

Charismatic Balkans Peninsula

8 days – 7 nights

**Tirana, Ohrid, Bitola, Kalambaka, Butrint, Saranda, Gjirokastër, Vlora, Appolonia, Berat, Durrës
Discovery, Culture, History**

**This program may be operated for individuals or for groups
This is a suggested itinerary**

Approaching a splendid and rich region without bias, enjoying it with its sensitivity and intelligence, letting yourself be penetrated, that goes in the direction of this itinerary of great style. Landing in Albania, in Tirana, emerging from the shadow of Enver Hoxha, going to Ohrid, where you can swim in the lake and eat trout, taking a pick at Greece's exceptional monasteries and re-entering Albania through the southern border going along the Ionic coast.

Day 1: Tirana

On arrival at Tirana International Airport you'll be met by our representative and transferred to your hotel. Rest of the day fee. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. [D]

Day 2: Ohrid, Bitola

Morning drive to Ohrid in Macedonia arriving in time for lunch. This well-preserved fortified city benefits from both an exceptional natural site and a UNESCO-listed cultural heritage of great wealth known for its many churches and monasteries, its mosques and its lake at high altitude. During the guided tour, you will discover the Church of Saint Sofia, the most important medieval monument in Macedonia with its beautiful Byzantine frescoes and the archaeological site of the ruins of the Plaosnik basilica. After the visit we continue to Bitola for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 3: Bitola, Kalambaka

After breakfast take a guided tour of Bitola, founded in the 4th century BC and partly renovated to prevent the total dilapidation of the historic site. Enter the important archaeological site of Heraclea to admire its Roman amphitheater in particular and its cathedral dating from the beginning of the Byzantine era. Continue to Kalambaka, in Greece, stopping for lunch along the way. In Kalambaka visit two of the monasteries of the beautiful Meteora, a UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage site, that comprises 24 monasteries, 6 of which are still inhabited today. Dinner and overnight in Kalambaka. [B/L/D]

Day 4: Kalambaka, Butrint, Saranda

A 3½-hour drive to Albania brings you to Butrint in time for lunch. In the afternoon, take a guided tour of the archaeological site, also listed by UNESCO as World Heritage. It was in turn Greek, Roman, then the seat of a bishopric before knowing its golden age under the administration of Byzantium. The site presents not only a set of historic monuments representative of each of these eras but also an exceptional natural ecosystem. After the visit, a short drive to Saranda, a small seaside resort that charms visitors with its beautiful beaches and festive atmosphere. Dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 5: Saranda, Gjirokastër, Vlora

Today we'll discover another UNESCO Heritage Site: Gjirokastër. The old town is characterized by its turret houses, called "kule" in Turkish, which slope down the hill. Visit Gjirokastër Castle, the second largest in the Balkans, and spend some time in the ethnographic museum housed in a beautiful Ottoman-style building. This visit is an opportunity to discover the life of Albanians in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Lunch during the visit. Continue to Vlora for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 6: Vlora, Appolonia, Berat, Durrës, Tirana

A 45-minute drive through the Vlora national park before arriving at the ancient city of Apollonia, founded by the Greeks around 600 BC. and the largest archaeological park in Albania. We take time

afternoon enjoy the guided tour of Berat, another UNESCO site. Dominated by the hill where the castle stands, the city is characterized by its white stone houses with large wooden windows on the hillside. Visit the fortress, which origins date back to the 4th century BC although a large part of the castle dates from the 13th century. Visit the ethnographic museum of Berat which offers a real journey back in time to discover the life of the inhabitants of the region through everyday objects, agricultural and craft tools or even traditional clothes. Then, continue to Tirana for dinner and overnight. [B/L/D]

Day 7: Tirana

Guided tour of Tirana, the capital of Albania surrounded by mountains. The city is a cultural, economic and political center of great importance in Albania. It revolves around Skanderberg Square bordered by, among other things, the opera house, the Et'hem Bey mosque and the clock tower. Visit the Tirana National History Museum, the largest museum in the country, that traces the different periods of Albanian history from prehistoric times to the present day. Then, take the cable car to reach Mount Dajti and admire a superb panorama of Tirana from the heights. Lunch during the visit. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. [B/L/D]

