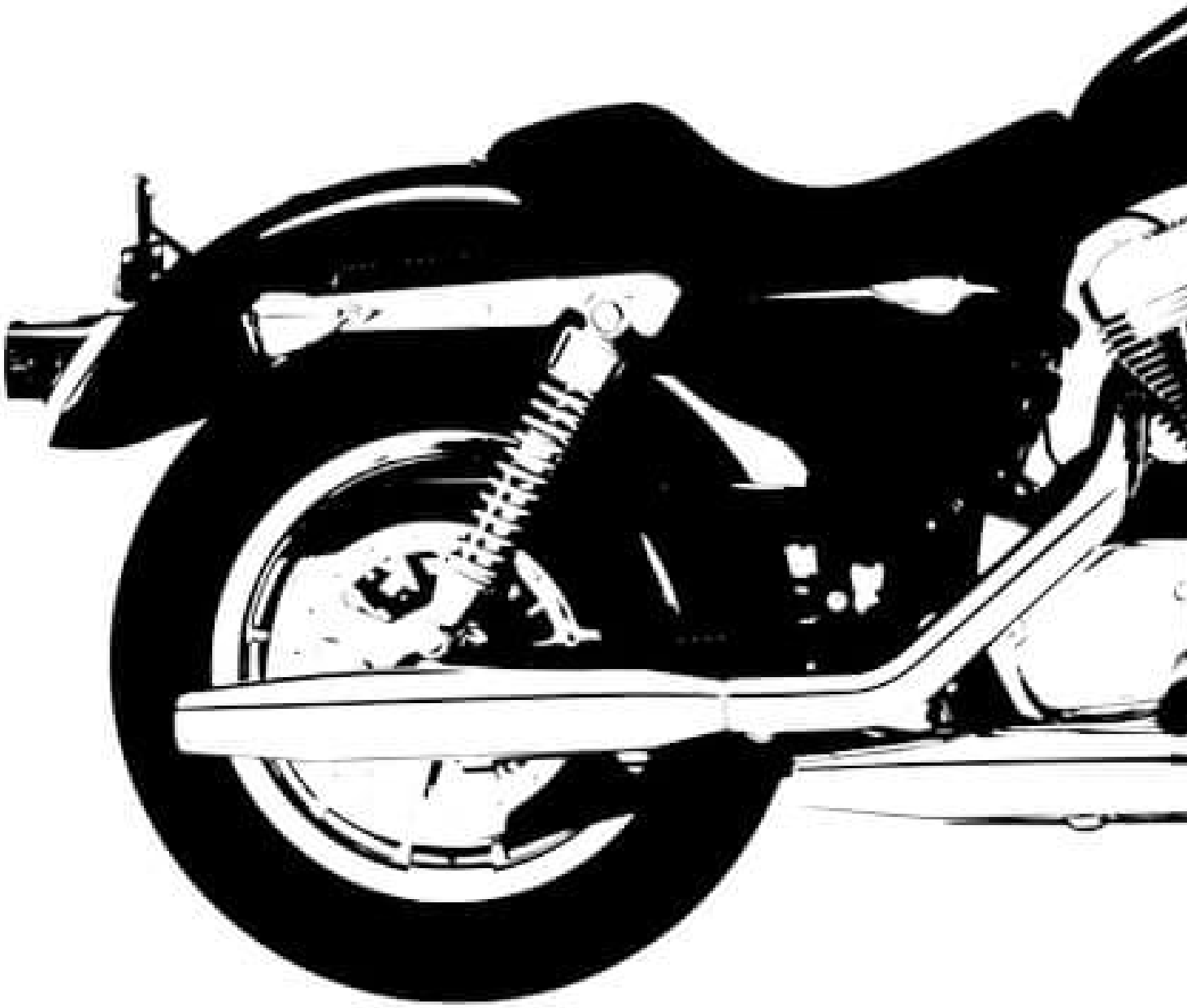
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Motorcycle tour Explore Albania

