

# Southern Albania and Corfu



THE ARTS  
SOCIETY  
TRAVEL AFFILIATE

Paleokastritsa

Arranged with Travel Editions Group Travel  
for The Arts Society Sarisbury Green

## 2 - 10 October 2026 - 9 days from \*£2,265pp

Southern Albania and Corfu form a unique crossroads of history, culture, and natural beauty in the southern Adriatic and Ionian Seas. Southern Albania, with its dramatic coastline, ancient archaeological sites, and vibrant towns like Saranda, Himara, and Gjirokastrë, offers a blend of Mediterranean charm and Balkan traditions. Just a short ferry ride away lies Corfu, one of Greece's most famous Ionian islands, known for its Venetian architecture, lush landscapes, and crystal-clear waters. Together, the region highlights centuries of interaction between Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and Venetian influences, making it a fascinating destination where diverse cultures and breathtaking scenery meet.



Lekursi Castle



Venetian Tower, Butrint

This holiday is operated by Travel Editions Group Travel

To secure your place please call Travel Editions on 020 7251 0045 to book.

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\*Based on 25 passengers. Price: £2,265 per person (twin share). Initial deposit of £300 per person required by 31 December 2025



Sarandë

### Day-by-day itinerary

#### Day 1: Journey to Corfu.

Our adventure begins with a private coach transfer from Sarisbury to London Heathrow, where you'll board a morning flight to the Greek island of Corfu. On arrival, transfer to the Divani Corfu Palace for check-in. The rest of the day is free at leisure.

Dinner at Divani Corfu Palace.

#### Day 2: Travel to Sarande, Albania.

After breakfast, enjoy a scenic hydrofoil/ferry ride across the Ionian Sea to Sarandë, Albania. As the Albanian coastline comes into view, the whitewashed houses, turquoise waters, and lush hillsides set the tone for the days ahead.

After check-in, gather for a Welcome Dinner where you'll be introduced to Albanian hospitality and cuisine. Expect hearty flavors: byrek (flaky pastry filled with cheese or spinach), freshly caught

seafood from the Ionian, and a taste of raki, the traditional local spirit. Overnight in Sarandë.

#### Day 3: Butrint National Park & Lekursi Castle.

This morning, explore Butrint National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site layered with history from the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, and Venetians. A guided tour will bring to life its highlights:

- Theatre (3rd century BC): once a stage for performances and civic gatherings, still remarkably intact.
- Baptistery (6th century): admire the delicate mosaics of geometric and floral patterns.
- Great Basilica: early Christian architecture that reveals the spread of faith through the region.
- Venetian Tower & Castle: strongholds that recall centuries of conflict and control.
- Lion Gate: an ancient portal adorned with a striking relief of a lion overpowering a bull.

In the afternoon, ascend to Lekursi Castle, built by the Ottomans in the 16th century. From its ramparts, you'll enjoy a panoramic sweep over Sarandë, the shimmering Ionian Sea, and across to Corfu.

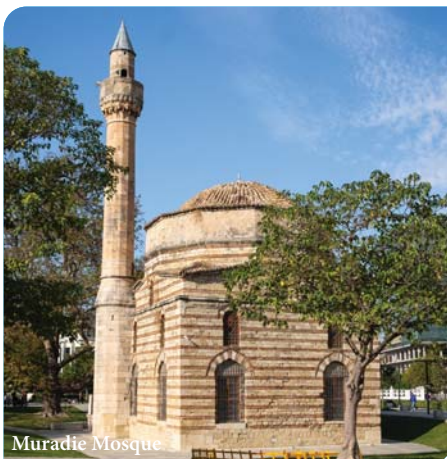
Evening at leisure to stroll Sarandë's promenade or relax by the waterfront. Overnight in Sarandë.

#### Day 4: Vlorë: Birthplace of Independence.

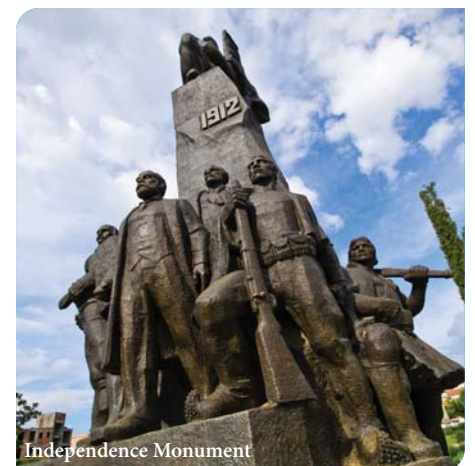
Set out on a scenic drive along the Albanian Riviera to Vlorë, a city rich in history and symbolism.

- Independence Monument & Museum: discover the story of Albania's 1912 declaration of independence.
- Muradie Mosque (1542): designed by Mimar Sinan, the Ottoman Empire's most renowned architect.
- Zvernec Monastery: cross the wooden causeway to a tranquil island in the Narta Lagoon. The 13th-century monastery is dedicated to St. Mary and surrounded by serene landscapes.
- Kanine Castle: perched on a hill above the city, this fortress holds Illyrian, Byzantine, and Ottoman layers of history, while offering commanding views over Vlorë Bay.

