High Peaks of the Balkans

Trip Code: HPB

Version:

WALK & TREK	GUIDED GROUP	CHALLENGING
		8



HIGHLIGHTS

- An amazing trekking journey through the heart of the undiscovered Balkans
- Climb the mighty three - Korab (2,764m), Gjeravica (2,656m) and Zla Kolata (2,534m)
- Boat across Lake Koman and overnight in bustling Tirana, Albania's capital
- A real off the beaten track experience in the land of the Via Dinarica trail

AT A GLANCE

- 5 days walking
- Max altitude - 2751m
- Join at Tirana

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

This Classic KE 8 day holiday includes an amazing trekking journey through four of Europe's most exciting countries with the opportunity to climb to spectacular summits in each. In the heart of the Balkans - Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro and Macedonia offer a rich melting pot of culture, cuisine and history combined with spectacular alpine scenery. We start our adventure in welcoming Albania and kick off the week in true KE style by summiting its tallest peak - Mount Korab (2764m). Located on the border between Albania and Macedonia, Korab sits in the Korab-Kortinik National Park. Next we head to the Republic of Kosovo with its rich traditions and simple lifestyle. Kosovo is a true undiscovered gem and we climb Mount Gjeravica (2656m), the second highest in the Dinaric Alps range. After Kosovo we cross-border trek between Albania and Montenegro through a remote and wild landscape before finishing our adventure by summiting the highest point in Montenegro - Zla Kolata (2534m). Finally we take a ferry through the fjord landscape of Lake Koman and a final night in Tirana sees us celebrate in the bustling capital of Albania. If you are looking for a new trekking holiday that is a KE classic - dramatic peaks to summit, amazing scenery and a spot of "the undiscovered," then this is the perfect choice!

Is this holiday for you?

This is a real mountain journey with significant amounts of ascent and descent on each day. Trails are generally good underfoot but you need to be prepared for difficult sections with no obvious path to follow and overgrown terrain. There are steep ascents and descents which cannot be avoided as we trek from one valley to another and include a number of summits. You need to be prepared for continuous sections of stony ground, scree, narrow mountain paths and brief sections of scrambling. Occasionally there may be the snow patches to cross. Each day you'll carry a daypack with everything you need for a full day in the mountains whilst your main kitbag is transported by horses. You will be hiking through a remote area and need to be prepared to walk for an average of 7 to 8 hours each day and for several days continuously. Each overnight has basic facilities so this holiday is suitable for fit and experienced hill walkers who are looking for a challenging mountain journey with a simpler style of accommodation. (Please note that early booking is recommended so we can secure your permits for Kosovo).

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

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

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Departure airport transfer
- Tips
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks and souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Tejze.

A single timed transfer is provided from Tirana Aiport in the early evening of Day 1.

On the last day of the itinerary airport transfers are not included. Getting to Tirana Airport by taxi or shuttle bus is straightforward.

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

Meal Plan

All meals are included in the holiday price, from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 8.

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.

The food of the Balkan is a real mix of Turkish and European and during this holiday there will be plenty of freshly cooked food using local ingredients. Breakfasts are simple in style, with bread and jam, tea, coffee and sometimes eggs or cheese. Packed lunches are provided (bread, meats, cheeses, tomatoes, cucumber, fruit and biscuits). The simple accommodation on this holiday is deep in the heart of the mountains and the lifestyle is very basic. Therefore “packed lunches” will not be the same as you are used to at home. If you’re someone who enjoys chocolate/sweets/nuts on the trail then please feel free to bring extra snacks from home. What is prepared is freshly cooked and evening meals are based on what local families would have themselves - traditional soups and bread, locally-grown vegetables and salads, dairy produce, rice and meat. Although simple the guesthouses will also provide a vegetarian alternative but please note that cheese, eggs and other dairy produce is used frequently in Balkan 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 2 nights in comfortable 3* tourist class hotels in Tirana and Gjakovo.

There will be 3 nights in simple village guesthouse/lodge accommodation with dormitory rooms of between 4 and 6 people per room. It may be necessary for male and female group members to share, depending on the make-up of the group. Each guesthouse is run by a local family and whilst charming, they have basic facilities. However the warm welcome and location more than makes up for the lack of hotel facilities!

There will be 1 night of camping and 1 night staying in shepherd accommodation which can be compared to a Scottish or mountain bothy - "camping without a tent." These huts are managed by local shepherds during the summer months. Although basic the sleeping area has proper mattresses on the floor, blankets are provided and there is a rustic toilet. Food is prepared by one of the local shepherds alongside the leader and staying here offers a fantastic opportunity to overnight in a remote location.

If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex for the 2 hotel nights. Single rooms are available for a supplementary cost for these 2 nights. If you are planning on extending your holiday additional nights at the group hotel are available on request.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be accompanied throughout by a professional English-speaking local mountain guide and a driver for transfers etc. In addition the group will be supported on trek by baggage animals (horses) and their handlers who will assist with chores when camping.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to moderately high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 2500 metres. Most people will have no difficulty with this level of altitude but before coming on the holiday, we recommend you read the advice on trekking at high altitude. You can also talk to one of our trekking experts if you have any concerns about altitude.

Spending Money

Approximately £100 should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses including drinks 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 in the arrivals hall at the airport in Tirana.

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

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, which should be a soft duffel bag, and a daypack. Your bag while on trek will be carried by a team of horses and should weigh no more than 16kg. This includes your sleeping bag /sheet liner and camping mattress.

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 time before coming on a trekking holiday getting some additional exercise. Regular walking in hill or back country is the best preparation whilst running and swimming are also good for developing better cardiovascular fitness and stamina. It makes sense to have some long days in the mountains walking in the boots you will be using on the holiday.

Climate

Daytime temperatures in the lower valleys will vary between 15°C and 30°C 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 will encounter cooler conditions and stormy weather cannot be ruled out at any time of year in this wild mountainous region.

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:

- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer 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
- Sunglasses
- Daypack 30 litres

- 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 (to lock your KE trek bag)
- Thermarest or similiar lightweight camping mattress
- Sleeping bag
- Name and address label for your trek bag (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:

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

- 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 guesthouse in Tejze. A single timed transfer is included from Tirana Airport on arrival.

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 Tirana, Albania. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the early afternoon, arriving in the early evening of Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary. Return flights will depart in the early evening of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later that same evening.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Pioneered by KE leaders, an exclusive to KE holiday, with a maximum group size of 12. This superb Balkan adventure is an adventure classic - awesome peaks to summit, genuine mountain days, dramatic landscapes, wild regions, expert mountain guides and all meals. Want to know more? Speak to Emily our High Peaks expert before securing your adventure. You can also read about, jounralist, Ben Lerwill's fantastic Balkan experience with KE in the Sunday Observer Magazine

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