SPICE ROADS
CYCLING



IONIAN ASCENTS: ALBANIA, NORTH MACEDONIA AND GREECE BY ROAD BIKE

Tour Code
MCT-AMG

9 DAYS
8 NIGHTS

Destinations	3
Tour Meets	Tirana, Albania
Tour Ends	Tirana, Albania
Fly in to	Tirana International Airport Nënë Tereza (Rinas Airport), TIA
Fly out of	Tirana International Airport Nënë Tereza (Rinas Airport), TIA
Group Size	4-16 riders
Minimum Age	18 (on scheduled departures)

ACTIVITY PROFILE

7 Cycling days	**569** km Total cycling distance
81 km Avg distance / day	**1246** m Avg climbing / day

PRICING

Price	US$ 2,795
Bike Hire (Road Bike)	US$ 490
Single Supplement	US$ 390

DEPARTURES

11 Apr - 19 Apr 2027
09 May - 17 May 2027
23 May - 31 May 2027
29 Aug - 06 Sep 2027
26 Sep - 04 Oct 2027
10 Oct - 18 Oct 2027

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Airport drop off
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Snacks and drinks

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Domestic flights
- ✗ Airport pick up
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

TRIP PROFILE

We ride a total of **569 km over 7 cycling days**. Days average 81 km and around 1,250 metres of climbing, though the shape of the week matters more than the average: two moderate days to open, then back-to-back mountain crossings over Galičica and up to Nea Kotili at 1,520 metres above sea level, a short recovery day along the Vjosa, a long rolling day towards the coast, and a hard finish above the Ionian. We ride the shores of Lake Ohrid and Lake Prespa, follow the Haliacmon and the Vjosa through their valleys, and cross the Muzina Pass to reach the sea. Along the way we ride through Gjirokastër, an Ottoman stone town, and spend the last night in Berat, both UNESCO listed. The hardest day comes last, **85 km with 2,497 metres** along the Albanian Riviera and over the Llogara Pass, or **71 km with 1,583 metres** if you stop at Dhërmi.

The trip is fully supported, and your guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you always know what is coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of water and refreshments along the way.

Suitability

This tour suits experienced road cyclists who are comfortable climbing. The daily average of 81 km and 1,250 metres understates it: three of the seven days carry more than 1,500 metres of ascent, two of them back to back mid-week, and the last day is the heaviest at 85 km and 2,497 metres. You should be at ease spending several hours in the saddle on consecutive days, holding a steady pace on climbs of an hour or more, and handling long mountain descents. Experience of hilly multi-day riding matters more here than raw distance. Plan to ride three times a week in the months before you travel, with longer and hillier rides mixed in. This tour is **not suitable for riders without recent climbing experience**.

Biking Conditions

We ride on sealed roads for around 98% of the route, across a mix of quiet mountain roads, secondary roads between towns, and lakeside roads around Ohrid and Prespa. The exception comes on the opening ride out of Borovë, where roughly 5 km run on unsealed surface. Traffic is light through the mountains and river valleys and builds near the larger towns. While much of the route is on quiet countryside roads with minimal traffic, we will be regularly sharing the roads with other vehicles, including cars, motorbikes, and buses. We cross national borders by bike on three of the riding days, so carry your passport with you. The descents run long, on open mountain roads with hairpin turns, the longest of them dropping from Nea Kotili almost all the way into Konitsa.

We generally ride rain or shine, but we can adjust the planned route based on the guide's discretion or your comfort. It's all part of the adventure! Throughout the ride, the support vehicle is always nearby to offer refuge to any weary cyclists.

Accommodations

We stay in **3 and 4-star hotels**, small and mid-sized properties in the centre of each town, with nights in all three countries: Albania, North Macedonia and Greece. On Lake Ohrid we're on the shore itself, with balconies over the water and a terrace on the lakeside boardwalk. The last night is in Berat, in the Mangalem quarter at the foot of the road up to the castle, where the hotel occupies restored Ottoman houses built in the local style of stone and timber. Rooms have air conditioning, private bathrooms and Wi-Fi, and breakfast is served at every property. Most of them have a restaurant or a bar on site.

