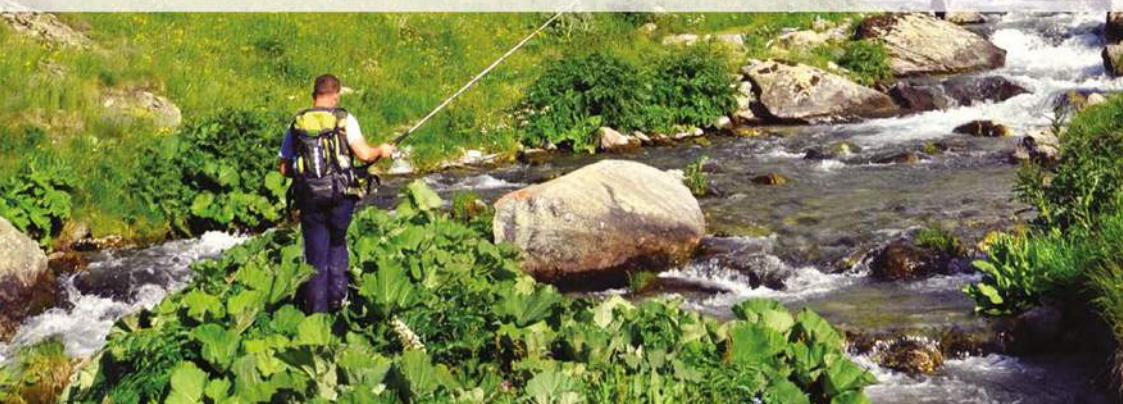
South Eastern Europe
SWG RRD
Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group

ABD PROGRAMME
Area Based Development Programme in the Western Balkan countries

SHARRA
CROSS-BORDER REGION



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SHARRA
The undiscovered gem
of the Balkans

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GETTING FAMILIAR WITH THE REGION

Position
The Sharra cross border region is positioned in the center of the Balkan Peninsula, occupying territories belonging to Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo*. The region covers the north-western part of Macedonia, the southern part of Kosovo* and the north-eastern part of Albania and covers 2.564km2 (311km2 in Macedonia, 930km2 in Albania and 1323km2 in Kosovo).

The name Sharra of the cross border region derives from the Sharra Mountain - a largely undiscovered gem for most visitors and a cherished dwelling place for the local inhabitants.

Countries, districts and municipalities
The Sharra cross-border region, homogenous in natural, cultural and socio-economic characteristics, includes two Municipalities from Macedonia, three from Kosovo and the district of Kukes, along with its 14 Communes, from Albania, as shown below.

Macedonia – the municipalities Jegunovce and Tearce
Albania – the district of Kukes with 14 communes (one urban and 13 rural)
Kosovo – the municipalities of Prizren, Shterpce/Štrpce and Dragash.

People and Diversity
Amongst the assets of the Sharra cross border region are its young population and its multiethnic composition. The inhabitants live beside each other, as they have done for centuries, and jealously preserve their languages, traditions and life styles. Within the area of 2.564km2 there are 7 different ethnic groups – Albanian, Macedonian, Serb, Bosniak, Turk, Gorani and Roma, thus making it one of the most ethnically diverse area in the Balkans.

Geography
The mountainous area of the Sharra region is positioned in the north-western part of Macedonia, the southern part of Kosovo* and the north-eastern part of Albania. Its elevation ranges from 300m above sea level, at the base of the mountains, to 2,764m at the highest peak. There are 29 mountain tops situated well over 2000 metres.

Uplift and glaciations have been primary forces on the mountains' formation, geology and present topography. Scattered glacial lakes, u-formed valleys and moraines are an evidence of this and the area is abundant typical features of the alpine landscape. Soil fertility is high on the base and lower on the higher slopes, making mixed agricultural production possible.

Climate
Whatever your preferences for the weather conditions are, you will find them in the Sharra region which enjoys three climate zones. Continental climate which prevails in the region as a whole merges with mountain influences and turns into the alpine as the you reach higher mountain parts. Up to 280 days of snow coverage at the higher altitudes is a valuable asset and a great experience. Mediterranean micro-climate is experienced in the Kukes and Prizren valleys as a result of the warm Adriatic draft of wind that persistently blows up from the coast through the valley of the Drim River.

