

15 DAY DUBROVNIK TO ATHENS

DESTINATIONS

—
DUBROVNIK
ATHENS
TIRANA
KOTOR
SKOPJE



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TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1

Destination	Dubrovnik
Meals included	
Hotel	Hostel, or similar

Dobro Dosli! Welcome to Croatia – a place of sunshine, azure waters and charming cobblestone towns. The undisputed jewel of the Dalmatian Coast, Dubrovnik old town is a beautiful white stone town surrounded entirely by city walls, easily covered on foot. Although it experienced devastation during the war in the early 1990s, the restored old town remains as charming as ever. Your adventure begins with a welcome meeting at 6 pm. As there is not much time in Dubrovnik on this trip, you may want to consider arriving one or two days earlier. If you do have time beforehand, why not head out to one of the Elafiti Islands? There's Lopud, a quiet island with lovely hikes, clean beaches and a ruined castle. Kolocep is a sleepy enclave that boasts walks for every fitness level, while Sipan is the most populated of the isles and has the most hospitable locals. There are also many monuments to explore in the city proper, including the 15th century Rector's Palace, monasteries with cloistered gardens, and fine baroque churches with copper domes.

Special Information: It's very important that you attend the welcome meeting as we will be collecting insurance details and next of kin information at this time. If you are going to be late please let your travel agent or hotel reception know. Ask reception or look for a note in the lobby for more information on where the meeting will take place. If you can't arrange a flight that will have you arrive on time, you may wish to arrive a day early. We'll be happy to organise accommodation for you (subject to availability).

DAY 2

Destination	Dubrovnik 🚗 Kotor
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Leave Dubrovnik behind and take a private transfer to Kotor on the coast of Montenegro (approximately 3 hours). This 5th-century World Heritage-listed city is set on a secluded bay, with towering peaks surrounding a rocky coastline dotted with pretty waterside towns. In its crooked alleyways, get lost and mingle with the locals. When you arrive, why not check out the 12th-century Cathedral, the South Gates, and the Armoury Square? Later, perhaps take a cruise on the Kotor Fjord – the longest fjord south of Scandinavia – and visit an island with a church that's almost as big as the island itself! In the evening the city walls are prettily lit up to provide a unique night-time perspective.

DAY 3

Destination	Kotor 🚗 Tirana
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

After breakfast, drive across the border into Albania. A unique mixture of cultures and customs, Tirana is filled with craziness, from its traffic to its nightlife, but on its doorstep are mosques, citadels, Ottoman architecture, and a stunning dose of the medieval Balkans. The real surprise of Albania is the people. Their warmth to strangers is infectious and you're bound to find yourself swapping stories over a glass of raki or three. Our first stop is the city of Shkoder (approximately 3 hours' drive from Kotor). Here you will have time to explore Rozafa Castle. The site was occupied by a fortress since Illyrian times, however most of what can be seen today is of Venetian origin. Depending on road conditions and volume of traffic it will be another 2 hours to Tirana. On arrival, take an orientation walk to get your bearings. Tirana is the capital of Albania and its biggest city, but it's still small and compact, with architectural influences from Italy and Turkey. Recently many buildings have been painted to alleviate the Soviet bloc feeling that pervaded. Many upgrades have been made all over town, such as new parks and wide pavements.

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DAY 4

Destination	Tirana 🚌 Kruja 🚌 Tirana
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Today, take a half-day trip to the mountain village and former Albanian capital of Kruja. Kruja was the last stronghold of Skanderbeg's (the national hero of Albania) army until the Ottomans took over the entire country. There is plenty of time to explore the citadel and the famous bazaar area. Perhaps pay a visit to the excellent ethnographical museum housed inside the fortress. You'll then return to Tirana after lunch. Tirana is dotted with many museums. You can't miss the National History Museum – just look for the gargantuan mosaic on the facade that represents the development of Albania's history. The main sight in Tirana is the Et'hem Bey Mosque, which sits right on the city's main square. Closed under communist rule, the mosque resumed as a place of worship in 1991. Ten thousand people attended the reopening and the event was considered a milestone in the rebirth of religious freedom in Albania. The mosque is currently undertaking extensive renovation works, but you can still take a look at the frescoes outside and in the portico that depict trees, waterfalls and bridges – motifs rarely seen in Islamic art.

