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NIKOLAY NENOV\*

## EUROPEAN HERITAGE BUILDINGS TOURIST ITINERARY GUIDEBOOK

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**Rezumat:** În acest articol sunt prezentate Clădiri - monumente arhitecturale de secolele XIX-XX din Ruse care au fost publicate într-un ghid realizat cu ajutorul Primăriei Ruse. Sunt incluse clădiri cu valoare excepțională arhitecturală și istorică. Pe lista monumentelor arhitecturale din Ruse sunt peste 260 de clădiri remarcabile dintre care: Gara orașului, monumentul Pantheon, turnul, Muzeul de Istorie, Biblioteca, Primăria, Prefectura, Școala de băieți, Camera de Comerț, Palatul Poștei, Opera, Teatrul ș.a.

The following report presents the episode 1 “European Heritage Buildings” of the tourist itinerary guidebook-collection, presenting Rousse and the region. The project is realized in the frames of the programme for Tourism Development, financed by the Rousse Municipality.

The itinerary “European Heritage Buildings” helps tourists discover Rousse on their own. With the professional help of the tourist itinerary guidebook and the film on the same topic, the visitors can get to know the buildings in the central area of the town - part of the European Heritage Sign Initiative system. The number of buildings in Rousse on the cultural heritage list exceeds 260. The itinerary demonstrates the successful merger between the European cultural identity and the local traditions that has already become part of the European heritage.

### ROUSSE ROUTES

**What is this?** It’s an integrated tourist information product, funded in the frames of the Program for Development of Tourism of the Rousse Municipality. The project’s implementation is expected in the duration of 4 years.

**1. Bilingual guide with 8 routes in Rousse and the region,** which offers consumers opportunities for recreation, entertainment and visits to interesting places and stories of the past and present of Rousse: places of memory, of heritage, markers of known and less-known images of the town. Author of text: Assoc. Prof. PhD. Nikolay Nenov, Publisher: Parnas.

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\* Muzeul Regional Ruse.

**2. Separate editions of each of the routes - two editions per year, with a book and a 15-minute film.** The texts and images of the book contain the information from the bilingual guide. Each film tells about the corresponding route with the possibilities of television. The films are suitable both for distribution on TV channels and for domestic consumption. They show and tell about the objects, thus provoking interest for them to be seen on the spot or trigger a memory for previously visited sites. Production: Arena Media Rousse

### **3. Editions**

**3.1. "European heritage" buildings** – The Profit-yielding Building-Liberty Square-Alexander Battenberg Square-The Boys' Secondary School-Rousse Chamber of Commerce and Industry-The Regional Administration. (2008)

**3.2. The temples of Rousse - a rock of faith.** Church of The Holy Trinity, Church of St. George, The St. Paul of the Cross Cathedral, The Armenian Church, The Said Pasha Mosque, The St. Dimityr Basarbovski Monastery, the Krasen village Church (2008)

**3.3. The Fortresses.** Sexaginta Prista - Kyuntu Kapu - Leventa – The Medieval town of Cherven

**3.4. Living water.** Rousse, the spring of the Teke, The Lipnik Forest park, Obratsov Chiflik, Chiflishki han, Kaseva cheshma, the spring of Saint Marina in the village of Karan Varbovka, Slepcha fountain near the village of Ivanovo, the cave Vodna near Tabachka village, monastery of St. Marina, the village of Syanovo, Tutrakan region.

**3.5. Heroes of Liberty.** The Pantheon of the National Revival Heroes, The tomb of Zahari Stoyanov, the monument of Stefan Karadja, Baba Tonka - monument, The Zahari Stoyanov Museum, The monument of Liberty.

**3.6. Festivals and Museums** - March Music Days, The Golden fiddle, National Jazz Meeting, The "Sexaginta Prista" Summer Stage, Blues Jazz Fest, Open air Festival, Christmas Festival, Winter Music Evenings, Theater quay on the Great river; school theater festival, Museum of History with archaeological exhibitions, The Kaliopa House, The Ivanovo rock churches.

**3.7. Parks and eco-routes.** The embankment and the Danube river, The Park of the National Revival Heroes, The Park of Youth, The Prista West Park, The Rousse Lom Natural Park, Stalpishte.