Please be aware that some older or more characterful properties may show signs of wear and the service pace can be more relaxed than you might be used to.

For larger groups we may occasionally split the group between nearby properties or substitute a similar hotel if the listed one is not available.



Day 1: Meet in Tirana

We meet in **Tirana** to start the tour. Our guide talks through the route, the daily distances and what to expect on the road. We sit down to a welcome dinner in the city centre.

Tirana rewards a walk. Italian architects laid out the ministries around Skanderbeg Square in the 1930s, and the Et'hem Bey Mosque still stands among them from a century earlier. The concrete pyramid a few streets south went up in 1988 as a museum to Enver Hoxha, who ruled Albania for four decades, and beyond it lies Blloku, where only Party officials lived until 1991 and where much of the city now eats and drinks.

Please let us know if you need assistance with airport transfers or pre-tour hotel bookings.

Sky 2 Hotel (or similar) Dinner

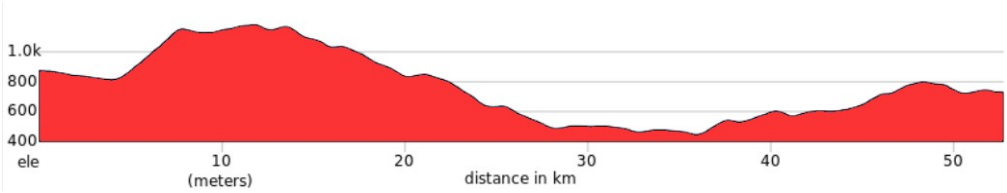
Day 2: Tirana → Peshkopi

We leave Tirana after breakfast and drive east for around two hours to Borovë, a village in the Librazhd hills close to the North Macedonian border. We have a coffee, get sorted on the bikes, and set off on the first ride of the week.

The road runs north along a ridgeline with the border a short way to our right, opening out over the mountains on both sides. We cross several rivers and stop for lunch in one of the villages along the way. It's the shortest ride of the week, though it climbs more than the distance suggests, and a final pull lifts us into **Peshkopi**, where we have dinner together.

The capital of Dibër county sits high above the valley, and people have come to its mineral baths for generations. Mount Korab rises north-east on the border at 2,764 metres above sea level, the highest peak in Albania.

Mont Blanc Hotel (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 53km +892m -1038m

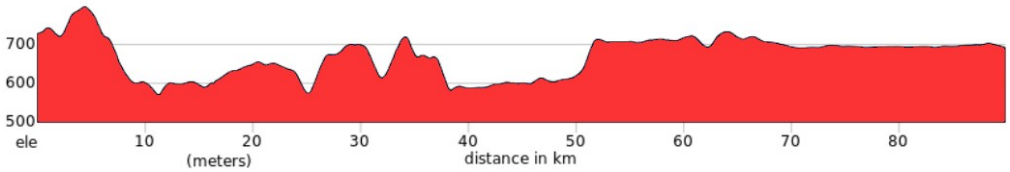
Day 3: Peshkopi → Ohrid

We start with a long descent out of Peshkopi and cross into North Macedonia inside the first 15 km. From there we pick up the Black Drin and follow it for the rest of the day, first along Lake Debar, the reservoir Tito's government created when it dammed the river in the 1960s, then past the town of Debar itself.

The valley narrows and opens again, undulating rather than climbing, and we stop for a picnic lunch along the water.

At Struga we reach the point where the Black Drin leaves Lake Ohrid, the lake's only outlet and the current we've ridden against since the border. The last 10 km run along the shoreline into **Ohrid**. The lake has held water for two to three million years and carries more than 200 species found nowhere else, and UNESCO lists the lake and the old town together. Dinner is on your own in town.

