



*Welcome to an unforgettable 8-day exploration of Albania's rich history, stunning landscapes, and vibrant culture. From the bustling streets of Tirana to the ancient ruins of Apollonia, and from the majestic peaks of Mount Tomorr to the timeless charm of Berat and Gjirokaster, this journey offers a perfect blend of nature, heritage, and authentic Albanian hospitality. Along the way, you will hike scenic trails, discover archaeological treasures, savor traditional cuisine, and experience the warmth of local communities. Prepare to be immersed in the stories, flavors, and breathtaking beauty that make Albania a truly unique destination.*

#### **Day 1: Arrival in Tirana (25KM)**

Arrive in Albania's vibrant capital, Tirana. Take the day to settle in, relax, and get a first taste of the city's dynamic atmosphere, colorful architecture, and lively cafés. Enjoy an easy evening at your leisure.

<b>Timing of activity:</b> <i>Depends on flight schedule, panoramic tour of Tirana!</i>
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#### **Day 2: Tirana – Shpella e Pellumbasit – Tirana (46KM) (RT)**

After a hearty breakfast in Tirana, embark on a refreshing day trip to Shpella e Pellumbasit, also known as Pellumbas Cave, located approximately 30 kilometers southeast of the capital. This hidden gem is nestled in the beautiful mountainous landscape of the Dajti National Park region, offering an excellent opportunity for nature lovers and adventure seekers to explore Albania's rugged terrain.

The hike to Pellumbas Cave is moderately challenging but rewarding, taking you through scenic trails surrounded by dense pine forests, rocky outcrops, and panoramic views of the Erzen River valley below. Along the way, you will notice diverse flora and fauna native to this region. The



cave itself is renowned for its fascinating limestone stalactites and stalagmites formations, creating a mystical underground world. Archaeological findings in the cave suggest it was inhabited by ancient humans during the Paleolithic era, adding a historical dimension to your visit. After your cave exploration and hike, return to Tirana where lunch awaits at the highly regarded Reka Restaurant. Known for its dedication to traditional Albanian cuisine, Reka offers a cozy and inviting atmosphere, with dishes prepared using fresh, locally sourced ingredients. Here, you can taste specialties such as tava e kosit (baked lamb with yogurt), fërgesë (a rich pepper and cheese stew), and seasonal vegetable dishes, accompanied by freshly baked bread and local wines.

Following lunch, you have the rest of the afternoon free to either relax or explore Tirana's vibrant city center, perhaps visiting landmarks like Skanderbeg Square, or the colorful Pazari i Ri market for a taste of local life. Overnight in Tirana.

***Timing of activity:***

08:00 Breakfast at hotel in Tirana

09:00 Depart for Pellumbas village (approx. 45 min drive)

09:45 – 12:30 Hike to Shpella e Pellumbasit (Pellumbas Cave) – moderate hike with scenic views and cave exploration

12:30 – 13:15 Return hike to starting point

13:15 – 14:00 Drive back to Tirana

14:00 – 15:30 Lunch at Reka Restaurant – enjoy traditional Albanian cuisine in a cozy setting

15:30 – 18:00 Free afternoon in Tirana:

– Visit Skanderbeg Square, Et'hem Bey Mosque, or Pazari i Ri market

– Relax at a local café or stroll through the Blloku district

Evening Overnight in Tirana

**Day 3: Tirana – Shkoder – Kruje – Tirana (222KM) (RT)**

Depart early from Tirana for a captivating full-day journey to northern Albania, a region rich in history and cultural heritage. Your first stop is Shkoder, one of the country's oldest and most historically significant cities. Upon arrival, explore the impressive Rozafa Castle, perched on a hill overlooking the confluence of the Buna, Drin, and Kir rivers. The castle's ancient walls tell tales of centuries of battles and legends, including the famous story of Rozafa, a woman who



was immured within the castle walls to ensure its stability. From this vantage point, enjoy sweeping panoramic views of the surrounding rivers, lush valleys, and the distant Albanian Alps.