DAY 5

Destination	Tirana 🚌 Berat
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Travel by public bus to Berat, the town of a thousand windows, and one of the few towns of Albania that escaped being razed to the ground to make way for apartment blocks. The old Mangalemi district has recently been inscribed on UNESCO's world heritage list. Enjoy an afternoon guided tour of the town and the looming fortress, the kala, built during the 13th century and still inhabited. The walk to the castle is steep and slippery so better bring some proper footwear with you. The views from the top across Berat and the Osum river valley are well worth the effort though.

DAY 6

Destination	Berat 🚌 Lake Ohrid
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Travel by private bus to Ohrid in North Macedonia, a drive of about 3 hours, situated on a lake with the same name. Europe's oldest lake, and one of the oldest human settlements in the world, Ohrid has a wealth of historic sites and religious monuments to discover. Ohrid is an eternal town, a magical hill whose primordial pulsation links ancient and modern times forever. The town is said to have once been home to 365 churches, one for each day of the year, earning it the nickname "the Macedonian Jerusalem", while historical excavations date back to Neolithic times. Despite being a World Heritage site for over 30 years, the town remains off the radar for visitors. Get your bearings on an orientation walk around Ohrid, maybe picking up a bargain or two in the vibrant Old Bazaar. Then embark on a scenic cruise on the turquoise waters of Lake Ohrid, ringed by mountains, attractive villages and beaches, and take in the views of the town and the surrounding scenery while afloat.

DAY 7

Destination	Lake Ohrid
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

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At 34 kilometres long, 14 kilometres wide, and over 300 meters deep, all shared between Albania and North Macedonia, there's plenty of vast Lake Ohrid to explore. Today is free for you to discover the area. There are many churches and monasteries to visit, but one of the most popular is the Macedonian Orthodox Church of Sveti Jovana Kaneo, situated on a rocky outcrop above the town, overlooking the lake. Past the church you can wander around to the back of town, exploring the old walls and fortress, and admiring the views of the lake. The Sveti Naum Monastery is also a great option, lying on the shores of the lake south of town, with well-kept grounds that are home to peacocks. The ancient Tsar Samoil's Fortress stands on the top of Ohrid Hill and looks across the town, while a 2,000-year-old Roman theatre was uncovered near the Upper Gate – in summer it's again being used for concerts and performances.

DAY 8

Destination	Lake Ohrid 🚌 Skopje
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

This morning hop onto public bus to Skopje, North Macedonia's capital city (approximately 3 hours). In Macedonia's political and cultural centre, walk past Byzantine domes, Turkish baths, and also newly built neo-classical buildings and grand monuments (aimed to bolster national pride), sampling gozleme and tasty baklava along the way. The 30 mosques, innumerable caravanserais and hamams that fill its winding streets are a testament to Skopje's Ottoman past. Take a step back to those times with a visit to the Daut Pasha Hamam, or journey through the humbling Holocaust Museum to learn how Macedonia suffered during this tragic chapter of history. Get lost in the narrow lanes of Carsija: Skopje's most atmospheric neighbourhood, or take in the stone bridge over the river Vardar – an iconic sight that acts as a handy connection between Macedonia Square and the Old Bazaar. Perhaps visit the Museum of the City of Skopje, housed in the old Railway Station, which is itself a unique piece of history. Its unusual, part-ruined exterior is a result of the 1963 earthquake. The large clock on the outside of the building is frozen at 5.17 – the moment the earthquake shook the city.

