-block bars, river-barge dance floors. Needing no

excuse to throw a good party, Belgraders are happy to dance all night and go straight to work the next day.

When it all gets too much, there are places to escape to and relax. Ada Ciganlija swarms with swimmers during hot summer days. The nearby Košutnjak park has forests to walk in. Alternatively, you can dive into one of the city's galleries or excellent museums and learn about Belgrade's contemporary art or ancient history.

History

The lumpy hill flanked by the Sava and Danube Rivers was ideal for a fortified settlement. The trouble was that it attracted enemies – Belgrade has been destroyed and rebuilt 40 times in its 2300-year history. Those fortifications – the massive Kalemegdan Citadel, changed by succeeding conquerors and defenders – are now no more than fortified parkland. At first it was the Celts who decided to settle on the hill overlooking the confluence of the two rivers. The Romans came in 1st century AD and remained for around 400 years. Then there were Goths and Huns wreaking havoc in the area, before the Serbs came to settle here and make it their capital in 1403. In 1521 the Turks conquered the Balkans, and with it Belgrade. In the 19th century Belgrade was capital of the union of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and then capital of Socialist Yugoslavia between 1945 and 1990. Air attacks by the Germans in 1941 left Belgrade in ruins and much of the pick'n'mix architecture seen today is the result of postwar rebuilding.

Orientation

The central train station and two adjacent bus stations are on the southern side of the city centre. A couple of blocks northeast lies Terazije, the heart of modern Belgrade. Knez Mihailova, Belgrade's lively pedestrian boulevard, runs northwest through the old town from Terazije to the Kalemegdan Citadel.

Information BUSHOPS

Mamut (Map pp276-7; ☎ 639 060; cnr Knez Mihailova & Sremska; ☎ 9am-10pm Mon-Sat, noon-10pm Sun) Big browse-around shop with many floors; it sells books, magazines and newspapers in English as well as CDs, DVDs and gifts.

BELGRADE IN TWO DAYS

Grab breakfast on the go and catch tram 2 anywhere on its circular route. Get off and roam **Kalemegdan Citadel** (p277), stroll through Knez Mihailova and have a coffee in the **Russian Tsar** (p287) or somewhere on **Trg Republike** (p285). Check out the **National Museum** (p279) and the **Ethnographical Museum** (p279), dine out to Roma violins in **Skadarska** (p280), and catch some cocktails in **Ben Akiba** (p288) or a gig in **Akademija** (p289).

Have a peek at the mighty Sveti Sava and Sveti Marko churches in **central Belgrade** (p281), catch a bus to **Zemun** (p290) for a late lunch, have an afternoon drink on one of the **Danube River barges** (p289) and head back to the city to go clubbing at **Anderground** (p288), **Oh! Cinema!** (p289) or **Plastic** (p289).

Plato Bookshop (Map pp276-7; ☎ 625 834; 48 Knez Mihailova; ☎ 9am-midnight Mon-Sat, noon-midnight Sun) University bookshop with a small Internet café. Stocks English literature, maps, books on Serbia and stationery.

INTERNET ACCESS

IPS (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 3344; off Makedonska 4; per hr 90DIN; ☎ 24hr)

Plato Cyber Club (Map pp276-7; ☎ 635 363; Vase Čarapića 19; per hr 65DIN; ☎ 24hr)

INTERNET RESOURCES

Belgrade City site (www.beograd.org.yu)

Tourist Organisation of Belgrade (www.belgrade-tourism.org.yu)

LEFT LUGGAGE

Central train station (Map pp276-7; Savski Trg 2; per piece per day 60DIN)

MEDICAL SERVICES

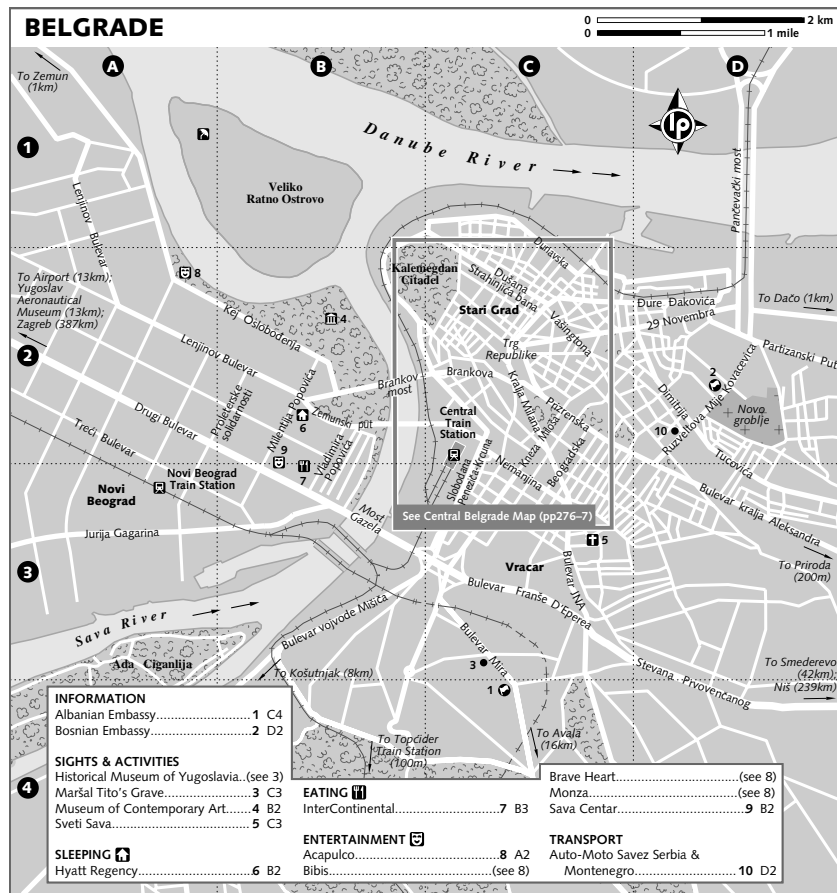
Boris Kidrič Hospital Diplomatic Section (Map pp276-7; ☎ 643 839; Miloša Porcerca Pasterova 1; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri)

Klinički Centar (Map pp276-7; ☎ 361 8444; Miloša Porcerca Pasterova 2; ☎ 24hr) Medical clinic.

Prima 1 (Map pp276-7; ☎ 361 0999; Nemanjina 2; ☎ 24hr) Pharmacy.

MONEY

You won't be stuck for cash on the streets of Belgrade; there is an ATM on every corner.



CENTRAL BELGRADE

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Albania building.....(see 25)	25	C2
Bayrakli Mosque.....	26	C2
Burial Chamber of Sheikh Mustapha.....	27	C2
City Zoo.....	28	B1
Ethnographical Museum.....	29	B2
Extension of the Museum of Modern Art.....	30	B2
Gallery of Frescoes.....	31	B2
Greek Queen.....	32	B2
Green Wreath Market.....	33	A3

Kalemegdan Citadel.....	34	A1
Krstanovic House.....	35	C4
Military Museum.....	36	A2
Museum of Automobiles.....	37	D4
Museum of the History of Yugoslavia.....	38	D4
Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church.....	39	B3
National Guide Association of Serbia.....	40	C3
National Museum.....	41	C3
Nikola Tesla Museum.....	42	E5
Old Telephone Building.....(see 9)		
Palace of Princess Ljubica.....	43	B3
Parliament.....	44	D4
Russian Church.....	45	E4
Saborna Church.....	46	B2
School of Fine Arts.....	47	B2
Smederevo Bank.....	48	C4
Stambol Gate.....	49	A1
Sveti Marko Church.....	50	D4
Victory Monument.....	51	A1
Yugoslav Film Library Theatre.....	52	B5
Zvezda Cinema.....	53	C4

INFORMATION

American Embassy.....	1	B6
Atlas Bank.....	2	C3
Australian Embassy.....	3	C3
Bas Tourist.....	4	B4
Boris Kidric Hospital Diplomatic Section.....	5	C6
British Embassy.....	6	B6
Bulgarian Embassy.....	7	C6
Canadian Embassy.....	8	B6
Central Post Office.....	9	D4
Croatian Embassy.....	10	B6
Delta Bank.....	11	B3
Dutch Embassy.....	12	C2
French Embassy.....	13	B2
German Embassy.....	14	B6
Hungarian Embassy.....	15	E6
IPS.....	16	C3
Klinicki Centar.....	17	C6
KSR Beograd Tours.....	18	C5
Lasta.....	19	B4
Mamut.....	20	C3
Plato Bookshop.....	21	B2
Plato Cyber Club.....	22	C2
Prima 1.....(see 9)		
Telephone Centre.....(see 9)		
Tourist Organisation of Belgrade.....	24	C3
Tourist Organisation of Belgrade.....	25	C3

SLEEPING

Aleksandar Palas.....	54	B2
Hotel Astoria.....	55	C5
Hotel Balkan.....	56	C4
Hotel Centar.....	57	B5
Hotel Moscow.....	58	C4
Hotel Palace.....	59	B3
Hotel Pošta.....	60	B5
Hotel Prag.....	61	C4
Hotel Royal.....	62	C2
Hotel Splendid.....	63	C4
Jelica Milanovic.....	64	D5
Kasina Hotel.....	65	C3
Youth Hostel Organisation.....	66	D3

EATING

?.....	67	B3
Guli.....	68	D3
Ima Dana.....	69	D3
Jevrem.....	70	B2
Kalemegdanska Terasa.....	71	B1
Market.....	72	B3
Pekara Centar Pizza.....	73	C3
Peking Restaurant.....	74	B2
Plato.....	75	C2
Polet Restaurant.....	76	D5
Que Pasa?.....	77	B2
Sešir Moj.....	78	D2
Trattoria Košava.....	79	B2
Trn Sešira.....	80	D2
Writers' Club.....	81	C3

DRINKING

Balkanski Spjun.....	82	B3
Ben Akiba.....	83	D3
DŽKC.....	84	C5
Exclusive.....	85	B2
Federal Association of World Travellers.....	86	D3
Hot Spot Café.....	87	C2
Movie Bar.....	88	C3
Pazi Skolal.....(see 102)		
Rezime.....	89	B2
Rio Bravo.....	90	B2
Russian Tsar.....	91	C3
Tema.....	92	D3
Three Carrots.....	93	C5

ENTERTAINMENT

Akademija.....	94	B2
Anderground.....	95	B2
Bilet Servis.....	96	C3
Cocktail No Name.....	97	A3
Dom Omladine.....	98	C3
Exile.....(see 97)		
Kolarčev University Concert Hall.....	99	B2
National Theatre.....	100	C3
Obl Cinema.....	101	B1
Plastic.....	102	E4
Sargon.....(see 95)		
Serbian Academy of Arts & Sciences.....	103	B3
Sound.....(see 97)		
Tuckwood Cineplex.....	104	D4
Zippo.....(see 97)		

SHOPPING

Craft Street Market.....	105	D5
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TRANSPORT

BAS Bus Station.....	106	B4
JAT Bus Terminal.....	107	D6
Lasta Bus Station.....	108	B4
Putnik Travel Agency.....	109	C3

Exchange offices, recognisable by a large blue diamond sign, are also widespread.

Atlas Bank (Map pp276-7; ☎ 302 4000; Emilijana Joksimovića 4; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) Cashes travellers cheques.

Delta Banka (Map pp276-7; ☎ 302 2624; Knez Mihailova 30; ☎ 6.30am-10pm) ATM and cashes travellers cheques.

POST

Central post office (Map pp276-7; ☎ 633 492; Takovska 2; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Sat)

TELEPHONE & FAX

Telephone centre (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 4484; Takovska 2; ☎ 7am-midnight Mon-Fri, 7am-10pm Sat & Sun) In the central post office building.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist Organisation of Belgrade (Map pp276-7; www.belgradetourism.org.yu) Knez Mihailova (☎ 629 992; Knez Mihailova 18; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat, 11am-5pm Sun); Terazije Underpass (☎ 635 622; fax 635 343; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat) Cheery and friendly with useful brochures, city maps and a *Yellow Cab* events mag.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Bas Tourist (Map pp276-7; ☎ 638 555; fax 784 859; BAS bus station) International bus tickets.
KSR Beograd Tours (Map pp276-7; ☎ 641 258; fax 687 447; Milovana Milovanovića 5; ☎ 6.30am-8pm) Train tickets at station prices without the crowds.
Lasta (Map pp276-7; ☎ 641 251; www.lasta.co.yu; Milovana Milovanovića 1; ☎ 7am-9pm) International bus tickets.

Sights

KALEMEGDAN CITADEL

When approaching Kalemegdan (Map pp276-7) from Knez Mihailova street it looks like a fortified park full of youngsters and the older generation, with souvenir sellers displaying their goods on the benches. Seeing it from the river gives it a more imposing look, the large fortification is perched on the hill (and above the city zoo) and behind it sprawls central Belgrade. This is the most important of Belgrade's sights.

Kalemegdan Citadel looks out onto the confluence of the Danube and Sava Rivers, Belgrade's two main arteries. Fortifications were started in Celtic times and extended down onto the flood plain during the Roman settlement of Singidunum,

Belgrade's Roman name. Over the centuries the fortifications were attacked, destroyed and rebuilt as one conqueror removed another. The statistics for this piece of real estate, the key to power in the region, are staggering. Some 115 battles were fought over it and parts of it and the outer city were razed no fewer than 40 times.

Much of what can be seen today dates from the 18th century when the Austro-Hungarians and the Turks reconstructed the citadel three times.

Entering the fortifications from Knez Mihailova street on the southern side, you will start with the essence of the fortification: the Upper Citadel. The main entrance is **Stambol Gate** (Map pp276-7) built by the Turks around 1750.

Passing through Stambol Gate you will find yourself surrounded by cannons and tanks. Fear not, it's only the **Military Museum** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 334 4408; admission 20DIN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), a large complex presenting a complete military history of the former Yugoslavia. Captured Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) weapons and bits of a downed American stealth fighter are on display as successful 'catches'. Outside are a number of bombs and missiles contributed from the air by NATO in 1999 and a line-up of old guns and tanks, some quite rare. There are basketball grounds nearby, which turn into an ice rink in the winter months and gliding is free.

Crossing through Clock-Tower Gate just by the museum, you will see the Clock Tower above, built during the Austrian occupation in the 18th century. Further on is the mausoleum of Damad Ali-Pasha, where the Turkish dignitary was buried. If you peek through the window you will notice what looks like a coffin covered in a green rug, with an elegant Turkish water jug on the table next to it. No-one knows who it's for.

The large Ottoman-style house behind is the Belgrade Landmarks Preservation office, housed in what used to be a military building. Nearby is the Great Well, 62m deep, at the foot of a double stairway that descends 30m underground, built by the Austrians from 1721 to 1731 to provide a safe water supply to the fortress. The well's depth makes it 10m deeper than the Sava River.

Look up from the well, and you will see the **Victory monument** (Map pp276-7), sculpted by

Ivan Meštrović (see p271) in 1928. There is a funny story about this monument: originally built to stand in the city centre, the statue was moved to the citadel due to numerous prudish complaints about its frontal nudity. Now its reveal-all front is facing away from the city and into the distance. The statue holds a falcon in one hand – the symbol of Slav freedom – and a sword in the other, representing the defence of peace. Beyond the statue is the Sava River and Veliko Ratno Ostrvo (The Great War Island), an excellent area for bird-watching.

Another of Meštrović's monumental legacies is the 1930 Monument to France, seen just before the Military Museum. It was erected out of gratitude to the French soldiers who fought and died in Belgrade during WWI.

On the northeastern side is the Despot Gate, the main entrance to the Citadel in medieval times and the best preserved of the fortifications from that period. The Dizdar Tower, next to the gate, was built in the 15th century at the location where the Citadel was entered by a drawbridge. On top of the Dizdar Tower is the Astronomical Observatory, from where you can gaze at the stars (Friday and Saturday nights only).

Nearby is the Dungeon Gate with two impressive round towers on each side, used as a prison during medieval times. Just below is the Rose Church of Our Lady. The original church is said to have been destroyed by the Turks in the 16th century, and the present 18th-century one was originally an arsenal and then a military chapel, until its restoration in 1925.

The small but pleasant **City Zoo** (Map pp276-7; admission 300DIN; ☎ 8am-8pm) is further down, towards the street. How do those hippos, elephants, camels and tigers survive a Belgrade winter?

The Lower Citadel, closer to the river, suffered heavy destruction. The most impressive of the few sights is the 15th-century Nebojsa Tower built to protect the harbour. It served its purpose bravely for a while, but was conquered by fire after which the Turks invaded the Lower Citadel.

STARI GRAD

South of the citadel and along Knez Mihailova street is **Stari Grad** (Old Town; Map

pp276-7). The mishmash of architecture covers the last two centuries, starting from when Belgrade was snatched from the dying Ottoman Empire and given a boost by the Habsburgs. Pedestrian **Knez Mihailova street** (Map pp276-7) is central to this area and to the city as a whole. It was the first street in Belgrade with an official name. This is where the cafés spill onto the pavements in the summer and where people stroll in their multitudes. Many of the restaurants and some of the hotels reviewed in this chapter are located on Knez Mihailova.

Knez Mihailova itself has some fine buildings, such as the elegant pink and white, neo-Renaissance **School of Fine Arts** (Map pp276-7) sitting on the corner with Rajičeva street. The **Greek queen** (Grčka kraljica; Map pp276-7) hotel and restaurant was built in the mid-19th century and is one of Belgrade's oldest buildings outside the fortified citadel. A little further down is the Serbian Academy of Arts & Sciences (pp276-7), an early-20th-century Art Nouveau-style building, with the goddess Nike at its helm crowning Industry and Trade with two wreaths. A young, arty crowd hangs out here wearing dark shades and cigarettes suspended from their lower lip, so if you feel like belonging, just assume the pose and look cool.

At the other end of Knez Mihailova is Trg Republike (Republic Sq) with the lovely **National Museum** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 624 322; Trg Republike; admission 200DIN, free Sun; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue, Wed & Fri, noon-8pm Thu, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun). The lower two floors of prehistory and early Serbian art and culture were closed for restoration at the time of research. You can see the modern-art gallery on the 3rd floor, which displays a fraction of a large collection of national and European art, including work by Picasso and Monet. If you are interested in seeing some local art, Nadežda Petrović (1873-1915), one of Serbia's first female artists, is well represented. A few blocks away is the **Ethnographical Museum** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 1888; Studentski Trg 13; admission 60DIN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Sat, 9am-2pm Sun), with traditional costumes, living spaces and working utensils on display. Pay attention to the elaborate 19th-century bridal costume with a 'Smiljevac' hat (on the ground floor). The woman's hat is made out of coins and mimosas with peacock feathers at the front – it may have been the fash-

ion two centuries ago, but it wouldn't look out of place at Rio Carnival. Montenegrin men's costumes are also fascinating, with guns in shawls wrapped around their waists like belts, revealing their warrior past.

The 2nd floor displays historical living conditions and 19th-century mountain village interiors. It is interesting to compare this with the almost 'real' thing in the museum village of Sirogojno (p300) where museum houses are displayed on a mountainside as a real village would have been 200 years ago. All displays are marked in English.

The 1831 **Palace of Princess Ljubica** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 638 264; Kneza Sime Markovića 8; admission 50DIN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun) is a Balkan-style palace built for the wife of Prince Miloš. The spacious rooms are filled with period furniture, but you don't get much of a feeling of how the princess might have lived here. Perhaps the only thing that brings the idea closer to life is the little *hammam* (Turkish bath) where Ljubica would have had steams and massages, and, were she the woman of today, the odd yoga or Pilates class.

To the right of the Palace is the 19th-century **Saborna church** (Orthodox Cathedral; Map pp276-7), a mixture of late baroque and neoclassical styles. The church itself is not as impressive as some others you will encounter in the city, but it is nevertheless important because it holds the tombs of Prince Miloš Obrenović and his two sons. Vuk Karadžić, the man responsible for phoneticising the Serbian language, is buried in the church's graveyard. Opposite is the Patriarchate (Patrijaršija) building with the **Museum of the Serbian Orthodox Church** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 2593; Kralja Petra 5; admission 50DIN; ☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Fri), housing valuable items such as the robes of King Milutin (12th and 14th century), Ivan The Terrible's cup and various icons, prints and engravings.

Just up on Kralja Petra, by the church, is the '?' restaurant (see p285), apparently the oldest restaurant in the city. Laid out in the traditional style, this place has acquired its peculiar name because of a long-ago dispute with the church authorities. Built in 1823 and known as Ećim Toma's Café-Restaurant for a while, it eventually changed its name to Cathedral Café because of its location. This

rubbed the ecclesiastical authorities up the wrong way and they protested and protested, claiming the café 'desecrated the name of God's temple'. The owner, baffled by all the fuss, put a simple question mark above the front door.

For some quality art exhibitions in the centre, pop into the **Extension of the Museum of Modern Art** (Salon Muzeja Savremene Umetnosti; Map pp276-7; ☎ 630 940; Pariška 14; admission free; 🕒 11am-5pm). The two large rooms house temporary art exhibitions by high-profile international artists. Abbas Kiarostami's photography exhibition 'Roads' was here before it went to London.

DORČOL

Dorčol gets its name from the Turkish *dört yol*, meaning 'four roads'. The area initially encompassed only the crossing of Dubrovačka and Dušanova streets, but now includes the northern area from Studentski Trg (Student Sq) to the Danube, and from Skadarska to Kalemegdan in the east. Dorčol was once the most cosmopolitan area of Belgrade. A mixture of Turkish, Greek, Jewish, German, Armenian and Vlach merchant communities filled the streets, and Christmas, Passover and Ramadan were celebrated side by side. Unfortunately, no tatziki can be bought on these streets any more, nor can you sink your teeth into a *kugel* (yeasted sweet bread) in the Dorčol restaurants. But you can still enjoy a stroll and get a feel of the old Dorčol in Jevrem restaurant (see p285).

The area has had a few nips and tucks over the years, depending on who ruled the city: the Turks gave it a distinct oriental look, with small houses and cobbled winding streets; during the brief Austrian command between 1717 and 1739, the streets were 'straightened'; when Belgrade was returned to Turkish power in 1739, the streets got their curves back. Now the area has a pleasant residential feel, but none of the oriental architecture remains, apart from the 18th-century **Burial Chamber of Sheik Mustafa** (Map pp276-7; cnr Braće Jugovića & Višnjićeva), a dervish sheik from Baghdad.

Dorčol's last remaining mosque, and indeed the last mosque in Belgrade, is the **Bayrakli Mosque** (Map pp276-7; cnr Kralja Petra & Gospodar Jevremova). It dates back to the 17th century and is being reconstructed after it

was damaged in the March 2004 riots, a backlash against the anti-Serb pogroms in Kosovo at the time.

One of Belgrade's first synagogues was built in this area, but sadly it no longer stands. The **St Aleksandar Nevski church** (Cra Dušana) is the first Christian place of worship to have been built in the area and is still here. For a bit of free music, catch the Roma bands playing outside the church when the wedding crowds come out on Saturday afternoons.

The **Gallery of Frescoes** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 621 491; Cara Uroša 20; admission 50DIN; 🕒 10am-5pm Mon, Tue & Thu-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun) gives you a good idea of Serbian church art with its full-size replicas (and some originals) of paintings from churches and monasteries. The replicas are exact down to the last detail, even reproducing scratches and wear. Some fascinating Roman floor mosaics are being reconstructed and can be seen under their protective sheets.

SKADARSKA

East of Trg Republike, Skadarska (Map pp276-7) or 'Skadarlija' is what some like to call 'Belgrade's Montmartre'. Although a perhaps slightly ambitious comparison, Skadarska earned this name for being the place where bohemians hung out at the turn of the 20th century, discussing their latest poems or art in thick clouds of cigarette smoke. It's a small street and still has its old-fashioned charm. Although the sight of men in bowler hats, or – even better – berets, writing poetry or discussing philosophy is now a thing of the past, they still would not look out of place on this cobbled street. For a true Serbian experience, dine in one of the traditional restaurants that hide in the small houses, while the compulsory Roma fiddle plays into your ear. It's especially good if you're doing a bit of wooing: Skadarska is definitely a street for romantics.

In the 1830s this area was a collection of abandoned trenches outside of Belgrade's defensive walls and was populated by the city's Roma community. The Roma shantytown was removed and houses were built for craftsmen and poorer civil servants. The street got its name in honour of the Albanian city of Skadar (Shkodra). By the early 20th century, Skadarska had become

the stomping ground of Belgrade's artists, actors, writers and musicians and even today you may dine next to a Belgrade film star in one of the restaurants.

Further up, off Skadarska, is the Association of Serbian Writers with a famous restaurant (the Writers' Club, p286), where Belgrade's men and women of the pen met and ate during socialist times. Now, anyone is welcome and the restaurant still retains its old-time atmosphere.

Skadarska is at its best in the summer months when musical, theatrical and cabaret performances enliven outdoor eating. The food is mainly traditional and the restaurants rejoice in unusual names: Three Hats (Tri Šešira; once a hatmaking shop), There Are Days (Ima Dana), Two Deer (Dva Jelena) and Two White Doves (Dva Bela Goluba).

There is a market at the end of the street, called Bajlonova pijaca, and a copy of the Sarajevo Sebilj fountain given to Belgrade by Sarajevo in 1989.

CENTRAL BELGRADE

From Skadarska, across Trg Republike is **Terazije** street, the core of Belgrade's hustle and bustle. The grandiose Hotel Moscow with its water fountain in the front dominates the square. The wide Terazije street is traffic-laden, advertisement lights flicker from the buildings, and shops line the street. Terazije street has some lovely architecture that gets somewhat lost among all the lights and noise.

