

# Bulgaria

THE SECRET FLYWAY

LIMOSA HOLIDAYS | TOUR INFO PACK



Migrant Red-breasted Flycatchers can be numerous along the Black Sea coast in autumn © Gordon Small, wildlifeimagesgs.com

**2019**      **Saturday 14th - Saturday 21st September (8 days)**  
**2020**      **Saturday 19th - Saturday 26th September (8 days)**  
**Small group tour with Robin Chittenden & local guide**

*Our autumn visit to Bulgaria's Black Sea coast is timed to coincide with the big annual movement of birds of prey, pelicans and storks as they bypass the Balkan Mountains and stream south towards the Bosphorus in Turkey. It's one of Europe's busiest yet - surprisingly - least known migration corridors. Passage peaks during the second half of September, when the range of species heading south along this 'Secret Flyway' is astonishing. This classic migration tour is also excellent for waders - plus Red-breasted Flycatcher, Red-backed Shrike and countless other passerines that make landfall on Bulgaria's coastal headlands. Join us for some terrific autumn birding, without the crowds!*

- Impressive autumn migration on Bulgaria's Black Sea coast
- Expect to see 150-175 species during the week
- Birds of prey, pelicans, storks and many passerines heading south for the Bosphorus
- Coastal marshes producing 20-25 species of wader most trips
- Black-headed Wagtail, Red-backed Shrike, Pied Wheatear, Red-breasted Flycatcher
- Small group tour - maximum 10 participants
- 2019 tour, our 40th visit to Bulgaria
- Expertly led by Limosa's Robin Chittenden and an English-speaking Bulgarian bird tour guide

## What's Included?

- Limosa Tour Leader
- Expert English-speaking Bulgarian ornithologist guide
- Return flights - London Heathrow-Sofia, returning Bucharest-London with British Airways
- 7 nights hotel accommodation in Bulgaria
- All main meals - with drinking water provided during the day
- Minibus transport
- All excursions, entry fees, tour based tips and taxes

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## Outline Itinerary

- Day 1:** Fly London-Sofia. Transfer east to the Black Sea coast. Pomorie (3 nts)
- Days 2-3:** Birding Lake Atanasovsko, Black Sea coast and marshes around Pomorie
- Day 4:** Pomorie salt pans, north along coast via Goritza Forest. Kavarna (3 nts)
- Days 5-6:** Lake Durankulak, Cape Kaliakra and birding the northern coastal hotspots
- Day 7:** Inland to Lake Srebarna and the Danube River. Night Pelican Lodge
- Day 8:** Nova Cherna marshland, ferry to Romania. Fly Bucharest-London

## Tour Overview

Corncrake on the hotel balcony... Lesser Spotted Eagles passing by right outside the bedrooms... Black Storks at eye level as we breakfast in the restaurant... a male Pallid Harrier ghosting in from the sea at extremely close range... 'falls' of Red-backed Shrikes, Golden Orioles, Icterine Warblers and Red-breasted Flycatchers on the coastal headlands... a flock of 1200 roosting White Pelicans... up to 21 different species of birds of prey recorded in the week... These are just some of the many varied highlights taken from our previous autumn tours to Bulgaria's Black Sea coast over the past 23 years.

The annual migration of birds of prey and storks over the Bosphorus in neighbouring Turkey has long been famous as one of the great European bird spectacles. But the fact that the majority of these birds - plus countless thousands of pelicans, herons and other migrants - must first travel south through coastal Bulgaria was inexplicably overlooked by travelling birders until as recently as the late 1990s!

As with migration anywhere, the make up and number of birds moving can vary enormously from day to day, and year on year. But our autumn birdwatching tour to Bulgaria is carefully timed to run during the period when the spectacle of migration along this 'secret flyway' is typically at its best. And by arriving into Sofia but leaving from Bucharest, we will have time to cover all the coastal hotspots in

Bulgaria's Black Sea region - as well as to visit the productive Danube River valley, too.

By happy coincidence, some of Europe's most important wetlands are also to be found nearby. The coastal salt pans, lakes and reed beds are a vital staging post for southbound migrants and can hold an impressive array of specialities. Great White and Dalmatian Pelicans, Pygmy Cormorant, Little Crake, Broad-billed and Marsh Sandpipers, Bluethroat and Penduline Tit are among 'regulars' we've seen before.

