

Welcome Pat!

Hi Pat and welcome to Belgrade. We hope you enjoy your first trip to the city, and getting to know some of the finer points of Balkan cuisine. Belgrade (Beograd in Serbian, which literally means 'White City') frequently surprises visitors with the warmth of its residents and the liveliness of its social scene. Despite the troubles the city has suffered over the years, and perhaps even because of them, life on the streets remains vibrant and earnest, and

the cafes and restaurants pretty much always packed out.

The old adage that a vegetarian might starve on the streets of Belgrade is almost true: it's a fact that the pride of most restaurant kitchens is the meat grill that turns out all manner of marinated and barbequed carnivorous delight, but the city also has a pretty strong fish tradition and a strong line in home-style foods – stews, bakes and the like – that are very frequently

composed of vegetables and grains.

If you've visited any other Balkan lands as far as Turkey, you'll notice some definite recurring themes, especially foods that were put in place at the time of the Ottoman Empire: stuffed vegetable dishes and bakery delights reign supreme and still maintain their old Turkish names, while a miniature shot of potent Turkish coffee remains a firm favourite with people in the city.

YOUR Eatinerary is made up of our suggestions for:

breakfast

lunch

dinner

dessert

tips

markets

Belgrade's most popular breakfast destination is the local bakery where folk snap up bureks, pitas and pretzels, washed down with a cup of drinking yoghurt, on their way to work. People with a more leisurely morning schedule might take a seat at a café for a Turkish coffee and a pastry.

Since you're staying in the thick of the city centre, you won't need to go far for your morning fuel, since Knez Mihailova and its surrounding streets are thick with coffee shops and cafes. The closest place to you that we would recommend would be **Mali Princ**, in the square just

breakfast

opposite the opera house. This place serves up some of our favourite coffee in the city and is a great place to sit and watch the world go by.

To start your day with a more old-school kick, head over to the timeless hangout of the city's well-to-do, the **Hotel Moskva**, where Turkish coffee and snacks are served in the opulent restaurant lobby, or outside on the street terrace.

For something more substantial, and for a typical old Serbian breakfast dish, hop in a cab and take a ride across town to **Mala Fabrika Ukusa**, a stylish little joint has a great contemporary Serbian menu around the clock, but does a particularly

The flavour factory: Mala Fabrika Ukusa



delicious and otherwise hard-to-find 'popara', a steamed bread dish with cheese.

Lunch time is the best time of day to take advantage of the city's outdoor venues and views. The action starts at 2pm and though many office workers will try and stretch their hour into the early afternoon, we advise that you be seated by 3:30.

lunch

One of our favourite restaurants in the city – and the favourite of our parents before us – is **Klub Knjevnika** ('The Writers' Club') that's been serving great traditional Serbian food in a gorgeous garden atmosphere since as far back as anyone can remember. Book ahead on a nice day and get a seat in the garden where you can feast on local specialties like 'sarme', stuffed cabbage or chard leaves, similar to dolma. The lamb stew here is also fantastic as is the veal, which is grilled to perfection.

You mentioned wanting a table with a view, for which we'd like to send you to **Kalemegdanska**

Terasa, a restaurant right in the middle of the park that's always been popular with locals in the city and has recently undergone a facelift. From here you can look out over the Danube – and, if you crane your neck, down into the appetite-killing zoo below – and work your way through the likes of Istrian Fuzi (a type of pasta from Croatia) with black truffles, or another type of local pasta called 'mlinci' that usually served with strips of turkey meat in a very filling cream sauce. Also keep an eye out for the 'mućkalica', a pork stew with peppers, onions and tomatoes.

However, for your interest in more traditional Serbian cuisine, you'll love a meal at **Orašac**, where you can go for either lunch or dinner. Go hungry, though, as there's an epic menu to work through here. Start as the Serbs do with some ham ('pršut') and local cheese ('sir'), or even a plate of 'Gravče na Tavče', which are delicious slow-cooked beans, served cold. Move onto some stuffed peppers (which should just be coming



Sharpen your pencils for the Writers' Club

into season when you get there) before hitting the meat course, hard. At Orašac you can have your beef, lamb or veal grilled, roasted or stewed, according to how you like it. We personally love the lamb goulash and the bean crock ('pasulj') with sausages and ribs as well as the roasted pork.

A load of old cobbles: a Skadarlija evening



Style over substance

If you're willing to trade in the quality of your food for sheer atmosphere of an evening, then head to **Skadarlija**, an historic little cobbled street in the centre of town that has tried to preserve the city's old tradition of shoulder to shoulder kafanas, all of which are usually rocking with traditional musicians putting out tunes from times past that will put many a tear in a local's eye. The area has become a bit touristy of late, though it's not lost its charm. All the restaurants here are pretty much on a par with one another, so we'd suggest following your spidey sense and going for the one with the best atmosphere at that moment.

