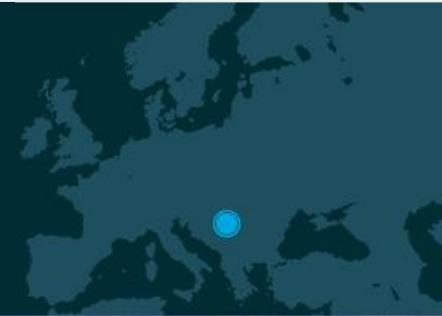


Mind over Mountains - Peaks of the Balkans

26 September - 3 October 2026



Ultimate Challenges



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Mind over Mountains

100 kilometers. 100 colleagues. \$100K raised. 100 years.

1 unforgettable experience

Join us on a beautiful secret European trek following underneath some of the highest peaks of the Balkans in the heart of the mountains in Kosovo, Albania, and Montenegro.

There is a bewitching allure about these alpine mountains at the heart of this far-flung region. Think towering peaks above us and jagged ridges, pristine valleys and green meadows strewn with wild berries. Think forests and shards of limestone.

This mountain area links communities and settlements – opening ‘minds and borders’ by bringing tourism and local mountain guides and local innkeepers together after past conflicts in the area.

We are welcomed as guests into remote villages and get to witness cultures and traditions which have been preserved in this mountain region for centuries.

The epic trek passes through villages, separated by strict borders and fortified by bunkers that were built over two generations when communist regimes-controlled Yugoslavia and Albania. Winding through meadows, mountain peaks, lakes and woodlands, this is one of the most diverse walking trails in the world.

The views and the trails transform, switching from rocky paths and bare peaks to meadows rich with flowers and plants, where nature has been left to run wild.

Each day we cross-borders through wild and remote landscapes with breathtaking views of the Accursed Mountains. We finish our epic adventure in Kosovo celebrating all we have achieved!



Detailed itinerary



Day 1: Arrive Prishtina Airport, Kosovo

Transfer to Peja. Overnight hotels, meet the guides and learn about the challenge ahead.

Day 2: Kuqishte - Babino Polje

Distance: 15.1 km (9.38 mi)

Uphill cumulative: 1147m (3763ft)

Downhill cumulative: 1049m (3440ft)

Minimal elevation: 1420m (4660ft)

Maximal elevation: 2275m (7463ft)

This day will begin with a transfer to the village of Kuqishte from where we start this epic adventure and trek over the border into Montenegro. The trek starts through coniferous forest and then a couple of iced lakes will appear in front of us. From here we pass through Lugu i Shkodres, and continue to the Jelenka pass, which is also the border point between Kosovo and Montenegro. We see incredible panoramas before we descend to Babino Polje, which is inhabited mostly by shepherds. You will be hosted in a guesthouses with very peaceful surroundings. Please note that there is no phone reception or internet connection in this area.

Day 3: Babino Polje - Doberdol

Distance: 13.2 km (8.20 mi)

Uphill: 450m (1475ft)

Downhill: 745m (2444ft)

Minimal elevation: 1505m (4937ft)

Maximal elevation: 2250m (7381ft)

From Babino Polje (Montenegro) to the Village of Doberdol in Albania, there are several hiking trails that can offer different beautiful sceneries. These two valleys have been connected for cultural and trading purposes but disconnected by political borders. At 2,366m, the famous Tromedja/Three Border Peak can be climbed, starting from a narrow pass located at the border with Montenegro. Not far from our starting point, we reach Bogicevica Katun which offers a magnificent view toward the Babino Polje Valley and its surrounding pine tree forests. Both Bogicevica Katun and Babino Polje are inhabited by the Montenegrin Bosniak Muslim community speaking South Slavic. From here the trail joins with the Via Dinarica trail, crossing through different passes where amongst them it is also Bogicevica Pass. We end today in Doberdol, where our next host of the guesthouses will be waiting for us.

Day 4: Doberdol - Cerem

Distance: 16.8km (10.43 mi)

Uphill cumulative: 520m (1706ft)

Downhill cumulative: 1100m (3608ft)

Minimal elevation: 1180m (3871ft)

Maximal elevation: 1920m (6299ft)

We leave directly from the guesthouses and follows scenic trails with magnificent views over the Lumi Gashit Valley, a UNESCO site. It passes through the village of Balqine, where locals offer food and drinks like yogurt with blueberries. In summer, the trail is full of wild berries. Along the way are shepherd settlements used only in summer. The trail briefly crosses into Montenegro through a forest before returning to Albania. We join a 4WD track leading to a small coffee bar with splendid views and a water source. We finish today in Cerem, a seasonal village with guesthouses and typical local food. Cerem was created in the early fifties when villagers of Vusanje came to use pastures in Albania, and the state just blocked the borders, and the summer pastures became a permanent home of the villagers.

