

Sunday, 13th – Friday, 18th May



We have received confirmation from the Albanian and Macedonian authorities of our visits to their air forces.

The Albanian Air Force is unique in Europe in that it still has a sizeable number of classic Soviet and/or Chinese versions, of Russian fixed and rotary wing MiGs, Mils and Ilyushin types. No longer operational, they were withdrawn and placed in open or covered storage; on dispersals; in hardened aircraft shelters (HASs); and even in a tunnel bored into a mountainside! To date very few have suffered at the mechanical hands of the scrapman.

Conversely there are very few, if any, operational aircraft and helicopters from the Soviet-era Yugoslavian air force, now being operated by Macedonia's modernised armed forces. Conveniently neighbouring Albania, it is but a few hours drive to Macedonia and an opportunity to see their current air force and police aviation assets.

Here, then, is a chance to see some famous 'Cold War Warriors' along with the beautiful Albanian and Macedonian scenery and to meet the friendly, welcoming people.

We fly with Malev Airlines from London's Gatwick Airport, via Budapest to Tirana; travel in-country is by coach; we stay each night in a comfortable hotel on a bed and breakfast basis; and are accompanied by local English-speaking guides.

PROVISIONAL ITINERARY (all times local)

DAY 1: SUNDAY, 13th MAY

Please meet your Ian Allan Tour Manager, and fellow enthusiasts, in Malev Airline's check-in area which is located on the Departures level of the North Terminal at London's Gatwick Airport; latest check-in time is 06:55hrs..

✈ Gatwick Airport, North Terminal	Flight: MA 613	Departs: 08:55
✈ Budapest		Arrives: 12:15

On disembarking the aircraft we follow the signs for connecting or transfer passengers and go directly to the gate of our connecting flight to Tirana.

✈ Budapest	Flight: MA 430	Departs: 13:20
✈ Tirana		Arrives: 14:40

After the customary arrival procedures, we meet our local guide, Mrs Ardiola Alike (who accompanied our 2006 and 2007 groups), and our Albanian Air Force escort officer.

Boarding our awaiting coach we drive to Berat in the south of the country. En-route we stop by a Roman amphitheatre. We stay the night at the Tomorri Hotel located in the centre of this small town, on a bed & breakfast basis. <http://www.albania-hotel.com/albania/berat/hotels/tomorri-hotel>

DAY 2: MONDAY, 14th MAY

At 08:30 hrs. we depart the hotel and drive to the nearby ancient castle perched on the mountain top with glorious views out over the Albanian mountains, valleys and forests.

Late-morning we arrive at Kucova airbase, and the Akademia e Forcave Ajore. In our request, which was approved, we specifically asked for a walk-round tour to see and photograph the aircraft which are located at several places on the base: on the concrete dispersals, the engineering facility, the storage area and inside a tunnel.

Arriving in Tirana by 18:00 hrs., we stay 2 nights at the Tirana International Hotel located in the city centre, on a bed and breakfast basis. <http://www.tiranainternational.com/template.php?pag=35899>

DAY 3: TUESDAY, 15th MAY

Departing our hotel at 09:00 hrs. we visit the helicopter base at Farka, hidden away among the beautiful forested hills on the outskirts of Tirana. Here we will see both the modern helicopters in operation today, and the old types now retired from flying but parked around the base.

In the afternoon we arrive at the reserve airbase of Gjadri (Zadrime), to see the FAS's main aircraft storage site - a 600 meter 'hangar' running right through the mountain!

We arrive back at our hotel by 18:00 hrs..

In the evening, as it is our final night in Albania, we propose to host our Air Force escort officer and local guide to dinner at a local restaurant.

DAY 4: WEDNESDAY, 16th MAY

At 09:00 hrs. we leave for the old Lapraka air base which has now been swallowed up by the suburbs of Tirana; located here are the government and medical ambulance helicopter units.

Our second visit of the day is to Rinas AB, located at Tirana's Mother Teresa International Airport. Here we see the aircraft preserved on the Headquarters site, then go on to the operational area with H-5s, Y-5s, and more FT-5s, F-6s, F-7As stored in hardened aircraft shelters. Also visible during our last visit were the mangled remains of several Illuyshin (Avia) 14s.

Early afternoon we set off for the picturesque holiday resort of Ohrid, on the shores of Lake Ohrid, staying the night at the Hotel Bellevue on a bed and breakfast basis; the hotel is located in the centre of the town. <http://www.booking.com/hotel/mk/bellevue-ohrid.en.html>

DAY 5: THURSDAY, 17th MAY

At 08:30 hrs. we set off for Skopje, arriving midday at Skopje Airport where you have the opportunity to take lunch in the terminal building, at your own expense.

