

9th UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism

The Art of Wine Tourism

6-7 October 2025 – Plovdiv, Bulgaria

GENERAL INFORMATION NOTE



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1. INTRODUCTION

The 9th UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism will take place in Plovdiv, Bulgaria on 6-7 October 2025. This information note provides relevant information to facilitate your participation in this event and might be subject to change. Any further changes will be promptly notified.

1.1 Conference overview

Title:	9 th UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism
Dates:	6-7 October 2025
Venue:	“Boris Hristov” House of Culture
Organizers:	UN Tourism Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria
Speakers	20 experts from the private sector and representatives of national and international wine regions
Participants	Approximately 250 participants including government officials from National Tourism Administrations or Organizations, regional and local authorities, DMOs, UN Tourism Affiliate Members and private sector representatives, wineries, infrastructure providers, media and the academia.
Official languages	English, Spanish, French and Bulgarian
Official website	https://www.unwto.org/9-UN-Tourism-Global-Conference-Wine-Tourism

1.2 Venue information

The Conference will take place at:

“Boris Hristov” House of Culture
Plovdiv Center, “Gladston” str. 15,
4000 Plovdiv, Bulgaria

T: [+359 32 630 518](tel:+35932630518)
Web: [Дом на културата "Борис Христов"](https://dom-na-kulturnata-boris-hristov.com)



1.3 The Host City: Plovdiv – where history, culture, and wine become one

Welcome to Plovdiv, the oldest European continuously inhabited city and the official Best Wine Capital of Europe 2025, where over 8,000 years of history blend seamlessly with world-class wine, vibrant culture, and unforgettable charm.

In 2019, Plovdiv became the first Bulgarian city to hold the title of European Capital of Culture, a distinction that sparked a cultural renaissance and showcased the city's vibrant artistic spirit to the world.

Nestled in the heart of the Thracian Valley, under the shadows of seven iconic hills, and divided gracefully by the River Maritsa, Plovdiv is Bulgaria's second-largest city and one of Europe's most captivating destinations. With Roman theatre, ancient streets, and revival-era architecture, this city tells the story of civilizations — from Thracians to Romans, Byzantines to Bulgarians — all still alive in every stone, melody, and glass of wine.

Why Visit Plovdiv?

- The first of Bulgaria – European Capital of Culture: An arts and festival hotspot, home to events like Opera Open, Hills of Rock, Plovdiv Jazz Fest, One Dance, Francofolies and many others.
- The Old Town: An architectural and historical reserve and living museum of 18th–19th century Bulgarian architecture, Roman ruins, and cobblestone romance.
- Kapana Creative District: A lively urban oasis of innovation and charm, filled with artisan workshops, independent galleries, cozy cafes, and wine bars — where tradition meets contemporary spirit.
- Roman Legacy: Walk the marble steps of one of the world's best-preserved Ancient Roman Theatres or explore the hidden Roman Stadium beneath the city's modern life. Enjoy the rich historical landmarks, such as the Eastern Gate of Philippopolis and Nebet Tepe – timeless symbols of the city's ancient heritage, dating back to the 2nd century AD.

Europe's Wine Paradise

In 2025, Plovdiv triumphed over Bordeaux, La Rioja, and Tuscany to be crowned Best Wine Capital in Europe by European Best Destinations, winning the hearts of over 284,000 wine lovers from 82 countries. Here's why:

- 5,000 years of winemaking heritage, rooted in Thracian traditions.
- Home to Bulgaria's most renowned red grape – Mavrud, alongside local gems like Rubin, Pamid, and Cherven Misket.
- Over 17 boutique wineries in the Plovdiv region, with 9 offering wine tourism experiences including tastings, vineyard picnics, food pairings, and even vineyard weddings.
- City Wine Tourism: Six curated urban wine locations, with tastings available in Plovdiv's iconic Kapana and Central Districts.

- Host of world-class wine events like Vinaria Expo, Wine & Gourmet Festival (May), and Young Wine Parade (November).

