**Borovets**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Snowboarders

Families

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

4

**Intermediate Runs**

17

**Advanced Runs**

4

**Total Runs**

25

**Lifts**

12

**Chairs**

4

**Drags**

7

**Gondola Cable Cars**

1

**Parks**

0

**Pipes**

0

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

Unavailable.

**Overview**

Borovets, a small town with buildings clustered together in the surrounding pine forests, is Bulgaria's oldest winter resort and is also home to the highest peak in the Balkans, Mount Musala.

Most of the hotels, restaurants and bars here are gathered between the huge Rila and Samokov hotels. The skiing, which is suited mainly to intermediates, takes place in the Yastrebetz and Markudjik ski areas – around half an hour away by cable car – and in the local Sitnyakovo area, which has runs leading back down to the resort base.

As with Bulgaria's other resorts, the cost of a ski holiday is cheaper than most parts of Western Europe, although that gap has narrowed recently. Like other resorts in the country, Borovets has big expansion plans; the main is one known as Super Borovets – simply the creation of a bigger, better Borovets. The two main issues thwarting this development are increasingly vociferous environmental lobbying and the reduction of cash available for investment.

**Location**

Borovets is situated on the northern slopes of the Rila Mountains, lying in the west of Bulgaria, 72km (45 miles) south of the capital Sofia. Borovets is the country's oldest ski resort and is the initial point for climbing 2,925m-high (9,596ft) Mount Musala.

**Website**

http://www.borovets-bg.com

**Piste Map**

http://www.borovets-bg.com/en/tracks/trail\_map/

**Hit The Slopes**

The majority of the runs in Borovets ski resort are rated medium to difficult, with its marked pistes totalling 58km (36 miles) split between three areas: Yastrebetz, Markudjik and Sitnyakovo.

Accomplished intermediates and experts are likely to head to Yastrebetz, which has a concentration of fairly steep red runs up to 2,369m (7,772ft) in altitude. Once at the base of the area, the Yastrebetz Express chairlift transports skiers back up the mountain from the mid-station.

Mid-level skiers will aim for Markudjik which, like Yastrebetz, is around 30 minutes away from the town via the gondola. This area is home to Borovets’ longest run, the 12km-long (7.5-mile) blue Musala Pathway that winds its way through the forest all the way back down to the resort base. There is also a green run here along the top of the ridge, as well as a couple of black runs for experts.

Beginners and early intermediates can make use of the Sitnyakovo ski area near the resort base, which is home to the Borosport ski school – the largest in the resort. Beginners who are ready for the slopes can use the chairlift to access the long and winding Sitnyakovo Residence green run. Expert skiers, meanwhile, have a couple of black runs to explore in this area.

There are also 35km (22 miles) of cross-country ski runs, plus biathlon and ski-jumping facilities for experts. Four well-lit runs operate from 1,350m (4,429ft) to 1,648m (5,407ft) for night skiing, complete with funky sound effects.

The ski season in Borovets runs from mid-December to early April, with the most reliable snow in February and March.

**Borovets**

**Resort**

1300

**Base**

1337

**Top**

2543

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

Within the resort, a bowling alley at the Samokov Hotel and swimming pools in all the major hotels can be used by non-guests. Horse riding can be arranged – either with or without a guide – from Butch Riding School (tel: (0887) 660 119) (on the track from the road between the Rila Hotel and Tyrol bar).

Visit Tsarska Bistrista, the hunting lodge and former palace that is adorned with woodcarvings, 1km (0.6 miles) northwest of the Rila Hotel. It’s the main reminder that Borovets was a royal hunting ground just a century ago.

The nearby town of Samokov (15 minutes via the hourly minibus) was once the woodcarving capital of the region and has well-preserved paintings in its churches. Most major hotels can arrange trips to the 10th-century Rila Monastery and further afield to Sofia and Melnik.

