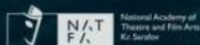


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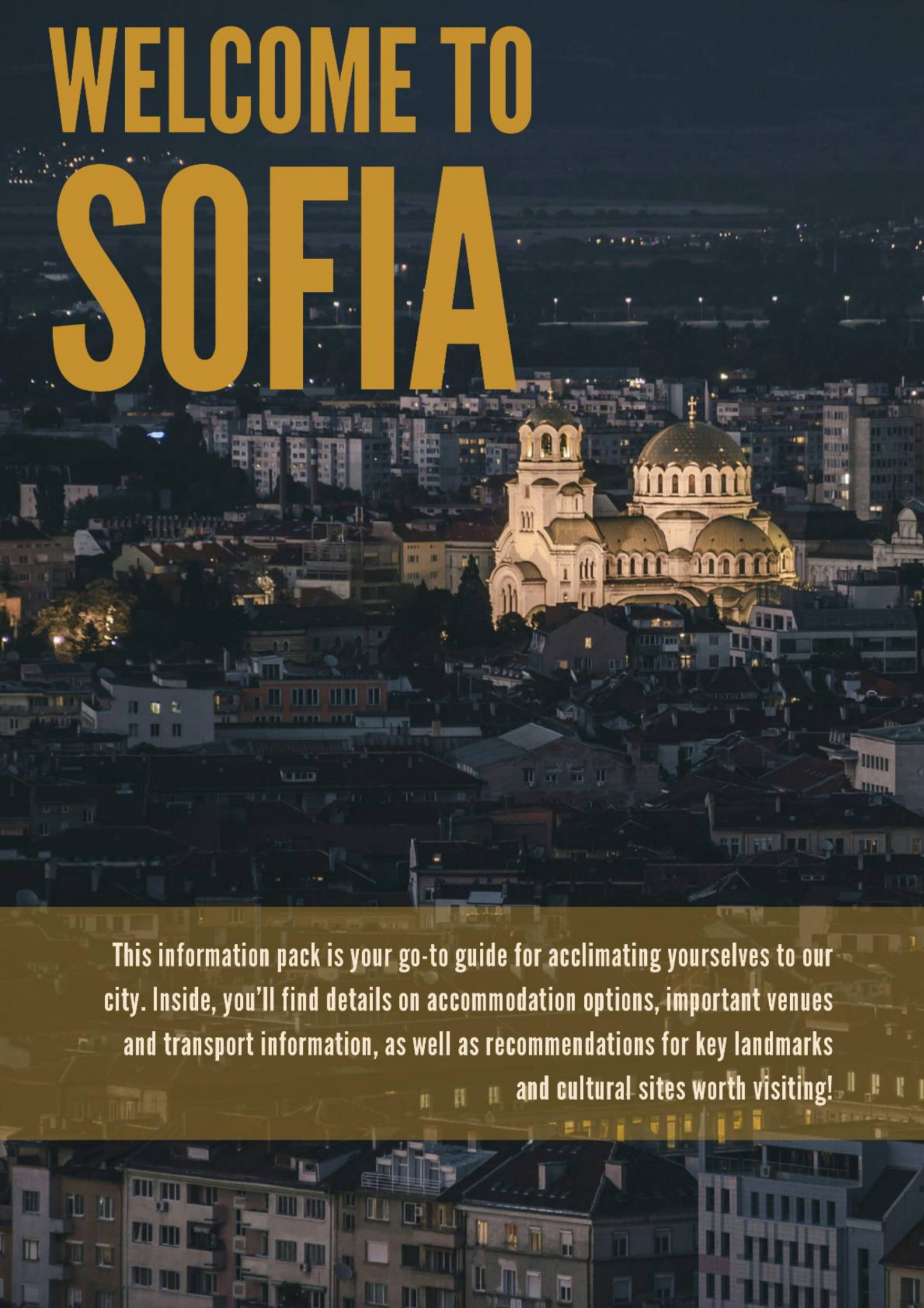
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WELCOME PACK

YOUR GUIDE TO LOCAL LIFE - AND TO
FINDING YOUR PLACE IN
SOFIA



WELCOME TO SOFIA

A nighttime aerial photograph of Sofia, Bulgaria. The Alexander Nevsky Cathedral is the central focus, brightly lit with warm yellow lights that contrast with the dark night sky. The city's dense urban landscape is visible, with numerous buildings and streets illuminated by city lights. The overall atmosphere is welcoming and vibrant.