Climate characteristics have a strong influence on the presence and evolution of the regional flora and fauna. The region is high in biodiversity protected within a national park and several protected zones.

Average temperature in the region is around 11ºC – the temperature range is between 20 ºC below zero to 38 ºC above it, the highest temperature being experienced in July and August and the lowest in January and February. Average wind speed is 16 metres per second and with a maximum of around 26,5 mps. Fog is very common during the winter period and occasionally occurs during the warmer months. Winter snow falls to the height of 1.5 metres and above in the mountains and around 1 metre or more at lower altitudes, so ski resorts on both the Kosovo and Macedonian sides of the mountain have a long-lasting snow cover to guarantee you a perfect winter holiday.

Nature

The Sharra region distinguishes itself by its high-mountains and associated flora, fauna, eco systems, genetic resources and local endemism. It is amongst the most important mountain chains in South East Europe and one of the largest compact areas covered with pastures. It combines significant geo-morphological, hydrological and natural resources. Vegetation on the mountains includes crops up to around 1,000 m, forests up to 1,700 m, and above that lie high pastures which encompass around 550 km2.

The first impression of visitors to the Sharra region is unquestionably of the picturesque landscape, the almost always snowy Shar/Sharri Mountains standing proud and glorious, the attractive valleys clothed in forests and pastures, the rivers and glacial lakes beautiful and diverse.

The main rivers are the Lepenci and the Lumbardhi/Bistrica. Alpine and Glacial lakes represent one of key attractions of the Shar/Sharri Mountains. At the altitude above 1900 metres there are 25 glacial lakes, which are especially distinguished by their beauty and size. Lake Livadica/Livadhi and Jazhinca Lake lie at the elevations of 2210 m and 2180 m

respectively. Shutman Lake lies at an elevation of 2,070 m asl. Other lakes of importance are Gornjasella lake, Karanikola lake, Miskova lake, Bezdanka lake, Dnivodno lake, Defsko lake, and all are attractive for mountaineers and tourists.

The region is a home to more than 2000 species of indigenous flora and fauna. The flora includes high altitude forest-belts of oak, beech and spruce. Many medical herbs are found in the forest floors and in open areas. Indigenous fauna includes rare species of birds, bears, wolf, lynx, wild rabbit and fox. Bountiful water resources support such diversity.

History

The Sharra region is an area of rich and interesting historical heritage. In ancient times, until the 4th century, it lay on the boundary between the influences of the Latin and Greek languages. The Jericek Line described by historians bisects the area - most inscriptions found to the North of this were written in Latin, while those found to South were in Greek. Historically the area was a crossroads of cultures. It has been at the juncture between Latin and Greek and between the Eastern and Western Roman Empires. Even Ptolomy's Geography mentions the Roman town of Theranda (Prizren) in the 2nd century AD.

The expansion of the Ottoman Empire to the Balkans included the Sharra region, so from the 1400s until the First World War, the area was under its significant influnence.

In 1918 the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed and renamed in 1929 to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, with Sharra region becoming a part of Vardarska Banovina.

During the Second World War, the region was divided and controlled by the Italian and German forces until 1944. At the end of the war, this area was administratively divided into the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Serbia with its Autonomous Province of Kosovo, all under the communist government of Yugoslavia, and into the Republic of Albania. As part of the breakdown of Yugoslavia, the Republic of Macedonia became independent in 1991 and Kosovo* declared independence in 2008.

After a 50-year slowdown of cooperation among the people of the area who have always shared a common fate, territory and social life because of a political setting, the change of the social and political systems in all three countries marks a new start of regional cooperation and communication.

Culture

Centuries of changes and the influences of different empires and kingdoms is still to be seen in very rich cultural identity of the Sharra region today, and this is preserved and nourished with passion. The credits for this should be given to the local communities who have been dedicated to the task and successful in their efforts. As an evidence for this stand numerous cultural events, festivals, associations dealing in culture, libraries, theaters, religious institutions which are actively preserving the cultural identity of the region, and many more.

Architecture

Rich historical and cultural setting and changing influences over centuries have left a trace on the region's architecture. Travelling through the region gives the feeling of time-travel back through past times. Monuments and buildings characterizing different periods and civilizations are numerous and widespread. Architecture from the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman eras can be seen alongside that of more modern times. Ancient fortresses, mosques, monasteries, churches, tekkes and traditional houses make up this rich architectural mosaic. They all give a form and insight to the social order, religious traditions, beliefs and the ways of life of the region.

