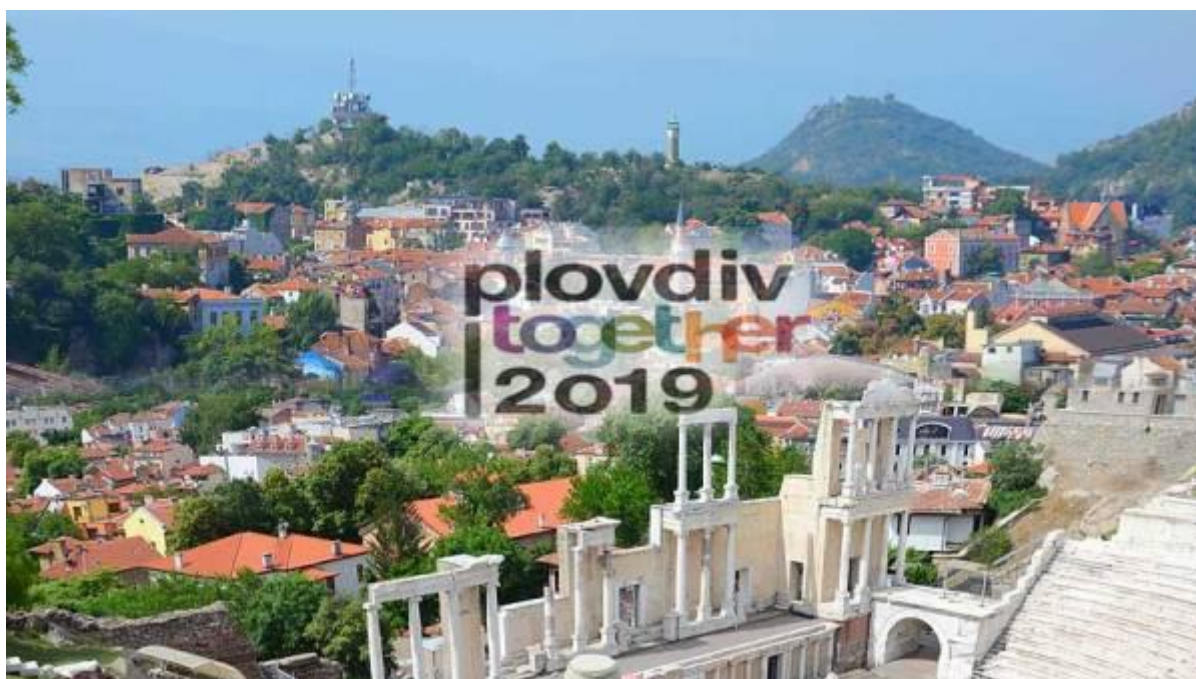


Welcome to Plovdiv



Plovdiv is one of the oldest centers of European civilization – older than Rome and Athens and a contemporary of Troy and Mycenae.

“...This is the biggest and loveliest of all towns. Its beauty shines from faraway...” – Lucian /2nd century/

The first settlement appeared in the sixth millennium BC on the northern hilltop /known as Nebet Tepe / of the Three hills.

PLOVDIV – THE HEART OF FERTILE THRACE

You find yourselves on the Balkan Peninsula in a city of hills and with a river, a city with many names and many faces. This city is Plovdiv, situated on the crossroads between the West and the East, amid the fertile plain of Thrace, where history and modernity go hand in

hand, whereas since the ancient times until today culture and art thrive within a vivid medley of shapes, styles and colours.



Plovdiv is two hours away from the Bulgarian capital Sofia, four hours from the Black Sea and the same distance from the Aegean Sea. It was founded in the fertile Thracian plain, the stripe between the Balkan Mountains and the Rhodope Mountains, amid seven hills and the broad river bed of Maritsa, the river, still crossing it today. This magical place has for centuries attracted settlers like a magnet, has welcome and sent off different tribes and populations. Thus it has, little by little, piled up its collective memory.

Evmolpia, Philippopolis, Trimontium, Pulpudeva, Puldin, Filibe, Plovdiv...This is just a selection of the many known names of the city.

