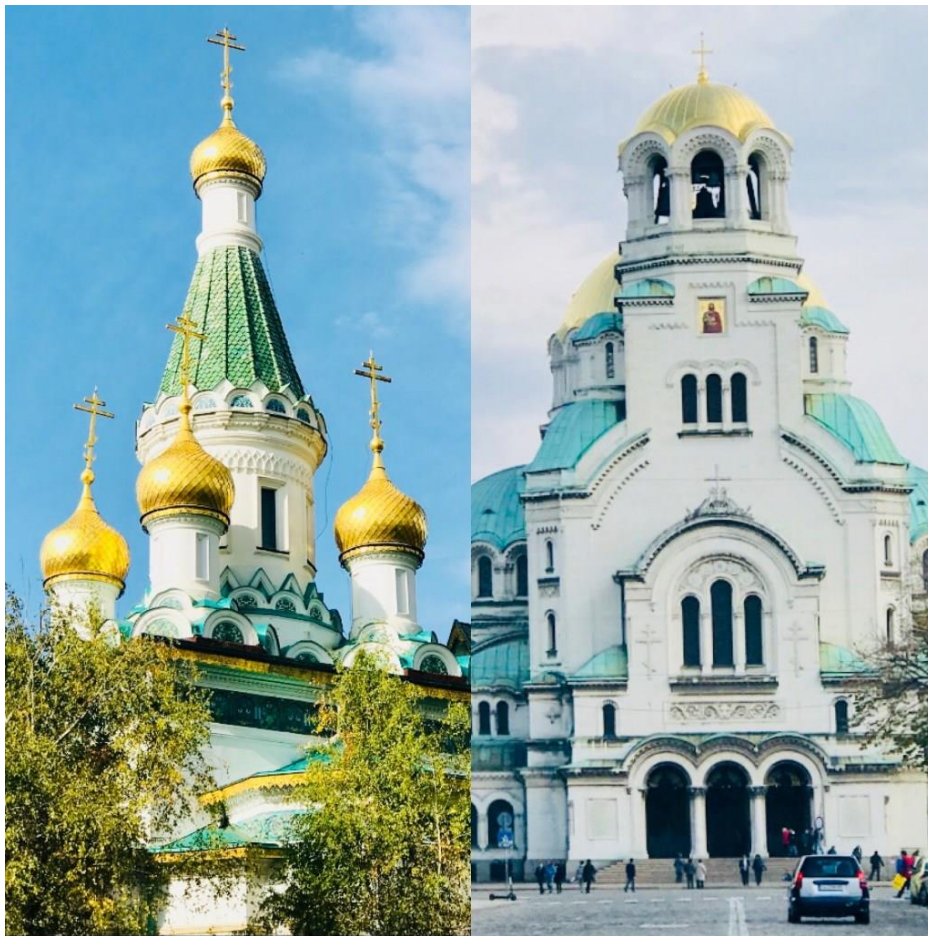


## Don't forget to visit these 2 cathedrals in Sofia, Bulgaria

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Categories : [Bulgria](#)

[Sofia](#) is the capital of [Bulgaria](#). Bulgaria is located in the center of Balkan and is the 13th largest country in the European Union. The region takes its name from the Balkan Mountains; that stretch throughout Bulgaria, from the Serbian–Bulgarian border to the Black Sea coast.



We combined Sofia along with our 5 day trip to [Istanbul, Turkey](#). The trip included the overnight train from Istanbul to Sofia. My first impression about Sofia, "This place is so lifeless". Anyone would feel this after experiencing Istanbul's hustle-bustle in [Grand bazaar](#), [Spice bazaar](#), [Galata bridge](#), and [Galata Tower](#).

One day is sufficient to visit all the major tourist attractions in Sofia. This blog contains two attractions

1. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral
2. Sveti Nikolay Mirlikiiski

## Alexander Nevsky Cathedral

[Alexander Nevsky Cathedral](#) is the symbol and the main attraction in Sofia. It is a Bulgarian orthodox church built-in 1904. Alexander Pomerantsev designed the Neo-Byzantine style cathedral.

