

Albania, amid fascinating culture and enchanting nature

A 10-day group or individual trip

Code: ALB01C



This part of the world is hotter than hot right now, and we aint gonna lie, this trip's name says it all. Sunshine, sunsets, and sights are served up left right and centre, with a nature fix dotted in-between to keep every explorer tuned in. 10-days of life changing experiences are yours for the taking.

A challenging but wonderful bicycle tour filled with history and breathtaking landscapes. Huge snow-capped mountains, inviting beaches, pretty rural villages, a genuine subsistence culture and an exceptionally friendly welcome is what you will find here. We ride through the very best of Europe's beautiful unknown. This diverse tour starts in the capital city, Tirana, rich in history and culture, and then go deeper and deeper into places far from the mundane. It will lead you from the tranquil beauty of Lake Ohrid, via picturesque mountains and sparkling rivers, to the inviting beaches of the Albanian Riviera, providing a taste of all the very best Albania has to offer. This incorporates visits to UNESCO heritage sites, Butrint, Gjirokaster, Rradhime, Saranda, as well as fascinating glimpses into an untouched subsistence culture. A challenging route, providing a feast for the senses and plenty of opportunity to experience the hospitality of the friendly Albanian people. It is also a journey where the typical products of the country are tasted, freshly harvested or caught and prepared according to ancient traditions, such as Tavë Kosi, a quiche, Qofte, tasty meatballs, and the Sarma vegetable rolls.

All in all it will be a fantastic and unforgettable tour!

Program in brief:

Day 1 Individual arrival in Tirana

Day 2 Tirana-Pogradec (40 km / 24,8 mi)

Day 3 Pogradec- Korçë (51 km / 31,7 mi)
Day 4, Korçë-Sotirë (72 km / 44,7 mi)
Day 5, Sotirë-Bënjë (66 km / 41 mi)
Day 6, Bënjë - Gjirokastër (70 km / 43,5 mi)
Day 7, Gjirokastër - Saranda (70 km / 43,5 mi)
Day 8, Saranda - Himarë (52 km / 32,3 mi)
Day 9, Himarë - Radhimë (64 km / 39,8 mi)
Day 10 End of tour

Dates for departure: self-guided tour each day from April to end October for min. 2 people; traveling alone departures only possible on group dates

Guided group dates 2024:

April 5 - April 14
April 11 - April 20
April 21 - April 30
April 30 - May 9

May 12 - May 21
May 15 - May 24
May 20 - May 29
May 23 - June 1

June 1 - June 10
June 6 - June 15
June 16 - June 25
June 22 - July 1

July 1 - July 10

August 24 - September 2
August 31 - September 9

September 9 - September 18
September 19 - September 28
September 20 - September 29
September 27 - October 6

October 6 - October 15
October 8 - October 17
October 15 - October 24
October 17 - October 26

Participants: from 4 people for the individual tour - single traveler alone with the group tour start dates. It is possible to do the individual tour with min. 2 people, if you start on the group dates or

on other dates with a surcharge, but then there is Van support only until the 7th day. After that, taxis transport the luggage and there will be no more Van support.

Group tour starts with min. 5 people

Level: 3,5

This is a full level 3,5. You need to have a good cycle experience and a good physical condition. The daily distances are some days long and there are significant difference in level, because of the hilly and mountainous terrain.

The tour has a support Van for eventual transfers.

Daily kilometers / miles: min. 40 km / 24,9 mi - max. 72 km / 44,7 mi

Total km / miles: 485 km / 301 mi

Day by day program

Day 1 Arrival in Albania

Individual arrival in Tirana. If your arrival time and curiosity permits, downtown Tirana offers several historical and archaeological sites all to discover, such as the National Museum or the Bunkart... Lively, colourful Tirana is the beating heart of Albania, where this tiny nation's hopes and dreams coalesce into a vibrant whirl of traffic, brash consumerism and unfettered fun. Having undergone a transformation of extraordinary proportions since awaking from its communist slumber in the early 1990s, Tirana's centre is now unrecognizable, with buildings painted in primary colours, and public squares and pedestrianized streets that are a pleasure to wander. To end the day on a high note, go to a cozy typical Albanian restaurant where you will be treated to traditional family-style food. Here you will have the opportunity to try for the first time the exquisite cuisine the country has to offer.