Whether you sip a ruby-red Mavrud under the stars of the ancient theatre, walk the vineyards that once served Thracian kings, or toast among friends in a Kapana wine bar — Plovdiv will captivate your senses.

Plovdiv Awaits You

Come for the wine. Stay for the wonder. Explore a city where every street tells a story, every glass holds tradition, and every visit becomes a lifelong memory.

Plovdiv – Ancient, Eternal, and Irresistibly Yours.

1.4 Contact information

UN Tourism Secretariat	Bulgaria
(general information)	(logistical support)
Chloe Bougeard Project Specialist Market Intelligence, Policies and Competitiveness World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) E-mail: cbougeard@untourism.int	Zlatina Lyutova State Expert International and Visa Affairs Directorate Ministry of Tourism of Bulgaria Tel: +359 2 904 6 845 Mob: +359 897 02 02 81 E-mail: z.lyutova@tourism.government.bg
Regional Department for Europe World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) E-mail: rdeu@unwto.org	Julian Milanov State Expert International and Visa Affairs Directorate Ministry of Tourism of Bulgaria Tel: +359 2 904 6 847 Mob: +359 885 93 87 10 E-mail: j.milanov@tourism.government.bg

2. PARTICIPATION

2.1 Registration

To participate in the event, prior registration is required.

Please complete your registration as soon as possible, and no later than **26 September 2025**.

- **International participants** should register at: <https://cvent.me/G1WREW>
- **National participants** will receive an invitation, and they can confirm their participation on the following email: n.nikolova@tourism.government.bg

Registrations are subject to approval by the organizers and the host country. Participants will receive a confirmation email once approval is granted and they will be asked to provide information on their travel schedule and accommodation to enable the host to make the necessary

arrangements for local transfers. Should this information remain incomplete once the deadline for registration is reached, organizers reserve the right to cancel registrations.

Due to restricted in-person capacity, limitations as per the number of international participants per organization/entity may apply.

2.2 Badges

Participants will be able to collect their identification badges at the venue of the Conference (“Boris Hristov” House of Culture) on the following dates and times:

- **Sunday, 5 October:** 15h – 18h
- **Monday, 6 October:** 08h – 16h

To collect their badges, participants must present a valid ID, or the registration confirmation email.

All participants are requested to wear their identification badges for the duration of the 9th UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism, as well as during social events.

3. ENTRY FORMALITIES

3.1 Entry Requirements

To enter the Republic of Bulgaria, all foreign nationals must possess:

- A **valid travel document** (passport or equivalent), and
- A **visa**, if required based on nationality and passport type.

3.2 Do You Need a Visa?

- **Holders of Diplomatic and Service Passports:**
[Check visa requirements for diplomatic and service passports](#)
- **Holders of Ordinary Passports (Short Stay – up to 90 days):**
[Check visa requirements for ordinary passports](#)

3.3 Bulgaria and the Schengen Area

- As of **31 March 2024**, Bulgaria is part of the **Schengen Area**, with the abolition of checks at internal air and sea borders, in accordance with [Council Decision \(EU\) 2024/210 of 30 December 2023](#).
- As of **1 January 2025**, checks at **internal land borders** with and between Bulgaria and Romania have also been lifted, per [Council Decision \(EU\) 2024/3212 of 12 December 2024](#).

- Bulgaria now issues **uniform Schengen visas**, valid throughout the Schengen Area, from 31 March 2024.

3.4 Types of Visas

For short stays related to conference attendance, most participants will require a **Visa Type C** (short stay for the purpose of transit or a planned visit).

[More information about Visa Type C](#)

3.5 Visa Application Requirements

To apply for a Bulgarian visa, applicants must hold a travel document that:

- Is valid for at least **3 months** beyond the intended departure date from Bulgaria,
- Contains at least **2 blank** pages for visa purposes,
- Has been issued within the last **10 years**.

3.6 Visa Application Process

- Visas are issued by the **diplomatic and consular missions of Bulgaria**.
- Applications must be submitted **in person or through an authorized agent**, no earlier than **3 months** before the planned travel date (exceptions apply in humanitarian cases).
- Participants must apply for their visas **individually** and are fully responsible for ensuring timely submission and follow-up of their application.

