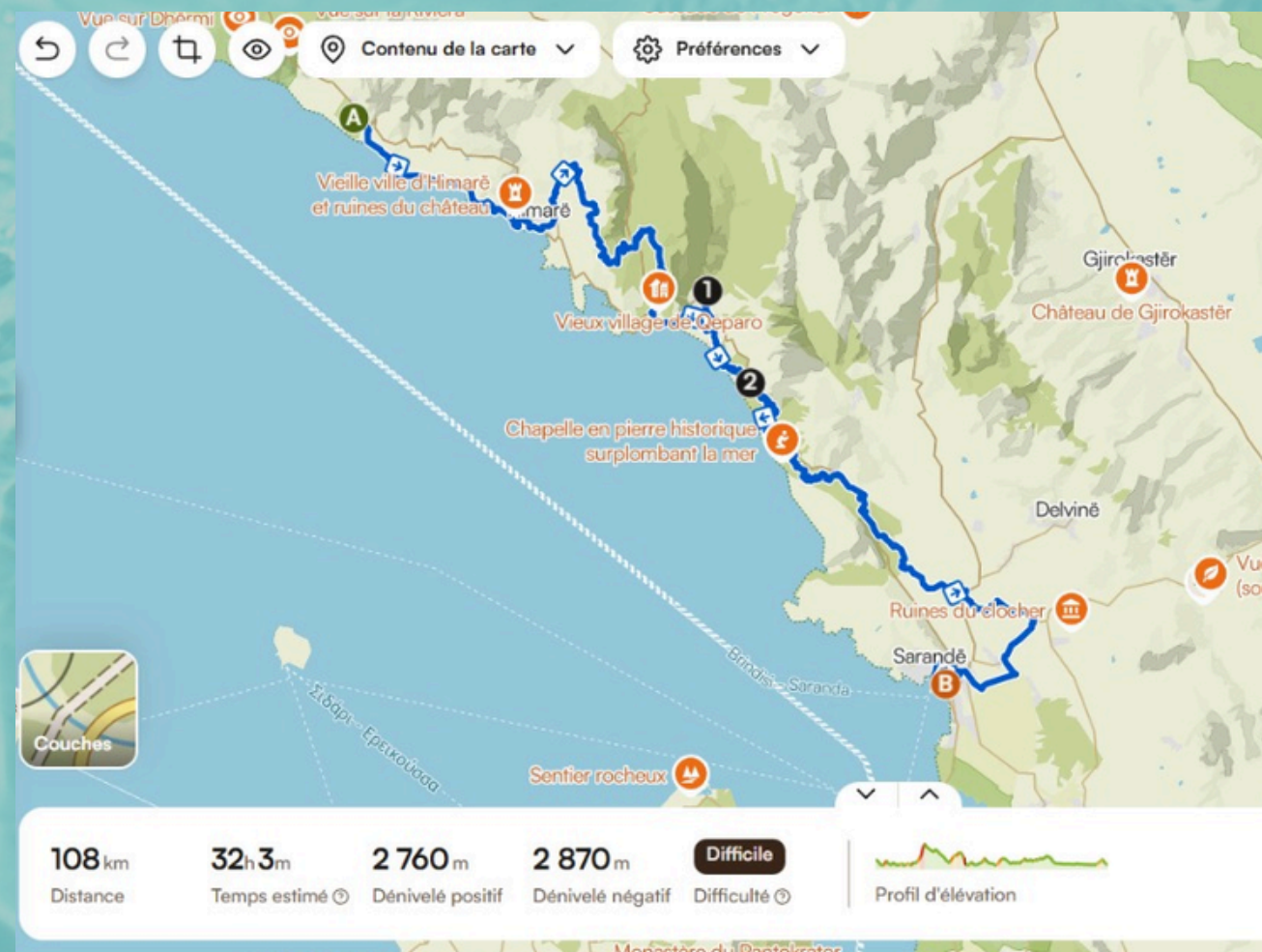


THE ALBANIAN BLUE WAY

Discover the coast, step by step

INTRODUCTION & VISION

The Albanian Blue Way is a social and responsible tourism initiative based on the Albanian Ionian Riviera. Under the slogan “Discover the coast, step by step,” this project offers an experience based on movement, learning, and local immersion rather than mass consumption. Our vision is to create a continuous route connecting Borsh to Saranda, offering a concrete and preventive alternative to intensive tourism development models.



