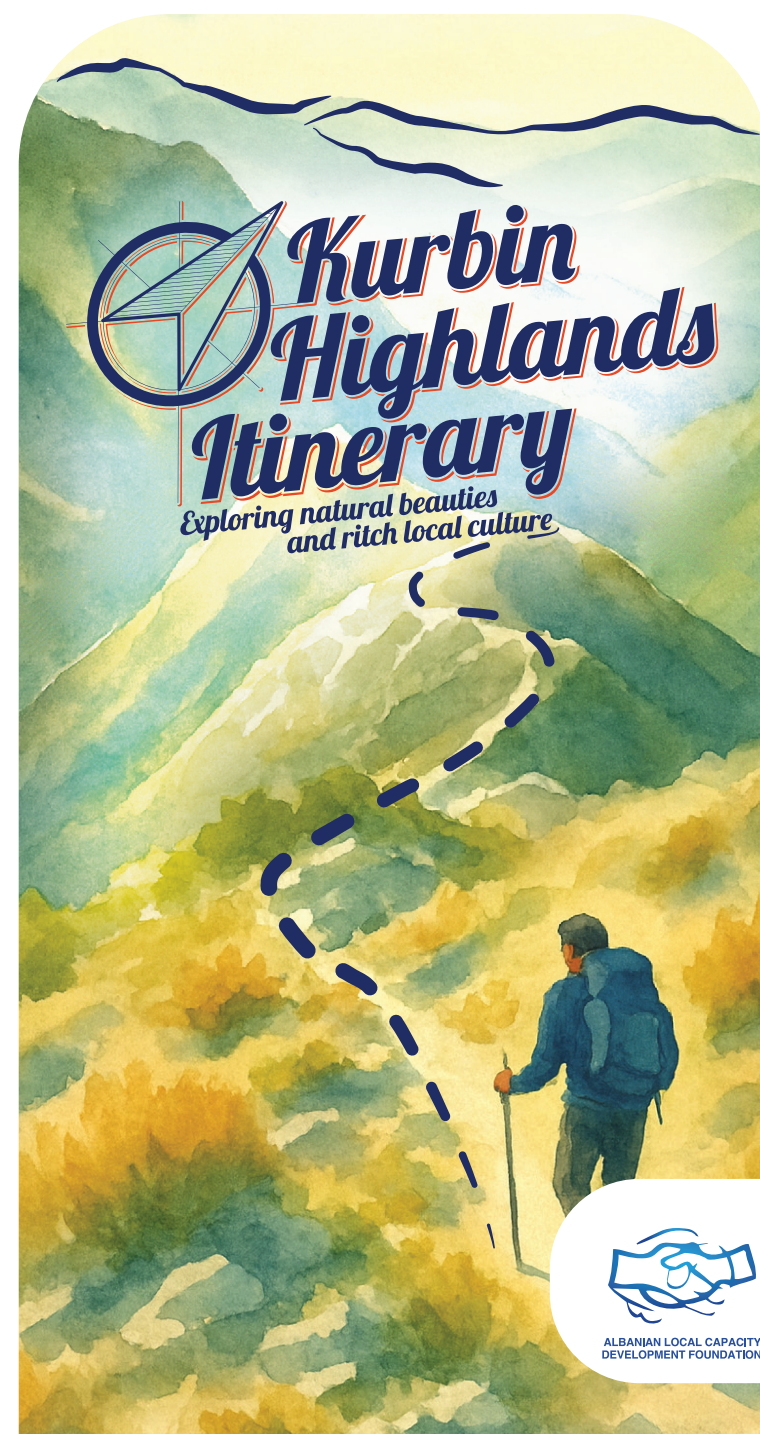




Kurbin Highlands Itinerary

The secrets' of Kurbin Highlands

Kurbin is the land of legends, fairy tales, religious monuments and natural beauties.

It is a part of the country that is much loved by pilgrims, history buffs, nature lovers, history enthusiasts, and adventure seekers.

It is also a place that connects two very important tourist locations. On the one hand, Kruja, which is renowned for its history and traditional tourism, and on the other, Shëngjin, popular for its beaches and beautiful coastline.