DAY 9

Destination	Skopje 🚌 Matka Canyon 🚌 Skopje
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Venture out to Matka Canyon, a deep ravine cut into the Suva mountains by the Treska River, 15 kilometres south-west of the city. This area is home to several medieval monasteries, caves, and over 70 species of butterflies. You could also take up the option to explore the canyon's sights by boat. One of the monasteries worth exploring is St Andrew's Monastery, which contains many superb frescoes of great artistic importance. There is also Vrelo cavern: a water-filled cave with incredible stalagmites and uncharted depths; it's speculated to be the deepest underwater cave in the world. Alternatively, you can take one of the many nature walks in the canyon, or up to tracks that hug the ridge high above the valley. Return back to Skopje, with the remaining part of the day free for you to continue exploring this exciting city. Perhaps take the Mount Vodno cable car to the giant 66-metre high Millennium Cross, mainly for the views back down across the city. For dinner this evening, why not head to the Old Bazaar, or the restaurants in the Debar Maalo area.

DAY 10

Destination	Skopje 🚌 Bitola/Pelister National Park
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Today, continue your adventure with a bus ride to the town of Bitola, located near Pelister National Park. Pelister is North Macedonia's oldest national park covering 171 square kilometres of the Baba massif (type of mountainous

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geological formation). Eight peaks in this park are over 2000 metres, with Mt Pelister the highest at 2601 metres. Close to the top are two glacial lakes, known as 'Pelister's Eyes'. Today, you'll get the chance to explore the stunning greenery in Pelister on an easy 2-hour hike of the park's lower trails, passing through the lush forests and breathing in the crisp mountain air. Head to the information centre to learn more about the endemic flora and fauna. Return to Bitola for the night.

DAY 11

Destination	Bitola 🚗 Kastoria
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Travel with private transport to the border with Greece and then continue to Kastoria. This medieval town sits on the western shore of Lake Orestiada, in a valley surrounded by limestone mountains. Kastoria is full of interesting Byzantine churches and Ottoman-style architecture, including old distinctive villas from the skin and fur trade times. Once you arrive, take an orientation walk along the labyrinthine lanes, with time to walk along the lakeside, where boats bob, Dalmatian pelicans and ducks make ripples on the water, and coniferous trees and mountains surround in the distance. Later, consider visiting the unspoilt Spilia tou Drakou, or Dragon Cave, one of the most impressive caves in Greece, and see stalactites and underground lakes in this mysterious natural wonder once believed to be a gold mine guarded by a sleepless dragon.

DAY 12

Destination	Kastoria 🚗 Litochoro
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Litochoro Guesthouse, or similar

Enjoy a free morning in Kastoria. Perhaps visit the Neolithic lakeside village and reconstruction at Dispilio, which gives you a real feel for life in a village in the middle of the 6th millennium BC. After lunch transfer by private vehicle to the town of Litochoro at the base of Mt Olympus. Upon arrival head out on a short orientation walk to familiarise yourself with the surroundings. Head down to the beach at Plaka for some well-deserved relaxation and a dip in the Aegean Sea before tomorrow's hike. Perhaps have dinner in one of the fish tavernas lining the sea shore, and indulge in some traditional dishes.

DAY 13

Destination	Litochoro / Mt Olympus National Park
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Litochoro Guesthouse, or similar

Mount Olympus, Greece's first national park, is the highest mountain in Greece and the second highest in the Balkans, with a height of 2918 metres. The mountain is famous in Greek mythology as it is the dwelling of the twelve Olympian gods, headed by Zeus. Mytikas peak was the gods' meeting place, and Stefani peak was the Throne of Zeus from where he was said to have displayed his mighty power by throwing thunderbolts. Head out early today for a hike along a lush trail within the national park to a beautiful waterfall. If it's a hot day, why not brave the cold water? Just don't forget to bring your swimming costume! There is the option to visit the monastery of St Dionysios on the way back into town. The rest of the day is free for you to continue enjoying the surrounding countryside or simply take in the view of the mountain from the vantage point of the nearby beach.

Special Information: Please note that depending on weather conditions (such as rain or extreme heat), today's activities are subject to alterations or cancellations.