WHY THIS DESTINATION?

Albania represents a destination in transition. Its coastline offers strong natural and cultural appeal, competitive prices and growing international interest. At the same time, environmental regulations, coastal planning and tourism governance remain limited, creating vulnerabilities. This makes the destination particularly relevant for testing alternative, preventive models of sustainable coastal tourism.

Focus on The Albanian Ionian Riviera. It is characterized by steep cliffs, small coves, clear waters and coastal villages that still retain a strong local identity. While tourism is developing rapidly, the region remains less structured and less saturated than other Mediterranean destinations.



SWOT ANALYSIS OF ALBANIA

STRENGTHS

- The coastline of the Ionian Riviera still largely natural and unspoiled
- High landscape quality: clear waters, coves, cliffs, white sand beaches
- Growing image as an “authentic” and “unspoiled” destination
- Costs still competitive for visitors
- Potentially extended tourist season (spring–fall)
- Traditional coastal villages with strong local identity

WEAKNESSES

- Environmental management still limited (waste, wastewater)
- Lack of structure in sustainable tourism offerings
- Coastal urbanization sometimes uncontrolled
- High seasonality in summer
- Poor coordination between local stakeholders
- Few distinctive tourism experiences with high educational value

OPPORTUNITIES

- Growing interest in slow tourism and active travel
- Increasing saturation of neighboring rivieras (Greece, Croatia, Italy)
- Search for experiences perceived as more authentic
- Growing international appeal of Albania
- Opportunity to act before tourist saturation
- Potential for boosting local rural and coastal economies

THREATS

- Rapid development of mass seaside tourism
- Real estate pressure on the coastline
- Degradation of marine and coastal ecosystems
- Pollution linked to increased tourist flows
- Increased vulnerability to climate change
- Gradual loss of authenticity and commoditization of offerings

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

The key challenge is to promote the coast without replicating the environmental damage and social tensions associated with mass tourism. Rather than concentrating tourist flows on a single site, our itinerant model spreads tourist presence along the coastline, transforming it into a medium for education and gradual discovery. The aim is to demonstrate that an alternative based on slowness and local roots is not only possible, but necessary for the sustainability of the region.



THE CONCEPT

The experience offers a 6-day, 5-night slow tourism experience along Albania's Ionian Riviera, specifically connecting Borsh to Saranda. Designed for small groups of up to 6 people to limit the ecological footprint, the trip takes place exclusively during the off-season (April-May and September-October) to promote seasonality and avoid summer congestion. The adventure combines coastal hiking and occasional kayaking segments, with unique homestay accommodation to support the local economy. The whole trip is supervised by a local guide who provides in-depth information on marine biodiversity and environmental issues in the area. The inspiration behind this project is to protect and preserve this exceptional environment before it becomes necessary to repair it.



STAY - LOCAL IMMERSION

Accommodation is provided exclusively through existing local guesthouses and homestays, avoiding any new coastal construction. This model ensures that tourism revenues are directly redistributed to local families rather than external investors. Meals are prepared by hosts using local and seasonal products, allowing participants to discover traditional Albanian cuisine and everyday food practices. Sharing meals and daily routines with local hosts fosters cultural exchange and provides a deeper understanding of coastal village life.



EXPERIENCE - COMMUNITY & MEDIATION

Each day is punctuated by the discovery of varied landscapes, making travel the common thread of a human and physical adventure. The role of the local guide is central: they are not simply a logistical support person, but a mediator between the visitor and the territory. By interpreting the landscapes and explaining the historical and environmental contexts, they create a bridge between travelers and the reality of the country. This collaboration with local communities transforms the trip into a true transmission of knowledge and ecological awareness.



