Tastes and Trails of North Macedonia

Trip Code: MAC

Version:

WALK & TREK	GUIDED GROUP	5 MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Spectacular views and wonderful flora in Mavrovo and Galicica national parks
- Sample herb rakija, taste local dishes and enjoy a home-cooked dinner
- Stroll along the shores of Lake Orhid and sail through Matka Canyon
- Hike trails to stunning viewpoints, flower meadows and mountain pastures

AT A GLANCE

- 6 days walking and sightseeing
- Max altitude 2255 metres
- Join at Skopje

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

In the heart of the Balkans you'll find welcoming North Macedonia, a land of dramatic mountains, stunning lakes, breath-taking monasteries and mouth-watering national cuisine. North Macedonia is perfect for a true off the beaten track walking holiday as you encounter pockets of solitude where time has stood still. Meandering trails will lead you through vibrant forest, deep gorges and sleepy hamlets enriched with a kaleidoscope of flora and fauna. Alongside excellent walking you'll get to sample some excellent local dishes as Tastes and Trails of North Macedonia takes you on a culinary delight for walkers. After the bustle of Skopje it's a boat ride through Matka Canyon and a fantastic variety of daily walks. Each day you'll find yourself following the best trails in the country as you take in the wild beauty of Mavrovo and Galicica National Parks, plus atmospheric monasteries and decorated mosques. A highlight of the country is Lake Ohrid, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the world's oldest lakes. Here you can relax on a free day before enjoying dinner with a local family. North Macedonia is a fascinating melting pot for walking, cuisine and culture and one of Europe's best kept secrets for walkers.

Is this holiday for you?

This holiday in North Macedonia includes 5 wonderful days of walking which starts out with a morning's hike from the summit of Mt Vodno through the Matka Canyon. Each day you'll only need to carry a day pack with your personal items and picnic lunch in. The other 4 days are longer and include a a mix of forest trails and open moorland, with slightly rockier footpaths as you ascend. There is a fee day in Ohrid which includes a walking tour and time at leisure. This is a wonderful walking holiday for active, regular hikers who are looking for a holiday in a unique country and the opportunity to sample a rich variety of North Macedonian dishes.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- English-speaking local guide
- A single group return airport transfer
- All accommodation as described in the trip notes
- Meals as described in the trip notes
- All land transport required by the itinerary
- National park entrance fees
- All excursions mentioned in the itinerary.

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Visas if applicable
- Meals other than breakfast on Day 8 and 9
- Airport transfers
- Extra activities and excursions
- Tips for local staff
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Skopje.

Single timed airport transfers are provided from / to Skopje Airport.

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

Meal Plan

On this trip 7 Breakfasts, 5 Lunches and 6 Dinners are included in the cost of the trip.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for 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 meals 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.

Food & Water

Water from the taps may not be drinkable in all locations on this trip - please check with your guide. We recommend taking water purification tablets and a reusable bottle with a filter such as **Water-to-Go**, which can both be used to help make safe other water sources. Please note that we do not encourage the purchase of single use plastic bottles.

A highlight of this holiday is the colourful local food and with a mix of Balkan, Turkish and European influences, Macedonian food is wonderful. Macedonian recipes haven't changed for centuries and food is still cooked the traditional way and is an important social event. Shopska salad is wonderfully fresh, as are slow cooked baked beans which are rich and delicious. Potato stew, traditional bread, sauerkraut casserole, kebabs, stuffed trout, cooked vegetables, baked cheeses, village casseroles plus stuffed peppers or cabbage rolls are all in abundance alongside slowly cooked meats and excellent mouth-watering pies. Vegetarians will love the freshly prepared vegetable dishes and salads plus excellent cheese and egg dishes, tasty pies and the wonderful Macedonian pizza! Burke is a tasty lunchtime treat and served all over the Balkans as a snack. Tuluba (pastry with syrup) is a traditional desert from the Ottoman Empire, sutlijash is a Turkish inspired rice pudding, ravanija is a delicious doughy cake and mekici are lightly fried doughnuts. Rakija is Macedonian brandy and comes under the category of a natural medicine! They say a small glass of Rakija is a cure for everything. Try the local wine as the country has a rich history of wine making. Breakfast are continental style, with cereals, bread and jam, tea, coffee and sometimes eggs and you'll have the chance to try a more traditional breakfast of eggs, tomato and fresh feta cheese. Lunches will be a packed lunch of bread and a variety of either meat, cheese, tomatoes and cucumber, fruit, cereal bar and a bottle of water which will be eaten along the trail at a suitable picnic spot. (Water is from local wells or mountain streams and is not chlorinated so if you are concerned about drinking untreated water, we suggest you bring a supply of water treatment tablets).