The Kurbin Highlands include some of the most beautiful and dramatic landscapes in Albania, with high peaks, dense forests, beautiful rivers, deep gorges and very rich history and traditions. Yet, despite all these tourism potentials, it is very little known or explored. The area is mainly mountainous and consists of two mountain ranges - the Skanderbeg one to the east, and the Milot Crown (Kunora e Milotit) and Suka Peak to the west. The two mountain ranges are divided by Hurdhaza, a river that originates in Mount Skanderbeg, Vinjollë, and flows into River Mat in Skuraj. There are all sorts of opportunities in the area for nature lovers, enthusiasts of hiking, mountain climbing, mountain biking, various sports and outdoor recreational activities. As such, they turn this area into an enchanting and fascinating destination for people who love both nature and adventure tourism. Some of the most interesting places to explore are the following:



The ruins of St. Friday Church

1. The city of Laç

Laç is the beating heart of Kurbin, a place that combines history and culture with the hospitality of its inhabitants. Built as an industrial centre after the 1960s, the city still retains traces of the characteristic architecture of the communist period, offering visitors a journey through time and a unique atmosphere.

Strolling through the main boulevard is a pleasant experience: small cafés and traditional restaurants invite you to enjoy local dishes and fresh drinks, while shops and itinerant artisans offer souvenirs to take with you as a memory of Laç. Those who are passionate about culture may wish to visit the City Library or the historical monuments nearby.

Laç is also an important spiritual centre in Albania. Every year thousands of pilgrims visit **St. Anthony's Church**, known in the local vernacular as the Church of Laç, a holy place located on the city's picturesque hillsides. In addition to its religious value, this area also preserves the ruins of the **ancient fortress of Sebastia**, a historical monument of special importance. From this strategic position, visitors may admire a panoramic view that stretches all the way to the Adriatic coast.

The pilgrimage route is also a unique experience. It is a path of about 2.7 km from the city centre to the church, which is traversed on foot through the stairs and uphill, not only making the journey an act of piety and reflection but also an unforgettable adventure and experience for visitors.



St. Anthony's monument

The area of Milot is also renowned for its religious harmony, a spiritual wealth that is reflected in the numerous worshipping places. Visitors may discover the **Shullazi Tekke**, **St. Michael's Church** in Mal Bardhë, **St. Theodore's Church**, as well as the **former Archbishopric of Durrës** in the village of Delbnisht, a cultural monument of historical significance.

The latter was restored after the 2019 earthquake thanks to the EU4Culture programme, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNOPS in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sports, therefore returning this treasure of Albanian cultural heritage to the residents and visitors alike.



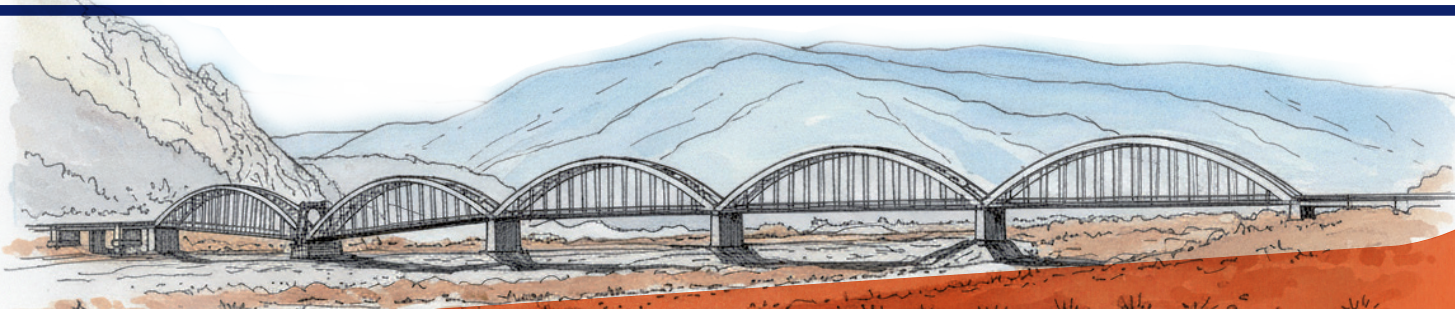
St. Mehil Church



St. Theodore's Church



The former **Archbishopric of Durrës** in the village of Delbnisht, one of the main cultural monuments, restored with funds from the EU4Culture program, financed by the European Union and implemented by UNOPS in cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sports.

