

PRE ADVENTURE
5-9 MAY 2016



Adventure in Malësi
'the most unspoiled corner of Europe'



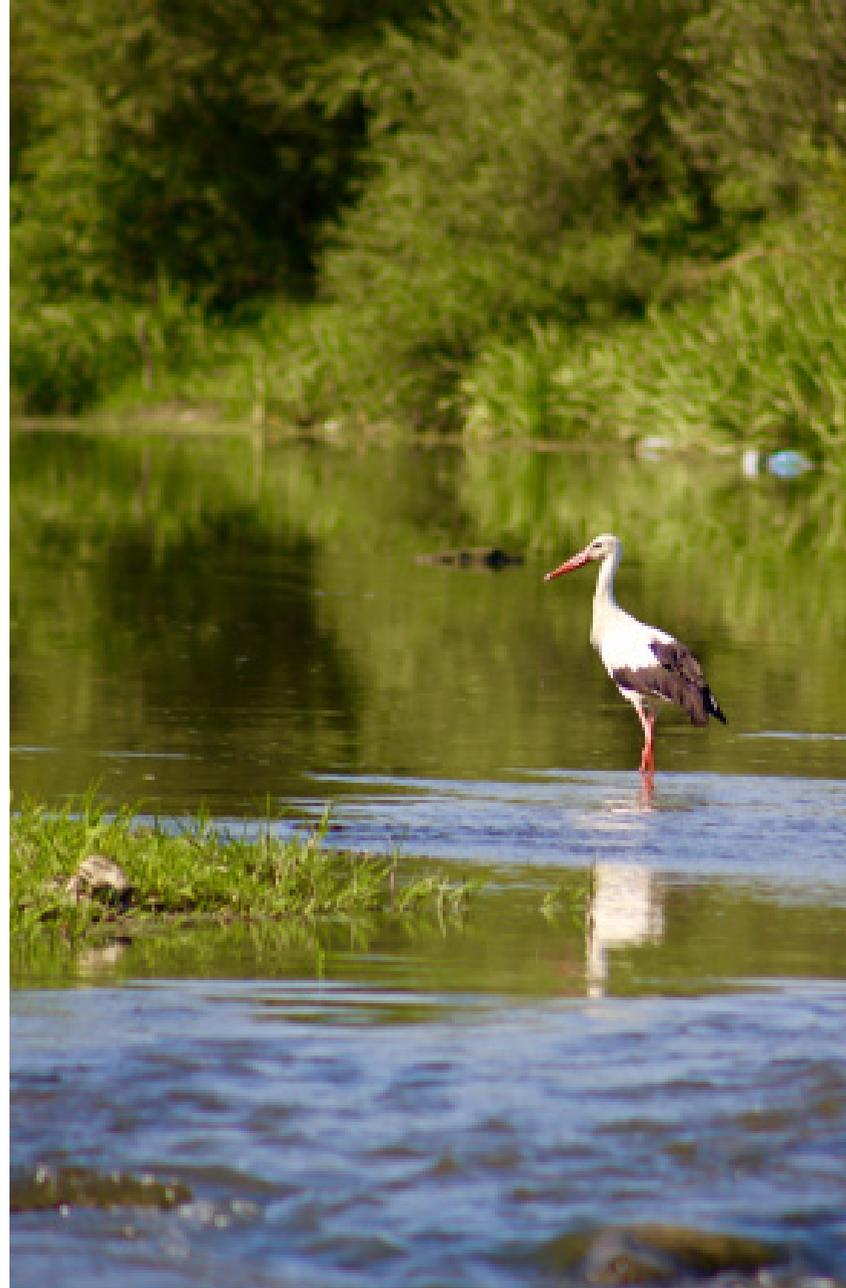
Adventure in Malësi

Reunited after a century

This trip highlights the hidden history of the Malësi region comprised of Valbona Valley (northeastern Albania) and Dukagjini (western Kosovo). Though nowadays these regions are located in two different countries, throughout most of history they were within one. The new borders that were forced in 1913 cut the area into two pieces, and from that point both sides lived in totally different realities. Once Communism fell in Albania the borders opened and since then they have been working to restore relations.

Dukagjini in western Kosovo is at a crossroad of history acting as somewhat of a boundary between Orient and Occident. In Dukagjini, you will see the finest Roman mosaics, well-preserved Medieval frescoes, kullas (fortified stone houses), Ottoman mosques and bazaars, and two spectacular waterfalls.

Valbona Valley is part of Malësi in Albania and was never really conquered or subdued by the various waves of invaders during the last 2,000 years of Balkan history. It is hard to imagine such an unspoiled, pristine place that still exists in Europe - Dukagjini and Valbona will be all yours this trip!





