

Bosnian Real Working Steam and Steam Charter tour October 2018

This Bosnia Tour has been agreed with a Japanese friend and steam enthusiast Masato Tsuzuki who will bring a group of 6 people for the tour. As his sub-group is almost enough to guarantee that the tour will run, the tour has been designed around the kind of tour he wants and his preferred dates. However, the tour should appeal to others who would like to see Real Working Steam in Bosnia in October 2018. It will probably not appeal if you are primarily interested in steam charters including Mokra Gora in Serbia.

There are 6 places remaining on this tour to make a maximum number of 12 participants. Prices quoted are estimates only at the moment and are based on 10 people participating.



83-159 on a charter empty coal train at Banovici 'station'

Bosnia is one of only 4 countries that still have real working industrial steam; the others being China, Indonesia and Zimbabwe. Real working industrial steam is very margin these days and in Bosnia this is now limited to shunting with some occasional light engine movements on the main line. There are 3 shunt operations in Bosnia, one is a narrow gauge coal washery shunt using either classic Yugoslavian class 83 0-8-2 or a Czech-built class 25 0-6-0T and there are also 2 standard gauge coal loader shunts using classic German WWII kriegslok 2-10-0s. There are also two workshops which keep the narrow gauge and standard gauge steam operational which can be visited.

The tour dates are Monday 8 October until Sunday 14 October for the main steam railway tour with the option to arrive on Sunday 7 October or earlier and leave Monday 15 October or later for marginal extra cost. I also plan to offer a post-tour Mostar train ride and wine experience from Monday 15 October until

Thursday 18 October for which a minimum number of 4 people are required.

This tour is firmly focussed on the remaining real working steam at Dubrave (sg), Sikulje (sg) and Oskova (ng) and also includes 2 charters; a full line charter at Banovici and the Oskova standard gauge shunt with steam substituting for diesel. A second line charter at Banovici is an option.



Bukinje Workshop with a class 33 under repair

The revised tour itinerary has a guide price of €1740 per person for Monday 8 October to Sunday 14 October.

	morning	afternoon	evening
Monday	arrive Sarajevo	transfer to Tuzla	
Tuesday	Bukinje + Dubrave Real working steam	Sikulje Real working steam	Tuzla brewery bier keller
Wednesday	Oskova ng shunt Real working steam*	Banovici works and line charter	Hotel dinner
Thursday	Sikulje Real working steam	Dubrave Real working steam	Etno Restaurant
Friday	Oskava sg shunt	Oskova ng shunt Real working steam*	Banovici company restaurant + Oskova night shots
Saturday	Oskova ng shunt or extra line charter	??? return to Sarajevo?	Sarajevo Brewery restaurant
Sunday	Tram & Trolley explorations, walking tour of old city	free time	airport by 19:00 for the Japanese group or extra night in Sarajevo
Monday	option to fly home or extra days in Sarajevo Start of Mostar post tour		

* The Oskova shunt is reported to be using steam again after a change of manager at Banovici who is more positive about steam. (Sources: Terry Wallace and Alex Jesserer via FaceBook) However, if the shunt is diesel, we should be able to arrange (at additional cost) for the shunt to be steam.



Class 83-158 prepares for a charter train at Banovici Works

Extension to Mostar

Mon 15 October	train to Mostar	Mostar Including cheese and wine tasting one evening
Tue 16 October	explore Mostar and surroundings with tour minibus	Mostar
Wed 17 October	drive back to Sarajevo exploring the railway route (option to return by train) Option to fly home from Sarajevo or one more night in Sarajevo	Sarajevo
Thu 18 October	fly home or extra time in Sarajevo can be arranged by request	

Dario has suggested some activities the group may wish to choose during the Mostar trip.

Day 1. train from Sarajevo to Mostar, city tour

Day 2. some or all of the activities offered :

Tekija na Buni (<http://tekijablagaj.ba/en/portfolio/history/>) great for photography

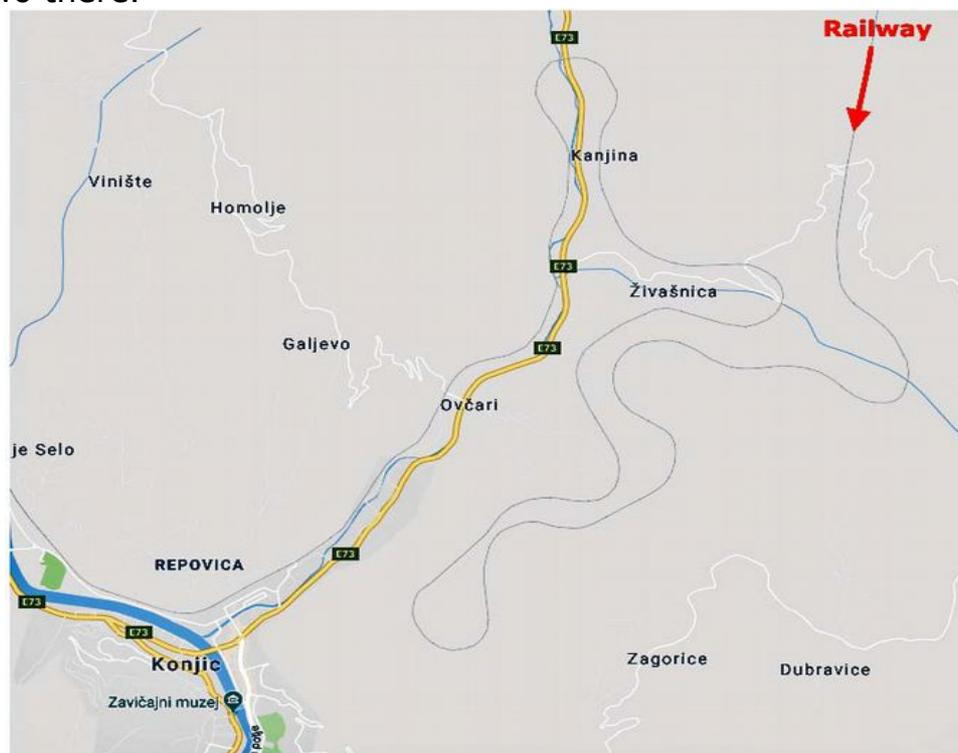
Međugorje (<http://www.medjugorje.hr/en/>) religious tourism

