

Discover the Balkans

Country(ies): Greece , Croatia , Albania , Montenegro , Bosnia & Herzegovina , Serbia & Macedonia

Tour type: Small Group

Transport: AC minibus/coach

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 20

Days: 16 Days

Start location: Athens

End location: Athens

Departs On: Monday

Meals: Breakfasts - 15, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 0

Highlights: The Acropolis, Meteora monasteries, Tirana, ancient Budva, spectacular Bay of Kotor, walled city of Dubrovnik, scenic Adriatic & Dalmatian coast, Split beaches, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Ohrid lake church, Stari Most bridge, Delphi

Places Visited: Athens, Meteora, Tirana, Budva, Kotor, Dubrovnik, Split, Sarajevo, Belgrade, Skopje, Thessaloniki & Delphi



Itinerary

Day 1: Your Balkans adventure starts in Greece. airport to hotel transfers included

Your Balkans adventure starts in the ancient Greek city of Athens. Upon arrival into Athens airport (ATH), you'll be met by one of our representatives who will then transfer you to your hotel. The rest of the day is then free for you to settle in, relax after your flight, and have a look around the area independently before meeting the group and starting the first sightseeing tours tomorrow morning.

OVERNIGHT: Athens hotel

MEALS: None

EXTRAS: Extra day in Athens - pre-tour (EXGR2S) || Single Room Supplement (GRSGDB)

Day 2: Exploring Athens

Our first full day of the Balkans tour begins with a city tour of Athens, as we make our way to its marble Panathenaic Stadium, which hosted the very first modern Olympics in the late 1800's.

We'll also make our way to the Temple of Olympian Zeus, Hadrian's Arch, the Parliament buildings and the Memorial to the Unknown Soldier before we explore the Academy, the University, the National Library and Constitution Square.

Later in the day, we make our way to the Acropolis, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erechtheion and the Parthenon, which was built in 438 BC to commemorate Athena Parthenos - the Greek goddess of wisdom, courage and warfare.

OVERNIGHT: Athens hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 3: Travel to Meteora

After a day in the Greek capital, we say goodbye for now as we travel to Meteora, one of the most important monastic locations of the Eastern Orthodox faith. Meteora boasts 24 monasteries with spectacular settings on clifftops and mountainsides - six which are still in use today.

After spending some time in Meteora, we'll make our way to Kalambaka - a traditional Greek village which is commonly known as the gateway to Meteora. We'll have some time to walk around the village, taking in the beauty of its cobblestoned streets and its traditional architecture which has stood the test of time.

OVERNIGHT: Kalambaka hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 4: Onwards to Albania

After spending a few days in Greece, it's time to make our way to Albania. During our journey, we'll make a pitstop at the town of Gjirokastra (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) - nestled in a valley between the Gjerë mountains and the Drino, 300 metres above sea level.

After spending some time in Gjirokastra, we'll head to Tirana - Albania's capital city. You have the rest of the day

free to explore the city, or simply relax at your hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Tirana hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 5: A walking city tour of Tirana, travel to Montenegro

The fifth day of our Balkans tour starts with a walking tour of Tirana, visiting some of its top attractions such as the Clock Tower, the Et'hem Bey Mosque, St Paul's Cathedral and the National Historical Museum. We'll also visit the Piramida, the National Art Gallery and Mother Teresa Square.

We'll then say goodbye to Albania, as we make our way to Montenegro's coastal town of Budva, famed for its turquoise-coloured beaches and buzzing nightlife. Our time in Budva sees us explore the Church St. Trojica, the Churches of St. Ivan, St. Bogorodica and St. Sava.

Today ends with a short drive to the ancient fortified and cobbled town of Kotor, where we'll spend the night.

OVERNIGHT: Kotor hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 6: The Bay of Kotor and Dubrovnik

Our day starts with a guided tour through Kotor taking in the old town as well as the Cathedral of Saint Tryphon, built in 1166.

We'll also drive around the edge of Bay of Kotor, which together with Kotor town forms a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The inlets and bays are positively fjord-like and beautiful to behold. We then continue across the border to Croatia, driving along its beautiful southern coast until we reach the legendary, stone-walled city of Dubrovnik.

We'll enjoy a guided city tour on foot, before visiting the Big Onofrio's Fountain - a large fountain which was built in 1438 as part of a water-supply system that involved bringing water from a well approximately 12 kilometres away.

OVERNIGHT: Dubrovnik hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 7: Follow the Dalmatian Coast to Split

Our second day in Croatia takes us on another scenic journey to the town of Split located on the Dalmatian Coast. Split is famed for its breathtaking beaches and its Diocletian's Palace, A UNESCO World Heritage Site which was built in the 4th century.