We visit the Macedonian Air Force's Petrovec airbase, co-located at the airport, to see and photograph both their operational aircraft and any withdrawn from use and in storage.

We stay overnight at the Best Western Hotel Bellevue, on a bed and breakfast basis. It has an on-site restaurant and bar, and is located 5 miles from the centre of Skopje and 10 miles from the airport. http://www.bestwestern.at/hotels/index_hotel.php?id=995



DAY 6: FRIDAY, 18th MAY

This morning we visit the Policija na Republika Makedonija to see their AB206, AB212 and B412 helicopters.

By 13:00hrs. we arrive at Skopje Airport and check in with Malev for our flights back to London via Budapest.

✈ Tirana
✈ Budapest

Flight: MA 441

Departs: 14:55
Arrives: 16:15

On arrival we proceed directly to the departure gate of our connecting flight to Gatwick.

✈ Budapest
✈ Gatwick Airport, North Terminal

Flight: MA 614

Departs: 17:15
Arrives: 18:45

Whilst waiting for our luggage in Baggage Reclaim, we take the opportunity to bid each farewell – until the next time.

PRICE PER PERSON	TOUR: 227207
From: £ 880.00	Package price based on sharing a twin bedded room on a bed and breakfast basis
£ 134.00	Single room supplement
On request	Land-only (NO flights) <i>PLEASE SPEAK WITH ONE OF OUR CONSULTANTS BEFORE BOOKING</i>

COST INCLUDES

- Flights on the scheduled services of Malev from London’s Gatwick Airport, as stated
- UK & Bulgarian airport taxes & UK Passenger Service Charge, currently £116.60 (subject to change)
- All coach transfers and transportation as stated
- 5-nights hotel accommodation in rooms with private facilities
- Continental breakfast each morning at the hotel
- Gratuity for coach driver
- Expenses of Albanian Air Force Escort
- Services of local English-speaking guides
- Services of an Ian Allan Tour Manager throughout

NOT INCLUDED

- Meals, other than those as stated above
- Travel insurance – see General Information
- Visas – not required by UK/EU citizens. See General Information
- Personal expenditure, e.g. telephone calls, laundry, drinks, etc.
- Tips and gratuities (other than for coach drivers)

Payment for Ian Allan Aviation Tours

A deposit of £250.00 per person should accompany your Booking Form, with the balance due 10 weeks prior to the tour's departure. Please see your Booking Confirmation/Invoice for the exact date. Please note that a reminder of the payment date will not be sent.

Passports and Visas

Citizens of the UK and EU are required to be in possession of a Full UK Passport, which must be valid for at least 6 months from the date of your return. You may also refer to the World Travel Guide website: www.wtgonline.com for general information on passports, visas and health requirements.

UK and EU passport holders do not require a visa to enter Albania or Macedonia.

If you hold a non UK or EU passport please contact the nearest Albanian and Macedonian Embassy.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) Consular Advice

The FCO's consular service is a major operation. Every hour of every day consular staff around the world are advising and helping British nationals. For up-to-date passport, visa and security information on the destination you intend visiting, we suggest you visit: www.fco.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo

In addition, the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) provide an Information Line, telephone: 0901 201 505 (calls currently charged at 51p per minute).

Arrival & Departure Taxes - Albania & Macedonia

Neither country charges a locally-paid arrival or departure tax as was previous.

Baggage Regulations – Malev – Departing from London's Gatwick Airport

Checked Baggage: Malev will transport 1 piece of 'checked' baggage per person free of charge, the total dimensions of which must not exceed 62ins (158cms), including the handle, pockets and wheels. Maximum weight is 23kg (50lb).

Cabin Baggage: you may take 1 carry-on bag (and 1 personal item). Your main piece of hand baggage can be up to the dimensions of 17in x 13in x 7.8in (45cm x 33cm x 20cm), including handles and wheels. Maximum weight is 17½lbs or (8kgs). Carry-on baggage must be stowed in carry-on compartments of the aircraft, under a seat, or in an overhead locker. Your bag must also fit into the bag gauge, available at the check-in area. All larger-sized items must go in the aircraft's hold.

Restrictions remain in place for the carriage of liquids, gels, and creams in hand baggage for all passengers departing from and transferring through all EU airports. Some other airports around the world operate their own restrictions. Customers are advised to check before they travel.

Limited quantities of liquids (individual containers must not exceed 100ml or 3.5 fl oz), are allowed as hand baggage but must be carried separately through security in a clear plastic, zip-top or re-sealable bag that does not exceed 20cm x 20cm (8 inches x 8 inches), or quart size. Items must fit in the bag comfortably and the bag must be completely closed.