[Find your nearest Bulgaria embassy or consulate](#)

Participants who may wish additional information for visa assistance are encouraged to contact:

Julian Milanov / j.milanov@tourism.government.bg

4. HOW TO GET TO PLOVDIV

Located in the heart of Bulgaria, Plovdiv is easily accessible by bus, train, car, and air. Whether you are arriving from Sofia, another Bulgarian city, or abroad, getting to the country's cultural and wine capital is smooth and straightforward.

4.1 From Abroad – Via Vasil Levski Sofia Airport (SOF)

- **Sofia Airport (SOF)** is the **nearest major international gateway** to Plovdiv, offering direct flights from across Europe and beyond.
- Upon arrival, Plovdiv is just a short journey away.

Distance: Approx. 145 km (90 miles)

Travel time: 1.5 to 2.5 hours, depending on the mode of transport

4.2 By Bus – Frequent and Affordable

Plovdiv is well connected to Sofia by a reliable and frequent bus network.

- **Departure point in Sofia:** Central Bus Station (*София Централна автогара*)
- **Arrival point in Plovdiv:** South Bus Station (*Автогара Юг*), located near the city center
- **Travel time:** Approx. 2 hours
- **Frequency:** Every 30–60 minutes
- **Ticket price:** Around 10–15 BGN (€5–8)

4.3 By Train – Scenic and Comfortable

Enjoy the scenic Bulgarian countryside aboard a train from Sofia to Plovdiv.

- **Departure station in Sofia:** Central Railway Station (*Централна гара София*)
- **Arrival station in Plovdiv:** Plovdiv Railway Station (*Гара Пловдив*), close to the city center
- **Travel time:** 2.5 to 3 hours
- **Ticket price:** From 9 BGN (€4.50)
- **Tickets available at:** Station counters or via the Bulgarian Railways website: www.bdz.bg

4.4 By Car – Fast and Flexible

For travelers preferring to drive, Plovdiv is a convenient drive from Sofia via the A1 Trakia Highway.

- **Estimated drive time:** 1.5 hours
- **Route:** A1 (Trakia) motorway, exit at Plovdiv
- **Car rentals:** Available at Sofia Airport and in the city center
- **Parking:** Public lots and designated street zones are available in Plovdiv

4.5 Plovdiv Airport (PDV)

Plovdiv also has a regional airport, located about **12 km southeast** of the city.

- **Airport name:** Plovdiv Airport (PDV)
- **Service:** Seasonal and charter flights from selected European cities
- **More information:** www.plovdivairport.com

5. LOCAL TRANSPORTATION

5.1 Arrivals

Although Plovdiv has its own airport, **we recommend that international participants arrive via Vasil Levski Sofia Airport (SOF)**, which offers a wider range of international connections.

Complimentary transportation from Vasil Levski Sofia Airport to the official hotels in

Plovdiv will be provided by the host on **4 and 5 October 2025**.

Upon arrival at **Vasil Levski Sofia Airport**, local representatives holding signs with the **Conference name** will welcome participants and guide them to their designated transfer.

5.2 Departures

Complimentary departure transfers from the official hotels in Plovdiv to **Vasil Levski Sofia Airport** will be available for participants departing on **7 and 8 October 2025**.

To help organize arrival and departure transfers, international participants are kindly requested to submit their travel details—including flight schedules (arrival and departure) and accommodation information—by **26 September 2025**.

