

Trek The Balkans

Conquer the highest peaks of Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania and Macedonia



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Trek the Balkans

Climb the highest peaks of Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania and North Macedonia

Join us on a beautiful secret European trek following the peaks of the Balkans through four countries.

There is a bewitching allure about these Alpine mountains at the heart of this far-flung region. Think towering peaks 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 shepherds' homes and get to witness cultures and traditions which have been preserved in this mountain region for centuries.

Our challenge is to conquer the three of highest peaks in the heart of the Balkans - Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania and North Macedonia.

We start our adventure in welcoming Kosovo with its rich traditions and simple lifestyle. Kosovo is a true undiscovered gem where we conquer Mount Gjeravica (2,656m), its highest peak and the second highest in the Dinaric Alps range.

From Kosovo, we cross-borders through wild and remote landscapes into Montenegro to summit Mount Zla Kolata (2,534m).

We finish our epic adventure by summitting Albania and North Macedonia's highest peak – Mount Korab (2,751m), which rises high above the border.



Detailed itinerary

Day 1: London to Pristina, Kosovo

The adventure starts when you meet your guide and transfer to the Kosovan city of Peja. With the stunning Rugova mountains all around, Peja (known as Peć in Serbian) is an extraordinary cultural amalgam, and a main gateway to the Peaks of the Balkans. With a Turkish-style bazaar at its heart, Peja is bisected by the rushing river Lumi Bardhi, where there is a laid-back ambience amid the cafés and restaurants which line its banks. Cultural gems include the Quashi mosque and the orthodox Patriarchate of Peć monastery with its frescoes and gold chandeliers.

Tonight, you stay in a hotel and will have a trek briefing from our local guide before dinner.



Day 2: Trek Mount Gjeravica to Doberdol

**Kosovo and Albania (18km trek)
915m ascent/980m descent
Max elevation: 2,656m**

A short 1-hour transfer takes us to the start of the trek, where you climb up to the highest peak of Kosovo – Mount Gjervica 2,656m and then cross over the border into Albania. The border is now unpatrolled, but during the communist regime was one of the most protected and controlled borders of the Cold War.

You trek through two shepherd villages in two different countries. Two valleys, which share the same culture and language, but which were disconnected by political borders. You pass two glacial lakes and reach one of the most isolated corners of Europe: no mobile network, no electricity and no roads.

You stay overnight, off-grid, in the very basic village of Doberdol in a local guesthouse.

Day 3: Trek Doberdol to Cerem Albania (15km trek) 1,025m ascent/449m descent Max elevation 1920m

After breakfast, the trek continues through lush pastures with wonderful and remote mountain scenery. You pass shepherd villages only inhabited during the summer.

You continue through the village of Balqin, part of the Gashi valley with its protected glacial lakes and Sulbica plateau. The Gashi woodlands are also under UNESCO protection as part of the Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and the Ancient Beech Forests of Germany, which now stretches over 12 countries: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine.

Overnight in Cerem village in a shared guesthouse (with electricity).

Detailed itinerary

Day 4: Cerem to Valbona
Montenegro (20km trek)
1,400m ascent/900m descent
Max elevation: 2,582m

The trek today takes you to the summit of Mount Zla Kolata peak, the highest peak of Montenegro. This trail has only recently opened and allows us to hike into Montenegro from Albania.

This is the toughest climb on the whole trek, with steep rocky sections, but is known as one of the best hikes in the Peaks of the Balkans. You end your day in the village of Valbona which is the biggest village in the Valbona National Park. Overnight in a hotel.



Day 5: Transfer to Rodimore, Sharr mountains, Albania

Today you have a beautiful mountain transfer through Kosovo. You stop for lunch and a visit in the city of Prizren, known for its mixed Ottoman culture, typical of this area. Overnight in the village of Radomire and prepare for your final summit challenge.

Day 6: Mount Korab 2,765m,
Albania and North Macedonia (17km trek)
1,400m ascent/1,400 descent
Max elevation: 2,764m

An early start today! It's a strenuous day and tough climb. You pass shepherd huts and trek over a mix of rocky trails and soft meadows. You reach the summit for a picnic lunch and continue the trek the same way down. Met and transferred to the hotel in Pristina.

Day 7: Departure

Early and short transfer to Pristina Airport.

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This itinerary is complex and subject to change

Challenge grade
Tough

You are likely to walk for 6-8 hours each day across hilly terrain which may sometimes be rough with the occasional high pass up altitudes of 3,500m.

Best time of year
June to end of September