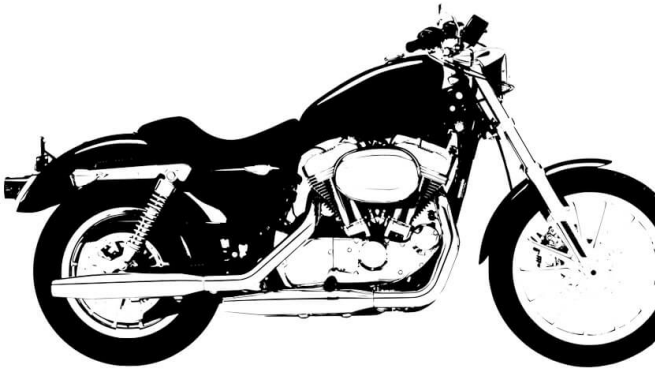
Motorcycle tour Explore Albania

Duration	Difficulty	Support vehicle
8 días	Easy-Normal	Nee
Language	**Guide**	
en,es,fr,de,it	Nee	

Welcome in the new millennium in the less traversed corner of Europe. A smidge of a country, soaked in folklore, flanked by mythical mountains and trimmed with a cobalt blue coastline, this journey will pierce the heart, seep beneath the skin and stay with you forever. For years Albania hid from sight, locked behind a curtain of one cruel empire after another. Only recently, in 1991 did the fortress wall of communism finally crumble – leaving a diamond in the rough – a country so spellbinding in beauty and precious in nature, it truly must be seen to be believed. This whirlwind motorbike tour will take you from the paint-box buzzing capital to the final frontiers of the Accursed Mountains.

Soar along the untapped roads that roll beside the Albanian Riviera, where verdant mountains are held back by empty stretches of sand. Tear across alpine plains where rivers run cold and clear and horses gallop in the wild prairies. Pass through ancestral villages where traditional taverns welcome you with warmth and homecooked fare. Take one of the world’s most majestic ferry rides along the winding fjords. Fall in love with a world untouched on this motorbike tour of Albania.

- 4 UNESCO World Heritage cities visited
- 6 riding days with 100% vehicle support
- 2 Contries Visited : Albania & Macedonia
- Total distance : 1200 km | 100% tarmac







1 - - - 0

Kaleidoscope colors welcome you to trendy Tirana, the bright and buzzing capital. As soon as you touch down it’s a swift drive from the tarmac to your city center hotel. The rumors of mountains and wild plateaus are already visible but today it’s time to explore Europe’s up and coming contender. Tirana has been battered and bruised by communism, collapsed pyramid schemes and civil unrest. But when the spring of the 21st century came around she bloomed beautifully. Edi Rama, the prime minister of Albania wasn’t a man to be boxed in by politics. The former art professor enticed the country to take up paintbrushes instead of arms. Wandering the easy breezy streets of Tirana, you will see the drab communist buildings have shaken off their winter coats and are painted in vibrant hues.

Delve down into the underground nuclear shelter of Bunk Art where the Orwellian horrors of Hoxha’s regime have been collected and displayed in a maze-like museum. Proof that Albanians have shaken off the terror of their past to perfect the art of living beautifully can be found in the palpable energy radiating from the achingly cool district of Blloku. The former neighborhood of the ‘party’ elite has thrown open its doors and is now lined with a sultry café culture, late night drinks, and pavement terraces punctuated with well-dressed guests.



2 - - - 205

Take your first bite of the sweet peach that is the Albanian countryside as you leave the city behind in a cloud of dust. You will find the world cracks open into a mirage of wrinkled mountains and winding paths. Here on out the roads become weightless and empty, as though carved for your pleasure – save for a sleeping donkey or two. Pass by jumbled villages where local homes groan beneath the weight of vines and pots of amber honey are sold at the side of the road. Follow the snow-capped peak of Mount Tomorri - hailed as the Albanian Olympus, marking the ancient Ottoman city of Beret on the map.

The UNESCO town of a thousand windows makes an idyllic lunch spot. A 15th century empire ensnared beside a river of green and meadows of a million wildflowers. After lunch head up into the crumbling golden citadel, also known as The Kala to wander the cobbled streets that once served as a defensive lookout, but now makes a picture-perfect window out across the mountains.

