

Tirana / Zurich, December 2023

2024: Exclusive

Singletrack Kosovo & Albania

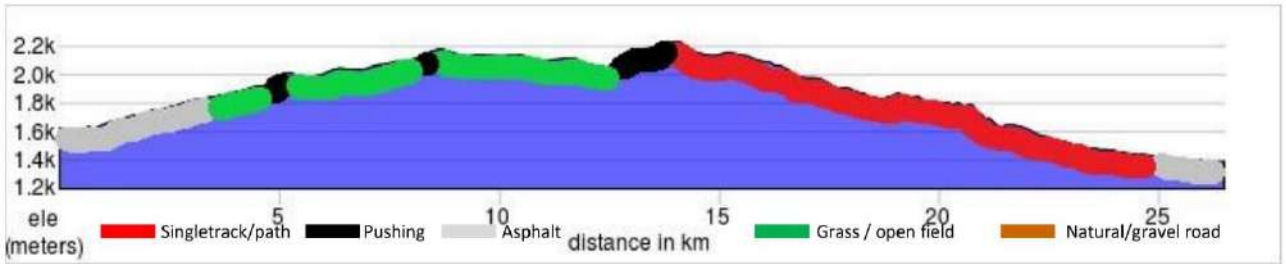
On the bike from mountains to sea,
while pioneering through Europe's last adventure!

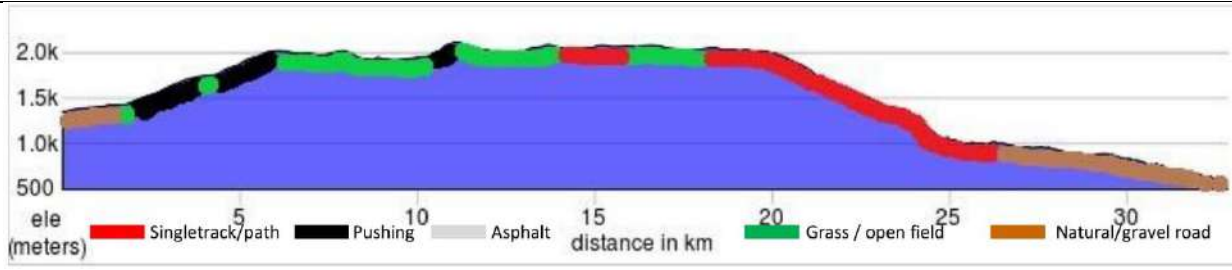
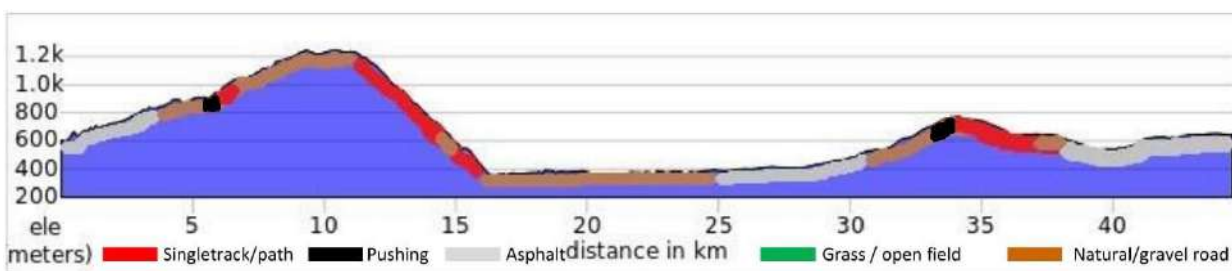