5.3 Transportation during the Conference to the venue and scheduled social events

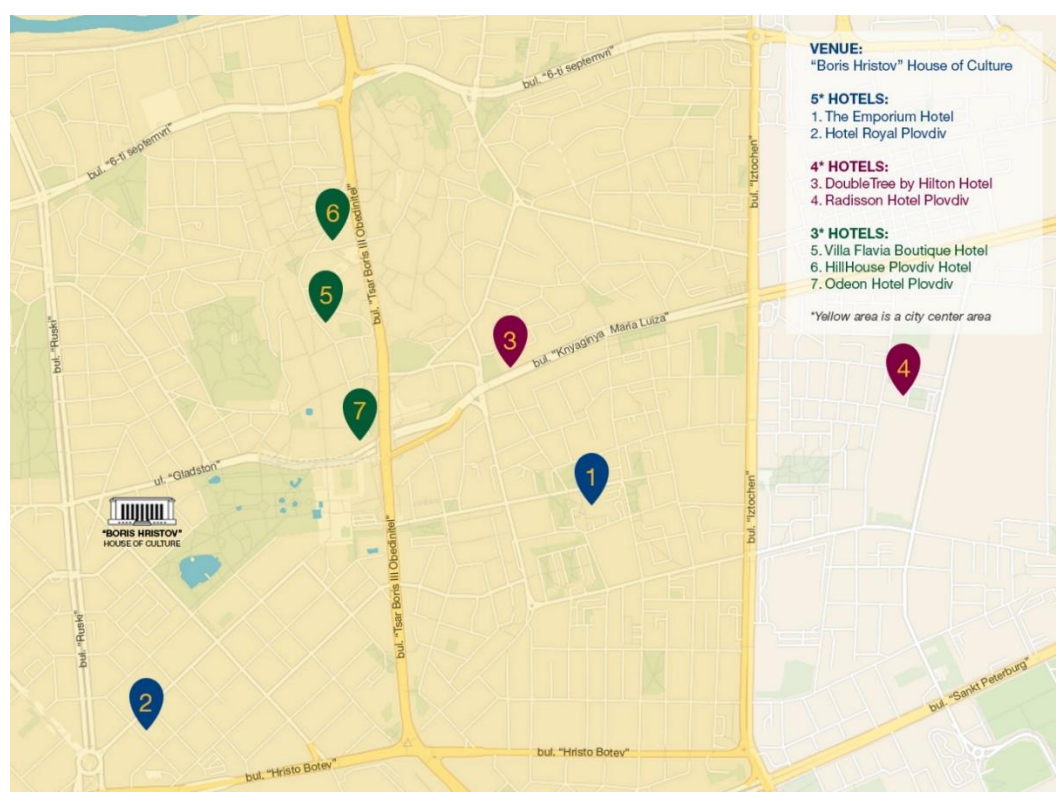
Local transportation will be provided by the host during the days of the Conference (**6 and 7 October**), covering transfers from the official hotels to the venue, as well as to the social events and masterclasses taking place at different locations in Plovdiv, in line with the official programme.

6. ACCOMMODATION

The host has secured special room rates at selected official hotels for participants of the 9th UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism. To ensure availability, **participants are encouraged to book their accommodation as early as possible at one of the designated official hotels below** via following link: <https://hm.cic-pco.com/unt2025/>

Hotel name	Distance to the venue	Rate on BB basis (€)
The Emporium Plovdiv Mgallery 5*	20 min walking distance; 5 min. by shuttle	160 € - 380 €
Hotel Royal Plovdiv 5*	12 min walking distance; 15 min. by shuttle	98 € - 134 €
DoubleTree by Hilton Plovdiv 4*	17 min walking distance; 4 min. by shuttle	145 € - 185 €
Radisson Hotel Plovdiv 4*	19 min walking distance; 9 min. by shuttle	152 € - 184 €
HillHouse Plovdiv 3*	20 min walking distance; 9 min. by shuttle	80 € - 96 €
Hotel Odeon 3*	11 min walking distance; 7 min. by shuttle	69 € - 84 €
Villa Flavia Heritage Boutique Hotel 3*	12 min walking distance; 8 min. by shuttle	102 € - 130 €

Other accommodation options are also available in the area. Participants staying at hotels other than the designated official ones may still make use of the transportation services provided, which will operate to and from the official hotels.



7. PROGRAMME

7.1 Conference Programme

The provisional programme of the Conference extends over 2 days with technical sessions, several thematic presentations, masterclasses, and technical tours on 6 and 7 October 2025. The provisional programme and list of speakers are available on the [Conference's website](#).

