

Undiscovered Balkans - Bosnia and Herzegovina

Trip Code: BAC

Version: BAC Undiscovered Balkans - Bosnia and Herzegovina



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike up Maglic (2386m) Bosnia's highest peak on the superb Via Dinarica
- Experience the wild Bjelasnica Mountains and Sutjeska National Park
- Soak up Yugoslavian culture and history in Mostar and Sarajevo

- Celebrate a great holiday with a wine-tasting in Trebenje old town

AT A GLANCE

- 6 days walking and sightseeing
- Wine tasting
- Max altitude - 2386m
- Join at Dubrovnik

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 7 Breakfasts
- 5 Lunches
- 5 Dinners
- 4 nights Hotel
- 2 nights Mountain Hut / Refuge
- 1 nights Guesthouse

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina with its fascinating history, delicious cuisine, vibrant cities, primeval forests, rich cultures and warm welcome is an exciting destination for a walking and cultural holiday in the heart of the Balkans. This wonderful adventure kicks off with the Balkan gem of Mostar and spectacular Ottoman Bridge. Next it's the Cvrsnica and Bjelasnica Mountains for some off the beaten track hiking deep in the heart of a timeless landscape where life has stood still for over a 100 years. After the mountains we explore the vibrant capital of Sarajevo including the Latin Bridge and atmospheric Copper Alley. Feeling invigorated after mountain walks and sightseeing we hike to the summit of Mount Maglic (2386m), the highest peak in the country. A spot of wine tasting in the charming old town of Trebinje is the perfect way to celebrate our summit success before heading to Dubrovnik in neighbouring Croatia for the final night. Once part of Former-Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina has risen like a phoenix and combined with Croatia offers the perfect walking destination for anyone looking to experience a very unique part of the Balkans.

Is this holiday for you?

This unique holiday offers a great mix of walking and sightseeing, with daily walks and cultural highlights coming before Mount Maglic. KE's Balkan adventure is a genuine off the beaten track walking journey which follows wild and dramatic mountain paths between valleys and villages with 4 full days of walking and 2 days of sightseeing. We walk on a variety of trails through an undiscovered country, with the longer Maglic day near the end of the holiday after a relaxed day of sightseeing in Sarajevo. Maglic summit at just over 2300m is optional, and if you decide not to head up to the top it won't take away your enjoyment from the rest of the holiday. The ascent of Maglic includes narrow trails plus small sections of fixed alpine cables and non-technical scrambling which the leader will guide you through. There are times (during very dry periods) when the guide may provide the group with helmets. We've added a variety of accommodation including two nights in a traditional mountain hut and each day you'll only need to carry your day pack.

Itinerary

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DAY 1

Meet at Dubrovnik Airport and transfer to the UNESCO gem of Mostar.

The group will meet at Dubrovnik Airport for a single-timed group transfer (3 hrs) to Mostar. From Dubrovnik we drive through ever-changing scenery towards the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Initially we follow the spectacular Adriatic Coast before heading inland and the journey is the perfect opportunity to sit back and watch local life go by amongst amazing scenery. Late afternoon we'll arrive in Mostar and after checking in at the hotel take a relaxed walking tour. Mostar is incredibly beautiful with the iconic Stari Most spanning the Neretva River. An important trading route for many centuries the town was heavily damaged during the breakup of Former-Yugoslavia. The original bridge was destroyed in 1993 but as a testament to peace it is now fully restored in all its splendour. Mostar is almost fairy-tale like when illuminated and a great place to photograph especially the cobbled streets and Ottoman quarter. Staying overnight in Mostar means we see the town lit up and enjoy its hearty cuisine.

Meals: **D**








Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Follow the Last King of Serbia's ancient trails in the Cvrsnica Mountains.

This morning we leave Mostar and take a short drive (45mins) to Diva Grabovica, nestled in the Cvrsnica Mountains. The landscape here is dramatic with deep gullies formed by the tributaries of the Neretva River and today we'll follow the historic trails of King Karadjordjevic. Peter of Serbia reigned as the last King of Serbia (1903-1918) and the first King of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (1918-1921). Today's walk starts in the valley of the Diva Grabovica and takes us through rich forests of beech to the hamlet of Zljeb. In this charming hamlet we'll enjoy lunch as we look out over the most dramatic rock faces in the Balkan Peninsula. We're still in the area of the Neretva River which in areas has created wetlands areas that are under the Ramsar Convention. In the afternoon we'll descend to the valley before transferring (1.5 hours) to our mountain accommodation in Tusila. We are now in the Bjelasnica Mountains which are our base for two nights. Life here is simple and part of the overall incredible experience is we get to step back in time and slow down.

