



MEJDI TOURS

Exploring the Balkans

Dates: May 10-20, 2026

Albania Extension Tour: May 20 - 24, 2026 *

Included:

- 10 nights' accommodation at premium hotels per itinerary
- 1 MEJDI-Trained Tour Leader throughout the tour
- Local city and excursion expert guides
- 10 days of private transportation, including private arrival and departure airport transfers
- Domestic flight (Belgrade-Sarajevo)
- Meals listed in the itinerary: 10 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 4 dinners
- Entrances, sites, and honorariums for speakers¹
- Water on the bus throughout the tour
- A collaborative photo book will be created with the best photos of our adventures
- A one-on-one photo review will be provided after the tour
- Dedicated pre-trip traveler services and 24/7 on-ground support

Not included:

- International airfare
- Travel insurance-highly recommended
- Single Supplement - \$955
- Meals and drinks not mentioned in the itinerary
- Arrival/departure airport transfers outside of group transfer
- Customary tips for drivers, guides, and hotel staff
- Anything not explicitly mentioned in the included section

Pricing: \$6,690 USD per person
Extension Tour: (\$1,475 per person, +\$170 single supplement)

*Extension tour has a minimum of 4 travelers

¹ Subject to confirmation based on availability



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival - Belgrade, Serbia (1 Guide, Private Airport Transfers)

Arrive in **Belgrade** and transfer to your hotel. Meet the group for a **welcome dinner** and **brief orientation** in the evening.

Hotel: Mama Shelter hotel, Belgrade, Serbia (dinner included)

Day 2: Belgrade Old Town (1 Guide, No Transportation - Walking Tour)

Explore Belgrade, Serbia's capital at a historic crossroads of the Roman and Ottoman Empires.

Walk through the **Stari Grad (Old Town)** and along **Knez Mihailova Street**, then continue to **Belgrade Fortress** and **Kalemegdan Park** for views over the **Danube and Sava Rivers**.

Visit landmarks including the **Despot's Gate**, **Sahat Tower**, and the **Victor Monument**. After lunch in a **traditional kafana**, stroll through the **bohemian quarter of Skadarlija** to meet a **local painter or curator** for discussion on the area's artistic culture.

Hotel: Mama Shelter hotel, Belgrade, Serbia (breakfast and lunch included)

Day 3: The Outskirts of Belgrade (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

Travel outside Belgrade into the countryside of **Vojvodina**, Serbia's multicultural northern province, for a visit to the Slovak-Serbian town of **Kovačica**, renowned for its vibrant naïve art tradition—inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Explore the **Museum of Naïve** and **Marginal Art**, meeting artists who continue to depict village life in colorful, dream-like works. Learn about the centuries-old process of **rakija distillation**, taste local varieties, and enjoy a **home-cooked meal** in a rustic village setting.

In the afternoon, create your very own naïve artwork in a **workshop led by local artists**.

Hotel: Mama Shelter hotel, Belgrade, Serbia (breakfast and lunch included)



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Day 4: Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

Fly to **Sarajevo** in the morning, take a **food tour** with **Balkantina** for lunch, sampling dishes like burek, somun bread, and tufahija, while exploring how history, empire, and migration have shaped Sarajevo's culinary identity. Walk through the **Baščaršija and Austro-Hungarian quarters**, where diverse religious landmarks stand side by side, offering insight into the city's layered past and pursuit of coexistence.

After lunch, ride the gondola to **Mount Trebević** for sweeping views, and walk along the **abandoned Olympic bobsled track**, a powerful symbol of the city's past.

In the evening, meet a **local photojournalist** over dinner (possibly visit their gallery).

Hotel: Colors Inn Sarajevo, Bosnia (breakfast, lunch and dinner included)

Day 5: The Outskirts of Sarajevo (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

Journey into the Bosnian countryside to explore **Bobovac**, the fortified medieval capital of the Bosnian Kingdom. A guided walk through the ruins reveals the remains of royal residences and churches where Bosnian kings were crowned and buried.

Continue to **Mijakovići**, recognized as one of The Most Beautiful Villages of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for a **traditional lunch** in a **local household**, experiencing authentic rural hospitality.