This information pack is your go-to guide for acclimating yourselves to our city. Inside, you'll find details on accommodation options, important venues and transport information, as well as recommendations for key landmarks and cultural sites worth visiting!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

This document uses hyperlinks for easy navigation - just click where you want to go!

- 01 ACCOMMODATION**
- 02 LOCAL INSIDER'S GUIDE**
- 03 TRANSPORTATION**
- 08 EXPERIENCE**
THE CITY CENTRE
- 11 LANDMARKS,**
GALLERIES, MUSEUMS
- 13 SHOPPING STREETS**
- 15 CONTACTS**

ACCOMMODATION

Student Housing

Affordable. Social. Convenient.

All students - both local and international - are welcome to stay in the Academy's dormitory, located in the heart of Sofia's vibrant 'Students' Town' ('Studentski Grad'). This lively district is more than just a place to crash, but rather a self-sufficient dynamic community. Enjoy spontaneous social gatherings, a youthful atmosphere, and easy access to everything you need!

What's around:

- Modern sports facilities
- Dozens of cafés, restaurants, and bars
- Shopping centers and local produce markets
- Health clinic and specialized polyclinic
- Green spaces, playgrounds, and childcare centers
- Budget-friendly student diners
- Excellent public transport links throughout Sofia

About the Rooms

Each room is shared by two students and priced per bed, per month. If you prefer a private room, it is still an affordable option to pay for both beds, but whether or not that is a possibility would depend on availability.

Not included are minor additional costs cover utilities (electricity, water, heating), Wi-Fi access and laundry services (on request). Dorm rooms do not include cooking facilities, but students enjoy discounted meals at our on-campus canteen, offering healthy and delicious options every day!

Due to high demand and limited availability, we recommend letting us know if you'll be applying for a room by the **end of August!**

**PRICE: €70 PER BED MONTHLY
(€77 PER BED WITH A TERRACE)**



[Booking page - for pictures](#)



[On-campus canteen](#)



[ulitsa 'Doctor Yordan Yosifov' Block
29, Studentski Grad, 1700 Sofia,
Bulgaria](#)



LOCAL INSIDER'S GUIDE



TO STUDENT TOWN

Here's how to experience it like a local:

Best budget eats:

- On the main street, you'll find endless **street food options** – from juicy burgers and slices of pizza, to gyros at 'Gyro Land' and the ever-popular KFC. Just take a stroll – something tasty is always within reach!
- **'Magiyata na Chergite'** ('The Magic of the Rugs') offers a cozy and authentic Bulgarian dining experience – perfect for discovering local flavours in a folksy setting.
- **Street bakeries** – fresh banitsa (local cheese pastry) and espresso for under €2.

Nightlife:

- **'Club 35'** and **'Maisons'** are just around the corner from the dorm – convenient, loud, and loved by locals and foreign students alike.
- **'Plazza'** and **'Eleven Club'** are favourites for live music and late nights.
- Many bars offer karaoke, salsa nights, or open mics – check the flyers or student Facebook groups for details.

Staying active:

- **'National Sports Academy' gym** – fully equipped and student-priced.
- Nearby parks and football fields are great for group sports or jogs.

Getting around:

- Bus lines **94, 280, and 294** connect you to the city center and NATFA.
- Check additional transportation information on [page 9](#).

