

Tour
Information



Classic Albania





Passports

Please ensure your 10 year British Passport is not out of date and is valid for a full three months beyond the duration of your visit. The name on your passport must match the name on your flight ticket/E-ticket otherwise you may be refused boarding at the airport.

Visas

Visas are not required for Albania for citizens of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

Embassy of Albania: 33 St. George's Drive, Westminster, London SW1V 4DG.
Tel: 020 7828 8897.



Tickets

Included with this documentation is an itinerary which includes a reference number for your flight. At check-in you will need to quote/show this and you will be issued with your boarding pass. **Online check-in is not available for this booking.** Visit the British Airways website for more information: www.britishairways.com

Please check that the details on your documentation are accurate and that all names are spelt correctly and match the names on your passport. Your flight ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.



Baggage Allowance

We advise that you stick to the baggage allowances advised. If your luggage is found to be heavier than the airlines baggage allowance the charges at the airport will be hefty.

With British Airways your ticket includes one hold bag of up to 23kg plus one cabin bag no bigger than 56 x 45 x 25cm including handles, pockets and wheels, and one personal bag, such as a handbag or computer bag.

For more information please visit www.britishairways.com

Labels

Please use the luggage labels provided. It is useful to have your home address located inside your suitcase should the label go astray.

Departure Tax

UK Flight Taxes are included in the price of your holiday.

Transfers

On arrival at Tirana Airport please collect your luggage and exit the luggage area and proceed until you are in the arrival's hall. You will find your Tour Manager situated in arrivals, holding a Travel Editions sign. The journey time to resort is approximately 45 mins.

Special Requests

If you haven't done so already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.



Accommodation

Hotel Panorama, Kruje

The 4-star Panorama Hotel is well located in the city centre and offers panoramic views over the castle, mountain and Adriatic Sea to the west. All rooms are modern and offer ensuite facilities, air-con, TV, telephone and Wi-Fi. There are two restaurants available at the hotel which offer an excellent standard of traditional dishes.

For more information visit the hotel website: <http://hotelpanoramakruje.com/>

Hotel Regina City, Vlore

This 4-star modern, relaxing hotel is the newest in Vlore, and boasts a private beach, swimming pool, lounge bar and restaurant. Rooms are modern and feature private bathroom, air-con, tea/coffee making facilities, TV and Wi-Fi.

For more information visit the hotel website: <http://reginacity.al/>

Hotel Brilant, Sarande

The Brilant Hotel is a modern 4-star hotel located just 100m from the main boulevard and 50m from the sea. This hotel offers a bar, rooms with ensuite facilities, air-con, minibar, telephone, TV and Wi-Fi.

For more information visit the hotel website: <https://www.brilanthotel.com/>

Hotel Argjiro, Gjirokaster

Located in the heart of historical Gjirokaster, the Hotel Argjiro is close to all touristic attractions like Old Bazaar and Argjiro castle. The hotel boasts a bar, roof garden and rooms are all ensuite with TV, hairdryer, air-con and Wi-Fi.

For more information visit the hotel website: <http://www.hotelargjiro.al/?lang=en>

Hotel Mangalemi, Berat

The first hotel that opened in Berat after the 1991 change of system in Albania, this hotel is conveniently located in the Mangalemi quarter. The hotel has a restaurant serving traditional dishes which offers a terrace overlooking the city. Rooms at the hotel offer ensuite facilities, air con, minibar, TV and WiFi.

<http://www.mangalemihotel.com/>

Hotel Rezidenca Desarat, Berat

The Hotel Rezidenca Desaret is situated just a few metres from the centre and is surrounded by fantastic views. The hotel was restored in 2016, adding an excellent combination of tradition and modern. Bedrooms all have private bathroom facilities with shower as well as air-con, balcony, TV, Wi-Fi and telephone.

Dining

Although this tour is on half board basis you will have the opportunity to eat out during the lunch breaks when you will have the opportunity to try some of the local cuisine.

Albania's food is based very heavily on meat, particularly lamb and beef, cooked in a typically Middle Eastern style. The main influence of Albanian cuisine is that of Turkey. Among the most common dishes in Albania are romsteak (patties made of minced meat), qofte (meat balls) and shishqebap (sheesh kababs). A number of other meat-based dishes are also popular; these include rosto me salcë kosi (roast beef with sour cream), fërges (beef stew), and çonlek (a meat stew with onions). The country grows a lot of olives, citrus fruits and grapes, and all appear prominently in local menus.

The country produces, like every other Mediterranean land, lots of wine; white and reds, with the former usually better than the latter; in addition, there are fruit liqueurs of different types, uzo - an aniseed-flavoured liqueur, and brandies locally called konjak and raki. Albania is also known for its coffee- the strong kafe turke and the milder kafe ekspres (espresso).

Meals included in your holiday

Breakfast and dinner are included daily.



Destination

Tirana

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 unrecognisable, with buildings painted in primary colours, and public squares and pedestrianised streets that are a pleasure to wander.

