

One day walking tour around the town of Elena

- Starting point – Hr. Botev square, the town centre
- Tourist information centre, situated in Bakalova house
- Museum complex Daskalolivnicata
- The clock tower
- Hr. Botev square
- House-museum of Ilarion Makariopolski
- The 5 Razsukanovi houses
- “The Virgin `s birth” church
- Hr. Botev square

Our walking tour starts at the main town square Hr. Botev. The big yellow building at the eastern corner of the square is the Community centre Napredak /Progress/ which is the cultural club in Elena. Opposite the fountain across the main street is the house of Urdan Hadjipetkov, which has an unique façade. The house was erected on the stone basement of a burnt during the Russo – Turkish war / 1877-1878 / old house.

Keep walking west, up the main cobbled street. The first administrative building on your right is the Town Hall of Elena. Opposite, across the street you will see a big wall painting showing one of the legends of our town – Queen Elena, wife of King Asen.

Walking up you will pass by the so called “top end square”. Overlooking are the beautiful buildings of “Queen Elena” market and our renovated ex - primary school.

After the square you turn left – and you will be facing “Bakalovata house”. Here is the Tourist information centre where you can get more info and ideas for new tourist destinations around the town and the region. The house once belonged to a wealthy man and it is a historical monument. You can have a look inside, free of charge.

Carry on uphill south and you will reach the museum complex “Daskalolivnitsa”. The first authentic 3 – storey wood-plank house on your left is Popnikolovata house, a historical monument, which is presently Paleontology museum affiliated with “St. Kliment Ohridski” University in Sofia. Free admission. If the museum is closed, please ring the door bell.

To get into the museum complex “Daskalolivnitsata” use the side entrance, next to the tavern. There are two other entrances at the upper part of the complex. A guided tour can take you around the “Kamburov inn”, the deep dug church “St. Nikola” and “Daskalolivnitsata” itself. The doors of the church “Assumption of Holly Mother” are also open for you. Walk up and have a look the old houses around. The curators` office is at “Gunevata house”, which is opposite the church “St. Nikola”. Admission charge for each building – 2 lv., student discount – 1 lv. Here you can get your 100 Bulgarian national tourist sites booklet`s stamp.

Right next to “Daskalolivnitsata” is a gate which takes you to a small cobbled square. Going down is a street that pass by the Clock tower - the symbol of Elena. The tower was built in 1812 by an unknown local master. The clock mechanism and the bell were bought by Feizi aga, as “a good deed”. The bell was cast in Gabrovo and its place is well chosen so that it can be seen and heard all over the town.

Walking down on the cobbled street you will see a lot of old traditional style houses some of which are historical monuments. One of them is the Tourist dorm called after the local famous benefactor – doctor Hristo Momchilov who contributed a lot to the development, sanitation and urbanization of Elena as well as to the building of the Medical faculty in Sofia.

The narrow road leads to the town centre where our walk started.

Here is the shop “Elena” where you can buy a lot of our traditional Elena produce – feta cheese, yellow cheese, the famous quarter of pork, fillet, local plum-brandy, aronia /purple chokeberry/ wine, jam, organic walnuts.

To get to the house - museum of Ilarion Makariopolski you have to cross the square and the main road. On your right you will see a massive wooden gate of an old rich house. It is a

national historical and architectural monument. Here were born Ilarion Makariopolski – the bishop who fought for the independency of our Bulgarian church, his brother Nikola Mihailovski – a famous intellectual figure who took an important part in the Bulgarian Renaissance and his son – Stoqn Mihailovski – a poet and satirist, the author of our anthem “Varvi narode vazrodeni”. Next to the house – museum across the car park is the home of Mina, the muse of our famous poet and revolutionary Yavorov.

Cross the bridge and take the first turn on the left. The quiet cobbled street still keeps the authentic look of many traditional small houses in Elena. At the end of the street you will find the “pearl” among them – The Five Razsukanovi Houses. They are an unique architectural ensemble – five houses under one roof, built by Hadji Dimitar Razsukanov for his five sons.

Across the street is another holy place for us - “The Virgin `s birth” church. Initially built as a shrine in 1812 under the guidance of our famous revolutionary Hadju Urdan Bradata, secretly from that time Ottoman rulers, the shrine was flooded and burnt many times.

Cross the river again using the near-by bridge and walk towards the town centre. You have passed by many taverns and restaurants – we recommend you to check them out! Try Elena specialties and enjoy the peace and quiet of our beautiful town.

Don’t forget to buy a souvenir as a keepsake.

We hope the info in this leaflet was useful and you had a good time here.

YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME BACK.

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