

C O D A ^

THE UNDISCOVERED BALKANS

Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Sep 06 – 17, 2023

5 COUNTRIES, 4 UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Discover Ottoman splendors, Byzantine and Eastern Orthodox Monasteries, ancient sites and dramatic landscapes on this 12-day Balkan tour from Skopje, Macedonia to Sarajevo, Albania. Bordered by the Adriatic, Mediterranean and the rugged Dinaric Mountains, diverse cultures have jostled and left their legacy across the Balkan Peninsula, Europe's oldest continuously inhabited land.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Coda Tours signature small group size
- Coda Tours signature comprehensive sightseeing programs
- Coda Tours signature inclusive meal plan
- Coda Tours signature deluxe accommodations
- Bizarre statuary in Skopje, North Macedonia
- Beautiful Lake Ohrid & its ancient Monasteries
- The farm to table food of Albania
- The bunkers from the Hoxha era in Albania
- The stunning Ottoman village of Berat
- The rebuilt bridge of Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina
- The fortified city of Kotor, Montenegro

C O D A I N T E R N A T I O N A L T O U R S , I N C .

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ITINERARY

DAY 1 DEPART USA

Depart the USA on any regularly scheduled flight to Skopje, Macedonia.

[Flights serving this itinerary are on United, Lufthansa, Turkish & Austrian. The airport code for Skopje is SKP and for Sarajevo on the return is SJJ.] No visas are required for this program.

Day 2 ARRIVE SKOPJE, MACEDONIA

Upon arrival in Skopje, Macedonia, you may book a transfer with Coda Tours to be met at the airport and transferred to the hotel. Check in to the Marriott Hotel, centrally located in Skopje. The afternoon is at leisure to relax after the flight.

Hotel: Marriott Hotel 5*

Meals: None

DAY 3 SKOPJE – CAPITAL OF NORTH MACEDONIA

After breakfast, we tour Skopje. North Macedonia is a country of 2 million, 30 percent of them ethnic Albanians. Obstructed by Greece from becoming part of the European Union (due to conflict over the use of the name Macedonia), today Macedonia is a divided nation with an uncertain future. In the last five years, Skopje has become the world capital of kitsch. We will discover the massive statuary of Alexander the Great, his mother, Olympias, and father, Phillip II, and listen to a local artist give a personal view point of their artistic merits. We will also see the home of former local resident, Mother Teresa, and the beautiful Church of Saint Salvation. Finally walk through the Albanian quarter – a world removed from Orthodox Skopje.



This evening we will depart for a local restaurant for our Welcome Dinner

Hotel: Marriott Hotel 5*

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 SKOPJE to PRIZREN –KOSOVO to SKOPJE



After breakfast, we drive to neighboring Prizren a charming city of mosques and monasteries dating back to the 14th century.

Hotel: Marriott Hotel 5*

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

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DAY 5 SKOPJE to LAKE OHRID, NORTH MACEDONIA

Departing Skopje this morning, we drive southwest to the Monastery of St. Naum — dramatically set on rocky outcropping over Lake Ohrid (World Heritage site), high above deep forest and the springs of the river Crn Drim. Here we board a boat for a cruise across the serene lake, which has captivated visitors since prehistoric times. Writing, education and Slavonic culture all spread out from remarkable Ohrid town in the 7th to 19th centuries. Among the extraordinary collection of monasteries, ancient buildings and medieval chapels, Ohrid has the oldest Slav monastery (St. Pantelejmon) — and more than 800 Byzantine-style icons. Orthodox Byzantine monks brought Christianity to Ohrid in the 10th century from Greece through the effort of Saints Cyril and Methodius. We check in to our hotel set along the lake with dinner tonight in the hotel.



Hotel: Unique Resort and Spa 5*

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 LAKE OHRID, NORTH MACEDONIA to BERAT to TIRANA, ALBANIA

En route today to Tirana, capital of Albania, we stop at the fortified city of Berat, a splendid UNESCO-designated example of the coexistence of Islamic and Ottoman traditions. Its castles and fort date back more than 2,400 years. We visit the Old Quarter and the icon museum of Onoufri, Albania's master iconographer, and stop along the way at Helveti Tekke, a Bektashi Sufi shrine and another testimony to the long history of tolerance in the region. We continue to Tirana, where we spend two nights.



Hotel: Plaza Hotel 5*

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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DAY 7 TIRANA to KRUJA to TIRANA

After breakfast we join our guide for a tour of Tirana and neighboring Kruja, — home of Albania's national hero, Scanderbeg, who famously recaptured the city and defended it from the Turks in the 15th century. We visit the Old Castle, Scanderbeg Museum and spend time at the Turkish-style bazaar before returning to Tirana for lunch and some time at leisure to explore this city on your own.

