Into the Balkans (Recce Tour)
Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia & Herzegovina

Emerging from the turbulent horrors of their recent past, the craggy and beautiful landscapes of Bosnia and Serbia provide a stunning backdrop to a journey rich in history and tradition. Lying at the crossroads of eastern and western cultures, they present a fascinating mix of Ottoman influences, Austro-Hungarian history and a warm hospitality that cannot fail to captivate. Beginning in Belgrade, we’ll follow the course of the Danube and cross the beautiful heartlands of rural Serbia, as we journey through a landscape filled with ancient fortresses and medieval churches. There will be opportunities to visit Roman ruins and Ottoman citadels, take boat rides along the Danube and visit stunning World Heritage monasteries. After taking a train ride through the mountains we’ll then cross into neighbouring Bosnia, where we will have the chance to visit the stunning old town of Sarajevo and explore the remarkable ‘Tunnels of Life’ that helped Sarajevo through one of the country’s darkest periods. In Mostar we’ll then discover the cultural centre of Herzegovina, before driving through the spectacular Vrbas Canyon towards Banja Luka and the journey’s end.

Duration: 15 Days
Start: Sat 01 Jul 17
Average group size: 5 - 10
Finish: Sat 15 Jul 2017

Looking for alternative dates? Check the website or give us a call
TOUR DETAILS

TOUR CODE: BAL/D

HIGHLIGHTS

- Discover the historic highlights of Belgrade, Pristina and Sarajevo
- Explore the beautiful landscapes of the Serbian heartlands and the Vrbas Canyon
- Visit the World Heritage monasteries of Sopočani and Visoki Dečani
- See the beautiful medieval bridges of Vishegrad and Mostar
- Ride the Sargan Eight Railway and sail through the Iron Gates Gorge

Accommodation: As an overall ethos, wherever possible we aim to use characterful accommodation that enhances the overall travel experience, not just offers a bed for the night. This can obviously vary dramatically from country to country and from trip to trip. On this particular trip we will be in comfortable and occasionally characterful hotels. Please note that the accommodation mentioned in the itinerary is intended as a guide only and is always subject to availability.

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Transport: On this tour we will use minibuses, 4WDs, boats and a steam train.

Climate: The Balkans have a continental climate meaning that summers are typically hot and dry while winters are bitterly cold. We have scheduled our trips in the region to avoid both of these extremes but please bear in mind that changes in global weather patterns combined the variety of landscapes through which this trip travels will mean that you should come prepared for any eventuality. In general though it would not be unreasonable to expect that most days will be warm/hot with daytime temperatures in the range of 25°C to 30°C.

Is this trip for me? It may sound obvious but Wild Frontiers tours are not always for everyone and it is important to us that the tour you choose is the most suitable. Please therefore take time to read the dossier carefully. All our tours are graded to give an overall picture of the trip but these are only guidelines and you should check the daily itinerary. Should you have any concerns about your ability to partake in any aspect of the tour then please contact the office.

Adventure Rating ★★★★★★★★
Comfort Grade ★★★★★★★★★
Fitness Level ★★★★★★★★★
Cultural Interest ★★★★★★★★★

Additional Comments:
Anyone in a reasonable state of health, with an open mind and a sense of adventure should be perfectly able to cope with this tour. It is also one of the few trips we offer where vegetarians can be easily catered for!
Day 1: Tour Starts in Belgrade (Serbia):
The tour starts in Belgrade early this evening, in time to enjoy dinner and a short walk around the Serbian capital. *Hotel Majestic or similar (D)*

Day 2: In Belgrade: With a full day to explore the city today, we’ll have an opportunity to discover some of Belgrade’s most important historic attractions including the Kalemegdan Fortress, Tito’s mausoleum and the stunning setting of St. Sava’s Church, one of the largest Orthodox churches in the world. This evening we’ll then enjoy the chance to take a boat trip along the Danube and Sava Rivers, to take in the city from a wholly different perspective. *Hotel Majestic or similar (B,L,D)*

Day 3: Belgrade - Donji Milanovac - Kladovo: Turning our back on the city this morning, our journey takes us deep into the rich agricultural landscapes of the Serbian heartlands today. Picking up the Danube once more we’ll skirt the Romanian border, stopping off to visit the historic sites of the Golubac Fortress and Lepenski Vir, before spending the final part of the journey sailing on to Donji Milanovac by way of the famous Iron Gates Gorge. From here we’ll transfer to the town of Kladovo for the night. *Hotel Aquastar Danube Wellness & Spa or similar (B,L,D)*