The bag can only contain liquids such as shampoo, suntan lotions, creams, toothpaste, hair gel and hair spray, perfumes, cosmetics such as mascara and lip gloss, water and other drinks, soups and syrups and other items of a similar consistency.

Cigarette lighters are NOT permitted in hold baggage or through the security search. These may be purchased airside.

Hand baggage can also include electronic equipment such as mobile phones, digital cameras and MP3 players (such as i-Pods). Laptops must be removed from the bag for x-ray.

Prescription medicines in liquid form, e.g. diabetic kit can also be included.

At security all remaining items should be placed in the tray provided for screening, e.g. car keys and fobs, cash, solid food, books, newspapers, cigarettes and tobacco, belts and shoes. Pushchairs and walking aids are permitted but must be x-ray screened. All wheelchairs will be subject to search. Please note: you may be subject to a hand search by the security team and required to remove footwear to be x-ray screened.

Baggage Weight Restrictions – UK Airports

Since 1st June 2004, any single piece of checked baggage weighing more than 70lbs (32kgs) has not been accepted at check-in by any airline operating from London's Heathrow Airport. The BAA may introduce this limit at their other airports in the UK (and so might non-BAA airports), in an attempt to reduce manual handling injuries amongst airport staff. Please bear this in mind when packing your suitcase.

Meals

On this tour continental breakfast each day at the hotel is included in the tour price.

Health Requirements

There are no known mandatory or recommended precautions for visiting Albania or Macedonia; however, we strongly recommend you consult your local doctor or health centre for the latest information.

Climate and Dress

The weather in May should be warm with temperatures in the high 60s° to low 70s°F, therefore, we recommend summer items of clothing, with a jumper or jacket for the cooler evenings.

Travel Insurance

For citizens of the United Kingdom, Ian Allan Travel Ltd are able to offer competitive and comprehensive insurance cover. However, if you do not wish to take out our insurance, you must ensure that comparable or greater cover is taken. The number of your Insurance Policy should be written, if known, on your Booking Form at the time of making the reservation, but no later than the date when final payment is due. A copy of the policy must be forwarded to Ian Allan Travel Ltd.

Individual insurance policies are arranged through CoverMore Insurance Services Limited; the premiums for which will vary according to your circumstances. Full details are available on request.

These policies also include cover for non-scheduled flights, i.e. pleasure flights, where the aircraft is licensed and insured to undertake such flights, and where a payment is made.

Wheelchair Assistance at Airports.

Anyone requiring wheelchair assistance at airports must have this service requested and confirmed in advance. Airlines and/or airports can no longer provide this service without prior confirmation, therefore, please annotate your booking form accordingly.

Flexible Itinerary

We are very happy for enthusiasts to take time away from the printed itinerary to pursue their own interests during multi-day stays in the same place, so long as they inform the Tour Manager. It will be the individual's responsibility to ensure that they re-join the group in the hotel at the stated time on the day of departure.

Land Only Price

For enthusiasts who would prefer to join the tour in Albania, instead of flying from the UK with the main group, we would be pleased to provide a 'Land Only' price.

You are strongly advised to contact us before making your own flight arrangements in the event that there has been a change to the published itinerary. This is particularly relevant regarding the specified domestic flights which form part of the tour itinerary.

Please note that the 'Land only' price is based on you meeting the main group on their arrival from London's Gatwick Airport at Tirana Airport. If your flight is delayed, or you miss meeting them at the airport for any reason, it will be your responsibility and expense to catch the group up.

Flight Timings & Connecting Travel Arrangements to Departure Airport

All flight departure and arrival times are correct at the time of preparing each itinerary; however, airlines may change these times with little or no prior warning. In practice such changes are only a few minutes either way and the final itinerary will show the actual times. Clients making their own arrangements to get to the departure airport by air, rail, coach etc., should bare the above in mind if purchasing non-refundable or non-changeable tickets. Ian Allan Travel cannot be held responsible for any changes to flight times and any privately arranged travel tickets to the airport becoming invalid.

Pre-departure

For connecting flights from UK regional airports - please call Ian Allan Travel on 01932 255625 for the latest special offers available.

Airport Hotel and/or Car Parking: we can offer special rates for the above at most UK airports, please ask for details.

Pleasure Flights – Disclaimer

Should you decide to undertake any pleasure/sightseeing flights which have not been offered or sanctioned by us, Ian Allan Travel Ltd will not be held liable for any injuries or death resulting thereon.

Tours Affected by World Events or Unforeseen/Unplanned Circumstances

In an ever-changing world, events may occur immediately before or during a tour that result in cancellations or changes to the tour itinerary. For example, an increase in security may result in an approved visit being cancelled by the host, etc.. Ian Allan Travel Ltd cannot be held responsible for any tour being cancelled, or itineraries affected, due to world events or circumstances beyond our control.

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