**3.8. The Rousse Lom Canyon.** Rock-hewn sanctuaries and churches near Nisovo, Pisanets, Koshov, Cherven and Tabachka. The Orlova Chuka cave.

### **A little bit of History**

Man had lived in Rousse and its surroundings for millennia. That is why the traces of his presence are so many - tells, sites of ancient towns, necropolises, monuments. Few people know that the town and the region has an unique cultural heritage of national and world significance. Many are the places that leave marks in the memory - important for the local community in shaping its cultural identity. Knowledge about the existence of these objects helps for their protection.

Rousse is an old Bulgarian town, a port on the Danube River. Since time immemorial, people have settled to the river that gave them subsistence – thus forming the Rousse tell of prehistoric times. The found clay idols - protectors of life, are now preserved in the museum. The houses in the tell were arranged in lines, forming streets. Therefore, specialists talk about a proto-town in the territory of the Rousse tell - five thousand years before Christ.

At the beginning of the I century AD the Romans established a military camp here - a fortress, where the Navy of the Lower Danube gathered during the winter. In the Rousse Lom mouth the “pristis” ships were anchoring, giving the town the name of Sexaginta Prista - Port of the sixty ships. According to others - the denomination "sixty ships" stands for the number of vessels, which could carry one legion of soldiers. Recent archaeological examinations showed that a long time before the arrival of the Romans, on the high bank at the mouth of the Rousse Lom river, there was a Thracian settlement. It existed three centuries BC and its inhabitants used to trade in the Eastern regions of the Balkans and the Mediterranean - amphorae from the island of Rhodes, found on the site, proves this.

At the beginning of V century Slavic invaders burst into the territories of the Roman Empire and destroyed the Sexaginta Prista fortress, like the Goths had done before them. However, the Slavs made their settlements near the present town, and after the establishment of the Bulgarian state, the fortress on the riverbank regained its guarding functions. The archaeological findings from the First Bulgarian Empire period prove the existence of this Bulgarian fortress and settlement.

In the pagan period the settlement bore the name Rousse (maybe - Roussingrad), by the name of the Roussalii feast. According to researchers, there was a cult to a woman - the patron of youth warrior companies, called Roussa girl and sometimes Grandmother Roussa. The cult reached us through the folklore. There were other fortresses on the Danube river with women-patrons, such as Grandmother Vida with the fortress of Vidin.

After converting to Christianity in the IX century, St. George was adopted as a warriors' patron. Thus the town received a new defender and was named Giurgevgrad. At the end of XIII century a bridgehead was built on the left bank of the river, and because of this two names of the town arise in the sources – Goliamo and Malko Giurgevo, sometimes Rousse and Giurgiu, as mentioned in different maps from the XIV-XV centuries.

In the mid-fifteenth century the Wallachian leader Vlad III took Rousse and liberated it from the Ottomans. It was here for the first time that Vlad III showed vast brutality in terms of the captured soldiers, as he impaled them. For this deed of

his, he received the nickname Vlad III The Impaler. His dark glory made him later known to the Europeans by the name of Dracula.

