



EDEN

Tourism Cluster of
Southwest Macedonia



*Adventure NEXT Balkans / May 10-12.2016 / Ohrid, Makedonia
POST Adventure: Spiridon Biking & Cycling*

Biking & Road Cycling, Exploring Wild Mountain Spiridon
at National Park Galichica, Discovering Two Extraordinary Lakes,
White Lake - Lake Ohrid & Lake Prespa

UNESCO Natural World Heritage, since 1979

5 day / 4 night - 13th to 17th May 2016, Trip Grade: 4/5

Pax: min. 4 / max. 12

Price: € 695

*can you see it, if you only close your eyes,
a place ... a piece of South paradise,
Eden ... kept secretly and wise ...*



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



The City of Ohrid
inscribed on
the World Heritage List in 1980



Trip Highlights

Be prepared to raise your adrenaline whilst enjoying exciting, though moderate climbs in the mountains. And be sure - your effort will pay off.

Our biking activity starts in the village of Velestovo, off road uphill to the Krstec pass. On the way up you will enjoy the views towards Ohrid valley and Ohrid Lake. You will explore a trail on dark-red soil resembling the surface of Mars at 1450 m.a.s.l. (4600 ft.). Visit the only island in Macedonia on Lake Prespa, Golem Grad (Pelican Island). The uninhabited island is home to an endemic Foya juniper variety (a type of tree), numerous birds (pelican, cormorant) and lots of snakes (that is why it is also known as the snake island). Little hiking adventure to the Lakoj Signoj peak 1970 m.a.s.l (6500 ft.), the location where both lakes meet like two pearls on the palm of the hand. Next is a very spiritual place, the monastery of St. Naum and the magical springs of the River Black Drim. We will have the opportunity to visit the Bay of Bones, prehistoric pile dwelling settlement from the 2nd millennium to the 8th century B.C. The night before departing to Skopje Airport, you will taste the uniqueness of our local wines and visit the wine region Tikveš.

At how many destinations in the world can you experience all of these activities in one small region ...



Day by Day Itinerary

Day 1 – Wild Spiridon & Island Golem Grad, 13th May

Our guide's will greet you at your choice of accommodation. Transportation will be organized to the village of Velestovo where our adventure will begin. Riding off road and uphill, you will climb to the Krstec pass at 1555 m.a.s.l. (5100 ft). On the Krstec pass we will be on a view point towards the full length of the mountain Spiridon - Galichica. Stop-point at mountain house Asan Djura, this is where dirty road opens into the karst fields of Jafa, and passes by the Jafa pond - the habitat of the endemic *Triturus Macedonicus*. After a short break in the mountain hut we continue through the Suvo Pole (Dry Fields) area. We reach the asphalt part of the road at the site Dva Javori (Two maple trees) at 1510 m.a.s.l. (4900 ft.) from where downhill begins on the east side of the mountain towards Lake Prespa. Shortly, we are back on dirt road combined with single trail, through the dense beech forest, passing the village of Leskoec where we reach the coast of Lake Prespa at village Stenje. This is where we will spend the night - in Hotel Riva. The hosts will prepare traditional fish appetizers on the terrace. After a short break, we continue to the village of Konjsko on dirt road around Prechna peninsula. There, a small boat – dingy will transfer us to the island of Golem Grad. The legends and the remains of Christian basilicas speak of the vivid past of the island. Previously the island was visited by researchers and scientists but also by people curious and hungry for knowledge. It thrives in herbal and animal species some of which are endemic. The Island is part of the National Park Galichica.

After our island adventure, we carry out again on two wheels on dirt road, riding back to Hotel Riva. Dinner will be served and we have time to rest until the next day.



Day 2 – Lakosignoy Peak & Monastery St. Naum, 14th May

After breakfast, we visit the village and some local bee-keepers tasting 100% natural honey. Using a comfortable van, we will transfer to “Baba pass” at an altitude of 1580 m.a.s.l. (5200 ft), where we take off on our hiking trip to the Lakosignoy peak, at 1980 m.a.s.l. (6500 ft), which offers an outstanding panoramic view of both Ohrid and Prespa lakes. This area is also a habitat to the *Sideritas Scardica*, an authentic type of tea for which the national park Galichica is famous for. Hiking back, we jump on our bikes and continue the Koritski Rid viewpoint at 1420 m.a.s.l. (4600 ft.). We descend to the Monastery Complex of St. Naum situated at the lake shore where we overnight at the hotel Complex “St. Naum”. Dinner will be organized at restaurant Cuba Libre (near the accommodation).