**Family Fun**

Children aged seven and older can use the Borosport Ski School at discounted rates until the age of 12. Younger children can learn the ropes in fun surroundings at the Boro Kids area. There is also a crèche for children aged from 10 months to four years.

Fun activities for children include riding across the surrounding hills in a handmade traditional horse-drawn sleigh, or taking a guided snowmobile tour. The Rila Hotel (tel: (0750) 32295; [www.rilaborovets.com](http://www.rilaborovets.com/)) can arrange these.

**Retail Therapy**

Aside from a handful of small supermarkets, most of the shops in Borovets are those dedicated to ski gear, with the best selection in the basement of the Rila Hotel. This all-encompassing hotel also has a couple of souvenir shops, selling amongst other items Russian dolls with amusing caricatures of Russian presidents. Next door, art Gallery Bissera has a decent collection of locally made ceramics and paintings.

**Splashing Out**

After a hard day carving up the slopes, enjoy a manicure at the Rila Hotel or indulge in hot-stone therapy at the spa in The Lodge Collection followed by cocktails in its lobby bar.

**Apres Ski**

Visitors enjoy earthy rather than sophisticated après-ski in Borovets, with a plethora of British-style pubs located mainly between the Rila and Samakov hotels. Après-ski Bulgarian style is an evening at a *mehana* (traditional bar) with traditional food, wine and music.

Among the more lively venues, Buzz Bar (on the road between the Samakov and Rila hotels) is popular, while Happy Duck (just south of Samakov Hotel) has nightly live music. Many hotels also have their own bars; these include the stylish bar at Ice Angels Hotel (tel: (0750) 32045) and the cosy bar in the Rila Hotel (tel: (0750) 32295). The bar/restaurant White Magic (opposite Samakov Hotel) is owned by ex-Olympic skier Christo Angelov and is popular among the skiing fraternity.

**Eating Out**

Opposite the Rila Hotel, where the majority of restaurants are clustered, most eateries have a varied menu and try to encompass a taste of Bulgarian food, together with steaks, burgers and pizzas. Many double up as bars and most are modestly priced. A few snack stalls along the roads sell burgers and Bulgarian dishes.

La Bomba is cosy and good value, with an enormous selection including fish, pasta and pizzas. Next door, the Black Tiger is more of a traditional *mehana* with local dishes focused in particular on grilled meats. For a more romantic experience, the elegant restaurant at The Lodge Collection (tel: (0750) 33850) has an open kitchen and a varied European menu.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airport: Sofia Airport (SOF).

Distance to resort: 72km (45 miles).

Driving time: 1 hour.

**Getting Around**

The best way of getting around Borovets is on foot. Taxis usually wait by the junction at the Samakov Hotel.

**Hotels**

There is a variety of hotels in Borovets to suit all tastes and budgets, as well as apartment complexes for those looking for self-catering facilities. The vast majority of accommodation in Borovets is found in alpine-style lodges, with some newer, more modern additions. There are also chalets to rent.

**Alpin Hotel**

As well as rooms in the hotel itself, there are eight simple pine chalets – all with at least one large bedroom/living area, and some with a sauna. Alpin Hotel is located near Rila Hotel.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Borovets

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Bulgaria

**Telephone**

(0750) 32201.

**Website**

http://www.alpin-hotel.bg

**Breza Hotel**

The simply furnished double rooms at Breza Hotel are small, but apartments have a decent living area and there is a sauna in the basement. Breza Hotel is located north of the village, opposite the hospital.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

XXX

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Borovets

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Bulgaria

**Telephone**

(0750) 32360.

**Website**

http://www.yagodavillage.com

**The Lodge Collection**

This boutique hotel is elegant and spacious, with a luxurious spa and treatment centre, Wi-Fi connection in all rooms, plus a restaurant serving Bulgarian and European cuisine. The Lodge Collection is located opposite the Samakov Hotel in central Borovets.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

Main Street

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Borovets

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Bulgaria

**Telephone**

(0750) 33850.

**Website**

XXX