

Albania & the Balkans Trek *New*

Trek through the beautiful alpine scenery of the Accursed Mountains, following ancient paths that criss-cross the invisible mountain borders of Albania, Montenegro and Kosovo.



Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Trek
Accommodation	Hotel, Guesthouses, Shepherds Hut
Grade	Moderate/Vigorous
Duration	8 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 6 days
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local Leader Balkans
Land only	Joining in Podgorica, Montenegro
Max altitude	Gjeravica Peak, 2,656m/8,714ft, Day 7

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



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Departures

Group departures

2025 Dates:

Sat 14 Jun - Sat 21 Jun

Fri 04 Jul - Fri 11 Jul

Sat 30 Aug - Sat 06 Sep

Sat 27 Sep - Sat 04 Oct

Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your guide



Your trek will be led by a professional local guide who speaks excellent English and knows the area well.

Guides for this trip include Semir Kardovic who has been leading treks in this region of the Balkans for many years. In fact, he was born just across the Kosovan border in Montenegro and, not only speaks English and Montenegrin but also the local dialects and languages of which there are several. Semir is very familiar with the mountain trails and has a great deal of knowledge about the flora, fauna and history of the region. He will undoubtedly lead you with great patience and charm through the Balkans.

Your trip highlights

- Trek with pack horses along ancient mountain paths
- Walk some of the best sections of the Balkans Peace Trail
- Discover unspoilt alpine scenery and a timeless way of life
- Explore the 'Shangri La' Thethi Valley
- Experience the generous hospitality of the Balkan people
- Stay in cosy guesthouses and an authentic shepherd's hut
- Climb Gjeravica Peak at 2,656m

At a glance itinerary

Day 1	Arrive Podgorica, Montenegro. Group transfer to Lepushë, Albania.
Day 2	Trek to Grebaje.
Days 3-4	Trek over Peja Pass, 1,751m, to the Thethi Valley. Day exploring the valley.
Day 5	Cross the Valbona Pass 1,800m/5,940ft, to reach the Valbona Valley.
Day 6	Drive to Ceremi, Trek to Doberdol, Kosovo
Day 7	Climb Gjeravica peak, 2,656m/8,415ft. Transfer to Gjakova
Day 8	Group transfer to Pristina airport. Fly to London

Trip summary

This trek takes you into the heart of the beautiful Accursed (or Prokletije) Mountains that range across northern Albania and into Montenegro and Kosovo. The mountains are criss-crossed by a network of ancient trading paths used for centuries by shepherds, traders and smugglers to move between villages and to cross the high passes and deep valleys of the region.

This part of the Balkans is a fascinating and little-visited corner of Europe that has remained firmly off the tourist map. For many hundreds of years, life in the remote valleys was governed by the 'Kanun', ancient laws that ruled the fiercely independent tribes who inhabited the seemingly impenetrable mountains. This was followed by harsh years of communism and isolation from the outside world. The outcome is an unspoilt landscape and communities living simple lives, little-changed over time and ready to welcome visitors with open arms. A recent initiative, the Balkans Peace Trail, links many of these mountain communities with the aim of preserving the pristine environment and traditional lifestyle, whilst promoting sustainable, responsible tourism. Our route includes some of the best sections of the trail, making the most of the wonderful scenery and the generous hospitality of the locals.

The trek starts in Montenegro, but you soon cross into Albania via the high Peja Pass to reach the magical Thethi Valley where there is a full day to discover its many scenic and cultural highlights and enjoy lunch with a local family. Edith Durham wrote in 1908 in her book High Albania "Life at Thethi was of absorbing interest. I forgot all about the rest of the world, and..there seemed no reason why I should ever return". You will probably feel the same!

Reluctantly leaving Thethi behind you climb steeply over the Valbona Pass, with far-reaching views, and down into the Valbona Valley which is an important area for livestock grazing in the summer months. Here you will spend a night in a traditional shepherd's hut for a truly unique experience. The final stretch of the trek crosses another invisible mountain border to enter Kosovo with the chance to summit Gjeravica Peak - the second highest point in the country at 2,656m and a fitting end to this satisfying and rewarding trek.

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Fly London to Podgorica

On arrival at Podgorica Airport in Montenegro, there will be a single group transfer to your Guest House in Lepushë Albania. The transfer is timed to fit the group flight, please check with us for further information. Lepushë is a small village in Northern Albania, set in a quiet valley at an altitude of 1,270 m.