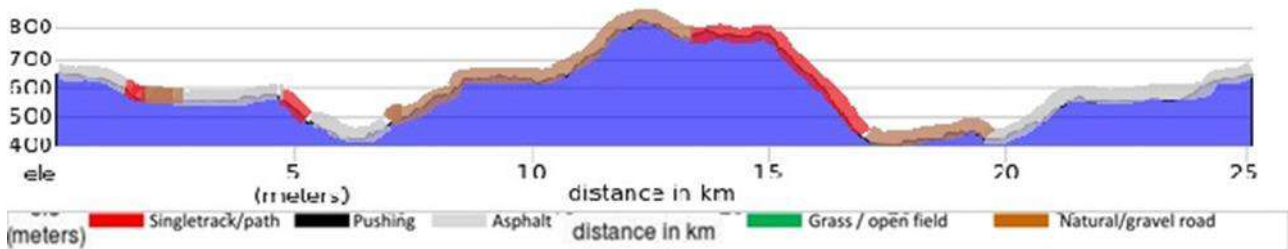
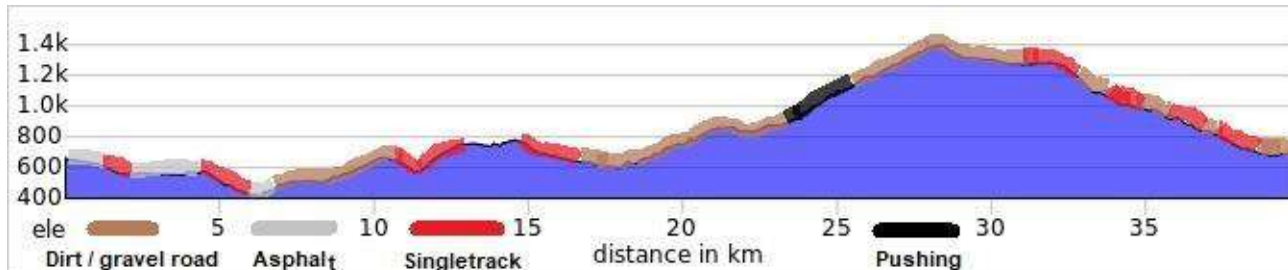
Slovenia? Cappadocia? Madeira? All well and good, but here comes real new land, “terra incognita” for the biker soul. A landscape full of isolated mountains, seemingly fallen from another time. Biking through Kosova and Albania's mountains - probably one of the last adventures of Europe. That's impressive hospitality, archaic villages and mountainous land of strong beauty, without cable cars, asphalt roads or holiday resorts. Instead shepherds and their flock, friendly encounters in no man's land, and the feeling of true pioneering. On single tracks (approx. 50%) and wild gravel roads we're on tour in alpine and semi-alpine areas up to 7200ft, biking through remote valleys and past mysterious hamlets. During a whole week, from Kosova to Albania, until we finally reach the Adriatic sea. From mountains to sea – that's a story to tell back home!

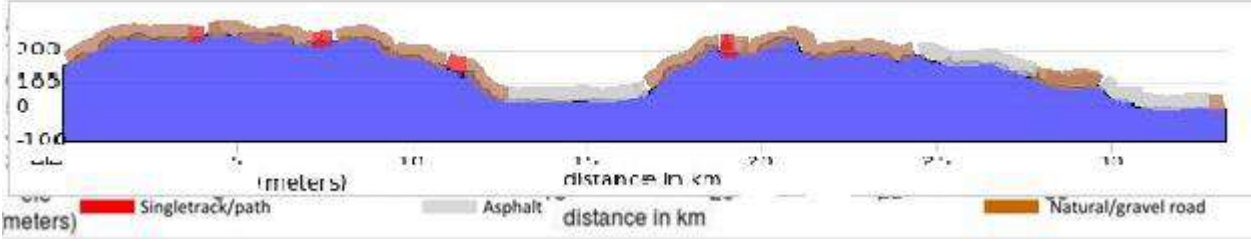
Highlights

- Developed by a Swiss-British bike expert living in Albania and guided by professional local guides
- Min. 50% single tracks, from alpine terrain on 7000ft down to the sea
- Small, beautiful and safe, max. 9x guests in a group
- Minibus for luggage transport and break if needed