After soaking in the history and views, continue your journey to Kruje, a town steeped in Ottoman and medieval heritage. Visit the bustling Kruje Bazaar, where artisans sell traditional crafts such as filigree silver jewelry, handwoven carpets, and vibrant souvenirs that reflect Albania's rich cultural traditions. Don't miss the Skanderbeg Museum located inside Kruje Castle, dedicated to Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg, Albania's revered national hero who valiantly resisted Ottoman rule in the 15th century. The museum offers fascinating insights into his life and the country's struggle for independence.

For lunch, delight in fresh, organic, and locally sourced dishes at **Mrizi i Zanave Agroturizem** in Fishte, is located in the village of Fishtë in the region of Zadrima, the place where the Albanian national poet, Gjergj Fishta, the author of the "Prayer of the Mountain" was born. Arriving here, the vibe is buzzing. Menus are prepared only with organic products that are collected by local families, who grow them themselves.

In general, you will find traditional and popular Albanian dishes with a modern twist, reflecting the composition of the kitchen staff of both local women and professionally trained and often internationally trained chefs.

The specialties for which Mrizi is best known are: **cheese fermented with different fruits** (with wild pomegranate, with grapes, etc.), **cheese with mold, simple Kackavall (Pecorino) cheese, Kackavall with nuts, with chili**, etc. I want to point out that some cheeses are seasonal, such as fermented cheeses. [Link - https://www.mrizizanave.al/](https://www.mrizizanave.al/) After this enriching day of culture, history, and gastronomy, return to Tirana. Overnight in Tirana.

***Timing of activity:***

07:30 Breakfast at hotel in Tirana

08:00 Depart from Tirana to Shkodër (approx. 2h drive)

10:00 – 12:00 Explore Rozafa Castle – learn legends, enjoy panoramic views of rivers and valleys

12:00 – 13:15 Depart Shkodër to Krujë (approx. 1h drive)

13:15 – 15:15 Visit Krujë Bazaar – shop traditional crafts and souvenirs

Explore Skanderbeg Museum inside Krujë Castle

15:15 – 15:30 Depart Krujë for Mrizi i Zanave Agroturizem in Fishtë (approx. 30 min drive)

15:30 – 17:30 Lunch & wine tasting at Mrizi i Zanave – savor organic dishes and artisanal cheeses

17:30 – 19:30 Return drive to Tirana (approx. 1.5-2h)

Evening Overnight in Tirana



#### **Day 4: Tirana – Apollonia – Gjirokaster (236KM)**

Depart from Tirana early in the morning and embark on a scenic drive southwest toward one of Albania's most important archaeological treasures, the ancient city of Apollonia. Founded by Greek colonists in the 6th century BC, Apollonia flourished during the Roman era as a center of education, philosophy, and commerce. Upon arrival, take time to wander through the expansive ruins, which include a remarkably well-preserved ancient theater that once hosted dramatic performances and public gatherings. Marvel at the remains of temples, including the Temple of Artemis, as well as the odeon, agora, and impressive colonnades that reveal the grandeur of this once-thriving city. The archaeological park is set against a beautiful natural backdrop, offering stunning views of the surrounding hills and valleys.

After immersing yourself in Apollonia's rich history and absorbing the tranquil landscape, continue your journey toward Gjirokaster, a UNESCO World Heritage site often called the "City of Stone" due to its distinctive stone-built Ottoman-era houses and fortifications. This town offers a unique glimpse into Albania's Ottoman past, with narrow cobblestone streets winding past traditional stone houses topped with slate roofs, creating an unforgettable atmosphere.