Royal View Hotel (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch



Ride 90km +695m -731m

Day 4: Ohrid → Kastoria

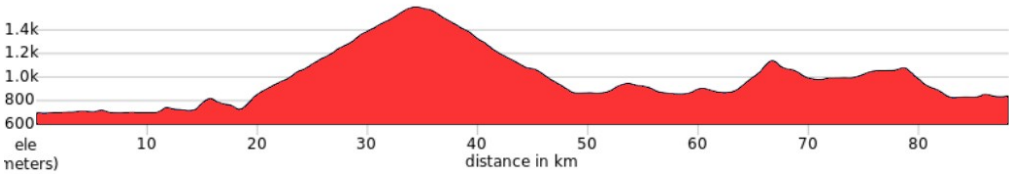
We ride south along the eastern shore of Lake Ohrid, flat to start. Around 13 km in we pass the Bay of Bones, where divers found a prehistoric stilt village on the lakebed and a reconstruction now stands on piles above the water.

Then the road leaves the lake and turns up into Galičica National Park, 20 km of climbing to a high point of 1,593 metres above sea level on the ridge that separates Lake Ohrid from Lake Prespa. Both lakes are in view from the top.

We drop to a road high above Prespa and follow it back into Albania, coming out of the mountains onto the Korçë plain. The riding finishes near the farming village of Plase, where we stop for lunch, then transfer into Greece (approx. 1 hour) to **Kastoria**. North Macedonia, Albania and Greece, all in one day.

The town sits on a peninsula in Lake Orestiada with water on three sides, and takes its name from the beaver, whose pelts built a fur trade here from the Middle Ages. More than fifty Byzantine churches survive in its streets. The evening is free to walk them and find somewhere to eat.

Hotel Kastoria (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch



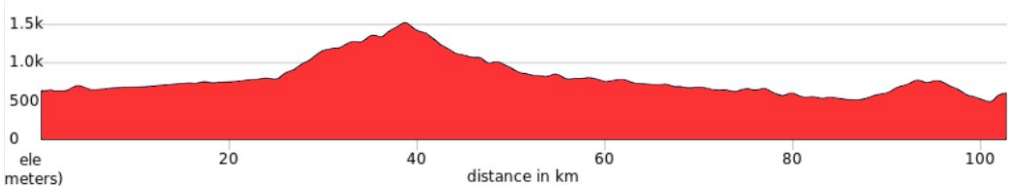
Ride 88km +1597m -1452m

Day 5: Kastoria → Konitsa

Today covers more ground than any other day of the tour, one long climb and a much longer descent. Out of Kastoria the road follows the Haliacmon upstream, the longest river entirely inside Greece, rising gently for most of 39 km and steepening near the top to Nea Kotili at 1,520 metres above sea level. We break for a picnic lunch, then the road runs downhill for 64 km, further than any other descent on the tour. It ends in **Konitsa**, at the meeting of the Aoos and the Voidomatis, where we share dinner tonight.

A single stone arch has spanned the Aoos at the edge of town since 1870, 20 metres above the water, and many call it the largest of its kind in the Balkans. A bell still hangs under it, there to warn travellers when wind through the gorge made the crossing dangerous.

Hotel Rodovoli (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 103km +1635m -1668m

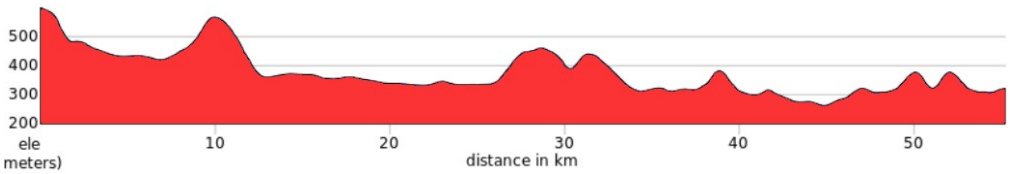
Day 6: Konitsa → Përmet

We leave Konitsa through wooded gorge country and follow the Aoos northwest to the Albanian border. It's the gentlest riding of the week, most of it downhill.

Once we're across, the river changes name and becomes the Vjosa. It's the same water, running free for more than 400 km from the Pindus to the Adriatic with no dam on its main stem, and Albania made it Europe's first wild river national park in 2023. We follow it down to the hot springs at Benje, at the mouth of the Lengarica canyon, where the ride finishes and there's time to get in. Pack something to swim in. Lunch is at a local restaurant nearby.

