



#MONUMENTAL9
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 BALKAN MONUMENTAL TRAIL



Monumental 9

Tour 2

Brezovica-Kruševo-Niš

CLOSING CONFERENCE
 "MONUMENTAL 9" project
 22-23 September 2020 - Nikšić, Montenegro



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 BALKAN MONUMENTAL TRAIL

Adventure #Brezovica

On 28th of July LDA Kosovo started the tour 2 of the Monumental 9 project. This tour includes 3 different countries: Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia. The starting point was Kosovo.

In one day, tour in Brezovica, you can experience a mixture of cultural heritage details and beautiful nature. Sharr Mountain is treasured as the cradle of Kosovo spirituality, statehood and history.

Our tour started by visiting the **MONUMENT TO THE SHARR MOUNTAINS PARTISAN UNIT**. This memorial commemorates the soldiers and veterans of Sharr Mountain Partisan Detachments, who fought and struggled in this region during People's Liberation Struggle (1941-1945) against fascist occupation and oppression. The shape of the monument is meant to be reminiscent of a parent's bosom of chest, as in being a place of safety of refuge, as this location within the mountains was where the Sharr partisans sought refuge and rest from the forces they were fighting! The monument was created by 1964 by Svetomir Basara. Young people who were part of the tour liked very much the monument but they were a little bit concerned about the condition of the monument and the fact that it is not promoted as a cultural value.



It was very interesting to see that in this region live several ethnic groups, such as Albanians, Bosniaks, Gorani, Serbs etc. who speak different languages, practice different religions and have specific customs and beliefs. Such a culturally diverse population has enriched the architecture, arts, cuisine, clothing, music, which have been established in such a way that responds to the specific needs of each.

After having a wonderful time on the area where the monument is located, learned the history and meet local people, it was time to taste some of the local traditional food! We stopped at "Pine" hotel and restaurant surrounded by beautiful nature and fresh air. Knowing the fact that the food is grown and taken from local farmers made it more delicious.

Being surrounded by mountains, of course it gives you opportunity to explore and enjoy different recreations. The adventure continued from **SKI SLOPES OF BREZOVICA** and ended up

at the highest peak in Brezovica. Brezovica has a good climate and snow cover from November to May means it's ideal for skiing and makes it one of the most popular ski centers in Kosovo. In summer the fresh air and plentiful sunshine provide ample opportunities for hiking, foraging and mountaineering.



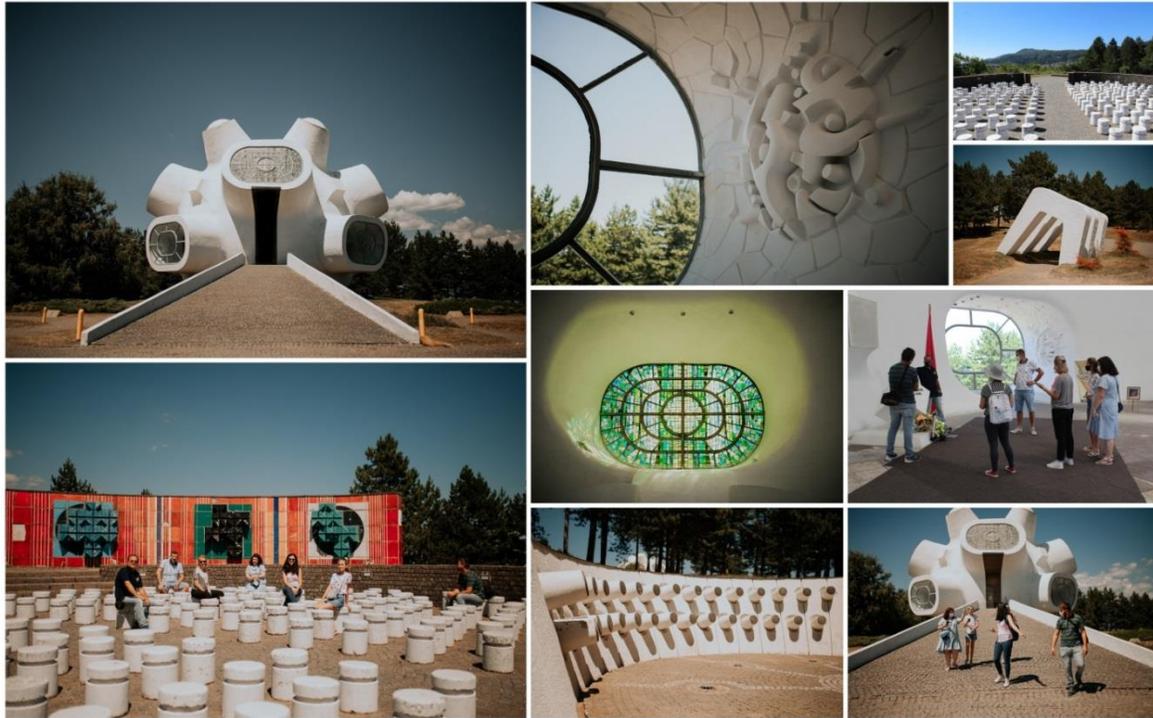
We returned to Peja with our minds filled with information and very beautiful views and of course relaxed.