The group tour has a meeting with the guide in the lobby and dinner in a cozy typical restaurant in town

Overnight stay and breakfast in Tirana (dinner included for group tour)

Day 2, Tirana-Pogradec

Ready, set and go!!!

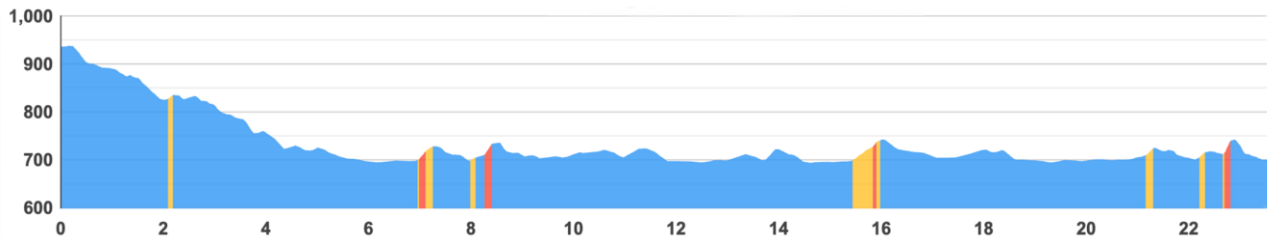
Setting off at 8 a.m., we have a 2-hour drive to the highest point of today Qafë Thanë and then starts a nice downhill ride to Lake Ohrid.

Group tour: after a nice restorative lunch in the hotel we will visit the Monastery of St. Naum.

Overnight stay and breakfast in Pogradec (dinner & lunch included for group tour)

Distance 40 km / 24.8 mi

Ascent +174 meters



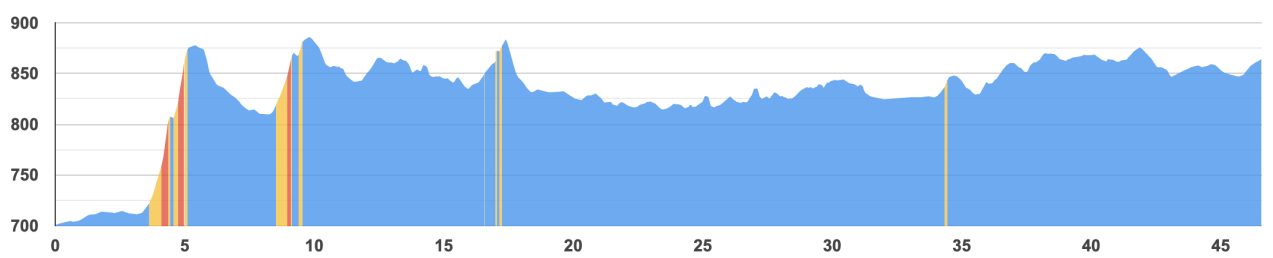
Day 3, Pogradec- Korçë

Have you ever heard of the Paris of Albania? Here, then I introduce you to Korçë. There are many monuments and museums to visit. It is also the town with the biggest Carnival event in Albania. On the way you can have a stop to drink a coffee then back to pedaling amongst the fields and vineyards. The group tour will visit the town together with the guide. We have a nice break in the old bazaar and... also not to be missed are the country's largest Orthodox cathedrals and Albania's first school.