Hotel: *Plaza Hotel 5**

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch*



DAY 8 TIRANA to SHKODRA LAKE to BUDVA, MONTENEGRO



Today we travel north through an old and historic region of Albania. We visit Rozafa Castle, an Illyrian stronghold near Shkodër, and continue along the Adriatic coast to the walled seaside town of Budva in Montenegro.

Hotel : *Avala Resort 4**

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch*

DAY 9 BUDVA to KOTOR, MONTENEGRO to MOSTAR, BOSNIA

After breakfast walking tour of the old town in Budva. Later we drive along the spectacular Dalmatian coast to medieval, fortified Kotor, which commands a gorgeous, deep, natural harbor in Montenegro. A part of the maritime Venetian Republic from 1420 to 1797 (interrupted by periods of Ottoman rule), Kotor retains much of its Venetian legacy. Set on a dramatic bay, the city was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site for both its cultural and natural riches. It has one of the best preserved medieval towns of the entire Mediterranean. Autumn is a marvelous time to enjoy the Adriatic. After Lunch continue to Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina and check in to our hotel.

Hotel: *Mepas Hotel 5**

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*



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DAY 10 MOSTAR TO SARAJEVO

Mostar in the center of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The scenery climbing from the coast is spectacular, with Mostar dramatically set on both sides of Neretva River. We wander cobbled alleys and watch the famous divers from the symbolic Old Bridge (Stari Most), painstakingly rebuilt since its destruction in the war, and tour the Ottoman Muslibegovic House, a Bosnian National Monument. After lunch continue to Sarajevo the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina

Hotel: *Swissotel 5**

Meals: *Breakfast, Lunch*



Day 11 SARAJEVO

Today we explore the wonders of Baščaršija, Sarajevo's 15th-century bazaar and old town spread out along the Miljacka River. A moving highlight is a tour of the Sarajevo Tunnel. Built between 1992 and 1995, the tunnel allowed food, war supplies and humanitarian aid to come into the city — and for its people to get out. Stand on the site where the Arch Duke Ferdinand was shot, sparking World War I. Enjoy sitting in a café, doing some shopping or exploring more of this fascinating city in the afternoon.

Hotel: *Swissotel 5**

Meals: *Breakfast, Dinner*

DAY 12 SARAJEVO – USA

After a morning at leisure, we transfer to the airport for flights home.

Meals: *Breakfast*

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OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION TO SERBIA

DAY 12 FLY SARAJEVO – BELGRADE

The morning is at leisure in Sarajevo. Fly this afternoon to Belgrade (3:15pm-4:05pm) and upon arrival, transfer to the **Saint Ten 5*Hotel**. The remainder of the day is at leisure. This evening, we will go out to dinner at a local restaurant.

Hotel: Saint Ten 5*

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 13 BELGRADE

Breakfast at the hotel. Tour Belgrade this morning. Visit Kalemegdan Fortress & Saint Sava Cathedral and see Kalemegdan Park & Knjez Mihalilova Street. Lunch at a local restaurant. The afternoon is at leisure.

Hotel: Saint Ten

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch 5*

DAY 14 BELGRADE – NOVI SAD - BELGRADE

Drive to historic Novi Sad, the second largest city in Serbia. Tour the old quarter – Stari Grad - and the 17th century Petrovaradin Fortress. Lunch in Novi Sad. Return to Belgrade in the late afternoon. This evening we dine together.

Hotel: Saint Ten 5*

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 15 BELGRADE – USA

Transfer to the airport for your return flight to the USA.

Meals: Breakfast

STILL NOT READY TO GO HOME?

We will customize design a trip to Slovenia to complete your Balkans Discovery. Please inquire.

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RATES

BALKANS TOUR	
PER PERSON RATES	LAND
DOUBLE	\$4295
SINGLE	\$4895

AIRPORT TRANSFERS	Skopje	Sarajevo
Per car	\$ 50	\$50
SERBIA EXTENSION		
PER PERSON RATES	LAND	
DOUBLE	\$995	
SINGLE	\$1245	
Flight Sarajevo-Belgrade	Approx \$150	

YOUR TRIP INCLUDES:

- 10-night accommodations in 4★ & 5★ hotels as described in the itinerary. Standard room category is reserved unless otherwise specified. Upgrades at the hotels may be available for additional cost. Please inquire.
- Breakfast daily in the hotels.
- 8 lunches & 5 dinners
- Complete program of tours as described in the itinerary
- Deluxe motor coach throughout the trip.
- Professional English-speaking tour leader/guide from Albania who will accompany the group throughout the tour
- Professional English-speaking Coda Tour Leader to accompany the group throughout the tour.
- Professional English-speaking guides where required.
- Complete pre-departure assistance and information
- Final document portfolio
- Baggage handling in hotels

YOUR TRIP DOES NOT INCLUDE:

International airfare; Visa and passport fees (if applicable); Arrival & departure transfers in Skopje & Sarajevo, (These may be booked separately), Trip Cancellation & Interruption insurance (recommended); Meals and beverages other than those specified in the itinerary; Personal expenses (such as laundry, telephone, WiFi, Internet); Gratuities to guides, drivers and Coda tour leader.

