

28 April 2019 – ESITIS Excursion to Mostar

Dear friends,

It's a pleasure to guide you for the day on an excursion to Mostar and back. It will be a long day in a Mediterranean climate and we recommend you consider bringing water, a snack, a hat and/or sunscreen, something to cover arms and legs and for women, also head at the Tekija and that you wear comfortable shoes.

We will meet early (6:50) at the train station in order to catch the 7:15 train and will catch the 18:30 train back, arriving around 21:00. The train ride should not only be more comfortable than a chartered bus (our original plan), but also give you a chance to experience one of the most beautiful train journeys in Europe, as we cross the Dinaric Alps into Herzegovina. Our apologies for the early start, which is beyond our control. A taxi to the station (*željeznička stanica*) from anywhere in the center should cost you around 5 km and take 10 minutes. You can also go by tram, but then you should allow more time: number 2 goes directly to the station, but is very infrequent, or take number 3 tram to 'muzej' and walk north/right about 5 min to the station (past the US embassy compound).

Your payment of 60 bosnian KM will cover the train to and from Mostar, bus to Blagaj and back, entrance to Blagaj Tekija and your various guides for the day. It does not cover lunch, snacks, drinks, souvenirs, etc.

The itinerary is a Bosnian one, which means things can change. We would appreciate it if you could be flexible. The snacks are suggested, above, in case meals don't happen at the times you normally eat (we all tend to be a little irritable when we're hungry).

With anticipation,

Julianne Funk and Marko Barišić

Itinerary

6:50 – meet at the Sarajevo train station (željeznička stanica)

7:15 – train departs from Sarajevo

9:30 – train arrives in Mostar

walk across the city to the bus stop, catch the bus to Blagaj (20 min ride)

11:00 - Tekija in Blagaj, near Mostar



For centuries this Tekija was an important Sufi spiritual centre located at the source of the river Buna. When Sufism was banned in Yugoslavia by the Islamic Community, the Tekija was transformed into a tourist place as Sufi practices went underground. After the 1992-1995 war, the Tekija was again reappropriated for its spiritual purposes without dismantling the tourism around it. Every spring, a famous zikr is organised at the Tekija which attracts hundreds of Sufi practitioners from across the globe.

More info: <http://tekijablagaj.ba/en/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/geoffreymorrison/2016/12/30/blagaj-tekija-bosnias-beautiful-monastery-under-a-cliff/>

catch the bus back to Mostar

13:00 – Franciscan Monastery in Mostar



The 19th century monastery, dating back to the Ottoman period, is one of the main Franciscan centres in Herzegovina. It's old church was destroyed in the last war and was replaced with the much taller church with the tallest tower in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The monastery has a valuable library with a rich Ottoman collection located underground.

More info:

http://www.turizam.mostar.ba/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=110:katolika-crkva-i-franjevaki-samostan-1866&catid=41:znamenitosti&Itemid=424&lang=en

14:00 – Free time to explore Mostar’s Old City (lunch)

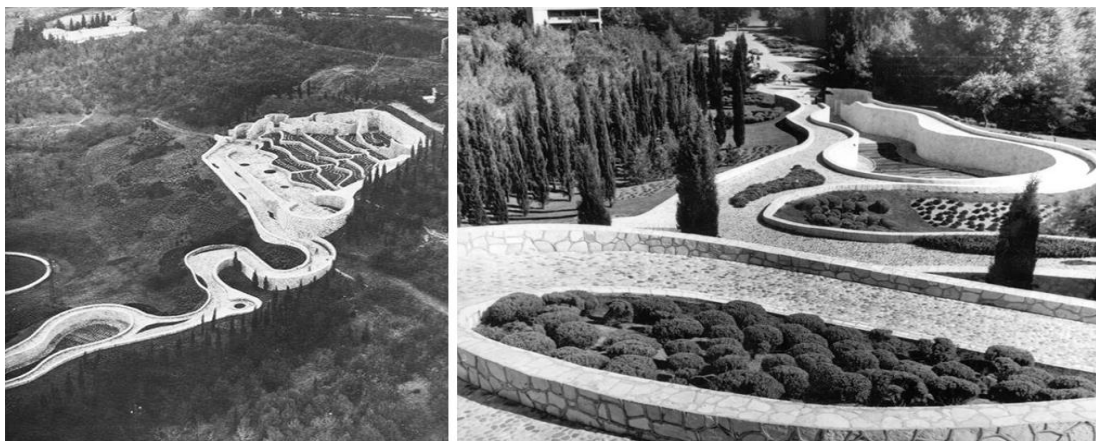
The old city of Mostar is an amalgamation of architecture from various periods: the Middle Ages, the Ottoman era, Austro-Hungarian and Yugoslav periods. Its recognisable Ottoman bridge over the turquoise Neretva river, together with its bazars, food and people make it perfect oasis for travellers. In recent years, Mostar became a centre of Street Art, parts of which can be seen in the Old City itself.



More info: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/946>
<https://www.facebook.com/StreetArtsFestivalMostar/>

16:00 – Partisan Memorial Cemetery

The Memorial was built in 1965 (Yugoslav period) by the famous Yugoslav architect Bogdan Bogdanovic to honour the Partisans who lost their lives in the struggle against Fascism. Fascinated with the ideas the mysticism the architect sought to build Mostar’s mirror reflection, an ideal diagram which would direct the city towards its utopian future.



More info: <https://www.spomenikdatabase.org/mostar?lightbox=datatem-j7dot0u5>
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=406002289960385>

18:15 – meet at the train station in Mostar

18:30 – train departs Mostar

21:00 – Arrive in Sarajevo