



Traditional Culture & Food of Macedonia - N.Macedonia (Pelagonija / Mariovo / Prespa) and Greece (Prespes / Kastoria)

Project: Increasing Tourism Opportunities through Utilization of Resources I-TOUR

Implemented by: Center for Development of the Pelagonija Planning Region- Bitola

Activities: Gastronomy trip combined with local cultural and natural highlights

Areas visited: Krushevo, Bitola, Prilep, Mariovo, Prespa, Prespes national park, Kastoria, Edessa, Pella, Thessaloniki

Day 1 N.Macedonia / Food walk in Krusevo



12:00-13:00 Welcome, meet/greet and tour briefing takes place at the hotel in the town of **Krushevo**. Located at 1250 m above sea level, the town of Krushevo is the highest settlement in N.Macedonia. With mild continental climate Krushevo is one of the coldest places in N.Macedonia with average temperature of 10 degrees Celsius. Nested in the mountains, Krushevo is 34 km from the city of Prilep.

13:00-17:00 Sightseeing, food walk & cooking demo in Krusevo. The town is known among Macedonians as city of heroes and legends, being the birthplace of numerous recognizable names of N.Macedonia's history and art scene. The singer Tose Proeski, the painter Nikola Martinovski and the revolutionaries Nikola Karev & Pitu Guli are among the notable people born in Krushevo. What makes Krushevo so important for N.Macedonia is being the place of the Saint Elijah (Ilinden), famous rebellion against the Ottomans which took place on 2nd August 1903



That day the s.c. Krushevo Republic was formed and lasted for 10 days before the return of a large Ottoman army, destroying the Macedonian forces. The 2nd of August is one of the biggest holidays for N.Macedonia and is representing the centuries long struggle of Macedonians for independence and freedom. Amenities visited in Krushevo during our tour are the Makedonium and Meckin Kamen, as well as interesting workshop (barrel maker) in the old bazaar od Krusevo.



However, the main highlight of our walk are the specialties Krusevo is most famous for, the turkish delight (so called **lokum**), its savory **pies**, as well as the tasty **sausages**.

Today the group will also enjoy short **cooking demo** for preparation of another very famous treat from Krusevo - the "celufki", organized by local women's association.

The traditional Krushevo cuisine combines Balkan and Mediterranean characteristics, inherited largely from Turkish tastes that prevailed during the long centuries of Ottoman rule. Most herbs are collected in the local mountains and in the countryside, and are renowned for their taste, scent and healing properties.



17:00-19:00 Free time.

19:00-21:00 Welcome dinner and overnight take place at a local restaurant in Krusevo, or at the setting of a family home, where our local hosts will give the guests the opportunity to taste try home-cooked food of Krusevo.

Transfer duration / distance: //

Meals: D (local restaurant)

Not included: L (local restaurant)

Accommodation: Krusevo

Activities: Sightseeing in Krusevo

Recommended suppliers & contact info	
Accommodation in Krusevo	Montana Palace , Panorama Spa , Vila Gora , La Kola
Restaurants	Krusevo: Montana Palace , Krusevska Odaia , Shape , Skar , Roma Family style dinner: Macedonia Experience
Activities	Sightseeing and food tasting in Krusevo Cooking demo in Krushevo (celufki)



Guides in Krusevo	Milan Veleski / Licensed Tour guides of Macedonia / Association of Tourist guides of Macedonia / Macedonia Experience
Local suppliers in Krusevo	Women Association "Cvet" Krusevo (local supplier for the cooking demo) Krusevska Odaja (cooking demo in the restaurants premises)
Museums & amenities	Krusevo: "Nikola Martinoski" Gallery , Makedonium, Historical Museum
Events	Krusevo: 10 Days Krusevo Republic , When in Krushevo

Day 2 N. Macedonia / Food walks in Prilep & Bitola

09:30-11:00 After a free morning in Krusevo, the guests will be transferred to Bitola via Prilep. Our first stop for the day is **Prilep**.