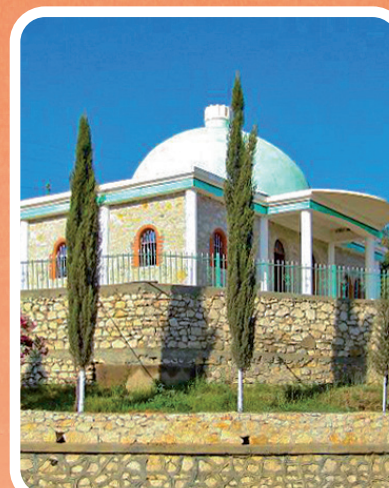


2. The Town of Milot

For centuries, the town of Milot with its surrounding villages has been a lovely commercial centre of the Kurbin region, known for the **traditional bazaar** of agricultural, livestock and handicraft products. In the heart of town, visitors may find the **Flag House**, a destination that brings history and national pride to the inhabitants and local visitors alike. Milot also offers a good range of tourist services – welcoming bars, restaurants offering local dishes (based on pork), comfortable hotels and other services for travellers. Another must-visit destination is the **King Zog Bridge** over River Mat, a cultural monument prized for its architectural and historical values.



The Flag House in Milot



Shullazi Tekke

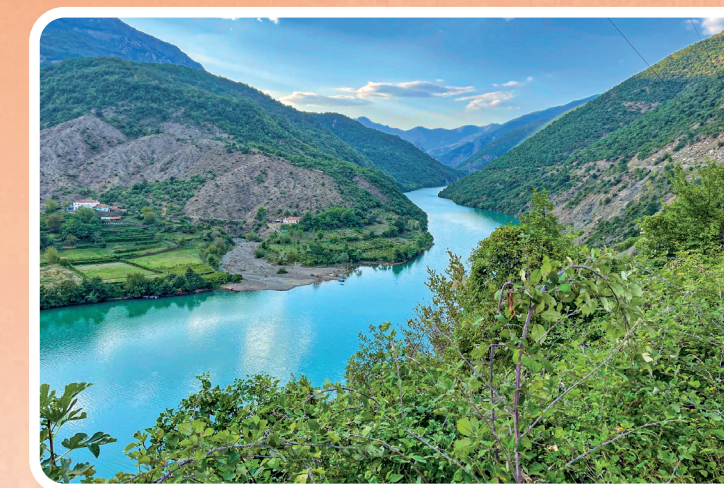
3. Shkopet Gorge

This gorge is one of the most beautiful natural monuments in the Kurbin Highlands. It is visited by both local and foreign tourists who thoroughly enjoy the freshness of the waters of **River Mat**, the wonderful landscapes of the **Shkopet gorge** and the slopes of **Skanderbeg Mountain**, as well as the **lake of Shkopet HPP**, offering a relaxing atmosphere amidst outstanding natural beauty.

Comfortable camping areas, traditional bars and restaurants and hospitable guesthouses offer services to all visitors who wish to enjoy water sports, the riverside beaches, fishing, kayaking and rafting.



