

# instant belgrade

essential mini guides



## Introducing Belgrade

Which city would have its tourist office print things like '*...fortunately, more than half of the two million inhabitants are beautiful, clever and unpredictable women*'? Indeed, only Belgrade. It may not be as pretty as Sarajevo or have the shopping possibilities of Budapest, it does have a beautiful setting overlooking the Sava and Danube rivers, a pleasant centre crowned by a magnificent fortress and park, and most of all, charming and outgoing people. This Instant Guide introduces you to the best that this vibrant city has to offer.

## About this guide

The *Belgrade In Your Pocket Instant Guide* is the essential city guide the vibrant capital of Serbia. It's the printable version of the online Belgrade guide on the In Your Pocket website at [www.inyourpocket.com](http://www.inyourpocket.com).

We currently do not have a print version of *Belgrade In Your Pocket*, but are open for all ideas if you're willing to help start one up.

**Note:** More than other cities in the region, Belgrade changes quickly. Therefore we recommend you use the prices and other listings details in this Instant Guide as indicative only. All comments, praise and criticism that can lead to the improvement of this guide for future readers can be sent to the editor at [belgrade@inyourpocket.com](mailto:belgrade@inyourpocket.com).

## On names

In January 2003, Yugoslavia ceased to exist and was renamed to the rather unwieldy *Serbia and Montenegro* (or, as locals joke, Solania, named after Javier Solana, the EU foreign policy chief responsible for keeping the two together).

To make life and reading easier we refer to this country as simply *Serbia* throughout the guide. This will also save us from having to rename it all over again when *Serbia and Montenegro* implodes and gets renamed to simply Serbia.

## Arriving

### By plane

On arrival at Belgrade's airport (Aerodrom Beograd or Surcin), 23km west of the centre, you'll go through an interesting rubber-stamp circus. Locals and people who may enter Serbia without ado can head straight for the ladies in the passport booths. Less fortunate mortals who need a **Tourist Pass** must pass a grumpy bunch of men in the booth marked Visas first. Once all passports have been scrutinised, a customs official (with passports in hand) will herd all foreigners together, march you past the smiling customs ladies and downstairs to the baggage retrieval hall, where you grab your belongings. Then you follow the official to the cash desk where a lady with an enormous hairdo will shout out your name and demand to know in which currency you will pay the equivalent of 320din (about €5) for the Tourist Pass. She'll give you your passport, the receipt and a small but essential blue card - proof that you are in Serbia legally. Do not lose this! There's an ATM in the baggage retrieval hall, all other services are found in the arrivals hall after baggage check: money exchange offices, car rental offices etc.

**To get to town**, you have the choice between rip-off taxis, official taxis and the JAT airport bus. **Hint:** the nice chain-smoking gentlemen with the black leather jackets crowding the arrivals hall are the rip-off taxi drivers. Go along with one of them, and end up paying between €15-30 for the 20-30 minute ride to the centre, depending on how ignorant or desperate you look. The pathetic stand marked *Taxi* next to the exit is just the leather brigade's way of making their scam look official - avoid! If however you ask at the tourist office, they will call an official taxi (charging the correct rate, about 600din) free of charge. The JAT airport bus costs 80din (payable to the driver) and leaves from the stop directly outside the arrivals hall on the hour between 05:00 and 21:00. **Beware:** the bus may leave 10-20 minutes earlier if your flight was the last to land that hour. It takes 40 minutes to reach the Slavija hotel with stops in Novi Beograd and at the train station (the most useful stop for getting to the centre). **Note** that once you leave the arrivals hall (to discover that the bus just left ahead of schedule), you cannot get back in (to order an honest taxi), leaving you at the mercy of the leather gang.

### By car

Getting around Serbia is a relatively hassle-free yet bumpy affair. Serbia is a member of the Green Card system. Direction signs are written using the Latin alphabet; street names are usually written in Cyrillic.

### By train

All international trains arrive at Belgrade main station (*Železnicka Stanica Beograd*). There's a left luggage office (*garderoba*) next to the first track. Find a currency exchange office (open 08:00 - 19:00, Sun 08:00 - 13:00), the tourism office (open 07:00 - 21:00) the Wasteels ticket office and card telephones in the north exit of the station. Note that to get back onto the platforms and the luggage office you'll need a

valid ticket or a *peronske karte* (platform ticket) that you can buy for 13din at the information counter in the main hall or the Wasteels office.

**Getting to town:** you are already in central Belgrade, but it's a 10 minute uphill slog to Trg Republike, the central square. Trams N° 2, 11 and 13 can bring you to Kalemegdan fortress and near to Studentski Trg: buy a ticket (10din) from the conductor. Otherwise flag down a taxi (or have the tourism office call you an honest one free of charge). The short drive to the centre shouldn't cost more than 80din.

### By bus

Belgrade's bus station (Beogradska Autobuska Stanica) is a more lively and hectic affair than the neighbouring train station. Find a luggage office marked *garderoba* in the small building next to the main exit (35din/item, open 06:00 - 22:00 with cigarette breaks between 09:00 - 09:30 and 17:00 - 17:30). The post office next to platform N°19 (open 08:00 - 20:00, Sat 08:00 - 14:00, closed Sun) can change money, sell telephone cards and has pay-per-call telephone booths. Find a card telephone next to platform N°15.

## Visas & Tourist Passes

The complicated requirements for westerners visiting Serbia were dropped in the summer of 2001, and getting in is easy. Note that Montenegro does not require visas or Tourist Passes from westerners, even though officially they should do so. Although the information presented here was correct in January 2002, we strongly advise you to consult the website of the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs ([www.mfa.gov.yu](http://www.mfa.gov.yu)) or to contact the nearest Yugoslav embassy or consulate (see a complete list at [www.mfa.gov.yu/embassies/emb\\_emb\\_e.html](http://www.mfa.gov.yu/embassies/emb_emb_e.html)) to check that nothing has changed.

## Instant Belgrade

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## Glossary

### Alphabets

Serbian is unique in the way that it uses two alphabets: the Latin and the Cyrillic (Slavic) one. The Serb language is spelt phonetically purposely, so that whatever alphabet you use, it's easy to spell and pronounce the words. Serbs learn both alphabets at school, and have no difficulty using either. Serb Cyrillic differs from Russian and Bulgarian Cyrillic slightly, as new symbols were invented for the 'j', 'dz', 'dzj' and 'ch' sounds. In practice, you'll see most texts are written using the Latin alphabet, but notable exceptions are streetnames and information at the train and bus stations and in the post office (where Cyrillic Serb and French [sic] is used). It really pays to memorise Cyrillic before arriving to make getting around and deciphering signs easier. It's pretty easy to learn the capital letter versions (these are most used in practice, as the undercase versions can be very different) and once you get the hang of it a whole new world opens up.

### Black Market

As Serbia still is the flea in the fur of the civilised world (that's us), international copyright laws are not respected, resulting in a very attractive range of readily available cheap, pirated goods. Most obvious are the absurdly cheap copied CDs (130din), videos, DVDs and DVIXs (films you can play on your PC). A new local speciality are the MP3 collections, which are the complete works of artists like Pink Floyd or the Rolling Stones neatly compressed onto one 130din CD. All these are for sale in respectable shops and kiosks, some of which have a very good selection (see *Shopping*). Otherwise, try your luck at finding nifty copies of sneakers (Reobok, Reebak, etc.), good quality clothes and accessories (Armani suits, trendy handbags) and more. Be aware that importing these products into your home country is officially illegal.

### Customs

You are allowed to bring the following into Serbia without facing taxes: 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 250 grammes of tobacco; 1 litre of wine and 1 litre of spirits; 1/4 litre of Eau de Cologne and a 'reasonable' quantity of perfume; 2 photocameras; 1 film camera; 1 pair of binoculars; 1 pocket electronic calculator; camping equipment and 1 bicycle. You can only take 500din (€8.30) worth of dinars out of the country.

### Health

Healthcare in Serbia is not bad, but if anything serious happens you'll want to go home. Although you

should get a comprehensive health insurance to cover your stay in Serbia, it's good to know that bilateral health insurance agreements have been concluded with many European countries (Germany, UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Italy, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Poland), so that initial costs of healthcare will be taken care of. Other agreements (like with Austria, Croatia) are pending.

### Humour

The Pythonesque sense of dark humour widely practised by Serbs is a joy to discover. However horrid the news, the locals have always found some kind of way to laugh about it, sometimes very much to the shock of more politically correct visitors from the west. Picture scenes of Belgrade's youth sipping beers on hilltop café terraces, doing guessing games about the kind of missiles slamming into the city, and you'll get the idea. During the period of sanctions against Yugoslavia, jokes about the colour of smuggled petrol abounded: mango petrol (orange, allegedly from Bosnia), kiwi petrol (green, from Bulgaria) and superior Shell petrol (red). As life gets more normal, this phenomenon which also could be observed in other Eastern European countries in the 1970s and '80s, may slowly disappear.

### Money

Serbia still clings on to the **dinar**, even though Montenegro, the other partner in the Federation, uses the euro as its official currency, not allowing politicians in Belgrade to further ruin their economy. After a period of horrific inflation, the dinar was pegged to the German mark at a rate of 30din to DM1, and is therefore now pegged to the euro at almost 60din to •1. Quite a change from 1993, when the largest bill, worth 500 billion dinar (yes, that's 500,000,000,000 dinar), would buy you two packs of cigarettes. Banknote freaks can purchase old funny money at Kalamegdan fortress (see *What to See*). The **dinar** comes in coins of 1, 2 and 5 dinar, and there are also some 50 para coins (100 para = 1 dinar). Note that different series of coins are circulating: there are two sizes of 1din coins from before 2000, both marked as 'novi dinar', being the coins replacing the hyperinflated dinar before 1994. Dinar bills are available in units of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 1,000. **Beware** that the old series of banknotes (the 5, 10 and 20 bills from 1994, the 50 bill from 1996 and the 100 bill from 1996) ceased to be a legal tender on January 1, 2002. You can change old notes into new ones at the Central Bank until February 28, 2002.