Another very scenic part of town to grab lunch or dinner is the newly-refurbished Pristanište, the old docks close to Brankov Most (bridge). It's a great walk right by the river here, and these places are positively hopping at night, though the food – foreign and hybrid cuisines – is unremarkable. The best of the bunch are **Iguana** and **Komunale**, which will nonetheless require reservations.

tips

dinner

Sit down for dinner before 9pm and you might find yourself alone in the restaurant. Serbs generally like to make a big deal of dinner, which will be a merry, drawn out affair punctuated with rakija, meat and, at the best of times, song. The best place to make the most of all three is the **Kafana**, an institution that provides a raucous evening's food and drink, usually accompanied by music.

For excellent Serbian food dripping with tradition, head to **Znak Pitanja** (The Question Mark), one of the oldest eating establishments in the city that's been standing for almost 200 years now. The fare is standard grill, but we always make sure to order a 'pasulj' (bean crock) when we're there too and we love their 'Ćevapčići na kaymaku' which are traditional meat balls cooked with kaymak, a very creamy kind of cheese. Dodge the waiters' suggestions of ample appetisers for your group as these are usually huge amounts of ham and cheese that really drive the price up. On most evenings there'll be a live band playing 'Starogradske Pesme', which is a true national nostalgia.



Sing while you chow down at Znak Pitanja

All that barbequed flesh occasionally calls for a break, and luckily Belgrade is well-equipped for such an emergency. Since you like fish, we'd send you to **Mornar** or the nearby **Polet**. Both are very down-to-earth, no-frills fish places that serve up excellent 'riblja čorba', a specialty fish soup and 'girice', fried whitebait. For a high-end fish experience that we would really call the best in town, we suggest you try **Cafe Cafe**. The restaurant has its own dedicated fishermen in Split down in Croatia that send their catch up daily so the fish or the day is always guaranteed fresh. The 'prstaci', date mussels, are also a great appetizer, as is the seafood risotto. Wash it all down with their special 'biska', a herby rakija specially imported from Hvar.

For a scenic evening by the water, we recommend taking a cab over to Zemun, an old neighborhood on the banks of the Danube, at the other end of New Belgrade.



Fish on the Danube at Šaran

Life here is village-like and it's great to stroll by the side of the river before or after your meal. Look out for **Šaran**, the famous fish restaurant here, that has a great line in everything from shellfish to catch of the day, as well as something on the side for those Serbs who can't stand to be without meat. Be sure to get a table on the terrace here for views of the Danube while you eat.



