

A Journey through TIRANA



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Skanderbeg Square

the heart of daily life in Tirana, hosting concerts, events, and large gatherings. From this square, you can see the various historical layers of the city. Named "Skanderbeg" on November 26, 1937, the square features a monument of the national hero Gjergj Kastriot Skanderbeg, erected on January 11, 1968, to mark the 500th anniversary of his death. The square was revitalized in 2016 as a pedestrian-only area, paved with a carpet of stones from all Albanian territories.

Tirana

the capital of Albania, is a city that pulses with life. It's both modern in its transformation and authentic in its warm hospitality. Albania's metropolis is a fascinating blend of church bells and call to salah/namaz, where medieval, totalitarian (both fascist and communist), and contemporary architectures coexist.

Tirana has become a city that never sleeps, with culture, adventure, and a vibrant nightlife at its core. So, what can tourists and visitors expect to find in Tirana? The historical-cultural itinerary introduces visitors to landmarks that have shaped the city's history.



2

Clock Tower

was initiated by Haxhi Et'hem Bey in 1822 and completed with contributions from Tirana's wealthy families. Originally 30 meters tall, the tower had a winding clock mechanism and a bronze bell. In 1928, the tower was modified to its current height of 35 meters. The Clock Tower is a symbol of the Tirana Municipality emblem and, along with the Et'hem Bey Mosque, forms a unique architectural ensemble.



Et'hem Bey Mosque

is the only one of the eight 18th - 19th century mosques in Tirana that still stands today. Its foundations were laid in 1794 by Molla Bey, who died after completing the dome. His son, Haxhi Et'hem Bey, finished the mosque in 1821. It includes a prayer hall, a portico to the north and east, and a minaret. Each of the mosque's four facades is unique.

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National Historical Museum

inaugurated on October 28, 1981, is the largest museum in Albania, housing around 6200 objects. The facade features a giant mosaic titled "Albania" measuring 10 x 40 meters, which dominates "Skanderbeg" Square.



Kadare & Agolli Studio House

is located in a building once criticized for its cubist design. This museum includes two spaces: one on the third floor, where the world-renowned Albanian writer Ismail Kadare lived from 1974 to the early '90s, and the other on the fourth floor, where the distinguished writer Dritëro Agolli lived.



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Palace of Culture

was built on the site of Tirana's Old Bazaar, with the first brick laid by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev on June 3, 1959. It houses the National Theater of Opera and Ballet and the National Library.



New Bazaar

created in 1931 to accommodate growing trade activity, is one of Tirana's oldest areas, along with the "Mujo" neighborhood. Today, the New Bazaar is a multifunctional space focusing on food products and culinary experiences, with surrounding restaurants and various events like festivals, fairs, exhibitions, performances, concerts, etc.



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Tirana Castle

is a rectangular fortification measuring 160 x 120 meters, with its longer side running east to west. It's believed to have been completed in the latter half of the 18th century. The castle was in use until 1832 when it was destroyed by Mehmet Pasha. Recently, a pedestrian area has been established within the walls, creating a space that showcases local artisans, traditions, cuisine, and art from Tirana.



Bunk'Art 2

is located in the former anti-atomic shelter of the Ministry of Interior. Built between 1981 and 1986, this bunker chronicles the history of the Albanian Ministry of Interior from 1912 to 1991. As well it houses the first major video-museum exhibition dedicated to the victims of communist terror.



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"Cloud" installation

covering 357 square meters, is a public art piece by Japanese artist Sou Fujimoto.



National Museum of Surveillance

"House of Leaves"

is one of the most unique museums, aiming to narrate to young people and foreigners one of the darkest periods in Albania's history. The building briefly housed the Gestapo during World War II and from 1944 to 1991 was the Central Directorate of the Secret Service.

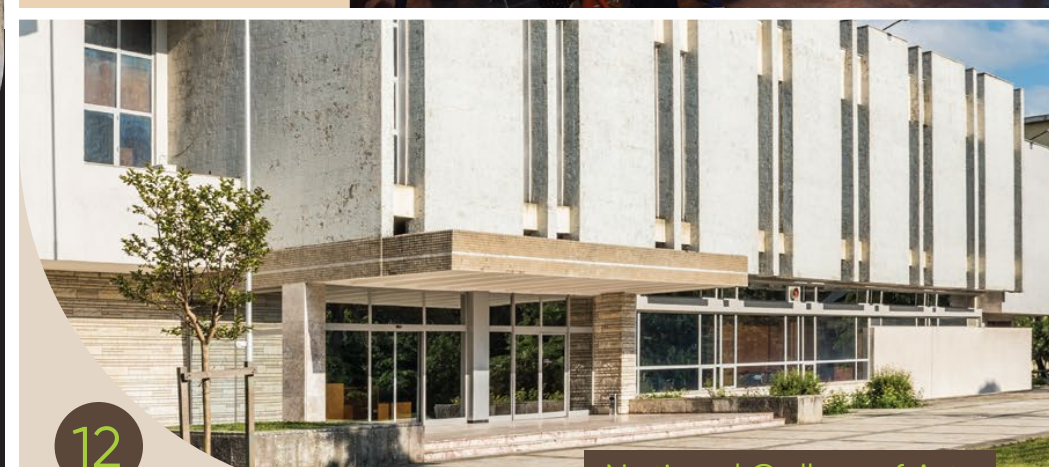


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National Gallery of Arts

Inaugurated on November 29, 1974, on "Martyrs of the Nation" (Dëshmorët e Kombit) Boulevard, contains a diverse collection of around 4500 works by Albanian and international artists.