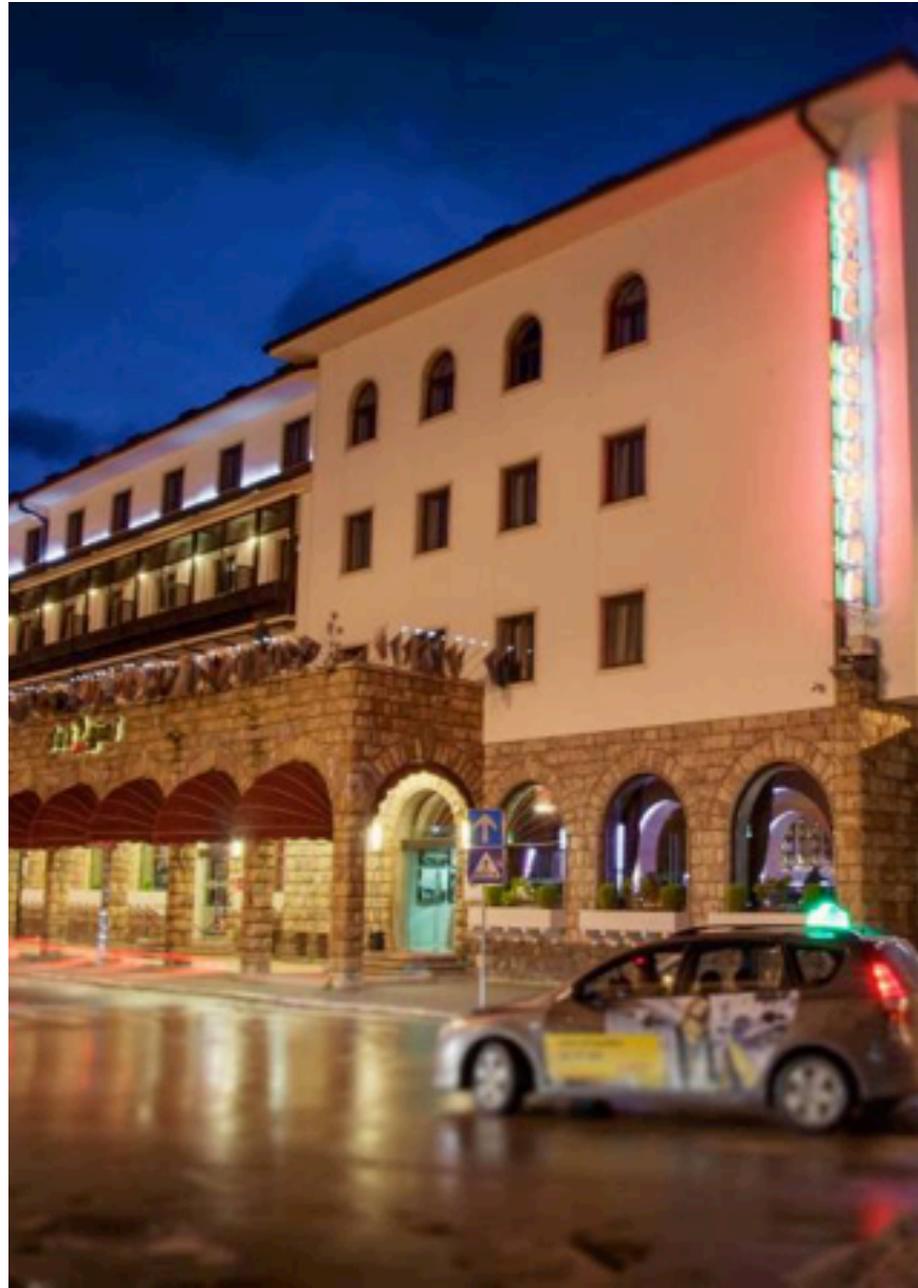
Adventure in Malësi

Day 1, Welcome!

Pick up at Pristina/Skopje airport. Catun's staff will be at the airport with a sign with your name.

Depending on your arrival time, we'll explore Pristina, the capital, or will be offering you a one hour drive to Peja, western Kosovo.

You will be checked in to Hotel Dukagjini (Peja) one of the highest-rated hotels in Kosovo. Dinner will be served in the hotel restaurant.





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Day 2, Waterfalls, roman mosaic

After the breakfast, a van will drive you around 12 km to the Source/ Waterfall of Drini i Bardhe, the biggest river in Kosovo. In the same place, you will visit a small cave called Radavci Cave. From the bus stop, you will walk 10-15 minutes to reach the destination.

