Offer 6: Korça-Pogradec- Ohrid-Struga

Time spent: 4 nights/5 days

### Day 1: Korca – Voskopoja (Full day 8 hrs)

* Arrival at Kapshtice crossing point (Greece) / Albania
* Lunch in a restaurant with Korça’s traditional food in Boboshtice village (optional)
* Departure for a trip to Voskopoja
* Visit to Voskopoja Churches and Monastery (1)
* Dinner at a restaurant with live music-famous Korça’s serenades
* Overnight in Korca

(1) What to visit in **Voskopoja**

For those who want to find out about Voskopja civilization and it’s role in the Medieval times, **St. Kolli church**, built in 1721, housing the best **Byzantine frescos and paintings** in the area from David, Kostandini and Anastasi, is the right place to go. The **St. Mihali** (1726) and **St. Thanasi churches** (1724) are in ruins but parts of great paintings by Kostandin and Athanas, are to be appreciated there.

### Day 2 - Korce – Dardha village (Full day 8 hrs)

* Breakfast at the hotel
* Departure to Dardha village (2)
* Lunch tasting the characteristic onion pie and home made “raki”
* Afternoon back to Korça
* Sightseeing tour of Korca (3)
* Overnight in Korça.

(2) What to visit in **Dardha village:**

A hiking and picnic at **Dardha village**, is perfect for those who like **nature**, **mountains**, **forests**, meet **local people** and taste their home made food products. The village lies 20 km from Korca at an altitude of 1,344m above sea level. The climate is rich in oxygen and very healthy. The green fields, fresh summer days and cold snowy winters make Dardha a popular tourist destination throughout the year.

(3) Sightseeing in **Korça**:

**Korça**, the city of serenades, situated in Southeastern part of Albania, is a charming and pristine city, with clean streets and many **typical stone lanes and sidewalks**. The most outstanding constructions are the magnificent **orthodox “Cathedral”** (the biggest in Albania), “**Mesonjtorja**” (the first Albanian school opened in 1887), and the **traditional bazaar**, lying in the western part of the city. Very interesting and appealing is the **Museum of Medieval Arts**, with **6000 icons** dating from 13th – 14th century. Another attractive building is the **Mosque of Ilyaz Bey Mirahori** (1484), the oldest city monument still in existence.

### Day 3 – Korca - Pogradec -Ohrid (Full day 8 hrs)

* Breakfast at the hotel
* Visit the Museum of Medieval Arts (4)
* Departure to Pogradec
* Visit of the water springs of Drilon (5)
* Lunch in Pogradec
* Tushemisht Border crossing point (Macedonia)
* Visit St. John at Kaneo Church (6)
* Dinner in Ohrid
* Overnight in Ohrid

(4) **Korça's best museum of Medieval Arts** has an excellent collection of 6,500 medieval and modern icons from Southern Albania, as well as 1,500 other objects, of which some 200 icons and 50 metal objects are on display in this curious building. Starting with icons from the **14th century** and proceeding in chronological order, most icons in the museum are from the 16th-19th centuries. Many are from Voskopoja, which in the 17th was one of the main centres for iconography in the Balkans. Orthodox art was highly regulated, and all icons had to be painted following precise instructions, with a fixed position prescribed for each saint; Mary can only be depicted in nine poses. The museum's highlight is the collection of icons by the 16th century Albanian master Onufri, which stand out for their vivid colours and wonderful detail. Onufri started his career in Berat (where there is a smaller but equally interesting icon museum dedicated to him) but made his finest works later in Gjirokastra.

(5) **Drilon springs -** Near the border 5km east of Pogradec, Drilon is a lush and delightful park set around the ponds where crystal-clear water originating from Lake Prespa bubbles up from the side of *Mali i Thate* ('dry') mountain at an amazing 7 cubic metres per second. You can feed the ducks and swans and rent a boat for a quiet paddle around. The small village of Tushemist, a few hundred metres east of the park, is worth a visit for its 6th century St. Pantaleon church with its original floor mosaic.

(6) Church St. John at Kaneo

One of the most magnificent churches in all of Macedonia stands right above a small fishing settlement, on a cliff rising up from Lake Ohrid; St. Jovan Kaneo is a combination of Byzantine and Armenian architectural styles.Built in the honor of St. John the Theologian, St. Kaneo with its sublime atmosphere and views of the placid lake below, remains an inspiring place for spiritual contemplation.The church which was consecrated at the end of the 13th century was built on a rectangular stone base.

### Day 4: Ohrid (Full day 8 hrs)

* Breakfast at the hotel
* Visit the St. Naum Monastery (7)
* Lunch in Ohrid
* Sightseeing tour in Ohrid (8)
* Dinner in Ohrid
* Overnight in Ohrid

(7) **Saint Naum Monastery**, Saint Sofie church, Saint Gjon church, and Saint Klements church.

Most of St. Naum Monastery’s iconostases and frescoes date from the 16th and 17th century, earlier etchings in the Byzantine Greek vernacular also remain. The icons of St. Naum are some of the best religious painting achievements in the Balkans. They date from the first half of the 18th century.

(8) The **Ohrid castle** dates back the III century B.C. In the X century it became the habitation of Cezar Samuel, and it was known as the Samuel castle. The antique theatre is found below the castle to the main center of the old bazaar. It was build in the II century B.C.

### Day 5: Ohrid – Struga – Greece (Full day 8 hrs)

* Breakfast at the hotel
* Sightseeing tour in Struga (9)
* Lunch in Struga
* Departure to the border crossing Macedonia / Greece

(9) **Sightseeing in Struga**

Among the more important cultural monuments is the church St. George, whose effigies date from the 13 to 19 centuries. In another church whit same name ("St. George") built in 1267, where the mosaic from the 5th century has been discovered. It is worth visiting the fisherman village Kalishta and the church St Bogorodica that is on the lake shores itself and the cave's church St. Atanasij. In Struga there is also old mosque architectural like Helveti teke mosque and the "Amam."