Day 4: Donji Milanovac - Derdap National Park - Nis: From the banks of Lake Derdap the journey turns inland today, as we head through the beautiful scenery of the Derdap National Park towards the Roman ruins of Felix Romulijan. Continuing on to Nis from here, we’ll then have an opportunity to explore one of the oldest cities in the Balkans, as we take in the vast Ottoman fortress and the Cele Kula (Skull Tower), built as a monument to the Serbian revolutionaries of the early 19th century. *Hotel Aleksander or similar (B,L,D)*

Day 5: Nis - Prima - Prolim Banja: After a short drive to the town of Lebane, we’ll then swap over to 4WDs for a journey through the serene landscapes of Radan Park. These timeless vistas abound with mystics, healing waters and farmland and provide a stunning scenic journey en route to the ancient Roman city of Prima. Stopping to enjoy the beautiful mosaics and a tasty lunch at one of the local farms, we’ll then drive on to Devil’s Town, a nominee for the New Seven Wonders of Nature. We’ll stay tonight in the nearby town of Prolom Banja a town whose curative waters are famous across all of Serbia. *Gareto Konak Hotel or similar (B,L,D)*

Day 6: Prolom Banja - Pristina - Gracanica (Kosovo): Today we continue our drive south and cross the border into Kosovo continuing on into the heart of Pristina, the Kosovan capital and the country’s largest city. With a heritage that dates back to the 8th century BC and covers everything from the Byzantines and the Ottomans to the Balkan wars, Pristina is steeped in history and this afternoon provides an opportunity to explore the city...
in some depth. On the way to Gracanica this evening we hope to be able to visit Kosovo's craft beer brewery.

Hotel Gracanica or similar (B,L,D)

Day 7: Gracanica - Prizren - Gracanica: The journey south takes us on towards the slopes of the Šar Mountains and the historic old city of Prizren, the country’s cultural capital. The drive to Prizren also stops at the Serbian Orthodox Monastery of Visoki Dečani, another UNESCO World Heritage Site that sits at the foot of the Prokletije Mountains.

Hotel Gracanica or similar (B,L,D)

Day 8: Gracanica - Novi Pazar (Serbia): Today we travel first to the beautiful 13th century Sopoćani Monastery, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and undoubtedly the most important historical site in the region. Continuing on towards Novi Pazar, a rich centre of Serbian Bosniak culture, there will be an opportunity to soak up the distinctly Turkish vibe of the city’s bustling bazaars and mosques later this afternoon.

Hotel Tadž or similar (B,L,D)

Day 9: Novi Pazar - Uvac Lake - Mecanvik: Heading towards the verdant and forested Western Serbia today we’ll pass through alpine ski resorts like Zlatibor en route to the small town of Mokra Gora. On the way we’ll stop at Uvac Lake and take a short walk up to a beautiful viewpoint and lunch in one of the local farm houses. We’ll spend the evening in a characterful hotel in Mecanvik, a traditional Serbian village that was created by director Emir Kusturica for his film, “Life is a Miracle”.

Hotel Mecanvik or similar (B,L,D)

Day 10: Mecanvik - Srebrenica - Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina): This morning we’ll catch the newly renovated Sargan Eight Railway through the mountains to Vitasi village - a fitting farewell to the stunning scenery of Serbia. From here we drive through Tara National Park following close to the Drina river before crossing the border into Bosnia & Herzegovina. The journey then continues on to Srebrenica, where we will be able to pay our respects at the memorial centre before completing the drive on to Sarajevo, Bosnia’s lively capital.

Hotel Art or similar (B,L,D)

Day 11: In Sarajevo: Today we’ll take a tour of the old town, which provides a chance to learn a little something of the city’s rich past. Later we’ll then pay a visit to the remarkable Sarajevo Tunnels, which were constructed during the Siege of Sarajevo at the height of the Bosnian War of the 1990s. Located under the UN held airport, these ‘Tunnels of Life’ provided the only route in or out of the city, allowing food, supplies and humanitarian aid into the besieged city.