In the afternoon, visit the **Franciscan Monastery** at **Kraljeva Sutjeska**, founded in the 14th century, home to a remarkable library, historic manuscripts, and sacred art that have preserved Bosnia's religious and cultural identity through centuries.

If available, meet **local women** who maintain the rare tradition of **Catholic hand tattoos**, an ancient practice once common in central Bosnia, offering a unique insight into intangible cultural heritage and remembrance of the last Bosnian Queen - Katarina.

Hotel: Colors Inn Sarajevo, Bosnia (breakfast and lunch included)



Day 6: The City of Mostar (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

Depart Sarajevo, traveling south along a scenic route through Herzegovina's dramatic mountain terrain above the Neretva River. Stop in **Konjic** to view its elegant Ottoman-era stone bridge and enjoy a traditional Bosnian coffee.

Continue to the **Old City of Mostar**, with its cobblestone streets, Ottoman architecture, and artisan shops. Climb the **minaret** of a **historic mosque** for panoramic views of the **UNESCO World Heritage site Stari Most**, a 16th century bridge destroyed during the war and later rebuilt as a symbol of reconciliation.

In the evening, visit the stunning **Emporia winery** on the **Herzegovina Wine Route** for dinner paired with regional wines, discovering Herzegovina's centuries-old viticulture and enjoying a relaxed meal amid the vineyards.

Hotel: Pasha hotel, Mostar, Bosnia (breakfast and Dinner included)

Day 7: Countryside from Mostar to Dubrovnik (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

Depart Mostar in the morning and travel south through Herzegovina's dramatic **karst landscapes**.

Stop at **Radimlja**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most significant necropolises of medieval tombstones (stećci) in the Balkans. The finely carved stones, dating from the 15th and 16th centuries, depict knights, crosses, and symbolic motifs that reflect medieval life and beliefs in the region.

Continue into the fertile **valley of Popovo Polje**, known for its vineyards, orchards, and traditional preserves. Visit a **local food producer** to taste regional specialties such as **honey**, **figs**, or **cheeses**, and learn about techniques passed down through generations. Continue to **Vjetrenica Cave**, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and visit the nearby 16th century **Orthodox Christian monastery Zavala**.

In the evening, take a tour of **Trebinje**, a picturesque town nestled by the **Trebišnjica River** and framed by vineyards. Stroll through its Ottoman-era old town and shaded plane-tree square.

Hotel: SP Integra hotel, Trebinje, Bosnia (breakfast and lunch included)



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Day 8: Walls of Dubrovnik (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

Begin the day crossing the border into Croatia and arriving in **Dubrovnik**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its **walled Old City** along the Mediterranean, which bears the marks of its glorious medieval and Baroque legacy. Take a guided walking tour exploring Dubrovnik's **architectural treasures and scenic coastline**, as well as its pop culture fame as a filming location for *Game of Thrones*.

After lunch, visit the **Rector's Palace**, once the seat of the Republic of Ragusa, and explore its chambers that showcase the city's political and artistic history. Continue to the **Franciscan Monastery**, home to one of the oldest pharmacies in Europe, before enjoying some free time to wander the narrow streets, browse artisan shops, or walk the famous city walls at your own pace.

Take a cable car to the nearby Srdj Hill to enjoy a spectacular view and sunset.

This evening head to the gallery of **War Photo LTD**, where a renowned international **photojournalist** shares his experience documenting conflict in the Balkans and beyond.

Hotel: Lero hotel, Dubrovnik, Croatia (breakfast and lunch included)

Day 9: Welcome to Montenegro (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

Cross into Montenegro, journeying along the scenic Adriatic coastline to the breathtaking Bay of Kotor. Explore the fortified medieval Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where Venetian palaces, stone alleyways, and centuries-old churches reveal the city's layered past.

Visit the **Kotor Ceramic Studio**, a family-run pottery workshop, to meet local artisans and learn how traditional forms and motifs are preserved in clay.

In the afternoon, **board a boat across the bay** to the **island church of Our Lady of the Rocks**, whose richly decorated interior reflects centuries of seafaring devotion. Continue by boat to the famous **Blue Cave**, where sunlight illuminates the waters in dazzling shades of turquoise. Return to Kotor in the early evening with time to relax before dinner.

