



Two Countries One Holiday: Albania

For a country that was closed to the world for much of the twentieth century, Albania has opened up to tourism remarkably quickly. Its popular beach resorts are now as sophisticated and busy as any in the Mediterranean, but venture a little off the beaten track and you will find an older Albania. It is a land of remarkable natural beauty, hospitable people and a long, distinguished history. We feature the south, which is now very easy to reach via Corfu in as little as 30 minutes by ferry. No visa is required for UK passport holders.

It is also possible to fly into the mainland Greek airport of Preveza and onward transfer by taxi (c. 2.5 to 3 hours to Saranda). This routing means Albania can be combined with the Greek resorts of Lefkas, Parga and Sivota – Sunvil will arrange all transfers.

As foreign tourism on any scale is relatively new, service, although nearly always willing and with a smile, can be a little rough around the edges. We offer Albania both as a single centre or as a twin centre with Greece, which makes for an intriguing and contrasting holiday experience.



Saranda

The bustling town of Saranda is set in a beautiful horse-shoe bay, fringed with pebble beaches and with lovely views to northern Corfu. High on a hill above is the 16th century Lekursi castle, which is worth a visit for the views alone and you can dine there. The town has an attractive palm-lined promenade and there are many restaurants, cafes and shops, all of which give a warm welcome. For some superb beaches not too far



from town, head for pretty Ksamili 14 kms to the south (there are regular buses). It is the new poster child for beach holidays in Albania, having a number of pretty small bays and beaches, and several islets just off-shore

Saranda is a very good base for exploration and has two UNESCO World Heritage sites within striking distance. Ancient Butrint is just a 20 minute to the south and should be seen. The atmospheric and historic

small town of Gjirokastra is an hour's drive to the north east, and en route you can pass by the unusual Blue Eye spring.

Himare

The Albanian Riviera to the north enables a stunningly scenic drive high above the sea, passing close to a number of traditional villages. The road from Saranda takes 80 minutes to the developing beach resort of Himare. Built behind a pair of long wide organised sand/shingle beaches, there is no shortage of restaurants and cafe bars to choose from in this small resort. Other excellent beaches can be found within a 30 minute drive north and south, and the high mountains behind hide a number of traditional villages where life continues much as it always has. Views from these are spectacular!

Albania

Albania's popular beach resorts are now as sophisticated and busy as any in the Mediterranean, but venture a little off the beaten track and you will find an older Albania.

Sea View Hotel Himare, Albania

It is little surprise that Himare (the walls of the old 4th/5th century BC town are still visible on the hill above the modern resort) has developed into the lively and attractive small resort it is today. It is an 80-minute scenic drive high above the sea from Saranda port.

One of the newer hotels in Himare (opened 2019) is the modern Sea View. It is a minute's walk down a slight hill to the southern beach and 5-6 minutes to the village centre and the second beach.

There is a pool, restaurant and bar and 28 rooms with balcony, all of which have fine sea views (as it says on the tin!). Rooms are spacious (25-30 sq m) and stylishly furnished in a contemporary style. Family Suites sleep up to 4. The hotel has its own section of the beach with a cafe-bar and sunbeds for its guests.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast
Guide price from **£1338 per person***



Brilant Hotel Saranda, Albania

Centrally located in the bustling port of Saranda, the Brilant is a modern, comfortable town hotel with good views from its upper floors.

It has 34 rooms on its 6 floors, served by a lift. Rooms are nicely done, with king-sized beds, walk-in showers, wooden floors and warm decor. Most rooms have some form of sea view - especially the Superior sea view rooms on the top floor which possess panoramic views over Saranda and bay to Corfu.

It is a short 3 minute walk to Saranda's attractive palm tree-fringed seafront promenade, which is backed by a very tempting choice of restaurants, cafes and shops, and 5 minutes' to the start of the long shingle beach and the harbour from which taxi boats shuttle to nearby beaches, sea caves and the islets off pretty Ksamil.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast
Guide price from **£1045 per person***

Private cultural tour Albania

This private 6 day cultural tour of south Albania is designed to discover the history and culture of a warm and hospitable country, to date little touched by mass tourism.

Albania has much to offer when it comes to historical interest as well as an abundance of natural beauty. This tour includes some of the most interesting UNESCO World Heritage sites, uncovering the country's rich past and our itinerary includes a host of historic towns and sites. Butrint, an impressive Greco-Roman

city, south of Saranda. Gjirokaster's architecture reflects the town's wealthy past. Berat, 'the town of a thousand eyes' because of the many-windowed old houses. Ardenica Monastery occupies a rocky outcrop and is a landmark visible for miles. Founded in 588 BC by Greeks, Apollonia became a renowned cultural centre in the Roman period

Board Basis: Half Board
Guide price from **£1994 per person***



* Guide prices are based on 2-sharing a lead-in room type for 7 nights in May and include return flights and transfers. Prices are subject to change and increases in airfares. Please visit our website for our latest prices and important further information on these properties, as well as more accommodation choices.