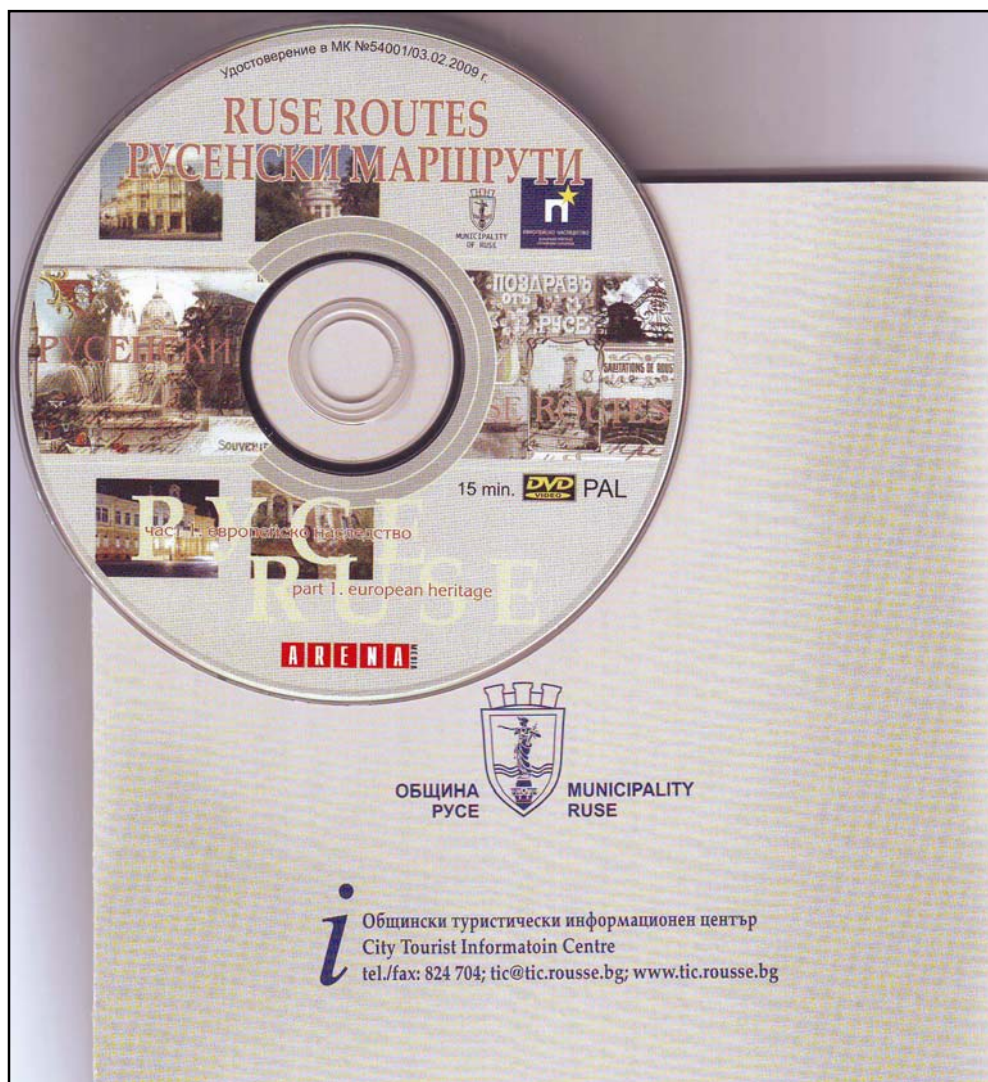
From the sixteenth century onwards the town on the right bank of the Danube (today Rousse) is known by its Ottoman name Rustchuk. The port and the good conditions for wintering of ships, supported the development of the town during the late Middle Ages. The Ottoman Danube fleet was situated in Rousse. The star of Rousse rose when, after the Crimean War in the mid-nineteenth century, the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia united into a new country - Romania. The new capital Bucharest is situated only 70 km north of Rousse. At that time the Austrian steamers enabled the popularization of the culture of Central Europe, so that "Europe" „reached” Bulgarian lands through Rousse – through the Danube River and through Bucharest. That is why, even before the Liberation, various European pre mieres for Bulgaria took place exactly here - the first railway station and railway line in the present-days Bulgarian territories, a modern printing-press was opened, a newspaper, a brewery.

As one of the main cities in the Ottoman Empire, Rousse gathered leading figures of the Bulgarian National Revival, which staid in contact from here with the outcasts in Wallachia. The mythical Baba Tonka represents the Motherland, whose children are heroes of the revolution.

After the Liberation, Rousse is the largest city in the Principality of Bulgaria, its economy is developing successfully, which reflected in the European vision of its architecture. The industrial development helped a rich cultural life to flourish. In 1897, for the first time in Bulgaria, in Rousse were shown movies. In Rousse was formed the Bulgarian fleet – both commercial and military, who later became maritime. After the establishment of the first private bank, the first private insurance company – “Bulgaria”, was formed – because in Rousse there was something to be insured.

