

Self-Guided Walking the Coastal South of Albania

Trip Code: SGSA

Version:



WALK & TREK



SELF-GUIDED



LEISURELY



HIGHLIGHTS

- Get off the beaten track in the lesser-trodden south of Albania
- Walk on stunning coastal paths and quiet shepherd's trails with views out to the Ionian Sea
- Swim in the crystal clear waters of the Albanian Riviera

- Explore vibrant Tirana and learn of its chequered history
- Enjoy sumptuous fresh Mediterranean cuisine and hearty Albanian mountain fare

AT A GLANCE

- Self-Guided
- 6 days walking
- Transfers included
- Daily departures available
- Max altitude 1600m
- Suitable for 2+ travellers
- Join at Tirana Airport

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

The hidden gem that is Albania is a fascinating country with so much to offer to the discerning traveller. Endowed with an incredible coastline on both the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, along with wild and untamed mountain ranges, this welcoming and emerging destination is calling for you to discover. On this one week self-guided walking holiday, you will immerse yourself into the south coast of Albania where the “thunder-split” peaks of the Ceraunian Mountains rise from the Ionian Sea.

Your holiday starts on your arrival to Tirana Airport, where you will be met and transferred to the lush green heights of the Llogara National Park; here you will discover its quiet trails and the breathtaking Karaburun Peninsula on foot. Contrasting your mountain experience, you will also spend 4 nights in Himara on the Ionian coast. Your day walks on the Albanian Riviera will take you on sections of the Southern Coastal Trail, hiking between rocky coves and beautiful bays with sparkling turquoise waters, and off the beaten track into the foothills of the Ceraunian mountain range that emerges from the sea. Along the way you will discover not only the picture-postcard azure beaches, but also the rich cultural heritage and culinary traditions of the region. You will also have the pleasure of Albanian hospitality and support local businesses by staying in hand-selected family-run guesthouses and small hotels. Ending your holiday with a final night in Tirana, you will have the opportunity to delve into this lively and colourful city, taking in the atmosphere at Skanderbeg Square, admire the historic Et’hem Bey Mosque, and perhaps pay an eye-opening visit to the National History Museum.

Is this holiday for you?

This holiday is perfect for those looking to experience a hidden gem on foot at your own pace, with the ease and assurance of transfers to/from each day’s walk arranged for you. Albania is an emerging destination and this is a great option to discover some wonderful walking while avoiding the crowds.

This holiday comprises of day walks; you will walk 3-5 hours each day with around 500m of average daily ascent/descent. The nature of the terrain on the coast and in the mountains means that trails are often narrow and uneven, and sometimes steep and rocky. Trails are waymarked and on the whole are easy to

follow, though some trails may be less defined. While there is no official trail maintenance, the trails are well-trodden and have been used by people or animals for years. A GPS device is provided locally for additional confidence and assistance with route finding on your walks.

You will stay in carefully selected simple hotels or comfortable family-run guesthouses, always in rooms with private bathrooms. There will be plenty of opportunities for swimming in the Ionian Sea so don't forget to pack your swimsuit and towel.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Tourist taxes
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your detailed route notes
- Transfer from Tirana Airport to Llogara on Day 1
- Transfers to / from your walk as described in the itinerary
- Transfer from Tirana city hotel to Tirana Airport on Day 8
- Luggage transfers
- GPS device & simple mobile phone with local SIM card

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to/from Tirana Airport
- Visas (if applicable)
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional
- Any charges incurred for loss or damage of loaned GPS & mobile phone devices

Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit, about the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook and all your relevant documents no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start date. We will send your documents using a signed for courier so that you can track your package and know that they are safely on their way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our sales team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker so please remind them to pack it before you set off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start date, please do inform our sales team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for most of our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, so please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking holiday for your family, a centre based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a days walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool or visiting museums is calling instead.

Please discuss this further with our sales team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The trip starts and ends at Tirana Airport. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. For this trip we have included a return transfer for you from Tirana Airport which offers many departures from regional UK airports.

Please ensure you inform our customer sales and support team as early as possible of your flight times so that we can arrange your transfers for you.

Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis to allow you the most flexibility during your trip. We have also included two packed lunches when you are Llogara where shops or cafes are not readily available.

Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. You should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) to treat your water. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

With a mix of Balkan, Greek and Italian influences, Albania offers a rich variety of dishes with a Mediterranean flair, utilising the seasonal produce of the region. In the mountains, you can expect hearty meat dishes such as stews or grilled meats, typically with lamb. A national specialty to try is Tave Kosi, a baked casserole of lamb, yoghurt, eggs and rice. The popular side dish of stuffed peppers filled with rice and herbs, or even meat or cheese are delicious. At the coast there will be plenty of excellent seafood options, with freshly caught fish such as bream, sea bass, octopus, squid, shrimp and so on. With the Italian influence you can also expect pasta and pizza to be readily available, plus coffee is a way of life. While in Albania, you should try the Byrek, a popular snack of filled filo pastry. Meat-free dishes are also readily available, with grilled or baked vegetables, cheese dishes, soups and salads.