There exists an exceptionally early evidence of life in these lands, the first settlements date eight millennia back, and it kept uninterrupted until today. Therefore Plovdiv is the oldest European city which was continuously inhabited and sixth in the world. This place is in itself a history manual, where you can familiarize yourself with the characteristics of almost all historical epochs and periods that left a lasting imprint on the city and shaped its varied identity.

It is people who are the repository of the collective memory of the city and those who draw the hologram of its future. It can be argued in this context, that Plovdiv is a real cosmopolitan city, having sheltered since the antiquity different ethnical groups. The multilingual facet of the city as early as the late Antiquity was extremely vivid there lived Thracians (the native population),

Byzantines, Persians, Syrians, Jews, and Armenians. At present Plovdiv is the second largest city in Bulgaria with about 350 000 residents, consisting mainly of Bulgarians, but there are also Armenian, Jewish, Greek and Turkish communities.

The ancient facet of the city is presented by the mystical Thracians with their sanctuary from the northernmost hill Nebet Tepe, by the first fortress walls from the time of Philip II of Macedon (342 B.C.) and by a series of well-preserved archeological sites from the Roman period of the city (1-4th c.): Ancient Theatre, Roman Stadium, Ancient Forum. This is the Bulgarian city with the greatest number of unearthed Roman mosaics, part of which are being displayed in the Trakart Fine Arts Gallery, in the "Archeological" subway. During the 1-4th c. period Plovdiv was the biggest trading centre in the Roman province of Thrace, with its splendor and aristocraticism it made all the chroniclers admire and regard it with esteem.

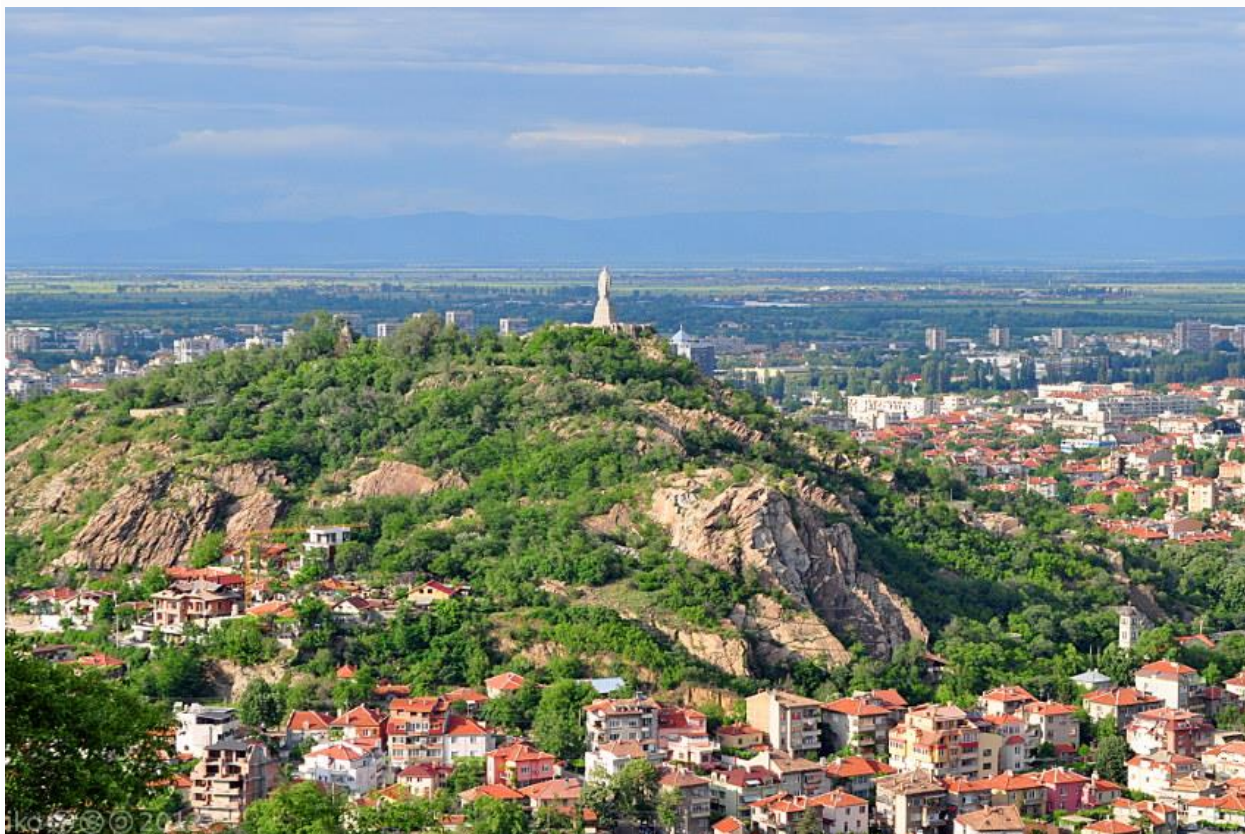
The medieval history of the city was marked by dramatic and conflicting turns of events. During this ten century long period, the town was either part of Byzantium or of the Bulgarian State. The fortress has continued to play a defense role and the city kept its fame as a large trading centre, despite the attacks and destruction caused by the Barbarian tribes.