Tradition

As already said, the Sharra region has a rich cultural heritage and a history dating from antiquity. Settlements date back to ancient periods and the input of peoples of various ethnicities, cultures faiths and traditions have resulted in the development of a region unique in every sense - traditional clothing, traditional cuisine, traditional events, language, and living style – and strongly bonded with the land and environment. The region is well known for the famous crafts works and old masters who have produced unique works of art for centuries - filigran craftsmen, sewers, patternmakers, silver workers, blacksmiths and leatherworkers who are proud of their skill that dates back to prehistory.

Gastronomy
Given its cultural and ethnic diversity, the cuisine of the Sharra region is a rich mixture of similar variety. Influences from the Turkish, Albanian, Macedonian, Serbian and Greek food preparation are evident all over the area. In the last decades a further influence has been that from Italy and Western Europe in general mostly coming from large numbers of people originating from Sharra region that live and work in Western Europe.

The region is famous for its Master Bakers throughout ex-Yugoslavia. Those from the Hasi region are famous for sweets and other confectioneries, while people from the Gora Valley, Opoja, are known for meat specialties and various types of dishes considered to be common cuisine.

The Sharra region in general is traditionally known for its high quality and delicious cheeses: soft white cheese (sirenje), yellow cheese (kashkaval) produced from sheep and cow milk. Every village in the region offers unique and tasty local varieties of cheese. The region's cuisine is also noted for the diversity and quality of its other dairy products, for wines and the rakija - local alcoholic beverage - a kind of brandy - produced from locally grown grape, pear and plum.

All regional hosts will welcome guests to the table and provide them with home-produced dairy and meat products to satisfy the keenest appetites - Shar/Sharra cheese, fresh vegetable salad, roasted lamb or beef, offering the best tasting sweets to conclude. The golden hand of the people, the fertility of the land, and the secrets of their recipes all combine to make this a region of specialties waiting to be discovered.

Agriculture

The Sharra region is abundant in natural resources that provide excellent conditions for agricultural and livestock development. Fertile land and diverse hydrographical characteristics makes the area highly suitable for cultivating various agricultural crops. Soil fertility is high on the base and lower on the higher slopes, making mixed agricultural production possible.

On the Macedonian side, the Polog Valley is one of the most developed agricultural regions in the country and one part of the valley (the municipalities of Tearce and Jegunovce) falls within the region of the Shara cross-border region. This valley lies on the banks of the River Vardar, the biggest river in Macedonia, which provides water for the plantations in the region.

On the Kosovo side, the Lepenac River Valley in the Municipality of Shtrpce provides excellent conditions for agricultural production.The Prizren Valley within the borders of the municipality of Prizren is rich with highly fertile land. The geographic position of the valley, as well as the climate, makes agriculture the main economic activity of its population.

Agricultural crop production on the Albanian side predominates in the area around Lake Koman where the land position and the climate characteristics provide good conditions for further developing agriculture, as well as livestock breeding.

Common characteristics of the region are that the settlements are rural, agriculture practice is mainly traditional and focused on production of cereals, forage crops and potatoes. Local agricultural products are easily found in the markets (bazaara/pazaars) in bigger towns.

Agriculture in the Sharra region is the most developed of all its industries and it is the main occupation in all the rural settlements within the region. Still, compared to world agricultural trends and standards, it is still in the early stages of its development.

However, most of the territory of this cross-border area has the advantage of being non-polluted and the use of fertilizers is not intensive here, so many products from the Sharra region can be considered as eco-products.

Economy
The main economic activities in Sharra region are agricultural production and trade. Farming is the most important employer for the rural population of the region. In the urban settlements of Kukes, Prizren, Jegunovce and Dragash the economy is mostly based on retail industry, small enterprises and food processing.

Development of the economy is the biggest challenge facing the Sharra region. Properly used resources and developed programmes of investments can contribute to the further strengthening of the region and its municipalities. There are several essential economic sectors at local level that form the heart of economic activity in the Sharra cross-border area. These are: agriculture, livestock breeding, trade, catering services and tourism, which is the least developed sector for the moment, but with future potential to become one of the most important ones.