For people who like adventure and one day full mixed activities this is the right starting point for a cross-border TOUR!

Adventure #Kruševo

We started our three-day adventure within the framework of the „Monumental 9“ tour in #Kruševo, North Macedonia. The first day of the journey begun in the evening with a short visit through downtown Kruševo and a beautiful diner at traditional cuisine restaurant.

On the 30th of August we started the tour with the monument **MAKEDONIUM (ILINDEN)** dedicated to all the fighters and revolutionaries who participated in the Ilinden uprising of 1903, as well as soldiers-partisans of the Macedonia National Liberation Struggle 1941-1944. Two hours later we had the chance to see the foundry which has the original tools used for casting bullets during the Ilinden uprising. It was hidden house in the basement, where people made the bullets. In the fireplace the cooper first was melted and then it was put in mold in different sizes to produce the bullets. Old women under the excuse to fill water, were transmitting the munition hidden under their traditional clothes. Nobody from the Ottomans suspected the old women. Another way of transmitting the munition was through wooden planks on which there was bread.



After the foundry we saw the stunning **CHURCH "SAINT NIKOLA"**. During an attack from Ottomans, one grenade hit the bell tower of this church and partly destroyed it. This church is also linked with Petar Filipovski - Garkata, famous wood carver who made the wall of icons. When he finished the last work of that wall he became blind. All icons are painted by Mihail and his sons Daniel and Nikola in 1884. In this church there is no fresco painting because it is considered as very expensive thing at that time.

Very close to the church we had our traditional lunch at "Krusevska Odaja" where we met the citizens and had a good time hearing their experiences and stories. There we tasted the traditional food from Krusevo: "Krusevo pie", "gravce tavce" prepared with macedonian beans, "pitulici" thin moist pancake fried on both sides with garlic and walnuts, "homemade sausage", and "celuvki" served with coffee.

Some few hundred meters down the street we visited the **GALLERY "MARTINOSKI"**, founded in 1968. It has several dozen works (drawings, oils, graphics) from several periods in the work of art of Nikola Martinoski. The amazing thing that we learned from our tour guide was that back in the days, Martinoski was fascinated by the figure of his mother, so that is why he had painted so many portraits of her. We also had the opportunity to see how looked the rooms in the small houses in Krusevo. We witness the creativity of the people from the past. We finished this long day fulfilled with impressions with the visit to the old school of Krusevo and for our luck we met "grandpa Mile" - the barrel-master of this town. The fifth generation of the family that has been crafting the handmade barrels. The ancestors of grandpa Mile and the ancestors of his neighbour who were blacksmiths were the ones who made the legendary cherry cannon.



The last day was dedicated to the **“TOSE PROESKI MEMORIAL HOUSE”**. The macedonian best singer who died in a car crash was from Krusevo. This building introduced us to his life from early age, how he grew up, how he started his music career, how he conquered the Balkan, his humanitarian participation and all the awards that he had. At the end of the day, we went to see the artificial **LAKE OF KRUSEVO**. You can enjoy fishing throughout the year except in June where the fish are spawning. However, you can also do kayaking or stand up paddle adventures. This trip in Krusevo was filled with marvelous memories, beautiful culture and traditions and phenomenal places. It is a must visit city in North Macedonia.

Adventure #Niš

As a part of the route of the Monumental 9 pilot tour 2, the team of LDA Central and Southern Serbia visited Niš and surrounding area. August the 1st was the perfect day for our adventure.

We started our day with the visit to **BUBANJ MEMORIAL COMPLEX**.

During the Second World War, from February 1942 to September 1944, the German Nazis shot at Bubanj, a hill in Niš, more than 10,000 inhabitants of Niš and Southeastern Serbia. This killing field was originally marked with a memorial pyramid in 1950 and a new monumental monument in memory of the victims, "Three Fists", the work of the Croatian sculptor Ivan Sabolić, was inaugurated on October 14, 1963.

About half a kilometer long memorial trail leads to the monumental complex where a visitor encounters a 23m long wall with a relief in marble which depicts the suffering during World War II, the fight against fascism, the victory and freedom. During the executions of the prisoners in Bubanj, many examples of defiance and courage by the prisoners were recorded. One of such inspiring examples was by a prisoner who raised his fist in front of the killing squad and greeted the freedom that would come. That event inspired the sculptor Ivan Sabolić to make a monument in the shape of three raised fists. Each of the three fists is of different sizes and they represent a symbol of a man's, woman's and child's hand defying the enemy paying respect to entire families that were shot here. This monument, which symbolizes resistance to fascism, keeps the memory of fascist terror, human suffering and the bravery of the antifascist's fighters for all the future generations.