ADRENALINE - SOFT ADVENTURE

In this project, adrenaline is not generated by extreme or motorized activities, but by sustained physical engagement with the coastal environment. Walking long distances day after day, and occasionally navigating the coastline by kayak to explore sea caves and coves that are inaccessible by land create a form of soft adventure. The challenge lies in endurance, immersion and self-reliance rather than speed or performance, offering a stimulating yet accessible experience aligned with the principles of slow tourism.



ENVIRONMENT - SOFT MOBILITY & EDUCATION

The project is designed to minimize its ecological footprint by relying on sustainable modes of transportation and small groups of no more than six people. By using only existing infrastructure and excluding all motorized activities, we respect the carrying capacity of fragile environments. Every aspect of the trip is designed to encourage a conscious and respectful relationship with nature.

Environmental awareness is integrated into every stage of the journey thanks to the guide's explanations about marine biodiversity, Posidonia seagrass beds, and plastic pollution. The kayaking sessions provide an ideal opportunity for observation and discussion about ecosystems and small-scale fishing. The aim is to transform travelers into active observers of coastal protection.



BRAND - IDENTITY & TARGET AUDIENCE

THE ALBANIAN BLUE WAY

The Albanian Blue Way is a social and responsible tourism initiative rooted in the Albanian Ionian Riviera. Its identity is built around slowness, human connection, responsibility and transmission, proposing a coastal experience based on movement, learning and local immersion rather than consumption.

The name refers to the Ionian Sea and to the idea of a progressive route, while the slogan “Discover the coast, step by step” reflects the project’s slow and itinerant approach to coastal tourism.

The project targets travelers aged 25 to 45 who are sensitive to environmental issues and seek meaningful, authentic and active experiences. A secondary target includes experienced travelers aged 45 to 60 with good physical condition and strong cultural interest. The brand deliberately excludes customers looking for luxury, resorts, or beach clubs.

BUSSINESS - VIABILITY



REVENUE

- Core Income: Sale of all-inclusive itinerant packages at a fixed rate.
- Full Coverage: Covers airport transfers, homestay lodging, local guiding, kayak rentals, meals, and equipment.
- High-Value Model: Small groups (max 6) limit volume but ensure high value per participant.
- Fair Trade: Intermediate pricing to ensure fair wages for local guides and hosts.
- Unique Selling Point: The primary activity (hiking) is free, making the package highly competitive.
- Secondary Funding: Support from institutions, grants, and environmental NGOs.

GROWTH POTENTIAL

- Ethical Growth: We refuse to increase group sizes to avoid mass tourism.
- Geographic Expansion: Extending the "Blue Way" to other sections of the Ionian coast.
- Qualitative Depth: Adding educational value via specialists like biologists or historians.
- Social Goal: To be a viable social enterprise where profits are reinvested into local training and conservation.



RISKS



- Environmental: Possible deterioration if attendance is poorly controlled → Mitigation: Small group sizes and framing.
- Logistical: Limited availability of homestay accommodations. → Mitigation: Possibility of staying in various nearby accommodations (requires a fairly large network of local partners).
- Climate: Weather conditions that may limit activities. → Mitigation: Relatively mild and sunny weather in spring/fall (weather is a bit of an issue for everything and everywhere).
- Economic: Limited income during the off-season. → Mitigation: Lower prices to attract niche markets + NGO partnerships.

WHY IS IT INNOVATIVE?

There are occasional coastal hikes along the Albanian Riviera, but they are not currently organized as continuous multi-day itineraries, nor are they structured around a strictly sustainable model with soft mobility, homestay accommodation, ecological mediation, and seasonal availability. The proposed concept therefore stands out clearly from existing offerings, as it combines these elements into an integrated and responsible proposal.

WHY SUPPORT US?

The Albanian Blue Way is not just a journey, it is an act of active preservation for one of the last wild jewels of the Mediterranean. By choosing to support this model, you are investing in a future where tourism becomes a vehicle for protection rather than exploitation. Join us in proving that sustainable coastal development is possible: together, let's protect the Ionian Riviera step by step.



CONVINCED?

TABW