Hotel: Monte Cristo hotel, Kotor, Montenegro (breakfast and lunch included)



Day 10: Lovćen National Park and Farewells (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

In the morning, take the scenic drive from Kotor to **Lovćen National Park**, winding up a dramatic mountain road, offering spectacular views over the Bay of Kotor at every turn.

Midway, you will reach **Njeguši village**, famous for its centuries-old tradition of producing **prosciutto and cheese**, cured naturally in mountain air. A short stop here provides a taste of authentic Montenegrin life before continuing higher into Lovćen National Park, where the road ends at the **Mausoleum of Petar II Petrović-Njegoš**. Set atop Mount Lovćen, this impressive monument to Montenegro's beloved poet and ruler offers panoramic views stretching across the mountains to the Adriatic Sea.

Return to Kotor in the late afternoon, concluding the trip with a **festive farewell dinner** accompanied by **live folk music**.

Hotel: Monte Cristo hotel, Kotor, Montenegro (breakfast and dinner included)

Day 11: Departure (No Guide, No Transportation)

Check out and transfer to the airport for departing flights.

(breakfast included)



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Optional Extension

Albania

Included: 3 nights' accommodation at the following hotels or similar:

- Golden Palace, Shkodra
- Elisa by Melia, Tirana

1 English Speaking guide for 4 days

Meals listed in the itinerary: 2 breakfasts, 1 dinner

Private transportation throughout the trip, including one group

Private departure airport transfer

Entrance fees and site visits

Water on bus throughout tour

Dedicated pre-trip traveler services and 24/7 on-ground support

Not

included: International airfare

Travel insurance - highly recommended

Single occupancy supplement

Meals not mentioned in the itinerary

Customary tips for drivers and guides

Porterage fees and gratuities at hotels

Individual airport transfers outside of the group transfer

Anything not explicitly mentioned in the included section

Itinerary

Day 1: Kotor -Transfer to Shkodra, Albania (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

After breakfast, meet with your guide and drive to **Shkodra, Albania**, for an in-depth exploration tour starting with its **prehistoric Rozafa Castle**, one of the oldest castles in the country built by the Illyrian civilization in the 4th century B. C.

Enjoy the **panoramic Shiroka lake tour** before heading to a **Shkodra city tour** including: The **Catholic cathedral**, the **main Mosque** and Pedonalja - a lively pedestrian boulevard, where traditional and modern Albania blend seamlessly.



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Visit **Marubi National Museum of Photography** and end the day with a free evening.

Hotel: Golden Palace, Shkodra, Albania (no meals included)

Day 2: Kruja -Tirana (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

After breakfast, head to **Kruja**, hometown of **National Hero Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg**, the Symbol of Ottoman Resistance or the “Protector of Civilization”.

Visit the **National Hero Skanderbeg Museum** located inside the walls of the **Fortress**. Stroll down the Unique Old **Medieval Bazaar**, offering a vibrant atmosphere with traditional Albanian crafts, souvenirs, and local cuisine.

Drive to **Tirana**, stopping at the **Bunk Art 2 downtown**, one of Tirana's most intriguing museums unraveling the history of the Albanian communist army.

Take a city tour through **Skenderbej Square**, the **Ethem Bey Mosque**, the **National Bank**, **Skanderbeg's Monument**, and the **Castle of Tirana**.

Hotel: Elisa by Melia, Tirana, Albania (Breakfast included)

Day 3: Durres - Berat (1 Guide, Private Transportation)

After breakfast, drive to the **ancient amphitheater** in **Durres**, one of the largest Roman constructions in the region and one of the most famous architectural wonders of Emperor Trajan's time.

Continue to **Berat UNESCO heritage site** known as the city of “One above the other Windows”. Tour the Castle, the traditional houses within the ancient walls and visit the **Onufri museum**.

Then, drive back to Tirana for your **farewell dinner, folk show** and final night on tour.

Hotel: Elisa by Melia, Tirana, Albania (Breakfast and Dinner included)

Day 4. Departure

This morning, check out of your hotel and transfer to the airport for your flight home.

(Breakfast included)