

Scenic Hiking in Northern Albania

Day 1 – Depart UK arrive Tirana Transfer to Kruja

The beginning point of the tour and meeting with the guide takes place at the hotel in Kruja at 18.00 hours where you will discuss the program for the coming week. Depending on the time of arrival you can visit the Kruja Bazar and the Kruja castle, epicenter of the legendary Albanian resistance to the Ottomans led by Scanderbeg in the 14th century.

Overnight: 3 star hotel Kruja Dinner: traditional restaurant

Transfer information: Distance: 22 km Duration: 45 min

Day 2 - The holy mountain of Sarisalltik

Today we will hike up the holy mountain of Tumenisht, (Sarisalltik in Ottoman), and visit the Bectasci Teqe (Sufi Dervishes Sanctuary) located at 1000m. After the descent, we will start driving north to Shkoder, the largest city of Northern Albania.

We will visit the holy tree in Fushe Kruja, and have lunch on the way. In the afternoon we will visit the Rozafa Castle and admire the superb view of the Shkoder Lake surrounded by mountains.

In the evening, we will relax at the Shkodra Lake and take a stroll around town.

Overnight: 2/3 star hotel in Shkodra Dinner: Traditional restaurant

Hike information: Gradient: .600m ; - 600m Distance: 2.5 km Duration: 3 hrs

Transfer information: Distance: 85 km Duration: 1:30 min

Day 3 - The lake of Koman and the canyon of Drin

In the early morning, we will drive to the ferry of Koman, which goes through the spectacular canyon of the river Drin. The lake formed after the construction of the dam of Koman, in the 1980s. The journey will continue through the beautiful valley of Valbona, until we reach a traditional family guesthouse where we will stay overnight.

Overnight: Village house in Valbona, Dinner: home-cooked meal.

Transfer information: Distance: 82 km Duration: 6 hrs

Car transfer: Shkodër – Koman (42 km); Koman-Fierzë (2,5 h ferry), Fierzë - Quku i Dunishës: 40km;

Day 4 - Qafa e Rosit

Today the trekking will start from the guesthouse in direction of the village of Kukaj (900m a.s.l). From here, a shepherd's path will bring us to remote landscapes of the eastern Alps of Albania until reaching Qafa e Rosit (2000m a.s.l - approx. 7-8 hours of walking). The path climbs smoothly in the middle of green meadows, with gorgeous views of Jezercë Mountain and Rrethi i Bardhë - The White Circle. At the end of the day, we will arrive in the village Rrogam, where we will check in to our accommodation.

Overnight: Mountain hotel Rrogam or guesthouse Dinner: Traditional dinner

Hike information: Gradient: 1100m ; - 950m Distance: 18.7 km Duration: 7-8 hrs

Day 5 - The Pass of Valbona

Today we will hike the classic pass of the Albanian Alps. For centuries, it linked the two most well-known valleys of the area, Valbona (Valbona pass; 1966m a.s.l) and Thethi. We will use horses to carry the luggage to the next house. Highlanders from late spring use the path daily, until the first snow of winter. Several springs of water will make for pleasant and refreshing rest stops to admire the steep and jagged surrounding peaks of Jezerca and Radohima. The group will start the descent towards the village of Thethi (850m a.s.l), where we will stay overnight after up to 8 hrs of walking.

Thethi is the best-preserved alpine village in Albania. It has typical houses still roofed with wooden tiles and its mountain valley location is spectacular.

We will stay overnight and have dinner in one of these traditional houses and experience the unforgettable hospitality of the hosts.

Overnight: Gueshouse in Thethi Dinner: meal prepared by a local family

Hike information: Gradient: 1150m ; - 900m Distance: 14 km Duration: 6 hrs

Day 6 - Thethi's attractions

Today we will have a nice day walking around in the nearings of Thethi, one of the most well-known villages of northern Albania, because of its charm, stunning nature and traditional wooden-tiled houses.

We will start walking downhill from the house (850m), and visit the attractions in and around the village, like: the Church (750m), the Kulla e Ngujimit (a tower house used in the past by men as a shelter against ongoing vendettas), the Thethi Waterfall, Grunasi Canyon, and the recent 2007 discover: a cyclopean stone walled terraces dating from the late bronze era!

We will overnight at the same house as the night before.

Overnight: Gueshouse in Thethi Dinner: meal prepared by a local family

Hike information: Gradient: 200m ; - 200m Distance: 11 km Duration: 5 hrs

Day 7 - The valley of Boga

We will leave Thethi (850m a.s.l) to start another day of spectacular hiking toward the village of Boga. Today we will walk along Shtegu i Dhenëve - the Path of the Sheep, which is another classic path in the Albanian Alps that connects the villages of Thethi and Boga. We will walk below the peaks of Radohima mountain before reaching the valley of Boga, then stop for a break in the village.

We will have lunch in a lovely setting, then leave through the Boga valley towards Shkoder and ending in Tirana (120km - 3hrs).

Overnight: 3 star hotel Tirana Dinner: restaurant

Hike information: Gradient: 900m ; - 1100m Distance: 17 km Duration: 6-7 hrs

Transfer information: Distance: 150 km Duration: 3 hrs

Day 8 - Tirana

If you leave in the afternoon you will have some time to spend in Tirana where you can take a walk, passing the important buildings of the capital - the Italian buildings, The Mosque of Ethem Bej and/or the National Museum of History. Alternatively, you can enjoy your free time to visit the museum in Tirana or one of its many markets.

Cost:

Approx. £550 per person + international flights (At the moment flights to Tirana with BA is around £210)

Cost includes:

Accommodation: 4 nights in guesthouse, based on several single beds per room. 3 nights in 2/3 star hotel based on twin shared ensuite rooms.

- Food: 7 x breakfast, 6 x lunch, 7 x dinner
- English speaking guide (Day 1- Day 7)
- All transport as per itinerary (based on public transport)
- All luggage transfer by mule and vehicle (bring bags, no suitcases!)
- Ferry ride Koman-Fierze
- All park/museum fees described in the itinerary.

Not included:

- Drinks
- Snacks
- Breakfast and lunch on day 1
- Lunch and dinner on day 8
- Bank transfer fees