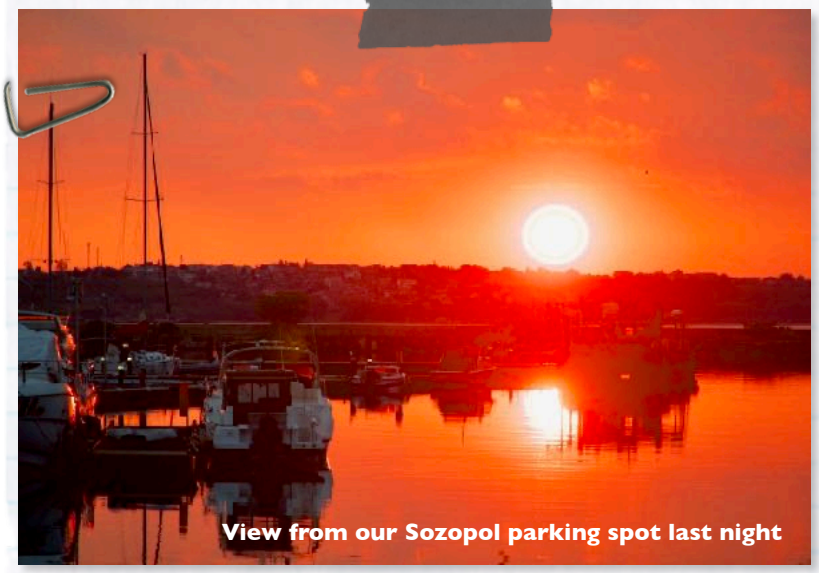
BULGARIA



View from our Sozopol parking spot last night

We have reached the half way point in our 5 month trip to Europe and have reached the most easterly and the most southern point in our trek through eastern Europe. It's now time to start heading back up.

Heading West

This morning we woke to a sunny day. We had been undecided about whether to stay on the Black Sea coast or go inland to the "Valley of the Roses". They are in the throes of a festival celebrating roses (of course) and a special day that allows anyone (including people from Australia) to help pick the roses occurs tomorrow and then not for another week. So, after a brief bike ride, where we watched a dolphin catching fish in the bay, we decided to head off to allow ourselves to be involved in the rose picking festival.

The three hour trip was via a very beautiful road - European Union funded - through a very broad plain. Mountains could be seen in the distance on both sides. We decided to find a quiet spot near the little village that was holding the "picking festival". Well, such disappointment. We drove into the dusty, dilapidated town and saw no evidence whatsoever of tomorrow's activity. Consequently we drove on to a larger town nearby - Kazanlak - the centre of the area. We found the Museum of the Rose and enjoyed its limited explanation of the history of the rose oil industry in this area. It is rather a big deal and has been since the 17th century. However not even the English speaking staff could assist us with how to find the location of the advertised activity in the little village of Rozovo. So, really frustrated, we decided it was all too hard and went to look for a overnight park. Tonight we are free camping beside a lovely lake with the sounds of a wedding coming from an event place just up the road. Toe tapping Bulgarian music.

ROSE OIL It takes 60 roses to create just one drop of rose oil. One drop is all that is all you need to smell like a rose.

ROSE OIL The oil is known for its aphrodisiac, antidepressant, antiseptic, antispasmodic and astringent actions. It makes you smell like a rose too.

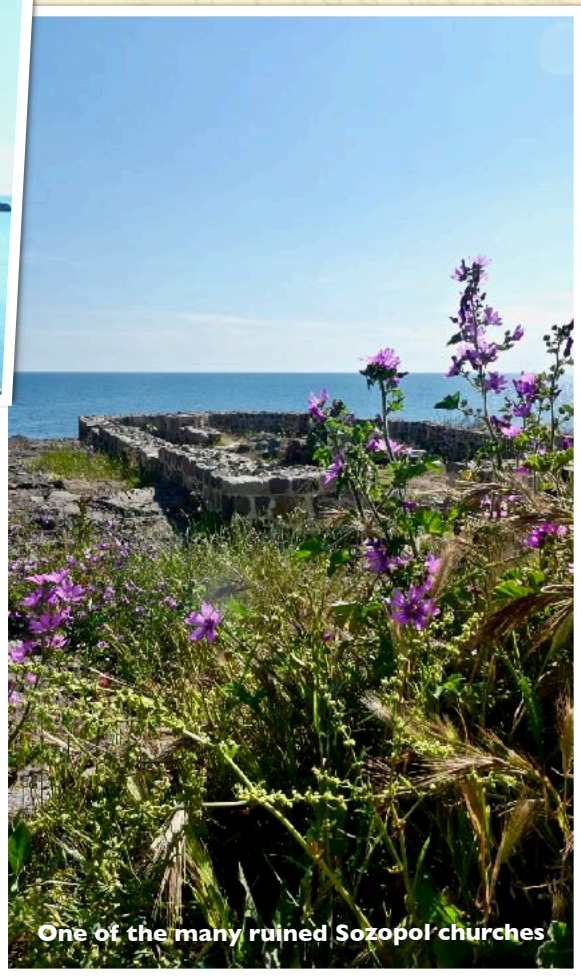
ROSE OIL Used in skin care products - soothes, moisturises, and cures mature or acne skin. In aromatherapy it is supposed to create a feeling of calm and well being.

Expectation feeds frustration …….

Sozopol harbour


Sozopol Bay

Sozopol harbour


One of the many ruined Sozopol churches

PHOTOS

Sozopol Bay

Our camp for the night beside Koprinka Lake