



**CAPITAL SUMMIT 2015**  
Summit of Capital City Mayors  
of Central and South East Europe

Туристичка  
организација  
Београда



Tourist  
Organization  
of Belgrade

## Welcome to Belgrade

Belgrade is the third largest city in South-eastern Europe after Istanbul and Athens. Just over 1,700,000 people live in it. Belgrade is the city of youth. More than 40% of its citizens are between 15 and 44 years of age.

Belgrade is constantly boiling; one can feel the life of a city at the border of two civilizations pulsing on the confluence of Sava and Danube, under Avala. The charm of Belgrade is simply irresistible. Belgrade is also worldwide famous for excellent food, extraordinary fun, unforgettable and unique nightlife and premium hospitality. All citizens of Belgrade love to talk of the spirit of the city. Open and ever ready for fun, many Belgraders will claim to be true hedonists – and many of them really are - knowing all there is to know about good food, wine and music.

The citizens of Belgrade like all sorts of things: pleasant conversations and long walks, they like being in motion and therefore the streets, walkways, cafes and restaurants are always filled with people. More importantly, Belgraders like everyone, so get to know Belgrade by getting to know Belgraders!

## Sightseeing programme 24 April 2015

### 10:00 – 11:00 "Belgrade Your host": Panoramic sightseeing

Get to know Belgrade better while enjoying the ride in an **open top bus**. During sightseeing tour, you will hear interesting stories, legends and anecdotes about Belgrade, its attractions and people who lived here. The tour is available in several languages - Serbian, English, French, German and Russian. Duration: 60 minutes.



SIEMENS





## **11:00 – 11:30 Belgrade Fortress**

Discover Belgrade walking the city streets and enjoying intriguing stories about the history, architecture and life of the city. Sights on the tour include the heart of old Belgrade and Belgrade Fortress, as well as the largest green belt in the city, Kalemegdan park.

Duration: 30 min.



## Belgrade Fortress history

*‘...I have discovered the most beautiful place since the days of yore, the great city of Belgrade...’* **Despot Stefan Lazarevic**

### BEGINNINGS OF SETTLEMENT

The strategically convenient location of the ridge at the confluence of the Sava and the Danube, which dominates the surroundings and enables control over the plain from its north and west side, had been inhabited since prehistoric times. Based on the archaeological findings at the Upper Town’s plateau of the Belgrade Fortress, the first settlement originates during the Neolithic period.

### SINGIDUNUM

Significant changes at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers occurred during the period following the unsuccessful march on Delphi in 279 BC. Upon their arrival at the territory surrounding the River Danube, the Celts – Scordisci, led by Batant, first came across the Illyrian tribe of Autariati and other Thracian and Illyrian tribes. The presence of the two different ethnic elements is indeed reflected in the town’s name: Singidunum is a compound of Thracian and Dacian tribal name Singi and Celtic word for town – dunum. After settling down, the Celts, who were great warriors, developed agriculture and pottery, and started making coins by the middle of the 2nd century BC. Relevant archaeological findings show that Celtic Singidunum was actually situated in the area of what is now Karaburma instead of the area of the Upper Town of the Belgrade Fortress.

### THE ROMAN MILITARY CAMP

The first Roman military camp was established at the beginning of the 1st century, most likely between the year 6 and 11 AD, as a response to repeated attacks of the barbarian tribes against the ridge over the confluence of the Sava and the Danube. At the beginning of the 2nd century, Singidunum became the base of the IV Flavia legion. This legion was also called Felix, meaning lucky, due to its war successes. The first Roman fortification was a palisade, soon after a military camp – castrum was built. The castrum had a rectangular basis, 560 metres long and approximately 350 metres wide. It was situated in the area of today’s Upper Town with a part of Kalemegdan Park up to the Pariska Street. Parts of Roman ramparts with remains of the four-angled tower have been excavated under the layers of later fortifications and can be seen today at the northwest wall of the Upper Town. During the reign of Hadrian (117-138), Singidunum had a status of a municipium ‘the settlement with a restricted self-governance’. The status of a colony, i.e. a town enjoying complete Roman civic rights, was obtained between the years 211 and 287. After the partition of the Roman Empire in the year 395, Singidunum was included in the Eastern Roman Empire- Byzantium.

## MIGRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE AND BYZANTINE SINGIDUNUM

Situated at the crossroads, Singidon – as the Byzantines called the city at the confluence of the Sava and the Danube – was an unavoidable place for many people who were passing by or staying in during the Great Migration. Under the leadership of Attila, the Huns broke through in the Balkans in the year 411, destroying a number of towns, Singidon being among them. After Attila's death, the Huns' state disintegrated, while the area of Singidon was settled by the tribes of Eastern Goths, Gepidaes, Sarmatians. The leader of the Ostrogoths, Theodoric conquered Singidon in the year 471 and had rule for 17 years, until his departure for Italy. The Byzantine emperor Anastasius I allowed the tribe of Heruli to settle the territory of Singidon. Being aware of the importance of the border towns in the struggle against barbarians, the emperor Iustinian I (527-565) started with the renewal of Singidon just before the beginning of the year 535. Procopius, Iustinian's court writer, noted that the emperor surrounded the town with strong ramparts turning it into a 'city of great glory'.

## SLAVIC BELGRADE

Byzantine emperor and historian Constantine Porphyrogenitus wrote that the Serbs got to Singidunum on the way to the Balkans. The whiteness of the limestone ridge, with the remains of early Byzantine fortress built from the stone of the same geological composition and colour, had clearly stood out from the rest of the surrounding, which clearly determined the Slavic name of the town: White Town – Beograd. There is no certain data when the Slavs built their own town, but it is believed it occurred between somewhere the 8th and 9th century. The Slavic name of the town, Beograd, was recorded for the first time on 16th April 878 in the letter of the Pope John VIII to the Bulgarian prince Boris. The Pope mentioned the Slav Sergius as the head of the Belgrade episcopate.

## THE BYZANTINES, HUNGARIANS, BULGARIANS AND THE CRUSADERS IN BELGRADE

At the beginning of the ninth century, the region underwent major change. The Avar khanate disappeared from the historical stage and Frankish rule was established in parts of Pannonia. To the south, a Bulgarian state developed, which expands toward the northwest in the second and third decade of the ninth century. Under its authority, at that time, comes and the Belgrade area. For Bulgarian state the position of Belgrade in the border area with the Franks, certainly had great strategic importance.

During the 11th and 12th century Belgrade was under the Byzantine rule. In these turbulent times, Belgrade was destroyed and renewed more than once. Numerous different crusader armies passed over the territory of Belgrade several times. After the crusader's invasions in 1096 and 1147, in the Third crusade in 1189, Belgrade was the centre of Frederick I Barbarossa's crusader army. Re-establishing the border at the Danube during the reign of Manuel I Comnenus (1143-1180) the Byzantine Empire showed interest in Belgrade by renewing the town's fortifications. Several towers and walls were built following the principles of Byzantine military architecture, as well as the deltoid castle in the Upper town,



which was 135 metres long and 60 metres wide. During the entire 13th century Belgrade was, apart smaller interruptions, in the hands of Hungarians.

## SERBIA AND BELGRADE

In 1282, Serbian king Dragutin gave up his throne in favour of his younger brother Milutin at the council in Dezevo, and got a part of Serbian country to govern. Dragutin was married to Katarina, the daughter of Hungarian king Stephen V, from whom he got Macva with Belgrade to rule over in 1284. Historical records about Belgrade in this period are very poor. It is known for sure that the Byzantine princess and Serbian queen Simonida visited Belgrade, most probably in 1315. On that occasion, Simonida made an obeisance to the icon of Holy Mother, which was considered to be miraculous and the greatest sanctity ever since 1070s. Belgrade remained Serbian until Dragutin's death in 1316. In March that year, king Milutin took Dragutin's region and held it until 1319, when Hungarians attacked and conquered Belgrade. Although the later Serbian rulers, tzar Stefan Dusan and duke Lazar fought against Hungarians on several occasions, the situation had not changed significantly – Belgrade remained in the Hungarian hands until the beginning of the 15th century.

## BELGRADE – THE CAPITAL OF THE SERBIAN STATE

After the battle of Angora in 1402, Stefan Lazarevic, the son of duke Lazar, was given a title of despot by the Byzantine Emperor, while Hungarian king Zsigmund gave him Belgrade to rule over. Thus, in 1404, Belgrade became, in a diplomatic way, for the first time the capital of the Serbian state, and therefore its military, economical and cultural centre. Since the town was, according to the Constantine the Philosopher, 'ruined and uncared for', the despot began renewing old and building the new fortifications, as well as the town walls and towers. Belgrade was divided in two parts: the Upper and the Lower Town. The town was surrounded by double walls with towers and trench from the mainland. In the Upper Town, at the place of the former Byzantine castel, despot built a castle, with especially strong walls with towers and a trench, and the entrance over a drawbridge. There was a court inside the castle, and the two towers – Nebojsa and Bojsa, houses of the aristocracy, chapel, library and a treasury. During the reign of despot Stefan Lazarevic, Belgrade enjoyed both economic and cultural prosperity. After the death of despot Stefan in 1427, Belgrade again fell in the hands of Hungarians, who started to enhance and fortify the fortress, due to the more frequent attacks of the Turkish army.