Continue, through prairies, colorful towns and salt silts that start to whisper of the end of land. As the golden rays of afternoon sizzle on the road, suddenly the siren song of the Ionian Sea is upon you. Check into a seafront hotel with views of blue and the curved silhouette of the mountains that make up the Llogora National Park. Slips of sand and gin-clear waters beckon for a sunset plunge before fish suppers beneath the stars.



3 - - - 200

Soar above the morning cloud as you take the highroad that climbs from the sparkling coast to the rocky bluffs of the Llogora National Park. At the dizzying height of 1000 meters, it can be hard to untangle the sky from the sea. Follow the road that wraps around the shores of the Albanian Riviera. Slithers of sand and topaz blues mark out Homer’s footprints on the map – yet these coastal lands of crumbling Greek temples, tales of mythology, and sprawling olive groves remain far from the tourist radar. Take a lazy lunch in the summer town of Ksamil, where simmering shrimp fondue is served up with views of Corfu and crisp Debine wine.

Turn inland, tackling mountain passes that curl like smoke signals until you reach the hand drawn ferry. A local raft that pulls you across the river strait with views onto the prehistoric colony of Butrint. Even before the 6th century when the Greeks landed, Butrint had already been occupied. After the Greeks came the Romans; following their fall – the Byzantines. Layers of history unravel and beneath the veil of the forest you will find impressive amphitheaters, public baths, and dazzling mosaics all sitting under the shadow of the acropolis.

Take the final road that leads to the stone city of Gjirokaster. In this UNESCO

gem, vertical cobbled streets showcase fluttering handmade lace, woven rugs of opium red, and chiseled stone paintings. Gjirokaster is one of the most famous towns in Albania, home of beloved author Ismail Kadare and birthplace of former dictator Enver Hoxha.



4 - - - 235

After breakfast head to the tip of the cobbled town to wander the castle ramparts of Gjirokaster. A heady mix of soaring stone corridors, striking cannons and fallen fighter planes are housed in this fabled fortress. If walls could talk the castle would tell tales dating back to the 12th century; from Ottoman stronghold to rebel prison under the 20th century's last ruler of romance - King Zog.

Leave the enchanting stone city behind as you make for the mountains of Nemercka and the pine forests where wild wolves roam. The alpine meadows blaze with red poppies like lipstick kisses in the grass. The road opens out into long straight stretches that pass beside milky waters and creaking bridges. Make a stop to swim in the hot springs of beautiful Benja. Hemmed in by snowy mountains and deep cut canyons where the locals say only god waits; the Sulphur rich waters soothe both the body and the soul.

Skirt past the Greek border as you climb high into the Pindus Mountains. Stop at Sotire Farm for lunch where fire-baked trout, homegrown salads, pillowy bread and the families signature red wine are always on the menu. As the Pindus Mountains sweeps down you catch your first sight of Lake Ohrid – as wide as the sea and as tranquil as heaven. Ride along the promenade dotted with waterslides, laughing children and fishing boats that skim the surface. Collapse in revelry beside the water's edge and dine on Koran, the famed fish that the Queen of England once declared the Queen of the Lake.



5 - - - 250

Wake early to watch the sunrise over the glittering lake before jumping on your bike and heading south to Maliq. Coniferous forests rise hiding wolves, wild boar and long-legged deer and the mountains arc like a backbone. Entering the Devolli Gorge there are echoes of the Grand Canyon as red rocks blaze in the morning sun. Let the engine soar as you race along the rapids of the Devolli River, where white river rafters attempt to tackle the raging rapids.

The caves and corridors around the Devolli Gorge have unearthed Mycenean pottery from the Bronze Age, ancient cave paintings, and Illyrian graves littered with jewelry. Keep roaring alongside the river until the gorge spits you out at Gramsh in Elbasan Country - a fairytale world of waterfalls, healing lakes, and canyons. This area is also home to two mighty dams. Albania is a country blessed with an abundance of water; gushing rivers, wide lakes, singing streams and the pulse of the sea. Almost a hundred percent of Albania's electricity crackles from hydropower.

Soar through the Shebenik-Jabllanice National Park where glacial ponds, wild blackberries and empty stretches of road abound. Peshkopi calls as your final destination of the day. Sitting east of the Black Drin River, during the Ottoman era this was once a Turkish market town and has retained its status for being an important stop on the food trail.