We'll explore the southern section of the Diocletian's Palace, as we delve into the history of its Bronze Gates, the Vestibul of the Emperor's Palace, The Mausoleum, St. Dujam's Cathedral, Cathedral Treasury, Temple of Jupiter and St. Martin's Church.

We'll finish the day with a visit to the fruit square before stopping at the Venetian castle, Milesi Palace and the Monument of Marko Marulic.

OVERNIGHT: Split hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 8: Mostar, the Stari Most Bridge & Sarajevo

After our time in Croatia, we cross the border into Bosnia and Herzegovina to the town of Mostar, which straddles the Neretva River. Famed for its iconic Stari Most (Old Bridge) built by the Ottomans in the 16th century, Mostar was one of the most heavily bombed locations during the war and has since become another UNESCO World Heritage Site (we certainly pack them in on this tour!).

After time to look at and photograph the bridge, and learn about the wartime history here, we'll make our way to its capital city of Sarajevo, a compact city located on the Miljacka River, surrounded by the Dinaric Alps.

Sarajevo was once war-torn place, but has since become one of Europe's most vibrant cities, boasting numerous minarets, mosques, bazaars and coffee shops. We'll spend the night exploring Sarajevo's old bazaar known as Bascarsija, trying all its unique dishes. You can also try the local speciality of 'bosanski cevapi', which is grilled minced meat mixed with mild spices.

OVERNIGHT: Sarajevo hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 9: Sarajevo to Belgrade

We'll start our day with a hearty breakfast before we say goodbye to Bosnia and Herzegovina and travel to Serbia. We'll stay in its capital city of Belgrade, famed for its impressive Orthodox churches and historical museums.

Tonight, we'll make our way to Skadarska Street to try some of its authentic cuisines. You'll be mesmerised by its buzzing atmosphere and vibrant nightlife, which runs alongside its Orthodox churches.

OVERNIGHT: Belgrade hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 10: Exploring Belgrade

We'll spend the entire day exploring Serbia's capital city of Belgrade today. Belgrade is one of Europe's oldest cities, boasting settlements which date back at least 7,000 years. Travellers flock here to immerse themselves in its rich culture, with ancient monuments at almost every step.

We'll browse through its boulevards and squares, before we make our way to Kalemegdan Park located on a 125-metre-high cliff, at the junction of the River Sava and the Danube River.

We'll spend the rest of the night in Belgrade before we make our way back to Macedonia tomorrow.

OVERNIGHT: Belgrade hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 11: Through Nis to Macedonia & Skopje

We start the day with a journey to Nis, Serbia's third largest city. We'll go on a sightseeing tour of Nis, as we delve deep into its Ottoman past. Nis is known for being the birthplace of Constantine the Great, a Roman Emperor of Illyrian-Greek origin from 306 to 337 AD.

We'll cross the border into Macedonia, as we head to its capital city of Skopje, situated in the heart of the Balkan

Peninsula. Skopje was founded at the time of the Romans and became capital of the Serbian Empire in the 14th century before it fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1392, and incorporated into Yugoslavia in 1918. You have the rest of the day free to explore Skopje independently.

OVERNIGHT: Skopje hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 12: Exploring Skopje

You have the morning free to do some exploring or get some extra sleep in before we head out in the afternoon for a walking tour of Skopje, where we'll visit the Kale Fortress - situated on the highest point in the city overlooking the Vardar River, the Church of the Holy Savior with its iconostasis, the Old Bazaar and the Stone Bridge.

You have the evening free to do some exploring and we'll once again overnight in Skopje.

OVERNIGHT: Skopje hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 13: Explore lakeside Ohrid's churches, the 'Macedonian Jerusalem'

We start our day with a drive to the small lakeside resort city of Ohrid, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Ohrid is often known as the 'Macedonian Jerusalem', due to the sheer number of churches in the city, at one stage having 365, one for each day of the year.

We'll explore Ohrid, visiting the 11th century Church of St. Sofia - one of the most important monuments of Macedonia, which houses architecture and art from the Middle Ages.

We'll spend the rest of the night in Ohrid, getting some rest in as we make our way back to Greece tomorrow.

OVERNIGHT: Ohrid hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 14: Back to Greece & Thessaloniki

After finishing our time in Macedonia we make our way back to Greece, this time visiting Thessaloniki - Greece's second largest city famed for UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as the Paleochristian and Byzantine Monuments and its breathtaking foreshore which boasts numerous cafes, cocktail lounges, bars and restaurants.

We'll spend the rest of the day in Thessaloniki.

OVERNIGHT: Thessaloniki hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 15: Exploring ancient Delphi, then travel back to Athens

Today we say goodbye to Thessaloniki as we make our way to the town of Delphi, which serves as the home of the 4th century BC Temple of Apollo and the former home of the legendary oracle.