A short transfer takes us into **Përmet** (approx. 15 minutes), a town known for its roses and its *gliko*, whole fruit preserved in syrup and eaten by the spoonful. You have the evening to browse for it, try the local *raki*, and pick somewhere for dinner.

Hotel Alvero (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch

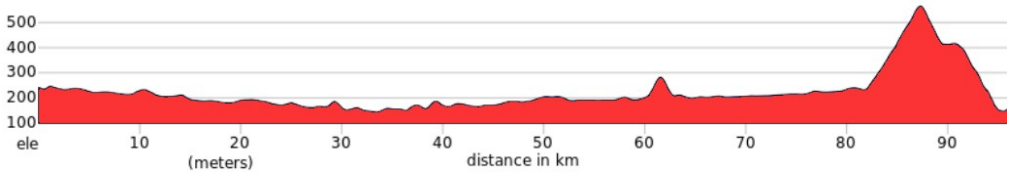


Ride 55km +665m -943m

Day 7: Përmet → Sarandë

The road stays low almost all day. We follow the Vjosa out of Përmet for 35 km, then turn south along the Drinos river, stopping for lunch on the way. **Gjirokastër** stands on the hillside above, a UNESCO town of grey stone tower houses with stone roofs, most built in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and some five storeys tall on their foundations. A castle sits above and an Ottoman bazaar street of two-storey stone arcades runs below, with time to walk both. The road finally goes up 20 km past the town, 5 km at 6% over the Muzina pass at 564 metres above sea level. The descent ends at the Blue Eye, a karst spring where divers have gone 50 metres down without finding the bottom. It's the source of the Bistrica, which runs 25 km from here to the sea. We transfer to Sarandë (approx. 30 minutes), where we reach the Ionian for the first time and Corfu sits across the channel in plain sight. Dinner is on your own along the seafront.

Hotel Agimi (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch

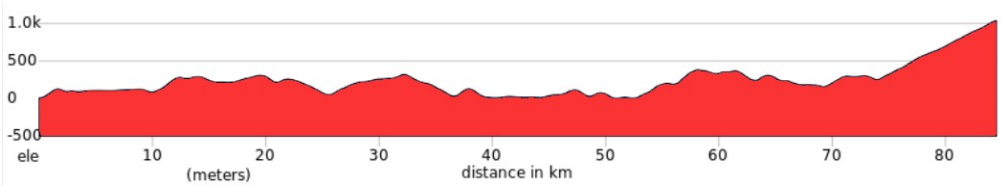


Ride 96km +738m -822m

Day 8: Sarandë → Berat

This is the hardest day of the tour, and the only one where you choose how hard. The road north out of Sarandë never settles: climb after climb along the Riviera with barely a flat kilometre between them. We stop for lunch at Dhërmi, a village of old stone streets about 200 metres above the water, and this is where you decide: finish the riding here, or carry on up the pass. The pass adds 13 km and 900 metres of climbing. The road turns up from the coast and stacks hairpins through the pine forest of the Ceraunian Mountains to the **Llogara Pass** at 1,036 metres above sea level, with the Ionian directly below. A transfer then takes us inland to Berat (approx. 3 hours) for the last night. Tiers of white Ottoman houses climb both banks of the Osum, which is how it earned the name city of a thousand windows, and people still live inside the thirteenth-century castle above. We close the week with a farewell dinner.

Hotel Mangalemi (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Ride 71-85km +2497m -1467m

Day 9: Tirana departure

We leave Berat after breakfast and transfer to Tirana (approx. 2 hours), where the tour ends. We can drop you at Rinas airport for onward flights, or in the city centre if you're staying on.

Tirana is worth a couple of extra days. Bunk'Art 1 sits on the edge of the city, a five-storey bunker of 106 rooms dug into the hillside between 1972 and 1978 to hold the country's leadership through a nuclear attack that never came. Enver Hoxha, who ruled Albania until his death in 1985, built more than 173,000 bunkers across the country and never needed any of them. The Dajti cable car starts nearby and lifts you above the city. Further out, Krujë is 45 minutes away, a hill town around the castle of Skanderbeg, who fought the Ottomans in the fifteenth century, with his museum inside and one of the few Ottoman bazaars still working in Albania.