Other useful spots:

- **24/7 pharmacy** near the main boulevard.
- **'Nedelya Café'** – strong Wi-Fi and a variety of cake choices make this a great spot for study sessions.
- **'Billa', 'Lidl', and 'Fantastico'** all offer a great mix of fresh produce, local goods, and budget-friendly staples. Most are open late and support contactless payment and self-checkout.
- **'Print Mania'** – open 24/7, whether you need a last-minute document printed or a binder for a class project. You can visit in person or simply email your files for quick service.



TRANSPORTATION

**GETTING AROUND SOFIA
EASY, AFFORDABLE, AND
WELL-CONNECTED**



Whether you're heading to class, exploring the city, or catching a flight — Sofia's transportation network has you covered. From buses and metro lines to taxis and rental options, moving around is simple and budget-friendly. In this section, you'll find everything you need to know about:

- Public transport passes and ticket prices
- Navigating the metro system and major stops
- Trusted taxi apps and safety tips
- Car rentals and other flexible ways to travel



Photo by Julie Pastrakova,
student at NATFA

UPON ARRIVAL AT SOFIA AIRPORT

You can easily reach the city center from the airport by taxi, with the journey typically taking about 20-30 minutes.

App recommendations:



[website](#)



[website](#)

However, we recommend using the listed apps for reliability and better rates, as random taxis at the airport can often be absurdly overpriced! The fare for a taxi service from the airport to the city center (and NATFA) is usually around €13. Simply download the app of your choice - the wait time to be picked up is usually about 10 minutes.

Our suggestion if you don't have too much luggage is to use the Metro - you can easily reach the inner city from the airport at a fraction of the price (for less than €1), with the journey typically taking just as long - about 30 minutes or less.

IF YOU DO DECIDE ON THE METRO, HERE ARE SOME QUICK COLOUR-CODED INSTRUCTIONS:





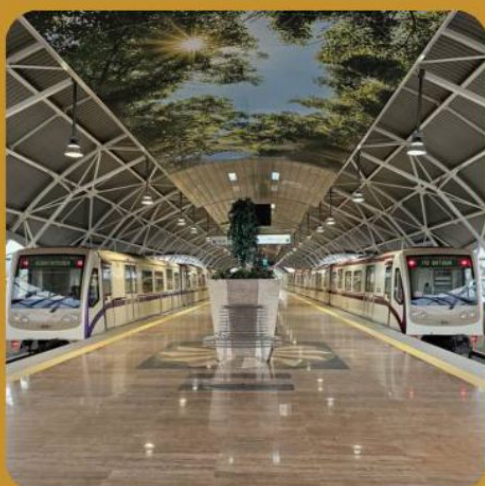
1. ARRIVE AT SOFIA AIRPORT

Follow the signs to the metro station located at the ground level of Terminal 2. (If you arrive at Terminal 1 - which is extremely unlikely - you can take the shuttle bus to Terminal 2.)



2. BUY A METRO TICKET

Ticket Price: A single ticket to the city centre costs €0.80. You can easily **purchase your ticket by swiping your credit/debit card** at the pass-through validators. There are also ticket machines, which accept cash and debit/credit cards (Visa, MasterCard), if you prefer those. If you are really old-fashioned, you can also buy a ticket at the ticket counter, where cash, debit and credit cards are accepted.



3. TAKE THE METRO LINE M4

There is only one possible direction - to the City Center. **The train will be to your right.**





4. TRAVEL TO SERDIKA STATION

Stay on the M4 line and travel for **12 stops**. Again, the journey takes approximately 30 minutes to reach the central Serdika station. At this point you are within walking distance from NATFA.



[Virtual tour](#)



[Sofia 1000, 108A, G. S. Rakovski St.](#)

OR

IF YOU WANT TO VISIT THE DORMITORIES FIRST



6. GET OFF AT G. M. DIMITROV METRO STATION

'G. M. Dimitrov' subway station is the **8th** stop from Sofia Airport. Right outside the station entrance, wait for a bus numbered either **280** or **294**.