Shkopet Gorge

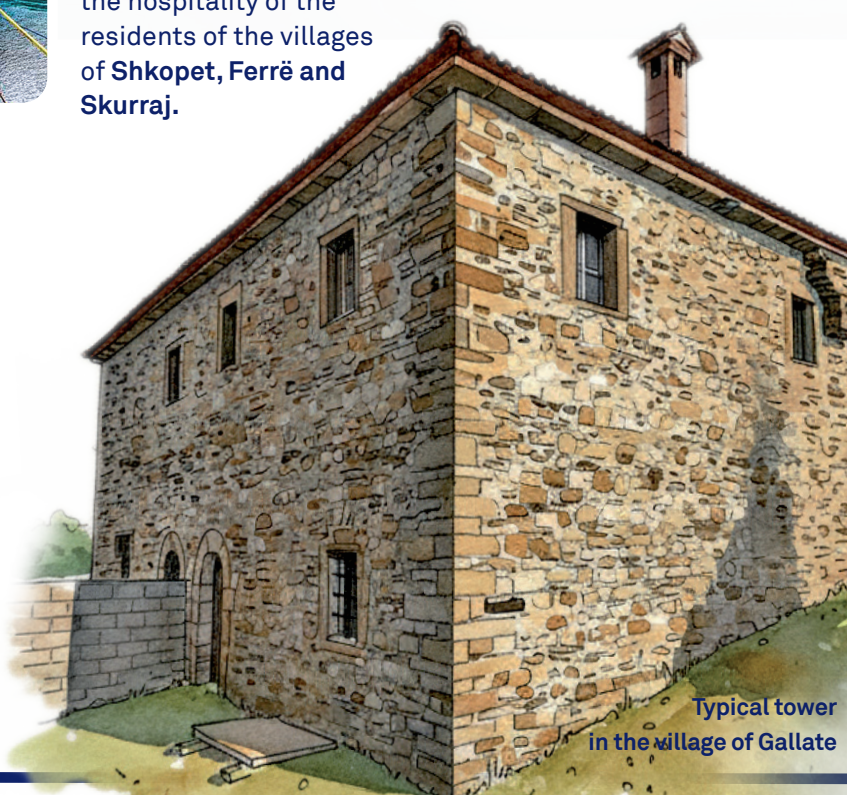


The lake of Shkopet HPP



Skuraj bridge

Shkopet Gorge offers a unique experience to visitors who, other than aquatic enjoyment, may relish the beautiful surrounding landscape, the typical products of the area, churches and other historical monuments, as well as the hospitality of the residents of the villages of **Shkopet**, **Ferrë** and **Skuraj**.



Typical tower in the village of Gallatë

4. Highland Villages

Enjoy a new experience in highland villages following the footsteps of Skanderbeg

Visiting the Kurbin Highland villages of **Skuraj**, **Gallatë**, **Vinjollë** and **Selitë** is an unforgettable experience. It stays with you because of the first-rate hospitality of the inhabitants of this area, unlike anywhere else, because here "the guest is sacred". Visitors will be delighted with the stories and ballads that bring antiquity and Skanderbeg's tales to the present, in the most authentic, lively and touching way.

The area is rich in natural landmarks steeped in historical symbolism, such as the **Mount Skanderbeg**, the **Spring of Skanderbeg**, **Gallatë's Falla Mill** and **Daula Castle**, a national cultural monument.

All of these destinations can be transformed into travel experiences, blending nature and history in the footsteps of our national hero, **Gjergj Kastrioti Skanderbeg**.



Church of St. Friday



Mount Skanderbeg

Part of this journey may also include the ruins of the **Church of St. Friday** (Kisha e Shën Prendes) in Gallatë, an important cultural monument with historical value, which once served as **Arbn's Episcopal Seat**, **Mount Skanderbeg** and **Hurdhaza Valley**, which offer natural beauty, forests of chestnut, oak, and pine trees, along with abundant water sources.

Built in the style of stone towers with traditional guest rooms and fireplaces, local guesthouses have become a tourist attraction for the Highlands of Kurbin. Visitors are treated like house guests and are given the place of honour, enjoying the warmth and hospitality of the family, and traditional dishes such as chestnut tart (karabec me gështenja), fried pork, chicken with porridge (pulë me qull), roasted kid goat, and granulated sugary pie (laknurin me sheqer), accompanied by honey and walnuts. You will leave looking back with fondness and a bagful of unforgettable memories.

Visitors may also engage in a wide range of outdoor activities, including mountain hiking, scenic trail trekking, mountain biking, off-road adventures with motorbikes or 4x4 vehicles provided by locals. Accommodation is offered in camping areas and guesthouses located in the hospitable villages of the Kurbin Highlands.

A unique experience awaits visitors at **Sandri's Castle** in Gallatë, a special location situated in a very picturesque spot, where hospitality meets the tranquility of nature and the cultural richness of the area.