7.2 Masterclasses logistics

All four masterclasses will take place at iconic sites in Plovdiv - [Regional Ethnographic Museum](#), ["Boris Hristov" House of Culture](#), City Art Gallery, [Bishop's Basilica of Philippopolis](#).

Transfers to these locations will be organized for all registered participants from 2019 [Exhibition Gallery](#) at 15:30. Attendees of the masterclasses in the Regional Ethnographic Museum and the City Art Gallery will have the option to go there on foot with a guided tour through Old Town Plovdiv (20 min walk).

7.3 Social Programme / Technical visits

The Conference will feature a dedicated **social programme for international participants**:

- **Welcome Cocktail**

 5 October 2025 at 19:30

 Venue: Plovdiv Drama Theatre

 Open to all participants

 Prior to the Welcome Cocktail, participants will have the option to join an organized visit to the Bishop's Basilica of Philippopolis followed by free time at the Urban Wine Fest Plovdiv, taking place in the city center from 3–5 October (more information on the Urban Wine Festival at p.13)

 Participants will be picked up from their official hotels at **17:00**.

 The guided visit to the Basilica will be followed by free time to explore the Urban Wine Fest, featuring local wines, food stalls, and live music.

 The cocktail venue is located nearby, and participants will walk there together at the end of the visit.

- **Opera and reception**

 6 October 2025 at 19:30

 Venue: Ancient Theatre of Philippopolis

 Open to all participants

- **Gala Dinner**

 6 October 2025 at 20:30

 Venue: Grand Hotel Plovdiv

 Open to all international participants and by invitation for national participants

- **Technical Visits**

 7 October 2025 at 13:30

 Exclusively for international participants

 More information on the technical tours will be available on the official website in the coming weeks.

- **Farewell Dinner**

 7 October 2025 at 20:00

 Venue: TBD

 Exclusively for international participants

Local transfers will be provided for all social events, with departures from and returns to the **official hotels and the Conference venue**.

7.4 Official languages

The languages of the Conference will be **English, Spanish, French and Bulgarian**.

Simultaneous interpretation will be offered in these languages. At the entrance of the Conference's rooms, headphones will be provided.

7.5 Dress code

Business attire is required at official meetings of the Conference.

8. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

8.1 Weather

The territory of the Municipality of Plovdiv is in the transitional-continental climatic zone. It is characterized by relatively mild winters, but with instability of winter temperatures. Summer is hot, autumn is warm and long, and spring is cool, with frequent frosts. The average annual temperature is 12.2°C, and the average annual amplitude is 23.4°C. On a typical day, the average temperature in Plovdiv in October ranges from a high of 19°C (67°F) to a low of 7°C (46°F), with an average temperature of 14°C (57°F).

8.2 Official time

The Republic of Bulgaria is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT +2)

8.3 Official currency

The Bulgarian lev is the official currency of Bulgaria. The currency code for the Bulgarian lev is BGN and its symbol is лв. 1 Euro equals 1.95583 BGN. Banks accept currency exchange, while credit card holders may acquire money from the ATMs of the collaborating banks operating 24 hours. Exchange offices are situated at the airports, official hotels and at Plovdiv city center.

Currency rates are available at the official page of the Bulgarian National Bank: https://www.bnb.bg/Statistics/StExternalSector/StExchangeRates/StERForeignCurrencies/index.htm?toLang=_EN&toLang=_EN

8.4 Official language

Bulgaria's official language is Bulgarian. However, English is widely spoken and understood.

8.5 Banking Hours

In Bulgaria, banks are open from 09:00 to 17:00 on weekdays.

The city of Plovdiv has ATMs in different parts of the city, and they operate 24 hours a day, with credit and debit cards.

8.6 Electricity

In Bulgaria, power plugs and sockets (outlets) of type F are used. The standard voltage is 230 V at a frequency of 50 Hz. Adaptors and converters may be needed if you are travelling from countries that use 110V or other types of plugs.



8.7 Local and international phone calls

For international inbound calls, the country code is +359.

