

The buried church Saint Demetrius in Patalenitsa, Bulgaria



The church of St. Demetrius, which is one of the most important medieval cultural monuments, lies in the village of Patalenitsa, located at the foot of the Rhodope Mountains. The temple remained buried in the ground for five centuries and avoided desecration by the Ottoman invaders. This is why some frescoes typical of the Renaissance period are well preserved. The legend has it that the church was discovered accidentally in the 19th century by a local shepherd who saw the top of a metal cross protruding from the hill after a heavy storm. Thus, the local legend, according to which a Christian temple was buried under the small mound, was confirmed. In 1870, the church was named after Saint Demetrius of Thessaloniki.