Note

This leaflet aims to inform readers about Kurbin's main tourist areas that can become part and parcel of various itineraries based on one's interests, time and logistical means available. The information therein may serve as a guide for visitors, travel agencies and tour operators alike helping them put together tours, holiday packages and particular itineraries, lasting one or more days in this area.

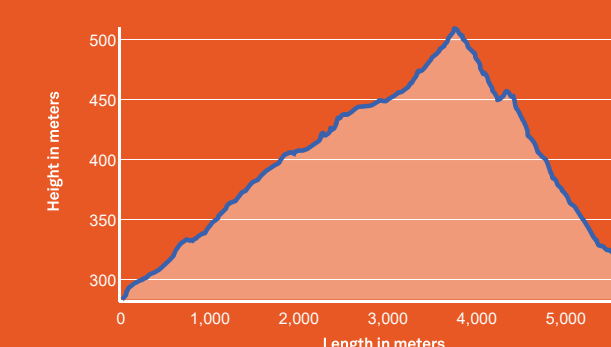
5. Skanderbeg Mountain Range (The Trails)

The Skanderbeg Mountains are stunning and naturally beautiful with abundant vegetation and dramatic terrain. The range begins in the east with **Mount Skanderbeg** near **Shkopet**, then passes through **Mëllezë Peak** (1,123 m), continues with **Huti Peak** (1,316 m) and reaches its highest point at **Lake Peak** (1,724 m). The western range's highest point is **Kunora (Crown) Peak** above Milot (745 m), followed by **Suka Peak** (675 m). This mountain range is a perfect destination for all nature lovers, both those who prefer slow peaceful walks to adventurers seeking challenges in every season. The variety of trails offers different levels of difficulty, from scenic walks for beginners to lengthy steep routes for experience enthusiasts.

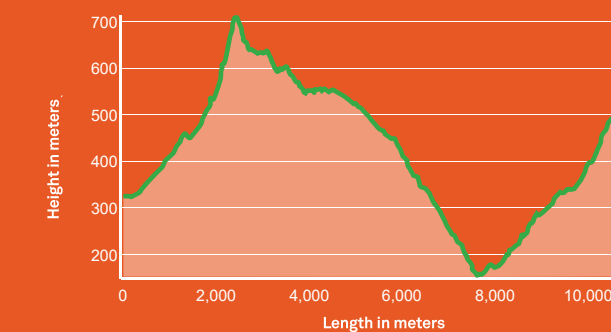
More than two days are needed to fully explore Mount Skanderbeg so as to fully experience hiking or mountain biking through the rugged terrain. The journey becomes even more special as the trails follow the historic paths of Skanderbeg and his warriors, turning each step into a journey through nature and history.

The most recommended trails are:

• **Former Archbishopric of Durrës – St. Anthony's Church Trail**, 6 km long, suitable for beginner hikers

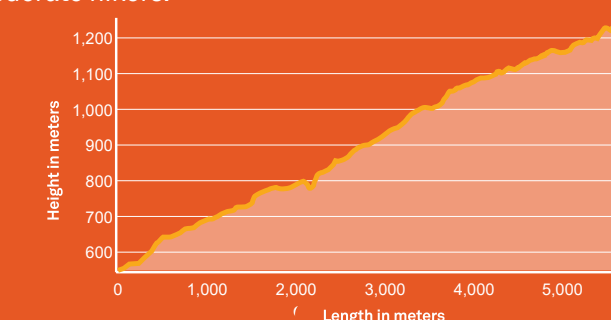


• **St. Anthony's Church – Church of St. Friday**, 10.8 km long, suitable for moderate hikers due to the natural hilly terrain and mountain ascents.

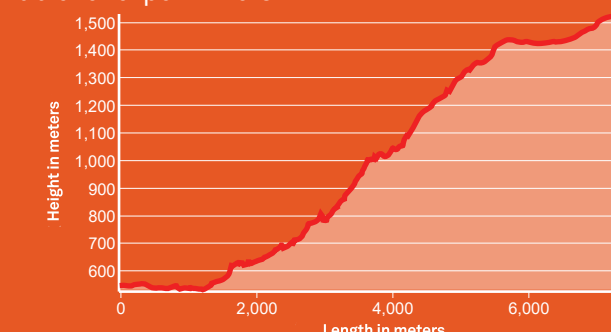


Locals refer to these two trails as **The Monk's Trail**.