11:00-13:00 Our first activity for the day is very easy walk in the area of King Marko's towers (Markovi Kuli). The towers of medieval Prince Marko Mrnjavčević are located on a 120-180 m high hill, surrounded by steep slopes covered with minute granite stones. The upper part of the former settlement can be reached from its north and south side. During the four-decade archaeological research, remnants indicating the existence of an early antique settlement-Keramija were found. In the Roman period, this small village expanded into the southwest, a fact suggested by the several marble ornaments of an early Christian basilica. The significance of the fortress Markovi Kuli (Marko's Towers) as well as the medieval town of Prilep, in the long history of the Balkans is great, primarily because of its location in Pelagonia. Namely, important thoroughfares that connected the Adriatic Sea with the Aegean Sea had passed through this valley. In ancient times the Via Serdika Heraclea road, as a sub branch of the Via Militaris (Singidunum - Constantinopolis), passed through Prilep, and in continuation it connected with the road Via Egnatia (Durachium - Amfipolis). The fortress was established and developed during the period of the IV century b.c till XIV century and also represents a symbol of the city. Due to the fortress, medieval Prilep is famous on the Balkan with its dominant defense system i.e., she is one of the five strongest and unassailable fortresses on the Balkans. Our pleasant walk will take place in Varosh (the old town of Prilep) around the remains of the fort.



13:00-15:00 Whoever comes to Prilep and has not tried **shirden** - it's like one has not been in Prilep. Shirden is one of the rare delicacies in the contemporary Macedonian cuisine. For those who don't know, shirden is the lining of the stomach of a lamb, and it will be the main dish for our lunch in Prilep.



15:00-16:00 In the afternoon the group will be transferred to the area of **Bitola**, where they will visit the archaeological site of Heraclea Lyncestis and do short walking sightseeing in the center.



16:00-18:00 Heraclea was founded by Philip II of Macedonia in the IV century BC after he had conquered the surrounding region of Lyncestis and incorporated it into his kingdom of Macedon. The city was named in honor of the mythological hero Heracles, whom Philip considered his ancestor. With its strategic location, it became a prosperous city. Each object, each stone, each pedestal is shrouded in mystery. However, the symbol of Bitola is the street called **Shirok Sokak**, beautiful long pedestrian street that runs through the heart of the city. This street is back-to-back cafes and restaurants and the meeting place of choice for everyone it seems. Beyond the coffee and people watching, if you look a little higher, you're bound to see some of the city's most beautiful buildings. There's many a neo-classical building to be admired, especially if you head towards the streets northern end and arrive in Magnolia Square. This modest square is home to some of the city's biggest landmarks. It is here that we'll find the city's pride, the Clock Tower, whose origin has been sadly lost. There is also strong evidence of the historical mix of religions found in Macedonia, with the notable Yeni Mosque and the nearby Church of St. Dimitrija.



18:00-20:00 **Peppers** play a central role in Balkan gastronomy, and are particularly important to Macedonian cuisine. They are one of the most cultivated and consumed vegetables in the region and are enjoyed with most meals. In September the markets display dozens of varieties, of every color and form imaginable, each of which has a distinct use: the long flat peppers are used to make ajvar (the pepper cream found across the Balkans), the round peppers are better suited to preserving, certain varieties are used fresh in dishes such as stuffed peppers and others are used to make paprika.



Bukovo, a small village situated a few kilometers from Bitola, has been famous throughout history for producing the best pepper seasoning, typically ground and added to soups and grilled meats. The region is so well known for being one of the best suited to this production, that today in Macedonia the term "**bukovec**" is used to refer to any dried and crushed pepper mix, used as a spice. In cooperation with "Slow Food Macedonia - Presidium Bukovo", presentation of the process of making the famous seasoning.

20:00-22:00 The evening is reserved for welcome dinner in a traditional setting, with traditional acoustic music, at a local restaurant in the **center of Bitola**. The overnight takes place in Bitola



Transfer duration / distance: 3 h / 123 km

Meals: B (hotel), L (local restaurant), D (local restaurant)