Time is running and approaches the fatal 14th c., when the Balkan Peninsula was conquered by the Ottomans. The fate of Plovdiv was not different. The outlook of the town was completely changed, the fortress lost its importance, the first mosques were erected... The Ottoman victors have realized that this was a place of old wisdom, and as early as the 15th c. many famous poets, healers, scholars and mages of the Empire paid visits to the town. A new religion – the Islam, both orthodox and mystical, has also found soil in the city. Two mosques from that time – Dzhumaya mosque (Friday Mosque) and Imaret mosque, and the Monastery of the whirling dervishes ("Puldin" restaurant) bear witness to these times.

You walk along the narrow streets of the Three hills and find yourselves in the old town of Plovdiv. In the 19th century this tiny oasis, like the long-lived Phoenix arose from the ashes and was regenerated for new life. Rich merchants began to build architecturally unique houses of the size of royal palaces. You contemplate the gorgeous wood-carved ceilings, the colorful mural decorations and around-the-world landscapes; you throw a glance from the so-called "gossiping corners" at the street so as to feel the rhythm of its life. You imagine the bustling gatherings and charity balls, organized by the wealthy hosts. Style, noblesse, generosity and peace are radiated from this area, surrounded by spacious courtyards with gardens and lush greenery such as the yards of the "royal" House of Kuyumdzhiogly and the houses of Nikola Nedkovich, Stepan Hindliyan, Veren Stambolyan and Georgi Mavridi, turned today into museum-houses.

Plovdiv was the place of many first beginnings in the 19th c. - here in 1881 the Bulgarian professional theatre was brought into existence, Bulgarian printing and publishing were born, one of the first secular schools in the country was established, the Day of the Slavonic alphabet and Bulgarian culture was first celebrated, the Movement for an independent Bulgarian Church was set up. Some of the famous Bulgarian enlighteners, writers, translators and journalists have lived and worked in the town. After the Liberation (1878), quite deservedly, Plovdiv was named the cultural capital of Bulgaria. These traditions are still alive. Many theatre

performances, concerts and festivals take place all year round. Such are the "Scene on a crossroad" theatre festival, the traditional Verdi Opera Festival, the International Folklore Festival, the Autumn Arts Salon, different biennales and exhibitions, literary premieres and music evenings. In 1999 Plovdiv has hosted the European Month of Culture and competes now for European capital of culture 2019.



Still, the heart of Thrace is not just history. The present day outlook of the city is not less versatile, diverse and attractive. You can stroll along the noisy main street, where you can pop into, see and try on the best fashion items in different brands shops, sit down for a coffee in the many pubs and cafes in the city centre, try the local snacks, relax and have fun. Amateurs of nightlife shall be attracted by the casinos and nightclubs in many places of the city.



The modern face of the city is complemented by its green spaces, represented mainly by the renowned city hills. They were originally bare and their greening was launched in the eighties of 19th c. and was ended in the thirties of the 20th c. They constitute today the green lungs of the city. The city parks were also started in the eighties of 19th c. and were designed by the renowned Swiss botanist and gardener Lucien Chevalas, whom the local community named "Minister of flowers". It was Chevalas who has created the central city park in 1881, on the occasion of the first commercial exposition, and where until the present day rare botanical species and age-old trees exist and tell legends of old times, of greatness and splendor, of wisdom and living experience gathered across the centuries.