Travel itinerary	
Day 1:	<p>Travel to Pristina KOSOVA Please arrive until 2pm latest</p> <p>Pickup from airport, transfer to Prizren/KS, dinner and accommodation at hotel („Prizreni“ or similar). If some time left a walk through the historic town, Prizren is the most attractive city of Kosova. Or we start directly with a singletrack above the city, we know a gem out there...</p>
Day 2:	<p>On the single tracks of the isolated Kosovar mountains Day tour in the Dragash area, approx 35km, 2400ft+ / 4800ft- Ascent incl. approx. 1h pushing (but no carrying)</p> <p>1.5h transfer in the morning, after that alpine tour in Kosovas most remote corner, „Dragash“, the mysterious 3-border area of Kos/Alba/Macedonia. Higher than 7000ft we bike on single tracks and meadows past mountain lakes, fresh streams and friendly greeting shepherds. As in the alps 100 years ago! The day's end brings a tasting of local cheese, and a shot of "raki" to celebrate. Accommodation in Dragash (Hotel „Mekka“).</p> 
Day 3:	<p>In the alpine frontier area of Kosova and Albania Day tour in the frontier area, approx 38km, 3900ft + / 5900ft- Ascent incl. approx. 2h pushing (but no carrying)</p> <p>Early morning transfer to a remote (but official) border crossing into Albania, entry and start of day tour in alpine area (7000ft+) along the borderline. During communism heavily guarded, today only the occasional bunker-ruins give witness of the borderline in this otherwise completely deserted mountain area. Great downhill single track with curved trail and varied terrain over nearly 6000ft altitude. Overnight stay at traditional guesthouse ("Shtini") in a beautiful mountain village ("Fshat").</p>

	
Day 4:	<p>Village trails and fresh water Day tour through Albanias most eastern province ("Diber"), approx. 45km +4300ft. / 4800ft- Ascent incl. approx. 30min pushing (but no carrying)</p> <p>Today there`s something of everything, and on top of it some special. After a short asphalt climb some incredible singletracks takes us down to the black Drin, the free floating river of the region. Over dirt roads we then bike to lunch, which we enjoy as a picnic on the rivers green banks Strengthened we start the second half of our day, and part of that is a fantastic flow trail connecting two villages. Goal of this day is the regional town of Peshkopi, where with some time left we hang our legs in an improvised sulfur-bath at the edge of the road – nothing that wouldn't exist here...</p> <p>Accommodation at the best Hotel in town ("Piazza"), freshly renovated and with modern comfort.</p> 
Day 5:	<p>The natural bike park – and a splash of cold water (alternative possibility for rest day) Day round-tour on the hills of the "Black Drin" river, approx, 25km 2500ft+ / 2500ft-</p> <p>We cross the delta of the black Drin – a short splash is a must, its mostly warm here – and climb up into the hills. Once on top we get treated with smooth single tracks and panoramas of the opposite border mountains. In intervals of climbs and varied downhill's we ride some trails coming very close to a human made bike park – but actually nothing else than old village trails together with mother nature`s work. Back down at our old friend the river Drin we enjoy a swim in its cold clear water – followed by a nap in the grass, today also deserves a moment of "chilling". We spend a second night at the comfortable "Hotel Piazza" in Peshkopi, which allows us to give some laundry & get it back fresh the next day. As mentioned above today also would allow an individual pause of biking if preferred/needed.</p>

	
Day 6:	<p>Over hidden trails to the mining town of Bulqize Day tour into inner Albania, approx. 40km, 4400ft + / 4300ft – Ascent incl. approx. 1h pushing (but no carrying)</p> <p>Today starts with downhill & a view, before we cross for a last time the Drin river and climb over natural roads into a remote mountain valley. The trail takes us along one of the most authentic villages of Albania, with fences woven from branches, cattle in the alleys, and local youngsters rather perplexed by us bikers. The highest point and the following downhill past alpine huts including some cool singletrack we earn with a juicy technical climb – or why not a little walk. The accommodation on this day is a memorable one. We are guests at the Hupi-family in their centuries old defense-tower, which over the past few years was renovated into a stunning guesthouse full of details and history. What hasn't been changed: the authentic Albanian hospitality and the delicious homemade food. Enjoy!</p> 
Day 7:	<p>Sea in sight! Day tour to the sea, approx 34km 2000ft+ / 2300ft - Ascent incl. approx. 20min pushing (but no carrying)</p> <p>After a bus transfer close to the capital Tirana we today get our swim in the sea: Lonely trails with a fresh breeze bring us on this last day to the beach, where we celebrate the end of a memorable week over grilled fish & white wine. Respect for you bike-pioneers, from 7000ft in Kosovas mountains down to sea level zero of the Adriatic! Accommodation in a comfortable hotel in Tirana.</p>

	
Day 8:	<p>Travel home from Tirana AL Transfer from hotel to airport</p> <p>Upon request were happy to organize you an additional TIRANA NIGHT (to Sunday) or even a WEEK at one of Albania's nice beaches – both is attractive.</p>

Open small group dates 2024 (min 4x and max 9x) :

July 6-13

Sept 7-14

Oct 5-12

If it should be another date and you can bring your group of at least 5x guests – let's discuss the options.

