

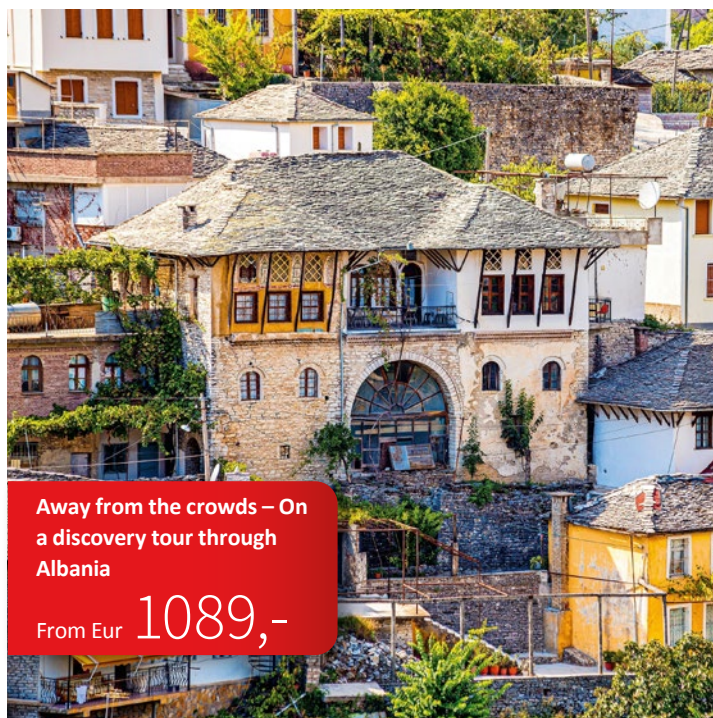
Guided cycle tour through Albania

10 DAYS / 9 NIGHTS, APPROX. 485 KM

BOOKING CODE: ES-ALTT9

DAILY ROUTE LENGTH ●●●●●

TOPOGRAPHY ●●●●●



Away from the crowds – On a discovery tour through Albania

From Eur **1089,-**



Your tour

Discover Albania on this ten-day guided cycle tour! From the lively capital Tirana, you will cycle along the picturesque Lake Ohrid, through historic towns such as Gjirokastra and to the dream beaches of the Albanian Riviera. Unforgettable landscapes, culinary highlights and exciting insights into Albania's rich history await you!

Itinerary

Day 1	Individual arrival to Tirana
Day 2	Tirana – Lin – Pogradec, approx. 40 km + transfer
Day 3	Pogradec – Korçë, approx. 50 km
Day 4	Korçë – Sotirë, approx. 70 km
Day 5	Sotirë – Bënjë, approx. 50 km
Day 6	Bënjë – Gjirokastra, approx. 70 km
Day 7	Gjirokastra – Muzina-Pass – Sarandë, approx. 70 km + transfer
Day 8	Sarandë – Himarë, approx. 50 km
Day 9	Himarë – Vlorë, approx. 65 km
Day 10	Individual departure

Travel time

Season A	06.04.	22.04.	26.04.
	01.05.	05.05.	22.05.
	29.05.	07.06.	16.06.
	25.06.	30.06.	24.08.
	28.08.	02.09.	04.09.
	06.09.	11.09.	26.09. – 27.09.
	30.09.	05.10.	09.10.
	14.10.	18.10.	

The season is dictated by the arrival date.

Services

- 9 overnight stays, 7x 3* / 4* hotels, 1x bungalow and 1x family-run inn
- Bus transfers according to programme incl. bike
- Digital travel documents
- English-speaking tour guide
- Luggage transport from hotel to hotel to Vlorë, max. 20 kg / piece
- Rental bike, surcharge for ebike
- Service-Hotline (7 days, 08.00 a.m. – 08.00 p.m.)
- Transfer Hotel – Airport on the last day

Basic price per person

Doubleroom, Season A	1389,-
Additional fee single room	249,-

Additional night prices per person

Tirana DBL / BB	49,-
Tirana SGL / BB	79,-

Additional services per person

Surcharge electric bike / pedelec	219,-
Sporty rental bike (30-gear)	inkl.