To the north, the coastal limestone steppe atop Cape Kaliakra attracts falls of migrant chats, warblers, flycatchers and shrikes - Red-backed Shrikes and Red-breasted Flycatchers can be particularly numerous! Being so little visited, we have good chances of finding something really special ourselves. Pallid Harrier, Eurasian Eagle Owl and Pied Wheatear are among birds to have stolen the show in the past, while forests inland of the coast can be outstanding for woodpeckers.

After six nights exploring the coast, we swing inland and head west along the Danube Valley, with views of the open floodplain landscape and chances of raptors and other migrants funnelling round the mountains to the south. The wetlands and woodlands along the River Danube can be real migrant traps in the autumn, hosting marsh terns, Black-necked and Red-necked Grebes, herons, pelicans and passerines. Here, Pelican Lodge will be our base for the final night of our tour before we cross the Danube itself and make an easy return to Bucharest for our flight home.

We first 'discovered' Bulgaria in 1996 and our groups have been returning every year since. Our autumn 2019 and 2020 tours will be guided by Robin Chittenden's fourth and fifth visits to Bulgaria, and Limosa's 40th and 42nd visits there. As ever, our tour will also be accompanied by an experienced Bulgarian ornithologist guide.

Join us for a week of exciting autumn birding in Bulgaria and thrill to the movement of birds of prey, pelicans, storks and innumerable passerine migrants that stream south along the 'Secret Flyway' every September!

## Daily Itinerary

### Day 1

#### FLY SOFIA, TRANSFER TO BLACK SEA COAST

Our September birdwatching tour to Bulgaria commences with the British Airways morning flight from London Heathrow to the Bulgarian capital Sofia, where our local guide will be waiting to welcome us.

From Sofia, we travel east along the southern edge of the Balkan Mountains to reach our first hotel, at Pomorie on Bulgaria's Black Sea coast. It's a journey of about four hours by bus, but we should arrive at our hotel in time for dinner this evening; (we believe you will find this infinitely preferable to the inconvenience of flying to the coast, with unavoidable changes of aircraft and touchdowns en route and eventual arrival at the hotel at around three in the morning on day 2).

We will pause to stretch our legs along the way and watch for our first Bulgarian birds - Osprey, Black Stork and soaring Great White Pelicans being among highlights seen on previous tours.

Our hotel for the first three nights of our tour is a comfortable contemporary property, close to the sea in Pomorie (east of Burgas). *Night Pomorie*

### Days 2 - 3

#### POMORIE: LAKES ATANASOVSKO, BURGAS, MANDRA & COAST

Twelve miles to the west, Burgas is a large port on Bulgaria's Black Sea coast - but there also happens to be a major raptor migration route right overhead! The second half of September sees peak passage here, with columns of birds streaming southwards. We should see plenty of Common Buzzards (some showing characters of the eastern form *vulpinus* or 'Steppe Buzzard'), along with variable numbers of Lesser Spotted and Short-toed Snake Eagles, Marsh Harriers and Eurasian Sparrowhawks. A generous sprinkling of other species adds to the mix, with Black Stork, European Honey Buzzard, Long-legged Buzzard, Red-footed Falcon and Levant Sparrowhawk possible.

The make up and number of birds moving will of course vary day to day (and year to year), but that such a prospect should have been largely

overlooked by travelling birdwatchers until so relatively recently is surprising - even more so when one realises that some of Europe's major wetland sites also lie nearby!

In fact, Bulgaria's most celebrated migration watchpoint - Lake Atanasovsko - lies within easy drive of our hotel. Despite being so close to the town, the lake boasts a wealth of bird life. Kentish Plovers, Black-winged Stilts and Avocets frequent the shallows and amidst the thousands of Yellow-legged and Mediterranean Gulls that gather at the lake each autumn, we should find the much rarer Slender-billed Gull.

In autumn, adjacent Lake Burgas can sometimes hold thousands of Great White Pelicans, often with a few rare Dalmatians tucked in amongst them. Nearby, larger Lake Mandra is a frequent haunt of the immense White-tailed Eagle.

