

Jim Gold International Folk Dance Tours

Albania!

Vlora Folk Dance Festival Tour

Folk Dancing, Culture, Art, History, Adventure !

May 7-19, 2019

Led by Lee Otterholt

Kosovo extension: May 19-21, 2019

- ★ **10 international folk dance groups dancing at Vlora International Folk Dance Festival "Aulona"**
- ★ **See Tirana, Durres, Vlora, Kruja, Saranda, Berat, Shkodra and Gjirokastra!**
- ★ **Meet and dance with Albanian folk dance groups and teachers!**
- ★ **International dancing with Lee Otterholt!**
- ★ **Price includes transfers, hotels, private bus, guide, festival, sightseeing, dance lessons, and all breakfasts and dinners!**

Itinerary

Day 1: May 7: Tuesday: Depart on airlines of your choice to Tirana, Albania.

Day 2: May 8: Wednesday: Transfer from Tirana International Airport to our hotel in Durres. Welcome dinner in a traditional restaurant. Overnight in the Arvi Hotel.

Day 3: May 9: Thursday: Durres—Apollonia—Vlore

Walking tour of Durres. Drive through Albania's oil fields towards the 7th century BC archaeological site of Apollonia, second largest Greek colony in Albania. Scenic drive along the Albanian coast. See island Monastery of Zvernec. Folk dancing with Lee. Dinner/ overnight at Vlora International Hotel.

Day 4-6: May 10-12: Friday-Sunday: Vlora International Folk Dance Festival "Aulona!"

Spend three day in beautiful city of Vlora watching Albanian and international folk dance groups! In addition we will arrange private lessons so we can learn from and dance with many of these groups and get to know them up close and personally.

Day 7: May 13: Monday: Vlora—Saranda

Drive along the spectacular Albanian Riviera looking down at the Ionian Sea. . Stop for refreshment and photos in Llogara. Lunch in local restaurant in Himara. See Himara Old Town

and the 18th century Panormic castle of Ali Pasha in Porto Palermo Bay. Head for Saranda. Hear polyphonic songs performed, then folk dance with local Polyphonic Group Zeri i Bilbilit. Dinner in local restaurant by the sea. Overnight in Saranda's Brilant Hotel.

Day 8: May 14: Tuesday: Saranda—Butrinti—Blue Eye Spring—Gjirokastra

Drive to 7th century BC city of Butrinti, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Asclepeion temple, Roman baths, all originating as a Greek colony in the 7th century BC. Visit 14th century Venetian castle. Stop at Blue Eye Spring. Lunch. Then on to UNESCO World Heritage town of Gjirokastra, birthplace of Enver Hoxha, dictator of Albania (1908-1985). Tour castle and Skendulli house. Folk dance with Lee. Dinner/overnight at Cajupi Hotel in Gjirokastra.

Day 9: May 15: Wednesday: Berat

Visit winery for wine tasting and snack en route to Berat, a town famous for its white-washed houses with many windows. Folk dancing with Lee. Dinner and overnight at Mangalemi Hotel.

Day 10: May 16: Thursday: Berat-Shkodra

Depart for Shkodra. Visit 4th century BC Illyrian castle. Lunch in local restaurant in Shkodra. (optional). Visit at the Catholic Cathedral. Dinner a traditional restaurant where Albanian highlands food is served. Overnight in Shkodra at Colosseo Hotel.

Day 11: May 17: Friday: Shkodra-Lezha-Kruja-Tirana

Travel to ancient town of Lissius. See Saint Nicolas cathedral where the national hero, Scanderbeg is buried. On to Kruja, Scanderbeg's home town Visit traditional carpet workshop, 18th century bazaar, Ethnographic Museum, and castle where the Bektashi—a little-known Muslim sect—Dollma Teqe (Bektashi Mosque) dwell. Folk dancing with Lee. Dinner in local restaurant. Overnights in Tirana International Hotel.

Day 12: May 18: Saturday: Tirana

Walking tour of Tirana including Et'Hem Bej Mosque. Afternoon at leisure. **Folk dancing with Lee.** Dinner in local restaurant. Overnights in Tirana International Hotel. .

Day 13: May 19: Sunday: Transfer to Tirana International Airport

After breakfast transfer to Tirana International Airport for flight home. **OR: Take our:**

KOSOVO EXTENSION

Day 13: May 19: Sunday: Prizren

Walking tour of historic Prizren which is still populated today by Albanians, Serbs, Turks, and Bosnians. Possible Folk Show. Overnight Hotel Centrum.

Day 14: May 20: Monday: Pej, Gjakova

Morning drive to Pej. On route visit Gjakova bazaar, and Hadumi Mosque, one of the oldest in Balkans. See Serbian Monastery of Visoki Decani. Continues to Pej, Dinner in Rugova Canion local restaurant to enjoy and dance with local folk group from Rugova.

Day 15: May 21: Tuesday: Transfer to the Airport of Prishtina.

Albania Land Only: \$2995

Kosovo extension: \$695

REGISTRATION FORM: I can't wait to go! Enclosed is my registration deposit of \$200 per person. Single supplement: \$395. Kosovo extension: \$695 Kosovo single supplement \$125. Gratuities and drinks during meals not included. Program subject to change without notice. Cancellations 90 days prior to departure: Total refund: Less than 60 days: No refund. Travel insurance always recommended.

Total balance due February 1, 2019.

Kosovo extension: Yes No

Name _____

Address _____

No. of people _____ Phone (_____) _____ email _____

Make checks payable to: **Jim Gold International**, 497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A
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