8.8 Useful telephone numbers

Police:

- In case of emergency, call 112 to contact the police.
- To file a report, visit the nearest police station as soon as possible.

Medical (Ambulance) and Fire Services:

- For genuine emergencies, dial 112.

8.9 Tourist information Bulgaria

Tourist information about Bulgaria: <https://visitbulgaria.com/>

Tourist information about Plovdiv: <https://www.visitplovdiv.com/en>

9. BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT BULGARIA

Picturesque nature, hot spring waters, fabulous seaside cities, golden sand beaches, historical treasures, remarkable monasteries, unforgettable mountain views and varied sport activities – Bulgaria is a place where you can immerse yourself and enjoy unique landmarks and places!

Situated between the East and the West, and having favorable climate and natural resources, the country has always been a site of continuous cultural exchange and diversity. Some of the most famous treasures in the world were discovered at the Varna Necropolis, including the world's oldest golden ornaments.

Bulgaria is a country with thousands of years of history and a cultural heritage that embraces ancient civilizations. Despite the fact that it occupies only 2% of the mainland continent of Europe, about 40,000 historical monuments have been registered in Bulgaria.

Wine production in Bulgaria has long tradition. The ancient Thracians, who populated the land in ancient times, worshipped the gods Zagreus and Dionysius and used the wine during their religious rituals.

In the late 19th and early 20th century a professional approach to viticulture and winemaking began to emerge and the foundations of the modern production methods were established for Bulgarian wines. Today, high-quality wines from Bulgaria can be sampled around the globe. Many of the local wine products win international awards and astound foreign oenophiles with their high quality and exquisite taste.

Few countries in Europe can rival Bulgaria's spa, balneological and wellness tourism, with its abundance and diversity of thermal mineral waters and curative mud deposits. There are more than 550 known sources with 1,600 hot springs. The hot spring with the highest temperature is Sapareva Banya (103°C). This is also the only geyser in Bulgaria and Continental Europe.

The country is known for excellent accommodation services and diverse programs that include massage, baths with mineral water, pearl baths, reflex therapy, medical exercises, balneological and medical cosmetics and many more.

Various tourism programmes combine these with visits of Bulgaria's cultural heritage, folkways, and traditional cuisine.

Come to Bulgaria and create your own story! Find new emotions, meet the locals and experience the Bulgarian culture and traditions!

10. URBAN WINE FEST PLOVDIV: A CELEBRATION OF LOCAL WINE CULTURE

October in Bulgaria is all about celebrating local wine and native grape varieties. For the past six years, 26 October has marked International Mavrud Day, honoring one of Bulgaria's most iconic grape sorts. This month offers opportunities to attend tastings at wine bars and shops, themed dinners across the country, online promotions, and masterclasses.

For the fourth year in a row, the Bulgarian Association of Wine Professionals (BAWP) leads the festivities with five Urban Wine Festivals in major cities. Among them is Urban Wine Fest Plovdiv, taking place **3–5 October 2025**, just ahead of the 9th UN Tourism Global Conference on Wine Tourism.

Set in Plovdiv's city center, the festival will feature wine bars, food stalls, caravans, and a vibrant music lineup. Guests are invited to taste over 40 wines made from 15 local grape varieties, available by the glass, bottle, or to-go.

In the spotlight this year is a dedicated regional stand, co-hosted by Plovdiv Wine Routes and BAWP, which will highlight wines from local producers and offer visitors a deeper dive into Plovdiv's unique terroir and styles.

The festival focuses on wines made from native and Bulgarian-developed varieties, such as Mavrud, Shiroka Melnik Vine, Red Misket, and cross-bred varieties like Rubin, Gergana, Kaylashki Misket, Melnik 55, and Sandanski Misket.

The event is held under the patronage of the Minister of Tourism, with official support from the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture, Plovdiv Municipality, and Mastercard. It is included in the Plovdiv 2025 Cultural Calendar and is financially supported by the municipality's Annual Tourism Development Program.

We are looking forward to welcoming you!