We'll explore the Temple of Apollo, before we visit the Museum of Delphi. We'll also make our way to the sanctuary

of Delphi, which was once the religious centre of the ancient Greek world.

Later in the day, we'll travel back to Athens, where we'll spend the night.

OVERNIGHT: Athens hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 16: Your Balkans adventure ends, hotel to airport transfers included

After an eventful journey through the Balkans, the tour unfortunately, comes to an end. After breakfast at your hotel in Athens, your time is free until we transfer you to the airport to board your flight back home.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: Extra day in Athens - post-tour (EXGR2E)

Included

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary in approx. 3 to 4-star level hotels
- All transport and transfers in AC non-smoking vehicles
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service in Athens
- Services of a professional local tour guide for all sightseeing tours
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (15 breakfasts)
- Tipping kitty (except driver & guide)

Excluded

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees (if applied)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Entrance fees to sites visited (allow approx. EUR 47)
- Greece hotel residence tax (see tour notes)
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guide & driver
- Optional tours
- Any other items not mentioned above

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting.

However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

Extra day in Athens - pre-tour (EXGR2S)

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$135.00

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport arrival transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Extra day in Athens - post-tour (EXGR2E)

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$69.00

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Single Room Supplement (GRSGDB)

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$585.00

This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. Room shares are not available on this tour, so if you are single traveller then you will need to add this option to your booking.

Note: The price shown is a low season price. Slightly higher prices may apply during high and peak seasons - the exact price for your dates will be shown on the online booking form and is always available on request.

Tour Notes

1. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

2. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and an ABTA Member (Y4447) and you can be confident when booking with us that your money is safe and protected.

Financial failure insurance is also provided through Affirma to protect all customers for the land portion of your tour.

Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

3. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

4. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

www.twitter.com/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

5. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

Note - to comply with insurance sales regulations, our travel insurance policies are only available to customers booking directly with us. If you have booked through a travel agent you will need to arrange your own insurance.

If you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally, or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.

6. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding

of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.



Sockets are two round pronged and 220 volts (Type C). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already.

If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

8. Accommodation

Our tours visiting the Balkans we use a range of hotels mainly at the local 3 and 4-star level though some more boutique style properties or guesthouses may be used at times. Please check the Accommodation section for more information on the normal hotels used on this tour. This list is given as a guide though and hotels may change from time to time to others of a similar standard.

Accommodation levels and hotels may be slightly different in this region to those you are accustomed to at home. We regularly inspect all the hotels we use to ensure that the service you receive is as close as possible to your expectations. Please check your hotel room when you first arrive (hot water, cleanliness etc.), as our rep will wait in the hotel reception for around 15 minutes to help in case of any problems.

We will contact you with your arrival hotel details normally a couple of weeks before departure.

Rooming Arrangements: Single, Twin, and Double bedded rooms are available in all of the hotels used on these tours. Single travellers will need to pay the additional single room supplement; though we will always try to pair you up with another traveller of the same sex if this is your preference. In instances when a share is arranged the single supplement will not be payable, however if a share cannot be arranged the single supplement will be added to your reservation.

Check In Times: Official hotel check-in times are between 14.00 and 15.00. However, we do always try to ensure that if you arrive early, you can check into your room as soon as possible. We can nearly always get you into your hotel rooms by midday, but please understand that it is out of our control if the hotel is full and it takes a little longer. You will have full use of the hotel facilities while you wait if there is a short delay.

9. Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. The distances involved when travelling around the Balkans mean that we use private vehicles and tourist coaches throughout this tour.

10. Transfers

Our tours in the Balkans include your arrival and departure airport-hotel transfers and all other transfers.

Your airport transfers are only included on the first and last day of the set tour itinerary, plus on any additional days if you book your hotel room with us. If you make your own arrangements for additional accommodation at either the beginning or the end of the tour then you will need to arrange your own airport transfers on these days.

11. International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour.

Please check your itinerary carefully for more information on where you should book your international flight into and out of as many of our tours start and end in different locations.

12. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

We are committed to being a small group operator, as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. There's no point in us providing great guides if you've got to peer over 30-40 shoulders to see them! So, we won't ever put you in a 50-seater coach with 49 other people and just one guide. Instead, we set our group departures in the Balkans to have a maximum of 20 travellers.

On these tours we provide a fully trained, local English-speaking guide for all of the sightseeing tours. Our local reps in some of the towns and cities en-route are also at your service. At Encounters Travel we try to use local guides and reps as much as possible. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing.

Please note that as we offer multiple tours in the Balkans you may be joined by new passenger part way through the tour or some passengers may only choose to day a part of the tour. Therefore the group size may change mid-way through your tour.