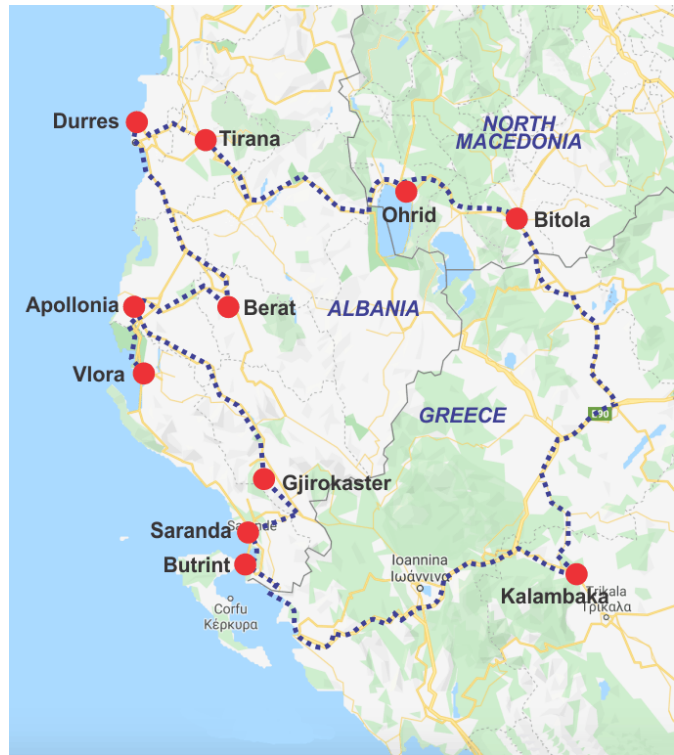
Day 8: Tirana, USA

After breakfast you may have some time to relax. At the appointed time you'll be met and transferred to Tirana airport to board your connecting flight back home. [B]

[B] = Breakfast | [D] = Dinner | [B/L/D] = Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Your Tour includes:

- Arrival and departure transfers
- 7 nights' accommodation in First Class hotels:
 - Tirana 3 nights
 - Bitola 1 night
 - Kalambaka 1 night
 - Saranda 1 night
 - Vlora 1 night
- Meals:
 - Breakfast daily
 - 7 lunches
 - 7 dinners
- Church of Saint Sofia
- Ancient monasteries of Meteora
- Cable car ride to reach Mount Dajti
- Butrint Archaeological site
- Apollonia Archaeological site
- Heraclea in Macedonia



- Gjirokastër Castle
- Berat, the city with a thousand windows
- Berat castle
- Landscapes & ancient sites
- Transport by A/C vehicle
- English-speaking guide/driver throughout the tour
- Entrances fees for sites visited
- Local taxes

Tour does not include:

- International airfares
- Any taxes related to airfares or airports
- Meals not mentioned under inclusions
- Travel Insurance
- Visas
- Tips to guides or drivers
- Expenses of a personal nature
- Any item not mentioned as "Included"

Hotels in your Tour:

City	Hotel Name	Tripadvisor
First Class		
Tirana	Prestige Hotel	4.5
Bitola	Hotel Millenium Palace	4
Kalambaka	Divani Meteora Hotel	4
Saranda	Hotel Brilant	4
Vlora	Partner Hotel	4

Hotels will be confirmed at time of booking

Tour Prices:

These programs can be customized for individuals and groups. Changes to this program may be requested by phone (1855-55-TOURS) or using the web FIT Quote Request

• **Airfare**

We also be glad to add the necessary airfare from your gateway so you take advantage of our special discounted leisure fares

• **Program**

You may add or remove;

- o Trip days
- o Cities and sites
- o Meals

• **Other options**

- o The program was designed with private services, however, we may substitute shared sightseeing where available
- o If you prefer deluxe services we may operate this program including private driver, private guide and concierge service.

• **Quotation**

Once we have designed the program the way you want we'll give you a quote within 2 business days.

Tour Code: AL02TIA20VT

Options:

- Lunches and dinners can be arranged for individuals, families and groups at top restaurants or any restaurant requested by you.
- We can revise the itinerary to spend more time and provide more depth in those areas that you are interested on.
- Any other changes to the itinerary will be accommodated depending on the facilities available in the area.

Group Quotations

- If you wish to use these programs for your group or as the basis for a customized journey please either call us (1-855-55-TOURS or use the web Group Quote Request.
- In either case our specialists will work with to refine all the details and they will get you a quote with 2 business days. Quotes may be obtained for the air and land portions of just for the land journey.
- Booking both air and land with us will represent savings for you because of our buying power and longtime relationship with the airlines.
- We will also may have the choice between regular fares and special leisure fares not available to the public.