Notes

- Minimum number of participants to be reached by 21 days before departure: 8 persons
- Maximum number of participants: 16 persons

Exemplary hotel list

Tirana	Hotel Sky2 Tirana	https://sky2hotel.com/
Pogradec	Hotel Millennium Pogradec	https://hotel-millennium-pogradec.albaniahotels.org/de/
Korcë	Hotel Boka Korcë	https://albaniavisit.com/accommodation/hotel-boka/
Sotirë	Guesthouse Farma Sotira	https://www.farmasotira.com/
Bënjë	Guesthouse Coli Bënjë	
Gjirokaster	Hotel Cajupi Gjirokaster	https://cajupi.com/
Sarandë	Hotel Nertili Sarande	https://www.nertili.al/
Himarë	Hotel Rondos Himare	https://www.hotel-rondos.com/
Vlorë	Hotel Coral Vlora	https://hotelcoral.al/

Child reduction on basic price

Due to the challenging stages, we do not recommend this trip for children.
No child discount is offered on this trip.
Since family rooms are not available on this trip, the children’s discount cannot be offered.

Languages Travel documents

→ English

Additional note

- All bookings are on request.
- Twin / double rooms / separate beds are only occasionally available. We treat requests as non-binding customer requests, if above mentioned room types are a booking condition, it must be mentioned as a condition at the time of booking.

Equipment of our rental bikes

- Comfortable saddle
- Luggage rack
- Waterproof pannier

Journey to Tirana

- Nearest airport: Tirana International Airport Nënë Tereza (TIA)

Stages description

Day 1: Individual arrival to Tirana

The meeting point is at 18:00 at the hotel, where you will meet the rest of the group and your tour guide for the tour briefing. This is followed by a relaxed welcome dinner. Vibrant, colourful Tirana is the beating heart of Albania, where the hopes and dreams of this small nation merge into a lively whirl of traffic, brash consumerism and unbridled fun.

Day 2: Tirana – Lin – Pogradec, approx. 40 km + transfer

We start the morning with a two-hour ride to the north side of Lake Ohrid. From there we will cycle along the picturesque shores of Lake Ohrid towards Pogradec. After reaching our hotel in the town of Tushemisht, just 4 kilometres east of Pogradec, lunch will be served at a waterside restaurant in Drilon National Park. After checking into the hotel, we will continue cycling in the afternoon, crossing into Macedonia and visiting the Monastery of St Naum. Lake Ohrid, one of the oldest lakes in the world, was formed a long time ago by tectonic shifts and is one of the largest biological reserves in Europe with its unique flora and fauna. With 212 known endemic species and an area of 358 square kilometres, it is probably the most diverse lake in the world. Prehistoric life forms that no longer exist today have been preserved in this lake.

Day 3: Pogradec – Korcë, approx. 50 km

We leave Lake Ohrid and climb up to a plateau bordered by mountains. We follow the gorge for a while until the hills open up and lead into a wide plain with a colourful patchwork of individual farms. Once we arrive in the town, we have time to visit the old market and its

picturesque cobbled streets that run between and behind the main roads. The day ends with a short walking tour of Korcë, the Paris of Albania. Korcë became an important trading and craft centre in the 18th century due to the development of trade with neighbouring regions. It was also an important religious centre for Orthodox Christians and Muslims in the 19th century. During the Ottoman period, it became one of the centres of the growing Albanian identity. The first school to teach in the Albanian language was established in 1887, followed by Albania’s first girls’ school in 1891.

Day 4: Korcë – Sotirë, approx. 70 km

We leave behind the agricultural plateau of Korcë, ascending steadily into the border mountains through a landscape of barren rock interspersed with wild flowers. Numerous cols and valleys lie ahead, climbing into the heart of the Grammoz Mountains and over the Barmash Pass at 1,159m. We will stop for lunch in the town of Ersekë, the highest city in Albania at about 1000m above sea level. Overnight at Sotirë farm, nestled in its own tranquil valley with all kinds of animals a family farm can have. After checking in one of the wooded bungalows, relax by the fish ponds with a glass of families special red wine made from grapes growing at 1000m of elevation.