Look up at the charming Art Nouveau **Smederevo Bank** (Map pp276-7; Terazije 39), a slim white construction built in 1912 for a local merchant. Opposite is another Art Nouveau building, now the **Zvezda cinema** (Map pp276-7; Terazije 40), but originally a photography studio of Milan Jovanović, a locally known portrait photographer. If you look at the wall of the building on the left-hand side, you will see a reproduction of one of Jovanović's elegant photographs called 'A Girl with a Parasol'.

A fine example of a neobaroque-style house on Terazije is the **Krsmanović House** (Map pp276-7; Terazije 34), where the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was first pronounced in 1918, a unification that would some years later lead to the federation of Yugoslavia.

The Hotel Moscow (see the boxed text, p284), apart from being a luxurious structure, is a legendary meeting place. It was built between 1906 and 1907 as a hotel and office building for an insurance company from St Petersburg. The hotel restaurant and bar are never empty and you may want to sip a coffee here too and watch Belgrade go by.

The tall modernist tower-block building **Albania** (Map pp276-7) marks the point where Terazije meets Knez Mihailova street. The building's underground passage hides shops and tourist information offices.

From Terazije, across Trg Nikola Pašić, is the grandiose 1938 **Post Office Building** (Map pp276-7), for mailing in style. Constructed to accompany the 1908 **Old Telephone Building** (Map pp276-7), it is a good example of Serbian-Byzantine style buildings, standing a few streets away from the post office.

Behind the post office is the **Sveti Marko church** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 1940; Bulevar Kralja Aleksandra 17), based on the design of the Gračanica Monastery in Kosovo. It is five-domed, with a bell tower above the main entrance. The church contains the grave of the Emperor Dušan (1308-55). Behind it is the tiny white **Russian church** (Map pp276-7) with blue domes, erected by Russian refugees who fled the October Revolution.

Surrounding these two churches is **Tašmajdan park** (Map pp276-7), a former quarry, and the ground where the Belgrade cemetery stood. After the post office building was constructed, the park was laid out behind it, and for a while in the 20th century, Tašmajdan park became an extension of the Belgrade racetrack.

Opposite the post office is the **Parliament** (Map pp276-7). This building gained fame in October 2000 when anti-Milošević rallies took place here. TV screens around the world were filled with crowds of people storming this very building.

Trg Nikola Pašića is adjacent, with the **Museum of the History of Yugoslavia** (Trg Nikole Pašića 11; admission free; 🕒 Tue-Sun noon-7pm) sitting on the corner. Temporary exhibitions show work by artists from all over former Yugoslavia and are definitely worth a look.

If vehicles are your thing, the **Museum of Automobiles** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 334 2625; Majke Jevrosime 30; admission 50DIN; 🕒 11am-7pm) is a compelling collection of cars and motorcycles.

Choice for our garage would be the '57 Cadillac convertible: only 25,000km and one careful owner – President Tito.

For film buffs, the **Yugoslav Film Library Theatre** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 324 8250; www.kinoteka.org.yu; Kosovska 11) has more than 82,000 films, stills, books and film magazines, all illustrating the technical development of film throughout the years. It also shows classic films, and prints a monthly programme of upcoming screenings.

Back on Terazije and down towards the river behind Hotel Moscow is the **Green Wreath market** (Zeleni Venac; Map pp276-7), a covered market that has been a place of trade since the 19th century. The construction of the place is interesting, with unusual, almost Chinese-style roofs on the chequerboard towers. The rest of the market area is covered with a patchwork of tin, wood and textile, to keep out the sun. Unfortunately, it seems to also have the effect of keeping the smell in. If your airline loses your luggage, fret not: you can stock up on anything here, from cheap clothes to washing products, dodgy DVDs and, of course, food. This is also a starting and ending

point for many of the city buses, including Zemun and Ada Ciganlija.

One of Belgrade's best museums is the **Nikola Tesla Museum** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 433 886; Krunska 51; www.tesla-museum.org; admission 50DIN; ☎ 10am-noon & 4-8pm Tue-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat & Sun). For more about Nikola Tesla, see the boxed text below. Apart from seeing demonstrations of Tesla's fascinating inventions, you will get to play a part in a *Star Wars*-like episode where a crazy machine produces noisy sparks, and lights the cableless neon lamp in your hand – excellent for a sword fight. A truly interactive museum experience, even for those who have no comprehension of science.

OUTER BELGRADE

Head down across Trg Slavija, where the tall 'Belgrade' building stands. Behind it is the massive Orthodox church of **Sveti Sava** (Map p274; Svetog Save). Billed as the biggest Orthodox church in the world, which is not hard to believe, it is a work in progress. Started in 1935, and interrupted by Hitler, communism and lack of cash, it's at the lock-up stage. Still, if the door's open for the builders, have a peek inside and feel

puny under its massive dome. The church is built on the site where the Turks apparently burnt the relics of St Sava, the youngest son of a 12th-century ruler, and founder of the independent Serbian Orthodox church. In front of it is a statue of Serbia's former ruler, the legendary Karadorde, which in turn is surrounded by Karadorde park where people lounge about in the sun.

Further south, don't miss **Maršal Tito's grave** (Kuća Cveća or House of Flowers; Map p274; ☎ 367 1485; Bulevar Mira; admission free; ☎ 9am-5pm Tue-Sun Jun-Sep, to 3pm rest of year) with an interesting museum of gifts (embroidery, dubious-purpose smoking pipes, saddles and weapons) given by toadying comrades and fellow travellers. Check if the adjacent **Historical Museum of Yugoslavia** (Map p274; ☎ 367 1485; exhibitions ☎ 9am-2pm Tue-Sun) is open for one of its occasional exhibitions. Take trolleybus 40 or 41.

At the airport, the exceptional **Yugoslav Aeronautical Museum** (☎ 670 992; Surčin; admission 300DIN; ☎ 9am-2pm Tue-Sun Nov-Apr, 9am-7pm Tue-Sun May-Oct) is engrossing if you're an aircraft buff. There are some rare planes here, including a Hurricane, Spitfire and Messerschmitt from WWII, and bits of that infamous American stealth fighter that air defences downed in 1999.

The **Museum of Contemporary Art** (Muzej Savremene Umetnosti; Map pp276-7; ☎ 311 5713; admission 80DIN; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon, Wed, Fri & Sat, noon-8pm Thu, 10am-2pm Sun) is in New Belgrade (Novi Beograd) on the banks of the Danube River. The permanent collection covers three periods: impressionist (1900-18); expressionist, constructivist and surrealist (1918-41); neosurrealist, modern and contemporary (1945 to present day). A collection of sculptures scans the period between 1900 and the 1970s, and the temporary exhibitions gallery has retrospectives of Serbian and foreign artists. Note that this is probably the only museum in the country (and possibly in Eastern Europe) that is open on Mondays. It's closed on Tuesdays though. Get there by buses 15, 84, 704E or 706 from the Green Wreath market (Zeleni Venac).

Ada Ciganlija (Map p274), an island park on the Sava River, is Belgrade's summer retreat. Gentle choices are swimming in a lake (get your kit off with the naturists 1km upstream), hiring a bicycle or just strolling

among the trees. Adrenaline junkies might fancy the bungee jumping or trying the water-ski tow. Plenty of places overlooking the lake sell restorative cold beers. To get to Ada take bus 53 or 56 from the Green Wreath market.

Avala is a mountain 16km south of Belgrade and is another popular summer outing place. There are water springs and walking opportunities here, as well as WWI and WWII monuments, the most famous being ubiquitous Ivan Meštrović's **Monument to the Unknown Hero**, essentially a tomb for a Serbian soldier, with eight tall granite female figures symbolising the Yugoslav peoples.

Košutnjak is a park on Belgrade's south-western outskirts where many come to walk on the 'health path' marked with suggestions of exercise. These are the remains of the country's socialist past, when the government made sport one of the axes for a happy existence, adopting the slogan from ancient Greece: 'A healthy spirit is in a healthy body' to get the masses jogging. Get bus 53 from the Green Wreath market or jog the 9km.

Tours

The Tourist Organisation of Belgrade (p277) runs bus, boat and guided walking tours.

National Guide Association of Serbia (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 5910; www.utvs.org.yu; 5th fl, Dučanska 8; ☎ 9.30am-3pm Mon-Fri) Independent and licensed guides for city or country tours.

Romantika Steam-hauled train to Austro-Hungarian Sremski Karlovci. Contact KSR Beograd Tours (p277).

Festivals & Events

FEST film festival (www.fest.org.yu) International and local films are screened from February to March every year, with talks by various directors.

Beer festival (www.belgradebeerfest.com) August.

BEMUS Music Festival (www.bemus.co.yu) A classical music festival with a good choice of local and international artists.

BITEF international theatre festival (www.bitef.co.yu) A September festival originating in the avant-garde of the '60s and '70s, it now stages Serbia's best thespian talent and international theatre companies.

Classical music festival October.

Sleeping

Belgrade's hotel scene is really rather underdeveloped, apart from a couple of big boys

NIKOLA TESLA: AN ELECTRIC LIFE

If you happened to see Jim Jarmusch's film *Coffee and Cigarettes* (2003) and wondered who on earth that guy Nikola Tesla was that everyone in the film was banging on about, now's your chance to find out.

Nikola Tesla was the embodiment of the idea of a crazy scientist, minus the wild hair sported by Einstein. In fact, the moustachioed Serb who spent most of his working life in America was about as influential in the world of physics and electronic engineering as Einstein himself. He was the inventor of the rotating magnetic field and the complete production and distribution of electrical energy based on alternate currents. For you and me that means he invented motors and generators, and without him, you'd still be using a wind-up mechanism to start your car.

Born in northern Serbia in 1856, Tesla studied at Graz and Prague universities before moving to Paris in 1882 to work for Edison's Continental Company, where he made the prototype of the induction motor. Two years later he moved to New York and after resigning from Edison's company for not getting paid, Tesla started playing around with X-rays and wireless power transmission. He invented the first neon light tube and forever changed the look of America's streets. He was also responsible for coming up with a way to transmit electricity over long distances, and those large power stations and towers, attached to miles of cables across many a country's landscape, are all thanks to Tesla. He played around with remote controls and electric motor ignition, both of which are integral to the modern world, and was an early starter at radio astronomy. But his more idiosyncratic inventions like the 'electric laxative' somehow didn't become household items.

Unfortunately, Tesla didn't have a business head and did not patent many of his inventions, leaving himself frequently out of pocket. He was also often tricked out of money by more shrewd businessmen, and ended up dying half-forgotten in the New Yorker hotel in Manhattan in 1943. A book entitled *The Man Who Invented the Twentieth Century: Nikola Tesla* by Robert Lomas (Headline) is a detailed account of this fascinating man's life.

like Hyatt Regency and Aleksandar Palas, which go slightly overboard both in price and in comfort. The lower end of the market leaves a lot to be desired. The midrange options are mostly decent, and provide guests with all the basics in slightly more polished surroundings. The real shame though is the lack of imaginative and different places to stay.

CITY CENTRE

Budget

The Youth Hostel organisation (Ferijalni Savez Beograd; Map pp276-7; ☎ 324 8550; www.hostels.org.yu; 2nd fl, Makedonska 22; ☹ 9am-5pm) does deals with local hotels for discounts. You need HI membership (300DIN to join) or an international student card. It also books the **Jelica Milanović** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 1268; Krunska 8; per person from €7.50; ☹ Jul & Aug), which offers college accommodation during holiday time. No food is available.

Hotel Royal (Map pp276-7; ☎ 634 222; www.hotelroyal.co.yu; Kralja Petra 56; s/d 1888/2628DIN; ☑) Possibly the best value for money: it's central (Dorćol area), cheap and clean. The rooms are simply decorated, pleasant and tidy, the staff are friendly, and the reception buzzes with action around a bizarre glass-mosaic staircase in the centre. There is live music in the basement restaurant, if you're up for the folk experience.

Hotel Splendid (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 5444; www.splendid.co.yu; D Jovanovića 5; s/d 1974/3168DIN) More splendid in name than in appearance, this place is slightly run-down, but in a good location (off Terazije) and has a friendly home-away-from-home feeling.

Hotel Astoria (Map pp276-7; ☎ 264 5422; www.astoria.co.yu; Milovana Milovanovića 1a; s/d 2684/2868DIN, d with shared bathroom 2208DIN) If there is no room in any of the other similarly priced hotels, you could stay a night here – but mind the scraggly gauze curtains and the dingy rooms. Oh, and its business card doubles as a small sewing kit, should you need one in a hurry.

Hotel Pošta (Map pp276-7; ☎ 361 4260; Slobodana Penezića 3; s/d 1590/2400DIN) A conspiratorial feeling stirs as you enter the hotel's reception area: a gambling-machine room flickers on one side; passers killing time until their next train fix their gazes upon you through thick clouds of cigarette smoke. In front is a reception with former Yugoslav memora-

bilias all around. The rooms are run-down but clean, with funny bar stools for sitting at the window-sills-come-tables. No credit cards are accepted.

Midrange

Hotel Balkan (Map pp276-7; ☎ 268 7466; fax 268 7581; Prizrenka 2; r €50-70) Opposite Hotel Moscow, but a little less grandiose, Balkan is great value for money. Rooms are spacious with lovely views of Terazije street, and the bathrooms are tiled in a seductive dark brown. There is a busy café on the ground floor and a terrace on the square in the summer.

Kasina Hotel (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 5574; www.kasina.stari-grad.co.yu; Terazije 25; s/d from 2904/5808DIN) In the Balkan-Moscow triangle on Terazije street, this place has decent and comfortable rooms. Depending on whether you go for the 'comfort' or 'standard' option you get air-conditioning and a minibar, or neither of those and slightly darker rooms. In the latter case try compensating by getting a room with a view of the square. A good location in any case.

Hotel Palace (Map pp276-7; ☎ 185 585; www.palacehotel.co.yu; Topličin Venac 23; s/d €60/82; ☑) Slightly better than other state hotels, it may still be a little overpriced for what it has to offer. The lobby is dolled up with a water feature and some leather armchairs. The rooms are equipped with a phone, TV and a massive bathroom. There is a good view of the city from the upstairs Panorama restaurant.

THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Hotel Moscow (Map pp276-7; Hotel Moskva; ☎ 268 6255; hotelmoskva@absolutok.net; Balkanska; s €33-56, d from €102; ☹) This is the most famous hotel in Belgrade and a lovely building it is too – an Art Nouveau structure dating from 1906 with a large terrace out front. Rooms range from cheaper singles, which are small but comfortable, to more spacious doubles and luxurious apartments with writing desks that'll make you feel like Lord Byron. If you can't remember what day it is, pop into the lift and check the carpet, changed each day with the weekday written on them. The bar downstairs is a gathering place for locals to have a drink, eat a cake and relax as Belgrade rushes by.

Hotel Prag (Map pp276-7; ☎ 361 0422; www.hotelprag.co.yu; Narodnog Fronta 27; s/d €34/63; ☹) This small hotel, hidden in what looks like someone's house, shows what a lick of paint can do to freshen up a room. The doubles are spacious and light, but the singles are a little cramped. The bathrooms have a scary blue light that does no favours to anyone's complexion in the morning.

Top End

Aleksandar Palas (Map pp276-7; ☎ 330 5300; Kralja Petra 13-15; apt €260; www.aleksandarpalas.com; ☹) An ultraposh place where you can have a pad to yourself. In fact, there are no rooms as such, only classy apartments, each with a living room, bedroom and bathroom. Then there are DVD players and home cinema systems with six speakers, Turkish baths, Finnish saunas, need we go on? So if your pockets are deep and you want to feel like the king of the hill for the night, look no further.

OUTER BELGRADE

Hyatt Regency (Map pp274; ☎ 301 1234; www.belgrade.regency.hyatt.com; Milentija Popovića 5; s/d from €245/265; ☹) A little less central than the Aleksandar Palas, this stately marble monument in New Belgrade has all the usual mod cons and luxury shops this kind of a place has to offer, and is close to the Museum of Contemporary Art.

Eating

Meat's the word on the modern (and traditional) Belgrader's tongue. And the Serbs are into their food. Big piles of it. Whether you choose to go for a traditional restaurant or a more modern affair, the atmosphere in Belgrade's restaurants is boisterous and the food affordable. Pick a place along Knez Mihailova, 29 Novembra or Makedonska, or one of the famous Skadarska street restaurants. If you don't mind floating while you eat, restaurants on the Danube are also a good option.

Many eat on the go, so the quality of quick bites is ensured, too. Kralja Petra street has some notable fast-food kiosks, green in colour and at the bottom of the street. Those around Trg Republike are open 24 hours, as are most of the ones by the train and bus stations. You can fill up for under 100DIN.

RESTAURANTS

Que Pasa? (Map pp276-7; ☎ 330 5377; Kralja Petra 13-15; www.que-pasa.co.yu; meals 600-700DIN; ☹ 8am-midnight) Is it a busy restaurant with a great bar, or a funky bar that does food? The menu is a curious mishmash of Mexican and Serbian, but the music is definitely Latin. Spacious, luminous and chic, this bar/restaurant has a happening buzz.

Jevrem (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 4746; Gospodar Jevremova 36; meals 300-500DIN; ☹ 10am-2am Mon-Sat, 2-10pm Sun) Set in a lovingly restored old Dorćol house and entered through a heavy walnut door, Jevrem is decorated to look like a place out of the 1920s. It has separate drinking and dining areas furnished with plush armchairs. Photographs of Belgrade from the '20s adorn the walls. This place breathes comfort. The food is traditional and simple. We recommend the Serbian beans at 280DIN, accompanied by one of the wines from the excellent selection. There's some live music, too.

Šešir Moj (My Hat; Map pp276-7; ☎ 322 8750; Skadarska 21; meals 300-500DIN; ☹ 8am-late) An intimate little restaurant with alcove rooms and walls obscured with an art gallery of oils and pastels. A place for romantics, especially when members of a Roma band swirl in playing their hauntingly passionate music. Go for the *punjena bela vešalica*, which is a pork fillet stuffed with *kajmak*. Finish with Serbian coffee and a piece of *orašnica* (walnut cake) if you've any room left.

Guli (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 7204; Skadarska 13; meals 400-600DIN; ☹ 11am-1am) And now for

THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

? (Map pp276-7; ☎ 635 421; Kralja Petra 6; meals 200-350DIN) There's no question about this being one of the best places in town for traditional food and décor. You'll be beckoned in by one of the smiling moustachioed old men standing outside. Tender lamb or veal *ispod saća* (baked in a special earthen pot under hot coals) is mouth-watering and plenty, with roast potatoes accompanied by shiny pickled peppers. The wooden interior is of an old-style Serbian tavern, with low tables and half-moon stools, and the service is jolly. The name is a result of a dispute between a previous owner and the Orthodox cathedral opposite.

something completely different. A Skadarska restaurant that is as spankingly modern and different from its neighbours as can be. Not only that, but Belgraders consider this a place of pilgrimage for the pizza and pasta on the menu. If you're not hungry, you can have some cocktails and snuggle up to what might be a Belgrade film star next to you. Great wine selection from Italy, Australia, Chile and Argentina.

Writers' Club (Klub Književnika; Map pp276-7; Francuska 7; meals 400-600DIN; ☎ 6pm-1am) This is a legendary institution that has been popular since the Tito era and was once frequented by the state-approved literati of the time. Despite not having the same cult status nowadays, it remains a Belgrade favourite. Many reminisce about the stuffed courgettes and roast lamb with potatoes, both of which have kept their cult status. Enter through the gate on the street and go into the grand stucco mansion, to the restaurant downstairs.

Dačo (☎ 278 1009; Patrisa Lumumbe 49; meals 250-500DIN; ☎ 10.30am-midnight) Dačo is a legend on the Belgrade dining scene. This all-Serbian restaurant has waiters in national dress, traditional music and fluttering trumpets attracting a crowd from across the city. It's a haul from the centre, so allow yourself half a day here. The boisterous atmosphere is great fun; try resisting the jocular musicians as they lure you into belting out traditional songs (or at least being an accompanying vocal). For authenticity the menu's in Cyrillic but English-speaking waiters will help you out. The entrées – *kajmak*, cheeses, *pršuta* (prosciutto) and other cold meats and salad items – served on wooden platters are the restaurant's speciality. Check out the Serbian mementos at the small shop. You will have to catch a taxi to get here from the city centre.

Priroda (☎ 411 890; Batutova 11; meals 25-400DIN; ☎ 9am-9.30pm, food from 12.30pm) Give the owner a medal for battling against adversity: here is a superb vegetarian restaurant in a land of human carnivores. Rediscover the delicate flavours of vegetables and pulses that don't normally appear in traditional Serbian cuisine. The macrobiotic cake is a mouth stunner. Priroda is about 6km east of the central train station.

Trattoria Košava (Map pp276-7; ☎ 627 344; Kralja Petra 6; meals 400-600DIN; ☎ 9am-1am Mon-Fri, noon-

1am Sat & Sun) A small eatery in which the kitchen is decidedly Italian. There's not much space at all in this cross between a family kitchen and a café/restaurant. If you like it cosy, this is your perfect lunch spot. The menu has pastas and pizzas for a proper lunch, or you can snack on a yummy cherry strudel and a coffee in the downstairs café.

Peking Restaurant (Map pp276-7; ☎ 181 931; Vuka Karadžića 2; meals 600-700DIN; ☎ 11am-midnight Mon-Sat, 2pm-midnight Sun) Boldly striking across national borders is this two-floor Chinese restaurant draped in red lanterns and Chinese décor, with tinkling music fortifying the oriental feeling (or compensating for the fact that none of the staff is Chinese). The meals are varied (40 different options), with inviting recipes like duck with walnuts and maybe a not-so-inviting deep-fried ice cream.

Kalemegdanska Terasa (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 2727; Kalemegdan bb; meals 400-900DIN; ☎ noon-1am) This slick peach-coloured restaurant in the grounds of Kalemegdan Citadel steals the city's views. Lovely terraces for summer dining alfresco beat the faux ancient interior. The menu consists of grilled meat and cutlets and diners seem to be charged for the location as well as the tasty food. For dessert, sample a Serbian walnut pie at 150DIN.

Plato (Map pp276-7; ☎ 658 863; Akademski Plato 1; meals 250-400DIN; ☎ 9am-2am Mon-Thu, 9am-3am Fri, 10am-3am Sat, noon-2am Sun) Plato (*plar-to*) is an eclectic mix of restaurant, café, bar and live-music venue. It provides enjoyable food, mostly Italian, in a relaxed atmosphere where you can eat, drink or just listen to jazz or Cuban rhythms.

Polet Restaurant (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 2454; Kralja Milana 31; meals 200-500DIN; ☎ 11am-11pm) With fat, shiny brass railings surrounding the upper mezzanine floor, and blue-and-white décor, you feel as if you're out at sea. Eat low or eat high here: a tasty fish soup at 90DIN or scampi à la Parisienne at 1150DIN. The succulent calamari (390DIN) is char-grilled to perfection.

Intercontinental (Map p274; ☎ 311 333; Vladimira Popovića, Novi Beograd; buffet breakfast 650DIN; ☎ 7am-10pm) Massive breakfasts. In fact, all-you-can-eat breakfasts, if your body is in need of a multitude of nutrients.

Also recommended in Skadarska street are **Ima Dana** (There Are Days; Map pp276-7; ☎ 323

4422; Skadarska 38; meals 250-350DIN; ☎ 11am-5pm & 7pm-1am) and **Tri Šešira** (Three Hats; Map pp276-7; ☎ 324 7501; Skadarska 29; meals 300-460DIN; ☎ lunch & dinner), both offering similar menus and entertainment.

QUICK EATS

Loki (Kralja Petra; 100-200DIN; ☎ 24hr) Dorćol's Loki is the most renowned of the fast-food kiosks. Its exquisite *pljeskavica* (a Serbian burger) is responsible for the long line of people at 1am. Recommended.

Pekara Centar Pizza (Map pp276-7; Kolarčeva 10; pizza 40DIN; ☎ 24hr) With its bright and cheery interior and French breads and pretzels hanging above the counter, its the freshly baked pizzas and pastry here that passers-by pop in for.

Belgrade's main fruit and veg **market** (Map pp276-7; cnr Brankova Prizrenska & Narodnog Fronta; ☎ 6am-1pm) is a scrounging ground for DIY food; there are also many supermarkets around Belgrade.

Drinking

Sometimes it's hard to distinguish between a café and a bar in Belgrade: both serve coffee and booze and some serve food. Many are quiet coffee places during the day and noisy, busy and smoky at night. All are open daily from early morning to at least midnight with a later start on Sunday. All around Belgrade, but particularly in the centre, café and bar terraces spread onto pavements in the spring and summer months.

Apart from serving excellent pizza, Belgraders flock to Guli (p285) for the cocktails. The exposed-brick walls, low-hanging subdued lights and long wooden tables are ideal for whispering sweet nothings into your sweetheart's ear.

CAFÉS

Hot Spot Café (Map pp276-7; ☎ 263 905; Studentski Trg 2; ☎ 8am-midnight) Glass-fronted and elegantly decorated with small sculptures and soft seats, this is a great (hot) spot for breakfast/brunch as well as night-time drinking. There is freshly squeezed orange juice, toasted sandwiches and delicious coffee. During the day, young and old come here to drink coffee and chat. In the evening the music is good and there's plenty to drink.