Accommodation: Bitola

Activities: Sightseeing in Prilep and Bitola, slow-food demo in Bukovo

Recommended suppliers & contact info	
Accommodation in Bitola	Hotel Teatar , Bela Kukja , Robevski Luxury Rooms , Hotel Treff , Millenium Palace , Epinal
Restaurants	Prilep: Makedonska Kukja , Del Posto , Kermes , Sokache Bitola: Grne , Pub Bourbon Street , Bar Manaki , Kus Kus , Vino Bar Bure
Activities	Sightseeing in Prilep and Bitola Food Tasting in Prilep Slow food demo in Bukovo (organized by Prezidium Bukovo)
Local guides in Prilep	Milan Veleski / Licensed Tour guides of Macedonia / Association of Tourist guides of Macedonia / Macedonia Experience
Local guides in Bitola	Tour HQ , / Licensed Tour guides of Macedonia / Association of Tourist guides of Macedonia / Slow Food Macedonia - Prezidium Bukovo
Museums & amenities	Bitola: Heraclea Lyncestis / Museum of Bitola Prilep: Museum of Prilep , Tobacco Museum
Events	Prilep: Pivo Fest , International Carnival , Bitola: Manaki Brothers Film Festival , Interfest Bitola , Ilindenski Denovi , Small Monmartre of Bitola



Day 3 N. Macedonia / Cheese tasting in Mariovo and beekeeping in Dihovo

08:00-13:00 Today we checkout from our hotel in Bitola, get on 4x4s and explore the remote highlands of **Mariovo** - beautiful area which occupies almost 20% from the territory of N.Macedonia, but nowadays has fewer than 500 residents. Mariovo was one of the main battlegrounds of the Macedonian front during WW1, which was also known as Thessaloniki (Salonika) Front, which extended from the Strymonian Gulf (Aegean Sea) to the Adriatic Sea at a length of about 600 km. The frontline went through four countries: Albania, Greece, Bulgaria and then Serbia, which included the territory of today's Republic of N.Macedonia. Some of the decisive battles on the Macedonian front occurred in Mariovo region, which had serious negative consequences resulting in heavy decline of the civilian population due to famine, diseases and military actions. Today in Mariovo region there is large quantity of remains and memorabilia from that period, and many stories about the "struggle" of the civilian population during the war and in the postwar period. Our excursion today aims to convey these stories, but also offers you an unforgettable one-day experience through the picturesque landscapes of Mariovo. The villages of **Staravina** (visit of remains from trenches and bunkers from the war), **Gradeshnica** (visit of the church of St. Demetrius) and **Zovik** (visit of the "movie bridge") are among the locations visited today.



13:00-15:00 Lunch is arranged at traditional setting in the villages of **Zovik** or **Vitoliste** (most densely populated village of Mariovo). If guests choose lunch in Vitoliste, then they will also have the chance to do on-site **cheese tasting** (sheep cheese) at a small family owned dairy farm near the lunch site.

15: 17:00-18:30 Upon returning from Mariovo in the afternoon hours, we will head to **Dihovo**, a little village located in the foothills of Mt Pelister on the outskirts of Bitola. Here we explore the fascinating world of the honeybee as we join the local beekeepers Blagoj and Naco Jovcevski, who will share the hidden secrets of bees, **beekeeping**, and honey and where in protective clothing, you can view an open beehive demonstration and get hands on if you choose. There'll be an opportunity to **extract honey** from the comb and also for some tasting afterwards.



18:30-19:00 Check In into the accommodation in Dihovo.

00-17:00 Transfer Vitoliste to Dihovo.



19:00-21:00 Our dinner in Dihovo is a traditional home cooked meal arranged in the family home of the beekeepers. All of the ingredients used to cook are organic and come from the Jovcevski own private gardens (they also sell groceries at the green market in Bitola). Overnight takes place in Dihovo.

Transfer duration / distance: 3 h 20 min / 135 km

Meals: B (hotel), L (villa), D (family home)

Accommodation: Dihovo

Activities: 4x4 exploration and cheese-tasting in Mariovo; beekeeping demonstration in Dihovo

Recommended suppliers & contact info	
Accommodation in Dihovo	Vila Dihovo , Vila Ilinden Dihovo , Villa Patrice
Restaurants	Lunch in Mariovo: Etno Restoran Mariovo , House Delin (owned and operated by Hotel Teatar), Etno House in village Zovik Dinner in Dihovo: Old House BN , Vila Dihovo
Activities	Sightseeing in Mariovo (4x4 tour arranged by Off-road Macedonia) Lunch & cheese tasting in Mariovo (arranged by House Delin) Beekeeping demonstration and dinner in Dihovo (arranged by Old House BN)
Local guides	Mariovo: Off-road Macedonia ; Macedonia Experience Dihovo: Old House BN , Vila Dihovo
Museums & amenities	Villages of Staravina, Gradeshnica, Zovik, Vitoliste, Dihovo
Events in Mariovo	//



Day 4 N. Macedonia / Bitola and Prespa

08:00-09:00 Checkout from Dihovo and early start of the day with transfer to Bitola for traditional breakfast - the local specialty of Bitola called **Ckembe Corba (tripe soup)**, originally a poor man's food, and now a local delicacy. It is claimed that the soup was part of the initiation rite for boys, but these days it's enjoyed by the young after a big night out and the older as an early morning breakfast dish.



