



Pogradec City



Verbania City





ALBANIA

At the front entrance of “Mother Teresa Airport”, a huge poster welcomes everyone to the “Country of the Eagles”, otherwise known by foreigners as Albania. The country is well known for its traditional hospitality and for the extraordinary nature. The climate in this small territory varies from exotic mediterranean to cold continental, with a relatively short winter and a hot dry summer. Albania’s climate changes from one province to another with large contrasts of temperature. Albania is home to centuries of history with ancient archaeological sites, medieval modern villages and a magnificent coastline with crystalline waters. Albania is located in Europe, in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula. The country is easily reachable by plane, by land and by sea routes. The territory of Albania is known for the variety of landscape and for its diverse relive. Rocky beaches, lagoons, rugged hills, high mountains, valleys and rivers, are the ingredients of this perfect combination, waiting for the visitors to be discovered. All this unexplored nature is found within a relatively small territory of 28,748 km². It is believed that the prehistoric origins of the Albanians come from an Indo-European tribe, which by the Greek historian Herodotus is known by the name of “the pellazgs”. The pellazgs are considered as direct ancestors of the Illyrians. It is supposed they lived many centuries B.C. Albania, the now days name of the country is an Illyrian denomination of the Illyrian tribe, the Albans. The desire to preserve the ancient beauty and the natural and archeological treasures of Albania is turning the country into a real paradise for all seasons.



GEOGRAPHY

Albania's surface area of 28,748 km² (11,100 square miles) makes it slightly smaller than Belgium. It is situated in the Balkan Peninsula, in southeastern Europe, and shares borders with Greece, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Kosova. In the west, the country is soaked by Adriatic and Ionian seas. The division of these seas is marked by the Bay of Vlora, about 170 km from the southern border with Greece. The Straits of Otranto marks the narrowest point, where only 72 km of water separates Albania from Italy.

CLIMATE

Albania has a Mediterranean climate with each season offering distinct, yet pleasant weather. Some features of the climate vary by region: Coastal areas: Central mediterranean, mild wet winter, hot and dry summer. Alpine areas: Central Continental, cold, snowy winter, temperate summer. Lowland rainfall ranges from 1,000 mm to more than 1,500 mm annually, with greater rainfall in the north. Nearly 95 % of the rain falls in the winter and rainfall in the upland mountain ranges is heavier. The lowlands have mild winters, averaging about 7°C. Summer temperatures average 24°C. On average, Albanians enjoy a great deal of sunshine, the country is second only to Spain in average annual sunny days. The overall climate is pleasant and favors outdoor activity.



POPULATION

The population of Albania numbers 3,150,886, with a density of 113 people per square kilometer. Population is growing by 0.73% a year. A slight majority of the population, about 51%, lives in rural areas. The average life expectancy is 75 years for females and 69 for males. The vast majority of inhabitants are Albanian, with ethnic minorities representing only about 2% of the population. The minority population is comprised primarily of Greeks and Macedonians. Tirana is the capital and largest city with 800,000 inhabitants. Other important cities with significant populations include Durrës, Elbasan, Shkodër, and Vlora.

LANGUAGE

Albanian is the official language. It comprises a separate original branch in the family of the Indo-European languages, and can be linguistically traced to its Illyrian origins. In its lexicon one can see influences from Italian, old and new Greek, Latin, and Slavic languages. Despite these influences, Albanian has retained its original, distinct nature and structure. The alphabet is comprised of 36 letters, each pronounced the same way, regardless of usage.



- **HOSPITALITY**

- Known as the “Land of the Eagles” (“Shqipëria”) in Albanian, the country of Albania has a long history of tourism, dating back to the time of Emperor Justinian in the fifth century. The Emperor’s family was known to vacation at Lin village on the shores of Lake Ohrid, just north of Pogradec. Several other famous travelers have traveled to Albania over the centuries: Lord Byron, Edith Wharton, Rebecca West, amongst others. Many of them left their impressions of Albania through their written works, describing in glittering terms this “Land of the Eagles”. The first tourist association in Albania was established in 1928 as the “Royal Tourist Automotive Club”.
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- After the Second World War in 1955 the ALBTURIST enterprise was established as a state controlled company. In April 1992, Albania created its first Ministry of Tourism, which has varied over the years with different names. Today the Ministry also encompasses the sectors of culture, youth and sports.