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DAY 14

Destination	Litochoro 🚌 Athens
Meals included	Breakfast
Hotel	Hotel, or similar

Board a public bus to Athens, the beating heart of Greece, and the centre of the ancient world (approximately 5.5 hours). After arriving and transferring to your central hotel, there's much to be seen in the capital of Greece, vibrant and refreshed following the 2004 Olympics, yet still retaining so much visible history. Named after the goddess of wisdom, Athens has a weighty history that spills out over the modern city, represented most dramatically by the ancient Acropolis, where you can enter the Pantheon and enjoy fabulous views over the city. The birthplace of Western civilisation, Athens has an amazing array of historic sites to explore, including the National Gardens, the Temple of Olympian Zeus and the original Olympic Stadium. Another highlight is the renowned changing of the guard at Syntagma (Parliament) Square. Afterwards, perhaps tuck into a delicious dinner of Greek cuisine and a shot (or two) of ouzo.

DAY 15

Destination	Athens
Meals included	Breakfast
Accommodation	N/A

There are no activities planned for today and you are able to depart the accommodation at any time. As there is so much to see and do in Greece's capital you may want to extend your stay here. We'll happy to assist with additional accommodation (subject to availability).

TOUR ITINERARY

Inclusions

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Accommodation: Hotel (10 nights), Guesthouse (2 nights), Homestay (1 night), Hostel (1 night)
- All Transportation
- Meals: 14 breakfasts as per itinerary
- Group size: Maximum 12 people
- 1 English speaking tour leader – Will accompany the group throughout
- All accommodation as listed
- All entrance fees to the sites listed (except optionals)
- All activities listed in the itinerary unless a paid optional
- Comfortable, dedicated private transportation throughout
- 24/7 customer service and your own Dedicated Support Agent

Fine Print

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TOUR ITINERARY

HOW TO BOOK & PAYMENTS

Deposit & Payments

- Book now and secure your package with only a \$400 deposit per person.
- Pay a 2nd instalment of \$1216 per person within 28 days.
- You will then be invoiced for final payment 90 days prior to departure.

Booking Process

- Select the purple 'Reserve Your Seat' tab to begin your booking (you must 'Sign Up' first by entering your email and creating a password)
- Then select the purple 'Book now' tab of the tour you have selected
- Select your Departure Date, Departure City, Number of Passengers, Room Configuration, any Upgrade Options, and enter any Special Requests
- Click the purple 'Proceed to Secure Checkout' tab
- Enter your credit card or PayPal details to secure your deposit/payment. You may also pay via BPAY (not available within 70 days of departure)
- Once your order is complete, you will be prompted to complete a Booking Form so that we can fulfil your booking
- Your booking is confirmed once your Booking Form is submitted and you can begin the countdown to your Inspiring Vacation!
- You will then be allocated and contacted by one of our Dedicated Support Agent's (within 48 hours) who will support you right up until you return from your journey

OPTIONAL TOURS

To enhance your journey, we are offering guests a choice of the following optional activities:

- Dubrovnik - Franciscan Monastery - HRK30 (Day 1)
- Dubrovnik - Lokrum Island Boat Trip - HRK150 (Day 1)
- Dubrovnik - War Photography Museum - HRK50 (Day 1)
- Dubrovnik - Game of Thrones Tour - HRK200 (Day 1)
- Dubrovnik - Rector's Palace - HRK120 (Day 1)
- Dubrovnik - Mt Srd Museum of Croatian War of Independence - HRK30 (Day 1)
- Dubrovnik - Church of St. Blaise - Free (Day 1)
- Dubrovnik - Hike up Mt Srd - Free (Day 1)
- Kotor - Cruise on Kotor Fjord - EUR30 (Day 2)
- Kotor - Fortress - EUR3 (Day 2)