Tourism
Due to the region's beautiful nature and rich cultural and historical heritage, accompanied with numerous activities that enable exploring the area, tourism is becoming a growing industry in the Sharra cross-border territory which attracts more and more tourists every year.

The beautiful and picturesque landscape of the Sharra Mountains, the city of Prizren (also known as a cultural capital of Kosovo*), the surrounding area of Shtrpce municipally, Pollog Valley in Jegunovce and Tearce, Fierza lake and Shishtavec area are the places and sites most visited by domestic and foreign tourists. Tourists are also impressed with the opportunities for skiing, swimming or taking some other activity in the wonderful natural surroundings.

Local people and their kindness are an additional factor for tourism development. Visitors to the region happily return to their hosts who are always ready to greet their guests, help passers-by and even tell a small story or a legend.

Opportunities for further development of rural tourism, mountain tourism, cultural and religious tourism, sports tourism, winter and summer tourism, fishing and hunting activities are limitless within the region.

Some of the most important tourism sites not to be missed during visits to the region are:

Sharra Mountain National Park

Shtrpce/Štrpce Municipality:

- **Brezovica Ski Resort -** situated between 900 m and 2,500 m above sea level
- **Glacial Lakes -** altitude above 1900 meters.
- **St. Nicholas Church -** (Serbian: Sv. Nikola) is an Orthodox Church built between 1576 and 1577.

Dragash Municipality

- **Brod Village –** located 12 km south of Dragash, unique old, stone-built village in traditional style.
- **Recreation and sport centre - Arxhena** on the slopes of the Sharra Mountain 1 km from Brod Village with an alpine hotel in picturesque surroundings
- **Shutman Lake -** at an elevation of 2,070 m above sea level. The lake has a length of 160 m and a width of 100 m and is 1.10 m deep.

Prizren Municipality

- **Fortress (Kalaja) of Prizren -** provides a wonderful view over the town. The fortress dates from the Eastern Roman era from the 5th century.
- **The Sinan Pasha Mosque -** one of the most important monuments from the Ottoman Empire in this territory built in 1615
- **The Prizren League –** the heritage of cultural, historic and natural values it is a symbol of Albanian resistance against the Ottoman Empire.
- **Our Lady of Ljevis –** UNESCO protected monument
- **Gazi Mehmed Pasha Hamam -** Turkish bath of Gazi Mehmed Pasha - built in 1573, one of the three biggest in the Balkans.
- **Shadervan and Fountains -** the main square in town, a stone piazza known as Shadervan, is the gathering point on most evenings.
- **Old Stone Bridge** (Albanian: URA e gurit, Serbian/Bosnian: Stari kameni most) - one of the landmarks of Prizren. It crosses the river Lumbardh/ Bistrica.

Kukës District

- **Fierza Lake –** one of the largest artificial lakes in Albania with its coastline of 80km covering the area of 73 ha
- **Shishtavec –** natural protected area

- **Palace of Culture -** ethnographic collection of the region's cultural heritage with unique values
- **Bicaj Canyon -** the monument of nature 1000 metres deep and only 3 metres wide

Tearce Municipalty

- **Monastery Complex Leshok -** part of this complex is the Monastery Church of St. Atanasius built in 1335. The Church of the Holy Mother of God is also located within the complex.

Jegunovce Municipalty

- Ljuboten Mountain Hut - situated at 1630 metres above sea level, this is the oldest hut in Macedonia built in 1931.
- Livadichko ezero (Meadow Lake) - positioned at 2210 metres a.m.s.l, this glacial lake is probably the most beautiful and popular lake and among the most visited lakes and is a big tourist attraction. According its location it belongs to the territories of Kosovo* and Macedonia.
- Ljuboten peak (2499 meters a.m.s.l) - although not being the highest peak of the range, it certainly is the most attractive peak of the Shar/Sharra Mountain.
- This peak opens a wonderful view towards the western part of the Shar/Sharra Mountain, Livadichko Lake, Polog valley and part of Kosovo*.

Interesting facts

Shar/Sharri Mountain contains over 30% of the flora of the Balkans and about 15% of the flora of Europe.

The communist government started to build Kukësi i Ri (New Town of Kukes) on a plateau high above the river. The ultimate goal was to resettle all citizens from Old Kukes to the new town. In 1978, the reservoir was flooded and Old Kukes drowned forever in the Fierzës Lake which is mainly used for the production of hydo-electricity.