Return to Sarandë for an evening at leisure. Overnight in Sarandë.



Muradie Mosque



Independence Monument



Gjirokastrë

#### Day 5: Gjirokastrë & the Blue Eye.

Travel inland to Gjirokastrë, known as the “City of Stone.” Built into the hillside, its slate-roofed houses and cobbled streets create an enchanting atmosphere. Highlights include:

- Gjirokastrë Castle: one of the Balkans’ largest fortresses, housing the National Museum of Armaments and boasting dramatic mountain views.
- Ethnographic Museum: once the home of Enver Hoxha, it now showcases daily life during the Ottoman period.

- Bazaar Quarter: wander through lanes lined with artisan stalls selling carpets, copperware, and handicrafts.

In the afternoon, marvel at the natural wonder of the Blue Eye Spring. The depth of this vivid turquoise and emerald spring remains a mystery, adding to its mystique. A short nature walk allows for tranquil exploration and photography. Return to Sarandë for dinner and overnight.

#### Day 6: Corfu Highlights.

This morning, cross back into Greece by ferry to Corfu.

- Kanoni Peninsula: admire postcard-perfect views over Mouse Island (Pontikonisi) and the whitewashed Vlacherna Monastery, set against the sea.
- Mon Repos Palace: explore its neoclassical halls and gardens, once the summer home of British governors and the birthplace of Prince Philip.

Lunch will feature Corfiot specialties—perhaps sofrito (beef in garlic sauce), pastitsada (pasta with braised meat), or



Zvernec Monastery



the island's famous seafood.

In the afternoon, a guided walking tour of Corfu Town (UNESCO World Heritage Site) reveals:

- Venetian fortresses and pastel-colored townhouses.
- Liston Promenade, designed in French style.
- Spianada Square, the largest in Greece.
- St. Spyridon Church, housing the relics of Corfu's patron saint.

Time for shopping local goods such as kumquat liqueur, olive wood carvings, and ceramics.

Overnight in Corfu.

Dinner at Kontokali Bay Hotel.

#### Day 7: Free Day in Corfu.

A day at leisure to enjoy at your own pace—relax by the beach, swim in crystal-clear waters, or linger in a café.

Overnight in Corfu.

Dinner at Kontokali Bay Hotel.

#### Day 8: Achilleion Palace & Paleokastritsa

– A Journey into Corfu's Soul:

- Morning: Achilleion Palace – Imperial Elegance & Mythology – guided tour through lavish halls and gardens, dedicated to the hero Achilles. Views over the Ionian Sea add grandeur to the experience.
- Afternoon: Paleokastritsa – visit the monastery, browse local produce (honey, olive oil, and liqueurs), enjoy a seaside lunch, and, if you wish, embark on a boat ride to discover hidden caves.

In the evening, we will gather for a Farewell Dinner at Kontokali Bay Hotel.

Overnight in Corfu.

#### Day 9: Departure.

Free time in the morning for relaxation and lunch. Transfer to Corfu Airport for return flight to London Heathrow. Private coach transfer back to Sarisbury Green.

#### Where you stay:

**Divani Hotel, Corfu:** Four-star hotel located on Kanoni Hill overlooking the lagoon, just 5 minutes from Corfu's UNESCO-listed historic centre.

**Hotel Demi, Sarande:** Four-star beach front hotel, with direct access to the private beach area, elegant bedrooms with modern facilities.

**Kontokali Bay Hotel, Corfu:** The five-star Kontokali Bay Spa Hotel, located on the lush Kontokali Peninsula, offers a pool, private beach, comfortable rooms and a magnificent setting.



#### Flight Details: British Airways.

02 October 2026

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|-------------|-------|-------|-------|
| LHR - Corfu | BA642 | 10:10 | 15:25 |
|-------------|-------|-------|-------|

10 October 2026

|             |      |       |       |
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| Corfu - LHR | BA64 | 18:10 | 19:30 |
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#### Included in the price

- Return flights from London Heathrow to Corfu
- One nights' bed and breakfast at the Divani Hotel, Corfu, based on shared occupancy of a twin/double room
- Four nights' bed and breakfast at Hotel Demi, Sarande, based on shared occupancy of a twin/double room
- Three nights' bed and breakfast at Kontokali Bay Hotel, Corfu, based on shared occupancy of a twin/double room
- Six dinners including a Welcome and Farewell Dinner
- Welcome and farewell dinners
- Airport transfers and coach touring as per the itinerary
- Entrance fees as per the itinerary
- Guided tours as per the itinerary

#### Not included

- Sole occupancy supplement - £499
- Holiday insurance
- Meals other than those stated
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone calls etc
- Portage and gratuities