Serbia is mostly a **cash-only** society, although changes are afoot. There are lots of ATMs happily blinking their 'out of order' screens all over the place. Often, places with credit cards stickers will only accept *locally issued* credit cards. If you have a Diners or VISA card, you'll be able to use that in some shops, hotels and restaurants, and also to withdraw

cash from one of their offices. The only other chance you have of getting cash out of western plastic, is by using your VISA (or Visa Elektron or Plus) card at the **ATMs** of the Societe Generale Serbia bank (the most central one of their five Belgrade offices is on Kralja Petra 14, tel. 301 15 55) or getting cash from it at the desk of Vojvodina bank (there's an office in the Hyatt lobby, bring your passport).

Even if you have a VISA card, always bring along enough cash (the euro is the preferred foreign currency) or **Travellers' Cheques** that can be exchanged in banks like Micro Finance (Gospodar Jevremova 9, tel. 302 56 25) or western ones like Societe Generale, HVB and Raiffeisen. Western Union (for fast and pricey cash transfers) is represented by Societe Generale and the post offices. Expect a 2-3% handling fee.

You can **change money** at any of hundreds of exchange offices (*menjarnica*) in Belgrade. Gone are the days of fluctuating rates and black market rates - all exchange bureaux (including those in the airport, shops, hotels, etc.) have to use the same rate, so you can change anywhere without fear of being overcharged. You can recognise official exchange offices by the gleamy new tilted square signs (featuring pictures of Euroland currencies that now no longer exist). Spend all your Hungarian forints, Romanian lei or Bulgarian leva before you arrive here - nobody is likely to change them.

The **euro** recently replaced the German mark as the currency of choice for locals. Large bills usually can be paid in euros at the easy rate of 60:1, making paying high hotel and restaurant bills so much easier. An exception are state institutions, who will only accept dinars (like the 600din airport tax charged on departure).

### Mosquitos

If you're travelling to Belgrade in summer, you may encounter these pesky seasonal invaders while strolling the riverbanks or hanging around a terrace. Bring repellent if you're squeamish about them.

### Poverty

Although the proud citizens of Belgrade may deny it, poverty is an important problem in modern-day Belgrade. Average salaries of •50-150 per month mean that normal people have to strain to make ends meet. Beggars are scarcer than in other Balkan countries, though you'll see the occasional enterprising urchin trying to sell the free copies of the *Yellow Cab* nightlife magazine. Milosevic's last 10 years mean that economical reforms that other Eastern European countries have long dealt with still have to be begun here, and things may get worse before they get better.

### Safety

You might think that Serbians would bear a noticeable grudge against westerners after the propaganda wars (on both sides) and bombings of the 1990s, but this is not the case. Indeed, what most visitors remember

most about a visit to Serbia is the hospitality and openness of the locals. If you are asked about your opinions on the actions of NATO or the present situation in the former Yugoslav republics, it may be best to keep an open mind, whatever your opinion, and wait till the bottle of slivovitz pops open to declare eternal friendship. All fears of 'being attacked' or harassed just because you are a foreigner are completely unfounded - to the contrary, you will be one of the few foreigners coming this way, and therefore a guest who has to be treated well and stuffed with food and booze. One young Belgrader who was hardly old enough to remember pre-Milosevic days gloomily told us: 'the west hates us'. As a foreigner visiting to prove the contrary, you will be welcomed.

You'll be pleased to hear that Belgrade is a perfectly safe city to wander through. Of course you should avoid walking through dark alleys at night and flashing cameras, fat wallets and the like.

### Spelling

Serbs have the habit of writing words phonetically - useful if you use two alphabets, very funny when spelling foreign words and names. Examples are street names such as Dzordza Vasingtona (indeed, the first George W.), but have a laugh at Hari Poter, Pol Harison (Paul Harrison) or words like pab (pub) or andergrund (the Underground club). The phonetic spelling is not always used however. Incidentally, it's interesting to notice that quite a few German words have made their way into Serbian, for example *Generalstab* for the Ministry of Defence and *shalter* (German *Schalter*) for counter.

### Streets

In Belgrade, many streets have been renamed in the past 10 years, depending on who was in government and who were their friends. Here is a list of the most important changed names that sometimes pop up on old maps, business cards or in the minds of locals who haven't got used to the new name (or simply refuse to acknowledge any change). Some old names had been in use for so long that now a mix of both names is used - the receptionist at the Metropol hotel on former Bulevard Revolucije had to ask a colleague the new name of their street.

Old name	New name
7. jula	Kralja Petra I
Bulevar Crvene armije	Junji bulevar
Bulevar revolucije	Bulevar kralja Aleksandra
General •danova	Resavska
Lenjinov bulevar	Bulevar Mihaila Pupina
Lole Ribara	Svetogorska
Maršala Tolbuhina	Makenzjeva
Mate Vidakoviæa	Bojanska
Moše Pjade	Deëanska
Proleterskih brigada	Krunska
Save Kovaëeviæa	Mileševska
Srpskih vladara	Kralja Milana
Trg Dimitrija Tucoviæa	Trg Slavja



## Restaurants

Although it's a fairly static scene, Belgrade's restaurants have come a long way in the last decade. There's a fair selection of cuisines and price ranges to choose from, and on average restaurants are cheap compared to Western Europe. The list below is a mere scratch on the surface of Belgrade's hundreds of restaurants - but it gives an overview of the best, most cheerful and most obvious places to be seen stuffing yourself. Vegetarians need not die of hunger - the many Chinese restaurants and pizzerias in town will be happy to cater to your needs. Reservations are advisable on weekends, especially in the 'national' (Serbian) restaurants. Note that the credit cards accepted by local businesses are only the Serb-issued ones, so take cash dinars and euros (see Glossary). The prices mentioned below indicate the average cost of a main course, including side dishes, but excluding drinks.

## Indian

**Indian Palace Ljubicka 1b, tel. 444 32 26, fax 446 10 87.** Belgrade's only Indian restaurant has everything except a central location: a good chef from the north of India, a stylish interior, a great terrace, reasonable prices and charming staff. On recommendation of the waiter, we gobbled down delicious *samosas* (fried starters with meat and vegetables, 93din) followed by a perfectly juicy chicken *tikka masala* (396din). Although the menu says that the *vindaloo* is supposed to have an aphrodisiac effect, the restaurant chickens out and does not guarantee anything - we'll test it on a waiter next time we visit. Located on a small road near the Dusanovacki bridge across the Nis highway, it's best to get a taxi here. Take-away to pay 10% less. **300-450din**

## International

**Metropolitan Milentija Popovica 5 (Hyatt Regency hotel), tel. 311 12 34, fax 311 22 34.** The restaurant that the Hyatt is rightly so proud of has a modern, Scandinavian look with a cool atmosphere and an open kitchen. The chef, Australian Peter Dixon, has brought a variety of Oceanian and Asian flavours to Belgrade. The most remarkable meal however will be that most Serbian of dishes, a sword adorned with grilled meat.

**Studio B Masarikova 5, tel. 361 38 86.** This wonderfully out-of-date restaurant is so 80s that you expect a crooning Barry White to pop up from behind a pillar any time. Set on the fifth floor of the huge Beogradjanka building, it keeps the curtains shut to prevent you from seeing the view (and from anyone peeking in of course). The glam interior is the paragon of interior design in the late Serbia - the copper, gold and red colours simply lurch at you. Between 12:00 - 17:00 enjoy a 200din set lunch menu. At night it may be booked for private parties. **Open 09:00 - 20:00.**

**Zepter Kralja Petra 32, tel. 328 14 1, fax 418 39 88.** Set in one of the few post-1990 structures in Belgrade, this classy courtyard restaurant belongs to the holding company distributing the wonderful Bioptron device (displayed in the hall) that eradicates all pain using light rays. On the menu are the usual international suspects, at the tables sits Belgrade's business class. **Open 10:00 - 24:00. 400-500din**

## Italian

**Kapric Kralja Petra 44, tel. 62 59 30.** This elegant *spaghetterian* near the top of Kneza Mihailova is one of the top Italian places in Belgrade. Possibly a tad too Laura Ashley inside, the restaurant offers truly excellent pastas at fair prices. If you're eating alone, there are Italian and local magazines to peruse. **Open 12:00 - 23:00. 260-340din**

**Knez Kneza Sime Markovica 10, tel. 63 51 60, fax 63 15 45.** Undoubtedly the most romantic restaurant we saw in Belgrade - there's enough quaint wooden beams and secluded seating here to make the dullest of blind dates a success. Knez is also the only place that has a roaring fireplace to warm up chilled diners in winter. The fare is very good (especially the pastas), and the long list of tempting desserts will make you forget about whoever else is at your table. The 45din cover charge gets you bread and butter. Avoid the summer terrace, it's squeezed between the building and a busy street. **350-500din**

**Resava Resavska 24, tel. 323 31 92.** Excellent food at great prices, subdued lighting, a glorious interior with frescoes of Italian cities and golden pillars and a civilised crowd make this a Belgrade favourite for expats and visitors. Be seated at a red table and make your choice from a menu with pasta and meat-based mains. Our *scalop valdostana* (pork with parmesan sauce, 400din) was outstanding. We'll be back. **Open 12:00 - 24:00. 400-600din**

**Verdi Terazije 5, tel. 322 24 01.** Reportedly one of Belgrade's finest, this is a very good restaurant but just a tad too shabby to lead the pack. Decorated with Italian Renaissance paintings, Verdi overlooks the shopping mall between Terazija and Decanska. The night we visited, plenty of tables were filled with western businessmen, and one table hosted a party of merry local bigwigs getting increasingly drunk and loud. The 40din cover charge gets you bread, butter and a lashing of sweet Ramazotti tunes. **Open 12:00 - 24:00. 300-500din**