Sharplaninec/Pastori Ilir /Šarplininac is a trademark of Shar/Sharri Mountain. This shepherd dog named after Shar/Sharri Mountain, whose origin remains controversial, is characterized by benevolence, loyalty to his owner, discipline, speed and adaptability. It shows great commitment and patience with children and is an unmatched protector of the area.

The establishment of the Mountaineering Society Ljuboten in 1925 marks the beginning of mountaineering and mountain tourism development on Sharra Mountain . The first organized hiking tours on Shar/Sharri Mountain began after the establishment of the club. At first, the people were visiting places near the city, but later they started climbing peaks that were far-away from their homes.

PUTTING THE REGION ON THE MAP

Encompassing the territory of three Kosovo* municipalities (Prizren, Dragaš and Štrpce), two Macedonian municipalities (Tearce and Jegunovce) and 14 communes of the County of Kukes (Arrën, Bicaj, GrykëÇaje, Kalis, Kolsh, Kukës, Malzi, Shishtavec, Shtiqën, Surroj, Tërthorë, Topojan, Ujmisht, Zapod), the Sharra cross border region covers a large territory of intact nature, huge spaces covered in pastures, various formations of dense forests, and specific reliefs including valleys gorges and ravines, rivers, numerous waterfalls and lakes. All these make the Sharra region landscape one of the most attractive ones on the European continent.

Positioned at the centre of the Balkan Peninsula, the region is generally well connected with the surrounding destinations taking in to consideration the fairly good road infrastructure.

The international highway E-75 runs north-South from Serbia to Greece, bisecting Macedonia. This is the most common route for overland tourists to take for entering Macedonia. There are also regional and local roads connecting Skopje, Prishtina and Tirana with the Sharra region.

The regional road R-1203 which goes from Tetovo towards the border crossing point of Jazince (Macedonia) and Globocica (Kosovo*) passes through the territory of the Sharra region on the Macedonian side and it reaches most of the villages in Tearce and Jegunovce Municipalities.

A number of bus lines connect Macedonia, Kosovo* and Albania, especially Skopje, Prishtina and Tirana, with all neighboring countries and other European cities. There are also buses that transit on a daily basis from Skopje towards several villages in Tearce and Jegunovce municipalities.

Here is a list of the most frequently used routes:
E851 from Tirana (AL) to Kukes (AL) and Prizren (KS*), regional road R113 to Dragash (KS*) and R115 to Strpce (KS*), R116 border crossing in Jazince (MK) following R1203 to Tearce (MK) and R2234 to Jegunovce (MK).

A2 highway from Skopje (MK), take R2242 to Jegunovce(MK) and R2234 to Tearce (MK), border crossing Jazince , R116 Strpce to Prizren, E851 Prizren to Kukes, R113 to Dragash.
E65/M2 from Pristina (KS*), turn to R115 to Shtrpce , R116 to border crossing in Jazince (MK), R1203 to Tearce (MK) and R2234 to Jegunovce (MK)

As for the railway, there is an international train from Skopje operating twice daily, connecting Ljubljana, Slovenia and Thessaloniki via Macedonia.

The existing local railway infrastructure is in poor condition. There is a train from Skopje to Kicevo that stops in several villages in the Sharra region on the Macedonian side and which can be used as starting points for visiting the region.

The region is connected with the world by air, the closest international airports being Alexander the Great in Skopje, St Paul the Apostle in Ohrid, Adem Jashashi in Priština and Mother Teresa in Tirana. The highways and regional roads connect these airports with the Sharra region, so it will take you 1 hour to reach it from Skopje, 2 hours from Ohrid, 3 hours from Tirana 3 hours and 45 minutes from Prishtina.

More information can be found on the websites of the airports: http://airports.com.mk. www.airportpristina.com, www.tirana-airport.com.

THE REGION THROUGH THE YEAR

The climate of the Sharra region is not homogenous due to the mountain massif and the water resource networks and close aerial distance to the Adriatic Sea. The continental climate prevails in the region, while in the upper parts of mountains there is the presence of the alpine climate with snow coverage up to 280 days during the year. Mediterranean climate appears in Kukes and Prizren valleys as a result of the warm Adriatic breeze that comes through the Valley of the Drim River.