Russian Tsar (Ruski Car; Map pp276-7; ☎ 633 628; Obiljež venac 28; ☎ 8am-midnight) A grandiose,

SILICON VALLEY

You may think that this has something to do with the high-tech boom in California, and if you do, you're most certainly mistaken. The only boom occurring on the trendy Strahinjica Bana street (aka 'Silicon Valley') in Dorćol is the silicone attributes of trophy girlfriends coming here to accompany their gangsta boyfriends. Strahinjica Bana is a quiet daytime street with a string of fashionable bars. Approaching the pumpkin hour, there's nowhere to park, and hardly anywhere to walk. The only thing to do is to stand back and enjoy the show.

faded café with heavy chandeliers that feels like a Moscow salon that found itself in the middle of Knez Mihailova by surprise. This classic hang-out has comforted thirsty Belgraders for the last hundred years. Teas, coffees and alcoholic drinks are served and there is a leafy garden outside in summer as well as a fast-food takeaway hole-in-the-wall.

Rezime (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 4276; Kralja Petra 41) Classy Rezime with its leather armchairs and sleek glass'n'gold tables is on the ground floor of a magnificently ornate Art Nouveau building. The waiters wear bow ties and local businessmen sip their coffees while flicking through the fashion magazines displayed on each table. A great selection of hot chocolate.

Balkanski Špijun (Map pp276-7; ☎ 639 903; Vuka Karadžića 7a; ☎ 8am-midnight) Named after a cult Yugoslav film called *The Balkan Spy*, this small bar has spy memorabilia hanging on the walls: Lomo cameras, small notebooks and multipurpose can't-work-out-what-they-are-unless-you're-a-spy tools. The atmosphere is relaxed and the coffee good.

Tema (Map pp276-7; ☎ 337 3859; Makedonska 11-13; ☎ 8am-midnight) Subtly lit modern bar that both young and old are welcome to linger in. It does a pleasant line in coffees with a spirit kick.

BARS

Kandahar (☎ 0643343970; Strahinjica Bana 48; ☎ 8am-late) On the 'Silicon Valley' beat (see above), this place brings home the true meaning of a 'lounge' bar. The décor is Arabic with gentle drapes hanging overhead, and the reclining

position is obligatory on the soft cushions scattered on the floor and benches. This is a popular hang-out and apart from cocktails (200DIN to 300DIN), exotic types of tea are served, such as desert tea (which curiously includes mango) or tea for lovers. Or you could try Kandahar coffee, served with Turkish delight.

Ben Akiba (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 7775; Nušićeva 8; ☎ 9am-late) Unless you're a part of Belgrade's 'in' crowd, you're not supposed to know about this place. Hidden away in a 'secret' location (a converted flat), it started out as a haven for liberals to sip cocktails and discuss freedom during the Milošević years. Now it's Belgrade's chic who frequent this place renowned for its cocktail range. You can even choose a painting by a local artist from a selection displayed on the walls.

Movie Bar (Map pp276-7; ☎ 262 3818; Kolarčeva 6; ☎ 9am-1am) A long, long white room with a longish bar and many, many drinks. Under the Albania building, and next to the cinema (hence the name), this is a cool oasis during the summer heat and a cool jazz joint at night. Italian-style *aperitivo* (snacks and wine) is served in the afternoons between 5pm and 8pm.

Pazi Škola! (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 5437; cnr Dalmatinska & Takovska; ☎ 7pm-1am Mon-Thu, 7pm-late Fri, Sat & Sun) This is a great bar. Adjacent to the nightclub Plastic, Pazi Škola! is a blue room with a few sofas, tables and chairs, as well as a bit of standing room, so everyone can fit in. Classed best as a DJ bar, it's subdued during weeknights, with a few barflies enjoying a quiet drink, and then kicking on the weekends, with most of Belgrade's 'alternative' club crowd dancing until all hours.

DžKC – Džepni Kulturni Centar (Pocket Culture Centre; Map pp276-7; Kralja Milana 18; ☎ 9am-late) Don't be afraid when you enter the courtyard that looks like a nuclear wasteland (that someone actually lives in – note the clothes drying among the rubble), boldly approach the old house. Run and frequented by those not interested in fashion or sleek places, DžKC is what has been described as a neopunk gathering ground and drinking den that hosts cultural evenings and workshops. It's a lively place with colourful walls, local art, and a fabulous panoramic photo of Belgrade stretching across one of its walls.

Federal Association of World Travellers (Map pp276-7; ☎ 324 2303; 29 Novembra 7; ☎ 1pm-mid-

night Mon-Fri, 3pm-late Sat & Sun) Open the big black gate, follow the lights that suddenly come on and enter a place that looks like an eccentric granny's house. Cats roam around the three rooms all decorated with ornaments from the four corners of the globe. Tables are anything from a piano to an old sewing machine, lamps are crooked on table edges and facing you are photos of relatives you never knew. The Association hosts hedonistic house parties on weekends. Try a cocktail of the day at 250DIN.

Exclusive (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 2288; Knez Mihailova 41-45; ☎ 9am-2am Mon-Sat, noon-1am Sun) This basement beer joint is Belgrade's answer to a Munich beer hall. There's plenty of knees-up music for this lads' bar, with big snacks – sausage, bread and chips (70DIN) – as a sound bedrock for serious drinking.

Rio Bravo (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 5050; Kralja Petra 54; ☎ 11am-2am Mon-Sat, 5pm-2am Sun) Hitch yer horse outside, mosey in and shoot down some hard liquor in this bar kitted out with redundant Western film sets.

Three Carrots (Map pp276-7; ☎ 683 748; Kneza Milosa 16; ☎ 9am-1am) Allegedly Belgrade's first Irish pub, although it only vaguely resembles a pub at all. It does have a wooden interior. Importantly it has Guinness, serves snacks and, 'authentically', plays a lot of U2.

Entertainment

Welcome to club central. Belgrade's nightlife is well and truly awake and in this city you can have a lot of fun. Belgraders are party animals, and clubs are everywhere: in the city centre, off centre, on the river barges. The music stretches from well-known European and local DJs playing house, R&B, hip-hop or drum'n'bass to the beats of turbofolk pounding into the night.

If you'd rather take it easy, cinemas screen films in English (with Serbian subtitles) and concerts are held at Sava Centar.

CLUBS

City Clubs

Anderground (Underground; Map pp276-7; ☎ 625 681; www.underground.com; Pariška 1a; ☎ noon-midnight Sun-Thu, to 2am Fri & Sat) The city's most famous nightclub parties hard. Big names in the DJ world spin records on Saturdays. Dancers shake it all on two elevated platforms. There's whooping, whistling, sweating and

jigging. Drenched waiters collect glasses and dodge flying limbs with unbelievable skill. The club, set in an old cavern, has a large dancing area and a smaller area for when you can dance no more. About the only nightclub with wheelchair access.

Sargon (Map pp276-7; ☎ 063 667 722; Pariška 1a; ☎ noon-midnight Sun-Thu, to 2am Fri & Sat) Next door to Anderground but with a markedly different atmosphere. It's all disco, disco, disco here with '80s and '90s music and a more subdued crowd. Nevertheless, it's packed on weekends.

Akademija (Map pp276-7; ☎ 627 846; www.aka-demija.net in Serbian; Rajičeva 10; ☎ 6pm-late) This dark, graffitied underground club is where it was at in the Belgrade '80s. The big names of Belgrade's pop and rock scene played and drank within the dark walls. After suffering a decline in the '90s, Akademija is on the up again with a young crowd, a buzzing atmosphere and a minifootball table. Bands like Darkwood Dub or the up-and-coming Sila play here alongside good DJs.

Oh! Cinema! (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 4000; Kalemegdan Citadel; ☎ 9pm-5am) A rock-till-dawn café/bar on the eastern bulwarks of the citadel, overlooking the Danube and zoo. Open only in summer months so the tigers get to have some sleep during winter.

Plastic (Map pp276-7; cnr Dalmatinska & Takovska; ☎ 11pm-late Fri & Sat only) This is where the alternative crowd lets loose. A more intimate venue than Anderground, Plastic has great DJs spinning anything from house to trance and techno, and an electric atmosphere, with Pazi Škola! (see opposite) in the back to chill your danced-out bones.

Danube River Barges

Adjacent to Hotel Jugoslavija in Novi Belgrade is a kilometre-long strip of some 20 barges. Buses 15, 68, 603 and 701 from Trg Republike go to the Hotel Jugoslavija. Most barges are closed in winter.

Brave Heart (Hrabro Srce; Map p274; ☎ 851 1480; ☎ 10pm-4am) The 'Hagar cartoon strip'-style chunky wood-slab furniture would make Mel Gibson proud. A place to chill out, with DJ music to midnight and then live music.

Bibis (Map p274; ☎ 319 2150; ☎ 10am-2am) A subdued place, good for a chat and a drink before hitting its larger and louder neighbouring barges for an all-nighter. Popular in winter when other barges close.

Acapulco (Map p274; ☎ 784 760; ☎ noon-3am) Where young men who work out come to flaunt their money and female attachments. Mockingly referred to as sponsorship girls, they work on the basis of 'you look after me (plenty of gifts), and I'll look gorgeous beside you'. Music is fast and furious turbofolk.

Monza (Map p274; ☎ 319 0712; ☎ 10am-2am) More of an afternoon place where you can sunbathe on the large outdoor terrace and listen to the sounds of R&B.

Sava River Barges

On the western bank of the Sava River is a 1.5km strip of floating bars, restaurants and discos. Here you'll find Cocktail No Name playing pop and '80s music, Zippo for Serbian folk music, Exile pounding out techno and nearby Sound playing house and disco. Get there by walking over the Brankov Most or by tram 7, 9 or 11. Most of these are only open in summer.

CONCERTS & THEATRE

Bilet Servis (Map pp276-7; ☎ 628 342; Trg Republike 5; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat) A ticketing agency that sells tickets for concerts and theatre.

National Theatre (Map pp276-7; ☎ 620 946; Trg Republike; box office ☎ 10am-2pm Tue-Sun) In winter there's opera at this elegant theatre.

Kolarčev University Concert Hall (Map pp276-7; ☎ 630 550; Studentski Trg 5; box office ☎ 10am-noon & 6-8pm) The Belgrade Philharmonia often performs at this concert hall.

Serbian Academy of Arts & Sciences (Map pp276-7; ☎ 334 2400; Knez Mihailova 35; concerts 6pm Mon & Thu) Hosts a number of free concerts and exhibitions; check its window for details.

Dom Omladine (Map pp276-7; ☎ 324 8202; Makedonska 22) Has nonclassical music concerts, film festivals and multimedia events.

Sava Centar (Map p274; ☎ 213 9840; www.sava-centar.com; Milentija Popovića 9, Novi Beograd) Hosts major concerts.

For some free entertainment on a Sunday, wander along to the outer part of the Kalemegdan Citadel, where folk come to dance hand in hand the traditional way to pipe, accordion and drum.

CINEMAS

Tuckwood Cineplex (Map pp276-7; ☎ 323 6517; Kneza Miloša 7; tickets 150-280DIN) For the latest in

Hollywood blockbusters, this cineplex shows films in English or with English subtitles.

Shopping

Belgrade's main street, Knez Mihailova, is decked out with all the usual shops that are best at showing what globalisation is really about: fashion. Mango, Zara, Benetton and the likes are always crowded.

If you're after a souvenir, you'll be happy to know that there isn't a tacky Belgrade fridge magnet to be found. Instead you can get something a bit lacy to perk up your table, or hand-knitted woollens from the sellers in Kalemegdan Park.

Snoop around the **craft street market** (Map pp276-7; crn Kralja Milana & Njegoševa; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Sat) for handcrafted jewellery items and original oil paintings.

Street sellers may offer you a set of 1990s currency, a period when unimaginable hyperinflation ruined Serbia (see the boxed text, p269). A 500 billion dinar note should be included; its only value now is the chance to boast multibillionaire status.

Getting There & Away

BUS

The country is well served by buses: Belgrade has two adjacent bus stations: **BAS** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 636 299; Železnička 4) serves regional Serbia and some destinations in Montenegro, while **Lasta** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 625 740; Železnička bb) deals with destinations around Belgrade.

Sample services are Subotica (440DIN, three hours), Niš (460DIN, three hours), Podgorica (940DIN, nine hours), Budva (1160DIN, 12 hours) and Novi Pazar (580DIN, three hours) for Kosovo.

International services to Western Europe are good with daily buses to destinations there; see p325.

TRAIN

The **central train station** (Map pp276-7; ☎ 629 400; Savski Trg 2) has a very helpful **information office** (☎ 361 8487; platform 1; ☎ 7am-7pm). There's also a **tourist office** (☎ 361 2732; ☎ 7am-9.30pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun) for basic city information, an **exchange bureau** (☎ 6am-10pm) and **sales counter** (☎/fax 265 8868; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Sat) for Eurail passes at the track end of the station.

You can buy your tickets (bus or train) in the city centre at **Putnik Travel Agency** (Map

pp276-7; ☎ 334 5619; Trg Nikole Pašića 1; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat) for no extra charge.

Overnight trains run from Belgrade to Bar (1000DIN plus three-/six-berth couchette 1000/564DIN, 11½ hours). Frequent trains go to Novi Sad (199DIN, 1½ hours) and Subotica (420DIN, three hours).

For international trains, see p326.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Surcin airport is 18km west of Belgrade. The **JAT bus** (☎ 675 583) connects the airport with the JAT bus terminal at Trg Slavija (120DIN, 5am to 9pm hourly airport-town, 7am to 8pm hourly town-airport) and the central train station. Ignore the taxi sharks prowling in the airport; go outside and catch a cab to town for 450DIN to 600DIN.

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Belgraders park on the pavements. It's even regulated, with three parking zones requiring tickets bought from a street kiosk.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Belgrade has trams and trolleybuses with limited routes, while buses ply all over the city, New Belgrade and the suburbs.

Tickets cost 20DIN from a street kiosk or 30DIN from the driver; make sure you validate the ticket in the machine on board.

Tram No 2 is useful for connecting the Kalemegdan Citadel with Trg Slavija, bus stations and the central train station.

TAXI

Belgrade's taxis are plentiful and most use meters. Flag fall is 35DIN to 45DIN (depending on the company) and a 5km trip should cost around 200DIN. If the meter's not running, then point it out to the driver.

Taxi sharks, usually in flash cars, prey around the airport, train and bus stations looking for a rich fare. Airport to city should be about 500DIN; at the stations move away from the entrance and pick up a cruising cab.

Have your hotel call you a taxi or phone **Maxis** (☎ 581 111) or **Plavi** (☎ 555 999).

Around Belgrade

ZEMUN ЗЕМУН

Once a separate little town on Belgrade's outskirts, Zemun is now part of the big

city. But despite its integration, Zemun retained its 'a town within a city' feel, with a slow pace, and elegant Austro-Hungarian houses lining the little streets. Who would have thought that one of the most notorious mafia groups in the country (the 'Zemun clan', credited for, among other things, the smooth arrest of Slobodan Milošević and the murder of Zoran Đinđić) comes from a quiet little place like this? But don't be alarmed, it's all firmly underground.

Zemun sits on the southern bank of the Danube, some 8km northwest of Central Belgrade. This was the most southerly point of the Austro-Hungarian empire when its opponents, the Turks, were in control of Belgrade. Visitors come for the fish restaurants, boating or just ambling along the Danube.

Catch bus 83 from outside Belgrade's central train station and get off in the main street, Glavna, where the pedestrian-only Leninova street leads through a market down to the Danube. You can also walk there (takes around 45 minutes), across the Branko Bridge (Brankov most) and over the green meadows alongside the river.

Above the market area and up the narrow cobbled street of Grobnjačka, remnants of the old village lead uphill towards the **Gardoš**, a fortress with origins going back to the 9th century. Fifteenth-century walls remain and, more importantly, the **Tower of Sibirjanin Janko**. Built in 1896 to celebrate the millennial anniversary of the Hungarian state and to keep an eye on the Turks, the tower guards the city like a misplaced lighthouse.

Down the stairs that descend from the tower is **Nikolajevska church** (Njegoševa 43), an Orthodox church dating back to 1731. Inside this high-vaulted building, gleaming out of the gloom, is an astoundingly beautiful iconostasis carved in the baroque style, gold plated on black and with rows of saints painted on golden backgrounds.

Zemun Museum (☎ 617 766; Glavna 9; admission 100DIN; ☎ 9am-4pm Tue-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat & Sun) has a huge collection demonstrating the development of Serbian applied arts.

A great way to spend the afternoon, after you've had a look around town, is to go down to the river and choose one of the fish restaurants for a dinner accompanied with music and wine or hard liquor like the notorious *šljivovica* (plum brandy) before hitting the barges for night-time fun.

A suggestion for a good fish lunch is **Aleksandar** (☎ 199 462; Kej Oslobođenja 49; meals 500DIN; ☎ 9am-midnight), with an expansive fish menu drawn from both sea and river. Try its fiery-red *riblja čorba* (a peppery fish soup) and a huge chunk of bread to mop up the remains.

SMEDEREVO СМЕДЕРЕВО

If you like fortresses, head to Smederevo. Forty-six kilometres southwest of Belgrade, this small, otherwise unremarkable town boasts an imposing fortress that guards the southern bank of the Danube. A frequent bus service (130DIN, 1½ hours) from Belgrade's Lasta bus station makes this a pleasant day trip.

Smederevo Fortress (admission 10DIN; ☎ daylight hr) is a triangular fort with 25 towers and a water moat. An inner citadel overlooks the river. Built by despot Đurađ Branković, it served as his capital from 1428 to 1430. The fortifications were never really tested in battle, the only damage being wrought by time and the massive explosion of an ammunition train in WWII.

Smederevo Museum (admission 10DIN; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat & Sun) is a 'history of the town' museum with artefacts dating from Roman times and some interesting frescoes.

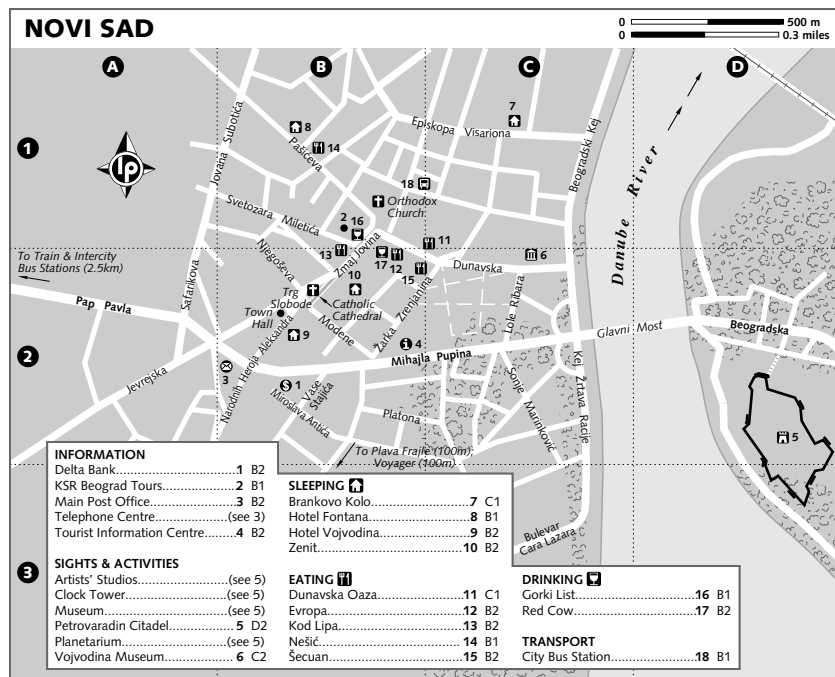
VOJVODINA ВОЈВОДИНА

North of the Danube, this flat fertile plain provides much of the food that fills the nation's larders. Vojvodina is a rich mix of Hungarian and Balkan cultures and traditions, and comprises a mixed population of Serbs, Hungarians, Croats, Romanians, Germans, Slovaks and Roma. The region divides into the three smaller geographical parts of Bačka, Banat and Srem. Towns like the region's capital Novi Sad or the more Hungarian Subotica have wide streets and charming buildings. The hilly Fruška Gora National Park is an 80km-long upland of rolling landscape, vineyards and some 14 monasteries as well as the charming little town of Sremski Karlovci, once the home of the Serbian Orthodox Patriarchate.

Novi Sad Нови Сад

☎ 021 / pop 299,000

Novi Sad, once an anonymous name to a Western ear, is fast gaining notoriety as the host of Serbia's biggest music festival, Exit.



A quiet town with wide streets, interesting cafés, bars, museums and the mighty Petrovaradin Citadel that dominates the town from the volcanic rock upon which it sits, Novi Sad becomes a young (and old) clubbers' mecca in July when the festival takes over the citadel. A jazz festival is held at various venues in town in November.

The town is definitely worth a day visit and makes a great base for exploring the Fruška Gora monasteries over a weekend, and Exit is highly recommended.

ORIENTATION

The adjacent train and intercity bus stations lie at the northern end of Bulevar Oslobođenja. It's a 2.5km walk to the city centre or a bus ride (11A) to the city bus station. One block south of the city bus station is Zmaj Jovina, leading into Trg Slobode, the heart of Novi Sad and dominated by the Catholic cathedral with its chequered roof tiles. Leading off Zmaj Jovina is the small cobbled street of Dunavska, the cultural hub of Novi Sad with a mix of brand-name clothing shops, cafés, restaurants and antique shops.

Two road bridges lead over the Danube to the eastern bank and the old town. Stairs beside the large church lead up to Petrovaradin Citadel.

INFORMATION

Delta Bank (☎ 487 0000; Mihajla Pupina 4; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) Cashes travellers cheques and has an all-cards ATM.

KSR Beograd Tours (☎ 27 455; fax 27 423; Svetozara Miletića 4; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri, 7am-1pm Sat) Train tickets at train station prices.

Main post office (☎ 614 708; Narodnih Heroja 2; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Sat, 8am-3pm Sun) The telephone centre is also located here.

Tourist information centre (☎ 421 811; www.novisadtourism.org.yu; Mihajla Pupina 9; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) On-the-button office with plenty of info.

Voyager (16 Straziłovska; per hr 60DIN; ☎ 24hr) Internet just southwest of the centre.

SIGHTS

Petrovaradin Citadel

The most impressive sight in Novi Sad is the Petrovaradin Citadel. A massive piece

of work perched on a hill overlooking the river, it is often referred to as the 'Gibraltar of the Danube'. Designed by the French architect Vauban, it was built by slaves, murderers and thieves who were 'earning their purgatory' in the process dubbed by many as hell. It is estimated that 70 to 80 men died per day in the 88 years it took to build the citadel (from 1692 to 1780). Petrovaradin was built to protect the town from Turkish invasions and was mainly populated by Austro-Hungarian army soldiers, although historical characters like Karadorde and Tito were held prisoners within its walls, albeit not at the same time. The village below was where the good life was, according to some. The town's 'ladies of the night' entertained the soldiers and the best Hungarian Roma came to play.

Within the citadel's walls is a **museum** (☎ 433 155; admission 70DIN; ☎ 9am-5pm) and a **planetarium** (☎ 433 308; admission 40DIN; ☎ shows 7pm Thu, 5pm Sat & Sun). The most fun part of the citadel is walking around it, exploring the many alcoves and enjoying the fantastic view of the river glistening in the sun.

The citadel's **clock tower** was erected by the Germans, who then introduced a 'clock tax' for each house that could see the clock – practically the entire town. The old clock-work has not been changed since (perhaps because the tax is no more) so the clock is a little slow in the winter, when the cold temperatures make the metal contract, and fast in the summer, when the mechanism relaxes. The hour hand is the longer one, so that everyone can tell what the hour is from a distance.

The charming **artists' studios** (☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Sat) are in the inner citadel, and visitors are welcome to explore. The artists are relaxed and friendly, chatting or snoozing when not busy working. Maybe over a coffee you'll find just that piece for back home.

Muzej Vojvodine

The main museum in Novi Sad is **Vojvodina Museum** (Muzej Vojvodine; ☎ 420 566; Dunavska 35-37; admission 70DIN; ☎ 9am-7pm Tue-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat & Sun), housed in two buildings. No 35 covers the history of Vojvodina from Palaeolithic times to the late 19th century; No 37 takes the story to 1945 with an emphasis on WWI

FESTIVAL FEVER

The 2005 **Exit festival** (www.exitfest.org; all-inclusive 1/2/4 days 1100/1790/2850DIN, all cheaper when bought in advance) was fronted by, among others, the White Stripes, Underworld and Fatboy Slim. An impressive roster of DJs, among them Gilles Peterson and Nitin Sawhney, all parted the weekend away. Thousands hit Novi Sad's Petrovaradin Citadel for what is becoming one of Europe's hippest festivals. In 2005 Exit was covered by BBC's Radio 1, which ranks it alongside festivals like Glastonbury and The Big Chill. The citadel is completely overtaken by the festival and about 20 stages are erected around the site. For a little festival that started as a protest against the Milošević regime, it's done quite well for itself, and the spectacular setting is a real treat for festivalgoers. Fingers crossed that it can only get better.

and WWII. The collection is impressive in its thoroughness, with the main explanatory panels in English.

SLEEPING

Zenit (☎ 621 444; www.hotelzenit.co.yu; Zmaj Jovina 8; s/d 3900/5400DIN; ☎ ☎ ☎) A glass-fronted hotel with comfortable, cosy rooms and chocolates balanced on the folded fresh linen. Zenit is very popular with foreign visitors and it is clear why: the place feels luxurious, comfortable and personal. The restaurant is for breakfast use only, and there is an Internet room in the hotel at a pricey 250DIN for a half-hour.

Hotel Vojvodina (☎ 622 122; vojvodina@visitnovisad.com; Trg Slobode 2; s/d from 2100/3000DIN) An atmospheric old hotel looking over the central square of Novi Sad with large but slightly run-down rooms.

Hotel Fontana (☎ 621 779; fax 621 779; Pašičeva 27; s/d 1500/2000DIN; ☎) The Fontana is a good find in a town stretched for cheap accommodation, plus it's close to the local bus station and there's a restaurant below. The rooms are simply decorated but clean and a geyser powers the hot water.