The Black Sea coast is also excellent for waders in autumn and we have recorded as many as 25 species during the week - including occasional goodies such as Red-necked Phalarope. Turning our eyes skyward, we'll check frequently for birds of prey sneaking by overhead! The passage of warblers through the area shows terrific potential for eastern vagrants to appear and other migrants regularly recorded by our groups include Bee-eater, Hoopoe, Red-breasted and Spotted Flycatchers, Whinchat and Red-backed Shrike. The latter can often be abundant!

Over the open water, graceful Black and Whiskered Terns work to and fro above parties of resting wildfowl. It's the perfect opportunity to study the latter's trickier autumn plumages, while the reedbeds provide shelter for Eurasian Spoonbill, Great and Little Egrets, and Squacco and Purple Herons. *Nights Pomorie*

### Day 4

#### NORTH TO GORITZA & KAVARNA

Our first stop today may well be to check the local saltpans at Pomorie for some of the many bustling waders that pass through. Amongst the expected Dunlin and Little Stints, we may pick out Greenshank, Curlew Sandpipers and Ruff, with scarcer species such as Marsh and Broad-billed Sandpipers also possible.

Leaving the fascinating wetlands around Burgas behind, we then head north along the coast towards our next hotel, at Kavarna. Our travels today will take us through an ever-changing landscape - past sprawling seaside resorts with extensive beaches, along rockier stretches with cliffs and through well-wooded valleys that are a haven for birds. Despite the rather dreary sound of its name, in fine weather we will find that the 'Black Sea' is actually a bright azure blue, its shores etched with bays of brilliant white sand.

Although migration could bring us to a halt more or less anywhere along the route today, we will make a planned stop to explore some fine forest near Goritza. Short-toed Treecreeper, Hawfinch and a variety of woodpeckers are possible. In autumn, birds of prey follow the line of the hills and the main road here - some groups have seen Pallid Harriers and Lesser Spotted Eagles over Goritza.

Late afternoon arrival at Kavarna, where we stay three nights. *Night Kavarna*

### Days 5 - 6

#### **KAVARNA: LAKE DURANKULAK & CAPE KALIAKRA**

Set on a hillside overlooking the Black Sea coast, Kavarna is perfectly situated for an autumn birding tour. Migrants of all shapes and sizes follow the valley here and, if conditions are right, the daylight hours have sometimes seen birds of prey and storks passing right by us at eye-level!

At night, the town's lights act as a beacon to nocturnal avian travellers. As with migration anywhere, the results are at their most dramatic during spells of mixed weather, when anything from Night Heron to Nightjar, plus waves of night-flying passerines, may descend upon the hillsides and hotel grounds. We once found a Corncrake sheltering on the hotel balcony!

Having made checked to see what's 'new' first thing, we head to Lake Durankulak, a brackish lake within 6km of the border with Romania. Glossy Ibis, Pygmy Cormorant and Ferruginous Duck lend a distinctly 'eastern' flavour to our birding here as we sift through the gatherings of waterfowl and shorebirds.

In late September, the scrub-topped limestone cliffs of nearby Cape Kaliakra are attractive to passerine migrants. They also act as a 'bottle-neck' to southbound raptors and other large soaring birds, while high-flying Bee-eaters pour south almost constantly and Red-backed Shrikes pop up on seemingly every bush! We will spend time exploring the headland, which stretches out into the Black Sea as if beckoning Asiatic birds to make the crossing.

In autumn, Lesser Spotted and Booted Eagles, Honey Buzzard, Osprey and other birds of prey can become grounded on the Cape during periods of inclement weather, which can also result in falls of... well, just about anything! We've enjoyed some excellent birding here over the years and previous 'finds' have included Pallid Harrier, Spoonbill, Corncrake, Tawny Pipit, and Short-toed and Calandra Larks. Seawatching from the cliffs could reward us with views of scuttling Yelkouan Shearwaters and the enormous Eurasian Eagle Owl is also possible on the cliffs. *Nights Kavarna*

### Day 7

#### **DANUBE & LAKE SREBARNA**

If conditions are right, we may pay a final early morning visit to Cape Kaliakra to check for new arrivals that might have taken refuge overnight.