09:00-11:00 Bazaars in Bitola flourished especially during the nineteenth century, when they were spread from "Drven Pazar" ("wood market") to "At Pazar" ("Horse Market"), with more than 2,000 stores, many shops, mills, inns and Covered Bazaar - Bezisten. There were over 30 functionally divided bazaars, determined according to the goods being sold: Pekmez bazaar, Grain bazaar, Horse bazaar, Wood bazaar, the "Lenski" covered bazaar etc. However, over the centuries the Bazaar of Bitola suffered from big fires, but still nowadays there is a significant section of the Bazaar which is authentic. We will do morning stroll around the **green market** of Bitola, one of the most colorful in the region, also taste fruits, cheese and local pastries on foot.



11:00-14:00 From Bitola the group is transferred to the village of **Carev Dvor**, major apple farming area of Prespa. The apple farm "**Spirit of Prespa**" (agriturismo) will host the group for lunch, as well as presentation of their products and activities. The orchard has been in the family since 1960, and they produce jams, juices and other fruit based products. All of their products are handmade from local sources using a mix of traditional & modern



methods. The apple orchard covers big area, allowing the visitors to get familiar with the **apple & cherry farming**, taste traditional food & buy products from the farm shop. One can also experience picking fruits during the harvest in the autumn months. The team of Spirit of Prespa is a local family with passion of farming and promoting the region of Prespa through their agritourism venture.

14:00-15:00 In the afternoon the guests are transferred to the area of the lake Prespa, one of the largest and oldest sweet water lakes in Europe.

15:00-18:00 Check in followed by time to explore the village of **Brajcino** on foot, or just relax in tranquility of this beautiful spot.

18:00-21:00 In the early evening there will be **cooking demo over dinner**. Our host Milka, whose family Pop-Janevski has lived in this village for many generations, will do front cooking demonstration in order to teach the guests how to prepare the local delicacy of **Prespa Carp**, as well as many different accompaniments such as **pinjur** (roasted peppers dip), **makalo** and **komat** (pie). Overnight takes place in the area of Prespa (Brajcino and Ljubojno).





Transfer duration / distance: 1 h 15 min / 70 km

Meals: B (hotel), L (apple farm), D (cooking demo)

Accommodation: Prespa

Activities: Visit of green market in Bitola; visit of apple farm in Carev Dvor; cooking demonstration in Brajcino

Recommended suppliers & contact info	
Accommodation in Prespa	Vila Raskrsnica (Brajcino), Stara Cesma (Ljubojno)
Restaurants	Lunch in Carev Dvor: Spirit of Prespa Dinner/cooking demo in Brajcino: Vila Raskrsnica (Krste Pop-Janevski: +389 75 796 796)
Activities	Visit of the green market in Bitola Cooking demonstration in Brajcino at Vila Raskrsnica (Krste Pop-Janevski: +389 75 796 796) Tasting of apples & apple products at Spirit of Prespa
Local guides in Prespa	Tour HQ , / Licensed Tour guides of Macedonia / Association of Tourist guides of Macedonia / Macedonia Experience / Rural Women of Prespa
Museums & amenities	Green market in Bitola, villages of Brajcino and Carev Dvor
Events	Apple Harvest Festival in Resen



Day 5 Greece / Food exploration of Prespes & Kastoria

08:00-11:00 Checkout after breakfast, followed by transfer from Bitola to the area of Prespes in Greece. Upon entering Greece via Niki/Medzitlija border crossing, we will make a short rest in the town of Florina before heading to the area of Prespes.



11:30-13:00 Boat trip in Psarades.

