

Trek The Balkans

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



Ultimate Challenges



Trek the Balkans

Climb the highest peaks of Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania, and 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 inkeepers 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 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 summiting Albania and Macedonia’s highest peak, Mount Korab (2,751m), which rises high above the border.



Detailed itinerary

Day 1: London to Prishtina, Kosovo

Our adventure starts when we meet our guides 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, we stay in a hotel and will have a trek briefing from our local guides before dinner.



Day 2: Mount Gjeravica to Doberdol

18km trekking

915m ascent/980m descent

Max elevation 2,656m

A short 1-hour transfer takes us to the start of our trek, where we climb up to the highest peak of Kosovo, Mount Gjervica 2,656m before crossing 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.

We 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. We hike past two glacial lakes and reach one of the most isolated corners of Europe: no mobile network, no electricity and no roads.

We stay overnight, off-grid, in the very basic village of Doberdol in several different local guesthouses, but we all come together for dinner around one fire.

Day 3: Trek Doberdol to Cerem

15km trekking

1,025m ascent/449m descent

Max elevation 1,920m

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

We head 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 shared guesthouses (with electricity). Dinner will be eaten together.

Detailed itinerary

Day 4: Cerem to Valbona

20km trekking

1,400m ascent/900m descent

Max elevation 2,582m

Our trek today takes us 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.

We end our day in the village of Valbona which is the biggest village in the Valbona National Park. We stay overnight in a hotel.



Day 5: Transfer to Rodimore, Sharr mountains, Albania

Today we have a beautiful mountain transfer through Kosovo. We stop for lunch and a visit in the city of Prizren, known for its mixed Ottoman culture, typical of this area.

We stay overnight in the village of Radomire and prepare for our final summit challenge.

Day 6: Mount Korab 2,765m

17km trekking

1,400m ascent/1,400 descent

Max elevation 2,764m

An early start today! It's a strenuous day and tough climb but well worth it! We pass shepherd huts and trek over a mix of rocky trails and soft meadows. When we reach the summit, we enjoy a picnic lunch before continuing the same way back down. We will be met and transferred to the ski resort of Mavrovi Anovi (30min drive) to our hotel.

Tonight, we celebrate our achievements with a traditional dinner.

Day 7: Day at leisure Mavrovi Anovi, Macedonia

Free day to enjoy the mountain scenery of the best ski resort of the Western Balkans.

Day 8: Departure

Early and short transfer to Skopje Airport.

Challenge grade

Moderate to tough

Moderate

You are likely to be walking between 5-7 hours each day on good paths and at a low altitude (below 2,500m), with the occasional more demanding ascent and descent.

Tough

You are likely to be walking between 6-8 hours each day on hilly terrain (undulating), which may sometimes be rough with the occasional high pass.

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This itinerary is complex and subject to change