At this point, you will be provided with bike (Trek or Scout) and helmets. You will bike in easy “white circle category” trail for about 44 km. First segment is around 28 km to Dresnik, a small village. You will visit a catholic church in Klina, small town mixed of Muslim and catholic communities.

A van will be driving with you and when stop for a break, dry and fresh fruits will be offered + fresh water. The lunch break will take place on the way. We stop in a beautiful viewpoint nearby a river.

After lunch, the remained biking segment is around 16 km to reach the Mirusha Waterfall. The last 2 kilometers are off-road. It is optional either to bike or to walk. Mirusha Waterfall is one of the most attractive natural sites in Kosovo.

In the late afternoon, a van will drive you back in the hotel.

The dinner will be served in Art Design, one the best restaurants in Peja, It is just 5 min walk from the hotel.





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Day 3, Monastery, kullas, Meja

After breakfast and checkout a van will drive you to the 14th Century Decani Monastery which is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. A monk community is still active within the monastery and the church, part of the complex, is distinguished by its imposing size and Romanesque and Early Gothic structure and design.

After the monastery, a biking trip of 45 km will show you the local culture. The trip has three stops before we reach our final destination. First, we stop in Drenoc, the village of kullas (fortified stone houses), where a local family will host you. You will take part in preparing flija, a specialty from traditional Albanian cuisine, which is mostly prepared in the more mountainous areas. It is most certainly the most popular Kosovar dish that every local will recommend. Flija will be served in an oda (traditional guest room), in a pleasant setting around sofra with Turkish coffee offered to you in the end. The next stop is a Sufi Tekke in Junik belonging to the tariqat order 'Aliyye Halvetie'. The tekke is a testimony of other Islamic influences in the region.

Our final stop is perhaps the most harrowing memorial in Kosovo: the village Meja. Meja was witness to of the largest massacre of the Kosovo War from 1998-99. On 27 April 1999, 377 civilians were mass executed here by Serbian police and paramilitaries.

(note: those who prefer to not visit, they can do something else nearby)

The last bike segment is around 6 km to the historical center of Gjakova where you will check in the Hotel Carshia e Jupave.

Dinner will be served at Hani i Haraqise, just a 7 min walk





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Day 4, City tour, Valbona Valley (Albania)

In the morning, a short city tour will give you a taste of Gjakova and will include a visit to the reconstructed bazaar which dates back to the 16th Century and one of the finest showcasing local handicrafts.

After the morning walk, you will be driven to Valbona Valley (Albania). On the way, you will stop in Bajram Curri, a small town in Albania, which during the Communist period was perhaps one of the most remote places in Europe.

And finally, you will reach Valbona valley, one of the last unspoiled corners of Europe. Valbona Valley is situated in the heart of Albania's wild "Accursed Mountains", the Bjeshkët e Nemuna of the Malësi highlands. A wild and mountainous region inhabited by strong and fiercely independent people, the Malësi has been the region which was never really conquered or subdued by the various waves of invaders during the last 2,000 years of Balkan history. You will be checked in Hotel Rilindja, run by English-speaking brothers Alfred and Skender, and Catherine, a lovely American lady who came to Albania and never left. The lunch will be ready! After lunch, be prepared for trekking to the Source of Valbona, around 5-6 hours walk. The views are extraordinary.

No reason to change the place for dinner: the restaurant specializes in traditional Northern Albanian cuisine, including whole goats roasted on a spit.



