# Walking in the Balkan Borderlands

Trip Code: BBL

Version:

| WALK & TREK | GUIDED GROUP | 5 MODERATE |
|---|---|---|



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Walk through the magnificent landscapes of Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania
- Explore Lake Skadar home to rare birdlife and stay in Lovcen National Park
- Head off the beaten track and discover a rich melting pot of cultures
- Experience traditional guesthouses and family home cooking

### AT A GLANCE

- 6 days walking
- Max altitude - 2250m
- Join at Pristina, End in Dubrovnik

### ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

# Introduction

Breath-taking landscapes, remote trails, towering mountains, meandering rivers, crystal clear lakes, colourful flora, eclectic architecture, fascinating history, a melting pot of cultures, tasty food and one of the warmest welcomes on the planet – welcome to the Balkan Borderlands. This fantastic cross-border walking holiday explores wild regions and follows trails along the Peaks of the Balkans route. As we weave our way through spectacular mountains and explore some of Europe's wildest scenery, we're guaranteed a warm Balkan welcome, simple way of life and unique experience. We start in the historical gem of Peja nestled at the foot of Kosovo's Rugova Mountains and home to charming Ottoman architecture and a rare opportunity to step back in time. After Peja we discover Kosovo's wild beauty and hike through traditional villages before heading over the Jelenak Pass and into Albania's magnificent Accursed Mountains. By crossing remote borders and walking through lush valleys, we criss-cross between dramatic Montenegro and majestic Albania whilst surrounded by incredible scenery. After transferring to Virpazar in Montenegro, we sail across Lake Skadar home to wonderful birdlife, stay in the breath-taking heart of Lovcen National Park and explore the Bay of Kotor, Europe's most southern fjord. This multi-country holiday takes you on an incredible walking and cultural journey through a very special area of Europe.

## Is this holiday for you?

This wonderful walking holiday follows remote trails between valleys and villages that are mainly used by local shepherds and villagers. As you'd expect in mountainous areas of Europe, paths are rugged and can be slippery underfoot, whilst in June we may encounter late lying areas of snow to cross. As on all alpine walking holidays, there are some steep ascents and descents and long days, so you should ensure you are physically prepared and able to walk for approximately 6 - 8 hours each day, and for several days continuously. Homestay and guesthouse accommodation in the mountains is simple and this area of the Balkans still observes a very traditional way of life. (This holiday requires a trekking permit so a copy of your passport is required by the KE office after booking).This wonderful walking holiday follows remote trails between valleys and villages that are mainly used by local shepherds and villagers. As you'd expect in mountainous areas of Europe, paths are rugged and can be slippery underfoot, whilst in June we may encounter late lying areas of snow to cross. As on all alpine walking holidays, there are some steep ascents and descents and long days, so you should ensure you are physically prepared and able to walk for approximately 6 - 8 hours each day, and for several days continuously. Homestay and guesthouse accommodation in the mountains is simple and this area of the Balkans still observes a very traditional way of life. (This holiday requires a trekking permit so a copy of your passport is required by the KE office after booking).

# Itinerary

Version:

# Holiday Information

## What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- Single timed airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as detailed in the Meal Plan
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- National park entrance fees
- All excursions as mentioned in the itinerary

## What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Any extra activities and excursions
- Tips
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks and souvenirs etc

## Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the Hotel in Peja.

A single group transfer from Pristina Airport to the first nights hotel in Peja is provided.

On the last day of the Land Only itinerary, there will be a single group transfer to Dubrovnik Airport.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost. Taxis are also available.

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

## Meal Plan

Breakfasts, 4 lunches and 7 dinners are included.

## 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.

With a mix of Balkan, Turkish and European influences, the food in this part of the world is fantastic. In the hotels breakfast are continental style, with cereals, bread and jam, tea, coffee and sometimes eggs. You may also have the chance to try a more traditional breakfast of flavoured rice. At the guesthouses, breakfasts are also simple. Packed lunches are provided and will consist of bread and a variety of meats, cheeses, tomatoes and cucumber. There will also be plenty of fruit, biscuits and cake. Evening meals include traditional soups, fantastic locally-grown vegetables, local dairy produce and meat dishes. Soups, stews, and goulashes are common. There is always plenty of bread which is usually Italian style, often served with a tomato and olive salad and various cheeses. On and near the coast, the diet is even more Mediterranean with fish understandably featuring in the most common dishes. Water is provided, but very often this is from local wells or mountain streams and is not chlorinated. If you are concerned about drinking untreated water, we suggest you bring a supply of water treatment tablets.

## Accommodation

During this holiday the group will spend 1 night at a comfortable hotel in Peja/Pec, 1 night at a similar establishment in Virpazar, and 2 nights in Kotor. These hotels provide twin-sharing, en-suite accommodation. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex for the hotel nights. Single rooms are available for these nights at a supplementary cost.

There will also be three nights spent in simple homestay, guesthouse, or lodge-style accommodation with basic bathroom facilities. During this time, the group will stay in remote areas with minimal tourism infrastructure – an integral part of the cultural experience. It's important to remember that these guesthouses and lodges are people's homes. While the facilities may be basic, they have been chosen for their welcoming atmosphere and excellent location, which more than compensates for the lack of hotel amenities. Rooms typically accommodate between two and five people, and depending on the group composition, mixed-gender room sharing may be necessary.

If you are planning to extend your holiday additional nights at the group hotel are available on request.

## Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader.