Later, we'll make the relatively short drive northwest across rolling fields, this time passing to the north of the Balkan Mountains, to reach the Danube River valley. Harriers may be seen quartering the fields as they funnel east around the hills, and sometimes Rollers are found on roadside wires. The landscape changes as we pass through Dobrich and we have a chance to see more Lesser Spotted Eagles and perhaps even the local speciality – Rook!

Passing by the old Roman town of Silistra we continue west to our final hotel, which lies close to both the River Danube and the wonderful wetland reserve of Lake Srebarna.

Lake Srebarna is a UNESCO World Heritage site of international importance for its breeding colonies of Dalmatian Pelicans, herons and many other wetland species, including Pygmy Cormorant. In autumn, many of these birds may still be present, but there is also a chance of

seeing other species such as Red-necked and Black-necked Grebes, Whiskered and White-winged Black Terns or perhaps Little Bittern. Our destination this evening is the comfortable Pelican Lodge. If time permits, we can take the short drive down to the River Danube. Beside the mighty river, there may be some late season dragonflies and butterflies to enjoy – or a wild-eyed Black Woodpecker in the poplars, if we are lucky. *Night Vetren*

## Day 8

### NOVA CHERNA MARSHES, DANUBE FERRY CROSSING TO ROMANIA, FLY BUCHAREST-LONDON

By taking advantage of the afternoon flight home from Bucharest - a much shorter journey than driving all the way back to Sofia from here - we should have time to enjoy some further birding along the Danube Valley this morning.

The relatively new marshland at Nova Cherna is a special area and may reveal yet more reed and wetland species. In autumn, the scattered trees can hold passerine migrants and we will hope to find something new.

Bidding farewell to Bulgaria, we then take the ferry across the River Danube to arrive on the Romanian shore. Once across the Danube, we are within 60 miles or so of Bucharest Airport. Late afternoon check-in for our British Airways flight back to London Heathrow, where our autumn birdwatching tour to Bulgaria concludes.

## Trip Information

**Group Size** Max 10 participants & 2 leaders

**Birds** 150-175 species

**Accommodation** 7 nights accommodation in Bulgaria, staying at hotels well situated for the best autumn birding: 6 nights in comfortable tourist hotels on the Black Sea coast (3 nights Pomorie, 3 nights Kavarna), plus one night at Pelican Lodge in Vetren, in the Danube valley. All rooms are en suite.

**Meals** All main meals are included in the tour price, commencing with dinner on Day 1 and concluding with lunch on Day 8. Breakfasts and

dinners will be taken at the hotels. Lunches will usually be picnics in the field.

**Walking** Easy. Short walks on good trails over easy-moderate terrain. Sturdy walking shoes or lightweight boots with corrugated soles for grip are recommended.

**Weather** Typically warm (12-25°C/59-77F) and sunny on the Black Sea coast in autumn. September is one of the driest months of the year in Bulgaria, but as with anywhere in Europe some rainfall is always possible. However, wet weather is unlikely to be prolonged at this season - and it does bring the migrating birds!

**Flights** We fly with British Airways, outbound from London Heathrow to Sofia (Bulgaria) and returning from Bucharest (Romania) to London Heathrow.

### A note about the flights:

Based on current airline schedules, we are confident you will find the above routing infinitely preferable to the protracted alternative of having a long wait in Sofia before catching the onward Bulgaria Air flight late evening in order to reach the coast - and eventual arrival at the first hotel around three o'clock in the morning on day 2! While the return journey with Bulgaria Air is no better, requiring an early start from the hotel followed by another lengthy lay over in Sofia before the onward flight to London departs.

**Ground Transport** By minibus with local driver.

## Tour Cost <sup>\*1</sup>

**2019** (8 days):  
 £1595 (inc flights from London)  
 Land only cost (without flights): £1425  
 Deposit: £300  
 Single Supp: £125

### Cost includes

- Limosa Tour Leader
- English-speaking Bulgarian bird guide
- Flights London Heathrow-Sofia, returning Bucharest-London with British Airways
- 7 nights hotel accommodation in Bulgaria
- All main meals (with drinking water provided)
- Minibus transport
- All excursions, entry fees, tour based tips and taxes
- Map & Limosa checklist of birds

### Cost excludes

Insurance, drinks, airport/in-flight meals and snacks & other items of a personal nature.

