
GEEO ITINERARY

Balkans

Day 1: Budapest Arrive in Budapest at any time. Meet your group for a welcome meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m.

Arrive in Budapest at any time. Due to the potential for flight delays or cancellations, we recommend that you plan to arrive in Europe at least a day in advance. This will also give you time to adjust to the time difference, overcome any jetlag, and avoid any disruption to your trip due to flight delays or cancellations. We can book extra hotel nights for you in Budapest before the trip. With the Danube River dividing old town, Buda, from the newer area, Pest, there is plenty to see and do. Opt to visit Buda Castle, window shop in Pest, or soak in the city's famous thermal baths. Please note that check-in at the hotel is usually around 2:00-3:00 p.m. There are no planned activities until an intro meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., usually in the hotel lobby. Check for a sign or ask at the reception desk about the exact time and location of the group meeting. Please make every effort to arrive in time for this meeting. If you are delayed and will arrive late, please inform us. Your tour leader will then leave you a message at the front desk informing you of where and when to meet up tomorrow. After the meeting, you might choose to get dinner at a nearby restaurant with your traveling companions and your tour leader to further get to know one another.

Day 2: Budapest/Novi Sad (B) After a full-day bus journey, arrive in Novi Sad. Enjoy the first opportunity to try some Serbian cuisine.

After a full day's bus journey, cross into Serbia and arrive in Novi Sad. Novi Sad, located on the banks of the Danube River, is Serbia's second-largest city. Atop a riverside bluff stands Petrovaradin Fortress, and across the river is the old quarter, Stari Grad, site of the Gothic Revival Name of Mary Church and Neo-Renaissance City Hall. We will spend an evening wandering this cultural hub. Approximate travel time: 5 hrs by bus

Day 3: Novi Sad/Belgrade (B) Spend the morning exploring Novi Sad. Visit the famous Petrovaradin Fortress and, with time, check out Stari Grad. In the afternoon, hop a train for a short ride to Belgrade.

This morning, we take the opportunity to explore Novi Sad, the ancient capital of Serbia. We start by visiting the famous Petrovaradin Fortress, construction on which began in the late 1600s. Today, the fortress remains an important landmark for the city. We will also visit the famous "reversed clock" and learn more about the varied history of this site. If we have time, we will check out the charming old town, or Stari Grad. Opt to visit some of the neighborhood's many monuments or museums, and stop into a café or shop along the way. In the afternoon, we hop on a train for a short ride to Belgrade, where you will have the rest of the day free to explore on your own. Opt to walk down the pedestrian street of Skadarlija or visit Republic Square. Approximate travel time: 1.5 hrs by private vehicle

Day 4: Belgrade (B) Visit the Kalemegdan Fortress. Spend the rest of the day freely, perhaps on a boat on the Danube or shopping in the local markets.

We start the day by visiting the Kalemegdan Fortress, also known as the Belgrade Fortress, which consists of the old citadel and Kalemegdan Park. Located in the Old Town of Belgrade, the sight makes for one of the best lookouts in the city, staring down at the confluence of two rivers. You will be free to explore Belgrade for the rest of the day. There is a lot to see and do. You can take the opportunity to float down the Danube on a river cruise or perhaps to go shopping in one of the many bustling markets. Alternatively, consider visiting the National Theater or National Museum. The city offers a wealth of churches and cathedrals, as well as an interesting Ethnographic Museum where you can learn more about Serbian culture, traditions, costumes, and tools used throughout history.

Day 5: Belgrade/Sarajevo (B) Travel to Sarajevo. Walk the cobblestone streets, visit the Latin Bridge, and soak in the atmosphere.

We leave the country of Serbia and travel to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina and one of the most beautiful and diverse cities in the region. We will visit the famous Latin Bridge, which played an important part in the history of this area. This is the site where the Archduke of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated, leading to the beginning of World War I. Soak in the bustling atmosphere of this resilient city. Approximate travel time: 7-8 hrs by private vehicle

Day 6: Sarajevo (B) Take an included tour of the "Tunnel of Life." Spend some free time exploring the Stari Grad section and looking for "Sarajevo Roses."

Today, we will have a tour of the "Tunnel of Life," which played a crucial role in the survival of the people of Sarajevo during the civil war of the mid-to-late 1990s. Visit the airport and the house of a brave Bosnian who allowed the smuggling of supplies. Hear firsthand accounts of the horrors of war and the resilience of the people of Sarajevo. Drive into the mountains and learn more about the somber history. You will have the afternoon to explore Sarajevo on your own. Take the opportunity perhaps to walk around the cobblestone streets of the Old Town (Stari Grad) and taking in the architecture of diverse places of worship. This is also a great place to shop and visit markets.

Day 7: Sarajevo/Mostar (B) Travel to Mostar. Wander the old city and visit the new, taking in the many reminders of what the people of this region have survived.

Today, we travel through beautiful countryside before reaching the charming city of Mostar. The city's symbol, a beautiful reconstructed Ottoman-style bridge, is a reminder of the tenacity of Bosnians in recent times. The bridge was constructed in the 1600s and was meticulously rebuilt after its destruction during the war. Wait at the bottom for daredevils to dive into the icy river below. For a sobering look into the city's recent history, wander through town, passing buildings still riddled with bullet holes. Visit a bank that was completely destroyed during the war and past houses in shambles. While life continues and progress is made, these sights remain as reminders of the evils of war. You will have plenty of free time today to enjoy the laid-back atmosphere of Mostar. Approximate travel time: 2-3 hrs by private vehicle

Day 8: Mostar/Kotor (B) Continue on to Montenegro and arrive at the Bay of Kotor. There is free time here to relax or explore as desired.