Overnight: Guesthouse Alpini In Lepushë (Meals: L D)

Day 2: An epic start. Trek along the border between Albania and Montenegro from Lepushë to Grebaje/Gusinje - 4-5 hours .

You start today's walk straight out of the door of your guest house in the Lepushë Valley. Your trip in the Accursed Mountains starts on a real high as you follow an old trade route, the Volušnica and Popadija trail, between Lepushë and Grebaje/Gusinje on the border of Albania's and Montenegro's Prokletije mountains. These mountains offer some of the most breathtaking scenery in the Balkans. Today's hike showcases the dramatic Karanfili peaks and the verdant ridges that frame the valley. Have your camera ready!

Firstly, you ascend through a peaceful forest and then, within an hour you emerge to your first expansive views. From here, you have the option to ascend Mt. Volušnica, which offers the first stunning panoramas of Karanfili, or alternatively you may continue along the ridge towards Mt. Taljanka, the highest peak on the trail. Taljanka sits on the Albanian side of the border, while Volušnica is on the Montenegrin side. The views from either are staggering, with layers of rugged mountains stretching to the horizon with picturesque pastures in the valleys below.

Your total altitude gain today is about 850 meters, and while the trail is not technically demanding, it may seem more strenuous if the weather is hot. If you are travelling in the late spring or early summer the brilliant wildflowers and lush meadows will be at their best. You will finally descend to the Grabaja valley where your transport will meet you to take you in about 20 minutes to your guest house in the Ropojana valley.

859m/2,800ft ascent, 970m/3,208ft descent, 4-5 hours walking.

Overnight: Hotel Rosi, Gusinje (Meals: BLD)

Day 3: Trek to Thethi via Peja Pass, 1,751m/5,788ft - 7-8 hours.

An exciting day, as you cross the border into Albania on foot, with your luggage carried on packhorses. It is a one hour drive to the village of Ropoyana and the end of the road. The soaring peaks of the valley ahead appear impenetrable, but the route ahead is an old smugglers trail used for centuries, most recently by Albanians escaping the communist regime. The walk initially follows the valley floor, passing a waterfall and stunning bright blue pond. After a couple of hours the path climbs to reach a large lake that completely dries up in the summer months. In this idyllic spot, a small stone marks the Albanian border. Your luggage will be swapped onto Albanian packhorses at this spot.



The path now climbs through an ancient beech forest for about an hour before emerging at the high Alpine meadows of Fush e Kunices. You may well see sheep grazing, and rough huts guarded by fierce shepherds' dogs, necessary to guard the flocks from wolves. The path zig zags up through stunning limestone scenery, and soon you will see the first of the 'mushroom' bunkers, built to house individual soldiers during the communist regime to stop Albanians from escaping. There are a couple of small passes to cross before you reach the 'true' Peja pass. From just beyond here you will be able to see the Thethi valley far below.

It is a steep descent on a well-built rocky path, passing soaring cliffs. The path eventually flattens out to follow a riverbed before reaching the spread out village of Thethi, where you will stay in a converted house which provides charming, simple accommodation.

Your guide may be able to arrange a lift today either at the start the walk, or at the end, to shorten the total distance walked today.

765m/2,509ft ascent, 1,100m/3609ft descent, 7-8 hours walking.

Overnight: Guest House In Thethi (Meals: BLD)

Day 4: Thethi Valley walk with farmhouse lunch - 5-6 hours.

The Thethi valley is astonishingly picturesque. Dominated by the soaring limestone peaks high above, the valley is fringed with beautiful forests. Accessible only in the summer and recently linked to the outside world by a rough jeep track, most transport is still by horse or on foot. The valley is inhabited about 200 families in summer, but only 20 in winter, when the valley is totally cut off by snow for several months. Any flat land is cultivated, with plums being a popular crop used to produce raki. Corn is grown to make bread, and you will visit a water powered mill. The village church was re-built in 2006, having been used in communist times as a warehouse. You will also visit a blood-feud tower, and have a chance to learn about how life has changed in recent years. A short climb above the village leads to a spectacular waterfall.



You will have lunch in a traditional farmhouse further down the valley in the hamlet of Nderlysa, where just about all the food you eat has been grown on the farm, and is served with the traditional hospitality that is so important in Albania. The family will be happy to show you around the farm and house. Close to the farm house the river has carved out amazing pools in the rocks, and a small swimming pond has been created. After a refreshing dip, those with energy left can walk an hour or so up the river valley to the 'Blue Eye', another swimming spot set in lush vegetation. A jeep will drive you back up the rough track to your guest-house.