The cathedral was built in honor of the Russian soldiers who died during the Russo-Turkish War. Later in 1879, Bulgaria was free from the Ottoman Empire. Hence this cathedral is a symbol of liberation for the Bulgarians.



### *Tickets and timings*

There is no entrance fee for the cathedral.

**Timings:** 7.00 am – 7.00 pm on all days. The [official website](#) has the worship timings.

### *Salient features*

My first impression was not great and it looked like any other cathedral. The exteriors were not appealing. However, the interiors were very beautiful and impressive; decorated with rare artifacts from all around the world. Few of the salient features are





The gold plated dome

- The gold plated dome is the highlight of the entire architecture. The dome is 46m high along with the cross.
- The cathedral houses 12 bells that were created in Moscow and then transported to Sofia.
- The central dome has the Lord's Prayer inscribed with thin gold letters.
- The cathedral interiors are made up of expensive materials like Italian marble, Indian alabaster, and chandeliers from Munich.

### *Market*

There was a nice flea market opposite the cathedral in the garden. It included many things at the display from mugs, cups, magnets, paintings, and household articles. The flea market hosts on all 7 days and through the year except during the rainy season.

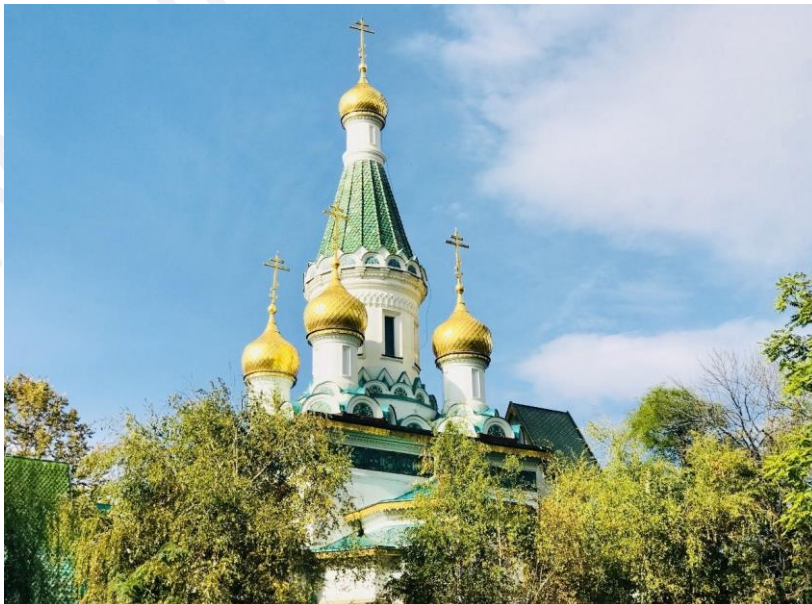


## Sveti Nikolay Mirlikiiski (Russian church)

[Sveti Nikolay Mirlikiiski](#) (Russian church) is officially known as "Church of St Nicholas the Miracle-Maker". It is of great importance because it has the power to make your wishes come true. The Ottoman Empire's liberation led to the church's destruction and the Russian embassy reconstructed it. Hence the name Russian church.



The Russian church is located just across the street from Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. It is hardly 2 mins walk. The domes are onion-shaped. These onion-domes are a symbol of Russian architecture. All churches in St. Petersburg included this design.





### *Tickets and timings*

There is no entrance fee for the cathedral and the opening timings are 8.00 am – 6.30 pm on all days.

### *Salient features*

The local authorities declared it a cultural monument making it a UNESCO World Heritage site. The church has five golden domes with the central one at a height of 19 meters.

### **My experience**

Honestly, Sofia is not impressive and feels dead to me. The Alexander Nevsky Cathedral and the Russian church were just like any other cathedral. But we should not forget the fact that it holds a special place in the Bulgarians heart. It is not worth traveling exclusively to Sofia. So I suggest you combine Sofia with other countries.

**Overall experience: ★ ★ ★ out of 5.**

**Time of visit: November 2019**

***" It feels good to be lost in the right direction"- unknown***

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