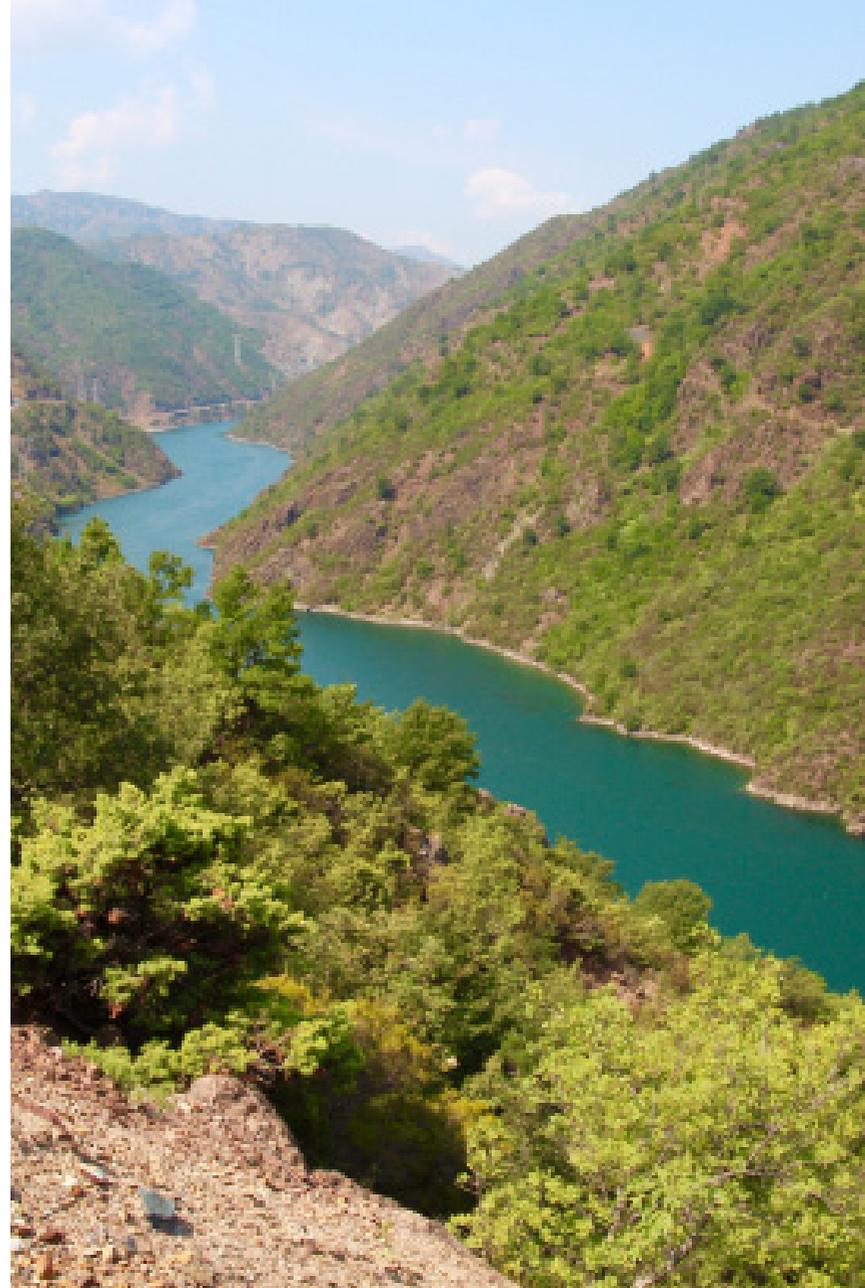


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Day 5, Komani Lake

After breakfast, you will be checked out from the hotel. The van will drive you to Komani Lake. The two hour trip on Lake Komani has been called “one of the great boat trips of the world” by the Bradt Guide. The packed lunch will be served in Ferry.

After this trip, the van will drive you to Ohrid. The trip will last 4 hours. On the way, dry and fresh fruits will be offered + fresh water.





Tour leader: Sali Shoshi

Contact name:

Sali Shoshi, +38649503050, sali.shoshi@gmail.com

Minimum and Maximum of pax: 4-12

Duration: 5 Days, 4 Nights

Difficulty rating: 3

Cost per persons:

Group of 12 persons: 598 Euro/per person

Group of 8 person: 683 Euro/per person

Group of 4 person; 836 Euro/per person

What is included in price?

Local transportation (including the transport to and from airport), bikes, entrances fees, accommodation, all meals (4 lunches, 4 dinners, 4 breakfasts), non-alcoholic drinks, water, guide

Adventure in Malësi

WHO WE ARE?

We are a company of trusted, passionate adventure specialists who create customized journeys to Kosovo and Albania. Our trips are completely based around your interests and schedule—they are one-of-a-kind experiences that are as unique as you are.

Our trips are always organized in combination with biking, trekking and hiking activities. All what we care is that your trip to be active, healthy in a deep interaction with the context.

We can have you traveling Valbona valley – ‘the most unspoiled, pristine place in Europe’, or to Dukagjini (the western Kosovo), where ‘the East meets West’. In Dukgjini, you will see the finest romans mosaics, medieval most preserved frescos, fortified stone houses - kullas, ottoman mosques and bazars.

You will have the chance of cooking Flija meals, a specialty from the traditional Albanian cuisine, which is mostly prepared in mountainous areas. If you are hiking passionate, Gjeravica, the highest mountain in Kosovo is in our program.

Our team is expanding. We are aware of the mission and values of the company. We are here because you have taken efforts to come to this part of the world. And we promise to make your choice more than just a trip!

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