POGRADECI

- The name of the city has a connection with his history. The enkelejd's tribe has been living inside of the wall of the castle, which has been constructed in the top of the hill, beside the city, in the north-west side of the city. In the ancient time the city was a small one, near the castle today may be found its ruins. With the growth of the population, with the end of the wars, the city needed to expand, in the beginning near the hill, later the growth of city expand far away from the castle. The castle was inhabited in the fifth century BC. This was an Illyrian settlement with walls and different types of huts. At the begging it was the castle of the area around it. Later it was inhabited until the 10th century. After that the inhabitants went down the hill along Ohri's lake.
- Pogradec AlbaniaThe city of Pogradec and its surrounding area, as one of the Albanian beauty pearls, provides much to discover for its visitors. The region dominated by the fantastic Ohrid Lake, surrounded by fields nestled before picturesque mountains, will be your panorama throughout your holidays in Pogradec. The sunny days at the beaches along the lake, the strolls along the promenade, as well as the various speciality dishes and local wine enjoyed in the restaurants will provide unforgettable moments for you.
- Pogradeci is one of the most charming tourist resorts in Albania because of its position near the Ohrid Lake, which distinguishes itself for clear water. Fish Koran, which is similar to the trout, is reared in this lake. Besides the beautiful beach, your staying in Pogradec is made more interesting by the excursion to the tourist center of Drilon (5 km eastward) with crystal clear fountains that fill the beautiful channels surrounded with trees and by ornamental plants.
- Pogradeci Lake Ohrid and its surrounding area shines as a splendidly unique ecosystem. Due to its historic culture and its unique flora and fauna, in 1980, Pogradec was declared by UNESCO as a place of worldwide natural and cultural heritage .



Albanian Map



Pogradec City





HYDROGRAPHY

Water is a natural asset of national value. The water is used in agriculture, industry and the supply of residential areas. Geographical location on the shores of the Adriatic Sea and Ionian Sea, climatic conditions, rugged landscape, mostly hilly-mountain, large rocks spread permeable by water and human activity have conditioned the abundant water resources and their diversity: the seas, lakes, rivers, streams and water sources.

Albania is rich in lakes, it has 247 natural lakes and over 800 artificial. According to genesis, natural lakes are divided into tectonic lakes, tektoniko-karst, glacial, karst and coastal.

LAKES

There are many lakes in the territory of Albania, differing in size and characteristics. The most famous is Lake Ohrid with a surface of 362 km², of which 1/3 belongs to Albania. The lake is 300 m deep ranking itself as the deepest in the Balkan Peninsula. The historical values and the diverse flora and fauna enlisted this naturalistic site as part of the UNESCO's cultural and natural heritage. There is a variety of aquatic species in the lake. The most famous and particular one is Koran, a very tasty fish. The city of Pogradec was built on its southwestern coast of the lake and is well known for its climate. Alongside the lakeshore there are several tourist centers such as Lini, Pojska, Pogradec, Drilon and Tushemisht, where many hotels and guesthouses offer all optimal conditions for a wonderful and relaxing vacation. Shkodra Lake possesses a surface of 362 km², which 149 km² belongs to Albania. The main tourist centers are Shiroka and Zogaj, offering numerous hotels and restaurants.



OHRID

•Ohrid lake is one of the most beautiful tectonic lakes of the Balkans. It is located on the shared border between Albania and Macedonia. It is located 695m above sea level and accordingly, remains temperate and cool-even in the warmest summers. At an estimated four million years old, it is also one of the oldest lakes in the world. It, too, boasts a tremendous variety of fish, some of which are uniquely found in Ohrid. Notable among them is the Belushka Salmon, a delicious and highly prized fish. The most famous is Koran, which is found only in this lake all over the world. Recreational opportunities abound, particularly near Pogradec, Lin, Pojske, and Tushemisht.