## Mediterranean

**Focaccia Milentija Popovica 5 (Hyatt Regency hotel), tel. 311 12 34, fax 311 22 34.** An open kitchen, an excellent selection of Mediterranean wines and a more cosy setting than the Hyatt's grand lobby make Focaccia one of Belgrade's top restaurants. Sunday brunches (12:00 - 16:00, 900din) offer family fun. **Open 19:00 - 24:00.**

**Ipanema Strahinjica Bana 68, tel. 62 58 96.** Locals say Ipanema went down since it changed from bustling bar to subdued restaurant, but the patrons we observed don't seem to mind. Trippy music pours out over the international guests in this hip semi-cellar serving Mediterranean-inspired food. Try the chicken breast with courgettes and ham, or else the beef in tuna sauce, but search in vain for the proverbial girl from here; only male waitstaff served us when we visited. **Open 09:00 - 24:00, Sun 12:00 - 18:00. 300-450din**

The ladies love it  
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## Serbian

Vegetarians take cover! Serbian cuisine is synonymous with sinking your teeth into meat. Lots of it. The so-called 'national' restaurants in Belgrade do roaring business, catering to people looking for a classy, old world atmosphere, with lots of wooden beams, bumbling penguin waiters and live gypsy musicians. Don't even dream of having a quick meal here - dining in here is a celebration of the best things in life: women, wine, music, smoke and grease. After observing tables being surrounded by podgy musicians, leaving the embarrassed diners wondering whether to ignore them, to stare or softly sing or nod along, you may want to opt for an unsurroundable table in a corner. Behind the quaint facade unfortunately, many of the restaurants in this category have all the sordid charm of state-run companies, and few are able to add a modern touch or innovation. Find a concentration of 'national' restaurants on Skadarska.

**? (Znak Pitanje) Kralja Petra 6, tel. 63 54 21.** The *Question Mark Inn* got its odd name after officials of the Orthodox Cathedral across the street demanded the name should be changed from the outrageously blasphemous *By The Cathedral*. The owner put up a sign with a question mark, and that's been the name ever since. Now ? is the most authentic local restaurant in town, with low wooden tables and stools set in two run-down and smokey rooms (a starker contrast with the Triangle bar next door is hardly imaginable). The food is filling and good, and marvellously priced. Whatever you do, do not go to the toilet here. **200-400din**

**Big Bull Vasina 9, tel. 18 30 88, fax 63 41 56.** Quite unsurprisingly, you have to enter this apotheosis of Serbian restaurants through a butcher's shop. Freshness guaranteed! Big Bull serves truly excellent grilled local specialties including *cevapcici* (stretched meat balls, 125din) and the best *pljeskavica* (grilled hamburger meat, 125din) we had in Belgrade - not too big, not too greasy. The setting in the arched cellars beneath the butcher's is pleasant - as is the absence of the ubiquitous 'national' music. **Open 09:00 - 24:00.**

**Dva Jelena Skadarska 32, tel. 323 48 85, fax 323 83 63.** Do as the locals do, and drag your whole family here and spend the larger part of the day toasting, eating and smoking. The *Two Deer* dates from 1832 and has two classic halls decorated with lots of wooden panels. Service is as can be expected from a gastronomic dinosaur: efficient, but with that lovely touch of socialist shabbiness (waiters sitting at a nearby table to have a smoke etc). **Open 11:00 - 01:00.**

**Sesir moj (My hat) Skadarska 27, tel. 322 87 50.** 'My hat' indeed. One of the most famous 'national' restaurants turned out to be a disappointment. First we were ignored altogether for 30 minutes, then it took another 15 minutes to serve the soup, leaving plenty of time to take in the cosy interior with walls crammed with paintings. The gypsy band, busy testing their musical table-encircling techniques, were in fact very good, and nearly worth the wait. Vegetarians will be pleased to find a good selection of warm pig-free starters. **Open 10:00 - 24:00. 300-450din**

**Sindjelic Vojislava Illica 86, tel. 41 22 97.** Have a taxi drive you through a surreal socialist landscape of hovels surrounded by high-rise flats to reach this Belgrade 'national cuisine' classic. Sindjelic is a modern complex of rooms surrounding a courtyard, with intimate seating in large booths to halls suited for nuclear-scale debauchery. The food is Serbian; filling, meaty, oversized and so greasy it tickles the back of your throat. For terminal protein-addicts. **Open 09:00 - 23:00. 300-600din**

**Tri Sesira (Three hats) Skadarska 27, tel. 324 75 01.** Possibly the most famous of them all, 'Three Hats' is a large complex of cosy farm-like buildings and terraces. In the evening, musicians swirl from one candle-lit and smokey room to the next, while waiters pile up slabs of meat on your table. The *cavapcici tri sesira* (grilled sausages, 240din) that we had were a little overwhelming on the grease front, but manageable with help of beer, bread and a cold grilled pepper (*pecena paprika*, 90din). **Open 11:00 - 02:00. 400-700din**

## Spanish

**Que Pasa? Kralja Petra 13-15, tel. 328 44 15, www.que-pasa.co.yu.** The last place we visited during our stay was the best. It may look snooty at first glance, but venture past the reception desk to be met by modern design, beautiful customers, reasonable prices and the friendliest waiter we encountered in town. Have whatever is recommended of the day, or lunch away on some tortillas (200din), sweet or hearty pancakes (150-200din) or large sandwich dishes. Have your coffee or tea in the adjoining lounge area, with occasional live music. We have a feeling this will be the first place we'll visit when we return. **450-550din**

## Fast food

**Amica Skadarska 40c, tel. 334 51 00.** Pancakes! Everyone loves pancakes. Because Amica's pancakes are the cheapest and best in Belgrade, this small basement *palacinkarnica* is immensely popular with students and party-goers on their way to the bar or home. There's a nicely named pancake for everyone. The hearty pancakes (*slane*, salt, 58-68din) include the *sunkarinka* (ham), *hotinka* (mustard) and *dacinka* (ajvarom and cheese). The sweet ones (*slatke*, 38-48din) include the *englezinka* (lemon), *erotinka* (nuts, honey) and the horrendously sweet *rafaelinka* (white chocolate, coconut, hazelnut). Find Amica in the large building at the bottom end of Skadarska. **Open 10:00 - 01:00. 40-70din**

**McDonald's Terazije 27, tel. 323 87 32.** The Zeleni venac outlet has a nice terrace with views over the Sava and Novi Beograd. The McDonald's restaurants were lightly vandalised in the first days of the NATO bombing campaign. Hamburger 40din, Big Mac 85din, Big Mac menu 155din. **Open 07:00 - 23:00, Sat, Sun 07:00 - 24:00.**

## Pizza

**Kosava Kralja Petra 36, tel. 62 73 44.** A cheery, simple trattoria on two levels near the top end of Kneza Mihailova. The blue wooden chairs decorated with happy little flowers get you into that warm Italian farmhouse mood, so you can get on ordering excellent pasta or pizzas. Kosava can be recognised by the big K on the window. **Open 10:00 - 01:00, Sat, Sun 12:00 - 01:00. 200-400din PS**

**Valentino Njegoseva 6, tel. 323 96 72.** When the Bangles sang about *kissing Valentino*, this was the one they had in mind. A modern, race-track inspired take-away with standing space only, you can get good pizzas from 80din as well as pastas and salads. Near the Park hotel. **Open 09:00 - 23:00. 80-100din**

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## Cafes

You may think the best reasons to come to to Belgrade are business, sightseeing, fishing and spying. Wrong. The real motive to come is to sit in cafes all day long, eying up and chatting with the locals. After all, that's what most Belgraders seem to do all day. The tradition of sipping coffee and munching on sticky cakes in the Balkans and Central Europe is one of the few positive legacies of the sweet-toothed Turks. Cafés offer warm refuge from the cold in winter and great terrace-flirting opportunities in summer. Most of them double as places for a quiet coffee and night-life spot - here we list the places more suited for daytime, for 'coffee bars' see Belgrade by Night.

**Europa Trg Republike 5, tel. 62 19 40.** The huge, two-level café overlooking Trg Republike is a popular place for meetings, people-watching and eating ultra-sweet cakes (60din) that will have your teeth rattling in their sockets and your dentist chuckling in his new BMW.

**Livingroom Café Makedonska 22, tel. 324 82 02.** The largest post-modern café in town fills the main hall of the Dom Omladine youth centre with hip lamps and trippy music, while huge windows offer good people-watching opportunities. Maybe it's a tad to large to be called cosy, but as a result it is pleasantly smoke-free (relatively anyway) and the location on the crossroads of youth culture makes it a good place for meeting up for a huge cup of tea before delving further into Belgrade's café jungle. *Open 09:00 - 01:00, Sun 17:00 - 01:00.*

**Plum Obilicev venac 17 (Millenium Shopping Centre), tel. 18 41 76.** A dazzlingly glamorous place to sip espresso: on multi-level platforms of turquoise glass suspended under the skylight of a shopping mall, with everyone to see. Ideal for that rainy day, or when popping into all those delightful boutiques simply gets too much, darling. *Open 09:00 - 21:00.*

## Floating cafés

**Amphora Bulevar Nikole Tesle bb, tel. 69 97 89.** The swankiest raft of them all (see also *Belgrade By Night*) is decked out like a gentleman's club, with luxury lounge chairs and upscale decoration including an amphora at the entrance. The amphora at the entrance is all you get to see if the receptionist deems your clothing or attitude incorrect, so dress up and look rich. Prices reflect the size of the wallets strolling in: beer starts at 175din. *Open 10:00 - 01:00, Sun 10:00 - 02:00.*

## Jazz bars

**Jazz Café Obilicev venac 19, tel. 328 23 80.** Owned by local 1980s pop legend Oliver Mandić, Jazz Café is a basic but essentially happy place with good vibes, seating on wooden benches and modern art on the walls. The occasional live music is of course jazz, and non-smokers will be happy to note the effective ventilation. *Open 10:00 - 02:00.*

**Plato Café Akademski Plato 1, tel. 65 88 63.** One of Belgrade's top bars, Plato has a lively crowd, a stage regularly hosting excellent live jazz music, good food and a terrace in summer. Beware that this is the only place in town where you may be served a more expensive drink than you ordered, so pay attention. Otherwise, just relax in the stylish first-floor bar area that offers good views of the square outside.