387m/1,269ft ascent, 387m/1,269ft descent. 5-6 hours walking.

Overnight: Guest House In Thethi (Meals: BLD)

Day 5: Trek to Valbona Valley via Valbona Pass 1,800m/5,940ft - 7 hours.

Today's walk is over a pass that is still used by locals to reach the Valbona valley. The initial climb is steep, and you soon reach the 'last' house of Thethi. After a rocky uphill track you reach the shade of an ancient beech wood. The well-built path zig-zags up to reach a high alp with fabulous views of Thethi far below. Above here a local family camps in the summer months, and provides drinks and snacks in an ingeniously built café. The Valbona pass opens up views of many more peaks, and you can see your route ahead snaking far below. After traversing below cliffs you reach easier ground and meadows.

After a lunch stop you descend through a grand forest to reach the valley floor, and a walk along a dried up river bed to reach the roadhead.

Overnight: Valbona Guest House (Meals: D)

Day 6: Transfer to Ceremi. Trek to Doberdol - 7 hours.

In the morning, to avoid having to walk a less interesting section, you will transfer from Valbona to Ceremi. There are two routes leading uphill from the lovely village of Ceremi. Both offer great views as you climb through a mixture of forest and dazzling flower-filled meadows. On either route you can stop after about an hour at the 'Forest Cafe'. This cafe was started by an enterprising Tirana man who speaks perfect English and lives with his family in the forest for the summer months. The trail continues uphill through the forest before you turn off onto a smaller path to climb gently to reach an open meadow and the Montenegrin border. You continue in Montenegro on a narrow mule trail, a truly delightful path, to finally reach a further clearing and the Albanian border. There are distant views from here of Doberdol, your final destination.

Walking on, about an hour of descent leads to the tiny village of Balqin. Perched on a steep hillside, the families here produce sheep's cheese to sell and you may well stop here to eat your lunch at one of the small stone houses. The summer inhabitants grow some vegetables and keep hens in addition to herding. With glimpses of distant Doberdol you contour around and down through beech and fir woods until you reach the

Glansh valley. This wonderfully unspoilt conservation area is home to a few families in summer. A steep hundred metre climb at the head of the valley brings you out at the base of the huge Doberdol valley. Here, there are sheep, cows and ponies everywhere in summer as the traditional farming families bring their animals up from the lowlands to graze and the human population swells to up to 500 people.

Ascent 995m/3,264, Descent 373m/1,223ft, 7 hours walking.

Overnight: Doberdol Shepherd's Hut (Meals: BLD)

Day 7: Trek to Gropa and climb Gjeravica Peak, 2,656m/8,714ft - 7 hours. Transfer to Gjakova.

Your final day's trekking is an ascent of the highest mountain in Kosova, Gjeravica - 2,656m/8,714ft. You initially walk up the Doberdol valley before ascending the side of the valley to reach the pass of Aleiq. You will enjoy excellent views from here before you descend to follow a small path round two giant mountain cirques. This is another day of great contrasts as you initially cross limestone pavements to reach the first cirque. The small, rocky path contours the cirques and offers great views of soaring granite peaks. The second smaller cirque ends in a lovely little tarn and you can enjoy some time here before you start climbing on an old caravan path to reach the Gjeravitza pass.



Weather permitting, from here it is about one and a half hours to the rocky top of the peak. This is the highest mountain in Kosovo (and was the highest peak in Serbia), and there are stupendous views from the top. You descend back to the pass and then initially down a steep rocky path which gradually becomes more gentle to reach meadows and the small summer hamlet of Gropa. Your vehicle will meet you here for the drive to Gjakova and hotel for the night.

Gjakova is an interesting, historic town, known for its two multi-arched stone bridges. In the evening you will have a chance to wander through its lively streets.

Ascent 1025m/3362ft. Descent 1195m/3920ft, 7 hours walking.

Overnight: Hotel Carshia e Jupave, Gjakova (Meals: BLD)

Day 8: Group transfer to Pristina airport - 1½ hours. Fly to London.

After breakfast, there is a single, timed group transfer to Pristina airport for the flight back to London.

(Meals: B)

Our grading system

Albania & the Balkans Trek is graded as a Moderate/Vigorous trekking holiday, as described below.