WATER SUPPLY

Lake Ohrid is supplied with water from numerous sources around. One of the biggest sources located near the Macedonian-Albanian border near St. Naum Monastery in Macedonia. It derives water comes from Lake Prespa, whose level is 200 meters higher than Lake Ohrid. On the other side, the side of Albania is also a great source to park near the village Tushemisht, Drilon. Water leaves the lake toward the north through the Black Drini River, which flows through the town of Struga.



CREATE

Ohrid's Lake counted as one of the oldest lakes worldwide. His age is estimated to be 2 to 5 million years. The lake was created by a collapse of the earth. This show numerous tectonic activities and the existence of a mountain 100 meters below the level of the lake. Ohrid's lake is one of many attractions for domestic and foreign tourists.

FLORA AND FAUNA

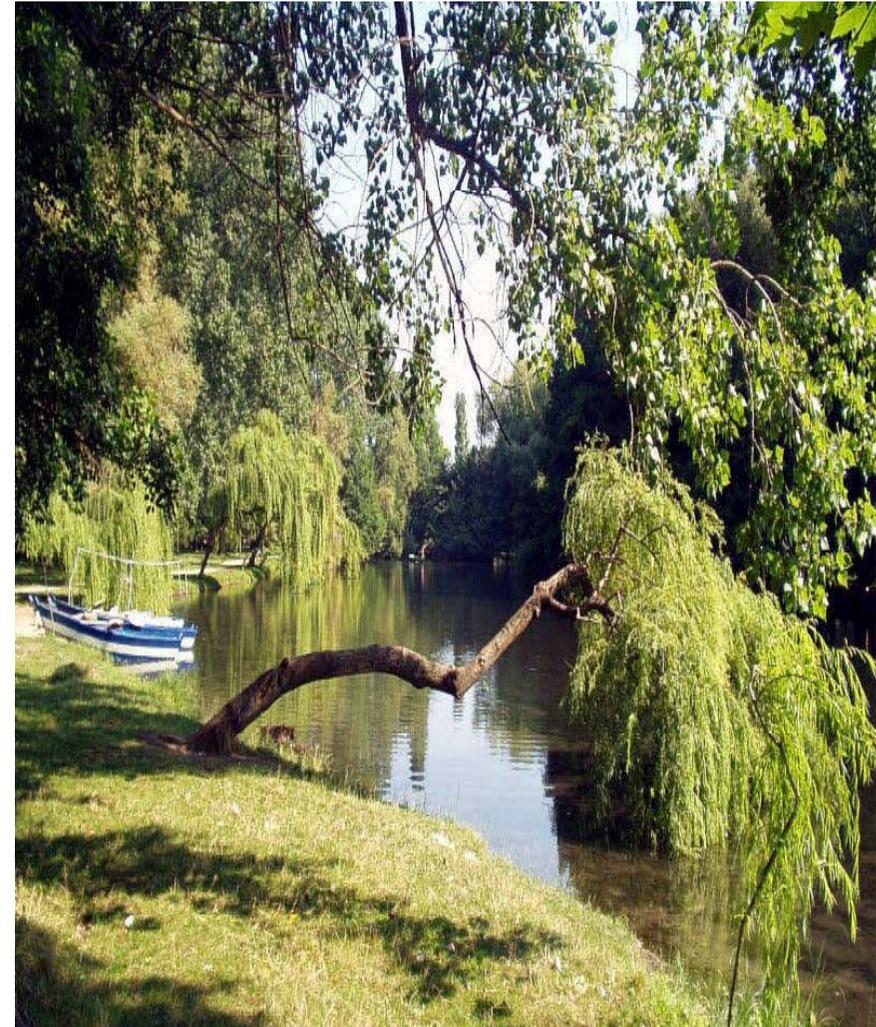
Ohrid's lake is home of many endemic animals, which come only in its waters. In this lake rise 40 rare species, among the best known and most economically important fish species are *Salmo pure letnica* (Korani), "*Salmothimus ohridanus*" (Belushka). A part of the Coast of Lake, along with the town of Ohrid, was appointed by UNESCO as world heritage.