Overnight stay and breakfast in Korçë (dinner & lunch included for group tour)

Distance 51 km / 31.6 mi

Ascent +412 meters



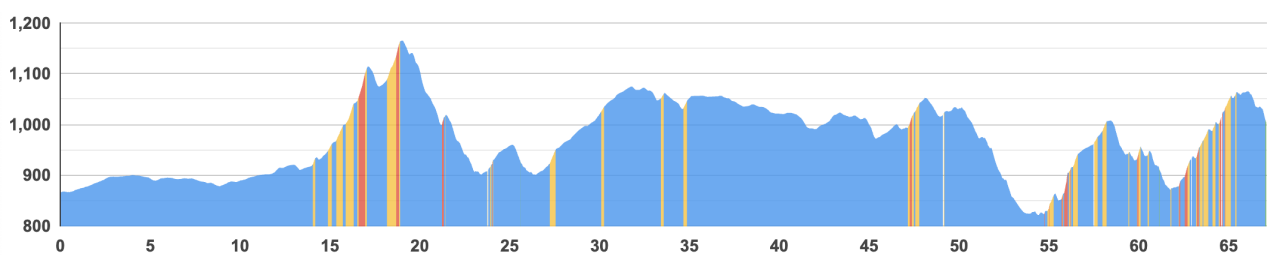
Day 4, Korçë-Sotirë

Today we go further into a more remote area, with only stunning nature and are approaching slowly the Greek border. Depending on the time of the year, the landscape you will see is different, changing colours and shapes of cultivated fields or high Gramoz mountain peaks that in springtime and autumn are covered with snow. Lunch will be on record, in the highest town in all of Albania, Erseke. After it, still some climbing until the Barmash pass at 1160m. For dinner, however, you can enjoy a nice trout freshly caught from the pond in the town of Sotire.

Overnight stay and breakfast in Sotire. (dinner in trout farm & lunch in Erseke included for group tour)

Distance 72 km / 44.7 mi

Ascent +1170 meters



Day 5, Sotirë - Bënjë

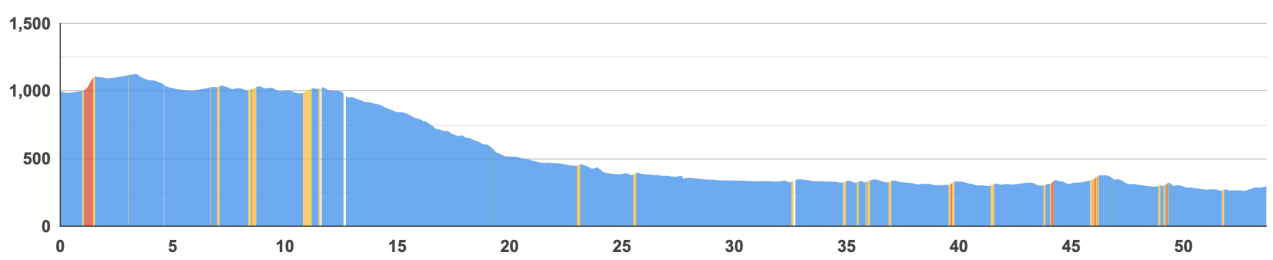
Leaving Sotire, pine forests are awaiting us. After 14 kilometers downhill on a paved road, we cycle within 50 meters of the border with Greece and find Albania's longest river, the Vjosa River along our route.

If you want, just a 4-kilometer ride away from the guesthouse are Albania's most famous hot springs, free of charge. Here inviting hot pools await you near an 18th-century Ottoman bridge. An alternative good be, to make a walk towards the Langarica River, which flows from the mountains to one of the most beautiful canyons in Europe.

Overnight stay and breakfast in Bënjë (dinner & lunch included for group tour)