Brankovo Kolo (☎ /fax 528 263; www.hostelns.com; Episkopa Visariona 3; d/tr/q per person €8/7/6; ☎ 1 Jul-25 Aug) Novi Sad's cheapie is student accommodation only available in summer.

EATING & DRINKING

Kod Lipa (☎ 615 259; Svetozara Miletića 7; meals from 290DIN; ☎ 10am–11pm) A great atmosphere that beams you into a different age and good traditional Vojvodinian cooking are a seductive combination, making this the place to eat in Novi Sad. Opened in the late 19th century, the yellowed photographs on the wall show the place looking exactly the same then and now. Descend into the converted cellars and smell mellow wine in the vast barrels; there is seating among them within secluded alcoves.

Secuan (☎ 529 693; Dunavska 16; meals 300–400DIN; ☎ 9am–11pm Mon–Fri, 9am–1am Sat & Sun) It's unlikely that you will eat a better Chinese meal in Serbia. Opened especially for 1981 when Novi Sad hosted the world table tennis championship, it wowed the Chinese team back in the 1980s and still excels today.

Plava Frajle (☎ 613 675; Sutjeska 2; meals 300–400DIN; ☎ 9am–midnight) A popular knees-up restaurant just southwest of the centre. On Thursdays and weekends traditional music bands play their hearts out, the clientele join in with gusto and the party rips on until dawn. A good taster of local food is the *paprika u pavlaci* (an appetiser of yellow peppers in crème fraîche). We never understood why there were chairs fixed to the ceiling.

Dunavska Oaza (☎ 528 020; Dunavska 25; meals 400–600DIN; ☎ 9am–11pm) A fish restaurant that looks as if it were designed by a nostalgic sailor, with dangling fish nets and blue-and-white life buoys on the walls. Try some of the fresh Danube fish at 1000DIN per kilo.

Evropa (Dunavska 6; cakes 50–100DIN; ☎ 8am–midnight) A place every calorie-fearing woman should run a mile from because the cakes and iced creams are so beguiling. You can sit down or takeaway. Try *žito*, the traditional dessert made of crushed wheat and walnuts.

Nešić (Pašića 23; cakes 10–60DIN; ☎ 8am–9pm, closed Sun) Worth a visit as much to buy a squidgy cake as to appreciate the interior of this 1950s cake shop that's still spick-and-span with red leatherette bench seats.

Gorki List (☎ 622 029; Zmaj Jovina 11; ☎ 8am–midnight) Zebra-print armchairs and comfy cushions are ideal for lounging over a morning coffee, afternoon tea or evening drink. Slap bang in the centre.

Red Cow (cnr Dunavska & Zmaj Jovina; ☎ 8am–1am) Is this the long-lost partner of Red Bull?

A young crowd spends its evenings in this busy Irish publike bar with a wooden interior and tons of seating in the bar area and the upstairs attic room. A relaxed atmosphere and 16 different kinds of bottled beer, as well as draught Guinness and Nikšičko. Go into the courtyard opposite the city library on Zmaj Jovina, and climb to the 1st floor.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

There are frequent trains linking the **train station** (☎ 443 200; Bulevar Jaše Tomića 4) with Belgrade (199DIN, two hours) and Subotica (179DIN, 1½ hours).

Buses leave from the **bus station** (☎ 442 021; Bulevar Jaše Tomića 6) frequently for Belgrade (250DIN, 1½ hours).

AROUND NOVI SAD**Fruška Gora** Фрушка Гора

A small area of land with rolling hills rising from the Vojvodina plain, Fruška Gora is given over to farming, vineyards and orchards. Thirty-five monasteries were built between the 15th and 18th centuries to protect Serbian culture and religion from the Turks to the south. Fifteen of those monasteries are preserved today.

In all of the monasteries you will hear the murmur of people chatting inside, see dirty wellies, clothes pegs, smoke out of the chimneys, and smell food being prepared; these monasteries are where important parts of life take place and many villagers come here on weekends for christenings and weddings. Krušedol and Novo Hopovo are perhaps the best known and the most easily accessible. All of the following are within 10km of each other and are well signposted.

Krušedol Monastery, near Krušedol Selo, was built by the Serbian ruler Đorđe Branković in the early 1500s. Like many monasteries in this area the church was severely damaged during one of the Turkish invasions and later rebuilt. The four central pillars are 16th-century originals and are very well preserved. Vivid frescoes, some original, leap out from the walls as a storyboard for biblical events.

Novo Hopovo, near Irig, is one of the oldest of the region's monasteries (1576), and in one of the loveliest settings for walks. It influenced the design of later churches

but suffered severe damage during WWII. Restoration of the frescoes revealed earlier work painted under the influence of Cretan masters who also worked at the Mt Athos Monastery in Greece. Many of the frescoes are incomplete but nevertheless they present powerful images.

Grgeteg is different from most other Orthodox monasteries – the church has no frescoes, but is adorned with paintings of flowers and has ochre walls and a light interior. Its centrepiece is the icon of the Holy Mother Trojeručica (meaning 'of three hands'), a copy of the famous icon from Hilander Monastery at Mt Athos, in front of which prayers are sung.

The 16th-century **Velika Remeta** was built entirely out of bricks rather than stone like others. It has the highest bell tower (built between 1733 and 1735) in the region, at nearly 40m. There are only new frescoes inside the church.

Other monasteries in the area are **Mala Remeta**, **Vrdnik** (or Ravanica) and **Jazak**.

Sremski Karlovci Сремски Карловци

Sremski Karlovci takes you by surprise. It's hidden away in the midst of Fruška Gora, but it has some of the most beautiful buildings in the country, all concentrated on the main town square. It's strange that such a historic little town never expanded to become a bigger, more important place in later years.

There is a **tourist office** (☎ 882 127; Branka Radičevića 7; ☎ 8am–6pm) on the main square.

Sremski Karlovci was the centre of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the 19th century and has a magnificent baroque **Orthodox cathedral** (1758–62) with an impressive iconostasis and 18th-century icons. Also on the square are the neoclassical **town hall** (1806–11) and the **high school building**, a cross between Art Nouveau and traditional Serbian style.

Off the square, down Mitropolita Strati-mirovića street, is the small white **Lower church** with a ghostly white plane tree.

The round **Peace Chapel** sits on the southern side of town, and is highly significant for it commemorates the signing of the Peace Treaty between the Turks and Austrians in 1699. The chapel (1817) was designed to resemble a Turkish military tent with four entrances enabling everyone

to enter at the same time and thus be equal to each other.

If you decide to stay the night in Sremski Karlovci, **Hotel Boem** (☎ 881 038; Branka Radičevića 5; per person 800DIN) has clean and tidy rooms. The **Četri Jelena** (Branka Radičevića 1; meals 200–400DIN) is a small and cosy restaurant with the usual traditional meat and good-value set menus.

Subotica Суботица

☎ 024 / pop 148,400

This is as close as you will get to being in Hungary, without actually crossing the border. Serbian and Hungarian languages mix in the streets, the smell of fresh goulash fills the nostrils, and the lovely Art Nouveau buildings (1908–12) add sparkle to this relaxed provincial town. The lakeside resort of Palić, 10km from the Hungarian border, is a crowd puller in the summer months. Subotica makes for a lovely day trip from Belgrade, or a stopover on your way to Hungary.

ORIENTATION

Walk out of the train station and through the park to Đure Đakovića. Left (southeast) leads to the bus station and on to Palić. On the right is the amazing Art Nouveau Modern Art Gallery. Also to the left, about 100m from the park, is a pedestrian street (Korzo) that leads down to the old heart of Subotica, Trg Republike and the town hall.

INFORMATION

Delta Bank (☎ 554 011; Cara Dušana; ☎ 8am–3pm Mon–Fri, to noon Sat) All-cards ATM, cashes travellers cheques.

Exchange office (Train station; ☎ 7am–7pm Mon–Sat, 7am–noon & 3–7pm Sun)

IPS (☎ 551 004; Korzo 8; ☎ 9am–9pm Mon–Fri, to 3pm Sat) Some English titles plus books on Subotica.

Left-luggage office (Train station; per item 60DIN; ☎ 24hr)

Tourist information office (☎ 554 809; ticsu@yunord.net; Korzo 15; ☎ 8am–8pm Mon–Sat, to noon Sun) Very helpful folk with maps, pamphlets and advice on what to see.

SIGHTS

Subotica's main attraction is the Art Nouveau architecture, especially if you are coming from inland Serbia, where the Serbian-Ottoman architecture prevails. The

majority of the sights are along the main street, Korzo, and on the main square, Trg Republike.

The **town hall** (Trg Republike), built in 1910, is a curious mixture of Art Nouveau and something Gaudí may have had a playful dab at. It houses an engaging **historical museum** (admission 50DIN; ☎ 9am-2pm Tue-Sat) displaying regional life and the skull of a mammoth. If the exquisitely decorated council chambers are open, don't miss seeing them. It seems that even the proprietors of McDonald's know beauty when they see it, for the fast-food giant has a branch in this fabulous town hall building.

An even more beautiful piece of Art Nouveau architecture is the gracefully decorated **Modern Art Gallery** (☎ 553 725; Trg Lenjina 5; ☎ 7am-1pm Mon, Wed & Fri, 7am-6pm Tue & Thu, 9am-noon Sat). Adorned with mosaics, floral patterns, ceramic tiles and stained-glass windows, this is one of the most stunning buildings in the country.

The 1854 **National Theatre building** on the main square is a Romanesque terracotta structure resting on six heavy pillars which houses Serbia's oldest theatre.

Along Korzo, the **Continental Bank building** is another Art Nouveau gem. A little further away is the first Art Nouveau building to have sprung up in Subotica, the **synagogue**. This grandiose building is now out of use, since most of Subotica's Jewish population was either killed in WWII or emigrated in the postwar years.

SLEEPING & EATING

Hotel Patria (☎ 554 500; www.patria-su.com in Serbian; Đure Đakovića; s/d 1950/3050DIN) An overpriced hotel with dorm-like retro rooms and tiger-print shower curtains. Unfortunately, there isn't much choice in the area. The reception is super-equipped, however, with currency exchange and rent-a-car offices, a souvenir shop, a casino, and a men's and women's hairdresser. You can have a lot of fun!

Student Centar (☎ 546 637; M V Tošinice 7; ☎ 15 Jun-30 August; per person 600DIN) This is a student hall that rents rooms over the summer. The rooms are doubles and triples with a kitchenette and a shared bathroom, generally in a good state. It's worth calling in advance, since this is a new venture, or checking with the Youth Hostels website (www.hostels.org.yu) or the tourist information office first.

Népkör (☎ 555 480; Žarka Zrenjanina 11; meals 250-400DIN; ☎ 8am-midnight Mon-Sat, to 4pm Sun) A large, airy restaurant where you can sample quality Hungarian cuisine. Have a steaming, spicy goulash for 300DIN or *gombásztl* (mushroom and cheese dish) for 280DIN. On Sundays gorge yourself on a buffet lunch for 400DIN.

Ravel (☎ 554 670; Nušičeva 2; cakes 50-100DIN; ☎ 9am-10pm Mon-Sat, 11am-10pm Sun) This is one of the loveliest cafés you are likely to set foot in. The beautiful Art Nouveau interior is as if untouched for a century, with pastel green walls, stained-glass partitions and golden lamps and tables. You can soak up the sun by the large windows and enjoy delicious cakes and coffee.

Vento Pizza (Korzo; ☎ 8am-midnight) A pizza slice from a hole in the wall at 85DIN.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

From the **train station** (☎ 555 606) there are two local trains to Szeged, Hungary (155DIN, 1¼ hours) and one international train. Trains to Belgrade (155DIN, 3½ hours) also call at Novi Sad.

For day trips to Subotica there's a handy train leaving from Belgrade at 8.20am, arriving in Subotica at 11.28am; the return is at 5.14pm arriving back in Belgrade at 8.15pm.

The **bus station** (☎ 555 566; Marksov Put) has regular buses to Szeged (135DIN, 1½ hours) and hourly buses to Novi Sad (300DIN, two hours) and Belgrade (400DIN, 3½ hours).

Palić Палић

Eight kilometres west of Subotica is the park resort of Palić. Crowds flock here in the summer to escape the heat by the 5.5-sq-km lake, where you can go boating, swimming, fishing and sailing. Outside the park on the Subotica road is a string of shops, pizza joints and a supermarket. In mid-July Palić hosts an international film festival.

Bus 6 from outside the Hotel Patria in Subotica goes to Palić (20 minutes, 35DIN); alternatively a taxi will cost 150DIN to 200DIN.

SOUTHERN SERBIA

Despotovac Деспотовац

☎ 035 / 25,500

The rural idyll of Southern Serbia is complete with peasants working the land, ruffled

haystacks along the roadside, dogs barking aimlessly, and people going about their day-to-day business in the small towns and villages. Among them is the tiny town of Despotovac, a quiet place on an eastern offshoot of the Belgrade-Niš corridor. It would be of no interest to the visitor were it not for the fascinating Resava Cave and the placid Manasija Monastery outside of the town.

SIGHTS

Manasija Monastery

The magnitude of this fortresslike monastery may be surprising to those who expect monasteries to be small and intimate places. But the 11 towers encircling the fortified walls were built for a reason. And the reason is (you guessed it) the Turks.

During the first half of the 15th century, Manasija was a refuge for artists and writers fleeing the Turkish invasion of Kosovo. The church was built during this time and the remaining frescoes date back to the early 1400s, the heyday of the Morava school of painting. The artists belonging to this school were either trained in Salonica or heavily influenced by Greek masters.

Despite their efforts to defend themselves and the monastery, the Serbs were conquered and Manasija taken over by the Turks on several occasions. This is why the remaining frescoes are only patchy. Many consider the Manasija frescoes to be the predecessors of the Serbian equivalent to Renaissance art (which might have happened had the artists not been so rudely interrupted).

The monastery is about 2km north of Despotovac.

Resava Cave

Up in the hills 20km beyond Despotovac **Resavska Pećina** (Resava Cave; ☎ 611 110; resp@milnet.co.yu; adult/child 150/80DIN; ☎ 9am-5pm 1 Apr-1 Nov) was not discovered until 1962. Some 4km have been explored, but only 80m are open to the public. The guided tour takes around 40 minutes and goes through several halls where lonely stalagmites and stalactites drip, with only some moss or a bat for company. It's suspected that the cave explorers were often hungry during their expedition for they named many of the 45 million-year-old formations things like 'Turkey Thigh' or 'Chicken Drum'. The

temperature inside the cave is a constant 7°C, so bring a jacket in the summer.

There's no public transport to the cave from Despotovac, so it'll cost about 1500DIN by taxi.

SLEEPING & EATING

The **Kruna Motel** (☎ 611 659; Rudnička bb; s/d 1050/1900DIN; ☎) is good value if you wish to stay the night. The bedroom slippers make you feel at home. The hotel staff will organise transport to the cave and monastery for 1500DIN.

Aside from the usual fast-food kiosks with grilled meat, you can try **Grand Restaurant** (☎ 611 552; bus station; meals 200-300DIN; 6am-midnight Mon-Sat, 3pm-midnight Sun), a bus-station café with some good food such as grilled trout.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Belgrade buses leave four times a day (350DIN, three hours).

Topola Топола

☎ 034 / 25,000

There's not much in Topola, but many Serbs regard this small rural town some 40km south of Belgrade as sacred since it was from here that Karađorđe Petrović pitched the Serbian insurrection against the Turks in 1804.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

The bus station is 10 minutes' walk north of the centre on the Belgrade road. From the Tourist Organisation office it's a five-minute walk south to the museum and 15 to the Church of St George. There are no ATMs in town.

The **Tourist Organisation** (☎ 811 172; Kneginje Zorke 13; ☎ 8am-4pm Nov-Mar, 8am-7pm Apr-Oct) has some pieces in English on Karađorđe plus a town map.

SIGHTS

The **museum** (Kraljice Marije; admission 100DIN; ☎ 9am-5pm) is one of the remnants of the fortified town built by Karađorđe and from where he led his rebellion. It houses artefacts of that period plus personal effects. Within the entrance stands Karađorđe's personal canon with one handle missing. This was removed by his grandson, King Petar I, to be made into his crown when he ascended to the Serbian throne in 1904.

The admission ticket also gets you in to the Church of St George and Petar House. Set in wooded parkland atop a hill, the **Church of St George** (Avenija Kralja Petra I; ☎ 8am-7pm Apr-Oct, 8am-4pm Nov-Mar) is a white marble, five-domed church built between 1904 and 1912 by King Petar I as a memorial to his grandfather, Karadorde. The interior is decorated with copies of the best Serbian medieval frescoes executed in millions of mosaic pieces. Similar mosaics depict the medieval kings of Serbia holding the monasteries they founded. The southern tomb is Karadorde's while the other is King Petar's.

Just downhill from the Church of St George is a small house, **Petar House** (Avenija Kralja Petra I; ☎ 8am-7pm Apr-Oct, 8am-4pm Nov-Mar), used by workmen building the church. King Petar also stayed here on occasions when he came to inspect progress on the church. Today it houses temporary historical and art exhibitions.

SLEEPING & EATING

Hotel Oplenac (☎ 811 430; Avenija Kralja Petra I; s/d 1280/1760DIN) This is the only hotel in town, and sits at the foot of the church park. Built in 1934 by King Aleksandar, the hotel has an old and a new part. Although you can see a smudge of its former sparkle, the Oplenac is now a run-down state hotel.

Breza (☎ 812 463; Krajiskih Brigada 25; meals 120-250DIN; ☎ 8am-late) Five minutes' walk downhill from the town centre, this local favourite is a restaurant built into someone's house. The food is traditional, hearty and cheap.

Alternatively, there are a number of food kiosks on the main street serving grilled meat.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Frequent buses travel to Belgrade (400DIN, three hours).

Niš Ниш

☎ 018 / pop 250,000

A city that most will stop in on their way to somewhere else (like, say, Sofia, Skopje or Thessaloniki), Niš feels a little forgotten. Although there is not much to lure the visitor, plenty of life fills the streets, with horse-drawn carriages racing alongside cars, and casino lights that hope to seduce the idle youngster. The Ottoman Tower of Skulls

(Čele Kula) is an infamous tourist attraction you may want to see.

HISTORY

Niš was first settled in pre-Roman times and flourished during the time of local-boy-made-good Emperor Constantine (AD 280-337), whose extensive palace ruins lie 4km east of town.

Turkish rule lasted from 1386 until 1877 despite several Serb revolts; the Čele Kula, a Turkish victory tower of Serbian skulls, is a grim reminder of their failure. The massive Tvrđava Citadel is another remnant of Turkish domination.

Niš had a tough time in the last century. The Nazis built one of the more notorious concentration camps in the country here, ironically named 'the Red Cross', where many perished.

During the '90s conflict, Niš was an infamous gathering place for Serb nationalists, and this kind of 'redneck' attitude is still evident with pictures of characters like Karadžić and Mladić on sale on the main street.

ORIENTATION

North of the Nišava River is the mighty Tvrđava Citadel, which shelters the adjacent market and the bus station. The train station is to the west on Dimitrija Tucovića; south of the river is the CBD.

The citadel hosts a blues, rock and pop festival in July and a jazz festival in October.

INFORMATION

Komercijalna Bank (Nikole Pašića 45) All-cards ATM.

KSR Beograd (☎ /fax 523 808; Trg Oslobođenja 9; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) Sells train tickets.

Post office (Voždova Karađorđa 13a; ☎ 8am-8pm) There's also Internet access for 50DIN per hour.

Tourist Organisation of Niš (☎ 542 588; torg@bankerinter.net; Voždova Karađorđa 7; ☎ 7.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) Basic tourist literature; books domestic buses.

SIGHTS

The **Tvrđava Citadel** (Jadranska; ☎ 24hr) was built in the 18th century to consolidate the Turks' hold on the region. Enter through the Stambol Gate into the spacious courtyard filled with souvenir shops, restaurants and cafés that attract the local crowd.

The macabre **Tower of Skulls** (Čele Kula; ☎ 322 228; Braće Tankosić bb; adult/child 40/30DIN; ☎ 8am-

8pm May-Oct, 9am-4pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun Nov-Apr) was erected by the Turks in 1809 as a ghoulish warning to would-be Serbian rebels. During 1809 a force under the duke of Resava trying to liberate Niš attacked a larger Turkish force. The Serbs suffered heavily and the duke desperately rushed the Turkish defences firing his pistol into their powder magazine. The resulting explosion reportedly wiped out 4,000 Serbs and 10,000 Turks but not enough to deny the Turks victory. The dead Serbs were beheaded, scalped and their skulls embedded in this squat tower. Only 58 skulls remain; the rest have disappeared over time.

Mediana (☎ 550 433; Bulevar Cara Konstantina bb; admission museum adult/child 40/30DIN, site free; ☎ 9am-4pm Tue-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun), on the eastern outskirts of Niš, is what remains of a 4th-century Roman palace complex, that of Constantine. Archaeological digging has revealed a palace, forum and an expansive grain-storage area with some sizable, almost intact, pottery vessels.

SLEEPING & EATING

Hotel Ambassador (☎ /fax 541 800; Trg Oslobođenja bb; s/d 2800/4100DIN) Right in the middle of the city centre, the tall glass building of Hotel Ambassador is the city's skyscraper pride and joy. The rooms are a little overpriced since you don't even get a TV, but the views are great. It's clean and bright, with laundry service. The retro reception is a hub of middle-aged activity.

Hamam (☎ 513 444; Tvrđava; meals 200-400DIN; ☎ 9am-midnight) A restaurant in a converted Turkish bath sounds like a great idea, but this feels like the space was slightly wasted on the owner. Considering the wonderful interior, surely an Eastern or more daring style would have been better. Nevertheless, the separate alcoves are pleasant, with warm lighting and a man tinkling on a keyboard. The food is a choice of Italian meals and national fare like *dimljena vešalica* (a roll of smoked pork stuffed with cream cheese and almonds).

Mama Pizza (☎ 45 044; Dušanova 43; meals about 350DIN; ☎ 9am-midnight) A restaurant decorated in Tuscan yellow, burnt amber and sienna, the colours of Italy all to accompany the pasta and pizza. It's very popular with the thirty-something crowd who come to munch, drink wine and listen to the smooth live music.

Sharing the same turn-of-the-19th-century building, adorned with winsome cherubs, are two interesting café/bars.

Tramvaj (Tramway; ☎ 547 909; Pobede 20; ☎ 8am-midnight) Get on the tram, sit down in your very own compartment and, instead of a ticket, order a coffee or ice-cream.

Broz (☎ 064 979 9909; Pobede 20; ☎ 10am-late) A shiny bar dedicated in its entirety to the late Josip Broz (Tito) that, given his sense of style, the man himself would surely have approved of. A large photomontage of Broz and Castro chuckling in the Havana heat covers a wall, and a bust of the Marshal guards the ladies' toilet. A fine range of single-malt whiskies is available for hours of sampling.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The **bus station** (Knežinj Ljubice) has frequent services to Belgrade (440DIN, three hours), Brus for Kopaonik (230DIN, 1½ hours), four daily to Novi Pazar (345DIN, four hours) and three to Užice for Zlatibor (455DIN, five hours).

Eight trains go to Belgrade (500DIN, 4½ hours) and two to Bar (1060DIN plus three-/six-berth couchette 680/317DIN, 11½ hours).

Копаноник Копаноник

Kopaonik, Serbia's prime ski resort and a national park, is great for those looking for snow fun without the glamour or prices to match and a rather long season. It is based around the Pančićev Peak (Pančićev Vrh, 2017m), overlooking Kosovo. Ski runs totalling 44km range from nursery slopes to difficult, served by 22 lifts also linked to 20km of cross-country runs. Depending on the weather, the ski season here runs from the end of November to the end of March, or even early April.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

Commercial and Delta banks cash travellers cheques and have ATMs dotted around the resort. The website www.kopaonik.net has some basic information and an area map.

There are several ski schools, equipment-rental places, and daily and weekly lift passes are available.

ACTIVITIES

There's all the usual winter activities you'd expect: skiing and snowboarding plus

snormobiles. In summer there's hiking, horse riding and mountain biking.

SLEEPING & EATING

There are several large-scale hotels with restaurants, gym facilities, pizzerias, discos and shops. Expect to pay from 1300DIN to 3000DIN for a single and 2250DIN to 4000DIN per double depending on the time of year and whether you take bed and breakfast or full board.

Possible accommodation options are the two-star **Hotel Jugobank** (☎ 036-71 040; Kopaonik) and **Hotel Junior** (☎ 037-825 051; fax 823 033; Brzeće), which is part of the Youth Hostel organisation. Inquiries can be made through the Youth Hostel organisation in Belgrade (see p284).

Balkan Holidays (www.balkanholidays.co.uk) A British outfit that books ski holidays in Kopaonik. Its website has a topographical map showing the ski runs.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

In summer and winter seasons there are three daily buses from Belgrade and one from Niš.

Zlatibor Златибор

☎ 031 / pop 156,000

Another ski resort, but the season is from December to February – shorter than Kopaonik's due to the lower altitude. Its stunning mountain scenery and walks along marked routes draw crowds during the summer months.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

Zlatibor is a patchwork of small settlements centred on Tržni centar, a village of shops, eating and drinking places, a market and a bus stop.

Anitours (☎ /fax 841 855; www.anitours.co.yu; Tržni centar; ☎ 8am-6pm) Books accommodation and half-/one-day tours for €10/20.

Gr@nd CyberCenter (Naselje Sloboda; per hr 100DIN; ☎ 10am-2am) In the shopping complex near the Olimp hotel.