Today, the citizens of Rousse are proud with their European town, which gathered the elite of the Bulgarian National Revival, whose relics are kept in the The Pantheon of the National Revival Heroes; present-days citizens confidently draw their vision for development, based on the good example of the old citizens of Rousse, one of which is Elias Canetti, a Nobel laureate for literature.







# РУСЕ СГРАДИ

Пътеводител по  
туристически маршрути

„ЕВРОПЕЙСКО НАСЛЕДСТВО“



# RUSE european

Tourist Itinerary  
Guidebook

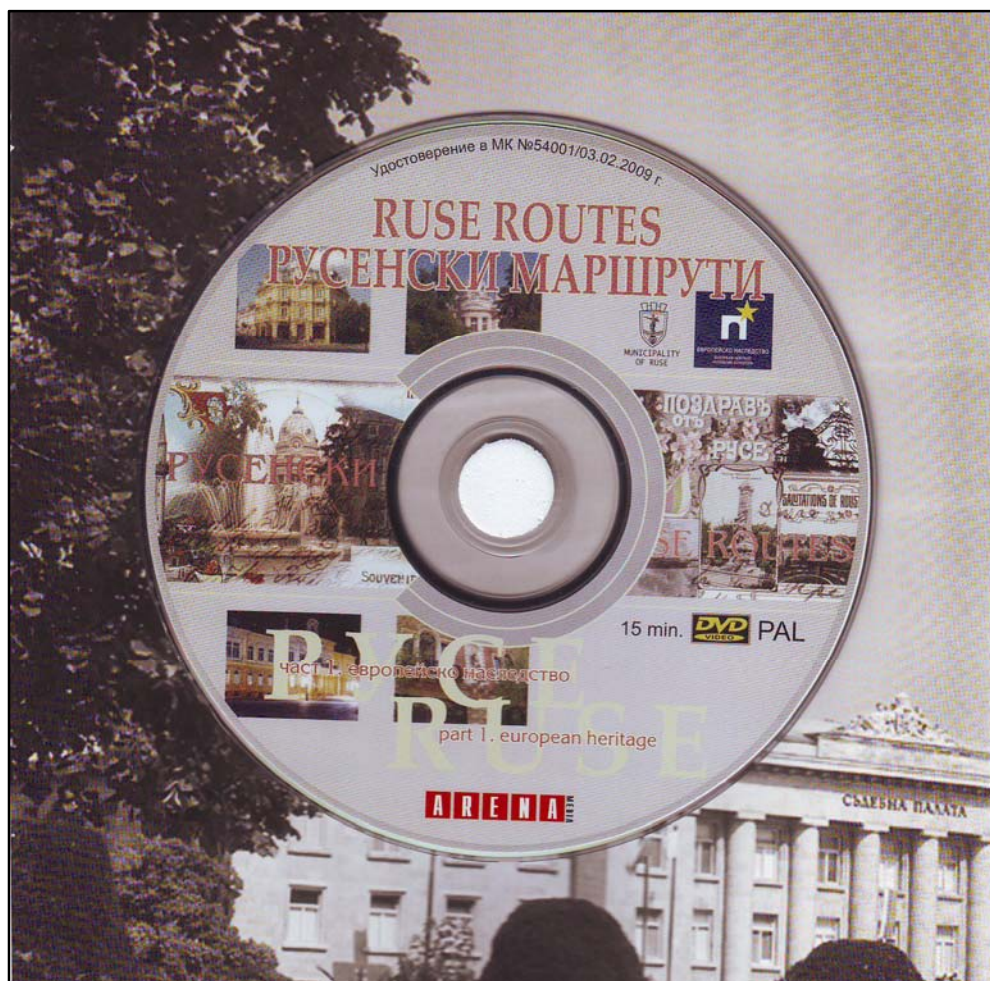
HERITAGE BUILDINGS

# КАРТА НА МАРШРУТА

## ITinerary map

The map illustrates a suggested walking route through the city of Ruse, Bulgaria, marked by red stars. The route begins at the National Museum of Transport, proceeds through the Court of Justice, the Monument to Freedom, the Ruse Opera House, the Ruse City Hall, the Holy Trinity Cathedral, the TV Tower, the Memorial to Bulgarian Soldiers, the Regional Library, the Regional Museum of History, and the Hristo Botev High School, before ending at the National Museum of Transport. The map also shows the Danube River (Dunav) and various streets including Prichunavski Blvd, Knyazheska St, and others.