7. GET OFF AT HRISTO BOTEV SPORTS HALL

Ride for **6 stops** and get off at 'Hristo Botev Sports Hall' ('Sportna zala Hristo Botev'). From there, it's just a quick 3-minute walk to the dormitory.



[Block 29, Student Complex, Yordan Yosifov St., 1700 Sofia](#)

LONGTERM RECOMMENDATIONS



PUBLIC TRANSPORT PASS

BUDGET-FRIENDLY & EASY TO USE

Even though a single ticket costs less than €1, when staying in Sofia for more than just a few days it's worth **getting a monthly or annual transport pass**.

These convenient card-style passes are issued by the Urban Mobility Center and work on all forms of public transport: metro, buses, trams, and trolleys. Just tap your card on the sensor when you get on and ride carefree!

Our tip:

As a student, get the one-month personalised season card for all lines — it **costs only €7.50 a month**. You can get your card at any Urban Mobility Center office, with most being located inside or near metro stations.



[Urban Mobility Center](#)



MOOVIT APP

YOUR SMART TRAVEL COMPANION

Worried about which bus to take, or where to get off?

The 'Moovit' app is your go-to guide for public transport in Sofia!

- Plan routes with real-time info
- See exact arrival times
- Get notified about delays or route changes
- Works for metro, buses, trams, and more

It's free, reliable, and student-approved! Download it from the links below and explore Sofia with confidence!



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SPARK – ELECTRIC CAR SHARING

DRIVE WHEN YOU NEED TO

If you're planning a weekend getaway or just want to move freely around the city, using 'Spark' is a great option. This electric car-sharing service lets you rent vehicles through a mobile app and pick them up or drop them off at various spots around Sofia.

Download the 'Spark' app from the links below and after a brief registration process you'll be ready to go anywhere!



EXPERIENCE THE CITY CENTRE

AND THE NATFA VICINITY

RIGHT IN THE HEART OF SOFIA — WHERE ART MEETS CITY LIFE

The National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (NATFA) is located in the vibrant city center of Sofia — steps away from buzzing cafés, cozy restaurants, and cultural landmarks.

Living and studying here means you're surrounded by everything you need:

- Libraries and cozy study corners*
- Parks and green spaces for creative breaks*
- Main shopping streets featuring local boutiques and international brands*
- Banks, bookstores, and all daily essentials within walking distance*

Whether you want to grab a coffee before lectures, catch a play after sunset, or stroll through history-soaked streets — it's all just outside your classroom door.

LOCAL INSIDER'S GUIDE

TO THE CITY CENTRE

Here's how to experience it like a local:

Coffee & Study Spots

- **'Green Deli Cafe'** – minimalist, quiet, fast Wi-Fi, ideal for laptop hours;
- **'Memento'** – perfect for people-watching and morning coffee rituals;
- **'Peroto'** – part café, part bookspace, open till late;

Food Favourites

- **'Warsteiner Pub'** – great for late-night dinners and a foreign beer with friends;
- **'Supa Star'** – homemade comfort food with a twist (try the lentil soup!);
- **'Happy Grill'** – local chain, quick service, solid portions, just outside of NATFA;

Parks & Green Corners

- **'City Garden'** (NATFA's front yard) – perfect for lunch breaks, artistic contemplation or a chat under the trees;
- **'Crystal' Garden** – meet locals, play chess, or join a quick student protest;
- **'Zaimov' Park** – green, quiet, and full of hidden benches for a dose of serenity;
- **'NDK' Park** – a vast green space at our National Palace of Culture with fountains, events, and street performers;

Culture on Your Doorstep

Theatres All Around – NATFA is located on Sofia's renowned 'Bulgarian Broadway', where stages, spotlights, and storytelling are always just a few steps away.