Durres

Durrës, historically also known as Epidamnos, Durazzo and Dyrrachium, is the largest port and second largest city and a municipality of Albania. Founded by Greek colonists from Corinth and Corfu as Epidamnos in 627 BC, it has been continuously inhabited ever since and is one of the oldest cities in Albania. Geographically, it is central on the coast, about 33 km west of the capital Tirana.

Gjirokaster

The city of Gjirokaster is part of the UNESCO World Heritage List and is one of the most attractive tourist sites of the country. Perched on the eastern side of the Wide Mountain, the city began as a fourth century castle, which is today the greatest castle in the whole country. Inside the fortress is the Museum of Weapons, where weapons of different periods up until the Second World War are displayed. Gjirokastra is known as 'The City of Stone'.

Natural Historical Museum, Tirana

Albania's largest museum, the National Historical Museum has seven pavilions of exhibits. You'll spot the attraction by the large mosaic above the front entrance called "The Albanians." Each pavilion showcases a different period in Albania's history from antiquity to communism. In the antiquity pavilion you'll see objects from prehistory to the Middle Ages, including tools from daily life, coins, and base reliefs. As you move forward in time, the exhibits get more political,

celebrating Albanian independence and decrying abuses from outside nations. Beyond the socio-political history, there is also an iconography exhibit with notable works by local artists and a large exhibit sharing Albania's story from World War II.

Et'hem Bey Mosque

To one side of the Skanderbeg Square the 1789–1823 Et'hem Bey Mosque was spared destruction during the atheism campaign of the late 1960s because of its status as a cultural monument. Small and elegant, it's one of the oldest buildings left in the city. Take your shoes off to look inside at the beautifully painted dome.

Archaeological Museum

The national archaeological museum in Tirana, was the first museum created after World War II. It was opened in 1948 as an Ethnographic-Archaeological Museum. This museum presents the research of archaeological discoveries in the territory of Albania.

BunkArt 2

Bunk'art 2 reconstructs the history of the Albanian Ministry of Internal Affairs from 1912 to 1991 and reveals the secrets of "Sigurimi", the political police that was the harsh persecution weapon used by the regime of Enver Hoxha. Bunk'art 2 is the first major video museum exhibition dedicated to the victims of communist terror.

Lezhe Castle

The castle originates from Illyrian times. In 1440 it was reconstructed by the Venetians, and in 1522, after the Ottoman conquest, it was also rebuilt by the latter. The castle bears traces of Illyrian, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman architecture.

Grave of Skanderbeg

An Albanian Military Leader. He is considered the most prominent historical figure in all Albanian history. He is their national hero and known as the Dragon of Albania. He grew up in the town of

Kruja during the 15th century and excelled in his studies at the Ottoman military school where he was awarded the Turkish title of Iskander Bey, or Lord Alexander.

Kruje Castle

Krujë castle is one of the most famous forts of Albania. Archaeological finds showed that the castles hill has been inhabited since the 3rd century, while the castle itself was built in the 5th century. Set atop a rocky hill, the castle withstood massive sieges from the Ottomans – even famous Mehmed II “The Conqueror” could not break the castle’s small defenses. Today, the castle is still a source of inspiration for Albanians everywhere.

Venetian Tower, Durres

The Venetian Castle is an extension of the Byzantine Fortress of Durrës. Built in the sixth century, it was considered one of the most powerful fortresses along the western coast of the Adriatic. Architectonic elements of the structure and historic records show that the fortress was rebuilt in the first half of the fifteenth century, when Durrës was ruled by the **Republic of Venice**.

Roman Amphitheatre, Durres

The Amphitheatre of Durrës, dating back from the beginning of the 2nd century, was discovered only in the 1960s. It is located in the very centre of the city, known in antiquity by the name of Epidamnos or Dyrrachium. It is one of the most remarkable heritage sites not only in Albania but in the whole Balkan region.

The Amphitheatre of Durrës, with a capacity for 15.000 to 20.000 spectators, was in use for more than three centuries. Later the Amphitheatre was used for Christian religious events, as testified, for instance, by a graceful early Christian chapel.

Apollonia

The ruins of the ancient Illyrian city of Apollonia sit on a remote hilltop location some 12km west of the city of Fier. While definitely one of Albania's most important ancient sites, the ruins have fairly minimal descriptions and can be quite hard to piece together, though the onsite Apollonia Museum complex is excellent, and does much to make up for the lack of context in the archaeological site itself.

Roman site of Oricum

Of the many archaeological treasures in Albania, the ancient port of Oricum is arguably one of the most intriguing. This forgotten city played a crucial role in Julius Caesar’s ascent to total domination. Yet, during the better part of the 20th century, the communist regime isolated Albania from the rest of the world. Archaeologists are only now scratching the surface of the site’s potential.

Butrint

The ancient ruins of Butrint, 18km south of Sarande, are famed for their size, beauty and tranquillity. They're in a fantastic natural setting and are part of a 29 sq km national park. The remains – Albania's finest – are from a variety of periods, spanning 2500 years.