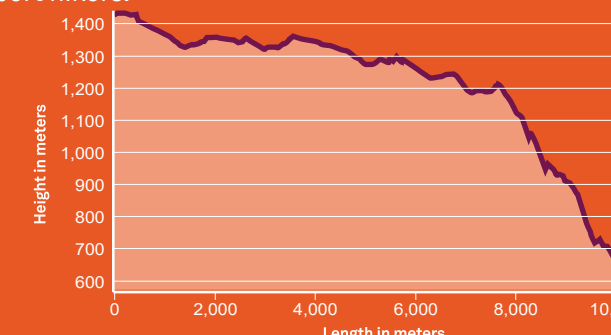
• **Church of St. Friday – Huti Peak Trail**, 5.7 km long through mountainous natural terrain, suitable for moderate hikers.



• **Vinjollë – Mount Skanderbeg Trail**, approximately 6.8 km long, featuring an uphill mountainous terrain and suitable for expert hikers



• **Mount Skanderbeg – Vinjollë Trail**, approximately 10.7 km long, featuring a descending terrain and suitable for expert hikers.



Locals refer to these three trails as **The Trail of Skanderbeg's warriors**.

The trails offer unrestricted views both inland and along the entire coast, allowing visitors to enjoy stunning sunsets over the Adriatic Sea.

The information is in your hands! Simply scan the QR Code and avoid using paper.



Information for the trails can be found in Wikiloc under the link www.wikiloc.com

Kurbin Municipality

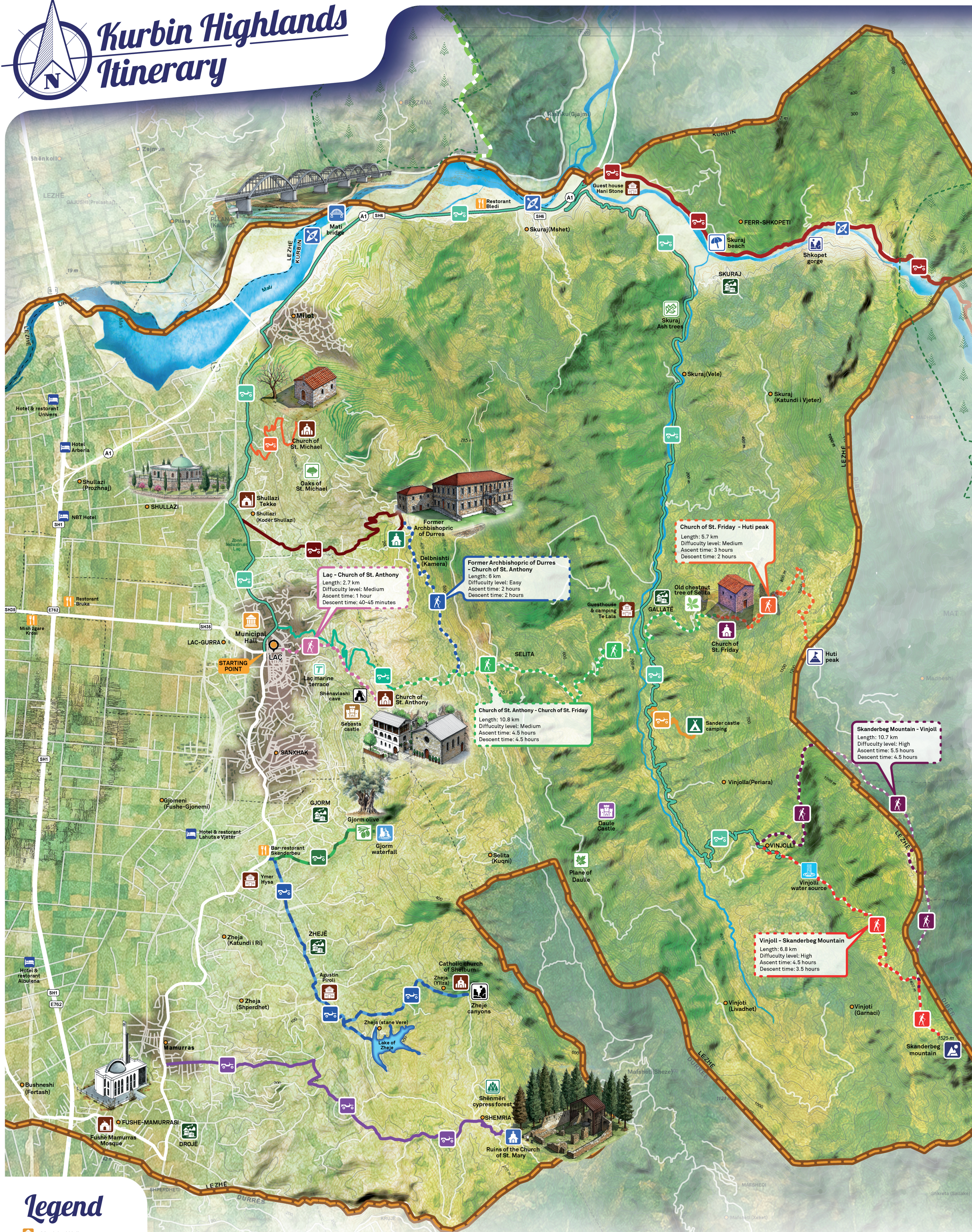
Address: Rruga Laç-Milot, Nr. 138, 4701, Laç, Albania
Web: www.bashkiakurbin.gov.al
E-mail: info@bashkiakurbin.gov.al

