



Multi Adventure in Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania

ESSENTIALS Duration: 10 days; 9 nights

Schedule: 26 June - 05 July 2017 / 22 - 31 August 2017 / 12 - 21 September 2017

Departure Point: Dubrovnik, Croatia or Tivat, Montenegro airport

Departure Time: To Be Defined

Level of Difficulty: Moderate;

Suitable For: Everyone;

Tour Type: Active; Adventure; Hiking; Climbing;

Language: English;

HIGHLIGHTS □ During this tour, you will visit Montenegro's spectacular Bay of Kotor, Skadar Lake, and Lovcen National Parks.

□ You will travel through the ruggedly beautiful land of Albania.

□ Explore the ancient heritage of Ohrid and Ohrid Lake, the mystical Treskavec Mountain, the Iron Gate, and the wine region of Macedonia

MORE INFORMATION Included: □ Licensed guide □ One group arrival transfer from Dubrovnik, Croatia or Tivat, Montenegro □ Accommodation in twin or double room □ Meals where described □ All transfers as described □ Included activities: sea kayaking, hiking, mountain biking, biking, boating.

Excluded: □ Private airport transfers if not arriving with the group □ Independent meals as stated □ Drinks □ Canyoning and paragliding activity □ International flights □ Single accommodation supplement □ Any extra expenses not mentioned under

Getting around: Private bus; Passport needed: Yes Minimum people required: 2

Itinerary

ARRIVAL AND WELCOME Arrival Dubrovnik or Tivat airports. Transfer to the town of Herceg Novi on the shores of the Bay of Kotor. Welcome from your local guide and enjoy a relaxed stroll and orientation through the streets of this 13th century citadel guarded by 3 mountain side fortresses – one Italian, one Spanish and one Turkish. Your first taste of Montenegro comes over a delicious welcome dinner at local seafood restaurant Feral in the harbour area. Try the local speciality: black risotto, coloured with squid ink.

KAYAK AND HIKE After breakfast served in your hotel, head to the harbour area to meet your kayaking guide for a half day kayaking tour across the Bay. The sit-on-top kayaks are suitable for all levels and even for those who have never paddled a sea kayak before. Full instruction will be given by your guide as well as safety briefing. Lasting approximately 4 hours, the tour will paddle across to the picturesque fishing village of Rose, visit a local ship wreck, peer inside the Cold War era submarine tunnels and paddle along the spectacular and rocky coastline. After the kayaking tour and a quick change of clothes, a short transfer drive of 25 mins will bring you to the small mountainside village of Zlijebi. Overlooking the Bay of Kotor at an altitude of 600 metres, the village is built from local stone mined by the villagers. Visit the beautiful home of local man Nikola who grew up in this village and has spent 25 years restoring his family farm. Enjoy lunch from the produce Nikola grows in his garden and learn about life in the village. After lunch and a look around, take a short hike to the church of St Nikola with its spectacular views across the Bay. Continuing onwards, hike the lower mountain trails down to the village of Trebjesin (approx. 1 hour 30 mins hiking from Zlijebi, 400 metres descent). In Trebjesin you will enjoy dinner in a traditional family inn tasting local mountain specialities included meat cooked 'under the ashes' and salads from the inn's own garden. After dinner it is a short 10 minute transfer by road back to the hotel.

KOTOR BAY COASTAL TRANSVERSAL HIKING AND KOTOR OVERNIGHT Depart today from Herceg Novi after breakfast by minivan to the small mountain village of Gornja Lastva, 50 mins drive away. From the village situated around 300 metres above sea level you will enjoy a 9kms hike along the beautiful Vrmac Ridge. Ascending up to a high point of 650 metres above sea level the ridge separates the inner and outer Bays of Kotor. Views stretch to the Adriatic in one direction and far into the Bay of Kotor the other. The ridge is a wide stone and grass path, with some shaded and some exposed sections. Hiking time is usually around 4 – 4.5 hours and a trail lunch will be enjoyed. Finally reaching the old Austro-Hungarian fortress of Trojica (long abandoned) you will descend on switchback pathways to the medieval town of Kotor. Arriving by afternoon the rest of the day is free to explore the walled city, enjoy a coffee or cold beer on one of the town's piazzas and watch the world go by. An independent evening also gives you time to check out the great local restaurants or nightlife.

BIKE FROM LOVCEN NATIONAL PARK TO SKADAR LAKE NATIONAL PARK Depart early this morning from Kotor with your luggage for the one hour drive to Lovcen National Park. Rising high above the Bay of Kotor this mountain has spectacular views in every direction. Upon arrival in the park you will have some time to rest and enjoy a mid-morning coffee or refreshments on the terrace of the Ivan Konak hotel before setting off for the main challenge of the day, a 64km 1600m descent (plus 480m total ascent) to Skadar Lake National Park. The ride is on tarmac using old roads which mostly see little traffic. There is one section where the tour will ride through the historic former capital city of Montenegro – Cetinje. Time for a stop and stroll along the

boulevards. A trail lunch is supplied today. By late afternoon you will arrive in the lakeside town of Virpazar for your final overnight in Montenegro at the Hotel Vir. Enjoy a farewell to Montenegro dinner at the riverside Konoba Bandanj restaurant.

