





# Albania

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## Why Go?

Alps sprout in the background, plains and lakes surround the traveller to Albania (or Shqipëria, as the locals call it) with dramatically different cultural and geographical landscapes. City slickers can down coffee in busy, always surprising Tirana before heading to an exhibition or nightclub.

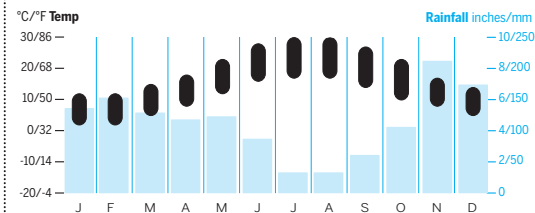
After years of government-enforced isolation, Albanians welcome travellers with sincere hospitality. Upgraded roads swirl past the new houses and bar/restaurant/hotel developments that demonstrate the country's newfound prosperity.

August sees quiet seaside spots morph into loud discolorated towns where every day is a thumping weekend. Head north and you might spot locals in traditional dress, sworn virgins and shepherds guiding flocks in the otherwise inhospitable mountains.

Albania is unforgettable: donkeys tethered to concrete bunkers, houses crawling up each other to reach the hilltops in Berat and Gjirokastra, and isolated beaches.

## When to Go

### Tirana



**June** Enjoy the Mediterranean climate and deserted beaches.

**August** Beaches are packed and overseas-based Albanians return to holiday with their families.

**December** See features and shorts at the Tirana Film Festival. Snowshoe to Theth.