Distance 66 km / 41 mi

Ascent +661 meters



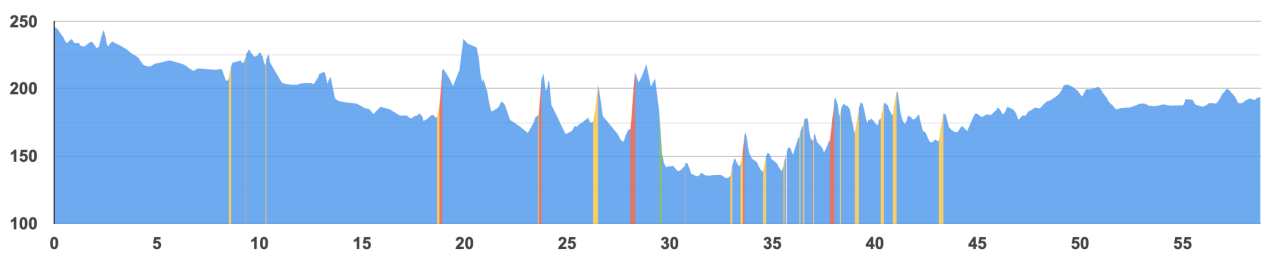
Day 6, Bënjë - Gjirokastrë

Following the road, for a time the Vjosa river is still our companion, when we are cycling towards the gorge of 20km. Then we say goodbye to the Vjosa River and follow the Drino River, which will take us into the Drino Valley, along the Lunxheri mountain range, where just opposite, hanging on a cliff, is the first UNESCO-protected town of our tour, Gjirokastrë. A tour around the town centre is a certainly a must. Visit the impressive citadel on its summit, the colourful and busy bazaar, where tourists can find authentic gifts, and finally visit also the Skenduli House, a perfectly preserved house dating from the Ottoman period.

Overnight stay and breakfast in Gjirokastrë (dinner & lunch included for group tour)

Distance 70 km / 43.4 mi

Ascent +427 meters



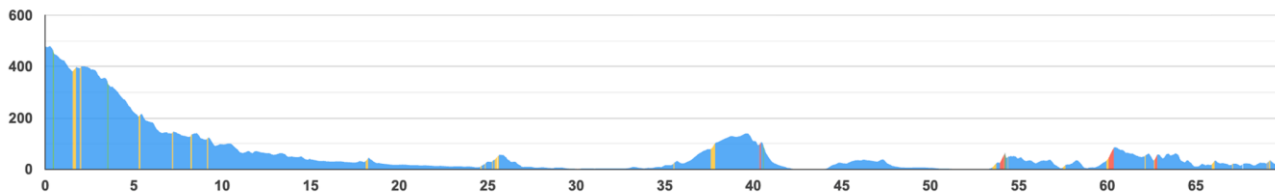
Day 7, Gjirokastrë - Saranda

After breakfast a transfer and the back in the saddle freewheeling downhill from the top of the Munzina pass in the direction of Saranda, the views of the coastline are breathtaking. Not to be missed is Butrint's National Park, located at the southern tip of the country. A lovely rustic wooden ferry crosses the Vivari Canal, which connects the Ionian Sea with Lake Butrint. Butrint was originally a Greek polis and later a Roman town and is considered one of the most important archaeological sites in Albania, now a UNESCO-Heritage site. The group tour has a guided visit. We end with a nice ride accompanied by the view of Corfu to our left.

Overnight stay and breakfast in Saranda (dinner & lunch included for group tour)

Distance 70 km / 43.4 mi

Ascent +525 meters



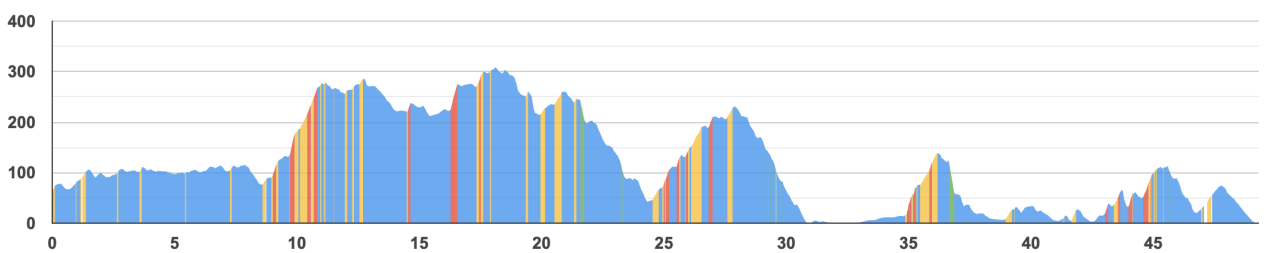
Day 8, Saranda - Himarë

Following the Albanian "Riviera Road" will make us feel like a roller coaster. To recover from the ups and downs, an excellent lunch will await you in Porto Palermo, in front of a charming Venetian castle, and then end the day in Himare, an old fishing village, where there will be plenty of time to relax on the beach and/or head downtown for a refreshing ice cream.