Hotel Art or similar (B,L)

Day 12: Sarajevo - Mostar: This morning, for those that wish, we’ll take rough roads to access the mountain village of Lukomir, which enjoys a reputation as the most isolated settlement in Bosnia and also one of the longest continually inhabited places in Europe. Alternatively, for those looking for a more relaxed morning you can remain in Sarajevo to soak up more of the rich ambience of this captivating city. This afternoon we’ll then take a scenic drive along the Neretva River to Mostar, the cultural capital of the Herzegovina region, where we’ll arrive in time for dinner and an evening stroll through the old town.

Hotel Kriva Ćuprija or similar (B,D)

Day 13: In Mostar: A morning tour through Mostar’s medieval heart affords an opportunity to see the beautiful Stari Most (Old Bridge), built by the Ottomans in the 16th century and easily the most recognisable of the town’s landmarks. The afternoon has then been set aside for exploring farther afield, with visits to the Tekija Dervish Monastery in Blagaj and the Kravica Waterfall, before rounding off the day with some wine tasting.

Hotel Kriva Ćuprija or similar (B,L,D)

Day 14: Mostar - Jajce - Vrbas Canyon - Banja Luka: Driving on to the ancient town of Jajce this morning, we’ll stop and visit the beautiful Pliva Watermills that lie on the outskirts of the town, before continuing on to explore the historic old settlement. After lunch and a guided tour of the town, we’ll then enjoy a short drive through the stunning Vrbas Canyon towards Banja Luka, Bosnia’s second largest city, where we’ll have our last evening and a final dinner.

Hotel Talija or similar (B,L,D)

Day 15: Tour Ends in Banja Luka: The tour ends this morning after breakfast. (B)
**Extensions:** If you have more time available, why not arrive early to adjust to a new time zone or just to get a feel for the country before your tour starts? Or alternatively you might choose to allow a few extra days after the tour to relax or to undertake some further exploration.

The choice is completely yours and we can usually arrange anything from simply additional accommodation and transfers to full tailor-made itineraries.

Here is just a small sample of what you could do:-

**Novi Sad:** An hour north of Belgrade lies this welcoming cultural city which is well known for its elegance and café culture. *Allow 1-2 days.*

Please contact the office for more details and to discuss your individual requirements.

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**Warning!**

The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) sometimes advises against certain parts of this itinerary. Before deciding to book this trip you should first read the advice on their website - [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice). You will need to sign a disclaimer to confirm you have read the advice and if you are a UK citizen, you will also need insurance that will remain valid throughout the entire trip. One such insurance policy is Travel & General’s Wild Frontiers Standard policy. For more information, please see the Insurance section below or contact us.

Non-UK clients should check the travel advice of their own governments as well as the small print of their insurance policy.

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**Recce Tours:** As we all know, the world is a constantly changing place - destinations & routes that were once cutting-edge now regularly find themselves appearing in mainstream brochures. Coming up with truly original tour ideas is a constant challenge but at Wild Frontiers we are committed to offering you a real alternative to the mainstream and each year we run a handful of new and original adventures. These are our so-called Recce Tours and since the very beginning have proven incredibly popular with those of you who like to act as our “guinea pigs” and join us on these tours. Fantastic fun and highly rewarding, Recce Tours will assuredly not go 100% to plan and it is not uncommon for clients to take an active role in tweaking the itineraries along the way. More challenging than our normal tours, these will often require a greater degree of flexibility...they will not be for everyone.

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**Pricing**

**Tour price:** All our tours are priced on a land-only basis, giving you maximum flexibility when deciding how to get to and from your tour. For the latest prices, please refer to our website or contact the office.

**Travelling Solo & Single Supplements:** As a company approximately 70% of our clients are solo travellers, so it’s very unlikely you’ll be alone!

Our prices are typically based on twin-share accommodation but single supplements are not compulsory for any Wild Frontiers tour. If you prefer not to pay a single supplement we’ll pair you with someone else of the same sex for you to share with throughout the trip.

On this trip, if you do opt to pay for a single supplement then please note that it will cover you for all nights of the tour.

**Flights:** If you would like us to send you a quote for the suggested tour flight (see GETTING THERE) or on any alternative flight that may suit you better, please let us know although it should be noted that in most cases we are only able to quote on flights originating in the UK.

Please remember that all Wild Frontiers tour prices mean NO hidden extras, NO local payments and NO compulsory single supplements.