<sup>\*1</sup> **2019 tour costs shown. Please note costs for our 2020 tour TBA (available summer 2019)**

## About Your Guides

**Robin Chittenden** Robin is a principal Limosa guide who lives in Norfolk with his wife and family. He is an excellent ornithologist and all-round naturalist with a wide-ranging repertoire of Limosa tours. Well known as a top wildlife photographer, Robin is photographic consultant for British Birds magazine and one of the wildlife photographers for Natural England. When he's not busy guiding for Limosa or out and about with his camera, he runs Birdline East Anglia, the regional information service for birdwatchers. Robin's travels for Limosa have taken him everywhere from Trinidad & Tobago to Gambia and Sri Lanka, and he has visited Eastern Europe many times for us, with personal favourites being our tours to Romania (where he has led 7 times) and Bulgaria. Our September 2019 and 2020 tours will be Robin's 4th and 5th visits to Bulgaria for Limosa.

**Local Guide** Our tour will be accompanied throughout by an experienced English-speaking

**Bulgarian ornithologist guide** supplied by our specialist local agent.

## Financial Security

Limosa Holidays is a fully bonded Tour Operator and a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO). We hold an ATOL (Air Tour Operators Licence) granted by the CAA, providing for your protection in the event of Limosa Holidays' insolvency. Our ATOL licence number is ATOL 2950.

For tours not including the cost of a flight from the UK or for holidays booked by you as 'Land Only', all payments made to us are fully bonded through the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT). Our ABTOT membership number is 5230. For details please see our brochure or website: <http://www.limosaholidays.co.uk/financial-protection>

## Limosa Loyalty Discount

We are proud of the number of loyal customers who travel regularly with us. As our way of saying 'thank you', we offer a **Frequent Travel Discount**. Under the scheme, everyone who takes four trips with us is entitled to claim a 5% discount on their 5th trip. <sup>\*1</sup>

<sup>\*1</sup> **Conditions:** *This offer applies to the basic tour cost only and excludes certain commission-based trips, extra costs such as additional flights or accommodation, private extensions and cancellations.* • *Discounts cannot be given in lieu of tour deposits or off the cost of single room supplements.* • **Please note discount must be requested at time of booking!**

## How To Book

Check availability on our website or with our office. We are happy to hold Provisional Reservations for up to 7 days. After this, we do require a Booking Form and deposit to confirm your place on tour. Any unconfirmed space will be released.

### Book Online, by Phone or by Post

You can book and pay the deposit simply and securely **Online** via our website, using the

‘**Book This Tour**’ button on the relevant tour page or the **Booking** tab at the top of the page.

Telephone bookings must be confirmed in writing by completion of a Booking Form (there's one tucked inside every brochure or as a PDF download from our website), which can be mailed to us in the time honoured way.

**Please be sure to read our Booking Conditions and General Information prior to booking.** These can be found in full in the footer on every page on our website (or available from our office on request); also in an abridged form at the back of our brochure.

## When to Book

Early booking is advised since flights and accommodation are much more easily secured well in advance. To encourage early booking, we are pleased to offer an **Early Bird Discount** - see our current brochure or website for details.

All our tours are limited to small group sizes. So they can fill up quickly - sometimes even before our new brochure comes out! Single rooms in particular can often be in short supply and among the first to go, so do try to plan well ahead if you definitely require one of these.

**Last-minute Bookings:** We inevitably receive a few unexpected cancellations over the course of a season so it is always worth enquiring about vacancies on any tour - even for those departing in just a few weeks!

## Payments

**Deposit:** The amount of **booking deposit** per person is shown alongside every tour. We accept deposit payments by **electronic bank transfer** (please ask for our bank details), **UK debit card** and **cheque** (made payable to *Limosa Holidays* and drawn on a UK bank in GBPounds Sterling).

We also accept Visa and MasterCard credit cards for payment of Booking Deposits only.

**Balance:** Full payment of the **tour balance** is due not later than 12 weeks prior to departure (20 weeks in the case of certain tours such as cruises or those involving rail travel). We will send you an invoice before the balance is due.

