



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival Tirana – Tirana



Today the group will arrive at the airport and later in the afternoon there will be a walking tour around Tirana where you can visit the main sites of Tirana like the Statue of Skanderbeg on the new Skanderbeg Square, the Et'hem Bey Mosque at the south east corner of Skanderbeg Square, The Clock Tower next to the Et'hem Bey Mosque and some of the government buildings at the south end of Skanderbeg Square. You can also visit the Pyramid of Tirana and the Blloku area, the area which was closed for the “normal” people during Communism and see the house of Enver Hoxha.

Day 2: Tirana – Epoka University – Durres welcome lunch – Visit of small Olive oil factory – Vlora



After breakfast we will depart for Vlora, but before we arrive here we have a few stops. The first stop is after 30 minutes, at the University of Epoka. After the visit here we continue to the coastal town of Durres for our welcome lunch in a restaurant overlooking the Adriatic Sea. From here it is around 1,5 hour to Vlora, but on the way we will have another stop in a small Biologic Olive Oil factory called “Musai”. Here we will get a tour around the factory to learn more about the process of how olive oil is made.



Day 3: Vlora – Llogara Pass – Himara – Saranda



Today we will only be driving along the Albanian Riviera and after 10 minutes of driving we can make a stop to enjoy the views. After around one hour we will make another stop at Porto Palermo, where the Ali Pasha Castle stands like a barrier in front of the blue rocky sea as a protection for the country. The bay of Porto Palermo once served as an important secret submarine base during the regime days. The semi abandoned base and the tunnel are still visible. After this we will continue to Saranda where we will be staying at a beach hotel. In the evening we can have a walk along the boulevard overlooking the Ionian Sea and the Greek Island of Corfu.

Day 4: Saranda – Butrint – Ioannina (visit an university) – Meteora



After breakfast we will drive for around 30 minutes to visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Butrint. The city was founded by the Trojans during the first millennium BC and was continuously inhabited for centuries. Here we will walk around for around 2 hours before crossing the border into Greece. In Ioannina we will have time for lunch and also visit an university before heading to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Meteora.

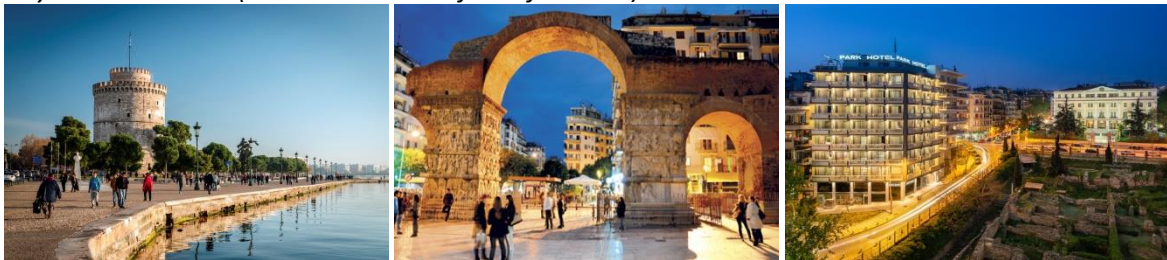


Day 5: Meteora (tour) – Thessaloniki



This morning we will have a tour with a local guide around some of the monasteries of Meteora, one of the largest and most precipitously built complexes of Eastern Orthodox Monasteries. After this impressive morning we will drive to Thessaloniki where we will have a free evening to explore the city.

Day 6: Thessaloniki (business visit and free afternoon)



Today we will have a business visit in Thessaloniki followed by a free afternoon. In the evening it is time for some fun as we will enjoy a real Greek evening in one of the “Bouzouki’s” of Thessaloniki!

Day 7: Thessaloniki – Skopje (half day tour with a local guide)



After breakfast we will cross another border as we will enter the Former Yugoslavian Republic Of Macedonia. Here we will have a walking tour with a local guide and visit the main attractions of the capital of this country.



Day 8: Skopje – Prizren – Valbona (meeting with a local entrepreneur)



Today we will cross into the newest country of Europe, namely Kosovo. Here we will visit the Ottoman Style town of Prizren where we can also have something for lunch. Prizren is a city where three major religions and great cultures come together. After this stop we enter the country where it all started, Albania. We will drive through breath-taking nature to the village of Valbona in the remote area of the Albanian Alps. In the afternoon there is time to walk around the village or have a short hike into the mountains close to the guesthouse.

Day 9: Valbona – Koman Ferry – Shkodra (lunch at Mrizi e Zanave followed by a tour around the land) – Tirana



After an early breakfast we depart to the village of Fierze where we will take the Koman Ferry. The ferry to Koman takes around 3 hours and during this trip you can enjoy the beautiful lake of Koman with breath-taking views of the scenery of the dramatic mountains and green hills. After arriving in Koman we will drive to Shkodra where we will visit the beautiful castle of Rozafa. After this visit we drive to the village of Fishte where we will have lunch in a slow-food restaurant called “Mrizi I Zanave” and also have a tour around the land of this restaurant. From here it is around 1,5 hour to Tirana.



Day 10: Tirana (visit of the microfinance centre and student presentation) – Bunkart 1 – Farewell dinner



The last day of our trip! Today we will visit the microfinance centre and the students will also do their presentations on this last day. In the afternoon we will have a visit of the large nuclear bunker located under the mountain of Tirana, Dajti. In the evening a farewell dinner with traditional singers and dancers is organized.

Day 11: Tirana – Tirana Airport

Today there is some time to stroll along the streets of Tirana before the airport transfer.



Hotels

<i>Tirana</i>	<i>Hotel Tirana International</i>
<i>Vlora</i>	<i>Hotel Partner</i>
<i>Saranda</i>	<i>Hotel Palace Saranda</i>
<i>Meteora</i>	<i>Hotel Doupiani House</i>
<i>Thessaloniki</i>	<i>Hotel Park</i>
<i>Skopje</i>	<i>Hotel Duvet</i>
<i>Valbona</i>	<i>Guesthouse Kol Gjoni</i>



Visits

University visits:

- *Epoka University in Tirana*
- *University in Ioannina*

Business visits:

- *Visit of a small biological olive oil factory*
- *Visit of a business in Thessaloniki*
- *Meeting with an entrepreneur in Valbona*
- *Visit of the surrounding of the slow-food restaurant and farm of Mrizi I Zanave*
- *Visit of the Microfinance centre in Tirana*

Cultural visits:

- *The archaeological (UNESCO) park of Butrint*
- *A tour with a local guide around the monasteries of Meteora*
- *Visit of a Bouzouki in Thessaloniki*
- *A city tour with a local guide in Skopje*
- *Visit of the nuclear bunker in Tirana (Bunkart 1)*