13:00-15:00 Lunch is arranged in the coastal village of **Psarades**, or the neighbouring villages of Agios Germanos or Agios Achilios. The natural beauty, along with its remote location, attracted many monks during the Ottoman reign, who built their hermitages along the shores of the lake. The Greek part of Prespa belongs to the "Prespes" national park, for its great importance as one of Europe's most important bird sanctuaries, and guests will definitely have the chance to spot many birds during the boat trip, among which the pelicans are most notable.



Named "caviar" of the Prespes region, the **elephant beans** are among the most recognizable food in the region. It is estimated that this type of beans are one of the best varieties worldwide due to the terroir. The beans vary in size and diversity, and can be cooked in multiple ways (salads, soups, as well as bean casserole). Apart from the beans, the guests will also taste different local **jams, honey, spoon sweets, and red peppers** (from Florina), home-made **tsipouro** and **wine**. Being lakeside area, locals mastered different ways to prepare **carp, trout, eel and bass**.

15:00-17:00 Our afternoon sightseeing today includes another special place - **Agios Achilios**, the basilica in the heart of Prespa. This is the place where Tsar Samuel built a magnificent basilica especially for the mummified remains of Saint Achillios, an early bishop of Larissa in Thessaly, when he conquered the city in the 10th century. The basilica is also the place where the sarcophaguses of Samuel, Gavriilo Radomir (his son) and Ivan Vladislav (his nephew) were discovered. Today this romantic ruin is the most important site in Prespa. The island can be reached by a long wooden bridge.





17:00-18:30 In the late afternoon the group gets transferred to Kastoria. The medieval town of **Kastoria** sits on the western shore of Lake Orestiada, in a valley surrounded by limestone mountains. Kastoria is full of interesting Byzantine churches and Ottoman-style architecture, including old distinctive villas from the skin and fur trade times. Once you arrive you'll take an orientation walk along the labyrinthine lanes, with time to walk along the lakeside, where boats bob, Dalmatian pelicans and ducks make iridescent ripples on the water, and coniferous trees and mountains surround in the distance.



19:00-21:00 Dinner will be arranged in one of the finest restaurants in Kastoria.

Transfer duration / distance: 3 h / 159 km

Meals: B (hotel), L (local restaurant), D (local restaurant)

Accommodation: Kastoria

Activities: Sightseeing and food tasting in Prespes and Kastoria

Recommended suppliers & contact info	
Accommodation in Kastoria	Hotel Doltsio , Orologopoulos Mansion , Paralimnio Suites , Andromeda Hotel
Restaurants	Psarades: Syntrofia Guesthouse , Paradosi Agios Achilios: Agios Achilios Restaurant , Agios Germanos: To Tzaki , Prespeion Kastoria: Old Town , Grada , Kratergo , Grammofono , Family Restaurant , Allotino
Activities	Sightseeing and food tasting in Prespes; Sightseeing in Kastoria
Local guides in Kastoria	Culture 8 Wildlife & Culture (Nikos Marmaridis: +30 694 430 5386; can arrange complete ground service, inclusive of guidance, local transfers, accommodation, meals, etc.) Prespa Experience (regional tourism portal)
Museums & amenities	Kastoria: Folklore Museum of Kastoria , Byzantine Museum of Kastoria , Traditional Costume Museum ,
Events	Cultural calendar of Kastoria



Day 6 Greece / Kastoria to Thessaloniki via Edessa and Pella

08:30-10:00 Checkout from beautiful Kastoria after breakfast, followed by another visit worth our time in the area, the Neolithic lakeside village and reconstruction at **Dispilio**, which gives you a real feel for life in a village in the middle of the 6th Millennium BC.



10:00-12:00 Transfer Kastoria to Edessa.

12:00-13:30 Our first enroute visit takes place in the town of **Edessa**. Waterfalls are considered as one of the most impressive natural phenomena around the world.

We will enjoy a visit to Greece's picturesque waterfall in Edessa town which happens to be the capital of Pella. The main volume of water was collected in a small basin in the west side of the city, up to the end of the 14th century, but due to a geological phenomenon the water changed course and crossed the city forming this spectacular waterfall; meanwhile numerous smaller sized rivers were created and the lake, where the water was once accumulated, eventually dried out. Many 17th and 18th century travelers described the city as built on a rock from which many waterfalls fell. We will enjoy the view of a green setting filled with tall trees and flowerbeds, located at the northeasternmost part of the town. **Karanos waterfall** measures 70 metres in height and is the biggest one in Greece. Lunch will be arranged near the waterfall, or in the old town of Edessa.



