



Travel  
to  
Albania  
Greece  
Macedonia  
Kosovo  
broadens  
one!

**Jim Gold International Folk Dance Tours**

# Albania

## Greece, Macedonia, and Kosovo

### Vlora International Folk Festival Tour

Folk Dancing, Culture, Art, History, Adventure

**May 20-June 1, 2026**

**Led by Lee Otterholt**

**Guided by Mili (Ermil) Mullanji**

**Kosovo extension: June 1-3, 2026**



**Visit Tirana, Durres, Berat, Vlora, Kruja,  
Saranda, Gjirokastra. Korca, Greece: Lake Prespa.  
Dance with Yannis Konstantinou**

**Macedonia: Ochrid**

**Vlora International Folk Festival !**

**Meet and dance with Albanian folk dance groups  
and teachers!**

**International dancing with Lee Otterholt**

**Price includes hotels, private bus, guide, sightseeing, two  
meals a day, festival, all dance lessons !**



### Itinerary

**Day 1: May 20: Wednesday-** Depart on airlines of your  
choice to Albania.

**Day 2: May 21: Thursday- Durres**



Arrive in Albania. Make your own way to our hotel in Durres. Welcome dinner in a traditional restaurant. Overnight in the Arvi Hotel.

### **Day 3: May 22: Friday- Durres, Berat, Vlore**

Morning walking tour of Durres. Drive through Albania's oil fields towards



the fascinating town of Berat on the River Osum. The town is famous for its white-washed houses with many windows which give it the nickname "town of a thousand windows". The Castle, Maria Church with the ikon Museum and the 400 hundred years old quarters, give us a real flavor of the Albanian history and culture. When we leave Berat, we can also make a stop at one of the famous winery in Albania for wine tasting. Later we drive toward Vloira to end our day with folk dancing with Genc Kastrati, famous Albanian folk dance master teacher. Dinner and overnight at Vloira International Hotel.



### **Day 4-6: May 23-25: Saturday/Monday- Vloira International Folk-Dance Festival "Aulona!"**



Spend three day in beautiful city of Vloira watching Albanian folk dance groups and invited folk dance groups from other countries. 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 26: Tuesday- Vloira—Saranda**

Drive along the spectacular Albanian Riviera looking down at the Ionian Sea. Upon leaving Radhima, the landscape dramatically changes as we



climb through the forest of Llogara National Park. Stop for refreshment and photos in Llogara. Then drive south through the seven villages of the Himara region. Lunch in local restaurant in Himara. Himara is rich with natural and historical monuments such as Flag Pine, Himara Old Town and the 18th century Panormic castle of Ali Pasha in Porto Palermo Bay. After a coffee break at springs of Borshi, we'll continue our tour towards 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 27: Wednesday: Saranda-Blue Eye Spring-Gjirokastra-Korca**

Start from our hotel at 8:30, stop at Blue Eye Spring. Then drive towards Gjirokastra, a

UNESCO World Heritage town, tour the 14th century castle and nice walk through cobblestone streets of this beautiful town. Continue our day drive through the beautiful mountain road of South Albania, enjoying amazing views of Vjosa Valley and forested mountains to reach the plain of Korca. possible dance lessons with Bardhi Pojani at The House of Arts in Korca. Dinner and overnight in Korca.

### **Day 9: May 28: Thursday: Greece Kastoria/Florina**

After breakfast after a nice walk through the center of Korca, the Historical Bazaar, Mirahori Mosque, Orthodox Basilica we continue to northern Greece to reach our destination in Lake Prespa. Restaurant to dance with the locals and Maestro Yiannis Konstantinou. Overnight in Lake Prespa.

### **Day 10: May 29: Friday: Sv.Naum and Ohrid**

After breakfast continue to North Macedonia, first stop at the city of Bitola (Manastir) to enjoy a walk in the beautiful streets, also to have a look at the Military school where Kemal Ataturk studied in the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Continue our drive to reach one of the oldest Lakes in the world, 900ft deep, on the shore of the City of Light, Ohrid, one of pearls of the Balkans with many Byzantine Churches and magnificent architecture. Afternoon a nice walk to enjoy this amazing town, possible Folk Show with local folk group. Dinner and overnight in Ohrid.