Meals: **B L D**






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|---|---|---|-----------------------|---|------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
|  | Accommodation Mountain Hut / Refuge |  | Ascent 725M |  | Descent 725M |  | Time 4 - 5 hrs walking |
|  | Distance 8KM | | | | | | |

DAY 3

Pass watermills on our walk to Bosnia's highest village of Lukomir (1496m).

We start our day with a brief transfer (15 minutes) to the village of Umoljani, which has a traditional mosque and seven watermills. Surrounded by dramatic beautiful nature we are today walking towards the village of Lukomir (1496m) which is the highest village in Bosnia. Located in the municipality of Konjic, Lukomir is also the most remote village in the entire country. The village is famed for its wonderful stecci or medieval tombstones which mean Lukomir has been inhabited since the 14th Century. This charming village is a collection of simple stone houses set amongst lush high pasture where the local people follow a very traditional way of life. The air is crystal clear up here, the scenery spectacular and we get a real insight into a rare way of life that seems to have disappeared in our own busy lifestyles. After taking in the views and enjoying this very special place we'll descend to a road head where we meet our vehicle which takes us back to Tusila for our second night.

Meals: **B L D**






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|  | Accommodation Mountain Hut / Refuge |  | Ascent 430M |  | Descent 350M |  | Time 4 - 5 hrs walking |
|  | Distance 8KM | | | | | | |

DAY 4

Walk along the Via Dinarica to Vito Peak and enjoy a night in Sarajevo.

Today is our final day in the mountains before we head to the capital. After breakfast, we start walking directly from our guesthouse in the village of Tusila (1200m). We are now in the heart of the Visocica Mountain which is home to the peak of Vito (1960m) which is on the new Via Dinarica White Trail. The whole area is home to the beautiful stone of karst stone with water sources and underground rivers as high as 1700m. During springtime the area is dotted with lakes which dry out as summer approaches but reappear in the autumn! After leaving the village we hike up through open meadows and lush beech forest until the summit of Vito (1960m) where the views are spectacular. Romantic and incredibly beautiful we'll take time to enjoy lunch and the all-important summit photos. In the afternoon we descend to our vehicle and transfer (1 hour) to the capital of Sarajevo where we spend the night. Staying here ensures we see the city lit up at night and experience Sarajevo in the evening.

Meals: **B L**


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|  | Accommodation Guesthouse |  | Ascent 840M |  | Descent 840M |  | Time 5 - 6 hrs walking |  | Distance 11KM |
|---|------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|-------------------------|

DAY 5

Sightseeing in Sarajevo before heading to the Sutjeska National Park.

This morning we'll enjoy a walking city tour which is the perfect way to see the city and the afternoon will be at leisure. Larger than life Sarajevo is one of the friendliest cities in Europe and has risen from the breakup of Yugoslavia to a must see Balkan city. As one of Europe's most vibrant capitals, it's a fantastic place to see locals relaxing and enjoying life. The city was originally governed by the Ottomans for over 400 years until the arrival of the Austro-Hungarians in the late 19th century and the result is a real mix of architecture. Rich in Ottoman history, Bascarsija or Pigeon Square has stone-flagged alleys and red-roofed houses which sit amongst minarets and a mountain backdrop. In 1914 Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo and the result was the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and start of First World War. The Winter Olympics were hosted in 1984 before the city was thrown into the spotlight in 1990 for being besieged by Serb forces. Novo Sarajevo, the newer part of the city is the home of café culture where drinking coffee, a beer or glass of wine and people watching is a way of life. Late afternoon we'll transfer to our hotel in the heart of Sutjeska National Park where we'll stay for the next two nights. We'll have dinner and a briefing on tomorrow's hike to the highest point in the country.

Meals: **B D**

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|  | Accommodation Hotel |
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DAY 6

Hike to the summit of Bosnia's highest peak Mount Maglic (2386m).

This morning after breakfast we transfer (1 hour) to Lokva Dernečiste for the start of our ascent of Maglic (2386m), the highest point in the country. Initially we ascend in forest before our trail brings us onto wild and dramatic terrain. The mountain itself is beautiful and stands proudly close to neighbouring Montenegro in Stjeska National Park. The park was established in 1962 and is the country's oldest national park. The Perucica forest reserve is one of only two primeval forest reserves remaining in Europe and the national park is also home to Balkan Chamois, bear, wild boar, wolf, wild cat and fox. If we very lucky we may spot Golden Eagle, grouse, peregrine falcon, blackbird and rock partridge. The route includes some short cabled sections for protection but these are non-technical. Next the steepness softens onto grassy slopes for the final approach to the summit. The ascent should take around 4 hours and weather permitting we'll have lunch at the top! There is a Bosnian flag on the summit and a plaque dedicated to the partisan movement under Marshall Tito. As Maglic is on the border between Bosnia and Montenegro we'll be able to enjoy views into both countries. Our descent to Trnovacko Lake takes us briefly into Montenegro and finally to the endpoint of our walk at Prijedor where we meet our vehicle for the transfer to Tjentište.