## Nightlife

If you thought that Belgrade was a dour place moaning over its wounds, look again. Once everyone is finished sitting on terraces and sipping coffee all day, it's time to dress up properly and hit the scores of bars and clubs in town. The venues are spread out over a large area, and you'll need a taxi if you want to get to the boat, but there are concentrations of night-life southwest and northeast of Kneza Mihailova, the upper end of Kneza Milosa and Resavska and a bit of Njegoseva. For more nightlife possibilities, see *Que Pasa?* in *Where to Eat*. Finally, if you're not a smoker... good luck.

## Fun & funky

**Bizzare Zmaj Jovina 25 (entrance on Gospodar Jevremova), tel. 63 94 28, cafebizzare@hotmail.com, www.cafebizzare.cjb.net.** Bizzare by name, bizarre by nature. The red glow emitting from the semi-basement prepares you for the overwhelmingly cool interior of this trendy bar. Candle-lit tables offer prime views of the beautiful bar area, and the loud music, a pinball machine, magazines and 14 different whiskeys offer respite for lonesome drinkers. Drop by on Fri/Sat to see their DJ in action. Nearly perfect, although they should of course chuck out the damn TV and add strobe effects to transform the already bizarre toilets to a scene from a David Lynch film. *Open 10:00 - 02:00.*

**House of Art Zmaja od Noca 11, tel. 63 24 48.** A hard-to-find doorway down a flight of stairs around the corner from Hotel Royal leads to a surprisingly large two-level cellar complex. Offering some of the cheapest drinks in town (all drinks 45din, kids!) the place attracts an audience of artists, students, academics, writers and other outcasts, all 'good people' according to the owner. There's lots to do here besides getting drunk - on Mondays there's theatre on the small stage, while Fridays are live jazz night, and Saturday blues. Very smokey - bring goggles. *Open 11:00 - 02:00.*

**Libre! Dordza Vasingtona 40, tel. 322 54 45.** The other Cuban-themed joint in town is a popular small and smokey bar on two levels. A rowdy crowd in their 20s-30s has the place rocking on weekend nights. If you can just keep your attention away from the eye-candy milling around here for one second, you'll notice the pictures of Cuban musicians and the cute lamp shades. OK, you can refocus now. *Open 10:00 - 01:00, Sun 17:00 - 01:00.*

**Make-Up Francuska 40, tel. 329 00 95.** A delightful and lively wood 'n bare bricks bar that fills to the gills on weekend nights. There's excellent live jazz music on the tiny stage every night except Mondays. Zoran, the owner, stands at the door and is happy to see new faces, especially foreign ones. *Open 10:00 - 02:00.*

**Republika Simina 22a, tel. 334 54 98.** The Federal Yugoslav Republic that Tito had in mind still survives - it has recently re-emerged as an extremely popular bar just off Skadarska. On November 29, former Republic Day, the bar parties all night long to celebrate the founding of Yugoslavia in 1943. Waitresses dressed as pioneers (the socialist version of scouts) scurry around in the small room decorated with red stars, pictures of Tito and huge wall maps of the Federation. Try to locate Tito grad, now known as Podgorica while you sip your coffee. Enjoy Tito-era prices: a beer is 54din (•0.90). *Open 12:00 - 02:00, Sat, Sun 12:00 - 04:00.*

## Bars

**Bel Canto Majke Jevrosime 45, tel. 322 05 37.** A classic gentlemen's club with comfy fauteuils and sofas, and enough secluded corners for intimate, upclass assignments and with live piano music every night. Drinks are reasonably priced, but only a couple of snacks are served. *Open 12:00 - 02:30, Sun 19:00 - 02:30.*

**Firma Makedonska 25, tel. 322 14 39.** This is what the non-snob locals disdainfully call a 'fancy' place - too posh to be taken seriously. Still, if you're looking for a touch of refinement, whatever that is, this is where you'll find it, together with pricey beers and cocktails, a dashing interior and Belgrade's up-and-coming upper class. *Open 10:00 - 01:00.*

**Guli Skadarska 13, tel. 323 72 04, guli@beonet.yu.** The most relaxed bar on Skadarska has a brick vaulted ceiling and lots of standing space to hold revellers on weekend evenings. A youngish crown sips espressos at the tables in the back before hitting the cocktail menu, listing Fuzzy Navels, B52s and Brazilian Nights. *Open 11:00 - 01:00.*

**Havana Nikole Spasica 1, tel. 328 31 08.** One of the most pleasant bars near Kneza Mihailova is this trendy 'jazz pub'. Eloquently lit, the brown/yellow bar with pictures of Havana on the walls is supposed to be a bit of Cuba, but fails on the consumption side of the theme - no rum nor cigars. Alcoholics shouldn't despair: the impressive wall of booze behind the bar will keep them busy for a while. *Open 11:00 - 02:00.*

**Jump Café Njegoseva 10, tel. 323 98 60.** Small and simple bar with a more impressive logo and terrace roof than interior. The TVs inside spoil all the fun as usual. *Open 08:00 - 01:00, Sun 10:00 - 01:00.*

**Kutuzof Vodka Bar Skadarska 40c, tel. 063 39 29 30.** You can either celebrate life, or choose to mourn it like Russians do - by getting completely slammed on vodka. Kutuzof offers ample opportunity to do exactly that, with over 25 vodkas in store, all foreign and priced between 60-100din a shot. Located in the unlikely setting of the huge ex-shopping complex on Skadarska, it manages to create a cosy Russian log-cabin look. *Open 10:00 - 02:00.*

**La Chunga Skadarska 40a, 3rd floor, tel. 334 08 93.** A darker, smokier and less appealing version of Amica downstairs, La Chunga can also bake you a pancake, although is not as good or friendly. For truly desperate pancake aficionados. *Open 10:00 - 02:00.*

**Liquid Njegoseva 6, tel. 323 81 64.** Modern looks, a metal bar, friendly staff, a mirror ball and bar stools surrounding the small floor make up the most pleasant bar on the street. Visit on weekends to experience the drum 'n bass evenings. *Open 09:00 - 01:00.*

**No No! Svetozara Markovica 40a, tel. 322 74 52.** A trendy and friendly bar near the cluster aligning Njegoseva that was filled with cute 20-year-old students (yes yes) learning how to do the latte when we popped in. Lots of wood and soft red tones give a Scandinavian feel to it all. *Open 08:00 - 01:00.*

**Paradox Strahinjica bana 20, tel. 63 02 02.** Belgrade's meeting point for journalists is a light bar with two levels near Studentski trg. Wednesday is cheap beer day (the press gets 30% off) and photo night - snapshots taken will be developed and presented the week after. On Thursday and Sundays enjoy live guitar music and singing, or come on Saturdays to hear the resident DJ spin. *Open 09:00 - 01:00, Sat, Sun 10:00 - 01:00.*

## Irish

**The Three Carrots Kneza Milosa 16, tel. 68 37 48.** Belgrade's nicely named and only Irish Pub lives up to expectation when it comes to decoration and crowd. The interior is hung with the same fake old trash that by now must decorate more pubs than there are Irish. The crowd however is a healthy combination of fit-looking young Belgraders and the occasional expat sipping Guinness. Service is good, and apart from beer they can bring you pub food, including ham & cheese toast with French fries (120din). *Open 09:30 - 02:00, Sun 14:00 - 02:00.*

**Peti Element (Fifth element) Njegoseva 10, tel. 323 99 75.** The truly brilliant name was inspired by the fact that this is the fifth café along the lower end of the street. In an attempt at a designer café, they succeed in creating a relaxed atmosphere with trippy, not too loud music and funky lamps and plexiglass chairs. Popular for cocktails and wine as well as the usual coffee and beer. *Open 09:00 - 01:00.*

**Portbello Sv. Save 11, www.portbello-cafe.com.** A very swank red lounge bar. Join the local elite in ordering from the huge drinks menu, or try some of the light snacks and dishes that are available. To get an idea, a beer clocks in at 75-200din. *Open 09:00 - 00:30, Sat, Sun 09:00 - 01:00.*

**Red Skadarska 17, tel. 063 850 16 76.** The other bar on Skadarska could have been great if it weren't so obviously sponsored. The high barn-like interior is as red as a brothel and has high chairs and tables for cocktail-sipping and chilling at. Friday night the night the *easy moving groovin' crew* arrives, so hold on to your panties. We liked the use of everyday pictograms but if you don't like ads in bars - keep walking. *Open 11:00 - 02:00.*

**Rio Bravo Kralja Petra 54, tel. 62 86 12.** Gallop in and throw down yer riding gear to hang at the bar of this popular Western-style bar. Saloon is decked out with plenty of wood, cartwheels and cosy corners for hoisting beers, whiskey or less manly drinks. *Open 11:00 - 02:00, Sun 17:00 - 02:00.*

**Rocher Njegoseva 5, tel. 323 97 39.** Looks are all that counts darling, so you better look stunning at Rocher to compete with the supermodels glaring out from monitors showing FashionTV, the magazines for the client's perusal and all the other good-looking Belgraders in here. The bar itself is so thin it needs two floors to be noticed. If you're too fat or human, go straight to one of the other bars along this street to collect your 200 calories of coffee. *Open 09:00 - 02:00.*