To secure yourself today a place in this adventure for 2023 send us a mail with your preferred date to tobi@ride-albania.com, and we'll get in touch with you.

Mail tobi@ride-albania.com

Web www.ride-albania.com



RIDE ALBANIA
MOUNTAIN BIKING

Prices: 1290 Euro per person, when joining one of our small groups of 4-9 guests (min. / max.) on this described tour / above dates

Single room-surcharge: 200 Euro (For 5x nights, other nights no single rooms available).

Rental bikes: We have a limited supply of Full suspensions for 300 Euro/week. Or you bring your own, and then we will transport your bike bag/box from Kosovo/arrival directly to Tirana for repacking last day.

Included:

- 6x guided bike day tours with our professional bike guide and mechanic Arben "Beni" Kuqi. From 7x guests onward we always have an additional / second bike guide riding at the end of the group – for maximum safety and your very personal choice of speed.
- All accommodations (5x in comfortable hotel double or single rooms (Prizren/Dragash/Peshkopi/Tirana), 2x in traditional family guesthouses (only dormitory rooms, Fshat/FusheBulqize), all meals & non-alcoholic beverages (hearty breakfast in accommodations, lunch in simple inns along the route or picnic, traditional Albanian dinners in the guesthouses, in Tirana grill / fish)
- All transfers as in program (including from/to airport)
- Luggage transport to the accommodations
- Assistance-vehicle for technical support / support in case of emergencies (but not "follow-car" permanently available to hop in)

Not included:

- Travel to Pristina Kosova and home from Tirana Albania
- Personal bikes & equipment (upon request we have a limited number of quality rental bikes)
- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal expenses for souvenirs tips etc.
- International valid accident insurance (mandatory)

Tour and prices valid for the year 2024. Tour/product changes reserved. This tour and all the text including related images are intellectual property of Ride Albania Mountain Biking.



Difficulty level of described tour:

Fitness – 3 (on a scale with 4 as maximum): mountain bike-tour with daily stretches around 40km and cumulative climbs of 4000ft, equaling approx. 4-7h pure daily saddle time. Partly also technical climbs, which when riding requires additional energy/power. Realistically speaking some ascents also contain pushing sections, find more info on that in the daily description. July & September can be pretty warm (30 degree+) especially in lower altitudes, which means a further energy consumption. A strong physical constitution therefore is necessary.

Technical difficulty level - This single track week contains approx. 50% single track sections of different difficulty levels, which are S0 to S2 on the German single track-scale <https://translate.google.ch/translate?sl=de&tl=en&js=y&prev=t&hl=en&ie=UTF-8&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.singletrail-skala.de%2F&edit-text=> , with S2 being rather seldom. While rock-blocked sections or big drops hardly have to be expected, there are several rocky sections, on downhill's as well as on climbs. Also possible are some pushing or (short) carrying sections. Prerequisite for this week therefore is an advanced biking experience incl. single tracks up to S2 level.