## Altitude

The altitudes on this holiday are not extreme and the maximum altitude attained is no more than the equivalent of a pressurised cabin on an international flight. You may 'feel' the altitude the first time you trek above 2,000 metres but all that is required is a slower pace to compensate. You should pay particular attention to your hydration levels while trekking above 2,000 metres.

## Spending Money

Approximately £100 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 (credit cards can be useful in this respect). Kosovo & Montenegro use the Euro, and the Lek is the currency of Albania. You should obtain Euros for this holiday. By far the easiest way to obtain your travel cash is from ATM's using a credit card or a debit card. ATM's are available at the airport in Pristina and in Peja, as well as Cetinje and Kotor. OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES (Subject to change) Boat ride to Lady of the Rock : €5, Local bus to Perast : €1 each way.

## Guidance on Tipping

Tips do not form part of the wages of local staff but they are very much 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. We recommend that each group member contributes around £30 and that tips are then distributed between the guide and support staff as the group feels is appropriate.

## Additional Information

During this holiday we trek across the borders of Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro. A trekking permit will be applied for on your behalf by our local agent. Please send a copy of your passport into the KE office after you have been confirmed on the holiday.

## Baggage Allowance

There is no weight restriction as such on this holiday other than that imposed by your international carrier (normally 20kg). Your baggage on the trip will be transported between overnight stops by vehicle. There is no weight restriction other than that imposed by your international carrier but we do ask you to limit your luggage to one piece which weighs no more than 15kgs plus your day pack.

## 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

### Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

**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.

For this holiday we require a scanned copy of the main pages of your passport. Please email this to the office when your holiday is guaranteed to run.

## 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.

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

## Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on a walking holiday getting some additional exercise. Regular walking in hill or back country is the best preparation. Running and swimming are also good for developing better cardiovascular fitness and stamina.

## Climate

Daytime temperatures in the lower valleys will vary between 15ºC and 30ºC at the times of year we operate this trip. The weather in summer is generally excellent - with hot days, clear skies and little rain. Note that temperatures do drop in the evenings in the mountains by several degrees. High up, we may encounter cooler conditions and stormy weather cannot be ruled out at any time of year in this mountainous region. At the coast the temperatures will be higher.

## 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

- Western Balkans Lonely Planet
- Southeastern Europe Lonely Planet
- The Accursed Mountains - Robert Carver
- Broken April - Ismail Kadare
- High Albania - Edith Durham
- The Mountains of Montenegro – A Walkers and Trekkers Guide. Rudolf Abraham. (Cicerone)
- Kosovo Bradt guide

## Maps

**Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro**

1:600,00. Detailed, double-sided road map of Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, with index and city centre street enlargements of Belgrade, Sarajevo, Zagreb and Ljubljana. Clearly shows the national road network and selected provincial and local roads, with each class of road clearly indicated and road numbers shown. Intermediate driving distances between locations are shown in kilometres alongside the road, motorway filling stations are shown and motorway junctions are indicated.

## Private Groups Information

**Make this KE Adventure holiday your own!**

- Do our normal group departure dates not fit?
- Would you prefer to travel with just friends and/or family?
- Are you looking to organise a trip for your local walking, biking or mountaineering club?

It's really easy to make a trip your own. Simply select from our full range of adventure holidays and choose the dates that work for you and your group.

We are experts in creating holidays for groups of friends, families, charities and clubs. Our personal service means you'll be fully involved as we make the arrangements for your perfect adventure holiday.

**Independence with Security**

Travelling as a KE Private Group allows you more flexibility and choice, but still with the peace of mind that everything is pre-planned and arranged for your group by a reputable adventure travel company.

To take your first step to an amazing adventure with your friends and family complete the private group enquiry form, or call our **Sales Experts on: 017687 73966**

## 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

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

## You must bring the following items:

### Clothing

- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof over-trousers
- Underwear
- Base layer shirts (1 short sleeve, 1 long sleeve)
- Light fleece shirt or mid-layer
- Warm fleece jacket or jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- T-shirts or casual shirts
- Lightweight thermal gloves
- Sunhat
- Warm hat

### Other items

- Day Pack (30 litres)
- Sunglasses
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including for lips)
- Water bottles 1 Litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets (Water is provided, but very often this is from local wells or mountain streams and is not chlorinated. If you are concerned about drinking untreated water, we suggest you bring a supply of water treatment tablets.)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Travel towel
- Antibacterial hand wash
- Small padlock (for your baggage)
- Name and address label for your baggage (for Customs when the bags travel across borders by vehicles unaccompanied by their owners)
- Basic First Aid Kit including Insect repellent (DEET); antiseptic cream; throat lozenges; diarrhoea treatment (Diocalm or Immodium); painkillers; plasters and blister treatment; and re-hydration salts (Dioralite). Glucose sweets and vitamin tablets are a useful addition.

## The following items are optional:

- Travel clothes
- Shorts
- Trainers or sandals
- Spare laces

- Sheet sleeping bag liner
- Trekking poles
- Camera
- Pen-knife
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

## Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

## Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary, joining at the hotel in Pristina in Kosovo and departing from Dubrovnik in Croatia. Single timed transfers are included from/to Pristina and Dubrovnik Airports.

## Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

## Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London Heathrow to Pristina (Kosovo). Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the morning, arriving in the early afternoon of the same day (day 1 of the Land Only itinerary). Return flights will depart in the afternoon of the last day of the itinerary from Dubrovnik (Croatia), arriving in the UK later that same evening.

# Why Choose KE

## Why KE

This wonderful walking holiday was created by KE staff that lived in the Balkans and takes you on one of their favourite cross-border journeys. Join the Balkan experts and explore on foot a contrasting variety of countries deep in the heart of an undiscovered Europe.

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