13:30-15:00 Lunch in Edessa. Contemporary Greek Macedonian cooking shares much with general Greek and wider Balkan Mediterranean cuisine, including dishes from the Ottoman past. Specific influences include dishes of the Slavic, Pontic, Aromanian, Armenian and Sephardi Jewish population. Our main dish for lunch in Edessa is a traditional one - Macedonian **sausages (loukanika)**, which are popular in many homes and most tavernas in the area.



The Macedonian sausage is spicy with the use of local paprika. The second prominent ingredient in Macedonian sausages are leeks, often used winter ingredient. The ingredients in between are seasonings and spices and up to interpretation from family to family, town to town. For desert we will enjoy the famous **cherries, peaches and apricots** grown on vast orchards in the Edessa area (depending on the season).



15:00-16:00 Transfer Edessa to Pella

16:00-17:30 **Pella** is the historical capital of the Kingdom of Ancient Macedonia, and birthplace of Alexander the Great. We will visit the monumental palatial complex that occupies the northernmost hill of the city, also wander around the city's commercial and manufacturing centre, the so-called agora, which was in fact the biggest agora of the ancient world. The two-storey private houses of Pella built in Doric and Ionic style brings to mind images of a prosperous, ancient, city. We will definitely not miss the outstanding mosaic floors that used to decorate the city's grand mansions.



17:30-20:00 Late afternoon transfer from Pella to Thessaloniki, followed by check in, rest and time to enjoy the bustling atmosphere of the largest city in Northern Greece.

20:00-22:00 Our gastronomy focus tonight is on the **Ladadika** district, a beautiful walkable area in the center of the city, which is one of the favorite destinations for both local and tourist visitors and the city's bohemian community. Ladadika is one of the hot spots of Thessaloniki when it comes to the food. It is located in a central area right opposite to the port's central gate and within a five-minute walk from Aristotle's square.



The colorful buildings are two-story with wide, rectangular windows and, along with the paved alleys, they exhale the spirit of old Thessaloniki. Here the old merges with the new. It hosted numerous shops and stores but since the Great Fire of 1917 and afterwards, it began to decline and some decades later only the oil selling shops remained open. This was until the late '70s when the area was fully abandoned. In 1985 it was declared a historical monument by the Ministry of Culture; the entire area was protected by law in order to preserve its original style and character. Ladadika soon came back to life, when small taverns, bars and restaurants opened and reoccupied the once abandoned and now renovated old buildings and welcomed the locals and tourists of all ages.

Ladadika area's pedestrians are filled with "**ouzeri**" while traditional taverns are found in almost every part of the area. There are many different taverns and restaurants in Ladadika that the guests can choose to go to, depending on their preference (fresh fish and seafood, as well as famous greek dishes and international cuisine). Thessaloniki is also famous for its big **souvlaki** (pork meat slices in a round pita bread with potatoes, tomatoes, onions, and **tzatziki**, a cucumber-yogurt-garlic sauce) and visitors will easily find "souvlatzidiko" (souvlaki shops) across the area. Overnight takes place in Thessaloniki.

Transfer duration / distance: 3 h 13 min / 200 km
 Meals: B (hotel), L (local restaurant), D (local restaurant)
 Accommodation: Thessaloniki
 Activities: Sightseeing in the areas of Edessa and Pella

Recommended suppliers & contact info	
Accommodation in Thessaloniki	The Modernist , The Caravan B&B , Blue Bottle , Colors Urban Hotel , Anatolia , Park
Restaurants	Edessa: Ousies , Stavianis , Geusidromio , Kouzina , Kelari Thessaloniki: Elia Lemoni , Gialos , Dia Xoiros , Kanoula , Xaroupi , Nama , Rouga
Activities	Sightseeing / visit of waterfall
Local guides in Edessa & Pella	Mr. Stefanos Papagiannakis (+30 2310 500225) (travel agent)
Museums & amenities	Edessa: City Museum Pella: Archaeological Museum of Pella
Events	Cultural events in Edessa (p12-14)