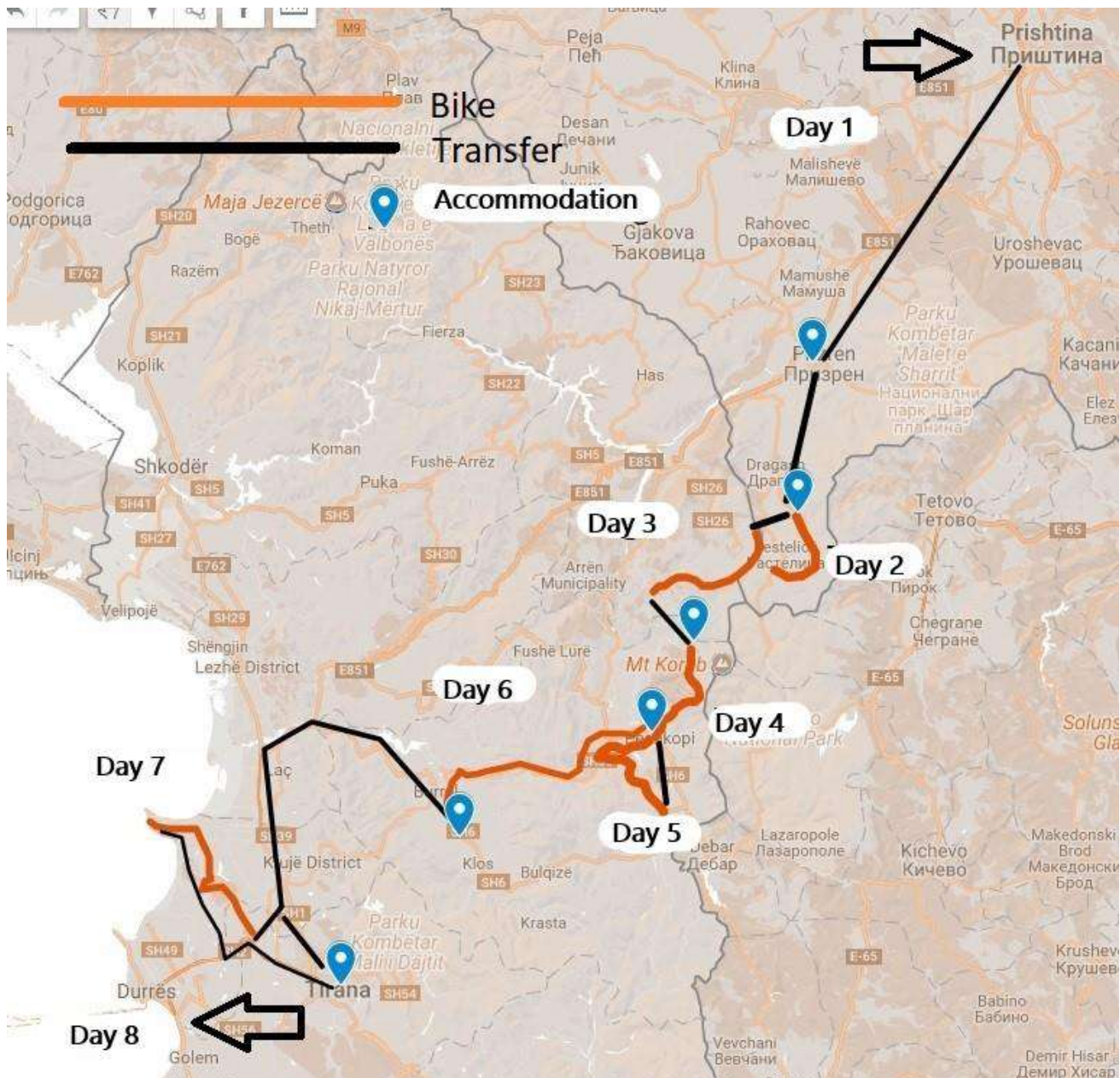
Safety:

Albania and Kosova do not have the emergency services speed and also not the following medical care of Western Europe. Nevertheless we see all mountain/ tour-mountain biking still as relatively safe, also in Albania & Kosova. Additional we are careful in our route planning and in descents, and of course we have first aid equipment, emergency numbers and a satellite-phone always with us. The local inhabitants are very helpful and concerned about the well-being of foreign guests. On the side of our guests a valid accident insurance with international coverage and the signature of a liability-disclaimer before the tour is mandatory.

About us / Ride Albania Mountain Biking:

We are the British/Swiss experts in Albania for mountain biking. Living since 2013 in the country, we develop trails and destinations, deliver guide trainings and expertise, and every year we take a limited number of guests on exclusive bike journeys into the Albanian mountains.

➡ Is this for me, my level and interests, will it make me smile? Any other question about the tour? We`re happy to make a call or chat with you over whatsapp +355 69 870 57 93 – anytime



Ride Albania Mountain Biking is a legally registered Albanian business, based in Tirana Albania. It has the identification number L81613021L and the official registration certificate with the serial number SN-528836-04-18. Sole legal owner and representative of the business is the Swiss national and Albanian resident Tobias Gessler.