Trebinje is a small city with mediterranean charm and on the way **Stolac** - necropolis of stećak tombstones (<http://trebinjeturizam.com/en/> and <https://www.stolac.gov.ba/index.php/turizam-i-kultura/znamenitosti/radimlja-nekropola-stecaka>)

Cheese and Wine night in the old town.

Day 3. On the way back to Sarajevo on **Mount Bjelašnica** there is an old Bosnian village and touristic attraction which is good for hikers and photographers (<https://sarajevo.travel/en/text/lukomir-the-last-bosnian-village/422>)

I'd also add that near Konjic the railway features some spectacular curves that we can both travel over and have a look at from the lineside and hope to see a train or two there.



The railway loops east of Konjic

The guide price for the extension is €400.

Dario points out that in Bosnia it is difficult to confirm prices this far in advance. So, his costings have to be based on historic 2017 or 2016 prices which are no guarantee of 2018 prices. For that reason, we must accept that the tour price can't be confirmed until closer to the start of the tour. Should you pay a deposit to join this tour, your deposit will remain fully refundable should there be a major change to the tour price to allow you to withdraw should the final price become unattractive.

Please let me know if you are interested in this Bosnian Real Working Steam and Steam Charter tour in October 2018.



Shunting at Sikulje

Additional Details

The tour includes all transport by private minibus, accommodation in en suite single rooms, 3 meals a day, the services of a Bosnian guide and an English tour manager as well as the necessary permissions and charter arrangements. All compulsory tips are included but optional tipping of the guide and driver if they provide good service is encouraged.

You will also enjoy Bosnian food, beer, wine and slivovitz including an evening with music at an ethnic restaurant and dinners at the Tuzla and Sarajevo brewery bier kellers as well as accommodation at the Banovici Coal Mine company's forest lodge 'Hotel Zlaca' (breakfast and dinner included and paid bar available) and lunch and/or dinner at the company's restaurant in Banovici with it's impressive Tito-era mural on the wall.



Sarajevo tram at the main railway station terminus

The tour is reliant on real working steam for 7 of the 9 half-day sessions available. While the standard gauge shunts are reasonably reliable we cannot control decisions of the Kreka mining railway or the Sarajevo Thermoelectric power supply company that owns it. The narrow gauge shunt at Oskova is something that can be either steam or diesel but currently I understand steam is preferred. The Banovici coal mine company that operates the railway, is aware of the attraction of steam and keeps steam available for shunting, charters and tourist trains. However, we cannot control which steam locos are available or under repair. If you join this tour, you accept that real, working steam is uncertain. Should steam not be working normally, the choice will be to arrange steam charters at additional cost or to substitute more general tourism. While we will do our best to arrange the best alternative arrangements, we cannot be held responsible for any failure to deliver any of the real steam components of this tour.



The Tuzla and Sarajevo breweries both produce a very passable black beer - according to Peter, Chris, John and Nigel (and me)!

Deposit

Participants pay a deposit of £400 to secure their place on the tour. This will be converted into Euros at the 0% cross rate according to Oanda (oanda.com) 2 months before the start of the tour.

The tour price is full board for the period of the tour with transport by private minibus. Alcoholic drinks, snacks and other personal items are not included in

the price.



The east end of Old Sarajevo with a mosque and water fountain

A note on Deposits and Refunds Your deposit is a guarantee both of your place on the tour and also of your commitment to participate in the tour and to pay the balance of the price of your tour. Should you need to cancel your participation, it's reasonable for you to expect a deposit refund if that decision is made early enough. However, especially if a tour has been declared go with small numbers, one person withdrawing from a tour close to the tour start can push the tour from profit to loss. For that reason, there has to be a point when your deposit becomes non-refundable. I have chosen 2 months out from the start of the tour as that point. If you cancel before that point but after the tour has been declared go, your deposit is partially refundable and the level of the refund will depend on any expenses that may have been incurred in Bosnia on your behalf. In most cases, you can expect a full refund. In the unlikely event that I have to cancel a tour, your deposit is fully refundable but that, along with any additional money remitted to the Bosnian guides or me, will be the limit of my liability.

As the tour price has not been confirmed, all deposits are fully refundable in case you find the tour price when announced is unacceptable.

John Raby
February 2018



Kriegslok 2-10-0 33-236 shunting at Dubrave



19-12 on the standard gauge shunt at Oskova



83-158 shunting at Oskova



33-503 shunting at Sikulje



83-158 departing Oskova on a freight charter



Kriegslok shunting at Sikulje



The potential of night shots at Oskova