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**What is included?**

- Full services of a Wild Frontiers Tour Leader with local guides and drivers
- Meal plan as detailed in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner) with drinking water as required with the majority of meals being taken in local restaurants where viable

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• All transport as outlined in the itinerary
• All accommodation
• All entrance fees, as per itinerary
• A carbon-offsetting contribution to Carbon Clear (if booking international flights through WF office)

**WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED**

• Visas (if applicable) Local airport taxes
• Tips (always optional, but some guidance will be given in the pre-departure information pack you’ll receive after booking)
• Beverages other than drinking water & any costs of a personal nature
• International flights to/from the start/finish of the trip
• Airport transfers (unless booking suggested flights through WF office)

**GETTING THERE**

For this trip our suggested flights from the UK (subject to change) are:

01JUL JU381 LHR-BEG 13:30/17:10
15JUL JU101 BNX-BEG 11:40/12:35
15JUL JU386 BEG-LHR 15:05/17:00

Key:
LHR - London Heathrow
BEG - Belgrade
BNX - Banja Luka
JU - Air Serbia

**NB** If you wish to arrange your own flights you are completely free to do so and in this case we can arrange any transfers or supplementary accommodation that you may require.

Please note that if you are planning on making your own flight arrangements, we recommend that you first check with us to see if the trip is guaranteed. We then suggest that you purchase flights that are flexible and ideally refundable as due to the nature of adventure travel, itineraries and destination accessibility can change at any time. For more information, please refer to our booking conditions.

Insurance: Insurance that provides cover for emergency repatriation in case of a medical emergency is compulsory for all tours. You should be aware that due to some of the geographical areas visited and some of the activities included on certain of our trips some standard insurance policies may not always provide adequate cover. As such we strongly recommend that you purchase a policy that adequately covers your trip.

Travel & General offer a tailor-made policy that provides cover for all Wild Frontiers trips. Under this policy there are two different levels of cover available - Standard and Elite.

**Cover explained:**

**Standard policy:** a comprehensive travel insurance policy that provides cover for all Wild Frontiers activities, including trekking up to 6,000m. This policy does not provide cover for travel to areas where the FCO is advising against all or all but essential travel except where it has been previously agreed.

**Elite policy:** provides the same comprehensive level of cover as the standard policy. In addition the Elite policy also provides cover for travel to areas where the FCO is advising against all or all but essential travel. Except in the case of terrorism, the policy will not provide cover for any claims arising from or relating to the reasons why the FCO is advising against travel.

For this trip the minimum requirement would be the Standard* policy.

These policies are only available to those travelling on a Wild Frontiers holiday and can be purchased on a trip-specific basis or annual cover. For more information please refer to the details on our website [www.wildfrontierstravel.com/insurance](http://www.wildfrontierstravel.com/insurance) or by calling Travel & General direct on +44 (0) 20 3794 2954. This insurance is available to EEA residents (i.e. EU countries as well as Iceland, Lichtenstein and Norway) up to the age of 78. It covers horse riding, mountain walking, trekking, white-water rafting and all other activities we offer as part of our tours.

If you are over 78 then you may still be able to get your insurance arranged by Travel & General Insurance Services Limited. Please contact us for assistance with this.
*The insurers have confirmed that the Standard policy (see above) is sufficient for this trip even though some parts of the trip contravene FCO advice. If you have alternative insurance you should check with your insurer that your cover is adequate.

If you do decide to purchase alternative insurance, then you must ensure that it covers you for every aspect of this trip. Please pay particular attention to ensuring that you are covered for travel to areas advised against by the FCO.

Wild Frontiers Limited is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Travel & General Insurance Service Ltd, details of which can be found at the website of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) www.fca.org.uk

Please note that no insurance policy will cover every eventuality and terms and conditions will apply in the event of any claim.

Visas: Visas are necessary for many of the destinations we travel to and while we aim to provide you with the most up-to-date information, requirements frequently change and as such for the latest advice we advise that you check with the relevant embassies or contact our recommended visa agency for this trip, details of which are below:-

Travcour
www.travcour.com

For this tour, UK passport holders currently do not require a visa for any of the countries visited.

Non-UK passport holders or non-UK residents should contact the relevant embassies for individual requirements.

Further details will be sent out to you on booking, however ensuring that correct and valid visas are obtained remains the sole responsibility of the client.

Responsible Travel: Responsible travel and sustainable tourism are fundamental ideas that Wild Frontiers has been committed to since our birth. It is our strong belief that these words should not be simply ‘tagged on’ to dossiers and websites but should be at the very core of each trip, and our adventures are therefore designed with the local people, culture and eco-system in mind. We believe that a successful trip not only delivers a unique and unsurpassable journey for our clients, but that it also benefits the peoples whose lands we are privileged to visit.