Accommodation

During this holiday we use a combination of hotels and lodges. There are 2 nights in Skopje, 2 nights in Mavrova and 3 nights in Ohrid. All accommodation is based on twin sharing, or occasionally triple sharing. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired with another solo traveller of the same sex.

Group Leader & Support Staff

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

Altitude

This holiday involves going to moderately high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 2500 metres. Most people will have no difficulty with this level of altitude but before coming on the holiday, we recommend you read the advice on trekking at high altitude. You can also talk to one of our trekking experts if you have any concerns about altitude.

Spending Money

Approximately £150 should cover miscellaneous expenses including your drinks bills and reasonable tips to crew. Macedonia's unit of currency is the denar. By far the easiest way to obtain your travel cash is from ATM's using a credit card or a debit card. ATM's are widely available at the airport in Skopje and Ohrid. Credit cards can be used to purchase goods in larger shops, hotels and restaurants.

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 and that tips are then distributed between the guide and support staff as the group feels is appropriate.

Baggage Allowance

Baggage will be transported between overnight stops by vehicle. There is no weight restriction other than that imposed by your international carrier but we do ask you to limit your luggage whilst on trek to one piece which weighs no more than 15kgs plus your day pack. You may leave unwanted items and clothes that you don't need whilst trekking, at the hotel in Skopje for your return.

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 the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status 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.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

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.

Currency

The unit of currency in North Macedonia is the Macedonian Denar.

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, whilst running, cycling and swimming are good for developing better cardiovascular fitness and stamina. Before departure, we suggest that you try to fit in a number of long walks in the boots you plan to walk in.

Climate

Daytime temperatures in the lower valleys will vary between 20ºC and 30ºC during June to September. The weather in summer is generally excellent - with warm days, clear skies and little rain. Temperatures do drop in the evenings so it's good to pack a fleece or warm sweater. In the mountains we may encounter cooler conditions and a mixuture of alpine style weather.

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 before 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. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

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 directly 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.

Private Groups Information

Make this KE Adventure holiday your own!

- Do our normal group departure dates not fit?
- Would you prefer to travel with just friends and/or family?
- Are you looking to organise a trip for your local walking, biking or mountaineering club?

It's really easy to make a trip your own. Simply select from our full range of adventure holidays and choose the dates that work for you and your group.

We are experts in creating holidays for groups of friends, families, charities and clubs. Our personal service means you'll be fully involved as we make the arrangements for your perfect adventure holiday.

Independence with Security

Travelling as a KE Private Group allows you more flexibility and choice, but still with the peace of mind that everything is pre-planned and arranged for your group by a reputable adventure travel company.

To take your first step to an amazing adventure with your friends and family complete the private group enquiry form, or call our **Sales Experts on: 017687 73966**

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 must bring the following items:

- Hiking boots
- Socks
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof over-trousers
- Underwear
- Base layer shirts (2 short sleeve, 2 long sleeve)
- Light fleece shirt or mid-layer
- T-shirts or casual shirts
- Waterproof jacket
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper

- Sunhat
- Fleece hat
- Sunglasses
- Thermal / fleece gloves
- Daypack 30 litres
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- 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 handwash
- Selection of dry bags (to keep trek bag contents dry)
- Small padlock (to lock your KE kit bag)
- Basic First Aid Kit, consisting of the following: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium) painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent (DEET), and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

The following items are optional:

- Trainers / sandals for after trekking
- Shorts
- Travel clothes

- Thermal baselayer - leggings
- Insect repellant
- Trekking poles
- Camera
- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)
- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Head torch
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary, joining at the hotel in Skopje. Single timed transfers are included from/to Skopje Airport.

Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Skopje with Austrian Airlines. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the morning, arriving early afternoon. Return flights will depart Skopje in the early afternoon of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later the same day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

As you'd expect from KE the walking experts, this fantastic holiday to North Macedonia includes the very best trails in the country. With 5* reviews for food we've also included an excellent variety of tasty dishes in local restaurants for you to sample on your walking adventure. Call Sarah to talk North Macedonia - she calls it A Must See Destination

Please Note This document was downloaded on 23/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change