Tushemisht



Drilon





POGRADEC PLACES TO GO

Lin

•The lakeside village of LIN is a charming opportunity to see Lake Ohrid life from a traditional perspective. Winding streets lined with old style stone, wooden and brick houses lead to the site of an ancient basilica with 8 colorful mosaics showing fish, water birds and bees, dating from the 5th Century. The Byzantine church ruins, under World Heritage protection, have a modern cover constructed to keep the treasures from further deterioration while awaiting further exploration. The Lake Ohrid and mountain vistas from the top of the hill are outstanding!

Selca

•Five ancient tombs and monuments dating from the 4 th Century B.C. are found in Selca, site of the ancient settlement of Pelion (where Illyrian King Klit dwelled). Other remains date from the Bronze Age through the middle VI th Century A.D. including Ionic treasures, bronze and pottery objects, weapons and articles of gold. You will feel that you've discovered a lost treasure when you visit this important place!

Golic Bridge

•The Golic Bridge spans the wild Shkumbin River and dates back to the XVII Century. This old double-span stone structure is situated along the ancient Egnatia Road, near Golic, which is a charming village in the heart of the Mokra region. Along the road to Golic, you will enjoy breathtaking views of waterfalls and mountain scenery from deep valleys. In taking this trip, you will trace the steps of many ancient people, who over the centuries walked, defended, and traveled through the region!

Shkumbin River

•This is one of the longest rivers in Albania with very clear water that flows through stunning scenery. The river has its headwaters near Guri i Topit on the Mokra Mountain, district of Pogradec and flows to the Adriatic Sea. Different kinds of fish, with trout among them, live in its waters, which makes possible sport fishing while some parts of the river are suitable for boat or raft drifting.

Tushemisht/Drilon

Just 4 kilometers away in Tushemisht you can see the DRILON tourist resort, named for the fresh water springs and Drilon River. The many decorative trees and plants are in full harmony with Drilon's clear water springs, strolling paths, characteristic bridges and bird life. Tushemisht has a special history because both King Zog and the former dictator of Albania, Enver Hoxha enjoyed summers in this special place. You can visit this house, now converted to a hotel and restaurant with fine local and continental cuisine!

Kabashi Springs

Only 2 kilometers from Pogradec, climbing the hill you will discover a wonderful place for picnics. With fresh fountains and prairies this is the right place for B.B.Q.

Potkozhan

This is a very interesting village in the district of Pogradec. The houses are very beautiful, made of stone and roofed with stone tiles. The streets among them are narrow and paved with cobble stones, while grapes and mulberries climb the walls and hang over the streets. The hospitable people of the village offers accommodation for tourists in their houses and tasty home made food with various local specialties. Around the village it is church of St Paraskeva , known as Shen Premte among the local people, there is a graveyard with beautifully engraved stone crosses.

Saint Bitri Church

The medieval church of Shen Bitri , as the locals use to call this St. Demetrios' church, is several hundred meters away from the village Potkozhan. This small stone building, roofed with stone tiles is very unique because of its two apses on the eastern side and very specific wall painting in its interior. Although the frescoes are damaged, you can still admire the beauty and mystery of the saints pictured on its walls.

Saint Marena Church

The church and monastery of Saint Marena is situated in the north of the village of Llenga, district of Pogradec with a dominated position on the slope of the mountain. The church is a small building, 12 to 8 meters. The altar is separated from the nave with a wooden iconostas 6m wide and 4m high. The icons is engraved and polychrome with floral motives. All the interior of the church is covered with frescoes that belong to the hand of the headmaster of these areas Kostandin Shpataraku.