Upon arrival in Gjirokaster, enjoy a well-deserved lunch at Edua Restaurant, it will be a pleasant experience. In this local experience, you will learn how to cook two of the oldest typical Gjirokastrite recipes: **Qifqi** (traditional plat in this city) **and a dessert**. They will share the secret ingredient with you because we have inherited it from generation to generation through family tradition. You will learn about the spices and teas of our mountains, their uses, and their benefits. During the tour you can also enjoy traditional snacks and various drinks raki, all mixed with local history and folklore. Also, at the end of this beautiful experience, you will receive the written recipe.

Link - [https://www.facebook.com/people/EduaGjirokaster/100064712764975/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/people/EduaGjirokaster/100064712764975/?ref=br_rs)

Overnight in Gjirokaster.



### Day 5: Gjirokaster – Permet – Gjirokaster (120KM)

Start your day early with a scenic drive from Gjirokaster to the charming town of Përmet, nestled in a valley renowned for its vibrant floral landscapes and rich culinary traditions. Përmet is often celebrated as the “City of Roses” for its lush greenery and fragrant gardens that bloom throughout much of the year, creating a peaceful and picturesque setting.

Upon arrival, explore the town’s quaint streets and discover its reputation for exquisite homemade specialties. Don’t miss the opportunity to taste *raki*, the traditional Albanian fruit brandy, carefully distilled in local households, alongside *gliko*, a sweet preserve made from a variety of fruits and often served as a delightful treat after meals.

A highlight of the visit is the **Benjë Thermal Baths**, located just outside Përmet. These natural hot springs, set alongside a historic Ottoman stone bridge, provide a serene and rejuvenating experience. Immerse yourself in the warm, mineral-rich waters while surrounded by the breathtaking mountainous scenery an ideal way to relax and unwind.

For lunch, savor local dishes at **Villa Përmet Restaurant**, famous for using fresh regional ingredients to create flavorful meals that reflect the culinary heritage of the area. This dining experience, combined with the natural beauty of Përmet, offers a true taste of southern Albanian hospitality. After a leisurely afternoon enjoying the town’s peaceful ambiance and natural wonders, return to Gjirokaster in the evening.

#### **Timing of activity:**

07:00 Breakfast at hotel in Tirana

07:30 Depart Tirana for Apollonia archaeological site (approx. 2.5h drive)

10:00 – 12:00 Explore Apollonia ruins – ancient theater, temples, agora, colonnades, and scenic views

12:00 – 14:30 Drive from Apollonia to Gjirokastër (approx. 2.5h drive)

14:30 – 17:00 Lunch & cooking experience at Edua Restaurant – learn to prepare traditional Gjirokastër dishes (Qifqi & dessert), taste local raki, and enjoy folklore stories

17:00 – 18:30 Optional light walk or rest in Gjirokastër’s historic old town

Evening Overnight in Gjirokastër

## Day 6: Gjirokaster – Berat (180KM)

After breakfast, depart from the historic “City of Stone,” Gjirokaster, and begin your journey towards Berat, often called the “City of a Thousand Windows” for its distinctive Ottoman houses that seem to cascade down the hillsides. Your drive will take you through picturesque countryside, offering glimpses of Albania’s diverse landscapes.

Along the way, pause at **Cobo Winery**, on the outskirts of Berat. This is one of the oldest wineries in the country and moreover is serves wines from local vineyards.

The degustation includes 4 types of wines, Raki, olives and cheese.

Link - <https://cobowine.com/>

After this indulgent pause, continue on to Berat. Upon arrival, begin your exploration with a visit to the iconic **Berat Castle**, a sprawling fortress that dates back to the 4th century BC. Inside the castle walls, you’ll find well-preserved Ottoman houses, Byzantine churches, and ancient mosques, all overlooking the Osum River valley. Wander through the **Mangalem** and **Gorica** neighborhoods, famous for their whitewashed houses with large windows that create the city’s signature “thousand windows” appearance.

Take time to stroll the cobbled streets, visiting charming local shops and cafes, and perhaps stop by the **Onufri Iconographic Museum** housed within the castle, which showcases exquisite religious art from the region.