Unique and ancient, beautiful and artistic, spiritual and challenging – such in a nutshell is the city of Plovdiv and even today one is enticed to exclaim just like the medieval travelers: "You, stranger, stop for a while in the heart of Thrace so that you feel its rhythm and that you get impregnated by its harmony".



Surviving in Plovdiv

Important information:

1. University websites:

- Medical University Plovdiv: <https://mu-plovdiv.bg/en/>
- Agricultural University Plovdiv: <http://www.au-plovdiv.bg/en/>
- Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”: <https://uni-plovdiv.bg/en/>
- University of Food Technologies: <http://uft-plovdiv.bg>

2. ESN Plovdiv contacts

- E-mail: Plovdiv.esn@hmail.com
- Website: <http://plovdiv.esnbg.org/>
- ESN card website: <https://esncard.org/>
- Phone numbers for emergency: 0899264045 or 0876649705

3. National Emergency Number - 112

Hostels and hotels



Hotels in affordable price range can be found all over the city , some suggestions would be:

Hotel Gerdzhika



It can be found on **str. Pobeda 1** , at the price of 55 leva per night (27,5 euro) . The rooms are equipped with phone, AC , TV, Wi-Fi, etc. The hotel has its own restaurant with a summer garden, and is located on the shore of Maritsa river.

Hotel Afrodita



It is located on Peshtersko Shose boul. № 84, at the price of 38-44 leva per night (depends of the kind of room you choose). The rooms are equipped with phone , AC , satellite TV, internet, etc . The hotel has a restaurant and a summer garden , it also has a spa centre, conference room , massage studio , parking and many more extras.

Other hotels can be looked up on - hoteli-plovdiv.pochivka.bg

Hostel suggestions :

Plovdiv Guesthouse is located on Saborna str. №20, at the price of 20 leva (10euro) per night it offers : free breakfast, independent bathroom and WC, TV, Wi-Fi. The kitchen is fully equipped for self-service. Some of the features the hostel offers are bicycle for rent, and the option to be taken back to the hostel from any point of the city by car .

Guest house “Eastern gate” is located in the Old Town and offers separate rooms, each with own bathroom, and also beds in general rooms. Free Wi-Fi, TV. The price is 10-30 lv.

Estate agencies

For those of you who choose to live on their own in an apartment - here are the websites of some estate agencies through which you could find the best place for yourself.