Komercijalna Bank (☎ 845 182; Tržni centar; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-3pm Sat Jan, Feb, Jul & Aug, 8am-4pm Mon-Fri 8am-3pm Sat rest of year) Cashes travellers cheques and has an all-cards ATM.

M Tours (☎ 841 911; office@m-tours.co.yu; Tržni centar; ☎ 8am-6pm) Books accommodation and organises tours.

Tourist Organisation (☎ 845 103; ☎ 8am-6pm Mar-Jun, 8am-10pm Jul-Feb) At the bus stop; provides tourist information, arranges private accommodation and sells bus tickets.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Zlatibor is a great skiing place for kids or faint-hearted adults. But don't dismiss it just yet; harder runs are being prepared and a couple are already in use. Ski schools and equipment-rental places are in Tržni centar.

Spend a day in the wonderful museum village of **Sirogojno** (☎ 802 291; admission 700DIN; ☎ 9am-4pm Oct-Apr, 9am-7pm rest of year). Set on a picturesque mountainside, Sirogojno is a meticulous reconstruction of a 19th-century Serbian village. The high-roofed wooden houses are furnished, and under the cooking utensils warm ashes smell as if someone had just heated a pot of stew. If you visited Belgrade's Ethnographic Museum, you'll have noticed many of the same items, but here in Sirogojno, they are in their 'natural habitat'. After a walk among the pines your appetite will be roaring for a homemade lunch in the wooden-hut restaurant (meals 100DIN to 300DIN) and a hot *rakija*.

Other activities include visits to the Stopića cave at Rožanstvo, the Uvac Monastery at Stublo and old wooden churches at Dobroselica, Jablanica and Kucani. It's also possible to visit the Mileševa Monastery, which houses the famous white angel fresco. Summer activities include paragliding, walking, horse riding and mountain biking.

A day trip from Zlatibor can also incorporate the **Sargan 8 narrow gauge steam railway** (Morca Gora to Sargan Vitas; 2½hr trip 400DIN; ☎ Apr-Sep), famous for its figure of eight ascension of the mountains towards Bosnia and Hercegovina.

SLEEPING & EATING

Most visitors choose to stay in private rooms and apartments. There are two peak seasons: winter (January and February) and summer (June to August). Apartments in season typically cost €30 to €80 for two to six people and €7 to €13 less out of season; full board costs an extra €18. Cheaper rooms with shared bathrooms are available for €8 to €15 in season and €7 out of season.

The following hotels are open all year.

Olimp (☎ 842 555; fax 841 953; Naselje Sloboda bb; s/d/tr B&B from 2200/3600/4500DIN, s/d/tr half board

3000/4800/7500DIN; ☎) Smashing works of art decorate this modern hotel. You can have your morning coffee on the balcony and breathe in the fresh mountain air. Prices remain the same all year but reduce after three days' stay. The penthouse apartment at 2500DIN per person is suitable for six and massive with three double bedrooms.

Hotel Jugopetrol (☎ 841 467; s/d/tr B&B from 2100/3600/4800DIN, s/d/tr half board 2400/4200/5400DIN) You could expect anything from a hotel with the word 'petrol' in its name. But this is a large and welcoming place with spacious, comfortable rooms with TV, phone, small balconies and sweets on the pillows. Off the lobby is a glass conservatory selling naughty cakes. This hotel is about 200m southwest of Tržni centar.

There are more pizza and *ćevapčići* joints, cafés and bars than you could visit in a month.

Zlatni Bor (☎ 841 638; meals from 250DIN; ☎ 7am-midnight) A hunger-stopping place for breakfast with a view over the lake. About 50m northeast of Tržni centar.

Zlatiborska Koliba (☎ 841 638; meals 250-600DIN; ☎ 8am-midnight) Wooden ceilings, a big brick-arched bar, an open fireplace and good Serbian food chased by slugs of *rakija* make this a suitable place to recover from the exhaustion of skiing or hiking. In season there's live traditional music. The house speciality is *teleća prsa* (a stew of veal, potatoes, *kajmak* and vegetables in an earthenware pot cooked over an open fire). It's at the foot of the ski slopes.

SHOPPING

Apart from fruit and veg, the market sells all manner of interesting things. For the nippy weather there's a range of brightly coloured chunky pullovers and gloves; for presents you could buy intricate lacework, a pair of *opanci* (traditional Serbian leather shoes) with the curly toes or *čutura* (wooden bottles) for holding your *rakija* stash.

On the food and drink front there's plenty of domestic *rakija*, honey, pickles, several varieties of *kajmak*, *pršuta* (smoked meats) and dried herbs for tea.

GETTING THERE & AROUND

Three daily express buses leave the **bus stand** (☎ 841 587) for Belgrade (400DIN, four hours), one bus daily heads to Niš (425DIN,

four hours) and hourly ones go to Užice (65DIN, 45 minutes), the nearest railhead.

Minibuses ply the villages in season.

Novi Pazar Нови Пазар

☎ 020 / pop 86,000

Novi Pazar is an explosion of bizarre architectural diversity in a small space: an Ottoman kasbah centre on one side of the Raška River, arched by a bridge attached to the UFO-like Hotel Vrbak, and backed by elaborate buildings and apartment blocks that whiff of socialism. All of this is speared with minarets reaching for the sky.

The Turks were not ousted from here until 1912. Novi Pazar is a gateway town for Kosovo, and there are some interesting churches to visit as well as the Unesco-protected Sopoćani Monastery.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

The Raška River runs through the town, placing the old Turkish fortress, Turkish quarter and the mosque of Altun Alem on the southern side. The peculiar Hotel Vrbak spans the river. The street of 28 Novembar, on the other side of the river, has numerous cafés, bars and restaurants.

SIGHTS

Checking out the old town's little shops, each individually dedicated to selling meat, coffee or nuts, and having a Turkish coffee in one of the old cafés, is good fun for a half-day. Perhaps you can find a copper souvenir too.

Sopoćani Monastery

Nestling in one of the most beautiful settings in Serbia, the Sopoćani Monastery is Unesco protected and a real treat. Built by King Uroš in mid-13th century, not only did the frescoes inside miraculously survive three centuries of exposure to the elements, they also remained very well preserved. Destroyed by the Turks at the end of the 17th century, the monastery was abandoned until it was restored in the 1920s. It displays the definite influence of Romanesque art, giving the frescoes a rhythm and vibrancy that makes the painted figures actors in their own stories. Some of the monks speak English and will be more than happy to give you the historical lowdown and a drink in their lush garden.

Church of St Peter

On a bluff on the Kraljevo road at the edge of town is the small stone Church of St Peter (Petrova Crkva). It's the oldest in Serbia with parts dating from the 8th century. Surrounding it is an ancient cemetery; if locked ask at the nearest house for the keeper of the huge iron key.

Inside the rough masonry, a step-down baptismal well and feet-polished flagstones provide a tangible sense of the ancient. The 13th-century frescoes are incomplete due to damage.

Columns of St George Monastery

Rising out of a cove 3km uphill from the Church of St Peter is the still-damaged Columns of St George (Đurđevi Stupovi) Monastery, the oldest monastery in Serbia, dating from 1170. The story goes that Stefan Nemanja, ruler of much of what is now southern Serbia, was captured by the Turks in 1172 and promised God that if he gained his freedom he would endow a monastery to St George. He was eventually released, and later in life he abdicated in favour of his son and became the monk and saint Simeon. St Simeon did indeed endow this monastery as promised, and was eventually buried here. The church was extensively damaged by the Turks in the same fit of destruction that befell Sopoćani. Repairs were done in the 1900s but undone in WWII when German troops removed stonework for their defences. Consequently only the western and northern sides of the church remain today.

SLEEPING & EATING

Hotel Vrbak (☎ 315 300; Maršala Tita bb; s/d from 1800/2500DIN) Once considered an architectural masterpiece and the most impressive hotel in the former Yugoslavia, the Vrbak is mind-boggling. As you approach its extraterrestrial grounds, you might be swept along by a Roma band accompanying a wedding crowd into the hotel's buzzing restaurant. A cross between a beehive and a spaceship, with elements of the Orient, this is a place you shouldn't miss the chance to stay the night. The rooms are a little rundown due to lack of funds, but the low Ottoman tables and leather puffs on the floor make them quite comfortable. The round reception area has a marble fountain in the

centre and a glass onion-dome roof letting the sunshine in.

Hotel Kan (Cannes; ☎ /fax 315 300; Rifata Burdževića 10; s/d 2050/3040DIN) This small hotel, built in an oriental style, has rather cramped rooms but compensates with the fact that you don't have to get up to reach the minibar while you're watching the telly. Or is that just being too lazy? It's clean and no-frills, with staff who are mountain-trekking enthusiasts (and they have pictures to prove it).

Ukus (1 Maj 59; meals 150-200; ☎ 8am-11pm) A down-to-earth joint on the main street of the old town. There's freshly cooked food every day. Delicious stews, stuffed peppers and fresh salads all taste amazing – just get there in time before it all gets munched away.

Kafana Centar (☎ 27 799; 28 Novembar 21; meals 150-170DIN; ☎ 7am-midnight) In a street of open cafés this traditional *kafana* (café), hiding behind lace curtains, is a favourite hang-out of the older generation of the town. The smiling matron welcomes foreigners and can dish up a mighty helping of *čevapčići* and salad to be washed down with a local beer.

Hotel Tadž (☎ 311 904; Rifata Burdževića 79; meals 150-350DIN; ☎ 7am-late; P) The poshest place in town, in the new hotel, this restaurant is a little soulless, but the *pastrmka* (trout) with a luscious garlic sauce makes the heart race.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Frequent buses go to Belgrade (432DIN, four hours), an overnight bus goes to Sarajevo (€13, seven hours) and four daily buses head to Prishtina in Kosovo (330DIN, three hours).

AROUND NOVI PAZAR

Studenica Monastery

Built around 1190 and set amid beautiful mountains and forests, and alongside Studenica River, Studenica Monastery holds a sacred place in Serbian psyche and history. The working monastery was established by monarch Stefan Nemanja (who is entombed here) and later further built by his sons Vuk and Stefan (also entombed here), and its monastic life was nurtured by Rastko, a monk whose piety has given him an almost saintly status in Serbian Orthodoxy. There are three churches within an oval complex. The central and

most important is **Bogorodična crkva** (The Church of Our Lady), built in 1191, which is unique in Serbia's medieval architecture for its polished marble exterior and elaborately decorated windows and doorways. Inside, the frescoes, originally dating back to the early 13th century, were repainted in 1569, with wonderful, vivid rich colours. A pilgrimage gathers at Bogorodična crkva annually on 24 May to celebrate the feast day of Stefan Nemanja.

Kraljeva crkva (King's church) is next door and occupies a much smaller space. It was built in 1314 by King Milutin, and houses some of the best preserved and most interesting frescoes in the country. The very realistic *Birth of the Virgin* illustrates the uniqueness of style and technique taken by Serbian fresco artists at the time. **Crkva Svetog Nikole/Nikoljača** (St Nicholas' church) is the smallest and the simplest structure. The church revealed medieval tombs and fresco remains upon removal of soil in which it was half-buried for centuries.

KOSOVO

A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Due to unrest in the area during the time of research, the author did not go to Kosovo. All practical information was updated by telephone. Check your government's advisory and news prior to going to Kosovo.

Kosovo, or Kosova as it's called in Albanian, seems like a hidden vale surrounded by the mountains of Serbia, Montenegro and Albania. Often, while winter still blankets those countries in snow, Kosovo will be enjoying the first touches of spring.

Your government's travel advisory may have warned against travel to Kosovo. They are of necessity cautious and if you do decide to ignore their advice, then it is safer to avoid areas of potential Serb/Kosovo Albanian tension such as Mitrovica and the boundary area with Serbia. Fortunately for visitors the sites of interest are outside these zones.

The ebb and flow of Islam and Orthodox Christianity has left Kosovo a legacy of several artistically beautiful buildings, such as Gračanica Monastery near Prishtina, Decani Monastery near Peja and the Sinan

Pasha Mosque in Prizren. These all escaped the violence of 1999 and 2004.

The countryside is pictorially attractive: wide-open plains in some places, rolling hills patchworked with fields in others. Rearing up to the south, behind Peja in the southwest, are a set of tall mountains, often snow-clad, that include Đeravica (2656m), the tallest mountain in pre-1999 Serbia. Further east, nearer Macedonia, the mountains provide the ski slopes of Brezovica, closed as a result of the 2004 riots but expected to open again for the next season.

Serb influence in the province has ended to be replaced by an Albanian one and new buildings are no longer in the Yugoslav socialist style of concrete blocks. In Prishtina new monuments celebrate Albanian heroes while the displays in the museums of Prishtina and Prizren are exploring the province's Illyrian and Albanian past.

As Kosovo is a small province with an extensive bus network, it's perfectly reasonable to use Prishtina as a base and visit Peja and Prizren as day trips.

HISTORY

Following their defeat in 1389 by the Turks, the Serbs abandoned the region to the Albanians, descendants of the Illyrians, the original inhabitants.

Serbia regained control when the Turks departed in 1913. In the ensuing years some 500,000 Albanians emigrated and Serbs were brought in to settle the vacated land. In WWII the territory was incorporated into Italian-controlled Albania and then liberated in October 1944 by Albanian partisans.

Tito wanted Albania united with Kosovo in the new Yugoslavia. It never happened. Three decades of pernicious neglect ensued until an autonomous province was created in 1974 and economic aid increased. However, little changed and the standard of living in Kosovo remained a quarter of the Yugoslav average. In 1981 demonstrations calling for full republic status were put down by the Serbian military; 300 died and 700 were imprisoned.

Trouble began anew in November 1988 with demonstrations against the sacking of local officials and Kosovo's President Azem Vllasi. Further unrest and strikes in February 1989 led to the suspension of Kosovo's autonomy and a state of emergency.

Serious rioting followed with 24 Albanian Kosovars shot dead. In July 1990 Kosovo's autonomy was cancelled, broadcasts in Albanian ceased and the only Albanian-language newspaper was banned. Some 115,000 Albanians had their jobs taken by loyalist Serbs. Against Serbian opposition, a referendum with a 90% turnout produced a 98% vote for independence.

The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was formed in 1996 out of frustrated attempts to negotiate autonomy. Using guerrilla tactics they began to fight the Serbs.

In March 1999, a US-backed plan to return Kosovo's autonomy was rejected by Serbia. Stepping up attacks on the KLA, Serbia moved to empty the province of its non-Serbian population. Nearly 850,000 Kosovo Albanians fled to Albania and Macedonia. Serbia ignored demands to desist and NATO unleashed a bombing campaign on 24 March 1999. On 2 June Milošević acquiesced to a UN settlement, Serbian forces withdrew and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) took over. Since June 1999 Kosovo has been administered as a UN-NATO protectorate.

Peace has not been easy. KFOR had to persuade the KLA to demilitarise and Serbian refugees to return home. Potential and real revenge attacks on the remaining Serbs made them isolated communities protected by KFOR.

The elections in November 2001 led to a coalition government with Ibrahim Rugova as the president of Kosovo. There was a gradual process to normalise relations with post-Milošević Serbia.

Kosovo slipped from the world's eye until March 2004, when three Kosovo Albanian children were allegedly chased into a river by Kosovo Serbs, and two drowned. This sparked a simmering discontent, mostly among youths, who attacked Serbian people, homes and churches. Nineteen people were killed, 600 homes burnt out and 29 monasteries and churches, many medieval, were destroyed. KFOR, which could have controlled much of the outrage, was disastrously slow to act.

In March 2005 Kosovo's then Prime Minister Ramuš Haradinaj surrendered to the International Tribunal in The Hague after he was indicted for war crimes. This sparked some temporary unrest in the area, but no serious trouble ensued.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Various government travel advisories warn against visiting Kosovo. The events of March 2004 have shown that civil insurrection is but an incident away in which a foreign visitor may unwittingly get caught.

The country is thought to have been cleared of landmines but there is still unexploded ordnance about, so if you are off the beaten track you will need KFOR and local advice (try the police).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

VISITING KOSOVO FIRST

Visitors coming into Kosovo first can then only legally enter Serbia via Macedonia, as there are no immigration facilities at the crossings between Kosovo and Serbia or Montenegro.

Air

For air services see p325. Passengers with more than €10,000 have to complete a currency declaration form on arrival.

Bus

International bus services serve much of Europe; some sample fares from Prishtina are Skopje, Macedonia (€5.50, 1½ hours), Tirana, Albania (€20, 10 hours), Istanbul, Turkey (€30, 20 hours), and Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina (€30, 10 hours).

From Peja there's an overnight bus to Podgorica (€16, seven hours) in Montenegro. Alternatively minibuses (€5) and taxis (€20) go to the Montenegrin town of Rožaje from outside the Peja bus station.

Four daily buses connect Prishtina and Novi Pazar in Serbia (€5.50, three hours) with onward connections to Belgrade.

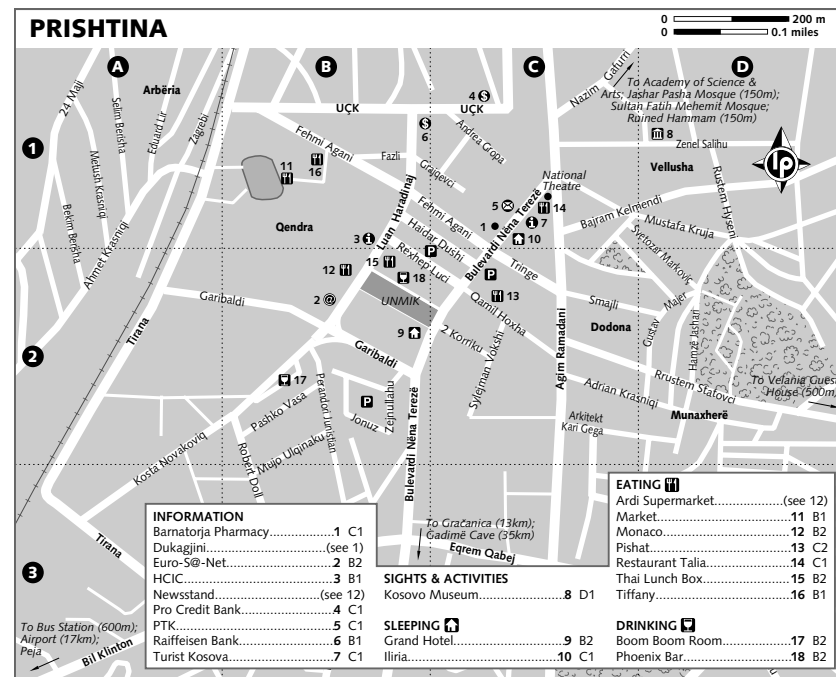
Getting Around

There is an excellent bus service linking all the main towns and villages. Buses operate very frequently between Prishtina, Prizren and Peja (€3 to €4, about two hours). There was a stab at resurrecting the railway but it ended after a short trial.

Prishtina

☎ 038 / pop 160,000

Prishtina is a bustling capital engorged with the activity and personnel of foreign



agencies. Some postwar reconstruction has taken place but a lot has still to happen. Apart from the city and its activities there's not a lot to see and it's really a jumping-off point to Peja and Prizren.

ORIENTATION

Bulevardi Nëna Terezë and Agim Ramadani run from the south and converge near the National Theatre in central Prishtina. The UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (Unmik) headquarters are off Nëna Terezë and west of this is the Sports Complex shopping mall. Bil Klinton (yes, him) runs southwest from Bulevardi Nëna Terezë passing the bus station, the airport (17km) and onto Peja.

INFORMATION

Barnatorja Pharmacy (☎ 224 245; Bulevardi Nëna Terezë; ☎ 7.30am-8pm Mon-Sat, 7.30am-8pm every 3rd Sun) Notice on window for Sunday opening times of other pharmacies.

Dukagjini (☎ 248 143; Bulevardi Nëna Terezë 20; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) Sells novels and art books in English, and city maps.

Euro-s@-net (☎ 227 225; Luan Haradinaj; per hr €1; ☎ 9am-11pm Mon-Sat) Also phone calls worldwide for €0.30 per minute.

Humanitarian Community Information Centre (HCIC; ☎ 549 169; Luan Haradinaj 8; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Mon-Fri) Information on Kosovo as well as maps and books.

Newsstand (Luan Haradinaj; ☎ 9am-late) Foreign newspapers and magazines; latest papers arrive at 6pm. It's outside Monaco restaurant.

Post Telephone Kosova (PTK; ☎ 245 339; Bulevardi Nëna Terezë; ☎ 8am-9pm) Post and telephone.

Pro Credit Bank (☎ 240 248; Skënderbeu; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Fri) Cashes travellers cheques and has a MasterCard ATM.

Raiffeisen Bank (☎ 226 400; Migjeni 1; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat) Cashes travellers cheques and has a Visa card ATM.

Turist Kosova (☎ 223 815; Bulevardi Nëna Terezë 36; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat, 8am-noon Sun) Travel information, flights and international bus booking.

SIGHTS

Kosovo Museum (☎ 249 964; Marte e Drielle; citizen/foreigner €1.50/5; ☎ 10.30am-7pm Tue-Sun) has a thoughtful and well-captioned exhibition on premedieval Kosovo.

Behind the museum is the **Jashar Pasha mosque**. Of note are the floral designs, the huge chandelier and the finely decorated mihrab (the niche showing the direction of Mecca, and the position of the person leading the congregation in prayer). Around the corner is a well-restored Balkan-style house, the home of the **Academy of Science and Arts**.

Nearby, a second mosque, the **Sultan Fatih Mehemit**, dates from the mid-15th century. Again there's exquisite decorative work and interestingly some carved marble stones from some earlier use among the courtyard flagstones.

Much of the old Turkish quarter was destroyed by WWII bombing but odd bits remain. Almost opposite Jashar Pasha is a **ruined hammam** (Vasil Andori) and if you walk down this street to Xhemajl Prishtina and the market, some investigative wandering around will reveal a number of old houses.

SLEEPING & EATING

Velania Guest House (Pansion Profesor; ☎ 531 742, 044 167 455; besa-h4@hotmail.com; Velania 4, 34; s/d with shared bathroom €13/18) At last a Prishtina cheapie! A professor's house just east of the centre welcoming budget travellers; 10 rooms on three floors, each floor with a small kitchen. There's free tea/coffee ingredients and laundry.

Iliria (☎ 224 275; fax 548 117; Bulevardi Nëna Terezë; s/d €30/60; (P)) A large former Serbian state hotel that's right in the thick of things, and a central safe haven for the party animal. Comes with very helpful staff.

Grand Hotel (☎ 220 210; reception@grandhotel-pr.com; Bulevardi Nëna Terezë; s/d/tr €60/90/105; (P)) Prishtina's top-notch hotel with all the facilities you'd expect for the price but rated five stars, two too many in our opinion; it's a bit shabby round the edges. Booking is advisable as it's the hotel for the big shots when they come to town.

Cafés abound in the centre selling *burek* and hamburgers for €1 to €2; pasta and pizza cafés charge up to €2.50.

Restaurant Talia (☎ 244 715; meals €3.50-5; ☎ 9am-midnight) Good pizza offered with Tabasco sauce to add heat if you feel like something spicy. It's behind the National Theatre.

Monaco (☎ 227 490; Luan Haradinaj; pizzas €3-6; ☎ 8am-late) Buy your newspaper from the vendor outside, sit down with a drink and mull over day-old news.

Tiffany (☎ 244 040; meals from €6; ☎ 8am-11pm Mon-Sat, 6-11pm Sun) A crisp-white-linen, best-behaviour establishment where it's wise to come early to secure a table. This very popular restaurant is off Fehmi Agani, hidden down by the side of the Sports Stadium; a lack of signage doesn't help. Soups, grills and salads are on offer but for some reason there's no menu.

Pishat (☎ 245 333; Qamil Hoxha; meals €2.50-5; ☎ 8am-11pm) Brand-new restaurant, centrally located off Bulevardi Nëna Terezë, decorated in strong earth, blue and yellow colours with a brightness that's like a blast of sunshine on a dull day. Feeling midday snack-ish? Go for *tavë e kuge*, a veggie hotpot with a large flap of newly baked bread. To finish, a macchiato coffee, the best in town.

Thai Lunch Box (☎ 044 140 791; meals €7-11; ☎ 11am-3pm & 6-11pm Mon-Sat) A small restaurant decorated with Kosovar cubist art, but just as the paintings are an interpretation of cubism so then the food is a Kosovar interpretation of Thai. However, when you see Thai members of Unmik eating here then you know the food's OK. It's a welcome relief from standard Eastern European fare although heavily dependent upon the chickens of Kosovo. The restaurant is between Unmik & Luan Haradinaj.

Ardi Supermarket (Luan Haradinaj; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat) and the fruit and veg section of the **market** (☎ 8am-2pm Mon-Fri), off Fehmi Agani, can provide your DIY supplies.

DRINKING

Phoenix Bar (☎ 7am-midnight) A favourite with the expats and decorated with football team strips as tribal identities rather than flags. Cholesterol-damage breakfasts, coffee and snacks (€2.50 to €4) all day plus booze are on offer. There's live music some weekends. It's opposite Unmik.

Boom Boom Room (Kosta Novakoviq; ☎ 10am-late) Behind and west of Unmik, this is a grungy big barn of a drinking joint with a considerable range of drinks, and it's popular with the locals. There's live music on Wednesday nights when the room does go boom boom.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air
For airlines operating from Prishtina **airport** (☎ 548 430) see p325. Unless included in your ticket, departure tax is €15.

Bus

International and domestic services leave from the **bus station** (☎ 550 011; Mitrovicë-Prishtinë). For details see p326.

