

Memories

- met Josh and his guitar
- he played guitar for us
- can't get tix in Belgrad
- wander aimlessly for ATM
- (crazy slums coming into Belgrad)
- Torn down building and nice building
- Try Irish pub, then casino, then finally ATM!
- buy tix & go back to pub
- Serbian beer flaming shots w/ coffee beans
- goal: drink as much as possible in ½ hour (note to self/Kate: foolish)
- girl says "Pivo"
- meet Serbian field hockey players
- trashed conductor
- strange guy from Kosovo
- 3 liters of beer on the train
- Kosovo guy hits on Kate and tells Nina she's really fat
- Kate puke a lot
- old guy doesn't sleep, protects himself from puke instead
- we don't sleep much, train is really really crowded
- arrive in Sofia
- call Ben & get coffee + \$
- wander w/ Josh to find tourist info, don't find, only map.
- leave anyways, get Kontrollled on tram
- get to bus to Dupnica just before it leaves (Josh stays)
- get off in Dupnica & catch another bus just in time to Rila (not the monastery ☹)
- confused and flustered when we don't get to monastery
- ask directions three times to ХОТЕЛ
- mean receptionist
- strange celebration in РИЛА
- lots of hamburgers w/out buns
- shopska salata
- waitress with short skirt and fishnets + tennis shoes
- noisy kids in ХОТЕЛ
- bus to РИЛА МОHECTИP
- MEKИЦИ & KAFЕ !
- approach random tourists for more info, no luck ☹
- wander off into woods
- meet guy coming from РИБНИ ЕЗЕРА, he said it would be unlocked so we go for it, despite warnings of rain!! & no idea how far
- make good time until end with water & meadow uphill
- very cold river crossing
- flooded meadows approach (wet feet cold)
- (Bulgarian brothers have very limited English)

- good tea, good view
- hang out in heated room
- find out other huts won't have food, so we can't do a loop, have to turn back to monastery.
- offered vodka before bed.
- Kate sleeps instead (so guys don't get action)
- Nina drinks several shots & has funny awkward conversation
- НАЗДРАВЕ! (cheers)
- can't name is only "cat" (in БЪЛГАРСКИ)
- communist blankets!!
- excessively hot room, can't sleep
- sleep poorly, skip morning day hike → monastery
- river jumping
- stop for lunch and excessively good homemade baklava : w/ poppy seeds
- eat another donut, and tea, (even though we thought we were full from Baklava)
- unheated room in monastery
- ancient wooden floors, w/trap door! (4 beds)
- bread & cheese & groceries
- art school kids ask about our card game, large audience
- monk hitting board
- Kiwi woman
- early to bed
- morning: wait & wait & wait for donuts & coffee, but it never opens ☹
- Dogs bothering us
- eat @ ПЕЦОПАХТ ПИЛА instead, good yogurt w/ honey
- of course the bakery is open when we come out ☹
- start walking uphill
- VERY STEEP!
- dog is following/leading us
- cross some sketchy now
- roughly follow ridgeline
- big hill/mountain
- 1500 meter ups – nettles
- @ the top (3.75 hours later) see a big storm w/ thunder & lightning where we want to go ☹
- very sad & disappointed
- waited to see where storm would go, but when it started raining we had to make a decision – safest to go down
- part way down we look up to see dark grey/black clouds on the ridge we'd been sitting on
- "Lány" (the dog) brought us dead lizard & deer hooves
- long way back down, sore knees
- make it down just after donut place closes, sajnos ☹

- get another room – Nina has to wait for priest to stop praying, then he rips us off (but we were ripping him off – (going to hell, all three of us ☺))
- eat bread & cheese for dinner
- restaurant, spicy Bulgarian tea + pancakes for dessert.
- finished book, stretched, & went to sleep.
- got bus for cheaper on way back to СОФИЯ via ДУПНИЦА
- confused woman on the bus
- lots of time to kill in Sofia
- caught trams successfully (random kids helps us)
- get coffee
- look like dirty bums for the afternoon, get in the way of people’s pictures
- raining --> tree, mall
- use last leva for ТР, 4 СТРАДИНКИ short
- sit by mosque
- people make fun of Nina’s braids
- get dinner and fagyi @ supermarket
- look for place to change leva to \$ for БЕОГРАД
- got “smells-like-garbage” drink with last 34 str.
- so disgusting – give it to a dog, blech
- go to train station, catch train to Beograd
- what does “ДРУГИ” mean in Bulgarian?
- women trafficking drugs????
- very sketchy, police, etc.
- sleep two in a ‘bed’
- spread out, squish back
- arrive in БЕОГРАД 6am
- change money
- get reservations, coffee, pastries, short 18 dinaris
- get on train to Budapest
- more sketchy border behavior
- smuggling at СУБОТИЦА
- he brings wireless drill w/ him, draws the curtains, unscrews part of the train’s ceiling & puts boxes of cigarettes and bottles of alcohol into the ceiling. Comes back later to add what looks like a bottle of water!
- has to go through the same process over the border to retrieve goods. Smuggling successful!
- make it safe and sound back to Budapest