<http://bulgaria-property.imoti.net/search/rents>

<http://www.property-plovdiv.com/>

http://www.bulgarianproperties.com/Plovdiv_property/index.html

<http://www.bulgarianestateagent.net/place.php?place=Plovdiv>

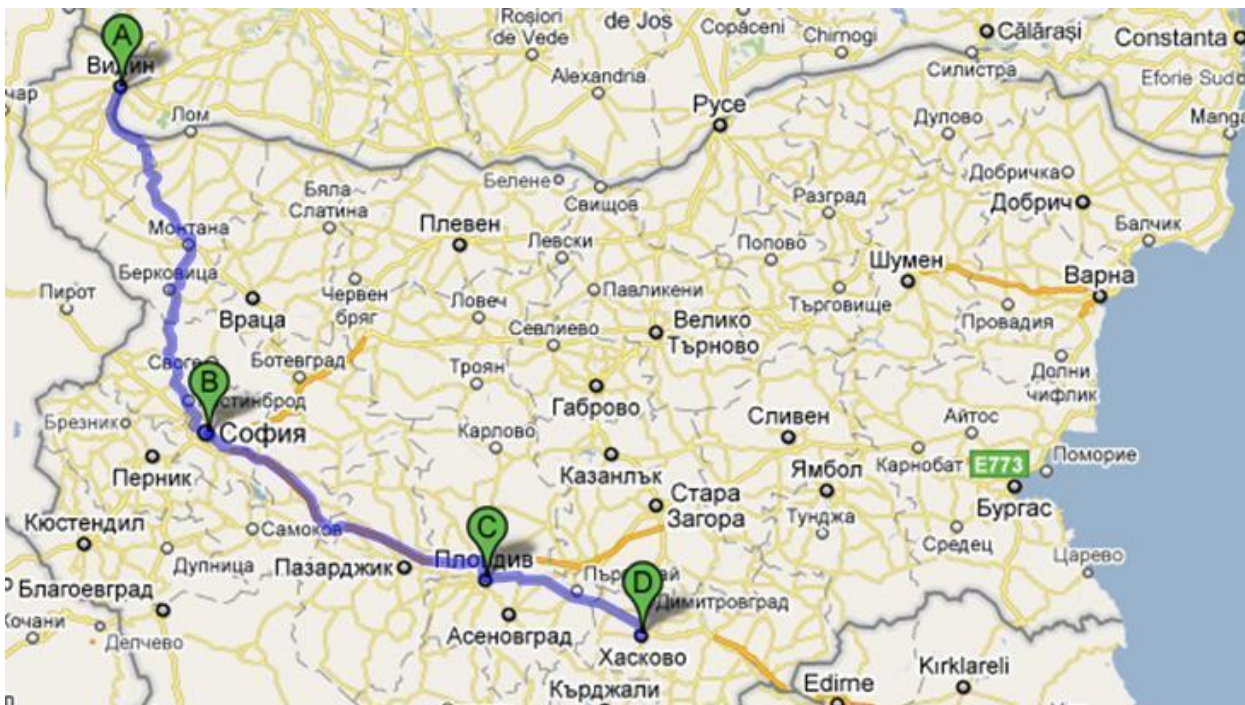
Exchange bureaus in Plovdiv



1. **CITY-74 LTD**
address: Plovdiv, bul. Vasil Aprilov 34, ent. A
2. **TAYNER - PAVLIN UZUNOV**
address: Plovdiv, Neofit Rilski St 17
3. **S-YONSEN-S.YONOV**
address: Plovdiv, Otets Paisiy St 5
4. **JESTKO-T.NIKOLOVA**
address: Plovdiv, Ruski Blvd 125
5. **ALBENONA**
address: Plovdiv, Sq. Grozdov Pazar 8A
6. **OBMENNO BYURO DIZARG**
address: Plovdiv, Zlatyu Boyadjiev St 1
7. **EKOM-2001-E.KOMANOV**
address: Plovdiv, Shahbazyan Sq. 1
8. **TSIKALOV-S-TSIKALOV**
address: Plovdiv, Knyaz Aleksandar I St 39
9. **LAKI-M**
address: Plovdiv, Trakiya , bl. 207
10. **KAVA-K.BODURSKI**
address: Plovdiv, V.Aprilov Blvd 33
11. **MELIN AND CO - V. IVANOV**
address: Plovdiv, Brezovska St 20
12. **SIGMA-3**
address: Plovdiv, Jelezarska St 6A
13. **ALFA-90**
address: Plovdiv, Ruski Blvd 31
14. **STIVAN-S.STOIMENOV**
address: Plovdiv, Iv.Vazov St 78
15. **COLOR - ANTONIYA VASILEVA**
address: Plovdiv, Aleksandar Batenberg St 36
16. **TEHOV & CO - ST. TEHOV**
address: Plovdiv, Knyaz Aleksandar I St 51
17. **LIDER 58-L.POPOV**
address: Plovdiv, Knyaz Al.Batenberg St 17
18. **DELTA TREYDING**
address: Plovdiv, Krali Marko St 13



Transport – from Sofia to Plovdiv (B – C)



For those of you who have chosen to come to Bulgaria by flight there are two choices available. The more common practice is arriving at Sofia's airport which as the biggest in Bulgaria has flight to and from almost any big airport in Europe, meanwhile the less popular option is to flight directly to Plovdiv's airport which holds flights with a more limited amount of companies. For those who have chosen Sofia as their destination must now find their way to Plovdiv. As the distance between the two cities is not that great (only in the mere range of 130-140km). As such you can choose one of these options:

- The easiest but at the same time the most expensive one is to catch a **cab directly from the airport**. The price varies from 50 to 70 leva depending on what company you use but for the money you pay you'll get a fast, comfortable and without much planning way to arrive in Plovdiv.
- **To arrive by bus**. You can find your way to the Central bus station in Sofia from where you can catch a bus to Plovdiv. This option is also fast and cost you 1/3 of the money you would pay for a cab but requires that you possess some orientational skills.
- And last but not least for those who possess a more adventurous spirit there is **the Train**. There are 4 train stations in Sofia as the biggest one being the Central Train Station that is located next to the Central Bus Station and the one closest to the airport being the "Poduene" train station. We would advise you to choose this option only if you are certain enough that you are able to take care of yourself but dare you take this challenge it is the cheapest and certainly a bit more comfortable than the bus option out of them all. Still trains in Bulgaria tend to not always be on time so be weary.

Public transport in Plovdiv



(<http://transport.plovdiv.bg>)

Most of the foreign student when faced with the problem of traveling from point A to point B in Plovdiv tend to rely a lot on the cabby drivers as using the bus can be quite challenging and sometimes a scary experience at first but if you get the hang of it you will save a lot of money.

In order to get a card for the public transport you need to go to a Transport cards' bureau at Kn. Mariya Louisa boulevard №21 (working time 08:00-17:00) and you need a document from the Students' office for this purpose and to represent your student's record book. The students transport card costs 16 lv. a month.

Taxis in Plovdiv

1. 032/6155 – *Eco taxi*
2. 032/6188
3. 032/6665- *Elma taxi*
4. 032/6143
5. 032/9199–*Inter taxi*

Banks in Plovdiv

UniCredit Bulbank

UniCredit Bulbank is one of the biggest Bulgarian banks and is servicing over one million individual clients and households. It is the banks through which you can make your payments to the university and also receive a scholarship.

<http://www.unicreditbulbank.bg/en/index.htm>

Addresses in Plovdiv :

1. Plovdiv 4, Ivan Vazov str., Phones: + 359 32 601 615; 601 614; 601 620 ; 624 176; Working hours (Mon - Fri) 8:00 - 18:00
2. Plovdiv Med. University -15A Vasil Aprilov blvd., Phone: +359 32 905 837, Working hours (Mon - Fri) 8:30 - 17:00 break 13:00 - 13:30
3. 51 Raiko Daskalov str., Plovdiv Phones: + 359 32 656 044, 045, 046, 049, Working hours (Mon - Fri) 8:00 - 18:30, (Sat) 10:00 - 14:00

DSK Bank

Every client has different banking and investment needs. At DSK Bank our Private Banking Relationship Managers work with you to identify your goals and requirements, and create specific solutions that make the most of the available opportunities for you.

https://dskbank.bg/page/default.aspx?&xml_id=/en-US/

Addresses in Plovdiv:

1. MALL PLOVDIV, 4000 Plovdiv, Perushtitsa str. №8
2. Financial Center PLOVDIV, 4000 Plovdiv, Hristo G. Danov str. №6
3. Financial Center PALDIN, 4000 Plovdiv, Petko D. Petkov str. №23

Piraeus bank

Another big Bulgarian bank which in aim to bring convenience, flexibility and benefit for the clients created wide range of banking packages.

<http://www.piraeusbank.bg/echome.asp?lang=2&txtSearch=>

Addresses in Plovdiv:

1. Philip Makedonski str. №72 ; 032/ 234 203; 032/234 204;
2. Beethoven str. № 9; +359 32/ 27 11 02 ;
3. Patriarh Evtimiy str. № 13;

ID-card

A document you might find yourself in need of during your stay in Bulgaria is a Bulgarian ID card. It is not mandatory to make one from the beginning but is recommended as you will need it in order to graduate from the university or to receive your student scholarship that is given to excellent students. Plus it will relieve you from the burden of carrying your passport everywhere with you. To receive one you must apply at the immigration office which is located on the south section of the police station on "Volga" str. №70 just a few blocks down the road from the main university campus. That will require the following documents:

- A valid copy of your current passport
- A coloured picture of you in the required size (usually the same size as one for a passport)
- A copy of your home contract with your address in it
- A copy of your European Health Insurance Card
- A document from the university stating that you are a student there
- A bank statement that is less than three months old and shows that you have at least 2000 euros in your account
- a document stating you have paid the residence permit fee which amounts to 45 leva.