BAR CANYONING OR ANCIENT BAR VISIT After breakfast continue onwards with the short drive to the port city of Bar on the Adriatic coastline. For those wishing to try canyoning a 3 hour trip through the Rikavac canyon is always an excitement. Suited for beginners this is ideal for those wishing to experience canyoning for the first time. Over the course of approx. 3 hrs, you will follow the flow of the water, hiking, abseiling (repelling) down waterfalls from heights ranging 2 - 10 meters and jumps/slides from various heights to the beautiful natural water pools below. Although this is not a large river canyon, it offers a fun & memorable experience. This experience is payable locally and costs EUR 75 per person based on minimum 4 participants. For those who do not wish to experience the canyoning, there will be the opportunity to visit the ancient town of Bar, located on the lower mountain slopes above the new town and port. Wander the historical streets and enjoy the sun soaked olive groves which surround this area. Time will be given for independent lunch. After lunch the group will join together again to continue the journey with a 3 hour drive to Tirana, the capital city of Albania. Spend one overnight in the city with an independent evening to explore the cosmopolitan and vibrant city centre with its colourful buildings and fascinating history.

BIKING FROM MACEDONIAN BORDER TO STRUGA AND OHRID Depart from Tirana after breakfast for the 2.5 hour drive to the Macedonian border at Qafe e Tane, where you will meet your local guide in Macedonia and get together on the bikes and continue cycling down to Ohrid Lake and along the lakeshore to Ohrid. We'll stop on the way to see the ancient monastic cells and temples carved in the rocks at Kalishta, and to enjoy our lunch in Antika restaurant on the river walk in Struga. After 30km in total cycling (400m descent starting from 1000m a.s.l, with total ascent of cca 100m) on the local asphalt road (cca 300m descent, and in total some arrive in Ohrid, a UNESCO World Heritage town, home to 365 Orthodox churches and birthplace of the Cyrillic script. Explore the old town of Ohrid on orientation walk with your guide, and find out more about the local customs and traditions while sampling Macedonian fresh salads and fish from the lake. Stay overnight in 4* hotel in Ohrid.

BOATING IN OHRID LAKE: BAY OF BONES, BBQ & SWIM ON A HIDDEN BEACH Head out this morning by boat for a full day adventure in the lake. We'll pack together with the boat our canoe and surfboard, few hammocks and snorkelling gear, and start boating by the fishing villages to visit the archaeological settlement on water, the Bay of Bones. Our BBQ lunch will be on a hidden beach with crystal clear water, accessible only by boat. Later in the afternoon we'll sail to the rocks for jumps in the water and snorkelling for lake sponges under the rocks, and on to the middle of the lake for more swimming. Sail back in the afternoon. From here it will take 1h 50min drive to our next destination: the picturesque mountain town Ktrushevo. Arrive in Krushevo in time for the tasty traditional dinner, including their famous mix of spiced, melted homemade cheese. Overnight in guesthouse in Krushevo.

HIKE TO TRESKAVEC MONASTERY WITH TANDEM FLIGHT DOWN

After breakfast drive some 50min to the city walls of Prilep, where we start a 3 hour hike on the 4,5km long trail to Treskavec monastery, hidden among the boulders of Gold Mountain. We'll meet

here Father Kalist, the only monk living in the monastery today, who speaks English fluently and who is

always happy to explain the story of the Byzantine art heritage in the frescoes of the monastery. After a picnic lunch at the monastery, you can descend down to Prilep, or, fly! The experienced, licensed paragliders will be provided with all the necessary equipment, while novices can take an exhilarating tandem flight with our experienced instructors: after a 10 min briefing with your tandem pilot, you will be connected together to the glider where each one of you has your own comfortable harness. Two minutes later, you are airborne! The flight takes around 20 minutes, where, if the flying conditions allow, you will be offered hands on control of the glider! They say, if you can jog 2-3 meters, than you can fly! This experience is payable locally and it is 60 euro based on minimum 2 participants. Once at the foothills of Treskavec, the hikers and flyers will join together and continue driving for another 1,5 hour into the wine area of Macedonia, where we'll enjoy dinner with wine tasting in Popova Kula winery. Overnight in the winery hotel.

ROCK CLIMBING & VIA FERATA IN THE IRON GATE After breakfast on the hotel balcony, transfer to the rocks of the Iron Gate. There are more than 120 rock climbing routes (from 15 – 100metres high with different levels of difficulty from beginners to experts) and more than 100 alpine routes (up to 300metres high) to choose from. No experience is required, belayed on our expert guide you can climb completely safely to any height you consider. We'll provide you with all the equipment (helmet, harness, rope, etc.) so you only have to bring yourself there together with your sport shoes. Lunch will be in the gardens of a local household where you can taste the best rakiya in the region and traditional dishes made of vine leaves by your lovely host Maria. Afternoon drive to Skopje, the Macedonian capital and one of the oldest since the early Bronze age. Take a walk through the main Macedonia square with the grand fountain of Alexander the Great, and over the old Stone Bridge into the maze of cobblestoned alleys of the Old Town. Farewell dinner will be in the Old Beer House bellow the city walls. Overnight in hotel Leonardo or similar in Skopje

LAST DAY After breakfast transfer to Skopje airport for your flight home.