In 2012 we were delighted to be awarded the Guardian Observer Best Ethical Travel Award.

For more information, please refer to www.wildfrontierstravel.com/rt

The Wild Frontiers Foundation: Supporting communities has always played a huge part of the Wild Frontiers’ ethos and from the outset we have contributed to projects in many of the places we visit. However in 2009 we decided to take things a step further by setting up our own charitable foundation. Through the Wild Frontiers Foundation, we have not only developed our own community projects but also - by working closely with certain carefully selected charity partners - helped fund the invaluable work they do throughout the developing world. With our mandate firmly based on education and sustainability we established our first project in 2010 in the remote Northern Pakistan village of Baleygon, where around 100 children are now being educated in a school built and maintained by the Foundation.
Working with charity partners we have also established a number of e-learning centres in schools across Ethiopia, sponsored an English class in rural Northern Laos and funded hospitality traineeships for a number of young people from the Kolkata slums in India. Where practicable, Wild Frontiers clients will have the opportunity to visit our projects whilst on tour.

Visit www.wildfrontiersfoundation.org to see details of all our projects, along with ways you can get involved by taking on the challenge of a charity trek, attending our fundraising events or simply giving what you can. Other ongoing fundraising schemes include:-

**Go Paperless:** For UK-based clients who are happy for all their final travel documents to be sent by email rather than through the post, Wild Frontiers will donate £5 from each booking to the Foundation.

**Kit Out for Kids:** Nomad Travel Stores generously donates 5% of purchases by Wild Frontiers’ clients to the Foundation. Quote WF1000 either online or in store when purchasing clothing and kit and Nomad will give you 20% off full priced clothing and kit, plus the charitable donation. Visit www.nomadtravel.co.uk

**The Environment:** Trying to do our bit for the environment, in 2005 we were among the first UK-based travel companies to automatically offset every client’s international flight (if booked with us) with a payment to Carbon Clear to help promote sustainable energy. To read more about the work of Carbon Clear, please follow this link: www.carbon-clear.com

**British Foreign & Commonwealth Office:** The travel advice of the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) highlights potential hazards people might experience when travelling abroad and as an advocate of their “Know Before You Go” campaign we strongly suggest that you refer to it before booking and contact us if you have any queries or concerns. Details can be found on the website below.

Non-UK citizens should consult the travel advice of their respective governments.

**Wild Frontiers Community**

If you’re still not sure if this trip is right or just want to see get some different perspectives, then why not have a look at the wide variety of resources we have on our website?

**Clients’ Views:** See what other travellers have said about our trips - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/views

**Blogs:** See what our tour-leaders, staff and clients have posted from the road - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/blog
Videos: They may not find their way on the list for Oscars nominations but we have an extensive (and growing) collection of short videos giving you an insight in many of our destinations - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/video

Photos: Our popular “Photo of the month” competition has added to the vast gallery of photos we already have from around the world. See them here - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/photos

Events: From time to time we hold informal presentations, photo exhibitions and dinner evenings mainly in the London area. To find out more see here - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/events

Wild Miles Club: Everyone that has booked a trip directly with us will become an automatic member of the Wild Miles Club gaining instant access to a range of exclusive discounts from a variety of travel partners from bookshops to outdoor clothing shops. In addition, regular direct bookers will earn “Wild Miles” which can earn you up to 10% in discounts off of all tours. For more information visit this page - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/wild-miles

Facebook: Keep up to date with the latest news and special offers by liking our Facebook page - www.facebook.com/wildfrontiers

THE BALKANS - THE FACTS

Belgrade: Located at the confluence of the Sava and Danube Rivers, Belgrade was the birthplace of the Vinča culture, one of the most important prehistoric cultures in Europe. Steeped in the historic influences of the Romans, the Byzantines and the Ottomans, the city today is filled with a fascinating mixture of art nouveau masterpieces, elegant coffee houses and a lively street scene that bridges the centuries between its old Habsburg heritage and the face of modern Belgrade. The capital and largest city in Serbia, its name translates as ‘White City’ and it enjoys a reputation as one of the oldest cities in Europe, providing an important

