

普罗夫迪夫 赴一场玫瑰之约



夏日最后的玫瑰独自绽放着，
所有昔日动人的同伴都已凋落残逝，
身旁没有同类的花朵，没有半个玫瑰苞，
映衬她的红润，分担她的忧愁。

——《夏日最后的玫瑰》



大马士革玫瑰

普罗夫迪夫是欧洲最古老的城市之一，有超过六千年的历史，比罗马、雅典和君士坦丁堡的年代还要久远。罗马帝国时期是普罗夫迪夫历史上最为辉煌的时刻，当时修建了大量公共建筑、教堂、公共浴室和剧院。如今，老城里仍然可以看到大量罗马时代建筑的遗址，尤其是罗马风格的露天圆形剧场，在这里可以远眺普罗夫迪夫新城以及远方的山峦。

每年6月去普罗夫迪夫，不仅可以感受保加利亚的夏日风情，稍稍移步，还能赶上传统的玫瑰花节。北边的卡赞勒克，地处巴尔干山脉南麓，气候温和，雨量充沛、土壤肥沃。整片的玫瑰花在这里竞相吐艳，在碧绿的枝叶中，各色玫瑰随风摇摆，散发醉人的芳香。这里是整个国家重要的玫瑰生产基地，拥有世界上最大的玫瑰种植园，世界近四分之三以上的玫瑰品种，以及330年的玫瑰油制造史，这里生产的玫瑰油价格比黄金还高出一半。

当地在每年6月的第一个周末举行盛大的玫瑰节，庆祝玫瑰的收获。人们天不亮就从全国各地甚至周边邻国驱车赶往卡赞勒克。玫瑰节的第一项活动是去郊外的玫瑰园采摘玫瑰，人们把花瓣倒在地上，少男少女们则围着花瓣堆跳啊唱啊，祈求来年的丰收。

玫瑰花像粉色的精灵遍布田野，或已绚烂绽放，或仍含苞待放。阳光还没有越过山峦，花田还弥漫着淡淡的或绿或粉的静谧雾气，当地花农热情地拿出自己制作的夹有保加利亚乳酪的面包请大家品尝，置身花田之中，呼吸着淡粉色的香甜玫瑰气息，一边喝着咖啡，一边品尝特色面包，那种享受难以言表！

当阳光洒向玫瑰花田的时候，一切变得生动活泼起来，玫瑰叶、玫瑰花、花农们都染上了淡淡的金黄色，玫瑰的香甜气息也变得更加浓郁起来，然而却一点都不甜腻，反而让人沉浸其中，觉得人都轻盈起来，忍不住想翩翩起舞！

这里的玫瑰属低矮灌木，又枝丛生，枝上多刺，花朵特多。人在玫瑰院间行走，高的枝条仅及腰，矮的着地而生。花色粉红，花朵略大于我国的蔷薇，直径约4-5厘米，但花瓣比蔷薇多。摘一片花瓣，捏在指间，用力一捻手指会粘乎乎的，且香留良久。玫瑰油正是从这种花瓣中

提取的。据当地的花农介绍，为了提取一公斤玫瑰油，需要两千公斤玫瑰花瓣。正因为这样，在国际市场上，玫瑰油的价格比黄金还高。玫瑰油不能直接涂抹在身上，只有稀释加工后制成玫瑰香水才能使用。而保加利亚的玫瑰油绝大部分出口法国。

节日中最精彩的部分是选出本年度的玫瑰皇后，当选后要进行巡游，前三名美丽动人的玫瑰皇后穿着玫瑰色的服装，头上戴着玫瑰花，乘坐花车在游行队伍的最前列，向“玫瑰国”的臣民们挥手致意。后面是各行各业（从学生到演员到花农）身穿特色服装的游行队伍，表演着保加利亚的民族舞蹈。置身于游行队伍中，被花农们的喜悦之情所感染，

心中也充满了幸福之情，这一场的玫瑰之约终于完美！

Tips

1. 从普罗夫迪夫到卡赞勒克102.5公里，自驾需1.5小时左右。
2. 2017年卡赞勒克玫瑰节时间：2017年6月3日，前后要持续一周左右。期间很多的庆祝活动，卡赞勒克城市广场每天有来自世界各地的民族歌舞表演，晚上还有演唱会。



采玫瑰的少女

玫瑰节游行，身穿保加利亚传统服装



采摘中的玫瑰



玫瑰节特色美食

说到当地特色美食的话，不得不提到葡萄酒和酸奶。不要小看当地葡萄酒的品质，其中加入了玫瑰精油，在世界范围内比肩法国拉菲，其浓郁甘香深受爱酒之人的垂怜。而当地的酸奶就更有名，在各种菜肴里都会见到，就如在撒上胡椒的肉上涂酸奶，再配上辛辣美味的杂汤以及浇上柠檬汁的沙拉，酸甜咸辣的滋味冲刷舌尖。