To satisfy your sweet tooth, make sure you sample some baklava with layers of thin filo, honey and nuts; or a variation with shredded filo called kadaif. Fried dough balls called petulla are a popular snack any time of day, with a variety of toppings such as chocolate, jam, honey or cheese.

In hotels breakfast are continental style, with cereals, bread and jam, meat, cheese, tea, coffee and sometimes eggs and fruit. You may also have the chance to try a more traditional Albanian breakfast of flavoured rice.

If you would like to sample some locally-produced drinks, Albania produces lagers and wines, or you might also like to brave the strong grape liquor known as raki. These can be purchased from most hotels and shops along the way.

Accommodation

On this holiday, you will stay in a selection of small, comfortable hotels and family-run guesthouses, all with WiFi connectivity. All accommodations are booked in twin or double rooms with private bathrooms, on a bed and breakfast basis. Where you are in the more remote mountains we have also included two packed lunches from the hotel.

In Llogara, you will stay at a simple and welcoming mountain inn with a popular restaurant serving up traditional Albanian fare. Located in the heart of the National Park and surrounded by natural woodland, the hiking trails are practically on the hotel doorstep.

In the coastal town of Himare, you will stay four nights in a comfortable, family-run guesthouse with easy access to the beach.

In Tirana, you will stay at a centrally-located hotel in the city, a great spot from which to explore on foot with some the most popular attractions of Tirana within walking distance.

Please note that not all places are able to accept payment by credit card so having a supply of cash is a good idea.

Baggage Allowance

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your walk. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is limited to one soft bag (duffle bag or rucksack) under 15kg per person and that your luggage is ready for collection in the morning. Suitcases or flight cases are not suitable for this trip. You will also need a daypack to carry your daily essentials with you.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Visa Albania

UK and USA passport holders do not require a visa for short stays.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Severe Allergies

Please inform our KE Sales and support team of any severe allergies you may have before travel. We will always do our best to help but we are unable to guarantee an allergy free environment on our KE trips. We advise that you always carry your own treatment for the allergy with you such as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' if required. We also recommend that you discuss this with your accommodation on arrival so that they can better assist you.

Currency

The unit of currency in Albania is the Lek.

Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided walking holiday is that you decide the pace however, getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable your walks will be. You should be comfortable with walking 4 to 5 hours for consecutive days. We suggest that you try to fit in a number of daily walks in hilly countryside before your trip and it is always a good idea to spend some time walking in the footwear you are going to use on this holiday.

Climate

Albania has a Mediterranean climate which varies by region. Coastal areas experience mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers, with temperatures reaching highs of 35-40 °C in July and August. Spring and autumn brings a moderate climate with temperatures reaching daytime highs of 22-26 °C, which are more comfortable for a walking holiday, hence this holiday is not offered in the summer. Flowers are in bloom in the spring, while the Ionian Sea is delightfully warm in the autumn. Mountainous regions such as Llogara feel cooler, with temperatures between 15-19 °C in spring and autumn, and can experience alpine microclimates with strong winds. While Albania enjoys a great deal of sunshine, rain can be expected at any time of the year particularly in mountainous regions, so you should always be prepared for all eventualities.

Those choosing to travel in November should be aware that the clocks go back an hour at the end of October. As such, the day will be an hour shorter in November, with the sun setting soon after 4pm. We recommend that walks should be planned accordingly to maximise the available daylight later in the year.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

Modern Albania: From Dictatorship to Democracy in Europe - Fred C. Abrahams

Free: Coming of Age at the End of History - Lea Ypi

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Please note that a paper copy of your travel insurance is required if you are travelling to Huaraz and the Huayhuash region.

Equipment Information

Self Guided Equipment List

- Hiking boots with good grip soles
- Functional base layer
- T-shirts
- Hat
- Windproof jacket
- Fleece / extra layer
- Long/short hiking trousers
- Hiking socks
- Waterproof jacket

- Waterproof trousers
- Rucksack (approx. 20 l)
- Small first aid kit inside your rucksack
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Camera (batteries/memory card)
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Sun glasses
- Personal wash kit
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Tupperware for picnics
- Walking poles
- Headtorch & spare batteries
- Your self-guided route notes

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers.
[>> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons in double or twin occupancy, however this trip is suitable for groups of 2 or more travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our sales team to find out more about this.

Our sales team will be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Get ahead of the crowds and discover the lesser-known coastal south of Albania, on foot and at your own pace. We have included transfers to/from your walks, as well as from/to Tirana Airport, for a seamless holiday experience.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 03/07/2024 and the trip is subject to change