Please let us know if you need assistance with post-tour hotel bookings or with onward transfers if you're staying on. We are happy to help you organise these final details for your journey home or an extended stay in the capital.

Breakfast

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

NUTS & BOLTS

Bikes

Because some people can't imagine going on a trip without their own beloved bicycle, we don't include bikes in the tour price. However, you can **hire one locally** for the price listed in the tour pricing section. The hire bikes are high-quality **aluminium road bikes** or similar. If you bring your own bike, we recommend a road bike, and please make sure it's in excellent mechanical order before you travel.

Bike Repairs

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

Safety

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Guides

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

THE NITTY GRITTY

NORTH MACEDONIA

Passports and Visas

North Macedonia isn't in the Schengen Area and keeps an open entry policy for tourists. Citizens of the UK, US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the EU enter without a visa for 90 days in any 180-day period. EU and Schengen nationals can cross on a national ID card rather than a passport. If you hold a multiple-entry Schengen visa or residence in an EU or Schengen state, you can enter on that for shorter stays. We sell to more nationalities than those, so if you're not on that list, check with your nearest North Macedonian embassy before you book flights. Your passport needs at least three months' validity beyond the date you leave. North Macedonia sits outside the Schengen Area, so Schengen entry systems don't apply here. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs publishes the current position by nationality: check before you travel. Use government sites only, since paid look-alike visa services exist and charge for nothing.

Health & Insurance

No vaccinations are required to enter North Macedonia. The CDC recommends every international traveller is up to date on MMR: see the CDC's North Macedonia page. Travel

insurance is essential and has to cover cycling and medical evacuation. Hospitals in Skopje are modern and well equipped. In the mountain regions and around the lakes, facilities are limited and getting to a well-equipped hospital takes time. North Macedonia has no reciprocal healthcare agreement with the EU or the UK, so an EHIC or GHIC won't get you treated here and your insurance is the whole of your cover.

Weather

We ride North Macedonia in April, May, August, September and October. The country is high, and Lake Ohrid sits around 700 metres, so it runs cooler than the coast at the same latitude. Spring and autumn bring daytime highs of roughly 16 to 24°C (61 to 75°F), with clear air and long views from the ridges. August is hot in the valleys and around Skopje, frequently above 32°C (90°F), though the national parks stay noticeably cooler. Weather at altitude turns quickly in any month, and a pass can be ten degrees colder than the lake below it.

Food

Macedonian cooking is Balkan with a Mediterranean edge, heavy on peppers, beans and grilled meat. *Tavče gravče* is the national dish, beans baked in an earthenware pot. *Ajvar* is a roast red pepper and aubergine relish, made in bulk every autumn and eaten with everything. *Pastrmajlija* is a boat of bread dough topped with cured meat and egg. Grilled *kebapi*, sheep's milk cheeses and thick yoghurt are on every menu, and around Lake Ohrid the trout is the local speciality. Meals arrive to share rather than plated per person, with bread and salad on the table throughout. We cater for dietary requirements when you tell us at the time of booking.

Drink

Coffee runs the social day here, Turkish-style in the older places and espresso everywhere else, and nobody drinks it standing up. Tap water is treated in the cities and generally fine, though bottled is easier in villages. North Macedonia has been making wine for a very long time and the reds are the reason to pay attention: Vranec is the grape to order, dark and firm, with Kratošija alongside it. *Rakija* is the fruit brandy poured at the start or the end of a meal, often homemade and stronger than it looks. Alcohol isn't included in the tour price.

Solo Travellers

SpiceRoads welcomes solo adventurers and does not charge a mandatory single supplement. We arrange for you to share a room with another traveller of the same gender. If no match is available, you receive a single room at no additional cost. If you prefer to guarantee your own private room for the duration of the trip, a single supplement is available at the rate listed in the tour pricing.