- **'NATFA Theatre'** – our very own stage, where student work meets professional ambition;
- **'Ivan Vazov' National Theatre** – the crown jewel of Bulgarian stage art, set in a postcard-worthy garden;
- **'Theatre '199'** – intimate and bold, known for its powerful performances in a small, engaging setting;
- **'Sylza I Smiah' Theatre** – classic meets contemporary with a pronounced focus on emotionally rich productions;
- **'Satirical Theatre'** – sharp, witty, and only sometimes socially aware;
- **'Bulgarian Army Theatre'** – dynamic productions with big casts and strong storytelling;
- **'Vazrazhdane' Theatre** – a cozy chamber theatre located inside the Sofia City Library;
- **'Sofia Puppet Theatre'** – a magical space dedicated to puppet performances for all ages;

Cinematic Corners

- **'Dom na Kinoto'** – this 'House of Cinema' showcases indie films and hosts many international festivals.
- **'Odeon' Cinema** – retro, intimate, and part of Sofia's cultural fabric.
- **'Lumière' Cinema** – inside the National Palace of Culture itself, known for film festivals and premieres.
- **'Vlaikova' Cinema** – one of the oldest community cinemas in Sofia – intimate, nostalgic, and run by passionate film lovers.





9



Photo by Veselin and Orlin Menkadzhiev, students at NATFA

1. KEVA

A versatile spot located within the premises of NATFA, making it a usual hangout for our students. Serving as both a cozy café during the day and a lively bar at night, KEVA is popular for its dawn-to-dark relaxed atmosphere, offering coffee, cocktails, and affordable drinks. With its outdoor seating, eclectic decor, and regular live music and events, KEVA attracts a colourful mix of visitors, making it a great place to unwind or socialize!



2. On-campus canteen

Located right at NATFA's main building ('Rakovski' 114), the canteen is an unpretentious, matter-of-fact space with over a hundred seats, which is open to NATFA students and staff, as well as peers from other universities. Menus change weekly and feature unassuming dishes with ecologically sourced ingredients, including meats, dairy, fruits, and veggies.

- Opening hours: Monday–Friday, 12:00–15:00 & 16:00–19:00.
- Closed on weekends.

LANDMARKS GALLERIES MUSEUMS



Landmarks Worth Exploring

Sofia is a city where history meets everyday life. Just a few steps away from NATFA and 'Serdika' metro station, you'll find remnants of ancient civilizations, sacred temples, art galleries, royal palaces, and more. It's all part of the local landscape – and all within walking distance!