GETTING AROUND

Numbered minibuses roam the streets. Numbers 1 and 2 go down Bil Clinton, from where it's a short walk back up Mitrovicë-Prishtinë to the bus station. The fare is €0.50.

The easiest way between town and the airport is by taxi. Try **Radio Taxi Victory** (☎ 550 889) or **Radio RGB** (☎ 515 515); the fare should be about €20.

AROUND PRISHTINA

Gračanica

Some 13km southeast of Prishtina is the superbly decorated Gračanica Monastery, built by the Serbian King Milutin in the early 14th century. It's in the shape of a five-dome building on a cross-in-a-square plan typical of the best Byzantine architecture of the period. Most of the frescoes date from then and cover all the walls.

Entry is no problem once you've identified yourself to KFOR at the entrance. Catch one of the frequent buses to Gjilan which pass outside.

Marble Cave

Some 35km south of Prishtina, **Marble Cave** (Gadimë Cave; adult/child €2.50/0.50; ☎ 9am-6pm), the only show cave in Kosovo, is definitely worth a plunge underground. It's renowned for its helictites, thin stalactites growing at strange angles. There are several buses to Gadimë Cave from Prishtina or a taxi, wait and return, would cost €30.

Outer Kosovo

PEJA (PEĆ)

☎ 039

The nearness of Peja and Prizren to Prishtina means that you can avail yourself of the better sleeping and eating options in Prishtina and do day trips. While there are a number of eating places in Peja and Prizren, hotels are very few and overexpensive. Peja's attractions stand outside town, the medieval Patrijaršija Monastery and the Decani Monastery. Much work remains to be done restoring the old buildings in the market area but there's a superb picture-postcard

backdrop of 2000m-plus mountains shearing straight up.

Orientation & Information

After the Serbian departure in 1999 all Serbian names were removed. Peja, unlike Prishtina and Prizren, still hasn't renamed its streets so they remain nameless or are numbered. The Prishtina road runs into the northern part of town. Striking south, and into town, is the main road. The bus station is at the intersection of these two routes.

Sights

Many of Peja's mosques and old buildings remain severely damaged but the colourful **bazaar** is the place to engage with the oriental atmosphere.

Two kilometres west of Peja is **Patrijaršija Monastery**, seat of the Serbian Orthodox Peć patriarchy. Although the monastery is open to visitors, KFOR at the gate may decide otherwise; if not you'll be rewarded with three mid-13th-century churches with glorious medieval frescoes.

Decani Monastery (1335) is 15km south and accessible by frequent local buses and a 2km walk. The monastery was the endowment of King, later Saint, Stefan, whose body is buried within the church. According to the monks it is still uncorrupted (not yet decayed), which is the hallmark of a saint.

Getting There & Away

The **bus station** (☎ 31 152; Geromin de Rada) is on the Peja road, about 2km northwest from the centre.

PRIZREN

☎ 029

Although Prizren was the medieval capital of 'Old Serbia', the architectural influence is Turkish. It seems like a party town as people throng the many bars and cafés along the river and in the plaza Shadrvan. The delight is wandering through cobbled streets soaking up the history and atmosphere.

Unfortunately the Albanian Kosovar vandalism of March 2004 has added to the Serbian vandalism of 1999 and left an ugly scar of burnt-out houses up the hillside.

Orientation & Information

The town revolves around the river and Shadrvan, a small cobblestone plaza with a

fountain in the middle. The **bus station** (☎ 31 152; Geromin de Rada) is on the Peja road about 2km from the centre. Crossing the river just west of the main bridge is a 'new' medieval bridge built to replace the old one destroyed by floods in 1979.

A documentary film and photographic exhibition, Dokufest, happens in the first week of September.

Sights

A slow plod up from behind the Shadrvan brings you to the castle that's passed through Roman, Turkish, Serbian and KFOR army hands. The views are quite stupendous and if you're there when the imams call for prayers you'll hear a wave of chants sweep across the town.

The Orthodox churches were mostly destroyed in the March 2004 violence with little left except collapsed and burnt-out interiors.

The 1561 **Sinan Pasha Mosque** on the river-side dominates the centre and can be visited for its fine, decorated high-domed ceiling.

Near the Theranda Hotel, the newly restored **Gazi Mehmed Pasha Baths** (1563) have become an occasional exhibition space. The internal upper floor was destroyed during WWII; maybe it couldn't cope with being an Italian bordello.

Opposite the post office is a solitary **minaretlike tower** with the Star of David; it's believed to be the remnants of a synagogue.

Some 200m upriver from the Theranda Hotel is a small **museum complex** (☎ 44 487; adult/child €1/0.20; ☎ 10am-10pm Sun-Tue) celebrating the Albanian League of Prizren. This was an independence movement in Turkish times and the museum illustrates the League and historical Prizren.

BREZOVIKA

This ski resort, 60km south of Prishtina, was seen as a bright spot in Kosovo's tourism future: Albanians working together with Serbs in a Serbian enclave to make a success of the resort. However, with the violence of March 2004 it was closed; it was also the end of the ski season. Hopefully it's a temporary closure.

Nine ski runs, served by seven chairlifts, lead down from 2500m; ski equipment and snowboards could be hired and lessons were available. Even if you're not a skier

a trip up the ski lift was worth it to see the stunning snow scenery.

The **Molika Hotel** (☎ 290-70 452), with a restaurant, bars and cafés, was the only hotel.

MONTENEGRO ЦРНА ГОРА

The tiny republic of Montenegro has got it all: dramatic mountains with sharp, rugged peaks reaching into steely blue skies, slashed with giddy, capricious canyons and scented with tufts of pine forests; the sapphire Adriatic Sea with its perfect Mediterranean towns; Kotor Bay, the biggest fjord in southern Europe, hemmed in by majestic limestone mountains. And all of that packed into 13,812 sq km.

Montenegrin culture is a curious cocktail. The key components are Montenegrin, Serb, Albanian and Croatian, with a relaxed Mediterranean air, and you'll see Orthodox and Catholic churches alongside mosques. Montenegro and Crna Gora both mean 'black mountain'. Crna Gora is a Slavic name, but the name Montenegro might come from the old Dalmatian language, a relative of Italian which died out in the 19th century.

Fantastic walled towns like Budva, Kotor or Herceg Novi are wonderful for exploring, and small, pretty seaside village-towns like Petrovac or Perast are perfect for resting and having a real summer holiday by the beach. Mountains such as Durmitor are great for skiing in winter, and many trek its fells in the summer. Fishing and bird-watching are favourites on the shores of Lake Skadar.

A small drawback is that Montenegro is a very popular local holiday spot, with crowds from the cities cascading onto the beaches in July and August, and things can get quite crowded. So the best times to go are May, June and September. Visitors with time or transport can choose their accommodation from a range of 'sobe', 'Zimmer' or 'private room' signs all along the coast.

The railway connects Belgrade to Bar, where ferries sail to Italy. Frequent bus services (fares €2 to €4) link the coastal towns with Podgorica and Cetinje.

History

Only tiny Montenegro was able to keep its head above the Turkish tide that engulfed the Balkans for over four centuries from the 14th century onwards. From 1482 Montenegro was ruled from Cetinje by *vladike* (prince-bishops). With the defeat of the Turks in 1878, Montenegrin independence was assured and later recognised by the Congress of Berlin. Nikola I Petrović, Montenegro's ruler, declared himself king in 1910 but was evicted by the Austrians in 1916. After the end of WWI Montenegro was incorporated into Serbia.

During WWII Montenegrins fought valiantly in Tito's partisan army and afterwards the region was rewarded with republic status within Yugoslavia.

The republic has been a stalwart of all Yugoslav federations and is now in a union with Serbia that may last no longer than the 2006 referendum.

PODGORICA ПОДГОРИЦА

☎ 081 / pop 170,000

Unfortunately, Montenegro's capital, Podgorica, is its most unattractive spot. With no sights and only expensive hotels, it is really a place to go to for only a half-day, if you need to do your errands. It also becomes cauldron-hot in the summer, so don't say you weren't warned. It is a much wiser choice to go south and stay on the coast.

Orientation

The commercial hub of the town centres around Slobode, and intersecting with it is Hercegovacka, the shopping/café heart of the town.

Information

Atlas Bank (☎ 407 211; Stanka Dragojevića 4;

☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-12.30pm Sat) Cashes travellers cheques.

Crnogorska Komercijalna Bank (cnr Slobode & Novaka) MasterCard ATM.

Gorbis (☎ 230 624; Slobode 47; ☎ 8am-5pm)

Tourist information, organises tours and books flights and ferries.

Internet cg (☎ 248 844; Vučedolska 13; per hr €1.50; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat)

Meridian (☎ 234 944, 069 316 666; Cetinjski put;

☎ 8am-2pm & 6-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-2pm Sat) Rents cars from €30 a day.

Sleeping & Eating

There are some cheap eating places around and in the bus station, and some pleasant cafés in Hercegovacka.

Europa (☎ 623 444; shole@cg.yu; Orahovačka 16; s/d €45/70) In a city of overexpensive hotels, this modern and well-equipped hotel near the train station is a weary traveller's best option if a night in Podgorica is necessary.

Mimi Pekara (bakery snacks €0.50-1.25; ☎ 6am-3am) There's always the *burek* option available for those in need of a quick snack, and here they make 'em good.

Buda Bar (☎ 344 944; Stanka Dragojevića 26; sandwiches €2.50; ☎ 8am-2am) This is the coolest place in town, popular as a daytime coffee-drinking spot and an evening meeting place. The interior is swish and smooth, with little Buddha statues adorning the room, and outside is a spacious garden with a bamboo bar.

Getting There & Away

The **train station** (☎ 633 663) and **bus station** (☎ 620 430) are adjacent in the eastern part of the town. There are eight buses daily to Belgrade (€14, nine hours), one each at 9am and 3.30pm to Žabljak (€7.50, four hours), many to Rožaje, for Kosovo (€7, four hours), and four buses to Sarajevo (€12, nine hours).

You can fly to Belgrade for €43, or take the scenic train route to Bar (€15 plus €15/8 for a three-/six-berth sleeper on overnight trains, eight hours).

Montenegro Airlines (☎ 664 411; www.montenegro-airlines.cg.yu; Slobode 23; ☎ 8.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat) flies to Frankfurt, Zürich and Budapest. There is a €15 departure tax charge at Podgorica airport.

Around Podgorica

LAKE SKADAR & VIRPAZAR

СКАДАРСКО ЈЕЗЕРО & ВИРПАЗАР

A causeway carries the road and railway from Podgorica to Bar over the western edge of the 44km-long Lake Skadar, part of Lake Skadar National Park. The biggest lake in the Balkans, it's one of the largest bird sanctuaries and remaining pelican habitats in Europe. Jutting westward from the causeway is the 400-year-old Turkish castle of Lesendro. Check with **Gorbis** (☎ 230 624; Slobode 47; ☎ 8am-5pm) in Podgorica about trips on the lake and water activities.

Alternatively, nose around Virpazar, where in summer there'll be sightseeing boats. You'll also find one of Montenegro's more interesting restaurants, the **Pelican** (☎ 081-711 011; Virpazar; d with shared bathroom €30, meals €6-8; ☎ 8am-midnight), exotically decorated with dried plants and herbs, old photographs and nautical ephemera. The service is top-notch and dessert is on the house. For starters try *dalmatinsko varvo* (a potato, onion and spinach pie) and follow that with a fish salad of perch, eel or trout – all fresh from the lake. Weekend evenings, May to September, there's live music. The Pelican also has accommodation.

CETINJE ЦЕТИЊЕ

☎ 086 / поp 20,000

The former capital of Montenegro sits in the country's crowning position amid Montenegro's tallest mountains. The green vale is like a nest, and the sharp-edged grey mountains surround it protectively. The residual air of Cetinje's former importance is still visible in many a palace dating from its royal past and the mansions that used to house various embassies; for Montenegrins this small place still occupies a special place in their hearts.

Many of the grandiose buildings have been turned into schools for music and the arts and some into museums. Cetinje Monastery, renowned throughout the country and with a good museum, is still the place in which many seek spiritual solace.

The area around Cetinje has some of the most stunning scenery: the panoramic view of Lake Skadar from Pavlova Strana; the old bridge at the tranquil village of Rijeka Crnojevića; or the plummeting road down to Kotor.

Cetinje's accommodation choice is highly limited and the town is best visited as a day trip from the coast or Podgorica. The transport to the town is very good. On a hot summer's day, Cetinje is always cooler thanks to the altitude.

Orientation & Information

A short walk from the bus stand leads to Balšića Pazar, the main square, with a big wall map to help you get your bearings.

There are no banks here for exchanging your money, so be prepared and arrange cash before you arrive.

Sights

Strolling around the town gives you some idea of what kind of a place this used to be. Cetinje's 500 years of capital glory are still reflected in the elegant little houses painted in greens and reds, juxtaposed against palaces and mansions that used to hold embassies from all over the world. Try working out which building used to represent which nation and you'll soon realise that most carry something of an 'architectural denomination' in them. The former Russian embassy, now a hip art academy, is as if plucked straight out of St Petersburg and planted on the Montenegrin soil; the former Italian embassy is all classic lines and Mediterranean freshness; and the former French embassy has Moorish elements with tiles and mosaics. Some say this building was supposed to have been built somewhere in North Africa, but the building plans got confused, so Cetinje got this building and the real embassy building is now God-knows-where.

There have been reports that if Montenegrins vote for independence from Serbia in 2006, the old embassies might be reinstated. So watch this space.

MUSEUMS

The most important building, the former parliament, is now the **National Museum of Montenegro** (☎ 231 477; Novice Cerovića bb; admission €5; ☎ 9am-5pm). The ticket also covers entry to the Art Gallery, the Billiard Hall and the State Museum (all in the same place as the museum). The neobaroque structure was built at the beginning of the 20th century, and was once the number one institution in Cetinje. The museum shows periods from pre-Slavic Montenegro all the way to the Yugoslav times, together with exhibits of a large variety of weapons and the coat (three bullet holes in the back) of Duke Danilo, the last *vladika*, who was killed in Kotor in 1860. The prime exhibit is the precious 5th-century icon of the Madonna's face, *Our Lady of Philermos*.

The **Art Gallery** celebrates 19th- and 20th-century Montenegrin and regional art. If you have any interest in art from the former Yugoslav period, this is a good place to see paintings and sculptures by artists such as Đuro Jakšić, Nadežda Petrović, Ivan Meštrović and Tomo Rosandić, among

others. Milo Milunović's paintings, which have their own separate space, are a real treat with touches of Picasso or Cézanne.

Opposite the National Museum, the **Billiard Hall** (Billjarda; ☎ 231 050; ☎ 9am-5pm Apr-Oct, 9am-3pm Mon-Fri Nov-Mar), built and financed by the Russians in 1838, was the residence of *vladika* and Montenegro's most celebrated poet Petar II Petrović Njegoš; it is now a museum dedicated to him. The hall housed the nation's first billiard table, hence the name. There is a special area for displays of original manuscripts and early editions of his lyrical work *The Mountain Wreath* (see p270), his most important epic poem and the piece that made him famous around the entirety of the former Yugoslavia. Also, there is a fascinating scale relief map of Montenegro created by the Austrians in 1917.

The **State Museum** (☎ 230 555; Trg Kralja Nikole; ☎ 9am-5pm Apr-Oct, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri Nov-Mar) was the former residence (built 1871) of Nikola Petrović I, last king of Montenegro. Although looted during WWII, sufficient furnishings, many stern portraits and period weapons remain to give a picture of the times.

CETINJE MONASTERY

Founded in 1484, and rebuilt in 1785, **Cetinje Monastery** (☎ 231 021; ☎ 8am-7pm May-Oct) has for the curious, or devout, a portion of the true Cross and some of the mummified right hand of St John the Baptist (although this seems to be the *pièce de résistance* of almost every monastery). To underline its significance as the hand that baptised Christ, it's set in a bejewelled casket with a little glass window.

The monastery **museum** is only open to groups. But if you are persuasive enough, you may be able to get in. The museum holds a copy of the 1494 *Oktoidh* (Book of the Eight Voices), one of the oldest collections of liturgical songs in a Slavic language. There's also a collection of portraits, vestments, ancient handwritten texts and gifts from Russian churches.

Around Cetinje

Around 7km along the road to Podgorica a turning leads another 7km to **Rijeka Crnojevića** village. At the end of Lake Skadar, this little village is a magical place. When

you approach it, having come down the winding mountain road, you'll be engulfed by silence and tranquillity. A little marble stone promenade is a platform for junior and senior fishermen, and the highlight of the village is the four-arched stone bridge that descends into a path alongside the river. Its mirror-smooth stillness is only occasionally disturbed by ripples from boats.

Carry on another 5km from Rijeka Crnojevića and you'll arrive at **Pavlova Strana**. This place has stunning views of the river flowing into the lake, around a rock island shaped like a giant tortoise. In the distance, a double hunchbacked mountain shelters the town of Virpazar. The view stretches for miles and creates a visual harmony of rock and water.

Twenty kilometres from Cetinje is **Mt Lovćen** (1749m), the 'Black Mountain' that is said to have given Montenegro its name (*crna* – black; *gora* – mountain) for it's covered with dark pines. On the mountain's summit is the mausoleum of Njegoš. If you don't have your own transport, take a taxi and then climb the 461 steps to the mausoleum where the views are of a sea of mountains, the Adriatic and, on a (very) clear day, the Italian coast.

COASTAL MONTENEGRO

The coastal area, although rather small, is diverse in its choice of beaches and swimming areas, and places to see and stay. Perhaps the most sensible way to divide it is in two: the stretch of towns and beaches south of Budva, via Petrovac and Bar, all the way to the Albanian border at Ulcinj; and the area of Kotor Bay (Boka Kotorska), curling south from the Croatian border with towns such as Kotor, Perast and Herceg Novi.

Budva Будва

☎ 086 / поp 11,700

Budva is the most popular holiday spot on the entire coast. This is hardly surprising: its old town is like a miniature Dubrovnik, with smooth narrow streets and old limestone houses. Dozens of bars and restaurants bulge with people in the hot summer days and nights, and the beaches are fine and plentiful.

In June the town hosts a national music festival and a summer festival in July and August.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

The **bus station** (☎ 456 000; Ivana Milutinovića bb) is about 1km from the Stari Grad (Old Town). The road called Mediteranska leads into Budva, ending at the harbour and Stari Grad.

Crnogorska Komercijalna Bank (☎ 451 075; Mediteranska 7; ☎ 8am-7.30pm Mon-Sat Jul & Aug, 8am-1pm Mon-Fri Sep-Jun) Has a MasterCard ATM, cashes travellers cheques.

Euromarket Bank (☎ 455 106; Mediteranska 4; ☎ 8.30am-2.30pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-12.30pm Sat) Has a Visa ATM, cashes travellers cheques.

JAT (☎ 451 641; Mediteranska 2; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) Airline office.

SIGHTS

Budva's best feature and star attraction is the walled Stari Grad. Narrow marble streets and old Mediterranean houses, as well as galleries, museums, shops, bars and restaurants, make this small old part the focus of all the summer fun. Much of the old town was ruined in two earthquakes in 1979, but it has since been completely rebuilt and is a tourist attraction, rather than a place where people live.

The recently renovated **Budva Museum** (☎ 457 994; Petra I Petrovića, Stari Grad; adult/child €1.50/0.50; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun), is neat and interesting, with three floors of artefacts showing pre-Roman and Roman findings from the area, as well as many artefacts from the time of the Ottoman rule. The seafarers' wooden chests painted and embroidered with images of land and home are captivating. There is a sample of an original Budva street displayed on the ground floor.

The tiny island of **St Nikola**, locally known as Hawaïi, is an uninhabited green spot where Montenegrins go to eat fish in the restaurant (there's only one). A nautical mile away off the coast, boats ply to and from the island from almost any area in the city during the summer. You can also go snorkelling or simply sunbathing.

Budva's main beach is pebbly and average. **Mogren beach** is better: follow the coastal path southwards for 500m from the Grand Hotel Avala.

Bečić beach is south of Budva. It's a long crescent of sand and the sea is calm, so if you have children, this is a good place to go, especially since there are many beach games at hand.

SLEEPING & EATING

Villa Balkan (☎ 454 401; Vuka Karadžića 2; 3-person apt Sep-Jun €70, Jul & Aug €110; ☎) On the north-western side of the old town walls, this place is a great deal if you are sharing the costs between three or two. The five apartments are spacious, with a kitchenette and great views of the bay, and the building is an elegant old Budva house that feels a lot more intimate than a big hotel.

Hotel Mogren (☎ 451 780; fax 452 041; Mediteranska 1; s/d Sep-Jun €30/60, Jul & Aug €42/84, half board €6) The 'cheapest' hotel option, but you may very well wonder if it's worth it. The hotel is large and formerly state owned, with rooms painted in aquatic blue and white. The furniture is a little old and decrepit. The more acceptable rooms are those with small balconies looking on to the sea.

Two options for camping are **Autocamp Avala** (☎ 451 205; ☎ Jun-Sep) at Boreti, 2km on the road to Bar, and **Budva Autocamp** (tent & 2 people €4). **JAMB travel** (☎ 452 992; www.jamb-travel.com; Mediteranska 23; r €5.90-13.50, 2-/5-person apt €16/80, half/full board €10/15; ☎ 8am-8pm Jun-Oct, 8am-3pm Mon-Fri Nov-May) books accommodation and organises day tours around Montenegro.

Join the crowds eating and drinking in Budva's Stari Grad or along the harbourside.

Restaurant Jadran (☎ 451 028; Slovenska Obala 10; meals €5-10; ☎ 8am-late) With three terraces ranging from an elegant sea-view restaurant, to a canteenlike eatery with views of the street, you can find your own space in Jadran. Equally, you can eat high with lobster at €60 per kilogram or eat low with a substantial soup or *čevapčići* for €2. If you decide to go for something in the middle, mussels Jadran are good: the fresh molluscs are served in a delicious sauce of olive oil, lemon and garlic and go very well with a chilled Montenegrin white wine.

Lazo i Milan (☎ 451 468; 13 Jul bb; meals €4-8; ☎ 9am-11pm) Pasta dishes just like mama makes them except this mama is a burly Montenegrin chef who can cook up a storm of gastronomic delight with his sauces.

Konoba Stari Grad (☎ 454 443; Njegoševa 14; meals €5-8; ☎ 8am-late) Bang in the middle of the old town, this small place looks like an Italian mama's kitchen, with a cosy atmosphere, chequered tablecloths and good-smelling food. A real advantage is the menu of the day (available only in the summer months) where for €12 to €15 you get starters, *primi*

piati (first course), *secondi piati* (second course) and dessert.

Donna kod Nikole (☎ 451 531; Budva Marina; meals €5-8; ☎ 8am-late) A recommended harbour-side restaurant with maritime décor (surprise, surprise). Its fish soup is excellent, and individual seafood/fish meals are good, but beware the seafood platters – a little overpriced.

Bus station café (Ivana Milutinovića; meals €2-3; ☎ 7am-9pm) The best cheap eats in town in a choose-and-point cafeteria.

MB Ice Club (☎ 452 552; Starogradski Trg; treats €3-6; ☎ 9am-2am) This place has a huge terrace, and cocktails go down easily with the silky Cuban rhythms.

AROUND BUDVA**Sveti Stefan**

About 5km south of Budva is the former fishing island of Sveti Stefan. Until 50 years ago it was a simple little fishing community, but since the people on the island grew increasingly poor, families kept moving away in search of bigger and better things. Then someone had the idea to buy the entire island, a wondrous-looking thing in itself, and turn it into a luxury hotel. It became a big hit with the glamorous layer of socialist Yugoslavia, and the likes of Sofia Loren and Doris Day strutted their stuff around here. But, like so many other things in the former Yugoslavia, it lost its appeal during the '90s.

The island is like a slice of Mediterranean heaven, with oleanders, pines and olives scenting the air and the little houses looking straight onto the expansive Adriatic. There is a charge of €5 to enter the resort, and it's worth the wander around. A small 15th-century church remains in the centre of the island, and there is a sense of nostalgia when you think how the villagers' life must have been in this beautiful isolated spot. At the time of research Sveti Stefan awaited its future, and it's possible that the resort will once again charge astronomical prices and attract an exclusive crowd.

Petrovac

Seventeen kilometres away from Budva, on the road to Bar, this used to be the place where rich Romans had their summer villas. Petrovac is a beautiful small town with a red sandy beach, a pretty promenade and lush Mediterranean plants performing the

air. A 16th-century **Venetian fortress** guards the harbour, and many dance the nights away in the club inside it.

The restaurants are mainly by the fortress, with places like Lazaret and Caffè Cuba, where you can have a breakfast of fried eggs for €3.50 and pizzas for €5. Sleeping can be arranged through any of the tourist agencies in Budva or Bar, but if you don't mind splashing out, the local **Hotel Rivijera** (☎ 422 100; www.riviera-petrovac.com; per person €50; ☎) is a luxurious hotel with plasma-screen TVs in the gleaming rooms and luxurious brand-new bathrooms. There is a small swimming pool, plus a bit of the beach belongs to the hotel.

Petrovac gets crowded in the months of July and August, so you won't be able to find an inch of space on the beach.

Bar Bap

☎ 085 / pop 37,000

This might be your first stop in coastal Montenegro if you decide to ferry it across from Italy. Bar is a modern city, a port with all that entails: tower blocks, a run-down feeling and a hint of oil threading the air. But Stari Bar (Old Bar), a thousand-year-old town in ruins up on the mountainside, is an enchanting site worth visiting.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

The ferry terminal in Bar is 300m from the town centre; the **bus station** (☎ 314 499) and adjacent **train station** (☎ 312 210) are about 2km southeast of the centre.