**Scena Strahinjica bana 17, tel. 18 53 66.** Enter through a grotty hallway and descend the stairs to find a completely surprising modern (cubist?) bar in Mondrian colours. Scena doubles as an Italian restaurant, with pizzas and pastas on the menu, but mainly is for downing beers and cocktails while chattering with other beautiful people. *Open 12:00 - 01:00, Sat 12:00 - 05:00, Sun 17:00 - 05:00.*

**Sport Café Makedonska 4a, tel. 324 31 77.** Extremely popular with the youngsters, Sport Café is modelled on the American example, with dozens of TVs emitting all kinds of sports at once while the clientele happily ignores all this sweaty business and sticks to coffee or beer. A slanting floor set with tables can be cleared to form the ideal arena for watching games on the large screen, while pictures and sports relics litter the walls. The tennis-themed menu lists breakfast (85-120din), sandwiches, pizza and pasta dishes (150-400din). Find it in the courtyard behind the Telekom Srbija shop on the corner of Makedoska and Decanska, opposite the large Sports Café sign. *Open 10:00 - 01:00, Sat 10:00 - 02:00.*



**Triangle Kralja Petra 4a.** A trendy small café-bar right next and completely and utterly different from "2" next door. Nicely situated between churches and museums and near the fortress. **Open 07:00 - 04:00.**

**Venom Skadarska 40a, 3rd floor.** Claims to be the only serious heavy metal bar in Belgrade, and 'today's playlist' on the wall featuring Metallica and Priest shows they really mean it. As the owner wasn't very welcoming to us after losing at pinball, we'd advise only serious metal fans to walk down this dark hall.

## Floating nightlife

When temperatures rise and terraces open up, Belgraders flock to their rivers. Along the banks of the Sava and Danube lie dozens of ships and elaborate rafts (*splavovi*) housing restaurants, cafés, bars and clubs. Most are concentrated on the bank of the Sava around Brankov bridge and quite a bit further north towards Zemun, on the Danube near hotel Jugosla-via.

**Acapulco Bulevar Nikole Tesle bb, tel. 78 47 60, fax 60 57 71.** Look for the rocking raft with the wave-roof and you've found Acapulco. You can't be further from Mexico, not in location nor atmosphere, as this is the main venue for *turbofolk*. Every night it's a hilarious scene as a band plays fast folk music boosted with modern beats, while fat guys prance around stunning boat babes with more mamillary protuberances than brain cells. It's the size of the wallet, not the waistline, that counts here. Top fun, but be aware of the clientele - you get frisked for guns. **Open 12:00 - 03:00.**

**Bibis Bulevar Nikole Tesle bb, tel. 319 21 50, fax 19 21 48.** One of the more popular rafts on the Danube, Bibis is plastered with signed pictures of famous local sportsmen, and understandably, they like to come here to see who else is on the walls. Tired of drinking? Bibis can also sell you a sauna. **Open 10:00 - 02:00.**

## Hobby bars

Many cafés in Belgrade seem to be the pet project of some young entrepreneur who just does it for fun so he has a place to meet up with friends. Although the in-crowd in these places may seem too close-knit to join, they're welcoming to strangers.

**Bar Code Strahinjica bana, corner Visnjiceva, tel. 328 41 85.** A trendy bar decorated with barcodes and the occasional art exhibition, Bar Code attracts a small cluster of 20-year-olds who enjoy house music, pinball and who welcome strangers in their midst for a party. The hot chocolate they made for us tasted awful, but was served with a smile... and that's what counts. **Open 09:00 - 23:00, Sat, Sun 09:00 - 02:00.**

**Criticar Skadarska 40a, 1st floor, tel. 063 26 61 56.** A hip little place occupying a part of the former shopping mall on Skadarska. Wednesday night is tequila night, with the dangerous drink going for 40din a shot. **Open 17:00 - 02:00, Sat 20:00 - 04:00.**

**Lokal u Pripremi Skadarska 40a, 2nd floor, tel. 064 168 62 02.** A great little bar run by a young entrepreneur who just wanted a good place to relax with his friends. You're welcome to join in and chill out to soothing music and good espresso. They hadn't gotten round to naming the bar, but will probably stick to what was written on the door when we visited: 'under construction'. **Open 13:00 - 04:00.**

## Clubs

**Beggars' Banquet Resavska 24, tel. 063 808 66 89.** The weird name, a weird barn-like interior and a weird collection of Rolling Stones and Mick Jagger posters does not deter the 30-ish crowd from flocking to Beggars' Banquet on weekends. Possibly one of the last places in Europe where you can order a Bud, it has two rooms with mostly standing space, separated by the bar. **Open 21:00 - 03:00.**

**Bus Abardareva 1b, tel. 334 06 71, fax 323 93 84.** What started off as a bar in a London double-decker bus has gotten completely out of hand - buildings have now completely encased the bus which now houses the DJ. Resembling a garage, it gets very busy on weekend nights - book ahead for a balcony table with a view. Tuesday is discount night: beer 35din, tequila 40din. Eerie location next to the bombed television studios.

**Ellington's Milentija Popovica 5 (Hyatt Regency hotel), tel. 311 12 34.** The club inside the Hyatt is a classy place with jam-sessions by well-known local jazz musicians on weekend nights. No excuses - this is where you should end a busy day of closing down banks: with a drink and perhaps a little wiggle before heading up to bed. **Open 21:30 - 02:30.**

**Fili Resavska 32, tel. 323 33 02.** A small but excellent club with a bar that looks like it emerged from the ceiling, a relaxed thirtyish crowd and old movies being played on a large screen. Downstairs, the dark and intimate basement houses a spacey dancefloor, the DJ and small tables to sit at.

**Klub studenata tehnike Bulevar Kralja Aleksandra 73, tel. 337 08 90.** The main student club in town is located near the Metropol hotel. Expect cheap drinks, a young and lively audience and plenty of live acts and rock music as well as more mainstream house.

**La Folie Rige od Fere 16, tel. 18 22 99.** Parked on a quiet side street near the fortress, La Folie is a strikingly orange basement club with happily chequered tables. Come on weekend nights when local bands perform. Like so many places, cocktails are their speciality: ask the barman what he recommends tonight. **Open 09:00 - 01:00, Sun 11:00 - 03:00.**

**Oh! Cinema! Gracanicka 18 (summer: Kalemegdanske terasas), tel. 328 40 00, fax 62 59 32.** An extremely popular venue with not one but two locations - a large hall decorated with cinema posters for in winter, and an excellent terrace inside Kalemegdan fortress in summer. Both have regular live music, and are known to party on when others have gone to bed. **Open 21:00 - 05:00.**

**Sinagoga Zemun, Rabina Alikalaja 5, tel. 316 18 00.** Instead of letting this old synagogue fall to ruin, enterprising Zemunians have turned it into a cool bar, and now serve beer instead of Jahweh. Ponder upon the ethics behind this operation while sipping a cocktail or playing darts - it's too late anyway. The round windows and low ceiling give the space character, as do the friendly staff. **Open 19:00 - 02:00.**

**Underground Pariska 1a, tel. 328 25 26.** Belgrade's top club sweats and pulses in the cavernous catacombs beneath Kalemegdan Fortress. A huge dancefloor with smoke, strobes and thundering house and techno music is at the centre of the complex, while there are also quieter sections with relaxed seating and possibilities for cocktail-sipping and oral interaction of the communicative kind. **Open 22:00 - 04:00.**

## Sights

## The best of Belgrade

**Kalemegdan & Belgrade Fortress** The main (indeed, some will say the only) sight in town is the fortress and park on top of the hill strategically overlooking the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers. Built over many centuries, it was handed over by the Ottomans to Serbia in 1867, and the military field in front of the fortress (*Kalemegdan* in Turkish) was turned into a park in the 19th century. The mound was called 'hill of contemplation' by the Turks, and you'll see modern Belgraders using it for exactly that nowadays, as it's the main spot for meeting and greeting, jogging and snogging.

**Princess Ljubica's Konak Sima Markovic 8.** Princess Ljubica Obrenovic moved into this *konak* (a Turkish-style residence) just after its completion in 1831 and lived here for 10 years. Since then it has been used for other purposes, but it was restored in the 1970s and turned into a museum. The rooms now reflect different styles of decoration, ranging from Ottoman to Biedermeier. Especially interesting are the early 19th century Turkish-style rooms with beautifully carved furniture. In the stary-ceilinged hamam (Turkish bath) you may be wondering where the tub was. The whole room was the tub: note the small drainage gutter carved into the outer floor tiles. The raised marble slab would have been heated (as well as the floor), and the Princess would have been soaped and massaged on top of it, back in the good old days.

**Skadarlija Skandarska and around.** On your map you'll see an orderly grid of streets stretching down from Kalemegdan Fortress that breaks up into complete chaos just southeast of Francuska - this area is Skadarlija, Belgrade's bohemian area. Skadarska street still follows the pattern of the city wall - it was once the ditch outside the walls where gypsy families had set up houses, later replaced by small dwellings for craftsmen. Now famous for 'national' restaurants, its irregularly cobbled surface attracts many a stumbling tourist.

## Tourist Information

**Tourist Information Centres Terazija Passage (passageway near the Albanija building), tel. 63 56 22, www.belgradetourism.org.yu.** Despite limited funds, the three information offices can help with maps (grab their 'Welcome to Belgrade' magazine), information on events (ask for their 'This Month In Belgrade' brochure), hotel reservations, free taxi booking and general advice. **Open 09:00 - 20:00.**

## Maps & Guides

You can get average-quality free maps of Belgrade at the Tourist Information office. For a good map, look for 'Beograd' (1:20,000 by Merkur-SV, 100din), available at the bookstore inside the Dom Omladine youth centre (Makedonska 22). The Tourist Information Centre publishes and sells two *Enjoy Belgrade* guides (both 60din): the handy *History and Culture* guide and the advertorial-filled *Gastronomic Guide*. The shop of the Belgrade Tourist Guide Association in Kalemegdan may still have copies of the 1989 *Belgrade tourist guide* (300din): out of date for practical information of course but useful for the history and architecture chapters and the suggested walks in Belgrade and surroundings, and also good for a laugh at socialist rhetoric.