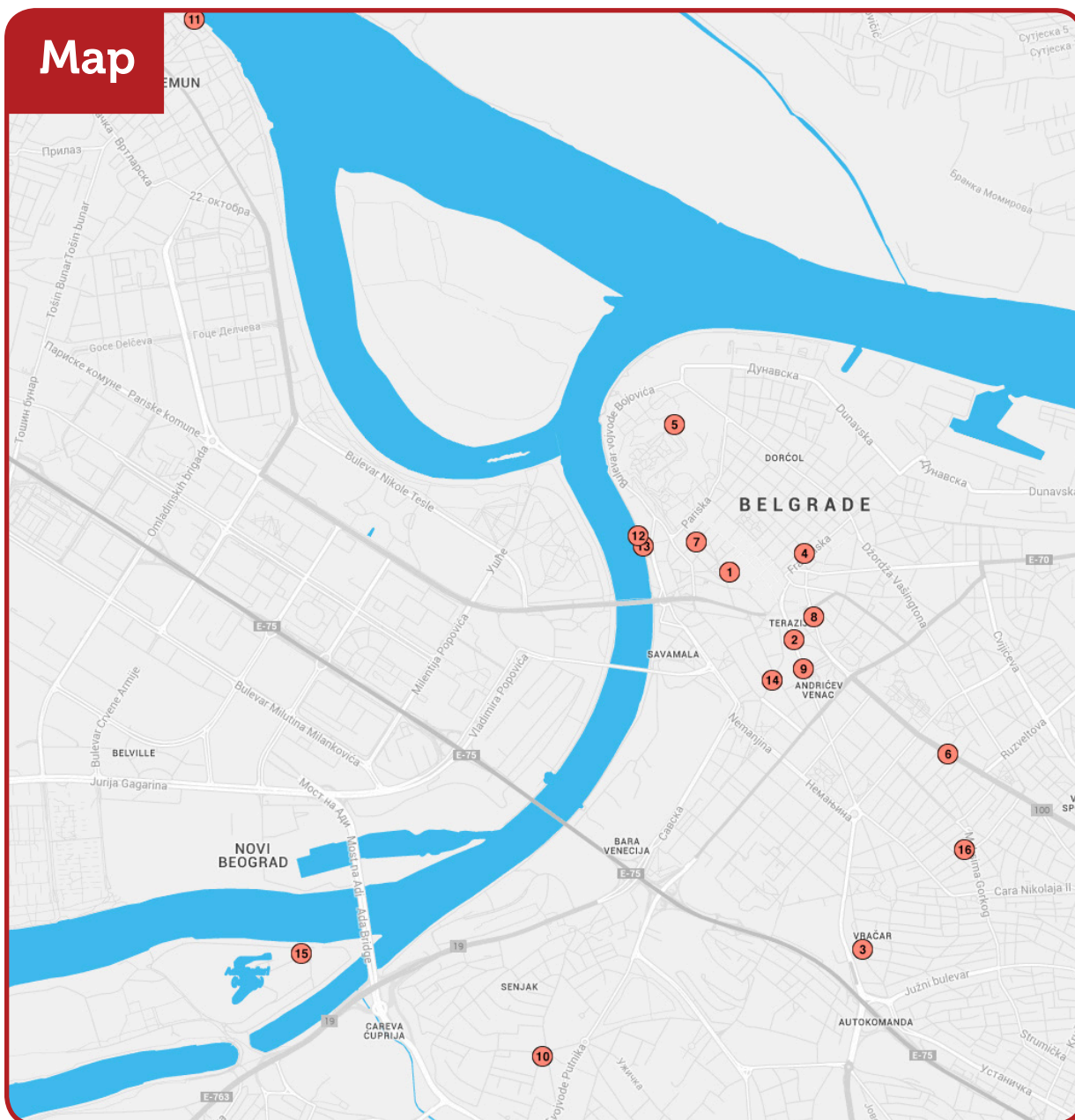
The autumn pepper rush

Pick a peck of pickled peppers

September is pepper season in Belgrade, which is when you can barely spit in the city without hitting a pepper of some variety. Locals buy literally sackloads from the market and spend lazy Sunday afternoons in the city's peripheral parks roasting them over impromptu barbeques in order to preserve them for the winter. It's a real family event. As such, it's the best time to order a roasted pepper side at restaurants ('pečene paprike') as well as the spicy ones ('ljute') which are all roasted, peeled and then soaked in olive oil.

markets

Map



Orientation

Belgrade is a city of two very distinctive parts: the old part of town and New Belgrade. The latter was built just after WW2 in a bid to extend and modernize the city. However, it wasn't really made to last and today this residential area is a rapidly aging eyesore compared to its architecturally richer, older counterpart across the Sava River. The Kalemegdan Fortress, which dates back to Roman times, lies on the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers offering stunning views to strolling locals who then extend their promenade down the city's main pedestrian drag, Knez Mihailova.



Listings

(1) Mali Princ \$

Obilićev venac 26
+38111 2635303
<http://www.maliprinc.com>

(2) Hotel Moskva \$\$ ☼

Terazije 20
+381 11 3642 069
<http://www.hotelmoskva.rs>

(3) Mala Fabrika Ukusa \$\$\$

☼ ☼ ☼
Nebojsina 49a
+381 11 2435 727
<http://malafabrikaukusa.com>

(4) Klub Knizevnika \$\$\$! ☼ ☼ ☼

7 Francuska
+38111262-79-31
<http://www.klubknjizevnika.rs/>

(5) Kalemegdanska Terasa \$\$\$

☼ ☼ ☼
Kalemegdnaska Terasa
+381 11 328 30 11

<http://www.kalemegdanskaterasa.com>

(6) Orašac \$\$ ☼

Bulevar kralja Aleksandra 122
+381112455-043
<http://www.restoranorasac.com/>

(7) Znak Pitanja \$\$

6 Kralja Petra
+381 11 2635421

(8) nMornar \$

Dečanska 2
+381 11 3235 514

(9) Polet \$

Kralja Milana 31
+381 11 3232 454

(10) Café Café \$\$\$!