Lekursi Castle

Lekursi Castle was built in the early 16th century by [Sultan Suleymani](#) and is located on the top of a hill in Lëkurës looking directly over Saranda. It’s located about 3-4km away from the centre of Sarande. The castle was initially built to protect the city from invaders accessing the coastline by boat. From the castle you have great views of Corfu and Ksamil islands.

Gjirokaster Castle

The fort sits on top of a hill that towers over the surrounding town making it a striking monument to the grandeur of the past. The site continued to operate as a prison until 1968, and now the castle complex is operated as a historical site, including an arms museum devoted to the weapons of Albania’s independence. Even outside of the museum proper the castles halls are sprinkled with abandoned World War II tanks, and there is even an American fighter plane that was shot down during the war that sits next to one of the towers as a reminder of the struggle against Western influence.

Byllis

For the Albanians, the city of Byllis, dating back to the 4th century B.C, is one of the most important archaeological sites in Albania. With its fascinating ruins and breath-taking views, Byllis is one of the numerous hidden treasures of south-central Albania.

Berat

This historic UNESCO city, the pride of Albanian architecture, is located 120 KM from Tirana. The city forms a wonderful combination of eastern and western cultures, costumes, traditions and is a testament to the country's tradition of religious harmony.

Your lecturer / Guide

Jeremy Paterson. Jeremy taught Greek and Roman history for over forty years at Newcastle University. He has travelled widely in Greece and the Mediterranean. His enthusiasm for the ancient world was first inspired by reading Homer and then by his fascination with the archaeological

Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operates according to plan. If you have any problems or questions, please see him or her immediately and they will do their utmost to resolve any issues.



The Basics

Climate – Albania has a Mediterranean climate, so the weather at this time of year is likely to be pleasant but can still be quite cool and there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared. Layers are useful as is a rain jacket and small umbrella.

Time –GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar). In reality this means, summer or winter, Albania is 1 hour ahead of the UK

Language – Albanian

Religion– The most- commonly practised religion is Islam followed by Christianity.

Currency– Leke (LEK) £1 = 145 Leke. Notes are in denominations of LEK 5000, 2000, 1000, 500, 200. Coins are in denominations of LEK 100, 50, 20, 10, 5, 1. The import and export of local currency is prohibited. Currency can be exchanged at Bureau de Change and Banks.

Banks – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are widespread; every town of any size has at least one.

Credit cards – Credit cards are accepted only by top-of-the-range hotels and restaurants

Travellers Cheques

American Express traveller's cheques can only be cashed in Tirana, with a 2% commission charge. Traveller's cheques are **NOT** accepted by hotels or restaurants anywhere in the country.

Electricity – 230 volt, two-pin continental plug.

Drinking water – Albanian tap water is treated and is safe for brushing teeth or cooking and in some places good for drinking. Nevertheless, most of the Albanians drink bottled water so we suggest you do the same. Bottled water is reasonably priced and available everywhere.

Shopping – Along with the opportunity to shop for clothing and souvenirs in some resorts in Albania like Kruja, Vlore & Sarande, still Tirana remains the centre of shopping. Lots of the small shops offer a great variety of clothes, shoes, bags and other accessories made in Italy, Turkey and Greece.

Telephones/mobiles – Albania has a good level of mobile coverage, though there are still some areas where getting a signal can be hard. If you are calling the UK from a mobile in Albania, you will need to prefix the number with the international dialling code 0044. Please note, using a UK mobile in Albania is expensive. Check costs with your provider before travel.

Tipping –To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that, when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services.

Walking shoes – for visits to archaeological sites, which can be a little rocky underfoot, we recommend that you take shoes which have good gripping soles that are fairly sturdy and definitely comfortable.



Health

General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit for Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Doctor/Dentist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a Doctor. If you do make a visit to either of these services and have treatment, please keep any receipts for insurance claims



Hospital

The nearest hospitals are in Tirana. Your tour manager/hotel reception will assist if you need to visit a hospital during your stay.

Keep any receipts for insurance claims.

Inoculations

No compulsory vaccinations are required for travel in Albania.

Pharmacies

For minor ailments, pharmacies sell almost everything over the counter including antibiotics. They are generally well stocked and will often speak some basic English.



Insurance

Travel Insurance

As the EHIC card is not valid in Albania, we strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad. If you require medical assistance whilst abroad it is essential that you contact the emergency number of your insurance company to advise them of the situation. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of action whilst in resort.



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045 (Mon-Fri 0900-1700)

Outside of the hours mentioned above telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7899 796542 or

00 44 7831 133079 or

00 44 1235 850720

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

If you are calling an Albanian number from a UK mobile you should prefix the number with the Albanian international dialling code 00 355.

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday please contact:

British Embassy Albania

Rruga Skenderbeg 12

Tirana

Albania

Tel: +355 4 2 34973

Email: british.embassytirana@fco.gov.uk

Open to the public - by appointment only

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