



The proximity of Vitosha and Sofia make it suitable for visits throughout the whole year . There are few towns blessed with such natural treasure. It has turned into one of the emblems of Sofia , Vitosha is in fact a part of the emblem of the capital city. Vitosha is the fourth highest mountain after Rila, Pirin and Stara Planina Mountains. Its area is 278 sq. km, its highest peak is Cherni Peak ( 2290m) . Vitosha is emblematic for the Bulgarian tourism – the climb of Cherni Peak by three hundred people from Sofia on 27th August 1895 led by the writer Aleko Konstantinov is accepted as the beginning of the organized Bulgarian tourist movement. Vitosha provides the conditions for winter sports and active tourism throughout the whole year. The access to the highest parts of Vitosha is possible through many paths , roads and lifts. The already created tense network of alleys and paths in the mountain exceeds 270 km. For the tourists facilitation there are many information tables and notes, clear markings, wooden benches, tables and barbecues, shades and fire places, beautiful bridges and more than 100 fountains for drinkable water. There are active basis of Mountain Rescue Services , hotels, holiday stations ,huts and shelters ( with full communication system), ensuring shelter and being owned by the Bulgarian Tourist Union, and other different organizations, joints, tourist associations, and travel agencies. There are restaurants, cafes, refreshment centers which offer tea, coffee, hot soup and other kinds of food. There are defined two resort – tourist centers- Aleko ( in the north east slopes) and the Zlatnite Mostove - the Golden Bridges ( in the northwest slopes) reachable through two main roads : Dragalevtsi – Aleko and Boyana – Zlatnite Mostove ( with deviation leading to the Kopitoto). At the bottom of the mountain are situated many resort settlements some of them are Sofia`s neighborhoods . In most of them are offered good accommodation services, and their closeness to the mountain makes them more attractive for visitors and lovers of the winter sports and the summer tourism. Starting points to Vitosha are Simeonovo neighbourhood, Dragalevtsi Neighbourhood, Boyana Neighbourhood, Knyazhevo neighbourhood , the villages of Rudartsi, Marchevi, Vladaya, Kladnitsa, Bosnek, Chuipetliovo, Yarlovo, Zheleznitsa, Bistritsa. They are connected with regular transport with Sofia and Pernik and are starting points for walking and automobile tourism, or they have bus stops for buses going to the mountain or to the lower lift points like in Dragalevtsi and Simeonovo. Sightseeing. Vitosha has two preserves – the biosphere preserve “ Bistrishko Branishte” (included in UNESCO`s program “ Human and biosphere” ) and the preserve “ Torfeno Branishte”. Both preserves are on the territory of nature park Vitosha (26606 hectares), which encompasses almost entirely the whole mountain. There is a Visitors center “ Vitosha” ( about 1 km away from Dragalevtsi). Among the protected sights is the Duhlata cave and the 20 meters high waterfall Samokovishteto at the river Bistritsa. One of the most characteristic sights of Vitosha are its stone rivers , which represent large river valleys with rounded stones, deep beneath them is babbling the water. They call the stones moraines because of their round shapes formed at the time of the Ice period. The separate stones reach the sizes of 4to 5 meters in diameter and weight of 40 tones, some of the stone rivers are long up to 2 km and wide 300 meters. Especially popular are the “moraines “ of the Zlatni Mostove.