There are several ATMs around town.

Komercijalna Bank (☎ 311 827; Obala Kralja Nikole bb; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat) Cashes travellers cheques.

Montenegro Express (☎ /fax 312 589; Obala 13 Julia bb; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat Jul & Aug, 8am-2pm Mon-Sat Sep-Jun) Books accommodation along the coast and organises tours.

Tourist Information Center (☎ 311 633; Obala 13 Julia bb; ☎ 7am-8pm Jul & Aug, 7am-2pm Mon-Fri Sep-Jun) Limited tourist information.

SIGHTS

The beautiful remains of **Stari Bar** (admission €1; ☎ 9am-5pm Apr-Oct) lie 5km east of the modern town, off the Ulcinj road. Stari Bar sits on top of Lundža hill and its setting is amazing. Steep cliffs surround the old town and render it inaccessible but from one side.

Findings of pottery and metal have dated occupancy as far back as 800 BC. During the 3rd century, the occupying Romans destroyed the old settlement and abandoned it for a location nearer to the sea. Three centuries later, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian built a fortified tower on the same hill, and Stari Bar started to develop into an active centre on the Adriatic coast. In the 10th century, Stari Bar was referred to as 'the Antinbaris, as in, opposite to the Italian city, Bari'. Hence its current name. In the 11th century, it was part of Duklja or Zeta, the first Slavonic littoral state, and soon after became one of the most important political, economic and cultural places on the coast. Nearly all the 240 buildings lie in ruin, a result of Montenegrin shelling when they captured the town back from the Turks in 1878.

Climbing the steep cobbled street will take you to the entrance of the old town, where the buzzing of insects and a serene atmosphere will make you feel you've entered a huge garden. Wandering around you'll notice the **upper fortress** in the northern corner. Built in the 11th century, the fortress was used as a prison in WWII, and looking out from its 'balcony', the view shows Stari Bar's isolated and beautiful setting, amid mountains and olive groves. Also in the north are the foundations of the **Church of St George**, the patron saint of Bar. Originally a Romanesque church, the Turks rebuilt it into a mosque in the 17th century, but the unlucky spot was yet again in ruins after an accidental explosion of gunpowder. Nearby are two preserved churches, **St Veneranda** and **St Catherine**, both from the 14th century. Around the corner is a **Turkish bath** from the 17th or 18th century, a solid, charming building. In the western part of the town are the remains of the **Church of St Nicolas** with glimpses of Serbo-Byzantine frescoes.

It's as if the murmur of people and the scurrying of everyday life are embedded in the air of the many living spaces you might be able to imagine among the ruins. They show the sophistication and the complexity of ancient life in Stari Bar.

SLEEPING & EATING

Putnik Gold (☎ 311 588; putnikgold@cg.yu; Obala 13 Jula bb; ☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Sat) Books accommodation along the coast. Private rooms

without breakfast start at €9, B&B apartments from €12, half-board apartments from €17 and hotels from €30 to €100.

Montenegro Express (☎/fax 312 589; Obala 13 Jula bb; private rooms €7-20, hotels €30-100; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat Jul & Aug, 8am-2pm Mon-Sat Sep-Jun) Another agency with similar deals.

Places to eat are limited with drinks-only cafés and bars outnumbering restaurants.

Pizzeria Bell (Vladimira Rolovića bb; pizzas €3, pastas €4-5; ☎ 7am-11pm) A small cosy pizza/pasta joint that's open year-round, with juicy portions and efficient service.

Primorka Supermarket (☎ 312 619; Vladimira Rolovića bb; ☎ 8am-8pm) Sells all you need for a feed-yourself holiday.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Four daily trains link Bar and Belgrade (€15 plus €15/8 for a three-/six-berth sleeper, nine hours).

Boats to Italy

Barska Plovidba (☎ 312 336; mlinesagency@cg.yu; Obala 13 Jula bb; ☎ 8am-10pm) is the agent for Montenegro Lines, which sails several times a week to Bari (Italy). For times and prices check www.montenegrolines.net.

Mercur (☎ 313 617; www.mercuradriatica.com in Serbian; Obala 13 Jula bb; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) books Adriatica ferries to Ancona (Italy). A Thursday service leaves at 5.30pm and arrives at 9.30am, and costs from €51/61/82 for passage only/deck seat/cabin bed.

Ulcinj Улцињ

☎ 085 / 24,000
The closest seaside town to the Albanian border is a rich bustle of Albanian and Montenegrin cultures. Although the new part of town is not as beautiful as, say, Kotor, Ulcinj still has a great coast. As well as Mala Plaža (Small Beach) in the town itself (a fine grin of a cove), Ulcinj has the longest sandy beach in the whole of Montenegro, aptly called Velika Plaža (Big Beach). Stretching east, towards the Albanian border, it is 12km long and provides a great escape from the crowded Ulcinj town beaches. Some of it is nudist, too.

The Stari Grad (Old Town) is a mire of stone houses and fortified walls that are present so often in Montenegrin seaside towns due to historical events that called for defence. But Ulcinj has a bit of a

PIRATES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

The Venetians handed control of Ulcinj to the Turks in 1571, and over the next 300 years the town gained notoriety as a pirate base. Initially, the pirates comprised mainly a few hundred North Africans and Maltese, but soon others joined in – Serbs, Albanians and Turks also took their eye patches out and got a hold of a hook or two.

They are said to have made great fortunes from their innumerable robberies, swapping small galleys for galleons in a relatively short time (a bit like progressing from a Yugo 55 to a Ferrari in a few weeks). Legendary leaders became 'celebrities' across the eastern Mediterranean with stories of the Karamindžoja brothers, Lika Ceni, Ali Hodža and the like fuelling the imaginations of avid listeners. It is said that the gangs changed their flags frequently while at sea, thus causing confusion and chaos, and, their day's work done, partied on Ulcinj's Mala Plaža and boiled halvah in massive cauldrons. Always faithful only to the sea, they stirred the piping halvah with an oar.

One tale tells of Cervantes being captured by some of these pirates in 1575, after the battle of Lepanto, and held prisoner in the vaults by the main square. There were rumours also that Don Quixote's Dulcinea was an Ulcinj girl, although one may question the verity of this.

There was a less romanticised side to this time too. Ulcinj was the centre of a thriving slave trade, and the slaves – some of them small children of only two or three, and mainly North African – were sold on the town's main square.

different history, and a fascinating one at that (see the boxed text, above).

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

The **bus station** (☎ 413 225) is on the edge of town. Travel into town by turning right onto 26 Novembar at the first major junction. Mala Plaža and Stari Grad are 3km down at the end of 26 Novembar. Just up from Mala Plaža is a small market area.

Velika Plaža begins about 5km southeast of the town (take the Ada bus or a minibus in season).

Euromarket Bank (☎ 422 370; 26 Novembar bb; ☎ 8.30am-3pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-12.30pm Sat) Cashes travellers cheques, has a Visa ATM.

Integral Caffè (☎ 401 144; 26 Novembar bb; per hr €2.50; ☎ 9am-2pm) Internet, up an alley opposite the mosque.

SIGHTS

The ancient Stari Grad walls overlook the sea and are lovely to wander around. The damaged buildings you will no doubt come across are result of an earthquake that shattered the town in 1979 – the repair works seem to be taking a rather long time. At the western entrance, the **Upper Gate**, is a **museum** (☎ 421 419; Stari Grad; admission €1; ☎ 8am-2pm Mon-Fri) containing Montenegrin and Turkish artefacts such as cannon balls and old Muslim tombstones, as well as some Roman ruins.

Just outside the western entrance is the **Church of St Nicholas** with an ancient olive

orchard. The olive trees are gnarled and beautiful on this part of the coast. The smiling **Mala Plaža** is Ulcinj's town beach.

On your way south towards **Velika Plaža**, whether you walk or go by transport, stop at the **Milena canal**, part of the Bojana River, where the local fishermen use traditional methods to catch their prey. Long willow rods are suspended above the river along with large nets catching unsuspecting fish as they swim by. The entire device is attached to a wooden house sitting on stilts above the water, and since there are many of these, they create an unusual sight that reminds you of Thailand or Vietnam. There are more of these on the banks of the **Bojana River**, beyond Velika Plaža. Along the river banks are fish restaurants with fresh catches lining your plate.

SLEEPING

The **Real Estate Tourist Agency** (☎ 421 612; 26 Novembar bb; ☎ 8am-9pm) has accommodation available in private rooms (from €10, no meals), hotels (doubles from €16, half board) and two-/three-/four-person apartments (€27/36/43, half board). The agency also runs tours.

Dvori Balšića & Palata Venecija (☎/fax 421 457; leart@cg.yu; Stari Grad; 2-/4-/6-person apt low season from €40/63/95, Jul & Aug €50/83/111) No better place than these adjacent places in Ulcinj: spacious two-room (and more) apartments with kitchenettes in an old stone house that looks

like a small castle, and endless views of the sea. The restaurant downstairs has a spacious terrace where you can guzzle and swill. Breakfast/half board/full board is €3/8/10.

Albatros (☎ 423 266; s/d from €22.10/34; 🍷) Among pine trees, this pleasant holiday hotel is 1km up the hill from Mala Plaža. Guests have access to a sauna, fitness room and swimming pool.

Tomí camping ground (🏕️ May-Sep) A camping ground under the trees, located east of Milena and adjacent to Velika Plaža.

HTP Velika Plaža (☎ 413 145; www.velikaplaza.cg.yu; Ada road) Further towards Ada, this holiday camp has a variety of accommodation from €19 to €23 per person or €35 to €100 for an apartment, full board.

EATING & DRINKING

On the seafloor is a string of restaurants specialising in seafood.

Marinero (☎ 423 009; Mala Plaža; meals €5-9; 🍷 7am-late) The owner was once a ship's cook and ship's cooks don't last long unless they're good. Seafaring mates gather, speaking three or four languages, so for a coffee or *rakija* you'll get the history of the town and tales of the sea. Come for a slap-up seafood meal.

Bazar (☎ 421 639; 26 Novembar bb; meals €5-8; 🍷 8am-late) A great place if you want to have some seafood in a quiet spot during the summer bustle. *Lignje na žaru* (grilled calamari) is the restaurant's speciality and finger-licking good.

Gallo Nero (☎ 315 245; 26 Novembar bb; meals €5-12; 🍷 10am-late) Friendly service and a good Italian menu draw the crowds to this place. You can snack or feast, it's your choice.

Bella Vista (☎ 067 315 266; 26 Novembar bb; meals €4-8; 🍷 7am-late) If you don't have breakfast included in your accommodation, this is a good place to come and feed yourself. Equally, you can drink late here. Or just stay the night, since the owners also have accommodation (half board from €25).

Rock (26 Novembar bb; 🍷 8am-late) An attempt at an Irish pub with some of the atmosphere, and live music on the weekend. If that pint of Guinness ain't available, there are plenty of other beers to replace it.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Many minibuses ply the road to Ada (and Velika Plaža) from the marketplace for €1.50 in season.

Bay of Kotor (Boka Kotorska)

Бoka Которска

KOTOR KOTOP

☎ 082 / pop 22,500

Imagine a place at the head of southern Europe's deepest fjord, with a fortified old town nestled at the foot of a high cliff, labyrinthine streets where bars, pizza joints, churches, shops, hotels and restaurants surprise you on hidden piazzas, and you start getting the idea of Kotor. It's probably the most beautiful place on the Montenegrin coast, and its setting couldn't be more dramatic. Brooding mountains protect the bay and the sea is a moody indigo blue.

Kotor attracts a fair amount of visitors during July and August, so it's best to avoid it during these times, if you can. If not, remember that during these months partying is a priority, so if you can't beat 'em, join 'em.

Orientation

The western flank of the funnel-shaped Stari Grad (Old Town) lies against Kotor Fjord (Kotorski Zaliv). An 18th-century gateway off Jadranski Put, which runs along the waterside, leads into the city and Stari Grad, where Kotor's places of interest lie. The **bus station** (☎ 325 809) is 1km away on the Budva road.

Information

Euromarket Bank (☎ 323 946; Trg Oktobarske Revolucije; 🍷 8am-8pm Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm Sat, until 8pm Sat Jun-Sep) Cashes travellers cheques, has a Visa ATM.

IDK Computers (☎ 301 046; Stari Grad; per hr €2;

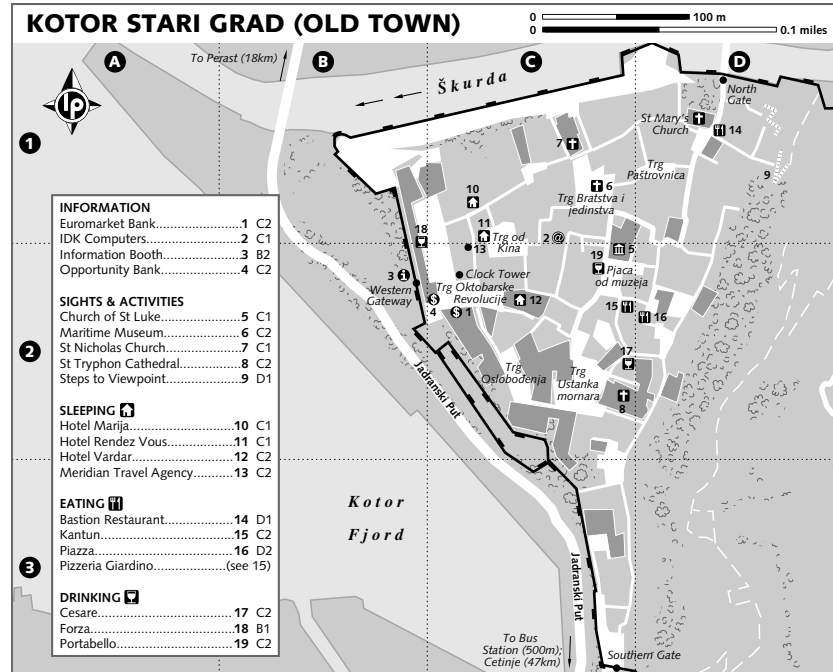
🍷 2pm-midnight summer, 5pm-midnight rest of year)

Information booth (☎ 325 950; western gateway; 🍷 9am-1pm & 5-8pm Mon-Sat) Information on the town and private accommodation.

Opportunity Bank (Trg Oktobarske Revolucije) Has a MasterCard ATM.

Sights

The best thing to do in Kotor is just let yourself get lost and found again in the maze of streets. You'll soon know every corner, since the town is quite small. But there's plenty to see and many coffees to be drunk in the shady squares. If you have the energy, climb the 1500 steps up to the old fortifications on the mountainside above Kotor. The views of the fjord are stunning and you get a good idea of the town below.



Within the town itself, the **Maritime Museum** (☎ 325 646; Stari Grad; admission €1; 🍷 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, to noon Sat) shows Kotor's formerly high position as a Mediterranean naval power and how important the sea is to the town. The displays show a proud history and tell that in the 18th century, the Bay of Kotor sent out over 400 ships to sail the world's seas. Note the brightly painted bottles reading 'For My True Love' and 'Think of Me', probably given to the sailors by their sweethearts upon departure. A leaflet in English is available.

The **St Tryphon Cathedral** (Trg Ustanka mornara), originally built in the 11th century, has been reconstructed several times since due to damage by a number of severe earthquakes. The entire western front was destroyed in 1667 and the replacement stone bell towers add a baroque aspect to the building. The interior is a masterpiece of Romanesque-Gothic architecture with slender columns thrusting upwards to support a series of vaulted roofs. The gilded silver-relief altar screen, in the form of an iconostasis, is held to be the most valuable exhibit in Kotor. There are 14th-century frescoes

which were discovered in the last few years, but the experts can't decide whether their painters were Greek or Serbian. Some of the remains of St Tryphon, Kotor's patron saint, are held at the reliquary chapel as well as parts of the Holy Cross.

The **Church of St Luke** (Trg bratstva i jedinstva) is a 12th-century Romanesque building with original frescoes remaining. The church became a place of worship for Orthodox Christianity in the 17th century, and a hundred years later a chapel to St Spiridon was built alongside it with a baroque façade. The church was restored to its original 12th-century form in 1979 after the strong earthquake that shattered so many of Montenegro's coastal towns. One of the most interesting things about this church is that it has two altars: a Catholic one and an Orthodox one, showing the historic closeness of these two faiths and the religious tolerance of the Kotor area. Confusion was avoided by the simple practice of holding Mass at separate times.

Breathe in the smell of incense and beeswax in the plain and unadorned 1909

Orthodox **St Nicholas Church**. The silence, the iconostasis with its silver panels in bas relief, the dark wood against bare grey walls and the filtered rays of light through the upper dome create an eerie atmosphere.

If you have your own transport, embark upon a journey that has become almost a cult among the inhabitants of Kotor: the **road to Cetinje**. The serpentine bends curve over the mountains and the views are breathtaking. Take the compulsory trip around the Bay of Kotor seeing all the little stone harbours protecting small boats against the chopping waves.

Sleeping & Eating

The information booth has some information on private accommodation. The ever-helpful **Meridian Travel Agency** (☎ 322 968; travel@cg.yu; r €8-15, apt €30-55, s €25-44, d €41-63; ☎ 9am-2pm & 6-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat), in a small lane behind the clock tower, books private and hotel accommodation in and around the city.

Hotel Vardar (☎ 325 084; Trg Oktobarske Revolucije; s/d from €25/41) A great-value hotel with spacious rooms in dark browns and whites, some with views of the main square. Its location (very close to the main town gate) makes it the most hassle-free place for lugging your luggage across the no-traffic marble paving stones of the old town.

Hotel Marija (☎ 325 062; fax 325 073; Stari Grad; s/d €45/65; ♿) A boutique hotel with a wood-paneled interior boasts of each room being different from the other. Tucked in a small side street, this cosy little place can become a little noisy at weekends with pumping music coming from the street below, so ask for a quiet(er) room.

Hotel Rendez Vous (☎ 322 447; Pjaca od mlijeka; s/d/apt €15/25/45) Possibly the cheapest hotel in town, with a TV and a fridge even, and a noisy old men's drinking den downstairs. The rooms are small and a little frumpy, but clean. The Pjaca od mlijeka (Milk Piazza) is quiet and the hotel building is a lovely old stone structure.

There are tons of small eateries on the streets of Kotor, from bakeries to takeaway pizza joints. For the sweet-toothed, cherry-filled strudel is a speciality of the region.

Kantun (☎ 325 757; Pjaca od muzeja; meals €3-6; ☎ 9am-midnight) This wood-beam hut serving fabulous food is a place you could imagine

seafarers having their last feast before treading the ship's boards for months at sea. Traditional Montenegrin food abounds and good examples are the Njegoša cheeses and the *roštiljska kobasica* (grilled sausages).

Piazza (☎ 069 205 720; Pjaca od muzeja; pizza slices €2; ☎ 8am-late) Best pizza in town with a thin base and perfectly measured toppings. Great for snacks or a sit-down meal.

Bastion Restaurant (☎ 322 116; meals €6-9; ☎ 10am-late) By St Mary's church, Bastion Restaurant is more favoured as a lunch-time venue, in which case it's best to go early. Any slight indecision in ordering and the waiter will wheel in a platter of fish to tempt you and if those don't say 'eat me' there's an expansive menu with veg options to choose from. The seafood salad starter is recommended.

Pizzeria Giardino (☎ 323 324; Pjaca od muzeja; pizzas €4-5; ☎ 9am-late) A neighbour to the Kantun and recommended for the pizza.

Drinking

In terms of nightlife, you can have a great time in Kotor. The cafés and bars play various, but invariably loud, music and the Kotorians (?) are definitely up for partying.

Portabello (Pjaca od muzeja; ☎ 9am-1am) Next door to the Piazza pizza joint, the bar itself is tiny, but the DJ lets his music roar outside, where people jig to the beats.

Cesare (☎ 325 913; Stari Grad 327; ☎ 7am-1am) An elongated café/bar popular with the fashionable crowd, Cesare is a place to come to drink and dance, to see and be seen. Take a trip to the toilets and feel like you've stepped onto an MTV music video set, with aluminium capsule cubicles padded in white leather behind shiny sliding doors.

Forza (☎ 304 352; Stari Grad bb; ☎ 8am-late) An Internet café, a bookshop, a cake shop and a sleek café with leather armchairs and soft lighting, popular with a cigar-smoking, distinguished older crowd. If you want to read in silence or just sit and relax, this is your place.

Getting There & Away

Buses go to Budva (€2), Cetinje (€3), Bar (€3) and Podgorica (€5) every 15 to 20 minutes.

If you are driving, the shortest way to Herceg Novi is by ferry from Tivat (€3.50 per car, every 10 minutes, half-hour after midnight). Otherwise, it's a leisurely 43km

drive around the bay, compared with 27km by ferry.

Around Kotor

Perast is a small waterside town about 18km from Kotor on the road around the bay. It's a beautiful old place, with fantastically preserved original Mediterranean charm. The entire town is made up of old houses, and none of the wonders of modern architecture have touched its grounds.

Quiet Perast boasts a parish **Church of St Nikola** on the waterfront, with the tallest bell tower in the bay (35m). Also on the waterfront is the **Perast Museum** (☎ 373 519; Obala Marka Martinovića bb; ☎ 8am-2pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat & Sun; admission €1.50), exhibiting documents about the history of the town and seafaring artefacts.

As soon as you hit this part of the bay, you'll notice two peculiarly small islands in the fjord, opposite Perast. These are the **Gospa od Škrpjela** (Lady of the Rock Island) and the **island of St George** (Ostrvo Svetog Đurđa). The remarkable Lady of the Rock Island was artificially created by the locals over a period of 550 years. Every 22 July they took stones over to the island site and dropped them in the water, on top of an underwater rock. A later sinking of 87 captured ships loaded with rocks made creating the island a little easier. The St George is balanced on a natural reef and houses the Benedictine Monastery of St George shaded by cypress trees.

Between mid-May and mid-October boats regularly ply between the island and Perast for €1 return; just ask on the waterfront. An hourly minibus service connects with Kotor for €1.

The small village of **Risan**, a little further from Perast on the road to Kotor, has **3rd-century mosaics**. There are signposts on the road, leading you to the site. Discovered in the 19th century, the dig was carried out in 1930. The mosaics are part of the remains of the foundations of a Roman villa rustica, where they covered the floors of five rooms. The loveliest is the mosaic of the Greek god of sleep, Hypnos, reclining in the centre of what must have been the bedroom.

HERCEG NOVI ХЕРЦЕГ НОВИ

☎ 088 / pop 30,000

Herceg Novi is the first place you will come upon if you cross into Montenegro from

Croatia. It's a lovely place, with sunny squares and a lively atmosphere. Herceg Novi has some great gardens and parks with rare trees and plants, and the beaches here and in the neighbouring Topla and Igalo are good for swimming.

A good general Herceg Novi information website is www.hercegnovi.cc/adresar/index.php.

There are plenty of ATMs in the city. **Crnogorska Komercijalna Bank** (☎ 322 666; Trg Nikole Đurkovića; ☎ 7am-8pm Mon-Sat) Cashes travellers cheques and has a MasterCard ATM.

Euromarket Bank (☎ 323 523; by Njegoševa 12; ☎ 8.30am-3pm Mon-Fri, 8.30am-12.30pm Sat) Cashes travellers cheques and has a Visa ATM.

Gorbis (☎ 326 085; Njegoševa 64; r €5-8, s/d €25/36; ☎ 8am-7pm) A travel agency that books accommodation, transfers to Dubrovnik and flight and ferry tickets.

Sights

The old city centre is surrounded by walls, and the **Španjola tower**, started by the Spanish and finished by the Turks, is well preserved. The Venetians built towers overlooking the sea, and called them, imaginatively, Fortemare. In the city centre is the **clock tower**, marking the border between the old and new parts of town.

One of the loveliest places in town is **Trg Belvista**, a gleaming white piazza with the **Church of the Archangel Michael** (1900) in the centre, surrounded by palm trees. Many relax, drink and chat in the shade.

The seafront area is as active as the old town and is popular for restaurants and bars. One of the best places for breakfast, possibly in the entire country, is the **Sports Café** (☎ 322 018; Šetalište 5, Danica 34; breakfast €3-4; ☎ 8am-late) on a barge at the waterfront. Breakfasts are a variety of massive omelettes, fresh bread rolls and jam, or delicious wraps.

Getting There & Away

The **bus station** (☎ 321 225) is on the main highway. There are two buses to Dubrovnik, at 3.50pm and 8.10pm (€7). There are frequent buses to Kotor (€2.50, 1½ hours) and Budva (€3, 1¼ hours).

NORTHERN MONTENEGRO

Ostrog Острог

Some 20km south of Nikšić off the road from Podgorica is the **monastery of Ostrog**. Built in 1665 by St Vasilije Jovanović, who

fled from the Turks, the monastery looks as if it has grown out of the rock of the cliff it rests on, 900m above the Zeta valley floor. Once you get on the winding road that snakes off the main Podgorica–Nikšić road, you will eventually make it to the Lower Monastery, a newer structure built in 1824. The Lower Monastery is, allegedly, the place where Montenegrin and Boka (Bay of Kotor) patriots met to agree that their country should join Tito's Yugoslavia in 1942.

The Upper Monastery (the impressive one) is dubbed St Vasilije's miracle, because no-one seems to understand how it was built. The Saint's bones are still inside and apparently heal all sorts of illnesses. There are original frescoes inside the monastery, as well as curious mosaics in rock. To get to the Upper Monastery, a 3km walk uphill, you can either join the pilgrims and get your cardiovascular system going, or if you'd rather drive and not be a sport, there's an upper car park.