Meals: **B L D**


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|---|-------------------------------|---|------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | Accommodation Hotel |  | Ascent 1200M |  | Descent 1200M |  | Time 9 hrs walking |  | Distance 15KM |
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DAY 7

Drive to Dubrovnik via the Tjentiste war memorial and wine tasting in Trebinje.

Today we start by visiting the Tjentiste war memorial built in the 1960s to remember Operation Fall Schwartz otherwise known as the Battle of Sutjeska during World War II. Around 7000 people died during this offensive, mainly civilians who were not able to escape with the Yugoslavian military forces. The memorial is quite simple but the setting is spectacular and it's an important part of Bosnian history. Our final stop in Bosnia is Trebinje, the most southern town in the country and famed for its wine cellars. This quaint walled old town has Serbian-Orthodox Churches and a pretty main square. As we learn about the art of wine making we'll enjoy a tasting and lunch before the 30km transfer to Dubrovnik. After checking in at the group hotel there will be some free time before we meet in the old town for our final dinner.

Meals: **B L**

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|  | Accommodation Hotel |
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DAY 8

Departure Day.

After breakfast a single-timed group transfer (30mins) for Dubrovnik Airport will leave the group hotel at 9am. Dubrovnik is a short transfer from the airport and a fantastic place to spend a few extra days sightseeing at the end of the holiday. The town has an abundance of museums and historical sights to explore and the lush island of Lokrum complete with wild peacocks wandering the beaches is a 15min boat ride from the harbour. The Dubrovnik cable car offers a bird's eye view of the old city and is also home to a fascinating but harrowing museum which shows the breakup of Yugoslavia and the siege of Dubrovnik. If you would like to extend your time in Dubrovnik at the group hotel then please contact the KE office and we can help you organise this.

Meals: **B**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- Professional English-speaking local leader
- Single-timed group airport transfers
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as per the meal plan
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- National park entrance fees
- All excursions mentioned in the itinerary

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Any required visas
- Airport transfers other than group transfers
- Tips for local staff
- Some meals are per the meal plan
- Miscellaneous expenses drinks souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

TRAVEL TO YOUR DESTINATION

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive than low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

The group will meet at the hotel in Mostar

A single timed transfer from / to Dubrovnik Airport is provided.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All breakfasts, 5 lunches and 5 dinners are included.

Food & Water

Many places on this holiday have drinkable water from the tap to fill your personal water bottles. Please check with the leader at the various locations. Please take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a [Water-To-Go bottle](#)) for days when drinking water out of the tap is not available. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

The food in Bosnia is delicious with lots of fresh ingredients and wonderful influences from the Ottoman Empire. Grilled meats are popular, as are dolme (stuffed cabbage leaves) and rich soups such as bosanski lonac (a Bosnian hotpot). Two of the most popular local dishes are cevapi and piljeskavica made from local sausages or mince served with salad and fresh Bosnian bread. Tomatoes, aubergines, courgettes and potatoes are in abundance, as are wonderful fresh cheeses, breads and salads. A foodie highlight is the delicious and mouth-watering burek, a popular snack of filo pastry, stuffed with either meat or fresh cheese – a must try! Slow cooked beans and courgettes are served as a side dish or main meals at lunch. For vegetarians the country has plenty of fresh salads, vegetables, cheeses, eggs, potatoes and freshly cooked breads. Let's not forget an excellent selection of cheeses ranging from kajmak (a rich cream cheese) to travnicki (a white feta style from Travnik). Typical desserts include mouth-watering Turkish-style baklava, pancakes, doughnuts, sweet pastries and baked apples. Bosnians love their strong Turkish style coffee, ice-cold bottled beers, rich wines and after dinner digestives, which range from the delicious honey schnapps to the wild and fiery plum and pear brandies. Be brave and give them a try!

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Accommodation

During this holiday the group will spend 1 night at a hotel in Mostar, 1 night at a guesthouse/pension in Sarajevo, 2 nights at a hotel in Tjentiste and 1 night at a hotel in Dubrovnik.