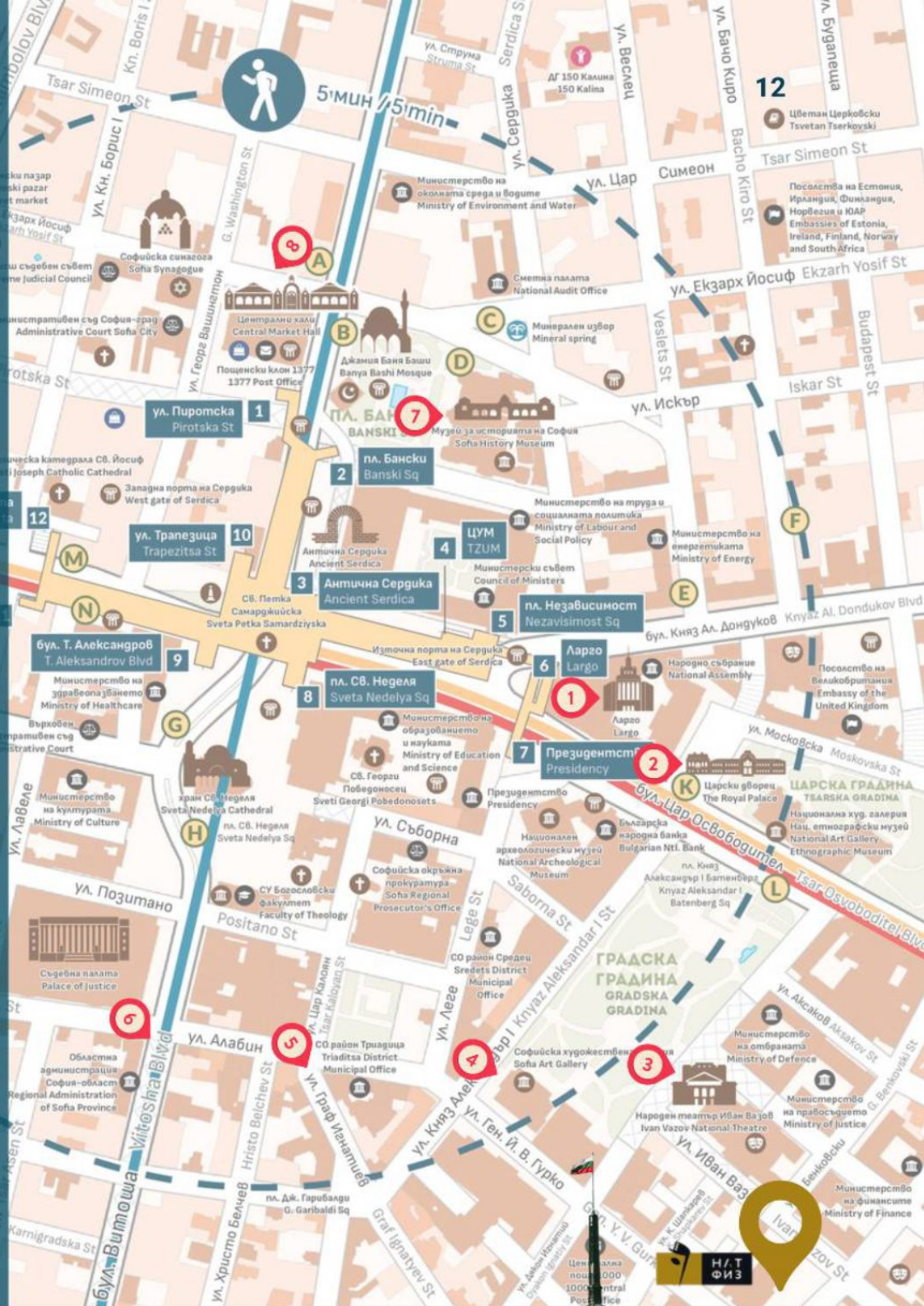
We've created a special map highlighting some of the city's must-see landmarks.

Simply click on the red pin to open links with photos and more information about each site!

When you have some extra time, try planning a day trip to these local escapes:

- Vitosha Mountain
- Pancharevo Lake
- Boyana Church
- Dragalevtsi Monastery
- Museum of Socialist Art

No matter where you choose to wander, Sofia will always find a way to surprise you!



SHOPPING STREETS

13

GRAF IGNATIEV STREET

'Graf Ignatiev Street' is a bustling thoroughfare in Sofia, known for its vibrant mix of local shops, cafés, and landmarks. Commonly referred to as 'Grafa', it's a favourite spot for locals to run errands, enjoy a coffee, or explore nearby attractions. The street is lined with bookstores, bakeries, and small boutiques, creating a lively atmosphere.



Ulitza 'Graf Ignatiev'

SHOPPING STREETS

VITOSHA BOULEVARD

14

Sofia's main pedestrian street, known for its lively atmosphere and upscale shops, restaurants, cafés and bars. With views of 'Vitosha' Mountain in the distance, this boulevard blends modern energy with European charm, making it a central hub for shopping and socialising.



'Vitosha' Boulevard

CONTACTS



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- Never travel abroad without insurance!
- Check out local mobile service providers for the best rates and coverage.
- Wander the side streets around NATFA for vintage shops, artisan bakeries, and indie theatres!

