Ultimate Albania Cycling Tour

Trip Code: ALMB

Version:

CYCLE	GUIDED GROUP	MODERATE
		5



HIGHLIGHTS

- Beautiful Lake Ohrid and a visit to the nearby Monastery of Saint Naum in Macedonia
- Quiet roads, colourful wild flowers and traditional agriculture of the Korce Plateau
- Get your fix of sun, sea and sand at Sarande and Himare on the Albanian Riviera
- Bike and ALL meals included. Expect to be amazed by the sheer quality of the food

AT A GLANCE

- 7 days cycling
- 397 kilometres
- 100% road
- 100% vehicle support
- Max. altitude - 1200m
- Join at Tirana

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

Isolated from the rest of the world until the mid 1990's, Albania is a colourful and welcoming country with a mix of unique attractions that make it the perfect destination for an adventure cycling holiday. Starting out from the thriving capital city of Tirana, this bespoke itinerary balances generally half-days of cycling with plenty of time to soak up the essence of the country.

You'll start out by cycling to Lake Ohrid within its circle of high mountains and have the chance to hop over into Macedonia to see the stunning Monastery of Saint Naum. Then, for several days, the route crosses the agricultural heartland of Albania, close to the border with Greece, where you'll share the quiet flower-fringed roads with horse-drawn carts and shepherds driving their flocks. The towns of Korce and Gjirocaster are highlights, as are the family farm of Farma Sotire in the Grammoz Mountains and the hot springs and Ottoman bridge at Lengarica. Cycling out to the coast, with the Island of Corfu looming on the horizon, you'll have a guided tour at Butrint with its well-preserved Greek theatre and Roman bath-house. Then, cycling north though the most beautiful section of the Albanian Riviera, you'll have a night at each of the contrasting resorts of Sarande and Himare. This final part of the holiday will show off a different side to the country and provide plenty of time to chill and to reflect on one of Europe's best cycling holidays.

Is this holiday for you?

ADVENTURE CYCLING. With just under 400 kilometres of cycling in 7 days, this is a holiday for regular weekend cyclists looking for a new challenge. There are a couple of short and easy days without a lot of ascent and there are also some longer days with moderate amounts of accumulated ascent. In most cases, the cycling is over by lunch time, or there's just a short ride after lunch to the next night's accommodation. The 'moving time' or time actually cycling generally averages out at little more than 3 hours each day. The roads are quiet and well surfaced for the most part, with a couple of rougher sections in the mountains that the provided hybrid bikes cope well with. What's more, Albanian motorists have a great attitude and are always ready to give you the room you need on the road. Our ground agent in Albania is first rate and has a fleet of Giant Roam hybrid bikes which are included within the trip price.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- An experienced English-speaking cycling guide
- Full-time support vehicle and driver
- A single timed transfer to Tirana Airport on Day 9
- All vehicle transfers as mentioned in the itinerary
- Accommodation as described
- All meals
- Guided city tours in Korce and Gjirokaster
- Guided tour at Butrint
- Local bike hire

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Tirana Airport transfers (other than the single transfer on Day 9)
- Tips for local staff
- Snacks and drinks with meals
- Miscellaneous personal expenses

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Tirana.

Transfers from Tirana Airport are not provided on arrival (Day 1 of the itinerary) but a single transfer to Tirana Airport on the final day of the holiday is provided.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are provided, from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 9.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Water from the taps may not be drinkable in all locations on this trip - please check with your guide. We recommend taking water purification tablets and a reusable bottle with a filter such as **Water-to-Go**, which can both be used to help make safe other water sources. Please note that we do not encourage the purchase of single use plastic bottles.

All meals are included in the holiday price and the food in Albania is a revelation. Breakfasts at the larger hotels are buffet style with all options covered. There are usually cereals, fruit, cheese, salad stuff (tomatoes, olives, cucumber), cold meats, as well as eggs, cooked sausage, bread, cakes, fruit juice, tea and coffee. There may be fewer items offered at one or two of the place we stay, but there is always plenty of choice. Lunches are always a proper sit-down meal at a restaurant with a selection of typical Albanian dishes offered and shared amongst the group. Salads and fresh vegetables predominate, with rich cream cheese, sizzling tomato and cheese dishes and/or grilled peppers. There will also be at least one meat or fish dish, such as spaghetti carbonara or baked lamb or grilled sea bream. Dinners are an even more lavish version of the lunch menus with multiple shared starters and a meat or sea-food main course. All food is locally sourced, locally inspired and generally organic.

Accommodation

For 6 of the 8 nights the accommodation is in hotels of a very good standard offering twin-share rooms with en-suite facilities. At Farma Sotira on Day 4 the group will stay in individual cabins which each have 2 rooms, one double room and one twin-share. There is a single shower room and toilet in each of the cabins. At Benje on Day 5, the family-run guesthouse we use offers twin-share rooms with en-suite facilities. If you are travelling by yourself you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Depending on availability, it may be possible to pre-book single room occupancy throughout the holiday.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The trip will be led by an experienced, English-speaking local cycling guide. In addition, there will be a full-time support vehicle and driver. There will be a specialist historical guide for the tour at Butrint.

Altitude

This holiday does not involve any significant ascent to altitude and we would not expect any altitude issues with this trip.

Spending Money

Approximately €150 should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses including your bar bills and reasonable tips to the support crew. If you intend to buy expensive souvenirs, you should budget accordingly. Albania's unit of currency is the Lek. ATM machines are available at Tirana Airport and in the larger towns. Credit cards can be used to purchase goods and services in some shops, hotels and restaurants in Albania. The local guide will set up a kitty (around €30 per person) which he will use to pay for the morning coffee stops, for snacks from the support vehicle (bananas, chocolate etc) and for drinks with meals at lunch and dinner.

