

EUROPE · HIKING · MOUNTAINS · HISTORY · CULTURE · SACRED SITES · OFF THE BEATEN PATH



Kosovo

Kosovo, which declared independence in 2008 and has Europe's youngest population, is one of the continent's cheapest places to travel. Pristina's café culture, Ottoman Prizren and frescoed Serbian Orthodox monasteries lie within two hours of each other, and the Rugova Canyon offers serious hiking.

i Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Kosovo and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 23 September 2026.

CAPITAL Pristina	CURRENCY Euro (EUR) £1 ≈ €1.19	LANGUAGE Albanian, Serbian	BEST TIME May–Sep
DAILY BUDGET £30–£120 £ Budget-friendly	PLUGS Type C, F 230V · adapter needed	FLIGHT FROM LONDON 3h 10m direct ~£60–£280 return	TIME ZONE UTC+1 standard time

Kosovo is small — you can cross it by car in about two hours — so most visitors base themselves in two or three places. Pristina, the capital, is less about sights than atmosphere: packed cafés, the Newborn monument and a startlingly young crowd. Prizren, in the south, is the cultural highlight, with mosques, a stone bridge and a hilltop fortress, while Peja in the west is the gateway to the Rugova Canyon and the mountains on the Albanian and Montenegrin borders. The UNESCO-listed Serbian Orthodox monasteries at Dečani, Peja and Gračanica preserve superb medieval frescoes. Many trips continue to Albania, North Macedonia or Montenegro as part of a wider Balkan loop.

Prices are among the lowest in Europe: a macchiato costs little more than a euro, a filling grill lunch a few more, and good guesthouses are cheap. Visitors are still relatively few outside July and August, when the diaspora returns from Germany and Switzerland and roads and restaurants fill. English is widely spoken by younger Kosovars, and many visitors are surprised by the warmth shown to British and American travellers, rooted in the 1999 NATO intervention. The country suits curious travellers interested in recent history, hikers and anyone building a Balkan route; nights out in Pristina are an unexpected bonus.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

ARCHITECTURE

Prizren old town

Prizren's Ottoman core straddles the Bistrica river, where the old stone bridge, the 17th-century Sinan Pasha Mosque and a hammam cluster below a hilltop fortress. Climb up at sunset, and seek out the frescoed Church of Our Lady of Ljeviš.
- 2

ADVENTURE

Rugova Canyon

West of Peja, this limestone gorge cuts deep into the Accursed Mountains. Walk or cycle the road through it, tackle the via ferrata and zipline, or join the long-distance Peaks of the Balkans trail into Albania and Montenegro.

3

SACRED SITE

Visoki Dečani Monastery

Founded in the 1320s, this Serbian Orthodox monastery holds one of the largest surviving collections of medieval frescoes in the Balkans. It is a working monastery and part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site; bring your passport and dress modestly.

4

SACRED SITE

Gračanica Monastery

Built by King Milutin in 1321, this monastery in a Serb-majority town just south-east of Pristina is a masterpiece of late Byzantine architecture, its five domes sheltering richly coloured 14th-century frescoes.

5

NATURE

Mirusha Waterfalls

A chain of 12 waterfalls and 13 lakes along the Mirusha river canyon in central Kosovo, the tallest dropping about 22m. Hike along the gorge from pool to pool, and swim in summer when the water is warmest.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Pristina

≈ 227,000 people

Kosovo's capital is short on postcard sights but long on energy: café-lined Mother Teresa Boulevard, the Newborn monument, the much-debated National Library building and a lively bar scene.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Prizren

≈ 147,000 people

Kosovo's cultural capital and second city sits beneath the Sharr Mountains; base yourself here for two nights, or longer in August for Dokufest's open-air screenings.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Ferizaj

≈ 109,000 people

A modern, largely commercial town between Pristina and the North Macedonian border, notable for its mosque and Orthodox church standing side by side; most visitors pass through.

Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to KosovoBest time: **May–Sep.**

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

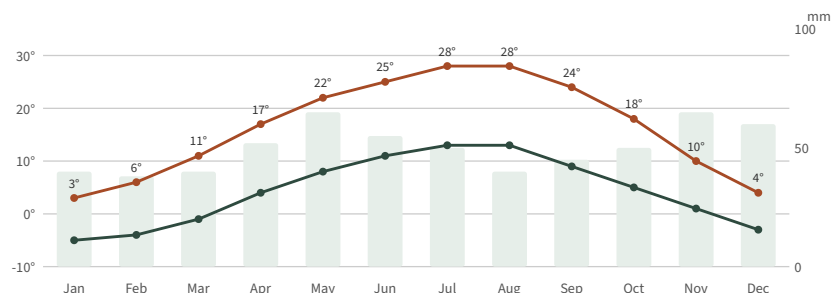
Nov

Dec

■ Best ■ Good ■ Mixed ■ Poor

Average climate in Pristina

— High °C — Low °C ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Feb	Independence Day On 17 February Pristina celebrates the 2008 declaration of independence with concerts and fireworks; the Newborn monument is repainted around each anniversary with a new design.
Aug	Dokufest Prizren's international documentary and short film festival fills the old town for a week in August, with open-air screenings by the river and at the fortress, plus concerts late into the night.

How much does Kosovo cost?

SHOESTRING £30 per person / day ≈ €35.71 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £60 per person / day ≈ €71.42 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £120 per person / day ≈ €143 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Flija Thin layers of batter brushed with cream and baked slowly under an ember-heated metal lid, taking hours to build; eat it with yoghurt, honey or pickles.	Qebapa Small grilled sausages of minced beef, served in fives or tens with bread, raw onion and ajvar pepper relish at grill houses everywhere.	Pite Flaky filo pies filled with cheese, spinach or minced meat, bought warm from bakeries for breakfast and eaten with a glass of yoghurt.
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Getting around

Frequent, cheap buses connect Pristina with Prizren, Peja, Gjakova and Ferizaj, and run on to Tirana, Skopje and Podgorica. Distances are short: Pristina to Prizren takes about 90 minutes. A slow train runs from Pristina to Peja. Hiring a car makes the Rugova Canyon and the monasteries much easier. Taxis are cheap, but insist on the meter.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  C F 230V — bring a UK-to-C/F adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS All emergencies: 112 (ambulance, fire, police) Police: 192 from a mobile (92 from a landline) Fire: 193 from a mobile (93 from a landline) Ambulance: 194 from a mobile (94 from a landline) Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +383	TIME ZONE UTC+1 (standard time)
TAP WATER Varies — bottled or filtered is safer	DRIVING On the right

TIPPING

Round up in cafés and taxis, and leave about 10% in restaurants for good service; it is appreciated rather than expected.

ETIQUETTE

Avoid treating Kosovo's status as small talk: it is deeply felt on all sides. Dress modestly in mosques and monasteries, and expect generous hospitality, often starting with coffee.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Pristina International Airport Adem Jashari (PRN), Pristina

Visas & entry for Kosovo

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can visit Kosovo without a visa for up to 90 days, for business or tourism.

Officials may ask you to provide documentary evidence giving a reason for your stay or showing you have sufficient finances. They will issue a 90-day entry stamp, which is renewable for longer stays.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Hepatitis B

Rabies

Tuberculosis

Typhoid

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Kosovo

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Fri 25 Dec 2026	Catholic Christmas Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Sat 2 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Mon 4 Jan 2027	New Year's Day (observed)

Thu 7 Jan 2027	Orthodox Christmas Day
Wed 17 Feb 2027	Independence Day
Tue 9 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Sun 28 Mar 2027	Catholic Easter
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Catholic Easter (observed)
Fri 9 Apr 2027	Constitution Day
Sat 1 May 2027	International Labour Day
Sun 2 May 2027	Orthodox Easter
Mon 3 May 2027	International Labour Day (observed)
Tue 4 May 2027	Orthodox Easter (observed)
Sun 9 May 2027	Europe Day
Mon 10 May 2027	Europe Day (observed)
Sun 16 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Mon 17 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (observed, estimated) (date may shift)

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Albanian

ENGLISH	ALBANIAN	SAY IT
Hello	Përshëndetje	<i>per-shen-DET-yeh</i>
Thank you	Faleminderit	<i>fah-leh-meen-DEH-reet</i>
Please	Ju lutem	<i>yoo LOO-tem</i>
Excuse me	Më falni	<i>muh FAHL-nee</i>
How much is this?	Sa kushton kjo?	<i>sah koosh-TOHN kyoh?</i>

Know before you go

- If you plan to travel on to Serbia, check the FCDO advice on routes first: border recognition issues mean how you entered Kosovo can affect crossing into Serbia.
- Kosovo uses the euro although it is not in the eurozone. Cards work in Pristina, but carry cash for village guesthouses, buses and small grill houses.
- Driving in from abroad? Most foreign green-card insurance does not cover Kosovo, so buy short-term border insurance at the crossing; hire cars from neighbouring countries need the rental firm's permission.