Moderate

Holidays in this grade typically involve 5 to 10 days of walking or trekking. They will often venture into more remote country and can cross mountain passes. Altitudes though are still relatively low, going no higher than around 4,300m/14,000ft. Accommodation can include simple hotels, tea houses, lodges and camping.

Vigorous

Typically these trips involve 8 to 14 days (occasionally more) trekking in relatively remote landscapes. High passes up to 4,900m/16,000ft may be crossed (sometimes snow-covered) and there may also be glacier travel and peak ascents. Walking days can be between 5 and 8 hours with considerable ascents and descents. This grade also covers some European treks of shorter durations. Overnight stops on trek could be in tea houses, mountain huts or camping.

These holidays would suit enthusiastic hill/mountain walkers.

Trip altitude

Important - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend www.medex.org.uk as a good source of information.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ 7 x breakfasts, 7 x lunches, and 7 x dinners
 - ✓ 5 nights in small, family-run guesthouses and 1 night in a shepherd's hut
 - ✓ 1 night in a good quality hotel in Gjakova
 - ✓ A local English-speaking leader
 - ✓ Group airport transfers.
 - ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
 - ✓ Sightseeing and activities as specified
 - ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK
- (flight inclusive option). If you are travelling land only, check with our office for joining time at the airport
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
 - ✓ A free high-quality Mountain Kingdoms kit bag or filtered water bottle

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- × Travel insurance
- × Locally paid bar bills and laundry
- × Optional activities
- × Tips

Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>.

Your accommodation

We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



Guesthouse Alpini In Lepushë

The Alpini is an attractive guesthouse set in gardens and overlooking a pretty valley with mountain views. It has a bar, simple rooms and bathrooms, and a pleasant dining room serving good, hearty fare. Free Wi-Fi available.



Hotel Rosi, Gusijne

Hotel Rosi is a simple, clean 2-star hotel, with colourful bedrooms, all en-suite. Situated at the entrance to the town, it has lovely views of the mountains, and a very frilly dining room.



Guest House In Thethi

A charming old house that has been extended to provide mainly en-suite rooms. Meals will be taken in the garden (weather permitting) and there is an outdoor fire pit to sit around after dinner.



Valbona Guest House

A simple, stone guest house with multi-bed rooms and shared modern shower rooms. Traditional and delicious food. Fabulous views from the terrace of the Valbona valley.



Doberdol Shepherd's Hut

Fabulous food and hospitality, with very basic dormitory sleeping arrangements in this extremely remote hamlet. A large mountain hut with a shared wooden platform for sleeping, very good mattresses but no electricity. An outside toilet and cold water for washing. This accommodation is suitable for the adventurous!



Hotel Carshia e Jupave, Gjakova

Set in the heart of the old town of Gjakova, this very comfortable hotel has air-conditioned en suite rooms. There is an excellent restaurant and bar and Wi-Fi is available. It is a one minute walk to the bazaar, which has a remarkably lively nightlife and many interesting shops.

Meal arrangements

7 x breakfasts, 7 x lunches, 7 x dinners. The lunches on trekking days will be picnics.