ALCDF

Albanian Local Capacity Development Foundation
Address: Bajram Curri boulevard, St. Shyqyri Ishmi, P.I.L. "Shpresa", Nr. 22/5, Tirana, Albania.
Tel: +355 4 451 8628
E-mail: info@alcdf.org
Web: www.alcdf.org

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Kurbin Highlands Itinerary



Legend



CULTURAL MONUMENTS

- Former Archbishopric of Durres
- Ruins of the Church of St. Mary
- Church of St. Friday
- Castle of Sebasta
- Dauile Castle
- Mati Bridge

RELIGIOUS SITES

- Church
- Mosque

NATURAL MONUMENTS

- Vinjoll water source
- Shkopet gorge
- Skuraj Ash trees
- Old chestnut tree of Selita
- Oaks of St. Michael
- Plane of Daulle
- Shënmëri cypress forest
- Cave of Shënavlashi
- Lac marine terrace

NATURAL ATTRACTIONS

- Skanderbeg mountain
- Huti peak
- Gjorm waterfall
- Gjorm olive
- Zheje canyons

HOTEL & RESTAURANT

- Hotel
- Restaurant

TOURIST POTENTIAL

- Attractive village
- Guest house
- Camping
- Beach

ROADS TO THE HIGHLANDS

- Lac - Gallatë - Vinjoll
- Gallatë - Castle of Sander
- Skuraj - Shkopet

HIKING TRAILS

- Former Archbishopric of Durres - Church of St. Anthony
- Church of St. Anthony - Church of St. Friday
- Church of St. Friday - Huti peak
- Vinjoll - Skanderbeg mountain
- Skanderbeg mountain - Vinjoll
- Lac - Church of St. Anthony

CHURCHES ITINERARY

- Lac - Church of St. Anthony
- Road Lac - Milot to Former Archbishopric of Durres
- Road Lac - Milot to Malbardha Church
- Mamurras - Ruins of the Church of St. Mary

RESIDENTIAL AREA

- LAÇ
- Residential center

WATER ATTRACTIONS

- Mat river
- Hurdhaz stream
- Lake of Zheje

PROTECTED AREAS

- Patok Lagoon
- Natural park

ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARY

- Municipality of Kurbin
- Other Municipalities

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Police	Firefighter	EMS	For all emergency situations
129	128	127	112

1:45,000

