



One of the most significant historical monuments in Belogradchik is the Belogradchik fortress. This ancient stronghold was built among unapproachable rocks when the Bulgarian nation had not been formed yet and the Balkan Peninsula was in the region of the Roman Empire, in III century AD. For the better fortification in the first two centuries of their domination, the Romans tried hard to build a good fortifying system and comfortable roads. The fortress had to control this part of the road from Ratsiaria city (near today's Archar village, Vidin district). Romans built the highest part of the fortress called the Citadel. Some meters away from the fortress in southwestern direction, on a lonely, steep rock are the ruins from another ancient fortification that helped the Romans. This fortress (The Latin fortress) had to observe, control and guard the road and to pass on military messages mostly, by means of different signals. During days, the Romans used smoke as a signal and fire at night. In 395, the Balkan land entered the borders of Byzantia. In VI century the Slavs began to attack the Balkan Peninsula and the Byzantines were forced (Emperor Justinian I-527-565) to build some new defensive zones. But despite these zones, they could not hold out the powerful attack of the Slavs and Prabulgarians who in the end of VII century obtained the right to create the new Bulgarian country. In XIV century in northwestern Bulgaria, the tsardom of Ivan Sratsimir was formed. He refortified and enlarged the old fortress. At the end of XIV century the Turks captured the fortress. A garrison was placed there that was very important for defending the western region of the country and for suppressing the uprisings of the Bulgarians. The Turks did some fortifying work and new constructions on the fortress walls were made. In 1850, the fortress had negative role for the crushing of the Belogradchik uprising. In its dungeon, the leaders of the uprising in Belogradchik were imprisoned and tortured. After that they were taken out through one of the tunnels in the fortress and beheaded. Nowadays, there is a memorial in memory of these fighters near the place of the execution. The fortress was last used for military purposes during the Serbian-Bulgarian war in 1885. The Belogradchik fortress was declared to be a memorial of culture with national significance in 1985 and is adjusted for mass tourist visits. It consists of three yards with total area of 10 211sq.m and one separate fortification. Loopholes for rifles were built in the fortress walls and for the cannons-three bastions and three loopholes were built. A memorable view is revealed from the highest part of the fortress called First Plate. In the south, the eyes caress the folded ridge of Stara Planina, from Peak Kom to Vrushka Chuka. To the west the copper Karpatian Mountain attracts the glance. And when looking down, the glance rests in the fantasticality of the Belogradchik Rocks. The road leading to the fortress is asphalted, there is a parking place, information boards and a relaxation spot.