Serbia & Kosovo: Rising from the ashes of a brutal civil war, Serbia and Kosovo lie at the crossroads of Central and Southern Europe. With a history imbued with a rich mix of eastern and western traditions, the region is soaked in Ottoman culture, Serbian nationalism and the strains of Kosovan music. An unsteady truce exists between the two separate countries, the results of years of ethnic diversity and the bloody outcome of the Kosovo War of the late 1990s. Today the region provides visitors with one of Europe’s last untouched frontiers, presenting spectacular mountains and an abundance of rivers and forests that provide home for wolves, lynx, bears and over 300 different bird species. The region’s overlapping influences encompass a wide variety of cultural traditions, from the Romans and Byzantines, to the Ottomans and the Habsburgs. Serbia itself can boast no fewer than four UNESCO cultural monuments including the medieval capital of Stari Ras and the 13th century monastery of Sopoćani, whilst Kosovo’s religious heritage includes the important sites of the Decani Monastery and Gračanica, one of the most beautiful examples of 14th century Serbian medieval ecclesiastical architecture in the entire region. Both countries also enjoy a reputation for their heterogeneous cuisine and their natural landscapes, making them an ideal destination for lovers of both the outdoors and good food.
River Danube: Europe’s second longest river, the Danube flows through no fewer than 10 different countries; beginning amongst the Black Forest mountains of western Germany and meandering its way some 2,860 kilometres to the shores of the Black Sea. Vital to the settlement and political development of much of central and southeastern Europe, it was immortalised by Johann Strauss the Younger in 1867 and today its banks are still lined with castles and fortresses that attest to its historical importance as a major commercial waterway. Home to a number of national parks, important wetland areas and UNESCO World Heritage sites, the river still plays an important role in the commercial and cultural development of the region.

Iron Gates Gorge: Forming the boundary between Serbia and Romania, the Iron Gates separate the southern Carpathian Mountains from the northwestern foothills of the Balkan ranges. Blessed with some of the most spectacular scenery along the entire Danube, the gorge spans an area that includes the Iron Gates Natural Park on the Romanian side and part of Serbia’s Đerdap National Park. The longest and largest gorge in Europe, it stretches for some 130 kilometres and encompasses four valleys, towering vertical cliffs and over 60,000 hectares of forest and parkland that is a haven for Carpathian lynx, wolves, rare chamoises, mouflon and over 150 species of birds including golden eagles.

Niš: One of the oldest cities in the Balkans, Niš has long been considered a gateway between the east and the west. Birthplace of Constantine the Great, the founder of Constantinople, the city is home to one of the oldest churches in Serbia and the Ćele Kula (the Skull Tower), a towering monument to the Serbian revolutionaries decapitated by the Ottomans during the early 19th century. Located besides the waters of the Nišava River, the city’s long and bloody history has seen it fall to Gallic tribes, Roman legions and the besieging Hun. Today, the reminders of its troubled past include monuments to its Turkish occupation, Nazi atrocities and the NATO bombing of the city during the recent Kosovo War.

Pristina: The capital and largest city in Kosovo, Pristina lies at the cultural heart of the region. Inhabited for nearly 10,000 years, its origins date back as far as the 8th century BC and during the Roman occupation it was considered one of the most important Roman cities in the
Balkans. The city suffered under the repressive regimes of the Ottoman Turks and the Nazis and many of the majority Albanians fled during the Kosovo War of the late 1990s, but today Pristina is enjoying a resurgence as one of Kosovo’s most popular tourist destinations. Filled with museums, churches and coffee houses, it provides an ideal gateway to the UNESCO World Heritage setting of Gracanica Monastery.

Novi Pazar: The cultural centre of the Serbian Bosniaks, Novi Pazar lies amongst the river valleys of southwestern Serbia. Formally founded by the Ottoman Turks during the 15th century, its name translates as ‘New Marketplace’ and it was once the main town of the medieval Ras Province. Today it enjoys the reputation of being the main cultural centre for the south Raška region and is home to the Church of the Apostles Peter and Paul, one of the oldest religious monuments in the area. Close by you will also find the World Heritage sites of the old Serbian monastery of Sopoćani and the ancient city of Ras, which dates back to the Vlastimirovic dynasty of the 8th-10th centuries.