Plovdiv: Attending an Appointment with Roses



*It's the last rose of summer, Left blooming alone,
All her lovely companions Are faded and gone.
No flower of her kindred, No rose bud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes, Or give sigh for sigh.*

— The Last Rose of Summer



A Tractor Full of Roses

As one of the oldest cities in Europe, Plovdiv has a history of more than 6,000 years, making it older than Rome, Athens and Istanbul. In its most glorious period during the Roman Empire, Plovdiv was home to many remarkable feats of public architecture, including churches, public bathhouses and theatres. Presently, in the old city visitors can still find ruins of such Roman period architecture. In particular, standing upon the Roman style outdoor amphitheatre, visitors can gaze upon the distance, seeing the new city of

Plovdiv as well as the far away mountain ranges.

A visit to Plovdiv in June each year brings not only the feelings of summer in Bulgaria, but also the traditional Rose Festival. Nearby to the north lies Kazanlak, located in the southern foothill of the Balkan Mountains. Kazanlak's climate is mild, with sufficient rain and fertile soil. Row upon row of roses burst into full bloom, as if competing with one another. Amidst the green twigs and leaves, colourful roses sway with the wind and emit a charming

fragrance. Not only the most significant rose production area in the country, Kazanlak is also home to the largest rose plantation in the world, with more than three quarters of the world's rose varieties present, and a 330-year history of making rose essential oil. The rose essential oil produced here is about 1.5 times the price of gold by weight.

In the first weekend of June every year, a grand Rose Festival is held in the local area to celebrate the harvest of roses. Before daybreak, people from all across the country, and even neighbouring countries, have already departed on the drive

to Kazanlak. The Rose Festival's first activity is to pick roses at the suburban rose plantation. Near the roses gathered on the ground, young men and women dance, sing and pray for a good harvest in the coming year.

Like pink angels, roses are spread all across the fields, some in full bloom while others still budding. As the early morning sun has not yet broken over the mountains, the rose fields are filled with a tranquil light green or pink mist. Local rose farmers enthusiastically offer

their home-made bread and Bulgarian cheese to the visitors. While in the rose fields, visitors and locals alike breathe in the sweet aroma of the pink roses, drink coffee and taste the local bread. Such an experience leads to a sense of enjoyment beyond words.

As the sunshine sprinkles over the rose fields, things become more lively. Everything, including the rose leaves, rose petals and even the farmers themselves are showered in a gentle gold colour. Even the sweet aroma of the roses turns more intense, yet does not become overly sweet. Instead, steeping in such aroma, one's entire body feels light, almost unable to resist from the rose's graceful dance.

As short shrubs, the roses here feature twigs. They are thorny and yield a large amount of flowers. When walking on the paths in the rose fields, you will find the tall branches touch your waist while the short ones crawl along the ground. Pink in colour and around 4-5 centimetres in diameter, the roses are slightly larger than the variety of roses commonly found in China. They also have more petals. Squeezing a petal with your fingers, you will discover a sticky feeling and lasting fragrance. It is from such petals that

the rose oil is extracted. The local rose farmers say that two tons of rose petals are needed to produce just one kilogram of rose oil. Thus, in the international market, rose oil costs more than gold. Rose oil should not be directly applied to the skin, as it is then diluted and processed into perfumes. Most of rose oil produced in Bulgaria is exported to France.

The festival reaches its climax when it comes the time to choose the Rose Queen of the Year, and following the election comes a lively parade. The top three beautiful Rose Queens, wearing rose costumes and rose crowns, sit on the rose chariot at the front of the parade and wave their hands to the subjects of the "Rose Kingdom". This is followed by a parade of people from all walks of life (from students to performers to rose farmers) wearing special costumes and performing the national dances of Bulgaria. Witnessing the parade, any participant will be touched by

the joyful rose farmers, and also feel a strong sense of happiness. The parade brings this appointment with roses to a perfect conclusion.



The Lady Behind the Rose Head Dress

Tips

1. The distance from Plovdiv to Kazanlak is 102.5 kilometres, with a total drive time of about 1.5 hours.
2. The 2017 Kazanlak Rose Festival will begin on 3 June. It will last about one week, during which there will be a great deal of celebration. On the urban square of Kazanlak each day during the festival is filled with national singing and dancing performances of various countries and regions from around the world. Music concerts are held at night.



Special Rose Festival Delicacies

When it comes to local delicacies, the wine and yoghurt are not to be missed. Never underestimate the quality of the local wine. With refined rose oil added, the wines produced are on equal footing with French Lafite. With intense sweetness and fragrance, they are well known among wine enthusiasts. The locally produced yoghurts are also very famous and are found in a wide variety of dishes. For example, yoghurt is used in various local classics including peppered steak with yoghurt, spicy local soup and salad with lemon juice. Incorporating yoghurt, the combined taste of such dishes is sour, sweet, salty and spicy, definitely a feast to the taste buds.



Roses and Dancing



A Rose atop an Instrument