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Pyramid

Initially served as a museum for the legacy of dictator Hoxha from 1988 to 1991. After 1991, it became a venue for various activities such as exhibitions, conferences, fairs, etc. Today, it has been transformed into the largest technology center for youth in Albania, focusing on digital education, art, culture, vocational courses and other youth spaces.



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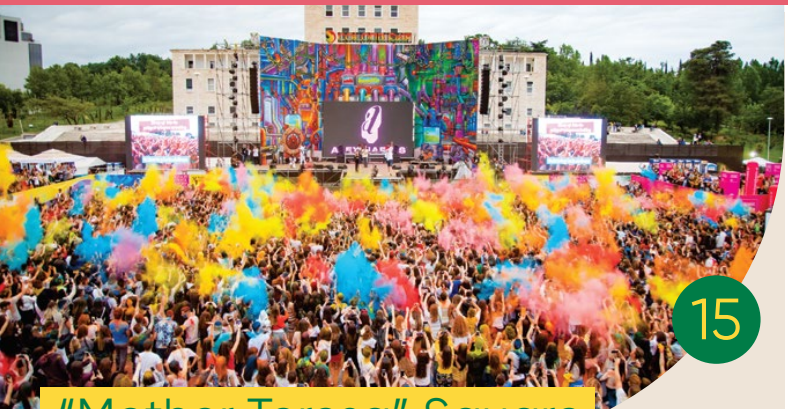
"Post Block" Memorial

An installation reflecting on the totalitarian era. It comprises three distinct elements: concrete pillars from Spaç Prison, known as the "Albanian Auschwitz", a bunker symbolizing the communist dictatorship, and a piece of the Berlin Wall.



"Mother Teresa" Square

Located at the end of "Martyrs of the Nation" Boulevard, was designed by Italian architect Gherardo Bosio between 1939 and 1941. The surrounding buildings were intended for various administrative functions and to form a complete political and sports complex.



15

"Air Albania" Stadium

Designed by Marco Casamonti, features a peculiar multi-faceted form so that each side allows access to distinct functions. The integration of the historical facade gives the stadium an added museum-like value. With a capacity of 21,777 seats, it is the largest stadium in Albania. Built on the site of the old "Qemal Stafa" Stadium, the original was designed by Italian architect Gherardo Bosio between 1939-1941.



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Block (Blloku)

Before the 1990s, it was an off-limits area to ordinary citizens. Enver Hoxha turned it his residence and that of his communist leadership "comrades". Today, this area is a unique mix of high-rise buildings, villas turned into residences, luxury boutiques, cafes, and clubs, especially popular with young people.



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Former Villa of Enver Hoxha

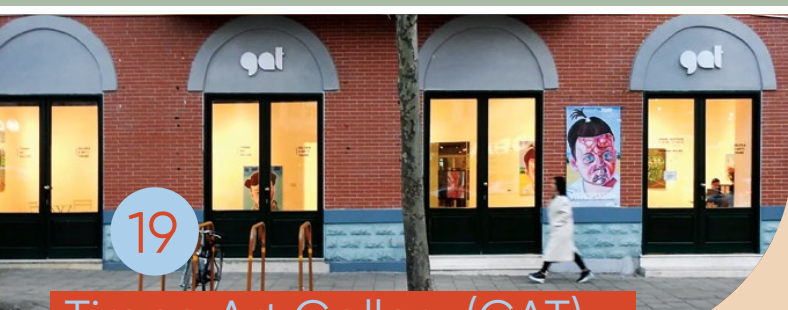
The Block is also home to the former villa of Enver Hoxha. Built during the communist era, its architecture partly imitates the style of the 1930s. Located in the former Block area, this house was an untouchable, taboo object, shrouded in mystery during the dictatorship.



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Tirana Art Gallery (GAT)

A public art gallery created in 2021 to support visual arts. Its primary mission is to provoke discussions and present new ideas through visual art, support young artists, and promote and exhibit their work to the public.



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Tirana Mosaic

belongs to an ancient settlement, believed to have been part of a rural dwelling built in the 1st century AD. In the 3rd century AD, the simple rural dwelling was replaced by a complex of buildings with agricultural functions. In the first half of the 4th century AD, the building was transformed into a cult building (a single-nave paleo-Christian church). The premises are paved with mosaics, featuring geometric and floral motifs, as well as the symbol of the cross.



21

Grand Park

The Grand Park of the Artificial Lake dates back to 1957-1958. The park area consists of a hilly massifs with gentle slopes. In the southern part, the water mirror of the Artificial Lake forms, creating very picturesque small bays and peninsulas. This park features several historical, artistic, social-cultural works, including the Church of St. Procopius (1938), the Memorial Pantheon of the Fashëri Brothers, the Amphitheater, the German soldiers' cemetery, and the British soldiers' cemetery from World War II, among others.



22

Tirana Zoo

Established in 1966, is the only zoo in Albania. Located in Tirana's green area, it was reopened in June 2022 after revitalization, featuring 27 animal species and recreational areas dominated by green spaces and playgrounds with educational environments for children.