Day 5: Sotirë – Bënjë, approx. 50 km

A climb out from Sotirë to a high Pine forest plateau surrounded by soaring peaks, before reaching the source of the River Vjosa and descending through its spectacular gorge to Leskovik. The 17km long descend to Çarshovë is both a pleasure and a thrill to cycle in one of the most scenic rides of the tour. We follow the corniche route high

above the river to Përmet, famed for its cuisine and strong raki. After arriving at our guesthouse for lunch, in the village of Bënjë, we will there after continue cycling for another 4km to the thermal pools of Langarica and its canyon. A 16th century ancient ottoman bridge marks the spot and the end of the road. If you feel adventurous and want to swim alone in one of the more secluded pools, build every spring by the locals, hike upriver through one of the most magnificent canyons in Europe.

Day 6: Bënjë – Gjirokaster, approx. 70 km

We continue along the valley towards Këlcyrë, the distant shark's tooth peaks, which guard a further gorge. Ride between them to the confluence of the Drinos, following yet another gorge. This opens out into a wide plain with the town of Gjirokastër (city of 1,000 steps) high above on the right. Gjirokastër, a 'museum' town, is perhaps the most beautiful in Albania. After checking in our hotel we will go on exploring on a guided tour, visiting the charming cobbled alleyways between the white-walled buildings and the fascinating traditional houses and with a little bit of luck and good timing we might witness one of many cultural festivals, organised by the city. The most famous of which is Gjirokastër National Folklore Festival, held since 1968, and regarded as the most important event in Albanian culture.

Day 7: Gjirokaster – Muzina-Pass – Sarandë, approx. 70 km + transfer

We will start the day with a brief transfer, skipping some road and starting our cycling at the top of Muzina pass towards Sarandë. The gateway to southern Albania on the Ionian coast, sandwiched between the high mountains and the sea. A short ride on a rustic ferry brings us to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Butrint, one of the country's most important archaeological treasures, where the influences of various ancient people are clearly visible. After a guided tour in Butrint, we will make our way along the coast heading north with the island of Corfu always at your side. Inhabited since prehistoric times, Butrint has been the site of a Greek colony, a Roman city and a bishopric. Following

a period of prosperity under Byzantine administration, then a brief occupation by the Venetians, the city was 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.

Day 8: Sarande – Himarë, approx. 50 km

A rollercoaster ride, we leave as the early morning mist is burnt off by the sun, climbing steeply out of Sarandë to a rocky plateau. Then it's over cols into bays and around headlands, always with the stunning mountain scenery to the right and coastal views to the left before descending to the long beach and the bay of Himarë, where there's plenty of time for a swim in the clear blue waters of the Albanian riviera. Along the way we will pay a visit to Porto Palermo Castle, a Venetian castle, wrongly asserted as being build by Ali Pasha of Tepelena in the 19th century is shrouded in many mysteries.

Day 9: Himarë – Vlorë, approx. 65 km

Today's ride is not only the most challenging but also the most spectacular. You will gradually climb from sea level up to 1,000m through forests, gorges and hairpin bends. After lunch in the beautiful national park of Llogara we will descend towards Vlorë for an afternoon's relaxation by the Ionian coast. In 48 BC during Roman Civil War, Julius Caesar landed with his legions at the nearby beach of Palase. He soon crossed the mountains over at Llogara Pass in a place later named as Caesar's Pass to chase his adversary Pompey. For centuries, this spectacular mountain range has almost completely isolated this part of the coast from the rest of the country. That's why the local inhabitants had easier connections by sea with Corfu and Greece than by land with inland Albania.

Day 10: Individual departure

After breakfast you start your individual return journey home or extend your stay.