Guidance on Tipping

Tips do not form part of the wages of local staff but they are appreciated. It is important to remember that tipping is voluntary and should be dependent on good service. It is best if the tip is given at the end of the trip by the group as a whole. A reasonable level of tipping would be €40 per person, to be split between the group's guide and driver.

Bike Hire

Bikes are provided locally within the cost of the holiday. Our agent in Albania provides Giant Roam 'hybrid' type bikes with Shimano components, triple chainsets, 63mm Suntour front suspension and hydraulic disc brakes. For women, there is a very similar model of bike, the Liv Rove, also manufactured by Giant. The bikes are fitted with a rack and a pannier - you can remove the pannier if you to prefer to cycle without one. The bikes come in a full range of sizes, they are well maintained and in good condition. They are fitted with flat pedals and fast-rolling Schwalbe Marathon Plus tyres. You can take your own pedals and even your seat if you wish. These will be fitted for you. Please provide us with your height when you book, so we can make sure you get a bike of the appropriate size.

E-bikes. The local agent also has Giant Explore E-bikes and if you would like to ride one of these pedal-assisted bikes there will be an additional charge of £175 / €210 / $220. If you choose to ride an e-bike, you will pay the additional cost with your final balance.

Vehicle Support

A support vehicle with a purpose-made trailer for the bikes will accompany the group throughout the trip. A separate transfer bus (or multiple taxis, as appropriate) will be brought in where a group transfer is called for. The cycling guide will usually ride at the head of the group and the support vehicle will bring up the rear. There will be regular stops, every 10 kilometres or so, to allow the group to reassemble. We want everyone to enjoy their cycling experience on this trip and it's important that group members can cycle at their own pace. The support vehicle can pick up group members who wish to take a break from cycling at any time. Water, fruit, chocoate and biscuits are provided from the support vehicle. If there are particular energy bars or gels that you rely on at home, consider taking a small supply.

Baggage Allowance

We recommend that you travel with one main item of luggage, such as a holdall or wheelie-bag, as well as a small day pack which can be used to carry valuable items such as cameras and GPS devices whilst travelling. Whilst cycling you can carry a small cycle-specific day-pack or you can fit a pannier (provided) to the bike and put your stuff in that.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the ‘Dates and Prices’ table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

The unit of currency in Albania is the Lek.

Preparing for your Holiday

The better shape you are in, the more you will enjoy your holiday. You should adopt a sensible weekly exercise regime and fit in a number of long cycle rides in hilly country ahead of the trip. As well as cycling, running and swimming are also good for developing aerobic fitness and stamina.

Climate

Albania has a Mediterranean climate, with hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters (in the highlands, snow can fall from November until March). We run this cycling holiday in May, in late September and in early October, either side of the too-hot summer months. The daytime maximum temperatures we are likely to encounter at these times will be in the low to mid 20's centigrade, falling at night to between 12 and 15 degrees centigrade. At Korce (850m), our highest overnight stop, it will be 2 or 3 degrees cooler than this. May and September are relatively dry months with slightly more chance of rain as you move into October.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Albania (Bradt Travel Guide) - Gillian Gloyer
- Western Balkans - Lonely Planet
- The Albanians: A Modern History - Miranda Vickers

Maps

Albania Road Map. Freytag and Berndt. 1:400,000

Road map of the entire country of Albania.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

For this holiday you will need normal cycling clothing, including suitable shoes, cycling gloves and a helmet (which you must wear at all times when on the bike).

Bike Gear

- Cycling helmet (one can be provided locally FOC)
- Cycling shoes or trainers
- Water bottle or small hydration pack
- Padded cycling shorts
- Long leg cycling trousers or leg warmers
- Base-layer - short sleeve cycling tops
- Mid-layer - long sleeved cycling tops
- Lightweight windproof/waterproof jacket
- Light fleece jacket or jumper (for evenings)
- Regular biking gloves

- Buff
- Sunglasses
- Sun cream (inc. total bloc for lips/nose)
- Camera

Other Stuff

- Travel and off-the-bike clothing and footwear
- Wash bag, towel, toiletries, including anti-bacterial handwash
- Swimwear
- Basic First Aid kit and personal medication

Spares and Repairs

You do not need to take any tools or spares. The local guide will take care of any and all issues. Please contact us if you have any questions about your equipment.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary starting at the hotel in Tirana. Transfers from Tirana Airport are not provided on arrival (Day 1 of the itinerary) but a single transfer to Tirana Airport on the final day of the holiday is provided. Ideally you should choose flights which enable you to reach the hotel in Tirana by late afternoon on Day 1.

There are a number of low cost carriers offering direct flights to and from Tirana. If you would like to take advantage of these schedules please check the timings of the departure transfer on Day 9 with the office team.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Tirana with Austrian Airlines. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the early morning, arriving in the early afternoon of the same day (Day 1 of the itinerary). Return flights will depart Tirana in the afternoon of the final day of the holiday, arriving in the UK later that same evening.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

The Best Itinerary We include a short introductory ride and a night beside Lake Ohrid with the option to visit the unmissable Monastery of Saint Naum in Macedonia. The remainder of the week offers up a nice balance of mostly half-day rides which ends at Himare on the Albanian Riviera. We have chosen to leave out the tough ride on a busy road up to the Llogara Pass that some of our competitors include.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 12/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change