Bosnia & Herzegovina: Set amongst the rugged beauty of the Balkan Peninsula, Bosnia and Herzegovina presents a wonderful mix of the historic and the chic. Straddling the old empires of the Ottoman Turks and the Austro-Hungarian emperors, its medieval towers and forest-clad mountains hide an engaging array of small rural towns, whilst the historic centres of Mostar and Sarajevo provide visitors with some world-class heritage sites. Sandwiched between the cool mountains and the azure waters of the Adriatic, the country enjoys hot summers and cold, snowy winters, making it an ideal year round destination. Steeped in the blood and history of a turbulent past, its rich mix of eastern and western cultures has also left it imbued with a fascinating cultural heritage, with Sarajevo and Mostar being the jewels in its glittering crown. The country can also boast some stunning outdoor attractions too, with Herzegovina enjoying some of the country’s most captivating landscapes and a reputation for some of its finest wines. The central Dinaric Alps also rank highly amongst hikers and walkers and these mountain valleys still echo to the haunting melodies of the traditional music of the past. So, come and rediscover a little something of a Europe long past, where centuries old traditions are still preserved and hospitality is a time honoured trademark.

Sargan Eight Railway: Running between the village of Mokra Gora and Šargan Vitasi, this narrow gauge heritage railway is considered to be one of the most scenic railway journeys in Europe. Built in 1925 and restored to its former glory some 70 years later, the figure of eight track takes you through the majestic splendour of the Tara Mountains, winding its way through the mountains and rocky gorges as it covers the 13.5 kilometre track. There are also 20 tunnels, 10 bridges and a number of picturesque villages to negotiate, as you sit back and enjoy the beautifully restored wooden interiors and the slowly passing Serbian countryside.
Sarajevo: Famed for its religious and cultural diversity, Sarajevo is the largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A prominent centre of Balkan culture, it has emerged from the brutal siege of the early 1990s to become one of Europe's most popular destinations. With a captivating historic centre, filled with the reminders of its Ottoman and Habsburg past, the city today has turned itself into a thriving European capital, with a distinctly eastern flavour. The cobbled streets of the Old Town provide a rich mix of Orthodox churches, mosques and markets, whilst the city’s international reputation for its eclectic array of festivals, sporting events and music performances is well founded.

Srebrenica: A small mountain town lying amongst the country’s easternmost regions, Srebrenica came to prominence during the Bosnian War when, in July 1995, Serb forces massacred more than 8,000 Muslim Bosniaks. At the time the town was meant to be under the protection of the UN, but the Dutch troops tasked with protecting the civilians failed to prevent the town’s capture and the subsequent massacre by troops loyal to General Ratko Mladić. The massacre remains the worst event of its kind in Europe since the end of the Second World War and today it is remembered at the Srebrenica Genocide Memorial, which includes the graves of the nearly 6,300 bodies recovered from the mass graves.

Lukomir: The highest and most remote village in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lukomir lies some 1,495 metres up on the slopes of Bjelašnica Mountain. A unique collection of stone houses with cherry-wood roof tiles, the village is often cut off during the winter snows and only becomes accessible during the spring thaw. Surrounded by some truly inspiring landscapes its traditionally attired residents still sport the hand-knitted costumes that have been worn in these remote mountains for centuries.

Mostar: Home to probably the most famous bridge in the Balkans, medieval Mostar is one of Herzegovina’s most famous destinations. The cultural capital of the region, its historic heart is filled with an astonishingly picturesque array of noteworthy buildings including Ottoman houses, Orthodox churches and some 13 mosques that date back to the 16th and 17th centuries. The Old Bridge that spans the River Neretva is its centrepiece though. Destroyed during the Bosnian War, it was restored to glory in 2004 and inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list a year later, along with the old city that surrounds it. Today it is considered one of the most exemplary pieces of Islamic architecture in the Balkans.
Jajce: Located in the central part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Jajce lies along the confluence of the Pliva and Vrbas Rivers. Dating back to the 14th century, it once served as the capital of the Kingdom of Bosnia, before falling to the Ottoman Turks. Indeed Jajce was the last Bosnian town to fall to the Ottoman Empire, in 1528. Famed for its beautiful waterfalls, the town lies in the heart of some stunning countryside, surrounded as it is by mountains, lakes and canyons. It is also home to an impressive hilltop fortress that was built by the town’s founder back in the 14th century.
How to Book:

In order to confirm your booking we need to have a completed signed booking form for each client together with a £400 deposit per person. You can either return your booking form to us by post or by booking online at www.wildfrontierstravel.com

You can contact the office by email to info@wildfrontierstravel.com or we are very happy to take your call on + 44 (0) 20 7736 3968.

Protection for you money:

The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT) provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for Wild Frontiers, and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following:

1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK;
2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; and
3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK, which are sold to customers outside of the UK.