Day 3 – Wild Coast & Bay of Bones, 15th May

Breakfast is served on the terrace of the complex with the view of Ohrid Lake. We start biking on asphalt road ascending to the Derven pass 890 m.a.s.l. (2900ft) followed by a fast downhill to the village of Trpejca. Boat tour to Zaum – the most unapproachable part of the coast and the deepest point of the Lake that is known for its cleanest waters and the small church of St. Bogorodica Zahumska. We continue biking on single trail right above the lake, riding through the wild coast, with a stunning view to the lake’s horizon. This ride will take us to Chokolsko picnic place where we will take a break and enjoy a snack.

Back onto asphalt road we visit the Bay of Bones, a pre-historic settlement from the 2nd millennium to the 8th century B.C. Riding through steep up and down road asphalt road we reach the village of Peshtani and the final point to the village of Elshani, 950 m.a.s.l. (3100ft) at Risto's Guest House. Once you catch your breath, you will be divided into two groups and have a chance to either start riding a donkey that will take you on a short trip through the village or an ethno-massage, both of which will be included in package.



Day 4 – Ethno Village & Tikvesh Vine Region, 16th May

The new day begins with another adventure, but this time without bikes. We head to the wine region Tikveš - the heart of Macedonia's wine. Our first exploration trip takes us to *Heraclea Lyncestis* – *remains of a settlement*, founded by Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great in the middle of the 4th century B.C. Heraclea was a strategically important town during the Hellenistic period until the middle of the 2nd century B.C. when the Romans conquered Macedon and destroyed its political power. From there, we jump back in the van for a short, 10 minute ride to Bitola where we will enjoy a lunch at the famous bazaar – Shirk Sokak.

As we drive East, we pass through Pelagonia (the largest plains in Macedonia) and finally we arrive at the Tikvesh region known for its endless wine fields.

We will have the opportunity to visit their local wineries and taste their world-renowned and award winning wines and find out more about the ancient Macedonians who inhabited this area. A confirmation of the worshipped Dionysus, the god of wine was found in the copious representations of grapes and vines carved in stone, marble and terracotta that can be seen in Kavadarci and Negotino, and in the museums of Belgrade, Sofia and Berlin.

The day will end with dinner and wine tasting at the winery Popova Kula where we will be accommodated for the night.

Day 5 – Skopje Airport, 17th May

Breakfast will be served in the tower above the winery, which offers a 360 degrees view of the vineyards. Skopje Airport is just an hour drive. Transfer to Skopje Airport will be organized depending on the group's flight itinerary. If this doesn't suit your travel itinerary, additional services (not included in the price) can be organized to show you Skopje and its surroundings.

Don't forget, this experience is only one of many, so remember that we have more to show you!

Essential Information

This section is designed to provide you with all the information you need to know prebooking. Once you have made a booking with us we will send you a comprehensive Trip Document including hour time detailed itinerary, full joining instructions and equipment list.

Trip Pricing

Approved AdventureNEXT buyers and journalists are fully hosted on this Post adventure. For non-qualified delegates who wish to attend this trip, the discounted prices range as followed: € 695
Group range: 4 pax (min.) to 12 pax (max).

This includes the following services:

- 5 days professional guiding with lead guide plus assistant guide/support driver
- 4 nights accommodation in villas & hotels 2* and 3* on a full board basis
- All Meals, appetizer, ride snacks, energy drinks, non-alcoholic drinks
- Vehicle transport and transfer throughout trip including ride support and luggage transfers
- Entrance and admission fees as stated in the itinerary
- Bike Rental

Bike Hire

While bike rental is included on this trip, you are more than welcome to bring your own bike if you prefer. Our hire bike fleet offers high quality with a range of models and sizes to suit each rider. The bikes we use are brand new for this season and maintained to the highest standards.

Bike models:

- Trek X Caliber 6
- Mongoose TYAX
- Polar Forester (hybrid lady's bike)

On each trip we carry a wide range of spares to customise your bike to your requirements and to keep it running smoothly during the trip.

Your Guides

Passionate and knowledgeable about Macedonia - our mystical and undiscovered country. Our guides will personally introduce you to their homeland, giving you unique insight into this land of mountains and lakes. As highly qualified and experienced outdoor guides, you can expect to be in safe hands while exploring these spectacular landscapes.

Rooms

Single or double rooms are available on this journey. If you would like to share a room with a travelling companion, please do let us know at the time of booking.