Thanks to favourable climate conditions and the beauties of Mother Nature, the region is magnificent in all seasons. The distinct alpine nature, high mountain environment and beautiful valleys and lakes of the region are adorned the events and festivals organized during the year. It is a true pleasure to participate in the cultural festivities which make this region even more beautiful, and cause the impression that the participating artists are coming from different places of the world, and not from one region. The list with brief descriptions of some of the region's events follows:

SPRING

Artisans Day, Kukes, Albania
This handicraft fair with a long tradition is held annually on 10th March. The fair is organized to promote the cultural and traditional values of the region.
Contact information:
Regional Council of the County of Kukes - Tourism Department
+355 69 600 9718
+355 69 600 9717
arjola.domi@kqk.gov.al

Hasi Jehon (Echo of Hasi), Gjonaj, Kosovo*

Held annually since 1976, the folklore festival is held over three evenings in early May in the village of Gjonaj, 15km North-West of Prizren. More than 30 cultural ensembles from across the country gather in the Hasi region to perform music and dance. There are also exhibitions of traditional Hasi clothes and crafts, and, naturally, plenty of local food and drink.

Contact information:
Municipality of Prizren, Directory for Tourism and Development
+381 29 232 844
+381 29 241 391
info@prizreni-gov.org
www.kk.rks-gov.net/prizren

Old Timer Fest, Prizren, Kosovo*

Lovers of old cars from Kosovo and across the region gather annually for one weekend in May. The club of old time car owners was established years ago, and now it counts about 25 members with 32 cars that are at least 40 years old.

Contact information:
http://www.oldtimerclubprizren.com
https://www.facebook.com/oldtimerclub.prizren

SUMMER

40 Bunar Fest, Prizren, Kosovo*

Prizren's 40 Bunar River Tubing Festival is one of the craziest events in the region. It is actually a race where the participants must get down through the Lumbardhi/Bistrica River from the Electrical Industry Museum to the Stone Bridge in the city center as fast possible. To get down the river, participants use tractor inner tires. This competition is called Kosovo*'s craziest race because of the challenges posed by the difficult parts of the river, ie the low water levels, protruding rocks and freezing water. 40 Bunar Fest is a traditional festival that takes place every year in the Lumbardhi/Bistrica river of Prizren city.

Contact information:
www.40bunarfest.com.
info@40bunarfest.org

Fish Day, Fierza Lake, Kukes, Albania

The traditional and very attractive event symbolizing the opening of the regular fishing season in Fierza Lake is held every year on June 13th. Organized ferry tours on the lake and tasting fish dishes especially prepared for this occasion make this event a genuine attraction both for fishermen and for tourists.

Contact information:
Regional Council of the County of Kukes - Tourism Department
+355 69 600 9718
+355 69 600 9717
arjola.domi@kqk.gov.al

Zambaku i Pizrenit (the Citizen's Song) Festival, Lumbardhi, Kosovo*

The festival takes place every year in June or July at the open air Lumbardhi cinema. Although the festival focuses on Albanian-language songs, some editions also have performances by other ethnic groups from the region.

Contact information:
Municipality of Prizren, Directory for Tourism and Development
+381(0)29 232 844
+381(0)29 241 391
info@prizreni-gov.org
www.kk.rks-gov.net/prizren

Visits to the glacial Livadicko Lake, Kosovo and Macedonia

Every year on July 05th and 06th, the Mountaineering club Ljuboten from Tetovo organises visits to the glacial Livadicko Lake. This event happens since since 1994 in honour of Mirko Marinković - the mountaineering legend from Tetovo. This event is organized as cross-border cooperation between mountaineering clubs from Macedonia and Kosovo*, with a starting point at the Ljuboten Mountain Hut.

Contact information:
Mountaineering Club Ljuboten
+389 44 333 226
contact@sharamountainguide.com.mk
kontakt@pkljuboten.org.mk
info@sharplanina.com.mk

DOKUFEST, Prizren, Kosovo*

The International Documentary and Short Film Festival is organised in August in the picturesque and historical town of Prizren which attracts numerous international and regional artists. In this annually organized festival films are screened twice a day in three open-air cinemas as well as in two regular cinemas. Except for its films, the festival is also well-known for lively nights after the screenings. Various events happen within the scope of the festival: workshops, DokuPhoto exhibitions, festival camping, concerts, which altogether turn the city into a charming place to be.