1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with Wild Frontiers.

If you choose to book your international flights with us then you will also be ATOL protected as we hold an Air Travel Organiser’s Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Our ATOL number is 5975. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will arrange to refund any monies to you that you have paid for an advance booking and ensure that you are not stranded abroad. For further information visit www.atol.org.uk

We recommend that you take out adequate travel insurance at the time of booking in the event that you are no longer able to travel as all deposits are non-refundable - full booking conditions can be found on the booking form and online at our website.

As I’m sure you can appreciate, Wild Frontiers trips can be quite complex affairs to arrange and certain elements (such as permits, visa authorisations, trains and flights) may need to be requested several months in advance. As such, wherever possible, we would encourage you to plan ahead and book early to avoid disappointment. Moreover, by booking early you are always guaranteed to get the best price with us as we will automatically offer you a retrospective discount if we happen to reduce the price of the tour later on. For further details, please refer to www.wildfrontierstravel.com/price-guarantee

Further information:
When you make a confirmed booking with Wild Frontiers we will send you a pre-departure information pack giving you details on visas, health and vaccinations, packing lists, suggested reading on the region, photography and other useful tips to make your trip more enjoyable.
Why Wild Frontiers?

Wild Frontiers is proud to have been regularly voted one of the top ten tour operators by readers of Wanderlust Travel Magazine over the last ten years. A number of our innovative itineraries have been included in National Geographic Traveller Magazine’s “Trips of a Lifetime”, and our acclaimed Tour Leaders regularly feature in the Wanderlust World Guide Awards, with Mark Steadman winning gold in 2015. Responsible travel has always been incredibly important to us, so we were delighted to be awarded Best Ethical Tour Operator by The Guardian/Observer in 2012.

We are frequently asked what makes Wild Frontiers different from other tour operators. Below are a few of the factors that we believe set us apart from our competitors and form the reasons as to why our clients travel with us again and again...

Personal Service & Expertise: Our London office is manned by experienced expedition leaders and most trips we run stem from our first-hand knowledge - in short, we run the kind of holidays that as passionate travellers, we like to do ourselves. When you ring our office, you can be guaranteed to chat to someone who knows the region and the terrain and is able to offer sound and practical advice.

Authentic, Cutting-Edge Experiences: Our unique, original itineraries allow you to take journeys that venture beneath the surface of the region. We rarely run any group tour more than a couple of times a year and they are typically on routes we have discovered for ourselves, meaning we are able to give a truly authentic, off-the-beaten-track experience.

Be the First: Our style of travel is all about exploration, and nothing excites us more than opening up new routes to genuine travellers, even if that makes our job harder at times! We keep abreast of new destinations and are often the first to return to places that have vanished from the tourist map. We were the first back into Pakistan after 9/11, the first to return to Kashmir after a decade of tourist isolation, and amongst the first to run a commercial travel trip to Afghanistan for almost 30 years. Since then we have helped bring Colombia, Iran, Georgia and Bangladesh back into the tourist fold, specialising in ground-breaking reconnaissance trips and imaginative expeditions.

Small Group Size: On our escorted tours, we believe it is imperative to keep the group sizes small. Most trips are limited to an average maximum of 12 travellers, thus giving you more access to fragile cultures, better opportunities to interact with local people, and the knowledge you are making less of an impact while there. “Having been a bit apprehensive about joining a group as a single traveller, I found myself surrounded by interesting, friendly, helpful people who I hope to catch up with again on future trips.” Angela Chick, Kashmir Group Tour

Cost of Group Tours: We believe in an honest, upfront pricing structure so you know exactly what the tour will cost before you book. On our group tours we avoid local payments, ‘optional extras’ or forcing our clients to go through the annoying procedure of splitting every meal bill. Our tours are provided on a predominantly full board basis, with drinking water, government permits, entrance fees and transport all included.

Our clients: Your companions can make or break a trip, and it’s lucky therefore that our clients are often our greatest asset. Travelling to remote regions is not for everyone, and as such we tend to attract open-minded travellers looking for genuine experiences, and a desire to reach those hard to get to places.

Responsible Travel: Awarded 5 star status by AITO (Association of Independent Tour operators), responsible tourism (RT) has always been an integral part of our company ethos and our adventures are designed with the local people, culture and eco-system in mind. In 2012 we were awarded the Guardian Observer Best Ethical Travel Award. For further details please refer to the RT section of our website - www.wildfrontierstravel.com/rt