Overnight stay and breakfast in Himarë (dinner & lunch in Saranda included for group tour)

Distance 52 km / 32.3 mi

Ascent +1064 meters



Day 9, Himarë - Radhimë

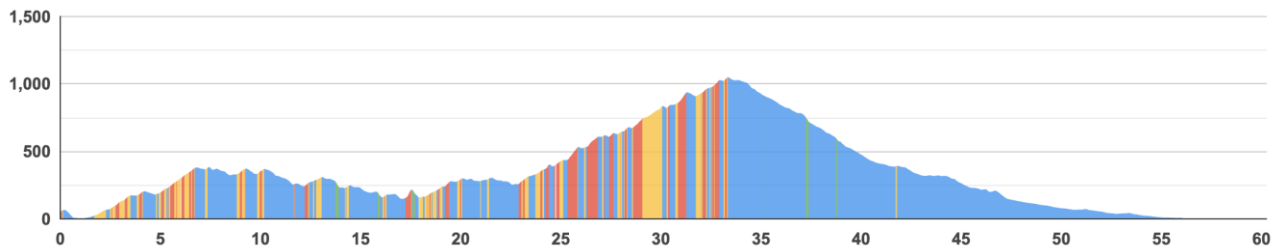
Get ready because a beautiful day awaits you today. It is also the most challenging day of the tour, because of the gradual steep climb.

Like in a fairy tale you will pass through forests, gorges and ancient villages, on your way to two of Albania's most famous beaches, Jale and Dhermi, but that is not the end goal...today you will climb to the top of the Llogara Pass. Once at the top, a nice descend is waiting for you towards the National Park bearing the same name to complete the tour in Rradhime. Relax by the sea and sip a mojito while admiring the sunset over the Albanian Karaburun Peninsula. YOU DID IT!

Overnight stay and breakfast in Radhimë (dinner & lunch included for group tour)

Distance 64 km / 39.7 mi

Ascent +1590 meters



Day 10, Departure

For those with a return plane will have a transfer that will take you to the airport in three hours, while for those planning to stay some more in Tirana there will be a drop off in town.

Hotels: a mix of hotels and characteristic Guesthouses

Price per person of the self-guided tour:

In double room with breakfast € 970

Single room supplement € 220

Supplement for only two-three people € 160

E.bike rental supplement € 200

Included in the self-guided tour:

- 9 overnight stays with breakfast
- Giant hybrid bike rental with panniers. Front suspension and disk brakes
- Mentioned transfers in the program
- Luggage transfers
- Van support (for min. 2-3 people only until 7th day)
- Transfer to Tirana airport o Tirana town centre at the end of the tour

Not included:

- Cene & pranzi
- Water bottle on your bike
- Helmet
- Transfer beginning of the tour from the airport to the hotel in Tirana
- Everything what is not mentioned under 'Included in the tour'

Price per person of the guided tour:

In double room with breakfast € 1190

Single room supplement € 220

E.bike rental supplement € 200

Included in the guided tour:

- 9 overnight stays with breakfast
- 9 dinners and 8 lunches
- Mentioned transfer in the program
- Multilingual cycling guide
- Giant hybrid bike rental with panniers. Front suspension and disk brakes
- Luggage transfers and Van support
- Transfer to Tirana airport or Tirana town centre at the end of the tour

Not included:

- Drinks during dinners & lunches
- Water bottle on your bike
- Helmet
- Entrance fees
- Transfer beginning of the tour from the airport to the hotel in Tirana
- Everything what is not mentioned under 'Included in the tour'

Start / end: Tirana/ Radhimë



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