



Kosovo

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Best Places to Stay

- » Hotel Sara (p453)
- » Hotel Royal (p453)

Best Places to Eat

- » Renaissance-2 (p456)
- » Tiffany (p456)

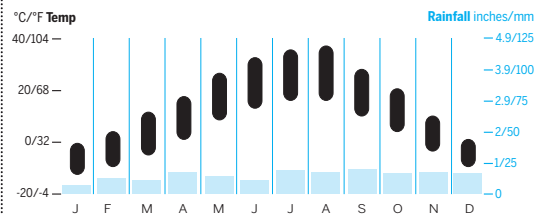
Why Go?

Everyone loves a newborn, and since 2008, when Kosovo declared independence, large letters spelling 'NEWBORN' have graced a section of pavement in Pristina. The location, between the secure offices of the UN and a shopping mall featuring ubiquitous European clothing stores and a sky-clawing crumbling concrete monument, tells it all. Kosovo is finding its feet. Staff from international organisations glam up Pristina's restaurants, cafes and bars, as do talented Kosovars who are taking their seats for the ride forward.

Barbs of its past are impossible to miss: roads are dotted with memorials featuring etchings of those killed in 1999, when Serbia stripped Kosovo of its autonomy and initiated ethnic cleansing. Kosovo's modern architectural standouts may stand out for all the wrong reasons, but what the rebuilt country lacks in style, it makes up for with its mountain-backed towns, hiking opportunities and 13th-century Serbian monasteries, all no more than a couple of hours' drive from its capital.

When to Go

Pristina



December-April
The skiing's good in these months.

July The Ship Film Fest brings short films to Peja.

August It's a sweat-free summer as temperatures hover in the mid-20s°C.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** euro (€)
- » **Language** Albanian and Serbian
- » **Money** ATMs in larger towns; banks open Mon-Fri
- » **Visas** Kosovo has no visa scheme at the time of research. Passports are stamped for a 90-day stay.

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 10,887 sq km
- » **Capital** Pristina
- » Telephone area code 381
- » **Emergency** police 92, fire 93, ambulance 94

Exchange rates

Australia	A\$1	€0.75
Canada	C\$1	€0.74
Japan	¥100	€0.89
New Zealand	NZ\$1	€0.57
UK	UK£1	€1.18
USA	US\$1	€0.74

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget accommodation** €10 to €15 per person
- » **Two-course meal** €10-20
- » **Museum entrance** €1 to €3
- » **Local beer** Peja €2

Resources

- » **Balkan Insight** (www.balkaninsight.com)
- » **Balkanology** (www.balkanology.com)
- » **Balkans Peace Park** (www.balkanspeacepark.org)

Connections

Kosovo has good bus connections between Albania, Montenegro and Macedonia, and there's a train line from Pristina to Macedonia's capital, Skopje. If you plan to go to Serbia but entered Kosovo via Albania, Macedonia or Montenegro, officials at the Serbian border will deem that you entered Serbia illegally and you will not be let in.

ITINERARIES

Two to Three Days

Fine dining and museum finding in Pristina, a visit to Gračanica Monastery and a curl through the mountains to Prizren's Ottoman sights.

One Week

After two or three days in the capital, loop to Prizren for castle views and its ethnographic museum, then Peja for monasteries, markets and mountain strolling.

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Byrek** Pastry with cheese or meat
- » **Duvëc** Baked meat and vegetables
- » **Fli** Flaky pastry pie served with honey
- » **Kos** Goat's-milk yogurt
- » **Pershut** Dried meat
- » **Qofta** Flat or cylindrical minced-meat rissoles
- » **Raki** Locally made spirit, usually made from grapes
- » **Tavë** Meat baked with cheese and egg
- » **Vranac** Red wine from the Rahovec region of Kosovo