6 - - - 230

The first time you catch sight of the Accursed Mountains, your heart flutters in your chest. This morning they are yours to own as you take the road along the Black Drin to Valbone. The mirage of those impregnable white peaks seems to be a fortress protecting the secrets of the North. These are the lands of Albania's fierce history. A place where generations have lived in the fringes of their own law – following the word of the ancient Kanun. Where black ribbons pinned to a sleeve whisper of death and ghosts of history roam the high plateau.

As you enter the Valbone National Park, the mountains deepen in layers of green as lush as Hawaii. The streams and rivers start to take on a turquoise and ice white hue as they gallop over smooth boulders, and the villages peter

out giving way to drama and daredevil turns. Cattle lounge on the steaming asphalt and wild ponies canter down the roads. The sun sinks fast in the height of these mountains where rivers of stone rush and wildflowers tremble.

Take a walk in the ancient forests where sunlight filters through the trees and crumbling water mills hold refuge for luminescent lizards cooling in the shadows. Stop at one of the cozy wooden clad mountain chalets for an evening sleeping beneath the weight of great silence, with only a few intrepid hikers for company.



7 - - - 200

An early start is easy when the cockerel crows. In the cool morning air take the road that flows like a river down from Valbone to Fierze and to the tapered edge of Lake Koman. Here, you will board the ferry for a three-hour cruise along ribbon like fjords flanked by the staggering spires of mountains. The mountains and lakes remain seemingly untouched, with only the dot of a lonely farmstead in the hills, or the occasional row boat stacked high with bleating goats passing by.

Carved into existence by a 1980’s hydroelectric dam, its hard to believe something so magnificent could be born from the vision of man. The vertical limestone walls press tight against the lake, creating a scene that would stand tall in any silver screen fantasy. Its easy to see why this crossing has been declared one of the best boat rides in the whole of Europe. On the other side, continue to snake along the Drin River until the Rozafa Fortress of Shkoder looms.

Shkoder is one of Europe’s oldest cities, found in the 4th century BC it still carries an ancient trade route air about it. Conquered by the Romans, taken by the Serbs, and grabbed by the Turks – Shkoder has been through tatter and tears before becoming part of Albania in 1912. There’s a hint of old world glamor echoing from the old converted mansions, the warble of the call to prayer from the grand mosques, and the buzzing memory of old trade ships passing along the banks of the Drin and Buna en-route to nearby Montenegro. Leave the shadow of Shkoder behind as you take the final flatland leg down to Tirana, arriving just in time for evening drinks.



8 - - - 0

Those who have a little extra time before their flight can soak up more of Tirana’s charm – whether its delving further into the drama of the past with a visit to the enigmatic House of Leaves to witness the tactics of Hoxha’s secret police. Otherwise keep things easy and breezy by sitting out in one of the al-fresco restaurants breaking into your final byrek and sipping fiery raki before your flight. The end of the road has finally come; it’s been a whistle stop week of unknown corners, secret sights, and intrepid exploration. Days of dancing with the energy of the open road, silent contemplation on top of mountain peaks, unforgettable stories, and rare moments that make you wonder if it was all some spark of a crazy dream. Wherever you go, you are sure to carry shards of Albania in your heart because some places are simply unforgettable.

Motorcycle



F 700 GS
+ $0.00



R 1200 GS Adv
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+ $0.00

Dates & prices

Options

Top case
$5.76

Side case
$9.22

Included

- GPS
- Breakfast
- Hotel
- Maps & Roadbook
- Motorcycle rental
- On route snacks
- Parking
- Transfers

Not included

- Guide
- Support vehicle
- Alcoholic beverages
- Basic insurance
- Damage deposit
- Dinner







Enduro body protection kit



Extreme cold protection kit



Ferrys



Flights



Local taxes



Lunch



Mechanic



Motorcycle return to origin



National parks tickets



Non-Alcoholic beverages water-coffee



Petrol & oil



Photo-video souvenir



Spare motorcycle



Tips



Visas

Other information

Kosten bij vroege annulering

Important notice, in case of cancellation:
The flight tickets, supplements and optional services subscribed in this tour regardless of the basic program, are subject to 100% of early cancellation costs.