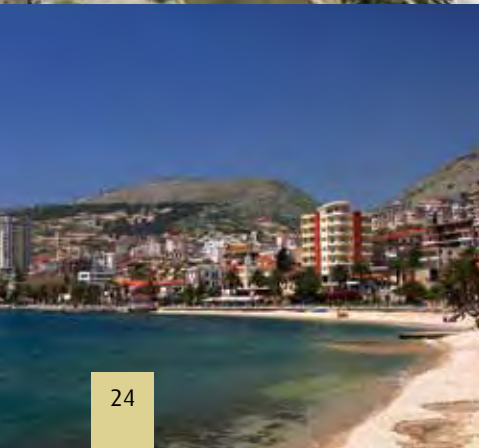


# HIGHLIGHTS OF ALBANIA & MACEDONIA TT•HAM

8 days from Tirana to Vlore, Saranda, Korce, Ohrid and Skopje



## ITINERARY

### Day 01: Tirana

Arrive at Tirana airport and transfer to your tour hotel. In the evening meet your fellow travelers and Tour Director for dinner scheduled in one of the local restaurants.

Meals: B, D

### Day 02: Tirana

Morning departure to Kruje which rises 560 meters above sea level on the slopes of Sari - Salltiku Mountain. The city is surrounded by walls reinforced by nine towers which served as observation and signaling posts during times of war. Visit the Museum of Skenderbeg, housed within the medieval castle where you will learn the history of Albania's national hero who led the 15th century struggle against the Ottoman Empire; the Ethnographic Museum will be visited during our tour as well. There will be time to explore the old bazaar before returning to Tirana.

Meals: B

### Day 03: From Tirana to Apollonia and Vlore

Morning sightseeing tour of Tirana, the capital of Albania which enjoys a beautiful setting between the ranges of Dajti Mountains from one side and the coastal plains on the other one. We will see Skenderbeg square, Palace of culture and visit the National Museum. Late morning departure to Apollonia, situated 12 km from the city of Fier. Apollonian was founded by the Greek colonists who came from Corinth. In Roman times Apollonian was a flourishing city near the Aos river. We will visit its monuments and museum and proceed to Vlore for an overnight.

Meals: B, D

### Day 04: From Vlore via Butrinti to Saranda

Morning drive to Butrinti to visit this archeological site which is on the UNESCO World Heritage List since it bears witness to the continuous inhabitation since prehistoric times. Butrinti has been a Roman city, a bishopric, and enjoyed the prosperity under Byzantine administration. It was briefly under the Venetian rule and then abandoned in the late Middle Ages after marshes formed in the area. The present archaeological site is a repository of ruins representing each period in the city's development. We will visit Temple of Aesculapius, the Baptistry, and the Nymphaeum.

Meals: B, D

### Day 05: From Saranda via Gjirokaster to Korce

Breakfast and departure to Gjirokaster, the "Stone City", situated on the eastern slope of Mountain Mali i Gjere and which is on the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites due to its architectural peculiarities. The city dates probably from the 4th century and passed to the Turks in the 15th century. What strikes visitors the most are the typical and characteristic houses which resemble little fortresses, clustered one above the other. During the sightseeing of Gjirokaster we will visit the Weapon Museum and the fortress. Later we proceed to Korce for an overnight.

Meals: B, D

### Day 06: From Korce to Ohrid

This morning we depart for Ohrid, but our first stop will be to visit St. Naum, the renovated monastery complex dating back to the 10th century. The monastery and the church were built by the end of the 9th century by St. Naum as a station and healing center for pilgrims. In the afternoon, we will reach Ohrid where several monuments will be seen during our sightseeing tour: the monument of St. Cyril and Methodius, the Lower gate, Samoil's fortress, Ohrid market and the church of St. Sofia with its icon museum.

Meals: B, D

### Day 07: From Ohrid to Skopje

This afternoon, we will reach Skopje, the capital of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, now an independent state. City sightseeing of Skopje features the Old Railway Station – the first train station in the Balkans, the Monument of Mother Teresa, the church St. Spas, built at the end of the XVII century and the Stone Bridge – a monumental structure in the center of the city. This evening join your fellow travelers and the Tour Director for a farewell dinner.

Meals: B, D

### Day 08: Skopje

Your tour finishes after breakfast in Skopje and transfer to Skopje airport.

Meals: B



## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Kruje:** The old bazaar within the walled city, Ethnographical and Skenderbeg Museum
- **Tirana:** Skenderbeg square, Palace of the Culture
- **Apollonia:** The remnants of the Greek settlement from the 7th century BC, Archeological Museum.
- The temple of Aesculap in **Butrinti** which, in itself, is on UNESCO World heritage List
- The "Stone City" of **Gjirokaster**
- **St. Naum** with its beautiful chapel
- **Ohrid:** St. Sophia Church and Icon Museum
- **Skopje:** the old railway station/monument, Church of St. Spas

## HOTELS:

- **Tirana:** Tirana International
- **Vlore:** New York
- **Saranda:** Butrinti
- **Korca:** Grand Hotel
- **Ohrid:** Metropol, Bellevue
- **Skopje:** Holiday Inn

## INCLUDED FEATURES:

- First class hotels, rooms with private facilities
- Service charges and taxes
- Welcome drink upon arrival with your Tour Director
- Breakfast daily, 4 hotel dinners plus a welcome dinner in local restaurant in Tirana, and a farewell dinner in local restaurant in Skopje
- Touring by modern air-conditioned motor coach
- Professional Tour Director throughout
- Qualified local city guides
- Luggage handling in hotels