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От площада се вижда Централна ж.п. гара, Телевизионната кула и Пантеонът на възрожденците. Той е издигнат в Парка на възрожденците – някогашното русенско гробище, където са били гробовете на мнозина видни национални герои. Пантеонът е национален паметник-костница.

**Работно време:**

09.00–12.00;

14.00–17.30,

*без неделя*

*и понеделник.*

За контакти:

082/820 998.



Ruse Central Railway Station, the TV tower and the Pantheon of Revivalists can be seen from the Central Square in the distance. The Pantheon was constructed in the Park of Revivalists, the former graveyard where many prominent national heroes were buried. The Pantheon is a national bone-vault.

**Work hours:**

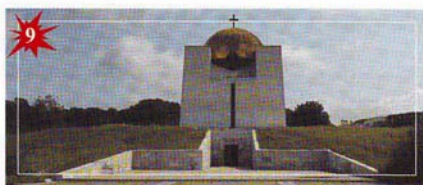
09.00-12.00;

14.00-17.30, closed on Sunday and

Monday.

Telephone:

082/820 998.



Северно от площада е улица „Княжеска“. В края на XIX век по нея е имало фотографски и модни ателиета, шапкарски и фризьорски салони. Сега изобилстват кафенетата. Улицата продължава до пристанището, като минава покрай някогашния Княжески дворец, а сега – Куклен театър.



North of the square is Knyazheska Street. In the late 19th century, that street was full of photo shops, tailor workshops, hatters and hairdressers. Now it abounds in cafes. The street leads to the port. It passes by the Puppet Theatre House that was once Prince's Palace.

Сградата на музея (2) е строена през 1882 г. за Окръжно управление от арх. Фридрих Грюнангер, същият, който по-късно преустройва софийския конак за царски дворец. Това е първата административна сграда у нас, строена за тази цел след Освобождението. Музеят представя на първия етаж археологически сбирки от праисторията, от римската крепост Сексагинта Приста и кастела Ятрус, а на втория – изложби, които разкриват детайли от модерната русенска история.

Мъжката гимназия (3) е построена през 1898 г. по проект на арх. Петко Момчилов. Като учител в нея Ст. Михайловски написва текста на „Върви, народе възродени“.

Регионалната библиотека „Л. Каравелов“ (4) се намира в сградата, строена през 1911 г. за първата у нас Търговско-индустриална камара по проект на арх. Н. Лазаров.

От турско време е останала сградата на Дирекцията на музея, зад нея е бил Затворът, в близост били разположени казарми.

Пощенската палата (5) е изградена през 1930 г. по проект на архитект Ан. Момов. Паметник на културата с местно значение.





**The building of the museum (2)** was constructed in 1882 for the **Regional Government** by the architect Friedrich Gruenanger. The same architect made the reconstruction of the Sofia City Hall from Turkish times into the King's Palace. This building was constructed as the first public administrative building in Bulgaria after the Liberation. On the ground floor, the Museum shows archaeological collections from pre-history and from the Roman castles of Sexsaginta Prista and Yatrus. On the upper floor are exhibitions that illustrate fragments of the modern history of Ruse.

**The High School for Boys (3)** was constructed in 1898. The architectural design was made by Petko Momchilov. The verses of the national anthem of the Bulgarian alphabet and culture were written by a teacher in this school.

**Lyuben Karavelov Regional Library (4)** is in a building that was constructed in 1911 for the first Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bulgaria. The architect was Nikola Lazarov.

The building of the Museum Administration is from Turkish times. The Prison was behind it; there were army barracks nearby.

**The Post Office (5)** was constructed in 1930 by the architect An. Momov. It is also a cultural site on the local heritage list.



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Сградата на **Природо-научния музей** е построена през 1901 г. по проект на Едуард Винтер за нуждите на техническата служба на общината. Паметник на културата с местно значение.

The building of the **Nature Museum** was constructed by the architect Edouard Winter in 1901 for the technical departments of the municipality. It is a cultural site on the local cultural heritage list.