### **Day 11: May 30: Saturday- Ohrid- Elbasan- Kruja-Tirana**

Starting from Ohrid we cross the border back to Albania, to drive more or less the ancient roman most famous route Via Egnatia first to Elbasan, old Scampini and later towards the Historical Capital of Albania, Kruja. We visit the museum dedicated to our national hero and symbol of our resistance, then Ethnographic Museum which is located in a traditional house built in the middle of the 18th century A.D (1764), by Ismail Pashe Toptani. Within the walls of the castle we will visit the Bektashi (a little-known Muslim sect) Dollma Teqe (Bektashi Mosque). After the visits we will have free time to explore and purchase Albanian souvenirs and antiques for very reasonable prices in the 400 years old Bazaar of Kruja. Lunch in traditional restaurant. Evening folk dance show with local Kruja folk dancers. Overnight in Tirana.



### **Day 12: May 31: Sunday- Tirana**

After breakfast we'll walk around the center of Tirana, visit to Et'Hem Bej Mosque, built in 1789, and one of the most beautiful mosques in Albania. We visit the recently discovered ruins of the Justinian castle near the center of Tirana. We visit new Catholic Cathedral and the new Orthodox Basilica. En route we will pass Tirana's



colorful buildings. While at the gallery, admire paintings dating back to the time of socialist realism. Lunch in local restaurant or free time to enjoy a cappuccino. (optional) Our afternoon will be at leisure but in the evening, we explore the ex-block area where villas of the Albanian communist leaders are still standing nearby trendy boutiques, active pubs and exclusive jewelry shops. Dinner in a local restaurant. Folk dancing with Lee and/or Genci Kastrati. Overnight in Tirana at the Tirana International Hotel.

### **Day 13: June 1: Monday-Depart**

Make your own way to Tirana international airport for your flight back home

## **Kosovo Extension**

### **Day 13: June 2: Monday- Prizren**

For guests who decide for the Kosovo Extension, we continue after the delivery in the airport of the rest of the group: Drive towards Kosova to Prizren. Lunch on the way or in the Old City of Prizren, maybe free time. After checking in at our hotel, located in the heart of Old Town, we make a walking tour to visit this beautiful city. The Catholic Cathedral, 14th century Serbian Basilica, 16th century Mosque and the Museum of the Albanian League of 1878, are our highlights! The old city with such a moving history offers a lot from all the communities who are populating it till today, Albanians, Serbs, Turks, Bosnians and so on. Dinner in our

Hotel or a restaurant in town. Also, possible Folk Show. Overnight at Hotel Centrum.



### **Day 14: June 2: Tuesday- Peja, Gjakova**

Morning drive northwards to Peja. On route visit Gjakova, with the renovated bazaar, after the burning during the last war, 1999. The Hadumi Mosque, one of the oldest in Balkans, is a highlight with the wall paintings and a very rare/old architecture. Later we drive to visit one of the most important Serbian Monasteries, Visoki Decani, where the Serbian king from the 14th century is buried. Lunch on the way (optional). Our journey continues to Pej, where we check in at our hotel, Hotel Dukagjini! For dinner we drive inside the marvelous Rugova Canion at a local restaurant where we can enjoy and dance together with the local folk group from Rugova.

### **Day 15: June 3: Wednesday-Depart**

Make your way to the airport. People on this extension should book return flight from Prishtina airport, not Tirana. It is more convenient than driving back to Tirana ... and the airfare from Prishtina is less expensive!)

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## About Lee Otterholt



Lee Otterholt, born in USA of Norwegian-American parents, has lived and worked in Norway as a professional dancer, teacher, and choreographer. He founded the Center for International Folk Dance in Oslo, and was professor of dance folklore at the Norwegian National College of Ballet, and University College of Oslo. Lee established folk dance and performing groups in Norway, taught at festivals and workshops throughout Europe, United States, and East Asia, and authored folk dance and instructional manuals for Norwegian schools. He was a choreographer for the Opening Ceremony of the Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer.