There is also 2 nights at a simple mountain guesthouse in Umoljani with between 2 and 4 people per room and shared bathroom facilities. This is a highlight because of the welcome and wonderful location where tourist infrastructure is very much in its infancy. In the mountains, the solitude and warm welcome more than makes up for the lack of hotel facilities.

If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex for the 5 nights in the hotels and pensions. Single rooms are available for a supplementary cost on these 5 nights. If you are planning on extending your holiday additional nights at the group hotel are available on request.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be accompanied throughout by a professional English-speaking local tour leader.

Altitude

The altitudes attained on this holiday are not extreme and the maximum altitude attained is no more than the equivalent of a pressurised cabin on an international flight. You may 'feel' the altitude the first time you trek above 2000 metres but all that is required is a slower pace to compensate. You should pay particular attention to your hydration levels while trekking above 2000 metres.

Spending Money

Approximately £150 - 200 should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses including drinks bills, meals not included and reasonable tips to support crew. If you intend to buy souvenirs, you'll need to budget accordingly (credit cards can be useful). The local currency in Bosnia is the Convertible Mark (KM) whilst in Croatia (for Dubrovnik) it's the Kuna (HRK). By far the easiest way to obtain your travel cash is from ATMs using a credit or debit card. ATM machines are available on arrival at Dubrovnik Airport and in Dubrovnik old town for Kuna. Sarajevo and Mostar both have ATM machines to obtain Bosnian currency. Major credit cards are only accepted in larger cities. There are also exchange facilities in Mostar for exchanging sterling, euro or dollars. For up to date exchange rates visit www.xe.com

Guidance on Tipping

Tips do not form part of the wages of local staff but they are very much appreciated. It is important to remember that tipping is voluntary and should be dependent on good service. It is best if the tip is given at the end of the trip by the group as a whole. We recommend that each group member contributes around £25 for the tour leader and £10 for the driver in 2 separate envelopes.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage and a daypack. Luggage with wheels or a soft kit bag is suitable for this holiday. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

VACCINATIONS

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella, along with hepatitis A and typhoid. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](#).

Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on an active holiday getting some additional exercise. Regular hiking is the best preparation as are running, cycling and swimming. The fitter you are for your holiday the more you'll enjoy the overall walking experience.

Climate

Bosnia is home to mixed weather with the southern part of the country having mild winters and warmer summers with average temperatures in June to September ranging from 25 to 30 degrees centigrade. As expected it can be cooler in the mountains due to the alpine conditions. Rainfall is generally less than 30mm per month through the summer and is usually confined to the odd thunderstorm. It's always good to be prepared for a wide range of mountain weather on this holiday.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Goodbye Sarajevo: Atka Reid and Hana Schofield
- Europe Bradt Travel Guides Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bosnia A Short History - Noel Malcolm
- The Shed That Fed a Million Children - Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow

Maps

Freytag-Berndt. Bosnia-Herzegovina. 1:200,000 scale

Bosnia-Herzegovina on a large, double-sided, indexed road map from Freytag & Berndt, showing the whole country at 1:200,000 with detailed presentation of the road and rail networks, places of interest, etc. Relief shading with spot heights and colouring indicating forested areas shows the country's topography, with plenty of names of geographical features. National parks and other protected areas are marked

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

You should bring the following items:

- Hiking boots with ankle support
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Underwear
- Baselayer shirts (1 short sleeve, 1 long sleeve)
- Light fleece shirt or mid-layer
- Warm fleece jacket or jumper
- Waterproof jacket
- T-shirts or casual shirts

- Lightweight thermal gloves
- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses
- Daypack 30 litres
- Headtorch and spare batteries
- Sun protection (including for lips)
- Water bottles 1 Litre (x2) (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
- Water purification tablets
- Washbag and toiletries
- Travel towel
- Antibacterial hand wash

Basic First Aid Kit including; Insect repellent, antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment

- (Diocalm or Immodium), painkillers, plasters, blister treatment and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).
Glucose sweets and vitamin tablets are a useful addition.

◆ **The following items are optional:**

- Trainers or sandals
- Shorts
- Travel clothes
- Trekking poles (highly recommended)

- Camera
- Pen-knife for picnic lunches
- Swimwear (there are on occasion opportunities to swim in natural pools and rivers)
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers.
[>> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

We sell this holiday on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. The holiday starts at the hotel in Mostar and a single timed transfer is provided from Dubrovnik Airport.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

As Balkan experts we're proud of 5* reviews for this holiday. Enjoy wonderful mountain walks including Lukomir the highest village in the country, to ensure you're fully prepared for Mount Maglic. Standing on Bosnia's highest peak deserves a reward, so we've included wine tasting in Trebenje to celebrate.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 19/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change