**Yugoslav Parliament (Skupstina) Trg Nikola Pasic 13.** This building certainly has seen a fair bit of action. Started off in 1906, building activities were interrupted by the First World War; it was completed in 1932, while the *Playing Black Horses* statues were added in 1939. In 1945, the Yugoslav Republic was announced here, and more recently the building had its 15 minutes of fame on October 5, 2000, when part a crowd of 900,000 gathered in Belgrade stormed the building, throwing out fraudulent ballot papers, setting fire to a room or two and scooting off with bits and pieces of the building and its interior, while RTS (Serbian state TV) happily chose to ignore all the fuss. BBC's John Simpson reported: 'when demonstrators brought out hatstands, chairs and policemen's helmets from the parliament building, it was more in the spirit of souvenir hunting than looting'. When the new authorities later kindly asked the public to bring back the furniture, nobody was surprised that many did so.

**Zemun** If you have a couple of hours, grab a cab to the charming suburb of Zemun. Although now stuck to New Belgrade's highrise, the old town still has a dozy Habsburg feel to it, and looks remarkably old compared to central Belgrade. The fish restaurants along the Danube are famed. Sniff around the market squares and shops and then climb up the hill west of the centre to reach the scant remains of the 9th century Gardos fortress, now crowned by the wacky Sibirjanin Janko tower, built in 1896 by the Hungarians to observe the doings of the naughty Ottomans across the Sava. When we visited, it was closed, defaced by graffiti and guarded by a very vicious dog, but at least the restaurant terrace next to it offers great views of Zemun, the Danube and Belgrade.

**'Old Belgrade' Kosancicev venac and around.** The only bit of medieval Belgrade that has survived wars, fires and mad dictators is on the slope towards the Sava river, southwest of Kalemegdan. Here you'll find the Orthodox Cathedral, Princess Ljubica's Konak, the '2' Inn and, south of the *konak*, a few quiet cobbled streets that still breathe the air of Belgrade in better days, and also sport good views over the Sava.

## City tours

**Belgrade Sightseeing, Tel. 446 11 53/063 854 26 48, http://solair.eunet.yu/~rabotic.** Mr. Branko Rabotic offers different walking/car/bus tours of Belgrade or other parts of Serbia (the monasteries, Vojvodina, Topola/Oplencac), as well as upkeeping a good website about Belgrade. Tours are conducted in English, Greek and Serbian. Prices for a city walk start at €30 per group.

**Belgrade Tourist Guide Association Kalemegdan Fortress Information Centre, tel. 354 78 65, fax 62 24 52.** Professional guides can take you on informative walks through Kalemegdan Fortress, the city or even on trips across the country. Prices start at 1,500din for a 90 minute tour. Their office and shop in the eastern gate of Kalemegdan has a nice selection of commie memorabilia (see Shopping). **Open 10:00 - 16:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.**

**Jolly Travel Kneza Milosa 9, tel. 323 23 93, fax 334 18 43.** Tours by airconditioned car/minibus through Belgrade as well as other places in Serbia. Jolly speaks English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek and Russian. Simple tours of the centre start at 1,500din.

**River Cruises Jugoslavija Hotel quay, tel. 63 56 22.** Organised by the Belgrade Tourist Information office, two boats depart daily for a trip down the Danube, past Belgrade's centre up the Sava river until Ada Ciganlija island, and back again. The whole trip takes 90 minutes. Phone ahead for information on summer night-time trips with 'music programme' (200din).

## Museums

**Military Museum Kalemegdan Fortress, tel. 62 07 22, fax 62 07 87.** Guns, uniforms, banners, tanks and all others things that ruin lives and make little boys smile. Especially interesting are the ancient Turkish items (lances, a suit of armour) and the modern guns and cannons outside.

**Museum of Contemporary Art Usce bb, tel. 311 57 13, fax 14 59 00.** Although your taxi driver may never have heard of it, this large museum on the banks of the Sava opposite the old town was erected in 1958 and houses an interesting collection of 20th century Yugoslav paintings and sculptures. Lovers of the Paris School will like the Croatian and Serbian art from the 1920s and '30s. Incidentally, the museum was damaged by a stray missile during the attack on the Usce Business centre, 500m away. Open 10:00 - 17:00.

**Museum of Ethnography Studentski trg 13, tel. 328 18 88, www.ethnomuzej.co.yu.** A good presentation of Serbian ethnography: craftwork, traditional dress and housing styles across Serbia, including Kosovo and Vojvodina. The museum often has music recitals from different parts of the country. Open 10:00 - 17:00, Sun 10:00 - 15:00.

**National Museum Trg Republike 1a, tel. 62 43 22.** Trot from prehistory via the Greek and Roman era to the middle ages admiring utensils, artworks and jewellery. However, best of all is the collection of impressionist paintings, with works by Renoir, Tintoretto, Rubens, Manet and Picasso. Open 10:00 - 17:00, Thu 12:00 - 20:00, Sun 10:00 - 14:00.

## Churches

**Alexander Nevski Church Cara Dusana 65, tel. 62 74.** A mobile Russian army Nevski chapel was brought to this spot by a Russian volunteer corps in the late 19th century, and in the 1920s this church was built. The interior is blackened by years of soot, but the large white oriental-style iconostase stands gleaming.

**Bairakli Mosque Gospodar Jevremova 11, tel. 62 24 28.** The only mosque still standing in Belgrade was built in 1690 under Sultan Suleiman II.

**Orthodox Cathedral (Saborna Crkva) Kralja Petra 7.** The Neoclassical Serbian Orthodox Cathedral with the Baroque tower dominating the skyline seen from the Sava river was erected in 1841 century by Prince Milos Obrenovic, who also lies buried here. Opposite stands the looming bulk of the Orthodox Patriarchate, built in 1930s Byzantine style.

**St. Marko Bulevar kralja Aleksandra 17 (Tasmaydan Park).** The impressive yellow-red Serbian-Byzantine exterior hides an huge, bare hall with four massive pillars. Built in the 1930s, Svetog Marko is an enlarged copy of the Gracianica monastery church in Kosovo, and houses the tomb of Serbian Czar Dusan (1308 - 1355) and some 18-19th century icons.

**St. Sava Krusedolska 20, tel. 43 25 85.** 'Monstrous' is the word most likely to pop to mind when you stand anywhere within 1km of St. Sava. Even Gaudi would shudder at the time it took to get the church this far: it has been planned and under construction since 1894, albeit with a rather long lunch break between 1941 and 1985. Once finished it will be the largest Orthodox church in the world, if nobody else secretly builds a bigger one in the meantime. The exterior still looks ugly, with concrete and bricks showing, so give it another decade before you pull your camera out. Interestingly, the bells played pagan tunes like 'Jingle Bells' and 'Yesterday' when we visited in December.

## The NATO trail

There are not much local sources that will tell you about the effects of the NATO campaign against Yugoslavia between March 26 and June 10, 1999. Whatever your views on the events, you'll certainly be impressed by the results. Here's an overview of what was targeted and what can be seen. Note that taking photographs may not be appreciated by bystanders or guards.

**Avala TV Tower** The huge 200m TV tower on top of Avala hill, a Belgrade landmark just south of town, was targeted on April 30th. By taking it out, NATO managed to stop state TV broadcasts for 10 hours.

**Hotel Jugoslavia** Hotel Jugoslavia was targeted on May 7th because of the casino owned by Zeljko Raznatovic (Arkan) and some offices. The missiles hit the northern end of hotel, destroying the conference centre, the swimming pool and a number of rooms, but leaving the casino undamaged.

**Kneza Milosa** A stroll down Kneza Milosa will bring you past some scary examples of precision bombing. On the corners of Kneza Milosa and Nemanjina there are the twin giant buildings of the **Yugoslav Ministry of Defense**. Especially these were heavily damaged during the bombings on May 7, and the impressive ruins will remain a warning eyesore for quite a while. Note that the buildings that were hit are rendered completely ruined, while the neighbouring buildings only occasionally have suffered damage, although all windows within two blocks broke. Further on, near the Canadian embassy at N°75, is the **Yugoslav Ministry of Interior**, and across the street the **Serbian Ministry of Interior**. At Kneza Milosa 50 stands the **US embassy complex** that was deserted before the campaign, and was vandalised surprisingly lightly - here the elements did their job; years of no maintenance, rain, wind and snow have rendered the historical building on the corner unsafe.

**RTS TV Station Aberdareva 1.** Possibly the most tragic single event (and most shocking for Belgraders) was the bombing of the RTS Serbian state TV station directly behind Sv. Marko church. At 02:00 on April 23, 1999, a missile hit the technician's wing of the large building, killing 16 RTS employees. The shocking news was that the authorities and management knew that the building would be targeted, but still had the employees work there. Employees leaving the building during work, even during air raids, were threatened with martial court. The official who had given that order was nearly lynched after the strike (and later again attacked during the revolution on October 5, 2000). The 16 killed are seen as heroes who were offered for political purposes. A monument overlooking the ruins from Tasmaydan park asks *zashto* ('why?'), lists the names, profession and ages of the victims and has a photo of the ruins directly after the attack.

