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1. Geographical location

One of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities, Berat is a city and a municipality located in South-Central Albania and is also the capital of County of Berat. The city lies on the banks of the river Osum and occupies a total area of 379.98 km² (146.71 sq mi).



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2. Neighbouring cities/countries

The Biggest City Close To Berat Is Fier (61 Kms) And Tirana Is At A Distance Of 70 Kms. Due To The Small Size Of The Country, Most Cities In The Country Can Be Easily Reached From Berat. Major International Cities Close To Berat Are Skopje In Macedonia (191 Kms), Pristina In Kosovo (241 Kms), Thessaloniki In Greece (252 Kms), Bari In Italy (266 Kms), Patras In Greece (312 Kms), Sofia In Bulgaria (359 Kms) And Sarajevo In Bosnia And Herzegovina (374 Kms).



3. Significance

Known as the UNESCO town of a Thousand Windows, Berat is a very interesting town to visit. Berat Is Known For Its Ottoman Era Mosques And The Various Byzantine Churches Dating From The 13th Century. The other thing that draws tourists to this beautiful city are Its Textile Articles And Stone Carvings.



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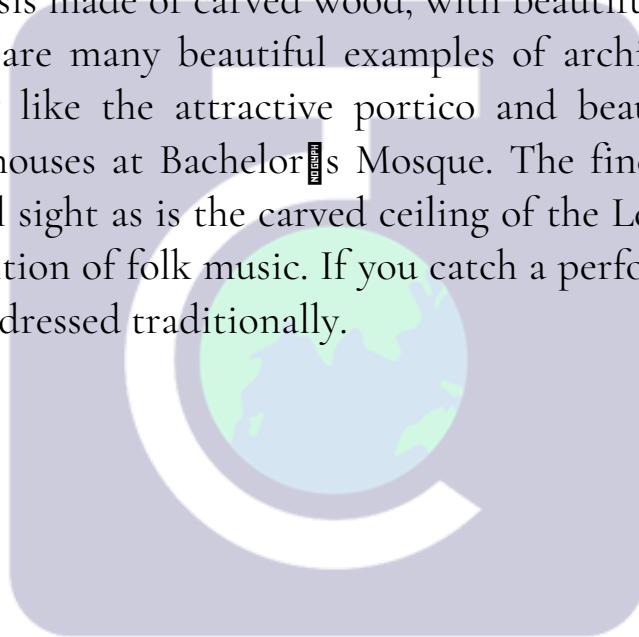
4. History

The History Of This City Is Around 2,400 Years. Since Then It Has Been Continuously Inhabited. The Architecture Of The City Shows Its Evolution From Ancient To Modern Times. For How Well This City Has Preserved History In Form Of Its Architecture, It Has Been Listed As A UNESCO World Heritage Site. Ancient History The Region Was First Settled By The Greek Of Dassaretae In The 5th Or 6th Century BC. Berat Is At The Site Of Antipatrea That Became An Illyrian Settlement. Antipatrea Was A Castle City Which Spread To The East. In Around 200 BC The City Came Roman Control. During This Period The Walls Of The Castle Were Destroyed And The Male Population Of The City Was Massacred. Middle Ages After The Fall Of The Roman Empire The City Became A Frontier Of The Byzantine Empire And It Suffered Repeated Invasions From The Slavs. During This Period The City Was Known As Pulcheriopolis. In The 9th Century The City Was Captured By Persian I As Part Of First Bulgarian Empire. The Name Of The City Was Changed To Belgrad Which Means White City. The City Again Came Under Control Of The Byzantine Empire During The 11th Century. Throught The Middle Ages The City's Rulership Kept Changing From One Empire To The Next Until 1417 When Berat Came Under The Control Of The Ottoman Empire. Modern Era After Becoming A Part Of The Ottoman Empire The City Went Into A Decline. By The End Of The 16th Century Only About 700 Houses Remained In The City. The Conditions Started Improving In The 17th Century When The City Became A Major Craft Centre. By The 18th Century Berat Became One Of The Most Important Albanian Cities Of The Ottoman Empire. In October 1944 The Second Session Of The Council Of National Liberation Of Albania Was Held In Berat, Where The Anti Fascist National Liberation Committee Became The Provisional Government Of Albania With Enver Hoxha As Its Prime Minister.