Extra Expenses

North Macedonia is among the cheapest countries in Europe to travel in. Budget cash for meals and drinks outside the itinerary, entry to monasteries, churches and museums, and anything you pick up along the way. Riders tend to buy copperware and filigree from the old bazaars, honey, mountain tea, and the ceramics and icons sold around Ohrid.

Tipping is a courtesy rather than an expectation. In restaurants, rounding up or leaving around 10% is normal, and you should check whether a service charge has already been added before you do. Taxi fares get rounded up. Hotel porters and housekeeping are usually given a small note. In village cafés and family-run places, nothing is expected.

Money

The currency is the Macedonian denar (MKD). Cards are accepted in hotels, larger restaurants and shops in Skopje, Ohrid and the main towns. Outside those, the country runs on cash. Cash machines are in every town of any size and take international cards, usually with a withdrawal fee. Carry denars for village shops, markets, roadside cafés and small guesthouses, where a card terminal is the exception.

ALBANIA

Passports and Visas

Albania isn't in the Schengen Area and keeps an open door for tourists. Citizens of the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the EU enter without a visa for 90 days in any 180-day period. US citizens can stay up to a year without applying for a residence permit. If you hold a multiple-entry Schengen visa you've already used once, or a residence permit from a Schengen state, you can enter Albania on that instead. Because we sell to more nationalities than those, check with your nearest Albanian embassy if you're not on that list. Your passport must be valid for at least three months beyond the day you plan to leave Albania. If you're arriving from a country with a yellow fever

transmission risk, you'll need to show a vaccination certificate at the border. Albania sits outside the Schengen Area, so Schengen entry systems don't apply here. The Albanian Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs runs a lookup by nationality: check the current position. Use government sites only. Paid look-alike visa services exist and charge for nothing.

Health & Insurance

No vaccinations are required to enter Albania. The CDC recommends every international traveller is up to date on MMR, and lists hepatitis A and typhoid for Albania: see the CDC's Albania page. If you're arriving from a country with a yellow fever transmission risk, you'll need to show a certificate. Travel insurance is essential and has to cover cycling and medical evacuation. Private clinics in Tirana are good. In the mountains, facilities are basic and the nearest hospital can be an hour or more away. Albania has no reciprocal healthcare agreement with the EU or the UK, so an EHIC or GHIC is no use here and your insurance is the whole of your cover.

Weather

We ride Albania in April, May, August, September and October. Spring and autumn give the best conditions: daytime highs of roughly 18 to 25°C (64 to 77°F) in the valleys and on the coast, with the mountains around 5 to 10°C cooler and colder again on a high pass. August runs hot, often above 32°C (90°F) inland and along the coast, and the heat sits in the river valleys where there's no wind. April and October are the wettest of the five, though rain tends to come in short spells rather than all day. Long descents feel cold in any month.

Food

Albanian cooking sits between the Balkans and the Mediterranean, built on what's in season. *Byrek*, a filo pastry filled with cheese, spinach or meat, turns up everywhere and is the standard mid-morning stop. *Tavë kosi* is the national dish, lamb and rice baked under a yoghurt and egg crust. *Fërgesë* is peppers, tomato and cottage cheese cooked down in a clay pot. Grilled meat, sheep and goat cheeses and thick yoghurt run through most menus. On the coast the fish is landed the same morning. In the south, *gliko* is whole fruit preserved in syrup and eaten by the spoonful. We cater for dietary requirements when you tell us at the time of booking.

Drink

Coffee is the centre of the day here, usually an espresso or a Turkish-style cup, and every town square has somewhere to drink one. Tap water is treated in the cities but bottled is the norm in villages and mountain guesthouses. *Raki* is the national spirit, a fruit brandy poured as a matter of hospitality and often homemade. Albania has been making wine a long time and the local grapes are worth ordering: Kallmet from the north, Shesh i Bardhë and Shesh i Zi around Tirana. Alcohol isn't included in the tour price.

Solo Travellers

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Extra Expenses

Albania is inexpensive by European standards. Budget cash for drinks and meals outside the itinerary, entry to castles, museums and archaeological sites, and anything you buy along the way. Riders tend to come home with *raki*, mountain tea, honey, olive oil and the woven textiles sold in the Ottoman bazaars.