**Tasmaydan Monument Tasmaydan Park.** Located near to the Pampers playground, this monument was erected to commemorate the children killed during the NATO bombings of 1999. The text on the monument, erected by the leading daily newspaper, seems to express anger and indignation towards NATO rather than genuine sorrow for the children in question - as proven by the fact that the text is both in Serbian and English, and by the careless spelling: *Dedicated to the children killed in NATO Aggression 1999. 'Vecernje novosti' with their reders.*

**The Chinese Embassy Bulevar Nikole Tesle.** Nobody here believes the claims that the embassy was 'accidentally' hit, and the precision with which most other bombs fell elsewhere will get you wondering too. The building was half destroyed by several direct hits. Four Chinese embassy staff were killed during the attack, causing a diplomatic crisis.

## Hotels

Keep in mind that as long as Eurocard/Mastercard and American Express credit cards are not accepted in Serbia, paying hotel bills will involve wheelbarrows and small trucks. Fortunately, all hotels accept cash euros as well as dinars. The hotel prices listed here include breakfast and the 44din tax and 16din insurance fees unless mentioned otherwise.

## Cream of the crop

**Beograd Inter-Continental Vladimira Popovica 10, tel. 311 33 33, fax 311 14 02.** In 2000, alleged war criminal and all-round naughty person Arkan was gunned down here. More recently the Inter-Continental head office has shunned it, and forbids any marketing under the group name. As a result, we were not allowed to review the rooms. However, the impressions of the lobby (a small airport would fit in it), the restaurants and the excellent sports centre convinced us it's something special. 415 rooms (singles US\$170 - 200, doubles US\$180 - 210, 30 suites US\$380)

**Hyatt Regency Beograd Milentija Popovica 5, tel. 311 12 34, fax 311 22 34, www.belgrade.hyatt.com.** A sure way to forget you are in Belgrade is to enter the Hyatt's huge temple-like lobby, complete with a forest and a river. Top-class service, elegant rooms and the excellent in-house restaurants make this the hotel of choice for the Western embassies and businesses in town. The two plush Regency floors pamper you with fast check-in, separate breakfast, lunch, snacks, magazines, even softer sheets and a great view of central Belgrade. 308 rooms (guest/studio rooms US\$195 - 250, suites US\$265 - 325, Regency Club rooms US\$245 - 325)

## Upmarket

**Jugoslavija Bulevar Nikole Tesle 3, tel. 60 02 22, fax 319 40 05.** *In Your Pocket editor:* "How many rooms does the Jugoslavija have?" *Nervous marketing girl:* "Just a moment, we've been bombed". Ten years after the last renovations, NATO did a little refurbishing by bombing the northern end of the hotel, destroying the conference centre, the swimming pool and slashing the number of rooms. Although when asked the staff still hasn't got a clue why the hotel was targeted, everyone knows that Arkan was the owner of the hotel casino. Since 2003 named after a country that doesn't exist. 185 rooms (104 singles 68 - 75, 61 doubles 90, 20 apartments 120).

**M Bulevar JNA 56a, tel. 397 25 60, fax 309 55 01.** M became a proud member of the Best Western group in August 2000. Though the halls are still 1980s brown/red, the rooms are modern and comfy with nice wide beds. Single rooms are quite small but acceptable. Quietly situated a 10-minute drive south of the centre, it's near Topcidar park and the upscale Dedinje area. 162 rooms (singles US\$70 - 90, 162 doubles US\$85 - 108, triples US\$108, apartments US\$108)

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**www.inyourpocket.com**

**Majestic Obilicev venac 28, tel. 60 00 4063 60.** Ideally located on a traffic-free street in the very centre of things, this is the best hotel in the old town area. Some rooms have been freshly renovated, others still sport the former dark brown colours of times past. Bathrooms all have bathtubs and are modern and spotless. On top of it all are the huge top-floor apartments, each with an equally huge terrace majestically overlooking the city. 82 rooms (46 singles •72.50 - 85, 26 doubles •100 - 125, 4 triples •140, 6 apartments •125 - 165)

**Metropol Bulevar Kralja Aleksandra 69, tel. 323 09 11, fax 323 09 91.** One of the better hotels from the 1950s, Metropol has an impressive lobby and pleasantly classically furnished rooms with tiptop bathrooms. The large suites at the back have balcony doors that open to the great view of Tasmaydan park. 224 rooms (singles US\$68, 218 doubles US\$92, 6 suites US\$200)

**Moskva Balkanska 1, tel. 68 62 55, fax 68 83 89, www.hotelmoskva.co.yu.** The grand old lady of Belgrade hotels. With its remarkable facade, it's actually one of the few beautiful buildings in town. Character just oozes from the grand halls, suites and somewhat worn and weary rooms. 40 rooms are duplex, on two levels, effectively separating business from pleasure. The duplex suites are filled with antique furniture, and one room is adorned with the large painting that the artist H. Wagner settled his bill with. Nowadays, that won't impress them. 135 rooms (49 singles •49 - 104, 78 doubles •105 - 130, 2 suites •104, 6 apartments •200).

**Palace Toplicin venac 2, tel. 63 72 22, fax 18 44 58, www.palacehotel.co.yu.** Very central, and with reasonable prices for what is on offer, the hotel appeals to business-types as well as tourists. The rooms, like Serbia, are in process of renovation, and some have bathrooms bigger than the room itself - we suggest you throw a party. 85 rooms (35 singles US\$71, 35 doubles US\$92, 15 suites US\$132)

**Slavija Lux Svetog Save 2, tel. 444 14 22, fax 43 15 17.** What can you expect from a hotel that still has the USSR mentioned on the in-room list of country telephone codes? The first thing that hits you is the horrendous purple carpet in the halls, mismatching nicely with the dark brown panelling. The rooms and apartments are meant to be swank, but look closer and see that everything is worn at the edges. 96 rooms (24 singles US\$115, 60 doubles US\$150, 12 suites US\$250)

## Mid-range

**Astorija Milovana Milovanovica 1, tel. 64 54 22, fax 68 64 37.** A dull building opposite the train station hides a worn hotel, that is just about acceptable for budget travellers. The single rooms are small and small stale, while the doubles are utterly forgettable. The large triple rooms could be interesting if you can put up with the shabby bathroom. 81 rooms (15 singles •30.50 - 33.50, 57 doubles •33.50 - 59, 5 triples •78, 4 apartments •93.50)

**Balkan Prizrenska 2, tel. 68 74 66, fax 68 75 81.** Balkan stands for small, noisy rooms, 1970s furnishings, a receptionist who will happily discuss the ups and downs of German football, and brochures printed in the time that *rogue state* simply indicated the way you felt after a heavy night of boozing. (Singles •25.50, doubles •34, triples •46.50, apartments •56.50)

**Excelsior Kneza Milosa 5, tel. 323 13 81, fax 323 19 51.** Near the centres of current-day (parliament) and former power (Defence Ministry ruins), the friendly receptionist just couldn't wait for privatisation and renovations to hit his hotel. Excelsior's high rooms overlook a busy street and a park, and though in need of a face-lift, are acceptable. 80 rooms (singles •40, doubles •60, suites •75)



**Kasina Terazije 25**, tel. 323 55 74, fax 323 82 57. Set in the ugly row of modern buildings along Terazija, Kasina has old-fashioned, bland rooms permeated with the drone of traffic out front. The singles are rather small, but the doubles and the newly renovated blue apartments (with TV, fridge and renovated bathrooms too) are worth the trouble. 84 rooms (26 singles •30 - 45, 43 doubles •50 - 65, 9 triples •60 - 75, 6 apartments •67 - 75)

**Park Njegoseva 4**, tel. 323 47 23, fax 323 30 29. Not bad at all - situated on the edge of the city, but in the middle of a nice little concentration of cafés and bars, the Park has simple, nice-looking rooms and is far enough from busy Kralja Milana to be quiet. 130 rooms (45 singles US\$41, 71 doubles US\$68, 14 triples US\$83)

**Prag Narodnog fronta 27**, tel. 361 04 22, fax 361 26 91. The orange and brown colours that once decorated the crib of this *In Your Pocket* editor have been lurking all these years in the rooms of the Prag. Set halfway the station and the old town in a maze of busy, small streets, the Prag has cramped rooms with creaky furniture. 116 rooms (45 singles •25, 50 doubles •40, 4 triples •60, 17 apartments •500)

**Skala Zemun, Bezanijska broj 3**, tel. 19 66 05, fax 19 07 24. The self-proclaimed 'first private hotel of Zemun' is the only good option in this town just west of Belgrade. Skala's quiet rooms are equipped with lots of classical wooden furniture and are grouped around a covered courtyard, at the bottom of which is a pleasant, brick-arched restaurant. 16 rooms (5 singles US\$40, 9 doubles US\$60, 2 suites US\$70)

**Slavija Svetog Save 1**, tel. 45 08 42, fax 43 15 17. At *In Your Pocket* we have seen lots of bad hotels all over Europe, but this one beats even the ones we saw in Minsk, Belarus. Owned by JAT, it becomes clear that airlines should stick to flying planes. This hotel is where the ugly stewardesses get sent to die. The staff was rude, the carpets stained, bathrooms smelly, the lamps dangling from wires... enough. (Singles US\$30 - 50, doubles US\$50 - 80, suites US\$80 - 100). Tax (22din/day) not included.