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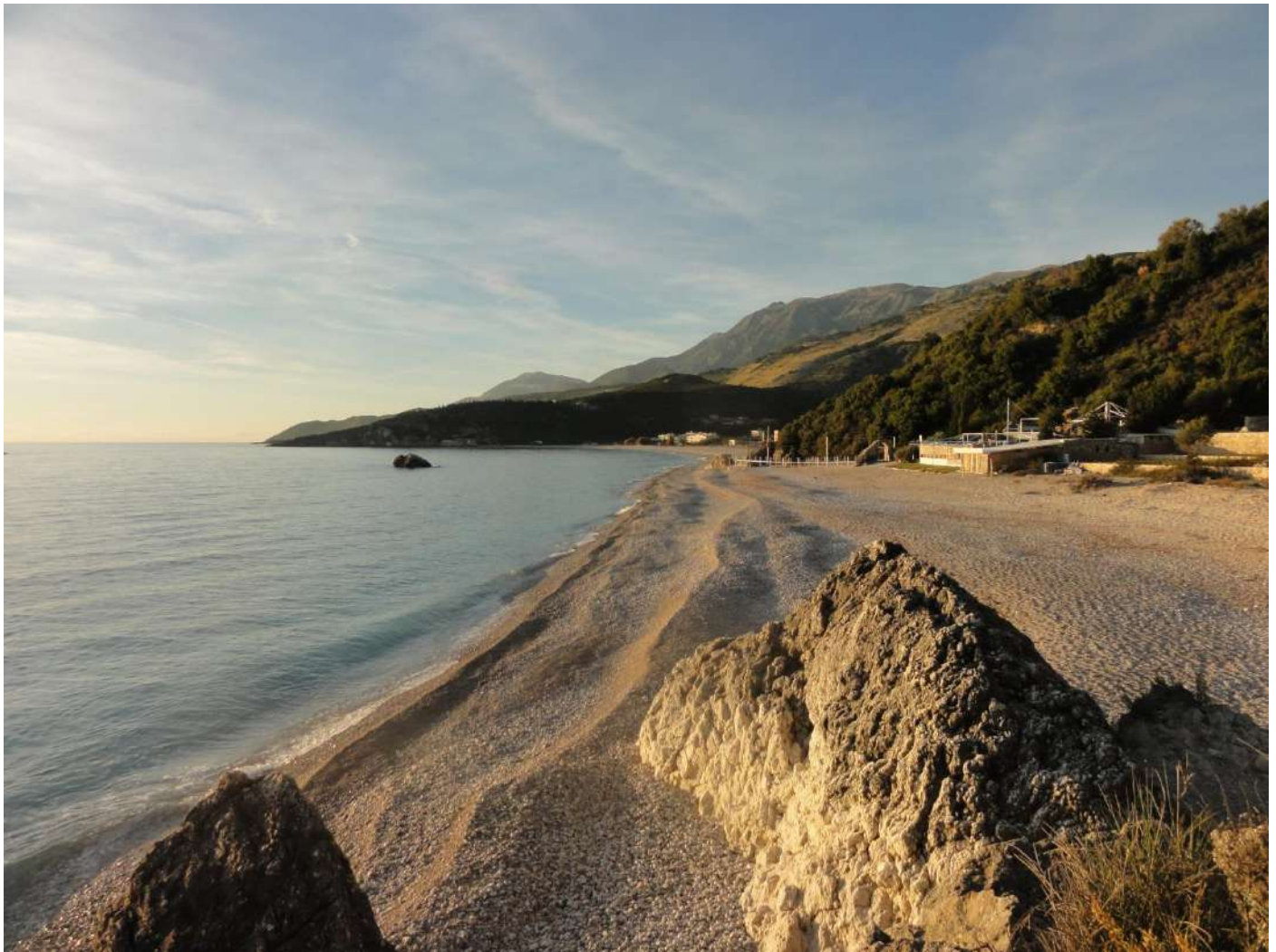
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Further impressions from this adventure you find here:

<http://www.ride-albania.com/gallery/>