Spend the evening soaking in the enchanting atmosphere of Berat, a living testament to Albania’s rich history and cultural blend.

### **Timing of activity**

07:30 Breakfast at hotel in Gjirokastër  
 08:00 Depart Gjirokastër for Berat via countryside (approx. 2.5h drive)  
 10:30 – 12:00 Stop at Cobo Winery – wine tasting (4 types of wines), raki, olives, and cheese sampling  
 12:00 – 13:30 Continue drive to Berat (approx. 30 min)  
 13:30 – 15:00 Visit Berat Castle and stroll through Mangalem & Gorica neighborhoods  
 15:00 – 16:00 Explore the Onufri Iconographic Museum inside Berat Castle  
 16:00 – 18:00 Leisure Walk, visit local shops and cafes, enjoy the atmosphere of Berat’s old town  
 Evening Overnight in Berat



### Day 7: Berat and Mount Tomorr (100km)

Breakfast at the hotel and spend a full day immersed in the natural and spiritual beauty that surrounds Berat. Begin by heading east toward **Mount Tomorr**, one of Albania's most revered mountains. This sacred peak has been considered a holy site since ancient Illyrian times and is deeply ingrained in Albanian folklore and spirituality. For locals, Mount Tomorr is presided over by *Baba Tomor*, a symbolic figure representing the mountain's protective spirit.

From Berat, travel to the peaceful village of **Bogova**, nestled at the foot of Mount Tomorr. Bogova serves as a gateway for hikers and nature enthusiasts eager to explore the mountain's pristine trails. Choose from several hiking routes that wind through fragrant pine forests, alpine meadows, and rocky outcrops, offering breathtaking panoramic views of the Osum River valley and beyond. The fresh mountain air and rich biodiversity make this a perfect day for outdoor adventure and reflection.

After your hike, make your way to the spectacular **Bogova Waterfalls**, a hidden gem featuring crystal-clear pools framed by towering cliffs. The 20-meter-high cascade flows into a serene natural basin, creating an idyllic spot for rest, photos, or even a refreshing dip. This area remains relatively untouched, offering visitors a peaceful escape into Albania's wild beauty.

Return to Berat in the evening, carrying with you the memories of a day that combined physical exploration with spiritual connection and awe-inspiring nature.

#### **Timing of activity**

08:00 Breakfast at the hotel in Berat

09:00 – 09:30 Transfer from Berat to the village of Bogova, foothill of Mount Tomorr (approx. 30 min)

09:30 – 13:00 Hiking and exploration of Mount Tomorr trails: pine forests, alpine meadows, and scenic views

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch break – picnic or local meal in Bogova or nearby (optional, depending on arrangements)

14:00 – 15:30 Visit Bogova Waterfalls – enjoy nature, take photos, relax, or swim

15:30 – 17:00 Return transfer to Berat (approx. 30 min), leisure time in Berat

Evening Free time for dinner and overnight stay in Berat



### **Day 8: Berat – Airport of Tirana (120 km)**

After breakfast, enjoy a final stroll or some last-minute shopping in Berat before departing for Tirana's airport to catch your flight home, taking with you unforgettable memories of Albania's rich history, culture, and stunning landscapes.

**Have a nice flight!**

### **Price:**

- ✓ 15 = 883 euro/person in Double/ Twin room
- ✓ 20 + 1 PAX = 862 euro/person in Double/ Twin room
- ✓ 25 + 1 PAX = 779 euro/person in Double/ Twin room
- ✓ 30 + 1 PAX = 758 euro/person in Double/ Twin room

Single Supplement = 266 euro

### **Included:**

- ✓ Accommodation 4-star hotels
- ✓ Guide according to the program
- ✓ Additional guide expenses (meals + accommodation)
- ✓ Entrance fee according to the program
- ✓ All transfers with bus
- ✓ *Mrizi I Zanave Agrotourism*
- ✓ *Cobo Winery or similar*
- ✓ *Edua Bazaar*