Tipping is a normal courtesy rather than an obligation. In restaurants, rounding up or leaving around 10% is usual, and a service charge is rare enough that you should check the bill before adding one. Taxi fares get rounded up. Hotel porters and housekeeping are usually given a small note. In village cafés and family-run places, nothing is expected.

Money

The currency is the Albanian lek (ALL). Cards work in hotels, larger restaurants and shops in Tirana, Sarandë and the bigger towns, but Albania still runs largely on cash. Cash machines are easy to find in towns and take international cards, usually with a withdrawal fee. Carry lek for village cafés, markets, small guesthouses and roadside stops, where card terminals often don't exist at all.

GREECE

Passports and Visas

Greece is in the Schengen Area. Citizens of the UK, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand travel without a visa for up to 90 days in any 180-day period. Citizens of the EU, Switzerland and Norway enter on a valid national ID card or passport. Everyone else should check with their nearest Greek embassy, since the visa-free list is long and we sell to more nationalities than the obvious few. Your passport must be valid for at least three months beyond the date you leave and must have been issued within the last ten years, a rule that catches renewed passports carrying months over from the old one. The Entry/Exit System is in operation, so on your first entry to the Schengen Area you'll register a facial image and fingerprints at the border in place of a passport stamp. A separate travel authorisation, ETIAS, will apply to visa-exempt travellers once it starts. Check the official EU page for the current position before you travel: Travel to Europe. Use government sites only. Paid look-alike authorisation sites exist and charge for nothing.

Health & Insurance

No vaccinations are required to enter Greece. The CDC recommends every international traveller is up to date on MMR: see the CDC's Greece page. Travel insurance is essential and has to cover cycling and medical evacuation, which matters on mountain routes where the nearest well-equipped hospital can be a long drive from the road. EU citizens should carry a European Health Insurance Card and UK citizens a Global Health Insurance Card, both of which give access to state-provided healthcare on the same terms as a Greek resident. Neither replaces travel insurance: they don't cover repatriation, evacuation, or treatment in a private clinic.

Weather

We ride Greece in April, May, August, September and October. The climate is Mediterranean, but the north and the Pindus run considerably cooler and wetter than the islands. Spring and autumn bring daytime highs of roughly 18 to 26°C (64 to 79°F) at lower altitudes. August is the hottest month by a distance, regularly above 33°C (91°F) away from the coast, with the mountains giving the only real relief. Weather at altitude changes quickly, and even in late spring a mountain pass can be ten degrees colder than the valley you left an hour earlier.

Food

Greek cooking is the Mediterranean diet as it's actually eaten: olive oil, bread, pulses, vegetables and whatever's in season. *Moussaka* layers aubergine and spiced meat under béchamel. *Horta* is wild mountain greens boiled and dressed with lemon and oil, and it appears on every table in the north. Grilled octopus, *gemista* of stuffed tomatoes and peppers, slow-cooked goat and thick sheep's yoghurt are staples, and the salad arrives with a slab of feta on top rather than crumbled through. In the mountains of Epirus and Greek Macedonia the cooking turns heavier: pies with hand-rolled pastry, beans, and cheeses from the high pasture. Meals are served family-style to share. We cater for dietary requirements when you tell us at the time of booking.

Drink

Tap water is safe to drink across mainland Greece. Coffee is a serious business: order a *freddo espresso* or *freddo cappuccino* in summer, which is what everyone around you is drinking, or a slow-brewed Greek coffee in the older cafés. Greek wine has come a long way and the north is where the good reds are: Xinomavro from around Naoussa is the one to order, firm and long-lived. *Ouzo* and *tsipouro* are the anise and grape spirits poured after a ride or with a plate of small dishes. Alcohol isn't included in the tour price.

Solo Travellers

SpiceRoads welcomes solo adventurers and does not charge a mandatory single supplement. We arrange for you to share a room with another traveller of the same gender. If no match is available, you receive a single room at no additional cost. If you prefer to guarantee your own private room for the duration of the trip, a single supplement is available at the rate listed in the tour pricing.