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5. Cultural identity

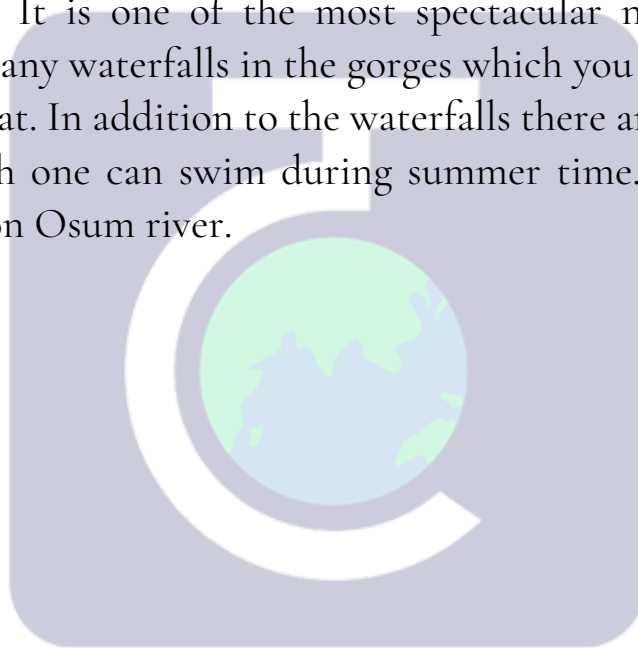
Berat is a unique city with a mix of Orthodox Christian and Islamic cultures. For this reason Berat is listed as a World Heritage Site as an example of religions and cultures co-existing. Among the oldest churches is the St. Mary of Blachernae Church which dates back to the 13th century. It contains mural paintings by Nikola, son of Albania's most famous medieval painter. The church contains a magnificent iconostasis made of carved wood, with beautiful icons of Christ and Virgin Mary. There are many beautiful examples of architecture in the many Mosques in the city like the attractive portico and beautiful decorations of flowers, plants and houses at Bachelor's Mosque. The fine ceiling of the King Mosque is a beautiful sight as is the carved ceiling of the Lead Mosque. The city also has its own tradition of folk music. If you catch a performance you will find the performers to be dressed traditionally.



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6. Natural resources

Mount Tomorr is located to the east of Berat, the highest peak of the mountain Çuka e Partizanit which is at a height of 2,416 metres. There are opportunities for skiing and other winter sports on its slope. It has been declared as a national park and is home to many endangered species. Osum Gorge Osum Gorge is a river gorge in Southern Albania. The River Osum which passes through Berat passes through the canyon. It is one of the most spectacular natural attractions of Albania. There are many waterfalls in the gorges which you can hear above if you pass the river on a boat. In addition to the waterfalls there are many natural pools and streams in which one can swim during summer time. You can also Kayak through the canyon on Osum river.



7. Key site seeing places (paid and free)



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7.1. Free

7.1.1. Berat Castle

A fortress overlooking the town of Berat, the Berat Castle is a 13th-century construction, built under Despot of Epirus, containing many Byzantine churches and Ottoman Mosques in the area. Even though the castle has taken some damage, it remains a spectacular and well-known site among tourists as well as locals. Situated at an elevation of 214 metres (702 ft), the buildings in the castle are preserved as cultural monuments because of their archetypal architecture.

Address : Berat, Albania

Location : 40.7086086, 19.9455921999999

Nearest Public Transport : Stacioni i Autobusëve Bus Station (Not Recommended)

Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours

Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.2. Çobo Winery

Cobo winery is the most popular winery in Berat. It began producing wines in the early 1900s, but after the Communists took control the winery was shut down. It was later reopened in the 1990s and began producing Albania's best wines. Their wine-tasting tour comprises of 5 types of wine and 2 types of raki. You need to call in advance to make an appointment.