With these in hand you must also be accompanied by a person who can speak Bulgarian in order to help you out with communications with the office workers.

Entertainment in Plovdiv

Life as a student is not only about testing yourself on the studying field but also finding your own way to relax and having a good time. As such Plovdiv can offer you a variety of good places starting with **Mall Plovdiv**, located 2km away from the University. In it you can find Cinema City the largest movie theatre in Plovdiv (mostly screening the latest films in English with

Bulgarian subtitles), the Q-zar Arena providing laser tag and other gaming options, and plenty of opportunity for shopping with familiar brands such as H&M. Another shopping

option, recommended for buying things for your flat e.g. linen, bedding, cutlery, furniture etc. is **Mall Galeria** and the surrounding shops – Metro, Jysk, Technomarket etc. The entertainment complex ‘**Excalibur**’ (located near the centre of Plovdiv) contains a bowling alley, a cocktail bar, billiard tables and if you are up for some adrenaline rush it is right next to the Go-Karting track ‘Lauta’.

And for those who like to dive into the more extreme experiences Plovdiv also houses a Paintball arena in it’s outskirts that also provides matches in forest environments during the summer heats. Or you could test your strength endeavouring on an indoor climbing wall inside the sport facility “Olimpiada” which also contains a basketball and volleyball field. For those who like to polish their football skills there are a lot of indoor and outdoor football fields at which you can have a heated rivalry with most rentable for a small fee or open for all as such as the ones located at Plovdivs rolling channel.

The rolling channel is also one of most visited places in Plovdiv whenever you feel like going for jogging, riding your bike, taking a stroll or even having a relaxing coffee break on its 4.5km round track surrounded by woods and water .



The **centre of Plovdiv** has both a relatively newly-built section as well as the **Old Town**, with beautiful views, ancient architecture, galleries and gift-shops. The centre contains a large post office, many shops (most of which are Bulgarian) as well as a selection of cafes and restaurants. Whether you want to try local Bulgarian, Turkish or Greek cuisines, or stick to your home food, Plovdiv has a large selection of restaurants. Mall Plovdiv provides the globally-familiar selection of KFC, MacDonald’s and Subway, but if you want to experience a larger variety then head down to the main Plovdiv centre and Old Town. You will find many restaurants as you stroll through the town and its back-streets. A small list of popular restaurants available includes:

- **Happy Bar and Grill** (one of the most popular amongst current students)
- **Gusto** (Italian restaurant in the centre)
- **Hemingway** (Italian restaurant in the centre)
- **Antik** (Turkish cuisine)
- **Diana** (Greek restaurant in the centre)
- **Elea** (Greek cuisine)
- **Brasilia** (Turkish cuisine)
- **Sombrero** (Mexican cuisine)
- **Supa bar** – near the main university campus and a great winter choice

This website contains more information about restaurants in Plovdiv:

http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Restaurants-g295391-Plovdiv_Plovdiv_Province.html

Museums

REGIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM



The Regional Archaeological Museum in Plovdiv is one of the oldest cultural institutions in Bulgaria. Officially opened in 1882, its development passes through the stage of being

archaeological-numismatic collection-office, until it was finally established as Archaeological Museum in 1920. The museum possesses one of the richest collections of artifacts and works of human art related to the history of Plovdiv District and the Town of Plovdiv – successor to one of the largest and most important ancient cities on the Balkan Peninsula – Philippopolis.

REGIONAL ETHNOGRAPHIC MUSEUM



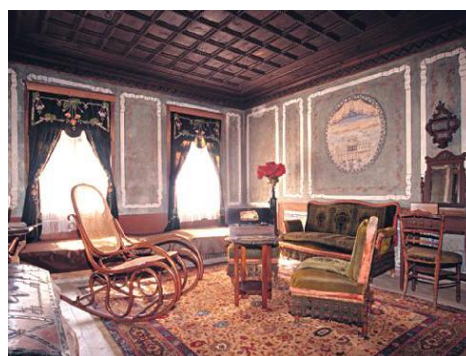
The exhibition is located in Arghir Kuyumdzhiov's beautiful Renaissance house, which was built in 1847 by the master-builder Hadji Georgi. Inside of it, there are representations of traditional material and spiritual culture of the Bulgarians who lived in the region of Plovdiv, Rhodope Mountains and Srednogie during the National Revival. Among the many museum collections, those of brassware, pottery, weapons, shepherds wood-carving, jewelry and church items, sewn and crocheted laces, costumes from the entire Bulgarian ethnic territory, musical instruments, and urban decor stand out.