Durmitor National Park Дурмитор

☎ 089 / pop 4900

A Unesco World Heritage site, Durmitor is the kind of mountain that sets off *Carmina Burana* in your head when you see its dramatic, imposing peaks. Slapped around by the elements, the sharp shapes of the rock stab the vast skies above. Relief comes in around 20 lakes that dot the Durmitor Range, dubbed 'Mountain Eyes' (Gorske oči).

In winter (December to March) Durmitor is Montenegro's ski resort; in summer (June to September) it's a popular place for hiking, rafting and many other activities. Be prepared though, as the weather is very changeable, even in summer.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

Žabljak town centre is where the Nikšić road meets the Đurđevića Tara bridge road. Here there's a **tourist information centre** (☎ 361 802; Stanka Dragojevića 26; ☎ 8am–8pm Dec–Mar, 8am–3pm Apr–Nov), with maps and fine picture books, a taxi stand and a bus stop.

Check out the informative Durmitor website www.durmitorcg.com.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Durmitor is fun, fun, fun. In winter there's skiing, snowboarding or having fun with a

dog-drawn team. In summer there's rafting trips through the steeply forested Tara Gorge and over countless foaming rapids. There's also horse riding, hiking, cycling, mountaineering and paragliding.

Ski Centar Durmitor (☎ 61 144; www.durmitorcg.com/ski_centar.php; ☎ 8am–6pm Mon–Sat), in the Hotel Žabljak adjacent to the tourist information centre, arranges ski passes (€6.15/35.79 per day/week), ski lessons (€3.07/17.90 for one/seven lessons) and also equipment rental (€3.07/17.90 per day/week).

The largest lake in the area, **Black Lake** (Crno jezero), is a 3km walk from Žabljak. Dominating all is the rounded mass of 'Bear' (Meded, 2287m) rearing up behind the lake and flanked by other peaks, including Bobotov Kuk (2525m). **Škrčko Lake** is in the centre of a tectonic valley and the scenery is magnificent here. This lake is particularly popular with mountaineers, who walk the fells surrounding it and then go for a cool dip at the end of the day. **Modro Lake** is more accessible, even walkable (8km from Žabljak), and many drink its pure water.

The 1.3km-deep **Tara Canyon** that slits open the earth's crust for 80km is best seen from a rock promontory at Ćurevac, a €10 taxi ride away from Žabljak. It is popular for rafting. The entire length of the course is 85km, but you can choose to raft only 15km. Rafting is a group activity but individuals can join by prior arrangement. **Sveti Đorđije** (☎/fax 61 367; tasaint@cg.yu; Njegoševa bb; ☎ 8am–8pm) is a fount of information (English spoken) and offers two-/three-day trips for €200/250 per person including transfers, accommodation and food. An inclusive day trip costs €80.

Sveti Đorđije also organises summer day tours, typically for six to eight people (individuals may join) at €30 each, to the **Piva Monastery**, near the Bosnian border, which has remarkable frescoes.

The **Durmitor National Park office** (☎ 61 474; fax 61 346; ☎ 7am–2pm Mon–Fri), by Hotel Durmitor, has park maps and runs rafting trips for €150 for a group of 10, horse-riding tours (half/whole day €25/50), led by an English-speaking guide, and walking tours.

SLEEPING & EATING

Sveti Đorđije (☎/fax 361 367; tasaint@cg.yu; Njegoševa bb; s/d €10/16, 2-/3-/4-person apt €26/30/39, B&B/half-board €3/9; ☎ 8am–8pm) is an agency with its finger on private accommodation.

Hotel Jezera (☎ 361 103; fax 61 579; Njegoševa bb; s/d/tr B&B €25/36/45, half board €28/46/54; ☎) If you feel like really joining the crowds, this large hotel has big groups of skiers and summer holidaymakers. The rooms are spacious and the hotel has a pleasant restaurant and apéritif bar.

Planinka (☎ 361 344; Njegoseva bb; s/d B&B €20/36, half board €25/46; ☎) Offers much the same as the Jezera, plus a relief map of Durmitor in the reception, to feel all those sharp peaks under your fingertips.

Autocamp Ivan-do is just a fenced-off field, without facilities, uphill from the national park office.

All the hotels have restaurants open to nonresidents.

National Restaurant (☎ 361 337; Božidara Žugića 8; meals €3–8; ☎ 8am–late) A pearl of a place! Small, but not crowded, it's a happy restaurant offering the best food around: broths and hot appetisers with slugs of domestic brandy to defeat the winter chill, or grilled trout and salad in summer.

Restaurant Durmitor (☎ 637 316; Božidara Žugića bb; meals €4–8; ☎ 7am–11pm) Home cooking at its best in a small hut-restaurant proudly bearing the mountain's name. The small space guarantees a cosy winter atmosphere.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The **bus station** (☎ 61 318), on the Nikšić road, is at the southern end of town. There's one bus daily to Belgrade (€18, 10 hours, departs 4.30pm), several to Nikšić (€3.50, two hours) and four to Podgorica (€6, 3½ hours).

SERBIA & MONTENEGRO DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION

The availability of hostel accommodation has declined but contact the Youth Hostel Organisation (p284) for current hotel deals. Belgrade hotels are rather expensive for what they have to offer, but there are a couple of good-value midrange hotels. Montenegrin hotels outside the coast and Žabljak are iniquitously expensive, while in Kosovo accommodation is scarce and pricey.

The cheapest option is private rooms (along the coast, seldom inland and not in

PRACTICALITIES

- *Danas* and *Politika* are daily newspapers, and *Vreme* and *NIN* weekly magazines.
- RTS is the state national broadcaster, and B92 radio and TV is the main independent broadcaster.
- Serbia and Montenegro uses standard European electricity (220V to 240V/50Hz to 60Hz).
- The system used for weights and measurements is metric.

Belgrade) organised through travel agencies. The Montenegrin coast has some summer camping grounds. 'Wild' camping would be possible outside national parks, but not in Kosovo due to the odd chance of an undiscovered mine. An overnight bus or train will always save you a night's accommodation.

The quoted accommodation prices in Montenegro are for the high season. Unless otherwise mentioned the tariff includes breakfast, and rooms have a private bathroom. Places listed in our Sleeping sections are ordered by preference.

ACTIVITIES

Serbia's main ski resorts are Zlatibor (p300) and Kopaonik (p299), while Montenegro's is Durmitor (opposite). Kosovo's resort is at Brezovica (p308). The ski season is from December to March; the resorts are also popular for hiking in summer. For white-water rafting, the Tara River in Montenegro's Durmitor National Park is the most important river in the country.

BOOKS

Rebecca West's 1941 *Black Lamb & Grey Falcon* is a classic piece of travel writing but now extremely dated. Consider *The Serbs: History, Myth and the Destruction of Yugoslavia* by Tim Judah and *Balkan Babel* by Sabrina Ramet, an engaging look at Yugoslavia from Tito to Milošević. Specifically for Kosovo read *Kosovo: A Short History* by Noel Malcolm. Ismail Kadare's *Three Elegies for Kosovo*, which centres around the myth of the 1389 Kosovo battle (the centre of the antagonism between the Serbs and the Albanians) is a recommended read.

BUSINESS HOURS

Banks are open from 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday and 8am to 2pm Saturday, but are closed Sunday. On weekdays many shops open at 8am and close at 6pm. Most government offices close on Saturday; although shops stay open until 2pm, many other businesses close at 3pm. Restaurants are open from 8am to 11pm or midnight and bars from 9pm to 3am.

CUSTOMS

If you're bringing in more than €2000, then you have to complete a currency declaration form on arrival and show it on departure. In practice it's ignored but the reality is that if customs officials wanted to play by the rules they could confiscate your money. Play it safe and declare.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Travel nearly everywhere is safe but your government travel advisories will warn against travel to Kosovo. Avoid southeastern Serbia, where Serb-Albanian tension remains. Kosovo is thought to have been cleared of landmines but there is still unexploded ordnance about, so if you are off the beaten track you will need KFOR (who are omnipresent) and local advice (try the police).

Many people are chain-smokers and give the same consideration to nonsmokers as lift farters do to their fellow passengers.

It's fine to discuss politics if you're also willing to listen.

Check with the police before photographing any official building they're guarding.

DISCOUNT CARDS

The EURO<26 discount card (www.euro26.org.yu) can provide holders with discounts on rail travel, air travel with JAT and Montenegro Airlines, and some selected hotels.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Serbian & Montenegrin Embassies & Consulates

Albania (☎ 042-232 042, 042-232 091; ambatira@icc-al.org; Skender Beg Bldg 8/3-II, Tirana)

Australia (☎ 02-6290 2630; yuembau@ozemail.com.au; 4 Bulwarra Close, O'Malley, ACT 2606)

Bosnia and Hercegovina (☎ 033-260 090; yugoamba@bih.net.ba; Obala Marka Dizdara 3a, Sarajevo 71000)

Bulgaria (☎ 02-946 16 35, 02-946 10 59; ambasada-sofija@infotel.bg; Veliko Tarnovo 3, Sofia 1504)

Canada (☎ 613-233 6289; www.embscg.ca)

/consular.html; 17 Blackburn Ave, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 8A2)

Croatia (☎ 01-457 90 6; ambasada@ambasada-srj.hr; Pantovcak 245, Zagreb)

France (☎ 01 40 72 24 24; ambasadaparis@wanadoo.fr; 54 rue Faisanderie, 75116 Paris)

Germany (☎ 030-895 77 00; info@botschaft-smg.de; Taubert Strasse 18, Berlin D-14193)

Hungary (☎ 1-322 9838; ambjubp@mail.datanet.hu; Dozsa Gyorgy ut 92/b, Budapest H-1068)

Netherlands (☎ 070-363 23 97; yuambanl@bart.nl; Groot Hertoginnelaan 30, The Hague 2517 EG)

Romania (☎ 021-211 98 71; ambiug@ines.ro; Calea Dorobantilor 34, Bucharest)

UK (☎ 0207-235 9049; www.yugoslavembassy.org.uk; 28 Belgrave Sq, London, SW1X 80B)

USA (☎ 202-332 0333; www.yuembusa.org; 2134 Kalorama Rd NW, Washington, DC, 20008)

Embassies & Consulates in Serbia & Montenegro

The following countries have representation in Belgrade:

Albania (Map p274; ☎ 306 6642; Bulevar Mira 25A)

Australia (Map pp276-7; ☎ 330 3400; Ćika Ljubina 13)

Bosnia and Hercegovina (Map p274; ☎ 329 1277; Milana Tankosića 8)

Bulgaria (Map pp276-7; ☎ 361 3980; Birčaninova 26)

Canada (Map pp276-7; ☎ 306 3000; Kneza Miloša 75)

Croatia (Map pp276-7; ☎ 361 0535; Kneza Miloša 62)

France (Map pp276-7; ☎ 302 3500; Pariska 11)

Germany (Map pp276-7; ☎ 306 4300; Kneza Miloša 74-6)

Hungary (Map pp276-7; ☎ 244 0472; Krunska 72)

Netherlands (Map pp276-7; ☎ 328 2332; Simina 29)

UK (Map pp276-7; ☎ 264 5055; Resavska 46)

USA (Map pp276-7; ☎ 361 9344; Kneza Miloša 50)

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

There's plenty of variety for all tastes. Pop, techno and electronic aficionados from all over Europe flock to Novi Sad's **Exit festival** in July, while those who like beer with their rock will want to sink a few at Belgrade's August **Beer festival**. On a different note there's the famous festival of brass band music (www.guca.co.yu). This crazy festival where the musical energy beats anything from Kusturica's films takes place annually from 1-7 August in Guča near Čačak, a village in southern Serbia. For those who want to hear something different and tap directly into an exhibition of Serbian pride and culture, this is the festival to attend.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Homosexuality has been legal in Yugoslavia since 1932 (the age of consent for male-male sex is 18 in Serbia but 14 in Montenegro, female-female sex is 14 in both), but significant homophobia has meant that gay and lesbian events and meeting places are very underground. For more information check www.gay-serbia.com.

HOLIDAYS

Public holidays in Serbia and Montenegro include:

New Year 1 January

Orthodox Christmas 7 January

Nation Day 27 April

International Labour Days 1 and 2 May

Victory Day 9 May

Republic Day 29 Nov

Additionally Montenegro has Uprising Day (13 July).

Orthodox churches celebrate Easter between one and five weeks later than other churches.

In Kosovo, 28 November is Flag Day and Easter Monday is a public holiday.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Fruška Gora (www.fruskagora-nat-park.co.yu)

Montenegro Tourist Organisation (www.visit-montenegro.cg.yu)

Serbian Government (www.srbija.sr.gov.yu)

Serbia in Your Hands (www.serbiainyourhands.com) This excellent tourism website offers an increasing amount of information on sights, restaurants and hotels throughout Serbia, plus the lowdown on wildlife, wine, spas and more.

Serbian Tourist Organisation (www.serbia-tourism.org)

LANGUAGE

Serbian is the common language in Serbia and Montenegro, although in Montenegro some also now refer to the language as Montenegrin. Only Albanian is spoken in Kosovo. Many people know some English and German.

Hungarians in Vojvodina use the Latin alphabet, Montenegrins and Serbs use both Latin and Cyrillic. See the language chapter (p414) for useful phrases and the Cyrillic alphabet.

MAPS

The Freytag & Berndt map *Yugoslavia, Slovenia, Croatia* covers the former republics

of Yugoslavia. The *Savezna Republika Jugoslavija Autokarta* map shows the new borders and has some maps of towns too. *Plan Grada Beograd* is a detailed Belgrade city map. The latter two are available free from the Tourist Organisation of Belgrade (p277). M@gic M@p's *Crna Gora* is good for navigating around Montenegro and International Travel Maps' *Kosovo* is a decent topographical map.

MONEY

Montenegro and Kosovo use the euro; Serbia retains the dinar although some hotels may want payment in euros. Some international train journeys may require part payment in dinar and part in euros. **Western Union** (www.westernunion.com) transfers can be made at most banks and major post offices. ATMs accepting Visa, MasterCard and their variants are widespread in major towns. MasterCard, Visa and Diners Club are widely accepted by businesses too. The euro is the favoured hard currency. Many exchange offices in Serbia will readily change these and other hard currencies into dinars and back again when you leave. Look for their large blue diamond signs hanging outside. Some Belgrade banks are installing 24-hour machines for changing foreign notes. A large number of banks cash hard currency travellers cheques – the euro is preferable.

POST

Parcels should be taken unsealed to the main post office for inspection. Allow time to check the post office's repacking and complete the transaction.

You can receive mail, addressed poste restante, in all towns for a small charge.

TELEPHONE & FAX

Press the *i* button on public phones in Serbian and Montenegro for dialling commands in English.

Calls to Serbia to Europe/Australia/North America costs 42/76/76DIN a minute.

Montenegro to Europe/Australia/North America costs €0.90/1.64/1.64 per minute

Kosovo to Europe/Australia/North America costs €0.65/1.42/1.42 per minute.

Some premises do not have land-line telephones but can be contacted through mobile phones. These numbers usually start with 06 or 04.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- Ambulance ☎ 94
- Fire service ☎ 93
- Motoring assistance in Belgrade ☎ 987
- Motoring assistance outside Belgrade ☎ 011 9800
- Police ☎ 92

Fax

Faxes can be sent from any large hotel or from post offices. In Serbia it costs 172/236/236DIN per page to Europe/Australia/North America; from Kosovo €2.10/3/3. Faxes can be sent from post offices but take a photocopy as they keep the original.

Phonocards

Phonocards don't give enough time for an international call, so use telephone centres at post offices.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Serbia is getting it together with its tourist offices and top marks go to Belgrade, Novi Sad and Subotica. They have plenty of maps and brochures and their English-speaking staff are a fountain of useful information. Montenegro's facilities, given the tourist potential, are woeful, with little literature and offices only open for short periods of time outside the tourist season. Better are the travel agencies listed in the Montenegro section. Kosovo has a tourist office in Prishtina but its non-English-speaking staff are of little assistance and have no literature. Again, try the travel agencies, but even their knowledge is limited.

TOURS

Ace Cycling & Mountaineering Center (☎/fax 018-47 287; www.ace-adventurecentre.com; B. Krsmanovica 51/8 Niš) organises guided cycling and walking tours in Serbia.

VISAS

Tourist visas for less than 90 days are not required for citizens of many European countries, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. The website of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** (www.mfa.gov.yu) has details.

If you're not staying at a hotel or in a private home then you have to register with

the police within 24 hours of arrival and subsequently on changing address.

WOMEN TRAVELLERS

Other than a cursory interest shown by men towards solo women travellers, travelling is hassle-free and easy. In Muslim areas a few women wear a headscarf but most young women adopt Western fashions.

Dress more conservatively in Muslim areas of Kosovo.

TRANSPORT IN SERBIA & MONTENEGRO

This section deals with travel into or out of Serbia and Montenegro, and includes getting around information. For details of travel within Western Balkans, see p399.

GETTING THERE & AWAY**Air**

Serbia and Montenegro is well served by regional airlines that pick up at inter-continental hubs. Travellers from Australasia can fly to Dubai and pick up a JAT flight to Belgrade or with Lufthansa via Frankfurt or Austrian Air via Vienna. Travellers from North America would pick up regional connecting flights in London or Frankfurt. As of yet none of the European discount airlines flies to or near Belgrade.

Belgrade's **Surčin Airport** (☎ 011-601 424, 011-601 431; www.airport-belgrade.co.yu) handles the majority of international flights. The following office telephone numbers are in Belgrade (area code ☎ 011).

Aeroflot (airline code SU; ☎ 323 5814; www.aeroflot.com; hub Moscow Sheremetyevo)

Air France (airline code AF; ☎ 638 378; www.airfrance.com; hub Paris Charles de Gaulle)

Air India (airline code AI; ☎ 133 551; www.airindia.com; hub New Delhi, Mumbai)

Alitalia (airline code AZ; ☎ 324 5344; www.alitalia.com; hub Rome)

Austrian Airlines (airline code OS; ☎ 324 8077; www.aua.com; hub Vienna)

British Airways (airline code BA; ☎ 328 1303; www.britishairways.com; hub London Heathrow)

ČSA (Czech Airlines; airline code OK; ☎ 361 4592; www.csa.cz; hub Prague)

Emirates (airline code EK; ☎ 624 435; www.ekgroup.com; hub Dubai)

DEPARTURE TAX

Departure tax for domestic/international flights is 500/1000DIN, although this may be covered in the price of your ticket. A €15 departure tax is charged at Podgorica airport.

JAT (airline code JU; ☎ 311 2123; www.jat.com; hub Belgrade)

KLM (airline code KL; ☎ 328 2747; www.klm.com; hub Amsterdam)

LOT Polish Airlines (airline code LOT; ☎ 324 8892; www.lot.com; hub Warsaw)

Lufthansa (airline code LH; ☎ 322 4975; www.lufthansa.com; hub Frankfurt)

Macedonian Airlines (MAT; airline code IN; ☎ 187 123; www.mat.com.mk; hub Skopje)

Malév (Hungarian Airlines; airline code MA; ☎ 626 377; www.malev.hu; hub Budapest)

Montenegro Airlines (airline code YM; ☎ 262 1122; www.montenegro-airlines.com; hub Podgorica)

Olympic Airways (airline code OA; ☎ 322 6800; www.olympic-airways.gr; hub Athens)

Royal Jordanian (airline code RJ; ☎ 645 555; www.rja.com.jo; hub Amman)

Swiss International Air Lines (airline code LX; ☎ 3030 140; www.swiss.com; hub Zurich)

Turkish Airlines (airline code TK; ☎ 323 2561; www.turkishairlines.com; hub Istanbul)

AIRLINES SERVING PODGORICA & TIVAT IN MONTENEGRO

Charter and other airlines fly into **Podgorica** (☎ 081-242 912) and **Tivat** (☎ 082-671 894) airports in Montenegro. The following office telephone numbers are in Podgorica (area code ☎ 081).

Adria Airlines (airline code JP; ☎ 310 000; www.adria-airways.com; hub Ljubljana) **JAT** (airline code JU; ☎ 230 027; www.jat.com; hub Belgrade)

Malév (Hungarian Airlines; airline code MA; ☎ 626 377; www.malev.hu; hub Budapest)

Montenegro Airlines (airline code YM; ☎ 664 411; www.montenegro-airlines.cg.yu; hub Podgorica)

AIRLINES SERVING PRISHTINA IN KOSOVO

Kosovo's airport is at **Prishtina** (☎ 038-548 430). The following office telephone numbers are in Prishtina (area code ☎ 038).

Adria Airways (airline code JP; ☎ 548 437; www.adria-airways.com; hub Ljubljana)

Austrian Airlines (airline code OS; ☎ 548 661; www.aua.com; hub Vienna)

British Airways (airline code BA; ☎ 548 661; www.britishairways.com; hub London Heathrow)

Kosovo Airlines (airline code KOS; ☎ 249 158; www.kosovairlines.com; hub Prishtina)

Malév (Hungarian Airlines; airline code MA; ☎ 535 535; www.malev.hu; hub Budapest)

Turkish Airlines (airline code TK; ☎ 502 052; www.turkishairlines.com; hub Istanbul)

Land

You can easily enter Serbia and Montenegro by land from any of its neighbours. Make sure you are registered with the police (it is the duty of your hotel/host to do this) and have the registration paper(s) with you when leaving the country.

Decent maps of the region such as the Freytag & Berndt map (see p323) and the National Tourist Organisation of Serbia brochure *In Serbia by Car* show borders.

BICYCLE

There are no problems bringing a bicycle into the country, but remember it's hilly. There are not many cyclists here, so road-users are not cycle savvy.

BORDER CROSSINGS**Albania**

From Kosovo you can cross at Qafe Prushit, Đakovica and Vrbnica. From Montenegro, cross at Božaj by Lake Skadar.

Bosnia & Hercegovina

Border crossings are at Kotroman, Sremska Rača, Badovinci, Trbušnica, and Zvornik.

Croatia

Crossing points are at Bijela, Batrovci, Bačka Palanka, Bogojevo, Apatin, Bezdán, and Šid.

Macedonia

There are crossings at Preševo and Đeneral Janković.

BUS

There's a well-developed bus service to Western Europe and Turkey. Contact any of the travel agencies mentioned in this chapter for information. Sample routes from Belgrade are Malmö in Sweden (€103, 34 hours, Friday), Munich (€55, 17 hours, daily), Paris (€97, 28 hours, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) and Zurich (€87, 23 hours, Saturday).

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Drivers need an International Driving Permit and vehicles need Green Card insurance, or insurance (from €80 a month) must be bought at the border. See also right.

TRAIN

All international rail connections out of Serbia originate in Belgrade with most calling at Novi Sad and Subotica heading north and west, and at Niš going east. Montenegro and Kosovo have no international connections. Curiously, tickets for international trains have to be paid for in euros, but sleeper supplements have to be paid for in DIN. Sample services from Belgrade are:

Dest	Frequency	Duration	Cost (€)	Sleeper (DIN)
Bucharest	daily	14hr	27	680
Budapest	daily	7hr	37	980
Istanbul	daily	26hr	44	360*
Ljubljana	daily	10hr	28	810
Moscow	daily	50hr	125	1520
Munich	daily	17hr	87	870
Sofia	daily	11hr	12	360
Thessaloniki	daily	16hr	30	680
Vienna	daily	11hr	65	980
Zagreb	daily	7hr	18	870

* to Thessaloniki only

Sea

A ferry service operates between Bar and Italy (see p314).

GETTING AROUND**Air****AIRLINES IN SERBIA & MONTENEGRO**

JAT and Montenegro Airlines fly daily between Belgrade and Podgorica or Tivat. For Belgrade and Podgorica details see p324.

Bicycle

Cyclists are rare on the country's roads, even in the cities, and there are no special provisions. For cycling tours see p324.

Bus

The bus service is extensive and reliable and covers all of Serbia and Montenegro and Kosovo. Buses are rarely full and there's usually a row available for everyone; luggage carried below is charged at 50DIN/€0.50 per piece.

RESERVATIONS

Reservations are only worthwhile for international buses, at holiday times and where long-distance journeys are infrequent.

Car & Motorcycle

Independent travel by car or motorcycle is an ideal way to gad about and discover the country.

Traffic police are everywhere, so stick to speed limits: 120km/h on motorways, 100km/h on dual carriageways, 80km/h on main roads and 60km/h in urban areas. Carry an International Driving Permit, available from your home motoring organisation.

Serbia and Montenegro has right-hand drive, seat belts must be worn and the drink-driving limit is .05.

AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATIONS

The **Auto-Moto Savez Serbia & Montenegro** (Serbia & Montenegro Automotive Association; Map p274; ☎ 011 9800; www.amsj.co.yu; Ruzveltova 18, Belgrade) web page has details on road conditions, tolls, insurance and petrol prices.

FUEL & SPARE PARTS

Filling up is no problem in any medium-sized town but don't leave it until the last drop as there are few late-night petrol stations. Spare parts for major brands (check with your dealer before you travel) will be no problem in the cities, and mechanics are available everywhere for simple repairs.

HIRE

There are plenty of hire companies; **VIP** (☎ 011-690 107), **Hertz** (☎ 011-600 634) and **Europcar** (☎ 011-601 555) all have offices at Belgrade airport. The typical cost of small-car hire in Serbia is €45 a day.

Car hire is cheaper in Montenegro with a small car costing from €30 a day from **Meridian Rent a Car** (☎ 081-234 944, 069 316 66) in Podgorica, Budva and Bar.

Train

Jugoslovenske Železnice (JŽ; www.yurail.co.yu in Serbian) provides adequate railway services from Belgrade serving Novi Sad, Subotica and the highly scenic line down to Bar; the website gives timetable details. Trains are slower than buses due to lack of infrastructure investment.

No trains run in Kosovo at present.

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