Day 7 Greece / Food walk in Thessaloniki

09:00-14:00 We will start off the morning in Thessaloniki with guided **walk (and breakfast on the move)** around the city's most famous markets. Firstly we visit **Kapani** market, located just off Aristotelous Square and Venizelou street. This is a local market that sells a variety of meats, seafood and staples for the regular shoppers. Along with staples, the market sells many of the specialized products and finished goods locally made from the region and are very popular with locals and tourists alike. Food stops can be made at different vendors on the market so guests can try some of their delicious foods including a **Koulouris** (aka Gevrek) with a Yogurt or Ayran. Another highlight of the Greek (among other green markets of the Southern Europe) are the varieties of delicious **olives**, as well as the sweet shops offering delicacies like **halva**.



Our second market of Thessaloniki is **Modiano**. Filled with authentic seafood and meat stalls, the market smells of fresh caught Aegean delicacies and fish, local meat and finished products, fresh produce and delicious pastry shops that are frequented for their famous **Spanakopita** (spinach) and **Tiropita** (cheese) pies. The carpenter and herb areas around the central market are very colorful and filled with specialty shops and local craftsmen making a variety of basketry and furniture from the region.





During the walk the guests will also enjoy a variety of flavored **ouzo** or **tsipouro** at a the local ouzeris in the marketplace. The drinks are always combined with local appetizers. Thessaloniki is celebrated for its many **mezedes**, or casual eateries around the city. Most featured different takes on local specialties of savory pies, **gyros**, grilled fish like sardines, **kalamaria gemista** (squid stuffed with feta), **melitzanosalata** (smoked eggplant and walnut tapenade) and **bougatsa**, a rich phyllo pastry filled with cheese, meat, or sweet custard. If the food walk hasn't satisfied our guests' hunger yet, then we will be happy to arrange lunch at local taverna in Ladadika, the old quarters of Thessaloniki.

14:00-19:00 Free afternoon.

19:00-21:00 For our farewell dinner in Thessaloniki we will attend cooking lesson specializing in the Greek cuisine, where you will have the opportunity to put your hand in the dough and participate more in the preparation of Greek menu. You will learn the benefits of the healthy Mediterranean kitchen and the variety of ingredients and herbs of each region. A welcome Greek coffee with handmade cookies will put you in the mood of being ready to learn to cook Greek. Ouzo assortments, pita pies, the world wide known moussaka, vegetarian dishes and many other recipes, selected with the best ingredients from under the Mediterranean sun. After 2 hours of hands on cooking, dinner will be served in the dining room where you will have the opportunity to taste all the dishes prepared by you, with a glass of the finest Greek wines. Overnight takes place in Thessaloniki.



Transfer duration / distance: //

Meals: B (hotel), L (local restaurant), D (local restaurant/cooking demonstration)

Accommodation: Thessaloniki

Activities: Sightseeing, food tasting and cooking demonstration in Thessaloniki

Recommended suppliers & contact info	
Accommodation in Thessaloniki	The Modernist , The Caravan B&B , Blue Bottle , Colors Urban Hotel , Anatolia , Park
Restaurants	Thessaloniki: Elia Lemoni , Gialos , Dia Xoiros , Kanoula , Xaroupi , Nama , Rouga Cooking lab: Marmita (owned and operated by Eat and Walk)
Activities	Sightseeing / food tasting / cooking demonstration
Local guides in Thessaloniki	Eat and Walk (guided food walk as well as cooking demonstration)
Museums & amenities	Markets of Thessaloniki (Kapani, Modiano)
Events	Thessaloniki Street Food Festival



Day 8 – Departure

Checkout from hotel and departure to Thessaloniki or Skopje airport. End of program.

Price per person in DBL/TWIN occupancy (NET, in EUR):

2-6 pax (minivan)	1828 eur
7-15 pax (minibus)	1058 eur

Note: Detailed costing is given in separate sheet (with approx. prices; please inquire directly with the suppliers for availability, pricing and bookings).