## TURKISH BELGRADE



Author: Unknown

Belgrade was defended against Turkish attacks for the first time in 1440. Sultan Mehmed II, the conqueror of Constantinople, undertook the Great campaign against Belgrade in 1456. After great battles on the rivers, with outstanding Serbs- 'sajkasi', and on the ground, Belgrade managed to defend and became 'Antemurale Christianitatis', the wall of Christianity. During the third siege of Belgrade in 1521, Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent succeeded to conquer the town. At that time, Belgrade became a very important stronghold for their further movement towards the heart of Europe. The town field in front of the Fortress was named Kalemegdan (kale – town, megdan – field), and the hill on which the Fortress was built, was called 'ficir bair' – hill for contemplation. From this period, only two of many Turkish buildings at the Belgrade Fortress are preserved: the fountain of Mehmed-pasha Sokolovic (second half of the 16th century) and the tomb (turbeh) of Damad Ali-Pasha (18th century).

## BAROQUE BELGRADE



Author: Johan Baptista Gump

After almost two centuries of Turkish rule, Austria began to rule over Belgrade in 1688 and at once started to build a modern fortress based on the design of engineer Andrea Cornaro. However, the Turks took over the town in 1690. During the siege, a Turkish bomb hit one of the towers in the Lower Town. The fire caught gunpowder storage and the explosion was so strong that it completely destroyed the castle of despot Stefan Lazarevic, with casualties of over one thousand people. The Turks worked on restoring fortifications guided by Cornaro's design, as he joined their service.



Author: Mancini From 1717 to 1739

Austria took over Belgrade and again began new constructions of walls bastions and earthwork. Colonel Nicolaus Doxat De Morez managed the works. The Belgrade Fortress became one of the strongest military strongholds in Europe. However, according to the Belgrade Peace Treaty in 1739, Turkey got the town without fight. Following a clause of this peace treaty, Austria was obliged to destroy all newly built fortifications. Once again Austria succeeded in taking over Belgrade in October 1789. By the Treaty of Svishtova in 1791, Austrians left Belgrade, and the janissaries were forbidden to enter the Belgrade pashadom.

#### BELGRADE FORTRESS IN THE MODERN TIMES



Author: Johan Georg Fridrih Popel

At the beginning of the 19th century, after the murder of the commander of Belgrade town, Hadji Mustaf – Pasha, janissaries controlled the town and the neighbouring villages. The terror of janissaries and the events around the ‘Decapitation of the dukes’ led to national awakening and the First Serbian Uprising in 1804, headed by Karadjordje Petrovic. The rebels had taken the town in 1806 and the Fortress in 1807. After the debacle of the Uprising in 1813, the Turks ruled over the Fortress again until they finally left Belgrade. The Turkish commander of Belgrade handed over the keys of the town to prince Mihajlo Obrenovic at Kalemegdan on 6/19 April 1867. Serbian soldiers replaced Turkish military guards and the flag of Serbia was raised next to the Turkish one. After this period, the importance of the Fortress as the military stronghold decreased.



Author: Popel Johan Georg

The first works on arranging the town field Kalemegdan started in 1869. During March 1891, the pathways were cut through and the trees were planted; in 1903 the Little Staircase was built, based on the project of Jelisaveta Nacic, the first woman architect in Serbia, while the Big Staircase, designed by architect Aleksandar Krstic, was built in 1928. All old buildings were ruined in the First World War, while the fortifications were considerably damaged. The park got its present appearance between the two world wars. The promenade along the Sava bank was made together with the Big Staircase on the road to the Kings Gate and newly built statue 'Victor'. The first archaeological research started in this period and is still ongoing. The Belgrade Fortress and Kalemegdan were placed under the state protection in 1946.

### **BELGRADE IN THE THIRD MILLENIUM**

The life at the ridge over the confluence of the Sava and the Danube has lasted for over two millenniums. Six centuries elapsed since Belgrade became the capital for the first time in its history. The core of today's two million agglomerations is the Belgrade fortress and the Kalemegdan Park. They form a unique spatial entity with clearly visible remains of the Fortress divided into Upper and Lower Town, with two distinct styles – elements of medieval architecture combined with dominant baroque solutions typical for the 18th century. The Kalemegdan Park, Large and Little, developed in the area that once was the town field, are the place of rest and joy. The Belgrade Fortress and the Kalemegdan Park together represent a cultural monument of exceptional importance, the area where various sport, cultural and arts events take place, and are fun and joy for all generations of Belgraders and numerous visitors of the city.