Address : Ura Vajgurore, 5007, Albania

Zipcode : 5007

Location : 40.7781309999999, 19.8583189999999

Contact : +355 361 22088

Website : <http://www.cobowineryonline.com/>

Open & Close Timing : Monday and Tuesday: 09:00hrs-18:30hrs Wednesday to Sunday: 09:30hrs-18:30hrs

Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.3. Ethnographic Museum

The National Ethnographic Museum is built inside a traditional house dating back to end of 18th century. Made of 2 floors, the first one is constructed out of stone and the second out of wood and the museum houses 1000 objects that belong to the region of Berat. The first floor is built like a medieval bazaar and contains objects like clothes for men and women, decorations, and crafts along with a display of types of equipment for processing olive oil, pottery, and smithy. On the second floor are the garret and the living quarters that have guestroom where the women used to stay, the country room and the loom room. In the loom room, there is equipment for processing cotton and wool. Also included is a kitchen with medieval crockery. Among the objects on display are the chimney, the sofa, a hanging gun and a 100-year-old flag.

Address : Berat, Albania

Location : 40.7075961, 19.9504101

Contact : +355 32 232 224

Website : <http://www.muzeumetberat.net/>

Nearest Public Transport : Stacioni i Autobusëve Bus Station (Not Recommended)

Open & Close Timing : Daily 09:00hrs-14:00hrs and 16:00hrs-19:00hrs

Time Required : 1

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.4. Holy Trinity Church

St. Mary of Blachernae Church is located inside the Berat Castle, named after the same church in Constantinople. It was built in the 13th century and contains the 16th-century murals by Nikollë Onufri, son of the most famous medieval Albanian painter Onufri. The ground is decorated with a Mosaic, whereas the walls are embellished with prophets and biblical scenes.

Address : Berat, Albania

Location : 40.707778, 19.9444954

Nearest Public Transport : Stacioni i Autobusëve Bus Station (Not Recommended)

Time Required : 0.5

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.5. St. Theodore's Church

Built during the half of the 16th century, St. Theodore's Church is rebuilt over the ruins of an earlier church of which a paleochristian column fragment has been preserved and placed at the apse window. This spiritual abode is designed by the naos, altar, and porches that encircle it on the 3 sides and has been painted by Onufri. Don't miss out on Glavenica Epitaph which is a renowned work of art dating back to 1373.

Address : Berat, Albania

Location : 40.7100441, 19.946183

Nearest Public Transport : Stacioni i Autobusëve Bus Station (Not Recommended)

Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours

Time Required : 0.5

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.6. Muzeu Kombëtar Ikonografik Onufri

Rebuilt in 1797, Muzeu Kombëtar Ikonografik Onufri (National Iconographic Museum Onufri) boasts of post-Byzantine architecture and has a massive collection comprising of 173 objects from a fund of 1500 objects out of which 106 are icons and remaining 67 are liturgical objects. With 3 gates, it is carved in wood and washed in gold, and plated as well as designed as an architectural facade.

Address : Berat, Albania

Location : 40.709397, 19.9450577999999

Contact : +355 32 232 224

Nearest Public Transport : Stacioni i Autobusëve Bus Station (Not Recommended)

Time Required : 1

Buy Ticket : No

7.1.7. Old Town

Weaved in history and architecture, the Berat Old Town captivates visitors as it stands as one of the oldest as well as most beautiful towns and renowned as "the town of a thousand windows, also the Museum City". Taking a walk on the

peculiar footpaths showcasing tight paths, many flowers, and plant decorations, as well as numerous picturesque architectural details of this beautiful town, is a must thing to do while in Berat.

Address : Berat, Albania

Location : 40.7048371, 19.949642

Nearest Public Transport : Stacioni i Autobusëve Bus Station

Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours

Time Required : 1

Buy Ticket : No



8. Time Zone

Berat observes DST. It is CET (UTC+2)



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