We leave Bosnia and cross over to the country of Montenegro for two days on the Bay of Kotor, a region that is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Arrive in time to start exploring this gorgeous area. If relaxing is more your style, the beach of Kotor offers a great escape. Approximate travel time: 3-4 hrs by private vehicle

Day 9: Kotor (B) Enjoy a sea kayaking tour before free time to relax or explore. Wander the streets of the walled city of Kotor, relax on picturesque beaches, or visit the local mud spas.

This morning, we will go sea kayaking to appreciate this gorgeous area fully. Start just outside the Old Town walls and explore the coast. Stop at a beach bar for a break or a swim. The sea kayaking will take about 5 hours. You can skip this included activity if you wish. Enjoy a free afternoon to explore Kotor. Take some time to walk around this picturesque town surrounded by a walled fortress built by the Republic of Venice. Kotor has a Mediterranean feel to it and the bay offers a stunning backdrop for photographs. You might opt to visit the Risan Roman mosaics. Risan, once the capital of Kotor Bay, contains the Roman Mosaics, found in what remains of an ancient Roman villa, built sometime between the 2nd and 3rd century BC. You can also take a leisurely stroll in Perast and the islands or continue sea kayaking. The Kotor Maritime Museum features historical, cultural, and living artifacts that connect

modern Kotor with its centuries-old naval traditions. Learn about the Boka Marines, a fraternity of sailors and navigators who helped shipbuilding flourish in the Balkans.

Day 10: Kotor/Dubrovnik (B) Travel to Croatia and experience Dubrovnik. Choose to relax in one of the many cafés, explore the old town fortifications, or take a boat trip to one of the nearby islands.

Today, we depart Montenegro, cross into the country of Croatia, and travel to the city of Dubrovnik, known as the "Pearl of the Adriatic." Set on the Dalmatian coast, Dubrovnik has been an important maritime town in the region for centuries. Surrounded by medieval walls, it is rich in history and is a beautiful city to explore, filled with stunning architecture, museums, and fountains. We will visit the G Adventures-supported Deša project, a non profit dedicated to empowering and employing women in the community. Founded during the homeland war in Dubrovnik, Deša runs victim support for survivors of domestic abuse through computer classes, language lessons, cultural preservation activities, and other inspiring programs. During your visit, you will learn about the powerful work undertaken by the women of Deša and their network across Croatia working to preserve traditional foods and handicrafts. Opt to take a city wall walking tour or head out on your own to explore the city's ancient walls. A trip to Dubrovnik isn't complete without doing this 2 km (1.1 mi) walk. See highlights along the way that include Fort Minceta, Fort St. John, Fort Lawrence, Fort Revelin, and St. Luke's Tower. There are three main entrances to the city walls, the principal one located by the Inner Pile Gates. Approximate travel time: 2 hrs by private vehicle

Day 11: Dubrovnik (B) Enjoy a free day to explore the old town fortifications or take a boat trip to one of the nearby islands.

Today, you can enjoy a free day to explore the old town fortifications or take a boat trip to one of the nearby islands. The red roofs of the old city make for spectacular photos, and the seaside cafés serve up delicious seafood. You may want to escape the city on a ferry ride to Lopud Island, part of the Elafiti Islands and home to one of Croatia's most stunning beaches, Plaza Sunj.

Day 12: Dubrovnik/Hvar (B) Head to the island of Hvar. Enjoy amazing beaches, nightlife, and water sports.

Today, we will leave Dubrovnik and head to the island of Hvar, where we will enjoy amazing beaches, nightlife, and water sports. Filled with sunshine, the beautiful island is known for its lavender fields and vineyards in the interior and detailed Venetian-inspired architecture in the towns. Approximate travel time: 3 hrs by ferry

Day 13: Hvar (B) Soak in the scenery and relish the calm on a boat ride around the Pakleni Islands.

Today, we have a scenic boat ride around the famous Pakleni Islands, offering a great escape for those wanting to spend a day relaxing on a quiet beach.

Day 14: Hvar/Split (B) Ferry back to the mainland and arrive in Split. Take a guided tour of the UNESCO site at Diocletian's Palace. Enjoy free time to explore this charming seaside town.

Today, we leave Hvar and take a ferry to Split. Once there, we will take a guided tour of Diocletian's Palace, one of the most imposing Roman ruins in Europe. It took over 10 years to construct and is built of white stone imported from the island of Brač. Visiting this UNESCO World Heritage Site is a perfect way to learn more about the history of Split. You will have the afternoon free to explore this charming seaside town. Opt to visit the local market and gobble up some Croatian delicacies. For a little more activity, visit Marjan's peak with gorgeous views over the city or hit up some of the hiking and biking trails in the area. Approximate travel time: 1 hr by ferry

Day 15: Split (B) Depart Split at any time.

There are no planned activities today, so you may depart Split at any time. If you wish to extend your stay in Split, consider booking post-tour accommodation with us. Please note that check-out time from the hotel is usually mid-morning, but luggage storage services are available at the reception desk. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEEO programs in the same school year and receive a discount! GEEO will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs per year). If you would like to extend your time abroad but don't see another GEEO program that interests you, let us know. We can work with you to find a trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Their tours are open to the general public and not designed specifically for educators, but we can still offer you and your travel companions a discounted educator price on any additional tours that you book.