Exhibition Unification of Bulgaria



The museum was built in 1885 for the Provincial Counsel of Eastern Rumelia. On 19.09.1985 the national exhibition „Unification of Bulgaria 1885” was opened here. On an area covering 1000 sq. m., through authentic items, weapons, photographs and documents are traced back the efforts of Bulgarians in the establishing of Eastern Rumelia as The Second Bulgarian State, their fight for the Unification with Principality of Bulgaria and its military defense – The Serbian-Bulgarian War.

„Bulgarian Revival” Exhibition



“Bulgarian Revival” Exhibition is set in the house of the rich merchant of Plovdiv Dimitar Georgiadi, which was built in 1848 and traces the history of Plovdiv during the period from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. Rich documentary and photographic material allows guests to submerge in the atmosphere of the city’s distant past – a time of foreign rule, but also a time of assertion of Bulgarians’ national identity, a time of fight for independent Bulgarian education, church and national independence.

Other important spots in Plovdiv:

Post offices :

4000 Central post – Central square №1 ; 032/ 27 62 10
4001 Plovdiv 1 – Ravnishta str. № 2A ; 032 / 64 27 90
4002 Plovdiv 2 – Peshtersko shose №30 ; 032 / 64 28 00

Police stations :

1st district office – Nikola Vaptsarov boul. № 91 ; 032/62-52-73
2nd district office – Volga str. № 70 ; 032/62-71-69
3rd district office – Brezovska str. № 33 ; 032/62-23-87
4th district office – Mali Bogdan str. №3 ; 032/62-71-68

Hospitals :

University hospital Saint George – It has 2 bases :
Base 1, located on Vasil Aprilov boul. №15
Base 2, located on Peshtersko Shose №66



Caspella hospital - multiprofile hospital for active treatment and emergency, located near the dormitory on Sofia str. № 64.

Useful Phrases

For the first few weeks of your stay in Bulgaria, without any previous exposure to the country and its language, you may find yourself questioning your capabilities of surviving in this new and unknown environment known as the city of Plovdiv. Most likely the words produced by its inhabitants will sound as nothing far from gibberish to your ears. As such we offer you a few words and sentences hoping they'll ease your transition.

THE BULGARIAN ALPHABET					
Аа	a (as in cat)	Кк	k (as in kick)	Фф	f (as in foot)
Бб	b (as in bus)	Лл	l (as in love)	Хх	h (like 'ch' in Bach)
Вв	v (as in very)	Мм	m (as in marry)	Цц	ch (as in check)
Гг	g (as in good)	Нн	n (as in no)	Чч	ts (as in puts)
Дд	d (as in dog)	Оо	o (as in hot)	Шш	sh (as in shut)
Ее	e (as in egg)	Пп	p (as in pot)	Щщ	sht (like 'shed' in pushed)
Жж	zh (like 's' in leisure)	Рр	r (as in red)	Ъъ	a (like 'u' in but)
Зз	z (as in zoo)	Сс	s (as in sit)	Ьь	(consonant softening sound)
Ии	i (as in instant)	Тт	t (as in tree)	Юю	yu (like you)
Йй	y (as in young)	Уу	u (as in yule)	Яя	ya (as in yank)

Hello – Zdravei

Yes - Da

No - Ne

Goodbye – Dovizhdane

How much does it cost? – Kolko struva?

Thank you – Blagodarya

One taxi at ... str. - Edno taxi na ... ulitsa.

Do you speak English? - Govorite li angliiski?

When? - Koga?

Where? - Kude?

I don't understand. - Ne razbiram.

Excuse me. - Izvinete me. / Izvinyavai

Please – Molya

No problem. - Nyama problem.

I'm sorry. – Suzhalyavam