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

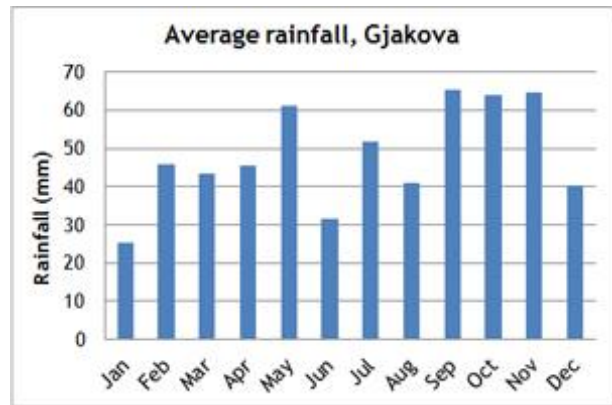
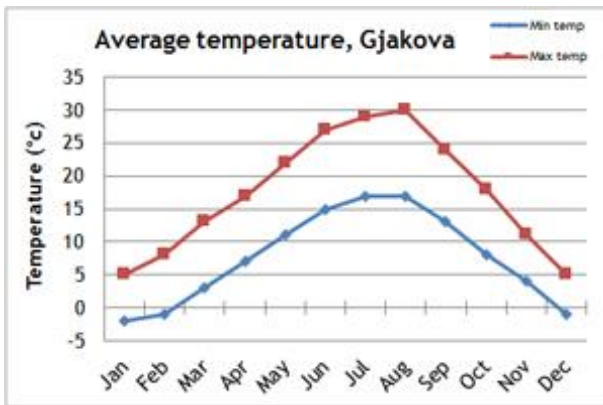
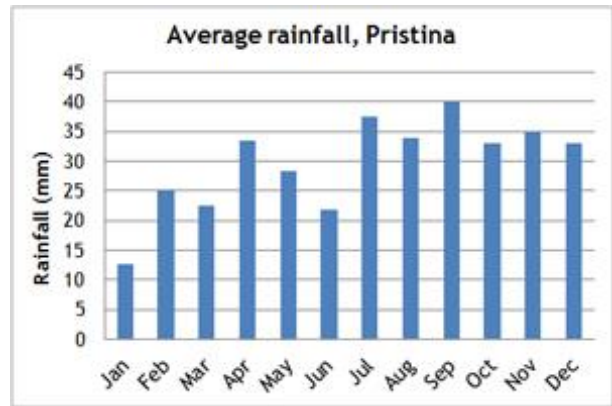
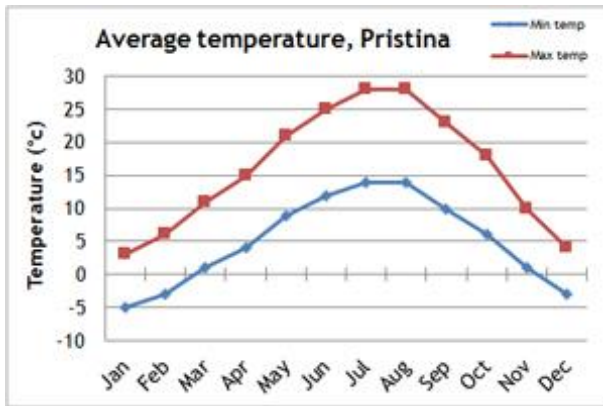
Further information

When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

Climate information



Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at www.mountainkingdoms.com.



There are many ways you can extend your holiday with Mountain Kingdoms: you could book extra hotel nights at the start or end of your trip, arrange a personal sightseeing tour or enjoy some other exciting activities. In fact, whatever's available we can help make it happen. We're happy to suggest ideas, provide quotes and make all the arrangements. We can also assist with flight and hotel upgrades.



Walk the length of the Balkans Peace trail

This trek covers includes sections of the Balkans Peace Trail, and you can complete virtually the whole trail by joining our Three Peaks of the Balkans Trek. This is a more strenuous trek that is mainly based in Kosovo but also ventures along paths in both Albania and Montenegro; the eastern section of the trail. Both treks offer superb walking through pristine mountain scenery, staying in local guesthouses and traditional accommodation en route.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- Our unique cross border trek follows sections of the Balkans Peace Trail and includes climbs to some of the most scenic peaks and viewpoints of the region such as Gjeravica Peak - the second highest mountain in Kosovo.
- There is a full day to explore the astonishingly picturesque Thethi Valley.
- Your trek will be led by a local English-speaking guide with unrivalled knowledge and experience of these wild regions of the Balkans.
- We have carefully selected accommodation to give you a true taste of Balkan hospitality and the local way of life, including a night in a shepherd's hut.
- Your luggage is transported for you so you only need to carry a daypack on trek.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

What our clients say



I felt that we saw a good representation of both countries - the best of each but also the realities of each. Our guide was outstanding, this trip is a great addition to your portfolio. The trip was really well thought out - excellent range of places visited, the hiking was superb and we were really well taken care of. Despite travelling as a tour group I thought we got off-the-beaten-track and experienced hidden gems.
- Mr & Mrs H, Hertfordshire (from a previous version of this trek in the Accursed Mountains)



The location was wild and spectacular. The trek was challenging at points but doable with a sense of achievement/purpose. The guide was really good, got a good understanding of the group and individual needs. He adapted and reacted sensibly and sensitively, good sense of humour.
- Mr & Mrs A, Gloucestershire (from a previous version of this trek in the Accursed Mountains)



I particularly loved staying in the traditional guesthouses along the way. The welcome couldn't have been warmer and their meals, produced from home-grown ingredients, were absolutely delicious.
- Seraphina Berry, Mountain Kingdoms

Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit www.tourismdeclares.com

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

Carbon Offsetting

Already doing:

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

Will do:

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

Already doing:

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

Will do:

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

