

A Thousand Windows by Day, a Bottomless Blue by Night — A 5-Day Albania Itinerary

Albania in five days: an afternoon in Tirana's reborn Blloku quarter and a guided descent into a Cold War-era nuclear bunker, a drive south to Berat's UNESCO-listed 'City of a Thousand Windows,' a mountain crossing over the pine-forested Llogara Pass to the turquoise coves of the Albanian Riviera, and a boat cruise past the Ksamil Islands after a swim in the still-unmapped depths of the Blue Eye spring — with real hotels, licensed transfer companies, and 2026 prices for every stop.

DURATION**5 Days****BEST TIME TO GO****May to June or September
(Shoulder Season)**

Late spring and early autumn keep the Riviera warm enough for swimming without August's crowds and peak prices, and Berat's hillside quarters are far more comfortable to climb before or after the summer heat.

FROM**\$820 USD / person**

for 2 people

Day 1**Arrive in Tirana**

Touch down in Albania's capital and settle into the reborn Blloku quarter — once a sealed-off compound for Communist-era officials, now the city's café-and-boutique heart — before a modern Albanian dinner nearby.

Private Airport Transfer — Tirana Airport Shuttle**~20 minutes · From \$22 USD, private car for 2**

A private transfer meets arrivals at Tirana International Airport (TIA) in Rinas for the short drive into the capital's Blloku district.

Tirana Airport Shuttle | +355676044052 | tiranaairportshuttle.com

Blloku & Skanderbeg Square Stroll**~2 hours, self-guided · Free**

Once off-limits to ordinary Albanians, Blloku is now a grid of cafés, design shops, and Enver Hoxha's own former villa; an easy walk connects it to the Ottoman clock tower and pastel apartment blocks ringing Skanderbeg Square.

Dinner — Mullixhiu**~1.5 hours · \$25–\$35 USD / person, tasting-style Albanian**

Chef Bledar Kola's restaurant reinterprets peasant-era Albanian recipes — hand-milled cornbread, byrek, slow-cooked lamb — inside a converted mill-house dining room near Grand Park.

Mullixhiu | www.mullixhiu.al

Overnight — Hotel Artistic Tirana Blloku

From \$72 USD / night, for 2 people

A design-forward boutique hotel tucked into the heart of Blloku, steps from Tirana's best cafés and restaurants.

Hotel Artistic Tirana Blloku | artisticblloku.hoteltirana.net

Day 2 Bunk'Art & On to Berat

A guided descent into a Cold War-era bunker beneath the capital, then a drive south across Skumbin valley farmland to Albania's 'City of a Thousand Windows.'

Communist History & Bunk'Art Tour — Walkative!

~3.5 hours, guided (free tour, tip-based) + Bunk'Art entry ~\$9 USD

A guided walk traces Albania's isolationist Communist era through the Pyramid and the Postbllok memorial, ending inside Bunk'Art 2 — a nuclear-proof bunker beneath central Tirana turned museum of secret-police history.

Walkative! Free Tours | freewalkingtour.com/tirana

Transfer — Tirana to Berat

~2.5 hours, private car · From \$90 USD, private car for 2

A private car crosses the Skumbin valley farmland south from Tirana to Berat, UNESCO-listed for the tiered Ottoman houses climbing its castle hill.

Easy Balkan Transfers | easybalkantransfers.com

Overnight — Hotel Mangalemi

From \$58 USD / night, for 2 people

A restored 18th-century Ottoman house in Berat's Mangalem quarter, with stone-arched rooms and a terrace looking straight up at the castle-topped hillside and its stacked white windows.

Hotel Mangalemi | mangalemihotel.com

Day 3 Berat to the Riviera

A morning inside Berat's still-inhabited hilltop castle, then a dramatic mountain-pass crossing to the turquoise coves of the Albanian Riviera.

Berat Castle & Onufri Museum

~2.5 hours, self-guided · ~\$2 USD entrance

Inside Berat's still-inhabited hilltop castle, more than twenty Byzantine-era churches sit alongside the Onufri Museum's 16th-century icons, with views down over the Mangalem and Gorica quarters' stacked windows and red-tiled roofs.

Ksamil Beach Afternoon

~2 hours, self-guided · Free (sunbed rental ~\$10 USD)

An open afternoon on Ksamil's white-sand coves, where shallow, layered blues rival the Caribbean — sunbeds and umbrellas rent by the day from beach bars along the shore.

Lekursi Castle Sunset & Dinner — Saranda

~2.5 hours · \$30–\$45 USD / person, dinner with a view

A short taxi up to the hilltop Lekursi Castle above Saranda catches sunset over the Ionian Sea toward Corfu, with a terrace restaurant serving grilled fish and Albanian wine at the same table.

Overnight — EMAR Beachfront Hotel Ksamil

From \$70 USD / night, for 2 people

A second night on the Riviera before tomorrow's transfer back north.

EMAR Beachfront Hotel Ksamil | www.hotels-al.com/en/h/emarbeachfront.html

Day 5**Riviera to Departure**

A last drive back over the mountains to Tirana, retracing the coast road before the flight home.

Transfer — Ksamil to Tirana Airport

~4 hours, private car · From \$130 USD, private car for 2

The return drive retraces the Riviera coast road and Llogara Pass before cutting inland to Tirana International Airport, timed for an afternoon or evening flight home.

Easy Balkan Transfers | easybalkantransfers.com

Departure — Tirana International Airport (TIA)

Self-guided

Closes a five-day loop that ran from Tirana's Communist-era bunkers to the thousand stacked windows of Berat and the bottomless Blue Eye spring on the Albanian Riviera.

Prices and business details researched and current as of 2026; confirm rates and availability before booking. © I-Journey.