## Budget

**Beograd Balkanska 52**, tel. 64 51 99, fax 68 79 59. We love grotty hotels, from the battered airplane model proudly displayed in the lobby and the 1970s postcards under the reception desk, to the ladies waiting patiently in the lobby for... you! The small, shabby and noisy rooms scream '1982' and 'renovate me' at you very loudly. 77 rooms (25 singles •25.50, 40 doubles •34, 8 triples •49.50, 4 apartments •42.50)

**Royal Kralja Petra 56**, tel. 63 42 22, fax 62 64 59. An old-time favourite and the oldest (1886) hotel in town, the Royal (formerly the Toplice) is worn and cheap enough to attract budget travellers, yet clean and central enough to be a serious contender for the 'best value downtown' award. The breakfast can best be skipped, the TV only works when the cable is kept in the socket by hanging it from the window and the pipes do glug glug at night, but rooms are spacious and clean, and the staff do their best. 105 rooms (singles •24.54, doubles •26.59, triples •36.30, suites •46.02)

**Union Kosovska 1**, tel. 324 80 22, fax 322 44 80. The best-value double and triple rooms in town are to be found here. Perfectly set in a quiet street just around the corner from Trg Republike, Makedonska and the Parliament building, Union is nothing fancy, but has spacious, clean doubles decked out with (Yugoslav) TV and a fridge. The singles however are small (so maybe get one at the Royal instead). All rooms have private bathrooms. 70 rooms (25 singles •25.50, 35 doubles •40.90 - 51.12, 10 triples •61.35)

## Officials

Find a complete overview of embassies in Belgrade at [www.mfa.gov.yu](http://www.mfa.gov.yu).

**Albania Kneza Milosa 56**, tel. 64 68 64. Open 08:00 - 15:30. **Bulgaria Bircaninova 26**, tel. 361 39 80, fax 361 11 36. Open 08:00 - 15:00.

**Croatia Kneza Milosa 62**, tel. 361 09 46, fax 361 00 32. Open 09:00 - 14:00.

**EU Delegation Padje Adamova 4**, tel. 367 24 11.

**France Pariska 11**, tel. 302 35 00, fax 302 35 52, [ambafr\\_1@eunet.yu](mailto:ambafr_1@eunet.yu). Open 09:00 - 17:00.

**Germany Kneza Milosa 74-76**, tel. 361 42 55, fax 361 21 97. Open 07:30 - 16:00.

**Hungary Krunska 74**, tel. 444 04 72, fax 344 18 76. Open 08:00 - 14:00.

**Italy Bircaninova 11**, tel. 306 61 00, fax 324 94 13, [italbelg@eunet.yu](mailto:italbelg@eunet.yu), [www.italy.org.yu](http://www.italy.org.yu). Open 08:00 - 18:00.

**Macedonia Gospodar Jevremova 34**, tel. 63 33 48, fax 18 22 82. Open 08:30 - 16:30.

**Romania Kneza Milosa 70**, tel. 64 60 71, fax 64 62 67. Open 07:30 - 15:00.

**Russia Deligradska 32**, tel. 65 67 24, fax 65 78 45. Open 08:00 - 16:15.

**Slovenia Zmaj Jovina 33a**, tel. 328 44 58. Open 09:00 - 12:00.

**UK Resavska 46**, tel. 64 50 55, fax 65 96 51.

**USA Kneza Milosa 50**, tel. 361 93 44, fax 361 86 84, [www.usemb-belgrade.rpo.at](http://www.usemb-belgrade.rpo.at). Open 08:30 - 17:00.

## Hostels

The local Hostelling International office is the central point for booking beds in the Jelica Milovanovic and Slavija hostels. You need to be a HI member to make use of the two hostels, but they're flexible about it, and can also sell you the HI membership (150-300din). Contact HI at Ferjale Savez Beograd, Dom Mladost, Makedonska 22, 2nd floor, room 3, tel. 323 12 68, fax 322 07 62, [www.hostels.org.yu](http://www.hostels.org.yu) (walk through café Living Room to the elevators of the high-rise). They also run a new hostel in Novi Sad: Hostel Ribnjak, Bld Mihail Pupin 19, tel. (+381-21) 253 39.

**Jelica Milovanovic Krunska 8**, tel. 323 12 68, fax 322 07 62, [www.hostels.org.yu](http://www.hostels.org.yu). Centrally located 300m from the Parliament building and a 10-15 minute walk from the station, Belgrade's newly renovated summer hostel is one of few places offering respite from the pricey hotels in town. The 3-4 bedded rooms have private showers while the 4-6 bedded rooms share both showers and toilets on the hall. Officially you need to be a member of Hostelling International to sleep here. Open June 20 - August 31. Reception open 08:00 - 12:00, 17:00 - 23:00. 4 rooms (2 singles 9, 2 doubles 15). 3-4 bedded rooms •9.20/bed, 4-6 bedded rooms •7.66/bed. Groups •7.66/ person. Breakfast not included.

**Slavija Hostel Svetog Save 1**, tel. 323 12 68. Book via the Hostelling International office to get a two-star room at the rather ghastly Slavija hotel for \$11.50/ person. You need to book via HI and be a member to make use of the offer. Otherwise than the Jelica Milovanovic hostel, this is valid year-round. However, see the Union and Royal hotels for better deals. 4 rooms (2 singles 11, 2 doubles 23). Singles US\$11.50, doubles US\$23. Breakfast included.

## Useful information

### Banks

**Societe Generale Yugoslav Bank Kralja Petra 14**, tel. 301 16 07, fax 301 15 55 (call centr. Modern banking facilities with a smile. Foreigners can open accounts here (startup costs 450din), which includes a domestic or international VISA Electron debit card. Societe Generale also performs Western Union fast cash transfers (information: tel. 311 55 25, [transfer.novca@sogcen.com](mailto:transfer.novca@sogcen.com)). Their ATMs are the only ones in the country to accept foreign VISA-compatible banking cards. Open 10:30 - 18:00.

## Shopping

### Souvenirs

**Belgrade Tourist Guide Association Kalemegdan Information Centre**, tel. 62 24 52. A true treasure trove of Yugoslav relics. This is where you'll finally find original 500,000,000,000din notes (now 16 billion times cheaper at 30din), photos of Tito, communist memorial pins and last but not least, anti-NATO postcards. They also sell normal maps, postcards and real stamps. Find it in the right-hand gate leading to the central fortress. Open 10:00 - 16:00, Sun 10:00 - 20:00.

**Beogradski Izlog Knez Mihailova 6**, tel. 63 17 21. Belgrade souvenirs! Shame on you for even wondering if they existed. Beozlog has the usual postcards, mugs and hats, but also clothing and some very nice posters of old Belgrade. Open 09:00 - 20:00, Sat 09:00 - 15:00.

### Music

**IPS Knez Mihailova 6 (Trg Republike 5)**, tel. 328 18 59. One of the best CD shops in town, with rock bottom prices (from 130din). Good selection of alternative, dance, house, pop and classical music. In the Beozlog basement. Open 09:00 - 20:00, Sat 09:00 - 15:00.

**Izlaz Makedonska 22 (Dom Omladine)**, tel. 322 25 49. Great for tracking down local and regional music. The staff will be happy to show and play what's hip and what's typical. Open 09:00 - 21:00, Sat 10:00 - 18:00.

### Department stores & malls

**City Passage Obilicev venac 18-20**. Open 10:00 - 20:00, Sat 10:00 - 17:00.

**Millenium Centre Obilicev venac 17**. Belgrade's swankiest, newest mall with countless little clothing and gift boutiques, cafés and two good CD shops. Open 09:00 - 21:00. **Sava Centar Milentija Popovica 9**, tel. 311 43 22. Exclusive boutiques in the huge Sava Centre building. Open 10:00 - 20:00.

### Photo development

**ProfiFoto Kneza Mihailova 47**, tel. 62 13 89.

### Books & press

**IPS Knez Mihailova 6 (Trg Republike 5)**, tel. 328 18 59. The best selection of English books and press is to be found in this shop below Beozlog including today's international papers. Open 09:00 - 20:00, Sat 09:00 - 15:00.

## Read more: [inyourpocket.com](http://inyourpocket.com)

## Getting around

### Roads

Roads in Serbia are bumpy but generally in a good state of repair. The speed limit is 60km/hr in towns and villages, 80km/hr on main roads and 120km/hr on highways. You're allowed to have an alcohol rate of 0.5 promille - equivalent to one glass of alcoholic drink. Be aware that most highways charge toll.

**Parking** in central Belgrade is not as hard as it seems - complaints from locals are mainly because they can't find a spot within 10m of their destination. Belgrade is possibly the only Eastern European city that has a good system of public parking garages in the centre.

### Public transport

Belgrade's public transport is in fact a highly successful state-sponsored effort to prove that the global sardine industry has a lot to learn about efficient packaging. At the same time, Belgrade is a Bermuda Triangle of European buses, trolleybuses and trams. In the space of 10 minutes you may see Swiss trams from Basel, French buses from Strasbourg and Swedish buses advertising a supermarket in Lund.

Most foreigners abhor the use of Belgrade's wheezing public transport and prefer to take the cheap and reliable taxis. Should you want to take the challenge, transport tickets cost 10din, to be paid to the conductor walking around the bus or tram. You can also buy a carnet of five tickets from a kiosk for 40din; remember to stamp a ticket when you board otherwise you may be relentlessly slammed with a 100din (•1.70) fine. Belgrade also has a metro, but it's not underground. It serves only to ship people out of the city to a large market on the outskirts of town, and other faraway places. Vukov Spomenik is the main station closest to the centre, and though trains should leave every 30 minutes, in practice this depends on the availability of electricity, passengers, a driver and most importantly the train itself.

### Taxis

Amazingly, Belgrade seems to be the only Eastern European capital where foreigners do not run a high risk of getting ripped off by taxi drivers (except those waiting at the airport and station of course). For western wallets, taxis are very cheap, and form the ideal antidote for the packed public transport. The starting rate is 25din, while the price per kilometre is 21-25din (28din at night and on Sundays). Reliable taxis can be recognised by the clear taxi sign on the roof, an electronic taximeter and a sticker inside displaying the rates. Some reliable companies are **LuxTaxi** (cheapest! tel. 324 88 88), **Pink** (tel. 9803), **Bell** (tel. 9808), **Naxi** (tel. 15 76 68), **Plavi** ('Blue', tel. 55 59 99) and **Beotaxi** (tel. 9801). We were advised never to set foot in a **Zuti taxi** (tel. 63 05 55).