Vase Pelagića 48
+38165 90 78 078

(11) Šaran \$\$ ☼ ☼

Kej Oslobođenja 53, Zemun

+381112618235

(12) Iguana \$\$\$! ☼ ☼ ☼ ☼

Karadorđeva 2-4
+381 11 328 3749
<http://www.iguana.rs/>

(13) Komunale \$\$\$! ☼ ☼ ☼ ☼

Karadorđeva 2-4
+381 11 3037337

(14) Pekara Suzana \$ ☼

Balkanska 29
+38163 462 116
<http://pekarasuzana.rs/pekara-balkanska/>

(15) Crni Panteri \$

Ada Ciganlija 7
+381113541117

(16) Kalenić Pijaca \$

Pijaca "Kalenić"
No phone

Symbol Guide

- ! - Dress up smart
- ♥ - Great for kids
- ☼ - Table with a view
- ☼ - Vegetarians well catered for
- ☼ - Hip spot
- ☼ - Outdoor seating available
- ☹ - No alcohol served
- ☒ - No credit cards
- B - Breakfast only
- L - Lunch only
- D - Dinner only
- \$-\$-\$-\$-\$ - Relative cost

Balkan bakes

As if restaurant fare needed supplementing with extra calories, Belgrade's bakeries are plentiful and rich in pastry pickings. One of our local go-to joints is **'Suzana'** on Balkanska. Despite their claim to always be open, they do actually close on a Sunday, but the best time to go is any given morning before 10. That's when you can catch the delicious spinach and cheese-filled pitas fresh out of the oven, as well as the cheese bureks (layered pastry pies) and the minced meat varieties. You'll also find 'pogaće', which are flaky bread rolls (great with a glass of yoghurt) and Serbian-style pretzels topped with a salty finish, and 'viršle' – hot dogs in flaky pastry which are a very naughty delight when done well.



Dr Atkins' worst nightmare



Let the good times roll at Crni Panteri

Smoke on the water

So, you're up for some misbehaving? If you really want to party like dyed-in-the-wool Serbs, then get a cab over to Ada Ciganlija island and get the driver to take to **Crni Panteri**. Right on the Sava River, it's a souped-up floating shed connected to the land by an Indiana Jones-style rope bridge where most nights of the week (barring Sunday and Monday) you'll find Toma Jovanovic and his band of Roma musicians whipping up a storm on the river. The action rarely starts before midnight, and though they do serve food here, we recommend you eat

before coming and line your stomach for the rakija (especially the grape vine-based 'loza') that is the uncontested accompaniment to the bonkers music that goes on till about 4am.

Market life

Many of Belgrade's old markets have transformed or been closed down altogether in the wake of reconstruction over the last few years, however, there is still one at the heart of the city that is the go-to place for housewives, chefs and foodies in general. **Kalenić pijaca**, nestled between Njegoševa and Maksima Gorkog, is best visited on a weekday morning to get a real feel for the pace of the place that is set by the farmers who come here from outside the city, setting up their stalls with a selection of seasonal wares. Here you'll find the best and the plumpest fruit and veg, as well as a startling array of white, creamy cheeses sorted by their age which usually varies by only a matter of days. Most of the stall holders are happy to let you taste before you buy, and we highly recommend you try some kaymak, a rich, creamy cheese that's a bit like clotted cream with a twang. You won't be sorry.



Kalenić market

City Basics

Currency RSD Serbian dinar. £1 – RSD144.40; €1 – RSD115.30; \$1 – RSD85.05. Most cash machines take foreign cards.

Dialling Code The country code for Serbia is +381 and the local code for Belgrade is (0)11.

Safety Belgrade is a very safe city, and you should have no worries about walking around at night. Just beware of pickpockets in crowded places.

Tips 5-10% in restaurants, cafes and bars. Round up cab fares. It's also customary to tip musicians in kafanas, especially when they come to sing at your table. RSD1,000 is considered a very decent contribution to your night's entertainment and buys you the right to request a few songs of your choosing (anything by the Beatles is usually a good bet as far as English songs go).

Taxis In general, quite easy to find and inexpensive. They run on meters and most drivers are honest. For a cheaper ride from the airport into town, pass by the touts in the arrivals hall and head upstairs to the road outside the departures drop-off where cars returning into town will give you a ride for about RSD1,200

Transport One of the great things about Belgrade is that it's essentially a walking city, so no matter how much you eat, you're always likely to burn it off. The old city centre is quite compact and easily walkable, though having said that, you can always hop on a bus or tram to speed up your journey.

Language We've provided a few Serbian words and phrases to get you started, but you might be surprised at the excellent level of English among locals in the city – taxi drivers and waiters included.

The lingo

Hvala

Thank you

Jedno pivo/dva piva molim

One beer/two beers please

Imate li nešto bez mesa?

Do you have something without meat?

Koliko košta?

How much is that?

Račun, molim

The bill, please