## About Mili (Ermil) Mullanji



Mili (Ermil) Mullanji, born on June 29, 1975, in Korça, Albania, is a passionate advocate for cultural heritage and tourism excellence. With a background in the restoration of monuments and the history of art, Mili possesses a deep understanding of Albania's rich culture and history. Licensed by the Ministry of Tourism as a National Tourist Guide, he has been an integral part of the tourism sector since 2012. In 2019, Mili was honored with the prestigious "Best Tourist Guide in Albania" award by the National Union of Tourism, to his dedication, expertise, and exceptional service in the field. Known for his outstanding communication skills, Mili has a unique ability to connect with diverse audiences, bringing history to life with engaging storytelling and vibrant enthusiasm. Mili's

extensive knowledge of historical sites, combined with his warm and approachable manners, ensures that every tour he leads is not just informative but also a memorable experience. His professionalism, adaptability, and passion for showcasing Albania's beauty make him a standout figure in the field of tourism. Whether guiding visitors through the cobbled streets of historical towns or unveiling hidden gems off the beaten path, Mili's tours reflect his unwavering commitment to excellence and his love for his country's heritage.

**Albania Land Only: \$4995**

**Kosovo extension: \$995**

**REGISTRATION FORM:** I can't wait to go! Enclosed is my registration deposit of \$200 per person. Single supplement: \$695. Kosovo extension: \$995 Kosovo single supplement \$225. Hotel taxes and service charges: \$185. Gratuities and drinks during meals not included. Program subject to change without notice. All tours have a professional guide. Over 10 participants, and tour will have an additional leader. Cancellations 90 days prior to departure: Total refund. Less than 90 days: No refund. Travel insurance recommended. **Total balance due**

**February 18, 2026.**

Kosovo extension: Yes\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

No. of people\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_(\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ email\_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: **Jim Gold International**, 497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666  
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### **JIM GOLD INTERNATIONAL: TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

**Air Transportation:** International air not included except as noted. **Rates:** Tour rates are subject to change in the event of currency fluctuations or increase in costs. Inclusive tour rates are per person in double occupancy. In case of computer or human billing errors, we reserve the right to reinvoice clients with corrected billing.

**Reservations:** Deposits and Payments: Deposit of \$200 per person is required at time of reservation. Balance is due 90 days prior to departure date.

**Changes:** Prices and program subject to change without notice

**Baggage:** One baggage per person and a carry on is allowed.

**Cancellations:** Cancellations 90 days prior to departure: Total refund. Less than 90 days: No refund. Additionally, any cancellation fees imposed by the respective hotels, airlines, tour companies and cruise lines will be charged. Travel Insurance is non-refundable as are unused services.

**Gratuities:** Tipping to guides, drivers, transfer personnel and hotel staff is left to the discretion of the participants and is not included.

**Insurance:** Tour participants are **strongly recommended to purchase insurance** for trip cancellation, trip interruption, accident, sickness and/or loss of baggage and personal effects.

**Dispute Resolution:** The sole and exclusive method of resolving any dispute which might rise under this agreement and any agreement between Jim Gold International, Inc., and another party (ies), the brochure or website and deemed to arise in the United States of America, shall be by arbitration before the American Arbitration Association in New York City pursuant to the Association's rules then in effect. Any such arbitration must take place in N.Y.C., N.Y. In any such arbitration, the substantive law of N.Y. will apply. In the event a tour participant should find a service or hotel unacceptable, it should be reported immediately to the local representative and to Jim Gold International, Inc. upon their immediate return. No claim shall be deemed legitimate if not reported to the local representative and if reported after the scheduled service or after departure from the hotel.

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Jim Gold International, Inc. 497 Cumberland Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666 U.S.A.  
Phone: (201) 836-0362 [www.jimgold.com](http://www.jimgold.com) e-mail: [jimgold@jimgold.com](mailto:jimgold@jimgold.com)