We accept balance payments and any additional payments (e.g. interim flight deposits, flight upgrades, extra hotels etc) by **electronic bank transfer (BACS), UK debit card or cheque.**

### Payment by overseas customers

These must be in GB Pounds Sterling and may be made by electronic transfer direct to our bank (*please ask for our bank details*).

We do **not** accept cheques on US Banks in US Dollars, or cheques in Euros or Eurocheques.

### Credit cards - please note:

(i) *We do NOT accept credit cards or overseas debit cards for balance payments (including any additional or interim payments) from customers living within the UK or European Economic Area (the EEA is the EU countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).*

(ii) *For customers living in North America, Australia and all other areas outside of the UK and the European Economic Area we are able to accept payment by Visa and MasterCard credit cards or overseas debit card but with a charge of 2.5% of the transaction amount to help offset card company charges.*

**Late Booking Payments:** In order for us to guarantee your airline seats, hotels etc., full payment is required at time of booking for all late bookings (*i.e. bookings made within 12 weeks of departure*).

## Other Things You Need To Know

### Passports & Visas

For UK passport holders (for stays of up to three months), your passport must be valid for the proposed duration of your stay.

Although you do not need any additional period of validity on your passport beyond this, **when travelling anywhere overseas we always recommend your passport has a minimum of 6 months left to run after your intended date of return home**, in case of unforeseen delay.

**Brexit - Important Note!**

The rules for travel to most countries in Europe will change **IF** the UK leaves the European Union (EU) with **no deal**.

After 29 March 2019:

1. You should have at least 6 months left on your passport from your date of arrival.
2. If you renewed a 10 year adult passport before it expired, extra months may have been added to your new passport's expiry date, making it valid for more than 10 years. Any extra months on your passport over 10 years may not count towards the 6 months that should be remaining for travel to most countries in Europe.

The new rules will apply to passports issued by the UK, Gibraltar, Guernsey, the Isle of Man and Jersey.

• **VISA NOT REQUIRED by British citizens** to enter either Bulgaria or Romania. [If you have a different type of British nationality, please check entry requirements with the Bulgarian and Romanian Embassies in London before you travel to see if you need a visa.]

*Holders of non-UK passports - including 'British subjects' as noted above - should contact the nearest Bulgarian AND Romanian embassies or consulates to enquire whether or not they require a visa. If a visa is required, you will need to apply locally. If the embassy or consulate requires you to provide a letter confirming that you are booked on an all-inclusive tour, please contact our office and we will be happy to provide one.*

**Border Crossing:** British citizens entering Romania via the ferry crossing near Ruse simply need to show their passport to the border control guard that enters the bus after we have crossed the bridge. If your passport is not that of a British citizen, however, you must check with the nearest Romanian embassy or consulate before travelling on the tour. If you require a visa, you must apply locally before you travel.

**Note:** The UK and EU have agreed the full legal text of the draft Withdrawal Agreement in

principle. This sets out that there will be no change to entry requirements for British Citizens travelling to the EU or for EU citizens travelling to the UK during the Implementation Period (30 March 2019 to 31 December 2020).

In the event of changes to entry requirements after the UK leaves the EU on 29 March 2019, this page will be updated as soon as information is available.

**Health & Vaccinations**

**Compulsory vaccinations:** None.

**Recommended vaccinations:** For travel everywhere (even within the UK) we recommend you check you are up-to-date with protection against tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. Check with your doctor for current advice as regards the need for protection against typhoid, diphtheria, hepatitis B, which may sometimes be recommended for Eastern Europe.

Ticks occur in grassy, forested and wetland areas below 1400m during the summer months across most of continental Europe, including Bulgaria. If you are at all concerned by this, you may wish to seek advice about inoculations and other measures to prevent tick-related problems (such as tick-borne encephalitis) prior to travel.

The above information, together with that contained within our Travel Information sheets (sent to everyone who books), outlines health requirements for this tour. **Please note that these details are given for guidance only - and are only for certain diseases - and you must consult your doctor in good time prior to travel as to what immunisations (if any) are needed for your chosen holiday.**

For full and up-to-date health information we **urge everyone to consult The National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) website [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) prior to booking any overseas holiday.** NaTHNaC is funded by the UK Government's Health Protection Agency and provides health information for both health professionals and travellers, with information compiled by its own clinical and scientific team. You can search for individual country requirements, which are updated regularly.

