

EUROPE · HISTORY · NIGHTLIFE · FOOD · SACRED SITES · HIKING



Serbia

Serbia is the Balkans at full volume: Belgrade's riverside clubs and kafanas, Novi Sad's Austro-Hungarian streets, medieval monasteries painted with Byzantine-style frescoes and the forested gorges of the Drina and Danube. It is affordable, hospitable and still lightly touristed outside the capital, and its food, from charcoal-grilled meats to creamy kajmak, is generous.

i Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Serbia and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 13 August 2026.

CAPITAL Belgrade	CURRENCY Serbian dinar (RSD) £1 ≈ RSD 140	LANGUAGE Serbian, Hungarian	BEST TIME Apr–Jun, Sep–Oct
DAILY BUDGET £40–£180 ££ Moderate	PLUGS Type C, F 230V · adapter needed	FLIGHT FROM LONDON 2h 50m direct ~£90–£280 return	TIME ZONE UTC+1 standard time

Serbia sits at the crossroads of the Balkans, with the flat farmland of Vojvodina in the north and wooded mountains rising to the south; the Sava and Danube meet at Belgrade in between. Most first trips spend a few days in Belgrade and a day or two in Novi Sad, under 40 minutes north by fast train. From there, head west to Tara National Park and the Šargan Eight heritage railway, south to the Raška monasteries of Studenica and Sopoćani, or east along the Danube through the Iron Gates gorge.

Serbia is cheap by European standards and easy to travel, though public transport off the main routes is slow and car hire pays off in the countryside. Belgrade runs late: dinners start at nine, bars fill after midnight and summer clubs float on river barges. Smoking indoors remains common in bars and cafés. Elsewhere the welcome is warm and often comes with homemade rakija. It suits food lovers, night owls and road-trippers; visitors are often surprised by the quality of medieval art in rural monasteries, and by how few other foreigners they meet.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

HISTORY

Belgrade Fortress (Kalemegdan)

Layers of Roman, Byzantine, Serbian, Austrian and Ottoman walls crown a ridge above the confluence of the Sava and Danube. Come at sunset for the view, and explore the military museum, gates and parkland.
- 2

HISTORY

Petrovaradin Fortress

A vast Habsburg fortress built between the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on the Danube opposite Novi Sad, with a clock tower whose hands are reversed, miles of underground tunnels and the long-time home of the EXIT festival.

3

SACRED SITE

Studenica Monastery

Founded in the late twelfth century by Stefan Nemanja, this UNESCO-listed white-marble monastery holds some of the finest Byzantine-style frescoes in the Balkans, including a celebrated Crucifixion painted around 1209.

4

NATURE

Tara National Park

Dense forest and limestone plateaux above the Drina canyon in western Serbia. Hike to the Banjska Stena viewpoint over Lake Perućac, look for brown bears, and combine it with the Šargan Eight railway and Drvengrad.

5

NATURE

Iron Gates and Golubac Fortress

The Danube narrows through a 100 km chain of gorges along the Romanian border, guarded at its western entrance by the turreted Golubac Fortress. Nearby Lepenski Vir preserves a Mesolithic settlement whose fish-faced stone sculptures are over 8,000 years old.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Belgrade

≈ 1.7 million people

A gritty, energetic capital at the meeting of the Sava and Danube: walk Kalemegdan fortress and Knez Mihailova, eat in Skadarlija's kafanas and spend summer nights on the river barges.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Novi Sad

≈ 370,000 people

Serbia's second city has a pastel Austro-Hungarian centre, a big student population and the Petrovaradin Fortress above the Danube, with the monasteries and wineries of Fruška Gora close by.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Niš

≈ 250,000 people

Birthplace of Emperor Constantine, with an Ottoman fortress, the macabre Skull Tower built from rebels' skulls in 1809 and some of Serbia's best grilled meat; a good base for the south.

Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Serbia

Best time: **Apr–Jun, Sep–Oct.**

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

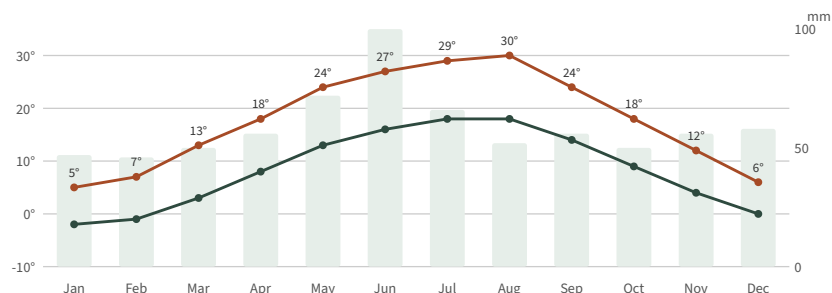
Nov

Dec

■ Best ■ Good ■ Mixed ■ Poor

Average climate in Belgrade

— High °C — Low °C ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Jan	Orthodox Christmas Serbs celebrate Christmas on 7 January; on Christmas Eve, oak branches known as badnjak are burned outside churches in Belgrade and across the country, followed by late services.
Aug	Guča Trumpet Festival Brass bands from across the Balkans compete in the village of Guča each August, playing day and night amid roasting pigs and rivers of beer; not for the faint-hearted.
Aug	Nišville Jazz Festival An international jazz festival held each August within Niš Fortress, mixing jazz, funk and world music with free fringe concerts around the city.

How much does Serbia cost?

SHOESTRING £40 per person / day ≈ RSD 5,590 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £85 per person / day ≈ RSD 11,879 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £180 per person / day ≈ RSD 25,156 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

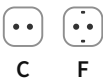
Ćevapi Small skinless sausages of minced beef and pork, grilled over charcoal and served in somun flatbread with chopped onion, kajmak and ajvar.	Sarma Leaves from whole soured cabbages rolled around minced meat and rice and slow-cooked with smoked pork; essential winter and holiday food.	Burek Flaky filo pie filled with meat, cheese or nothing at all, sold by bakeries from dawn and traditionally washed down with drinking yoghurt.
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Getting around

Fast Soko trains link Belgrade and Novi Sad in under 40 minutes, but most other rail routes are slow, so buses carry the bulk of intercity traffic. Car hire is worthwhile for Tara, the monasteries and the Danube gorge. In Belgrade, use the CarGo app or official taxis rather than cabs touting at the airport or stations; city buses and trams have been free since 2025.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE



230V — bring a UK-to-C/F adapter

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

All emergencies: **112**
Ambulance: **194**
Fire: **193**
Police: **192**
Source: FCDO “Getting help”

DIALLING CODE

+381

TIME ZONE

UTC+1 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Generally safe to drink

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

Round up or leave around 10% in restaurants and kafanas, and round up taxi fares; service is rarely added to the bill.

ETIQUETTE

Avoid casual opinions on Kosovo, the 1990s wars or the 1999 NATO bombing. When toasting, say 'Živeli' and meet each person's eyes; refusing offered food or rakija outright can seem rude.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport (BEG), Belgrade; Niš Constantine the Great Airport (INI), Niš

Visas & entry for Serbia

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can visit Serbia without a visa for up to 90 days within a 6-month period, for business or tourism.

For details about employment visas and long-stay visas, check the information from the Serbian Embassy in the UK.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Measles

Rabies

Tick-borne encephalitis

Typhoid

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Serbia

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Wed 11 Nov 2026

Armistice Day

Fri 1 Jan 2027

New Year's Day

Sat 2 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Thu 7 Jan 2027	Orthodox Christmas Day
Mon 15 Feb 2027	Statehood Day
Tue 16 Feb 2027	Statehood Day
Fri 30 Apr 2027	Good Friday
Sat 1 May 2027	Holy Saturday · Labour Day
Sun 2 May 2027	Easter Sunday · Labour Day
Mon 3 May 2027	Easter Monday
Tue 4 May 2027	Labour Day (observed)

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Serbian

ENGLISH	SERBIAN	SAY IT
Hello	Здраво	<i>ZDRAH-voh</i>
Thank you	Хвала	<i>HVAH-lah</i>
Please	Молим	<i>MOH-leem</i>
Excuse me	Извините	<i>eez-VEE-nee-teh</i>
How much is this?	Колико ово кошта?	<i>KOH-lee-koh OH-voh KOHSH-tah</i>

Know before you go

Pay in dinars: euros are sometimes quoted for accommodation but rarely accepted for everyday purchases. Cards work widely in cities, but carry cash for markets, kafanas and rural guesthouses.

At Belgrade airport, use the official taxi information desk, which issues a fixed-fare voucher into the city, or book through the CarGo app, to avoid being overcharged.

Smoking is still permitted in many bars and kafanas; if it bothers you, ask for non-smoking areas or choose terraces, which open from spring to autumn.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.