Included:

- Transportation throughout the journey (English speaking driver, fuel, pay tolls, parking incl.)
- Tour leader
- Accommodation in DOUBLE/TWIN rooms at conveniently located 3* hotels (as per program)
- Meals as per program: breakfast at hotels; lunches & dinners at small family owned local restaurants; Beverages excl.)
- Activities, equipment and local activity guides as per program
- Entrance fees at national parks and archaeological sites
- 24/7 assistance from Macedonia Experience

Not Included:

- Flights
- Airport transfers
- Single supplement (please account for cca 50% supplement to the reference prices of accommodation in DBL/TWIN occupancy)
- Travel insurance (please see below, in ADDITIONAL INFORMATION)
- Gratuities
- Personal expenses



Additional information:

Insurance information

- If the tour product is distributed directly (b2c distribution), then the tour organizer always requires clients to have valid travel insurance in order to confirm booking (the check is always conducted during the welcome meeting by the tour leader)
- If the tour product is distributed to company buyers (b2b distribution), its common company policy among tour operators in most western markets to require from their clients to have valid travel insurance in order to be eligible to sign up for a trip, and it's the duty of the ground agent to check the travel insurance on tour start (the check is always conducted during the welcome meeting by the tour leader)

Best time to go

We recommend April-October for this trip.

Activity level and accessibility

The activity level of this trip is leisurely. This is a cultural discovery trip with some walking, required both to access the sites and to make the most of the trip. The city tours are on foot. Travel is by private bus, generally on good roads and there are some long drives due to the distances covered on the trip.

This trip is not suitable for full wheelchair users, but it may be suitable for other persons of reduced mobility.

Packing list

Please pay attention to the equipment lists listed under each day's description.

Visas

No visa required for N.Macedonia and Greece for EU,USA,AUS,CAN,GB passport holders. Vaccinations

There are no specific health risks in both N.Macedonia and Greece.

Weather

The Balkans enjoy a similar climate to most of Central Europe - hot summers, cool springs and autumns and cold winters with considerable snowfall. We schedule trips May to September, when temperatures will be generally warmer (20-30°C). However, these temperatures will be a little cooler in the mountain areas. In July and August we can easily expect 25-35 degrees Celsius during the day. The weather in this region can sometimes be unpredictable where Mediterranean and Continental Alpine climates vie for supremacy. The result is an extremely unpredictable climate even in summer. Rain can fall at any time of the year, although in mid-summer it is more likely to come as short, sharp thunderstorms.

Eating and Drinking

Food in both N.Macedonia and Greece is quite varied thanks to the many regional influences, particularly Mediterranean combining Ottoman, Oriental and European tastes. Many corners of the Balkans have popular dishes



with the same names but often have big differences in taste. Dairy products, especially milk and yoghurt are present in many dishes. Grilled meats are very popular with pork and lamb being prevalent in both countries. Pastries, pies, salads and fresh vegetable dishes are a staple of the local diet.

Local wines are incredibly good value, especially wines from the region of Western Macedonia in Greece. Rakija, similar to brandy, is very popular in N.Macedonia (and tsipouro being its counterpart in Greece), and often locals make their own.

Vegetarian and special dietary requirements can be catered for. Please inform us for any specific requirements prior arrival.

Tour leader profile (Requirements & Responsibilities):

- Minimum 2 years active in the field working as a tour guide
- Consistently deliver a high level of customer service and traveller satisfaction
- Provide leadership for our travellers and be responsible for their well-being.
- Continually increase his/her knowledge about the visited areas, their culture, religion, current affairs, environment, etc.
- Have detailed knowledge of hotels, sights, restaurants, transport, souvenirs, prices, etc.
- Maintain a valid passport
- Keep vaccinations and preventive medication up to date.
- Act as day-to-day guide, interpreter and manager of the group
- Deal directly with traveller's issues and concerns, ensuring that passenger satisfaction is effectively achieved
- Maintain the established travel itinerary as closely as possible, making changes only when necessary.
- Keep track of reservations for accommodation, transportation and activities as required
- Assist and accompany travellers during optional activities and meals
- Advise travellers on suitable restaurants, additional transport requirements, purchase of souvenirs, etc.
- Maintain daily expenditure accounts, retain receipts and keep expenses within the trip budget provided
- Provide a report for each trip
- Excellent people skills
- Awareness of and commitment to sustainable tourism
- Resourceful, decisive and able to take action and resolve problems as they arise.
- Bilingualism and language skills (English is mandatory; Greek is an advantage)
- Knowledge of regional and local area
- First Aid/CPR Certification
- Background in basic computer and social networking skills