In 1979, this memorial complex has been declared a cultural asset of exceptional importance. In 2004, a modern looking chapel made of glass and metal, the work of architect Aleksandar Buđevac from Niš, has been added to the memorial complex.

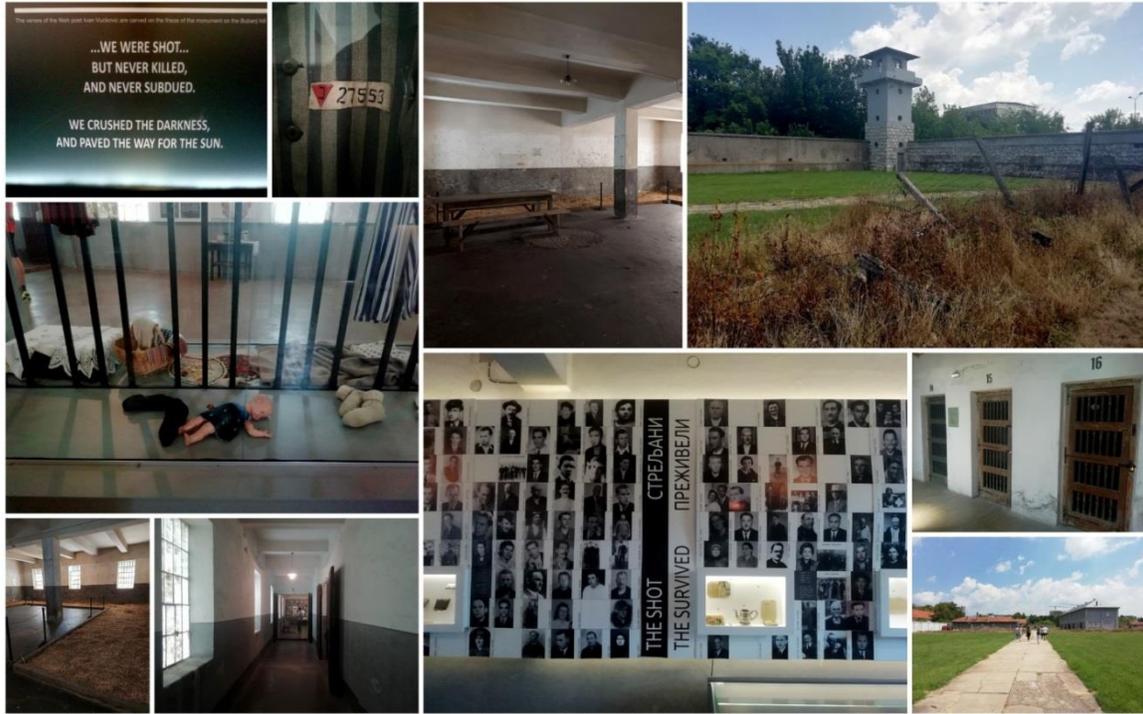


After Bubanj Memorial Park, continuing our tour, we paid a visit to the **RED CROSS CONCENTRATION CAMP - MEMORIAL COMPLEX "12TH FEBRUARY"**.

The Red Cross concentration camp was one of the German concentration camps in the territory of Serbia. It was founded in 1941, first as a temporary camp for prisoners of war of the Yugoslav Royal Army, and later for the rest of the Serbian, Roma and Jewish population many of whom were women and children. It is estimated that more than 30,000 people were detained in this concentration camp, while more than 10,000 of them were shot at Bubanj.

In February 1942, a group of 147 bare-handed prisoners attacked the guards and tried to escape from the camp. 105 of them succeeded in this attempt, while 42 of them left their lives on the camp wires. This was the first organized escape from a Nazi camp in enslaved Europe. This event accelerated the already prepared plan of the Nazis for the mass shootings that followed in retaliation.

Today, the main building of the concentration camp is a museum complex. There you can see solitary prison cells, rooms where groups of citizens were held captivated, as well as their authentic messages on the walls and personal items, such as letters and photographs, they took with them when they were taken prisoners.



Memorial park Bubanj and memorial complex "12th February" form a unique narrative of people's suffering, anti-fascist movement and fight for freedom. They provide unforgettable emotional and valuable learning experience and are mandatory stops for anyone visiting this part of Serbia.

The second part of our tour was dedicated to a more relaxing content. No matter what type of tourist you are, Niš has something interesting to offer to everyone, which is why you will want to come back at least once more. After tasting some of the local dishes, we spent the rest of our tour in Niš discovering only a fraction of the local attractions: **NIŠ FORTRESS, GALLERY OF CONTEMPORARY ART, STATUE OF ŠABAN BAJRAMOVIC, PROMENADE, CAFÉS AND RESTAURANTS BY THE RIVER NIŠAVA, A NEARBY SPA NIŠKA BANJA.**