13. Entrance fees, Hotel fees & permits

Our Small Group tours in the Balkans do not include entrance fees to the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. We do however normally include these in prices for Tailor-Made and Escorted tours. Please check the Inclusions and

Exclusions section below the tour itinerary for details about your tour and the amount you may need to budget. This amount is subject to change and will be reconfirmed at the start of your tour.

Greece Hotel Residence Fees: The Hellenic National Tourism Organization has announced that a residence fee will be applied on all hotel accommodation, starting from 1st January 2018. The fees must be paid by guests directly to the hotel before the end of their stay and are therefore not included in the tour price. Fees are per room per night (not per person) and have been set at EUR 1.50 for 3* hotels, EUR 3.00 for 4* hotels and EUR 4.00 for 5* hotels.

14. Tipping

Tipping is common practice in many Balkan countries, and is always appreciated when good service has been provided. For basic restaurants, taxis and local markets, leave the loose change. For more up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of your bill. We include a 'tipping kitty' in your tour price which your tour guide/leader will use to tip a wide range of people along the way to help ensure the smooth running of the tour. This does not include local guides, your tour guide/leader, driver(s) or transfer staff though.

Drivers: You may have a range of private drivers on your trip. For those you see for at least several days and who are more involved with the group, a tip of around EUR 1-2 per person per day is generally appropriate.

Tour guide/tour leader: If you think your tour guide and/or tour leader has worked hard and provided a good service then s/he will appreciate a tip of a few Euros. How much you tip is subject to your satisfaction with their service and your personal budget. You should not feel pressured to tip any particular amount. As a guideline, we can suggest that for good service, a tip of EUR 3-5 per day for local tour guides or local tour leaders would be fine.

15. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation. EU travellers visiting other European Union countries including Croatia and Greece should also carry the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) as it entitles travellers to reduced cost, sometimes free, medical treatment in most European countries.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination.

You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. No additional courses or boosters are normally recommended for this region though you could consider Tetanus and Tick-borne Encephalitis.

More information for the countries included in this region can be found using the following links: [Albania](#), [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), [Croatia](#), [Greece](#), [Macedonia](#), [Montenegro](#), [Serbia](#).

Malaria - there is low to no risk of malaria in this region, none in tourist areas.

Yellow fever certificates are not required.

16. Passports and Visas

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

Some foreign nationals require a visa to enter the countries included on our Balkan tours, though many do not

(including UK, EU, US, CA, AU, NZ). More information for the specific countries included on our tours can be found using the links provided: [Albania](#), [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), [Croatia](#), [Greece](#), [Macedonia](#), [Montenegro](#), [Serbia](#).

17. Time

The time in Albania is GMT plus 1 hour.

The time in Bosnia and Herzegovina is GMT plus 1 hour..

The time in Croatia is GMT plus 1 hour.

The time in Greece is GMT plus 1 hour.

The time in Macedonia is GMT plus 1 hour.

The time in Montenegro is GMT plus 1 hour.

The time in Serbia is GMT plus 1 hour.

18. Money

Currencies:

The currency of Albania is the Albanian Lek (ALL), in Bosnia and Herzegovina the Mark (BAM), in Croatia the Kuna (HRK), in Greece the Euro (EUR), in Macedonia the Denar (MKD), in Montenegro they have adopted the Euro despite not being a member of the EU (EUR) and finally in Serbia the Dinar is used (RSD). If you intend on bringing local currency with you on your Balkan tour then the most widely accepted currency is the Euro which can be used in Greece and Montenegro and is easily converted in other countries. Alternatively you can consider withdrawing small amounts of cash from ATM's in each country on arrival, though we would recommend that you check this with your bank first to ensure they don't place any blocks on your card and to check transaction fees.

Spending Money:

It is difficult for us to specify the amount of money that you will spend per day, however, as a general rule EUR 25 to 50 per day can provide you with additional meals, tipping, snacks and drinks. Should you wish to purchase many souvenirs or other luxuries, of which there is a diverse range, you will have to budget for these.

19. What to take

Luggage: Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you on our Balkan tours. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips or within the vehicle if you making stops between cities; you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

Luggage limits: There is no luggage limit for this tour, though since you are travelling around a lot we would normally recommend trying to bring as little as possible. Most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

Clothing: In the region from late March to May, spring brings with it average temperatures of around 15C, though the weather does gradually warm up with sunny days interspersed with rain showers. From May to the end of October, the climate is hot and sunny, getting cooler as the year progresses. By the end of October you can expect the first of the winter snows. So you must pack for cool and potentially wet conditions late in the year. Most of our

tours to the Balkans take place during the summer months when shorts and t-shirts will be the general attire.

Other items: We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera and charger.

20. Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departures on our Balkan tours between May and October. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 travellers and a maximum of 20. Departure dates and prices for your specific tour are listed on our website.

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Note: Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.
