

ALBANIA

By the open road.

Your keys to the Adriatic & Ionian — turquoise bays, stone cities and mountain passes, all within a single tank of fuel.

A small country, an enormous drive.

In one week you can swim in glass-clear bays at breakfast and stand on a thousand-metre mountain pass by sunset. Albania is compact, the roads are better than its reputation, and the finest places are rarely the ones on the postcard.

This is the route we would take ourselves — written by people who hand you the keys. Drive slowly, stop often, and talk to everyone.



CURRENCY

Lek (ALL) · cash is king

LANGUAGE

Shqip · English widely spoken

DRIVE ON THE

Right-hand side

POWER

Type C/F · 230V

BEST MONTHS

May–Jun · Sep–Oct

EMERGENCY

112

Seven Days: Coast & Castles

A relaxed loop of roughly 900 km that strings together the south's best in a week. Reverse it freely.

1 Tirana

DAY

Capital buzz — café-lined Blloku, Skanderbeg Square, the cold-war tunnels of Bunk'Art, and the Dajti cable car for the view.

2 Berat

DAY

The 'city of a thousand windows': Ottoman houses stacked up the hill to a castle people still live inside.

3 Gjirokastër + Blue Eye

DAY

A UNESCO 'stone city' of slate roofs and a huge fortress — swim at the electric-blue spring on the way.

4 Sarandë · Butrint · Ksamil

DAY

Ancient ruins in a lagoon forest by morning; island-clear water and tiny islets by afternoon.

5 The Riviera

DAY

Himara's coves, white-pebble Dhërmi, and the hike down to hidden Gjipe beach.

6 Llogara Pass → Vlorë

DAY

Albania's most beautiful road: hairpins dropping from pine forest straight to the sea.

7 Back to Tirana

DAY

Loop home via the ruins of Apollonia or a last espresso on the Durrës waterfront.

Add-on for the bold: the Albanian Alps

Two or three days north — Shkodër → Theth → Valbona. Alpine meadows, waterfalls, the famous pass hike and a fjord-like ferry across Lake Koman.

— COAST FEATURE

The Ionian Riviera

Where the mountains drop straight into water clear enough to read a map through. Pebble coves, the three little islands of Ksamil, and beach bars that close only when the last guest leaves.

KSAMIL

DHËRMI

HIMARA

GJIPE

LLOGARA

Sun, Sea & Ancient Stone



Ksamil COAST

Three tiny islands you can swim to in bath-warm water — the jewel of the Ionian.



Gjipe Beach HIKE-IN

A canyon-backed cove reached on foot or by boat. No shops — bring water and stay for sunset.



Dhërmi & Himara COAST

Clear coves, easy beach bars and white-pebble shores — the Riviera at its most laid-back.



Llogara Pass DRIVE

A thousand metres of switchbacks. Stop at the top for spit-roast lamb and an eagle's-eye view.



Syri i Kaltër • Blue Eye SPRING

A bottomless spring of impossible blue, ringed by forest. Look closely — the water never stops bubbling up.



Butrint UNESCO

Greek, Roman and Venetian ruins layered over 2,500 years inside a quiet lagoon forest.



Sarandë HUB

The Riviera's lively base, with ferries to Corfu just across the water.

— MOUNTAIN FEATURE

The Albanian Alps

Two hours north of the beach, the 'Accursed Mountains' rise green and jagged above villages of stone. Hike the Theth-Valbona pass and sail the fjord-like gorge of Lake Koman.

THETH

VALBONA

LAKE KOMAN

SHKODËR

Castles in the Clouds



Berat UNESCO

Tiers of white Ottoman houses and a hilltop castle that is still a living neighbourhood.



Gjirokaštër UNESCO

The 'stone city' — slate roofs, cobbled lanes and one of the Balkans' largest fortresses.



Krujë HISTORY

Skanderbeg's mountain stronghold, with a romantic old bazaar perfect for souvenirs and silver.



Shkodër GATEWAY

Albania's cycling city and the door to the Alps — Rozafa castle and golden lake sunsets.



Theth & Valbona ALPS

The 'Accursed Mountains': alpine meadows, waterfalls, the Blue Eye of Theth and the famous pass hike.



Lake Koman Ferry JOURNEY

A fjord-like boat ride through sheer gorges — quietly one of Europe's great rides.

What to Eat, and Where

DISHES TO HUNT DOWN

Tavë kosi · baked lamb & yogurt, the national dish

Byrek · flaky savoury pie

Fërgesë · peppers, tomato & curd cheese

Qofte · grilled meatballs

Seafood · fresh off the Ionian

Speca të mbushur · stuffed peppers

Petulla · fried dough with honey

Baklava · with a glass of raki

A FEW TABLES WE LIKE

TIRANA **Mullixhiu** — modern, farm-to-table Albanian. **Oda** — homestyle dishes in a cosy courtyard. **Era** — reliable Balkan classics in Blloku.

BERAT **Homemade Food Lili** — a family table in the old town; call ahead, it's worth it.

COAST Seafont fish tavernas in Ksamil & Sarandë — point at what looks freshest.

LLOGARA Roadside lamb spits at the top of the pass — the view is the side dish.

Tables and hours change with the season — a quick call or message ahead never hurts. In the mountains, the best meal is often dinner at your guesthouse.

Driving in Albania

The short briefing we give every traveller before they pull out of the lot.

Rules	Drive on the right, belts on, lights as required. Don't drink and drive — checks are common and serious.
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The roads	Main routes (SH) are modern and smooth. Mountain roads to Theth, Llogara and the Alps are narrow and winding — slow down and enjoy them.
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Fuel	Stations ('karburant') line the main roads but thin out in the mountains. Fill up before Theth, Valbona or a long coastal day.
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Tolls	The A1 'Nation's Highway' has a toll near the Kalimash tunnel (heading to Kosovo) — keep some cash handy.
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Surprises	Expect livestock, slow tractors and the odd pothole on rural roads. Keep your distance and your patience.
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Parking	Tight in central Tirana and on the Riviera in July–August. Arrive early and ask your host where to leave the car.
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Navigation	Google Maps is reliable; download offline maps for the Alps, where the signal disappears.
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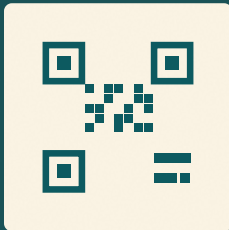
Papers & help	Keep your licence, passport and our rental documents in the car. Trouble? Call 112 — and call us. We answer.
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— PICK UP · DRIVE OFF

Your keys to Albania.

Booked the car? The whole country is a day trip.



Free Road-Trip Map Pack

Scan for 50 pinned spots — beaches, viewpoints, mountain routes and our favourite lunch stops, straight to your phone.

WEB rentproalbania.com

WHATSAPP [+355 69 753 5690](https://wa.me/355697535690)

PICKUP Tirana city · Rinas Airport (TIA)

Drive safe. Stop often. Eat everything.