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TRIP PREPARATION

GETTING THERE: You will fly from the USA on Sep 07 to Skopje (SKP) Macedonia, arriving Sep 8, and return to the USA from Sarajevo (SJJ), Bosnia-Herzegovina on Sep 18 – if you are taking program as written. Turkish Airways has easy connections through Istanbul and may be the best rate for your airfare. You may also fly several European carriers through major European cities. Coda Tours will be happy to assist you with your international airfare in Business or Economy class (First Class is rare nowadays on international flights, but if available, we can quote it.) Please ask us for a price quote, we often have favorable rates. There is a standard \$35 per ticket ticketing for this service.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS: No visas are required for American passport holders. If you overnight in Istanbul en route, a visa is required for Turkey and can be obtained on line prior to departure.

HEALTH: No special vaccinations or medications are required or recommended for this trip. Please check with your physician for his/her personal recommendations for you.

WEATHER: Below is a chart of average temperatures in selected cities on this tour.

Temp in F° - SEP	SKOPJE	TIRANA	BUDVA	SARAJEVO
HIGH	79°	78°	76°	70°
LOW	53°	61°	64°	52°
PRECIPITATION	1.4"	2.6"	4"	2.5"

PACKING: The trip is casual at all times. There is no need to bring a sports jacket or other formal wear. Polo shirts, jeans, khakis, comfortable walking shoes, a light jacket for the evening will serve you well. Fuller list of recommended items to bring with you will be sent with final documents.

TRIP CORRESPONDENCE: Once you are have deposited on the trip, Confirmation (including a Letter, Suggested Reading List, Visa Information (if applicable), and Invoice and an Insurance Quote will be sent to you via email. Final documents are mailed approximately 30 days prior to departure and include: Letter, Participants List, Destination Information (including weather, packing, tipping information), Luggage Tags, Airline Tickets (if applicable).

TRIP PAYMENTS: A deposit of \$750 is required to hold confirm your participation on the trip. Final payment is due 60 days prior to departure. The deposit may be made by any major credit card; final payment is payable by personal check. Payments by credit card are assessed the 4% credit card fee charged by the credit card company. If you would like to make arrangements to pay in installments, please inquire with us.

TIPPING & ADDITIONAL EXPENSES: Please refer to Inclusions to determine the number of meals included in the program cost. Meals not included are at your own expense. Drinks at

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meals, apart from water, are not usually included. Tipping to the guides, drivers, Coda Tour Managers are additional. Suggested tipping amounts are provided in Final Documents.

MONEY MATTERS: US dollars or EUROS will be your currency of choice on this tour. Where necessary you can change smaller amounts into local currencies as you need it. ATM machines are readily available throughout these countries.

INTERNET & WIFI: WiFi will be available in all hotels. Sometimes there is a fee. If you have T-Mobile, you will have free web browsing and cheap texts and phone calls.

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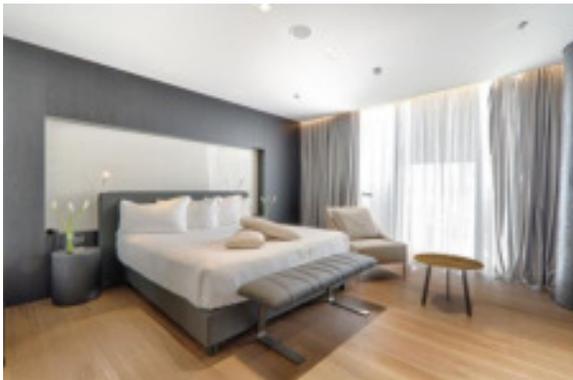
ACCOMMODATIONS



MARRIOTT HOTEL-SKOPJE



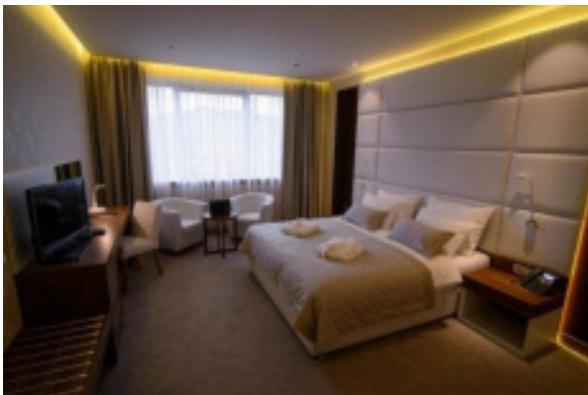
UNIQUE RESORT & SPA – OHRID



HOTEL PLAZA-TIRANA



AVALA RESORT AND SPA-BUDVA



HOTEL MEPAS-MOSTAR



SWISSOTEL- SARAJEVO