## Your Safety & Travel Advice

An unavoidable aspect of travelling abroad nowadays is the risk it may pose to your safety and security. The best advice on current risks is provided by the UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO). In order to assess and protect against any risks in your chosen destination we **strongly recommended** that you refer to the relevant FCO Travel Advice - both prior to booking and regularly before you travel. See [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice](https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)

It is standard Limosa policy for our office to send a copy of the relevant FCO Travel Advice about the tour to all participants along with their Final Letter (ca. 2-3 weeks prior to the trip).

‘**Travel Aware**’ - staying safe and healthy abroad - is a travel safety campaign run by the FCO, and another useful resource. Go to: <https://www.gov.uk/travelaware>

## Travel Insurance

Good travel insurance is **essential** before setting off on any overseas trip. In common with all responsible tour operators, **it is a condition of booking our tours that all clients are fully and adequately insured before travelling overseas with us.**

Be aware that some destinations may require you to produce proof of comprehensive travel insurance (e.g. valid insurance certificate) at immigration on arrival in the country, so you should carry your documentation with you.

Your travel insurance should cover against cancellation, curtailment, missed departure, delay, personal accident, death, loss of baggage and valuables (see note below), personal liability and legal expenses. Most importantly, your insurance must cover you fully in respect of medical care and repatriation should you become too ill to continue with the tour, including the cost of emergency evacuation by helicopter or air ambulance should this be necessary. Note that passenger liability insurance covering the transportation that we hire may be inadequate; it is therefore important that your insurance cover includes sufficient provision for your dependents in the event of an accident.

**We recommend that you obtain travel insurance as soon as possible after booking your holiday to ensure you are protected right from the word go in the event of unexpected cancellation prior to departure due to accident or illness. You must inform your insurers of any pre-existing medical conditions (including those of persons not necessarily travelling but upon whom your holiday may depend) that may require treatment during a period of overseas travel or might cause you to cancel the trip.**

**Once you have arranged your insurance, please be sure to send us the following essential details:** name and contact details of your insurance provider, your policy number, expiry date and your insurers 24hr Emergency Assistance number.

## Important Things to Note about Insurance

- Travel Insurance does **not** normally provide sufficient cover for valuable optical equipment, which is often best protected under your own household insurance policy. If in doubt ask your insurers for advice prior to travel.
- Most travel insurance policies limit the amount of cover, typically up to a maximum tour cost of £5000 per person. If the tour you are booking exceeds this amount, additional cover can usually be provided upon payment of additional premium. **We recommend all travellers** check their individual policy limit to ensure the full cost of their holiday is covered.

**Arranging Your Insurance:** due to UK Government legislation, under Financial Services Authority (FSA) regulations, we are not allowed to offer or recommend travel related insurance to customers. Premiums can vary widely according to your age, needs, health, choice of destination and other factors, while many people nowadays have Annual Travel Insurance cover. For these reasons, we leave you free to shop around and pick your own policy, one best suited to your own individual needs.

## General Information

***www.limosaholidays.co.uk***

Our website gives easy access to detailed tour itineraries (Tour Info Packs), trip reports, trip photos and the latest Limosa News.

### Special Diets & Other Requests

We pass on all such requests to the airlines, hotels and other suppliers, and do our best to ensure (but of course cannot guarantee) that your needs will be met. Please be sure to tell us about these (in as much detail as possible) at the time of booking, to allow good time to make the necessary arrangements.

### Smoking

Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. For the enjoyment and comfort of all, we ask that smokers refrain from smoking in proximity to the group and respect our NO SMOKING policy in the vehicle, at meal times and when watching wildlife.

### Any Questions?

If you have any questions at any time, you'll find our office staff friendly, efficient, approachable - and just a phone call away, eager to assist you in every way.

Our office is open 09.00-17.00 hrs Mon-Fri, and can also be reached by email. In the event we are unable to take your call, please leave a message on our answerphone (24 hrs) and our office will contact you as soon as we can.

***Thank you for your interest in our tours.  
We do hope that you will be able to join us  
- and we look forward to hearing from you  
again!***

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