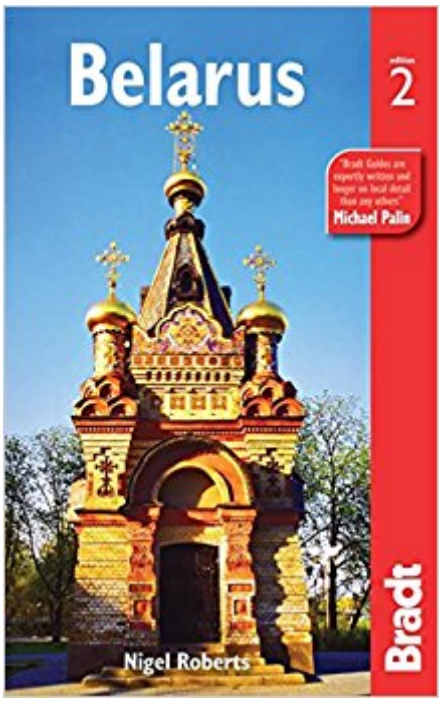
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Belarus, 2nd: The Bradt Travel Guide



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Synopsis

Mysterious and misunderstood, Belarus remains an enigma at the heart of Europe. This new edition of the first and only English-language guidebook to Belarus gives you all the information needed to get the best from this lost world. Explore Minsk, Belarus's modern city, built as a memorial to the glory of Soviet communism or step beyond the capital and find a wealth of riches that remain largely unknown to the outside world: the natural splendour of primeval forests, rivers and lakes; flora and fauna in abundance; stunning museums empty of visitors; rich culture and tradition; historical sites dating back to the Middle Ages; beautiful churches; Russian Orthodoxy and the genuine warmth of a people who believe that the rest of the world has either forgotten them or has no interest in their wellbeing.Ã Â

Book Information

Series: Bradt Travel Guide

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Bradt Travel Guides; Second edition (April 12, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1841623407

ISBN-13: 978-1841623405

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 5.2 x 0.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,318,333 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #90 inÃ Â Books > Travel > Europe > Belarus & Ukraine > General #411 inÃ Â Books > Travel > Asia > Russia > General #3333 inÃ Â Books > Travel > Europe > General

Customer Reviews

‘Nigel RobertsÃ¢â ¬â„¢ new guidebook to Belarus, just published by Bradt Travel Guides, is authoritative and insightful … This is the Belarus which is very competently mapped in the first ever English guidebook to the country … Nigel Roberts, author of the new volume, has produced a text that is authoritative, insightful and helpful for travellers to the country … Getting to grips with Belarus isnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t easy. Roberts has managed to get beyond Soviet-style monuments and hotels with dreary dÃƒÂ©cor to write with enthusiasm about everything from Belorussian bathhouses to Old Believers. He is particularly strong in his accounts of everyday life and culture. The volume has decent coverage of BelarusÃ¢â ¬â„¢ six major cities… Roberts is

strong again on national parks and nature reserves, a theme that has always been a feature of so many Bradt guides. And there are some wonderful descriptions of the extreme southeast of the country, an area devastated by fallout from Chernobyl.Ã¢â ¬â„¢ Hidden Europe.

Author Nigel Roberts is heavily involved with Belarusian communities on sustainable development projects. He speaks Russian and has travelled extensively throughout Western and Eastern Europe.

The Bradt guides are generally quite dense with important information, and this one is no exception. In general, it is difficult to locate guides about Belarus, and this one is quite helpful in that it also includes little snippets of stories about what life is like for those living in Belarus. It paints a realistic picture about the challenges and joys one might encounter while traveling there. The main complaint I have with the Bradt guides is that I wish they would include more visuals alongside the text as well as use a font that is a bit more readable than they one they have selected (too tiny!!). Overall, it's a great guide.

On my trip to Belarus in Aug 2014 half the people had this guide, most likely because it seems to be the only English guidebook for the country that is available. It was slightly out of date, with some of the conditions in-country no longer applicable, but the book was really quite useful overall for general tourism.

Excellent book, well written, beautiful photographs, lots of personal experiences of the author dealing with his frequent travels in Belarus, a country he obviously loves.

I really like the style of the author, it really brings Belarus closer to the Reader. Only thing I do miss from this guide are pictures.

Good, and balanced. Much better than the Lonely Planet (Russia/Belarus)

an eyeopener in terms of the restrictions of Belarus--permission to enter, visa, etc. I am going there and this book has been very valuable. I learned to not answer the phone after I get in the room or answer the soft knock at the door by the lady of the night! There are many spectacular sights in Belarus

I always buy a Bradt guide when I travel, if there is one available for the country. This is because they are much more insightful than the likes of Lonely Planet and will often be scribed from 1st hand local knowledge. Unfortunately, Dr Roberts has really let Bradt's image down on this one.I've lived in Belarus for the past 2 years and used the 1st edition guide to travel around as well as a source for what to see and do whilst in Minsk. I have now given up on this guide and have oft indulged in a long conversation with other ex-pats here about how Belarus is really lacking an informative guidebook (LP's Russia & Belarus is even worse than this offering).To start with Minsk, Dr Roberts recommends the bars and restaurants that any visitor would see walking down Nezavistimosti Avenue or in any of the squares. The real gems that are well known amongst anybody that has spent more than a few days in Minsk are notable by their absence. This is a real disappointment and the sad fact is that anybody with this guide is more likely to end up in TGI Friday's for dinner (perhaps the worst TGI Franchise you'll ever come across) rather than in one of Minsk's many excellent and individual bars, cafes or restaurants. Whilst he may have gotten the main tourists sites right, he has missed the multitude of quirky and zany aspects of this city that makes it wholly unique in Europe.Unfortunately it doesn't get much better as you leave Minsk. Dr Robert's almost totally ignores the impressive city of Mozyr, he glosses over the veritable treat that is the Braslau Lakes and barely gives Grodna, Mogilev and Vitebsk their due. A restaurant that he recommends in Grodna was a standard, awful and unfriendly offering that exists everywhere in the country and locals avoid like the plague. In Vitebsk he avoids points of interest such as Belarus' largest Disco and points the reader towards chain pizza joints. Most shocking perhaps (in the first edition, I've not yet seen the 2nd) was the fact that Dr Roberts failed to note anywhere that the City of Polotsk is claimed to be the geographical centre of europe by the Belarusian government. Whilst more learned geographers would tell you this is just outside of Vilnius in Lithuania, the fact that Polotsk has a memorial to "The Centre of Europe" is a salient fact of the town and I am stunned that Dr Roberts missed. It is a joke amongst anybody who has read this book that Dr Roberts urges people to spent "at least a full day each" at Mir and Njasvizh, both of which anybody would struggle to amuse themselves for more than 3 hours in.Taken as a whole, I can only assume that Dr Robert's time in Belarus has been spent in a small area and that his tour of the country was whistlestop at best. A very disappointing and underwhelming travel guide is the result. However, still the best on the market. Maybe a real gap exists for the likes of Rough Guide or DK if the market exists. Who knows...

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