Detailed itinerary

Day 5: Cerem - Vusanje

Distance: 12.8 km (7.95 mi)

Uphill cumulative: 685m (2247ft)

Downhill cumulative: 870m (2854ft)

Minimal elevation: 990m (3248ft)

Maximal elevation: 1864m (6115ft)

Today, this European adventure will take you in between two shepherd's villages which are inhabited only during the summer so that shepherds can use the abundant pastures. We follow the trail to arrive at Qafa e Borit and then turn west to cross the border to go to Vusanje. The villagers of Cerem and those of Vusanje are cousins. This truly special experience includes walks in the mountain crests and open pastures and invites travellers to dive into the unexplored regions of the Balkans. Overnight in welcoming guesthouses in this amazing undiscovered region.



Day 6: Vusanje - Theth

Distance: 23.1 km (14.35 mi)

Uphill cumulative: 1140m (3740ft)

Downhill cumulative: 1400m (4590ft)

Minimal elevation: 730m (2395ft)

Maximal elevation: 1740m (5705ft)

Well rested, we begin the 23km trek to the historic Albanian village of Theth. The path passes along the craggiest part of the Accursed Mountains or Prokletije/Albanian Alps, which was a forbidden zone during the Communist era. In addition to the dramatic cliffs that form the backdrop for the day, we encounter a military bunker and the old border crossing signs as you cross into Albania. Theth is famous for its traditional way of life and stone houses, and if you have the energy, a wonderful place to explore.



Day 7: Theth - Valbona. Transfer to Peja

Distance: 16.4 km (10.50 mi)

Uphill cumulative: 1175m (3855ft)

Downhill cumulative: 940m (3080ft)

Minimal elevation: 730m (2390ft)

Maximal elevation: 1854m (6082ft)

Our final leg and extremely exciting day ahead, to reach the Valbona Pass (1,759m) and the town of Valbona (995m) nestled in the heart of the eponymous national park. This 16km route follows the path of an ancient mule track linking the tribal regions of Shala and Nikaj. We head through a narrow crest that gives a view in both valleys and is the most southern glacier in the northern hemisphere. There is a difficult, long ascent here but all worth it to get to the village of Valbona and the finishing point of this amazing journey!



Detailed itinerary

Day 7: cont.

We trek between the catholic valley of Shala and the Muslim valley of Valbona. The Albanian Catholics are descendants of pro Venetian Albanians living in the city of Shkodra. These are the most southern Roman Catholics in Europe as the divide between the Orthodoxy and Roman Catholics is Croatia.

Once we reach the finish, we rejoice in our success before transferring to the city of Peja where we can celebrate our achievements.

Day 8: Depart Kosovo

Transfer to Prishtina Airport for flight home.

This itinerary is complex and subject to change. While we make every effort to provide the itinerary outlined, local weather or regulations may result in small alterations of which participants will be made aware.

Challenge grade:

Tough (with some moderate sections)

We grade each trek as a guide based on the level of terrain, length, altitude and climate. All our challenges require a certain level of fitness.

You should be mentally and physically prepared with previous experience required otherwise this will be a challenging trek for you. You are likely to walk for a minimum of 6-9 hours (maybe longer) on a mixture of terrain taking place on consecutive days at altitudes ranging from 700m to 2,300m. There will be the occasional more demanding ascents and descents, which may sometimes be rough and narrow with the intermittent higher pass.

Photos of previous trips:

[Peaks of the Balkans - Google Drive](#)



Breakdown of Costs –Mind over Mountains

Inclusions

- All transfers upon arrival
- Local guides
- Twin-share accommodation in hotels; guesthouse rooms will be shared (2–5 people, same-sex where possible depending on final group)
- Dinner on day 1, breakfast, lunch, dinner day 2-7, and breakfast on day 8
- Luggage transfers
- Local taxes / park fees / border permits
- UK expedition leaders
- UK expedition doctors

Exclusions

- Flights
- Personal travel/excursion insurance (mandatory)
- Any meals not mentioned above
- ‘Non-water’ beverages
- Gratuities
- Personal expenses
- Visas (if required)

Autumn 2026 costs

£1145 per person (based on 60 trekkers)