Our Trip Style

Our approach to road cycling holidays balances the best of both worlds – great guiding and insights when you would like it, alongside the freedom to explore at your pace.

At breakfast each day, you will receive a guide briefing and detailed route notes for the day's ride. Throughout the day your second guide and support vehicle will always be close to hand to provide drinks and snacks. The support vehicle will take care of your luggage transferring it from hotel to hotel each day.

Trip Grading

Our trip is 4/5 or "Moderate", designed for people who regularly enjoy biking & cycling. On these trips you can also experience some hiking through hilly terrain. You will be comfortable climbing and descending steep roads as there will be plenty of stops for photos. Harder days in the saddle are usually followed by easier ones both in terms of distance and the amount of climbing. On most days these trips offer lots of opportunity for exploring the surrounding area and enjoying relaxed lunches. Distances typically range from 30-50km or 20-30 miles each day. On Day 1, you can expect a more steep climbs and exciting descents. It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant fitness and required experience to join our trips.

Other Equipment

For this trip you will need to bring suitable gear for a 5 day biking & cycling trip. A full equipment list will be sent to you for guidance after your booking.

Insurance

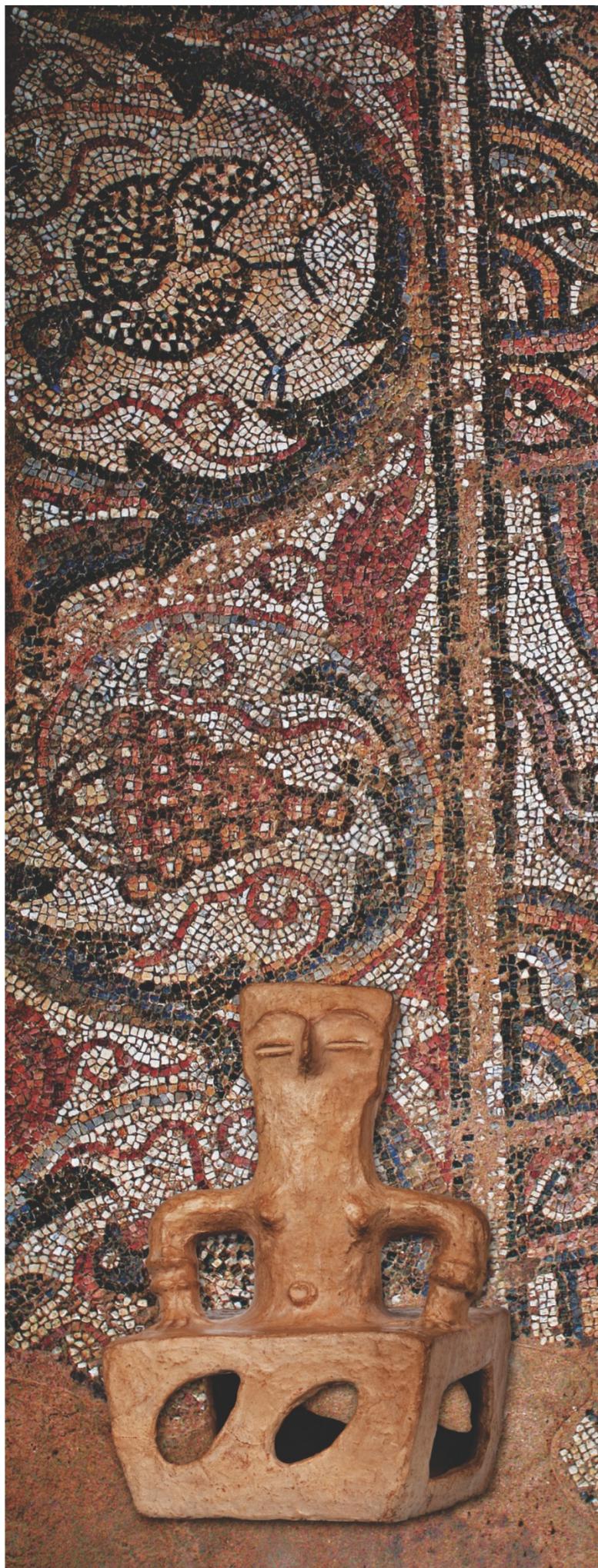
We require that you are insured against medical and personal accident risks. If you have any doubt or you are uncertain as to what is required please ask us via email to provide you with all relevant details.

Trip Question

If you have any questions or queries regarding this POST adventure, please do not hesitate to give us a call on

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*We look forward to welcoming you to
Adventure NEXT Balkans 2016*