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- Kotor - St. Tryphon's Cathedral - EUR2 (Day 2)
- Kotor - Maritime Museum - EUR4 (Day 2)
- Tirana - Sky Tower - ALL400 (Day 4)
- Tirana - National Art Gallery - ALL200 (Day 4)
- Tirana - National History Museum - ALL700 (Day 4)
- Tirana - Bunk'Art Gallery - ALL500 (Day 4)
- Ohrid - Robev Family House National Museum - MKD150 (Day 7)
- Ohrid - St Jovan Church - MKD100 (Day 7)
- Matka Canyon - Boat Ride - MKD139 (Day 9)
- Skopje - Museum of the City of Skopje - Free (Day 9)
- Skopje - Kale Fortress - Free (Day 9)
- Skopje - Mount Vodno Cable Car to Millennium Cross - MKD100 (Day 9)
- Skopje - Daut Pasha Hammam - MKD50 (Day 9)
- Litochoro - Agios Dionysios Monastery - Free (Day 13)
- Litochoro - Plaka Beach - Free (Day 13)
- Athens - Numismatic Museum - EUR6 (Day 14)
- Athens - National Archaeological Museum - EUR10 (Day 14)
- Athens - Lycabettus Hill - Free (Day 14)
- Athens - Acropolis Pass for 5 Sites - EUR30 (Day 14)
- Athens - Dora Stratou - EUR15 (Day 14)
- Athens - Walking Athens Urban Adventure - EUR55 (Day 15)
- Athens - Taste of Athens Urban Adventure - EUR68 (Day 15)
- Athens - Markets, Ruins & Ancient Athens Urban Adventure - EUR58 (Day 15)
- Athens - Twilight Athens Urban Adventure - EUR91 (Day 15)
- Athens - Bohemian Tales of the City Urban Adventure - EUR70 (Day 15)
- Athens - Day Trip to Delphi - EUR60 (Day 15)

Costs are per person.

The optional tours and shore excursions can only be purchased on-tour with your guide or the ship staff, and are payable in local currency. Optional tours are subject to conditions such as traffic, weather and sightseeing schedules, as well as minimum numbers.

TOUR ITINERARY

EXCLUSIONS

- Return International Airfares
- Transfers
- Visas (if applicable)
- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Tipping
- Anything not mentioned in the itinerary
- Optional activities
- Personal expenses

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Fitness Requirements

While the tour itinerary should give you some guidance and overview to the expected requirements, a basic level of fitness will be required. If you have any concerns please consult your healthcare provider prior to purchase/travel.

As a general rule, portage is not included, therefore at all times you are expected to handle your own luggage where help may not be available.

Tipping

A friendly reminder that tipping is not included in your package. While tipping is not customary, it's of great significance to the people who will take care of you during your travels, inspires excellent service, and is an entrenched feature of the tourism industry across many destinations.

You may also consider tipping your tour leader and driver for outstanding service throughout your trip. Remember, a tip is not compulsory and should only be given when you receive excellent service.

Accommodation

The accommodation listed is subject to change. Any changes will be of an equal or higher standard. Bedding configurations (double or twin) are requests only. All efforts will be made to meet your preferences, however, any changes are beyond our control.

Single Supplement

A single supplement is bookable on this trip from an extra \$875, subject to availability at the time of booking. Please note that due to the small properties we use in Europe there is only a limited amount of single supplements available per trip departure. If you would like to book a single supplement and enquire about availability please speak to your booking agent.

TOUR ITINERARY

Triple Share

Not available.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is required to protect yourself against the unexpected.

We have partnered with nib to offer our customers competitive rates for their travel insurance. You can book comprehensive or budget cover simply by clicking [HERE](#) to arrange your policy.

Visa & Passport information

It is the traveller's responsibility to ensure they have a valid passport. The passport must be valid for a minimum of six months from the intended date of your return.

Please note that these details are subject to change without notice. We recommend visiting <https://smartraveller.gov.au> for up to date information in terms of entry requirements.

Tour Documentation

Final documentation, including e-tickets and hotel details, will be provided approximately 30 days prior to travel.

Group Size

Maximum 12 people.

Children

Children must be 15 years old or over and share a room with parents at all times. Children are charged the same price as adults.

Tour Length

The total length of the tour in days includes time spent inflight and is subject to change, depending on the flight schedule. Please refer to the day-by-day itinerary for the time spent in your destination(s).

Itinerary

There is not much time in Dubrovnik on this trip, so you may want to consider arriving a few days earlier to make sure you are not missing out on everything that this beautiful city has to offer.

WHAT CLIMATE TO EXPECT

Click [HERE](#) for more information on the weather in Greece.

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