

*Sophia*  
BLANTON PRESENTS

# ANCESTRAL STEPS

FOLKLORIC JOURNEY TO MACEDONIA  
AUGUST 21-31, 2026

Ten Amazing Days of:

- Balkan & Romani Dance
- Folkloric Workshops Live
- Music & Public Festivals
- Daytrips in Nature Feasting
- & Hospitality



Welcome to Macedonia's Maleševo region and my birthtown, Berovo. I'm your hostess, Sophia Blanton, from one of Berovo's founding folkloric families & international folkloric dance teacher. Since 2007, I've welcomed dancers, musicians & folklore-lovers from around the world to our summer festival season in Berovo: full of authentic music, dance, cuisine & seasonal festival traditions.

# TEN DAYS OF MUSIC, DANCE, NATURE & CULTURE

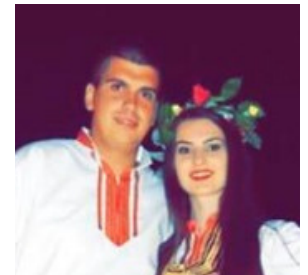


The ten-day itinerary offers you a mix of culture and leisure!

Six 1.5 HR Folkloric dance workshops with Macedonian & Romani teachers as well as čocek with me, Sophia. Maleševka, Berovka, Kopačka, Teškoto, Nevstinskoto & more!



Teacher:  
Milo Destanovski  
(Etno Maleš)



Teacher:  
Metodi Skenderski  
(Ansambel Makedonija)



Live music & dance interaction with regional Romani musicians such as street parade dancing, Charshija nights, & opportunities to dance & celebrate in Berovo's Ethno Square festival. Pictured: Etno Maleš

Nature trips with easy hikes & picnics in the stunning mountains, lakes & waterfalls of this storied region. Feat. special "zelnik" picnic!



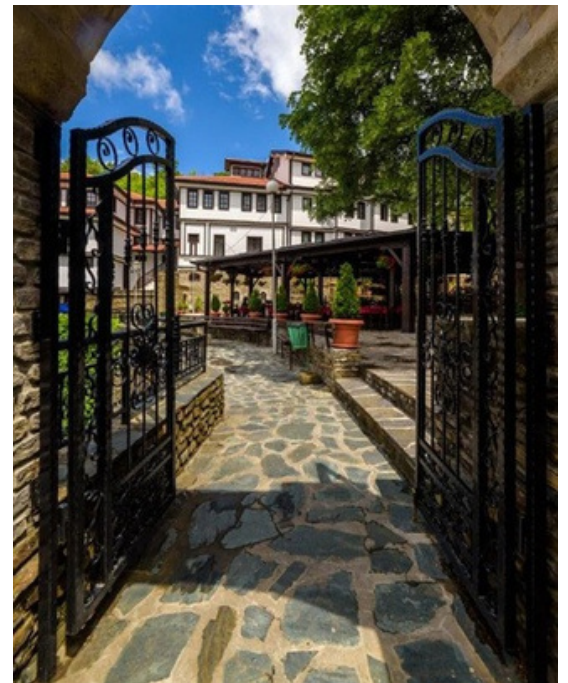
A hearty food experience featuring a seasonal array of regional cuisine & childhood favorites. Balkan dinner party at my ancestral home, musical lamb roast & zelnik picnic all included, yum!



Musical Fun with Uska Kan & the Kanturovi Family Orchestra

### 5-Star Accommodations

At the Hotel Manastir, next to the Archangel Michael Monastery (below) Less than mile walk to Charshija (town square)



### The Charšija!

Where it all happens this festival week: Great food, live music & dance. Musical parades, stages & impromptu surprises!

Cafés, restaurants, shops, outdoor stands & services central.



**Seasonal Traditions:**  
Sveta Bogorodica pilgrimage gathering, August 28, where large open-air cauldrons (kazani) of lamb stew (kurban) are prepared, blessed, and shared freely with all.

On the grounds of the beautiful Sveta Bogorodica (Mother Mary) monastery.



**Costs & Inclusions:** The following package rates include all land transport, lodgings with daily breakfast buffet, welcoming lunch, musical mountain picnic feast, dinner party at my ancestral home, special feast in the Romany neighborhood, all dance workshops & day trips, & all musical experiences. Music lessons for gajda, tapan & kaval are also available by request at €50 per lesson per person.

**Single Occupancy:** €2,575

**Double Occupancy:** €2,475

**Triple Occupancy:** €2,375

## How to Book:

- Choose your package.
- Book before February 2026 to receive a €100 discount!
- Pay-in-full receives additional €100 discount (Pay in full before February 2026 to receive both discounts - €200!)
- Pay 75% to secure your spot.
- Deposits are non-refundable.
- Pay 25% by August 1, 2026.
- Fee does not include air travel.

We will have a private Facebook group & a WhatsApp group to stay connected & informed about packing tips & itinerary/land travel details.

**Please book your flight to Sofia, Bulgaria** (the closest airport). Please organize your flights so that you arrive in Sofia on the 21st of August during the day, as we will plan for our land transport to leave the airport around 7 PM, or when all visitors have been collected. I will meet you at the airport with our drivers. Travel insurance is recommended in case you can't come for any reason. No visas needed for U.S. & U.K. citizens for Bulgaria or Macedonia.

When you sign up, please be aware that it represents your commitment to participation in the festival with ethical conduct & standards. As your hostess & organizer, I will do everything in my power to make your stay comfortable & very rewarding! As a locally-born kinswoman, it will be my pleasure to introduce you to my many relatives, friends & musical partners during your stay. I hope that you, like the many visitors I've hosted over the years, will leave with lifelong memories, new cultural connections, & lasting friendships.

Please email me at [connect@sophiablanton.com](mailto:connect@sophiablanton.com) for registration & any questions. Prior to the journey, I'll organize a zoom call to answer any questions & share last-minute details, but if you'd like to book a call with me to discuss any part of the experience, that can be arranged as well.

Dobre Došli vo Makedonija!