Extra Expenses

Greece is better value than most of western Europe, particularly away from the islands. Budget cash for meals and drinks outside the itinerary, entry to archaeological sites, monasteries and museums, and anything you buy along the way. Riders tend to come home with olive oil, mountain tea, honey, olive wood and the ceramics sold in the hill towns.

Tipping is customary but modest. In restaurants, rounding up or leaving 5 to 10% is normal. Check the bill first, since a service charge is sometimes included. Round up taxi fares. Hotel

porters and housekeeping are usually given a small note. In a village *kafeneio*, leaving the coins from your change is plenty and nothing more is expected.

Money

The currency is the euro (€). Cards are accepted almost everywhere: hotels, restaurants, shops and even small tavernas now take Visa and Mastercard, and contactless is standard. Cash machines are widely available in every town and take international cards. Carry a small amount of cash anyway for village tavernas, roadside stalls, small entry fees and mountain places where the connection drops and the terminal stops working.

GENERAL BOOKING INFO

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place:

FLEXIBLE BOOKING CONDITIONS

Booking a SpiceRoads cycling adventure is easy and we try to do everything possible to make sure you have full flexibility and peace of mind. We do not require a deposit to hold your place on a tour and once full payment has been made your money is protected in our client account and you have the flexibility to cancel or change your booking if needed.

CONFIRMING YOUR BOOKING

Just complete our online booking form or send your booking details offline (email or post), and we will confirm your participation. No deposit is needed to confirm your place on a SpiceRoads tour.

You are advised to read our Booking Conditions in full before you make your payment and should you require further clarifications of any of the conditions below, please email us or call our office.

TRIP STATUS

There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2) required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If the trip status is 'Limited' will mean we have only a small number of spaces available for booking. If you are unsure about the trip status, please email us or call our office.

BOOKING ONLINE

From the tour page, click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. For the next steps, you'll need to know the names of the people travelling. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height (for bike hire), or you can add that later by logging into Manage My Trip (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). Our system will contact you from time to time to fill in the missing information, as it will be required before departure. However, if the trip that you are booking offers a child discount, you will have to fill out the date of birth of each rider (so we can calculate the appropriate discount).

If you are having any problems please send us an email, or give us a call (+66 026 3295) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

BOOKING OFFLINE

Just call us or send an email indicating which trip you want to join and we will happily send you a list of questions and process your booking for you.

DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS

We do not require a deposit or full payment to book a place for you on a tour.

The balance of the tour's cost (final invoice) will need to be paid 60 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights.

In the case where a booking is made when there are less than 60 days until the tour departure date, the tour's cost should be paid in full within 72 hours of receiving an invoice from SpiceRoads. Payment can be made by credit card using our online payment gateway or by bank transfer. When making payment online you will need to confirm that you have read these booking conditions during the "checkout" process, which equates to agreeing to the terms of services and stipulations as indicated in this document.

In all cases, tour fees need to be paid "in full" before participation in a tour. No person(s) will be allowed to join a tour without fully settling their invoice and receiving a confirmation number from SpiceRoads.

The exception can be made for last-minute miscellaneous fees that can be paid locally (visas, additional local hotel bookings, etc.) can be settled on the day of arrival.

FULL FLEXIBILITY FOR TOUR CANCELATIONS

If the tour is cancelled or postponed by SpiceRoads because we didn't make the trip numbers and the tour can't run, we will make a full cash refund (by bank transfer or on your credit card).

If the tour is cancelled for any other reason, including due to Covid related travel restrictions, we will give you a full credit (with no deductions for admin or any other small-print item) to use on any SpiceRoads tour with no time limit. (Exceptions being flights, special permits and other non-refundable items and these will be advised when booking the trip).

Before paying for your tour, you can cancel your booking with no charge and up until 40 days before departure, you can change your booking to another travel date or move your booking onto another SpiceRoads tour with no charges.

If you need to cancel after you have made full payment, please see our cancellation policy.

Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us, we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for a loyalty discount.

International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your travel insurance that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

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