Contact information:
+ 381 29 2337
info@dokufest.com

Potatoes Day, Shishtavec, Albania

This event held annually on October 1st happens in the beautiful Shishtavec area. The event is dedicated to potatoes as the main food product for living and survival through the centuries in this region, and celebrates this 'blessing day' for this sort of vegetables.

Contact information:
Regional Council of the County of Kukes - Tourism Department
+355 69 600 9718
+355 69 600 9717
arjola.domi@kqk.gov.al

Traditional climbing to the top of Ljuboten Mountain, Jegunovce, Macedonia

11-12 October - Traditional climbing to the top of Ljuboten Mountain is organized since 1977 by the Mountaineering Club Ljuboten. This two-day tour is organised on October 11th and 12th with overnight stay in the oldest mountain hut in Macedonia - Ljuboten, which was built in 1931.

Contact information:
Mountaineering Club Ljuboten
+389 75 649 393
+389 44 333 226
contact@sharamountainguide.com.mk
kontakt@pkljuboten.org.mk
info@sharplanina.com.mk

Beans Day, village Tearce, Macedonia
This is a traditional event organised every October by the Center for Education and Development (CED) NGO from Tearce. Its goal is to promote beans as the most famous culture and food in Polog region in a creative way. The traditional dishes like alva, baked chestnuts and different kinds of dishes made from beans can be tasted at this occasion.
Contact information:
Center for Education and Development
+389 70 838 148
info@ced.org.mk
www.ced.org.mk

Shara Mountain Chestnut Day - village Jeloshnik, Tearce, Macedonia
Another event dedicated to a local product that has had a great significance for the population of the region for centuries is organised every November by a Civil Society Organisation Bella Vista. Here you can learn the most suitable techniques for baking chestnut and also to try traditional products and meals prepared from it.
Contact information:
NGO – Bella Vista
belavista.macedonia@yahoo.com
+389 78 202 010
www.belavista.org.mk/

WINTER

Ski & Snowboard Competition SBX, Brezovica, Kosovo*
Ski & Snowboard Competition event held every winter in February and March is becoming highly popular. The event also brings together athletes from across the region and world. Both the competitive and the recreational race routes take you safely into the rugged alpine high over this friendly Southern Kosovo* ski area. SBX is a competition designed to bridge the gap between grassroots and world cup level for Snowboard-cross and Skicross.
Contact information:
Association of extreme sports Scardus
+377 44 972 725
info@scardus.org

Ski Championship, Shishtavec, Albania
Shishtavec area is abundant with ski trails enabling the development of winter sports. Skiing has a tradition of more than hundred years (from 1908) in this area. The Ski sports club Kallabaku was established here in 1928. There is a natural ski slope measuring 1,800 metres of ski length and 60 metres in width. Year after year at the beginning of February (1-15) Local and National Championship are organised in this ski area where skiers participate from different regions of the country and abroad.
Contact information:
Regional Council of the County of Kukes - Tourism Department
+355 69 600 9718
+355 69 600 9717
arjola.domi@kqk.gov.al

TASTES OF THE REGION

Unique and healthy environment of the mountainous relief, clean air and clear waters have provided for the production of healthy food in the Sharra region for ages. When combined with the wonderful scenery of the region's wide spaces and kindness of its inhabitants, delicious local food turns into specialties worth attention of the most demanding gourmets.

The cuisine of the Sharra region combines Balkan and Mediterranean characteristics, inherited largely from Turkish tastes that have prevailed here during long centuries of Ottoman rule. This region is widely known for its high quality dairy products, and especially for its delicious cheeses: Shar/Sharri cheese, soft white cheese (sirenje), yellow cheese (kashkaval) mainly produced from sheep milk.

The region rich in waters is famous for the fish living in its lakes and rivers. There are also a lot of restaurants that are farming trout where you can taste the freshly prepared delicious Shar/Sharri trout. For the ones who love meat, Shar/Sharri lamb is the right choice. Its unique quality combined with the local recipes and tradition in preparation gives you one of a kind tasteful experience.

Harsh climate has made the local inhabitants prepare processed food for the winter. This is why you can taste different kind of spreads and pickles, especially the most famous one - ajvar. Sudjuk (type of sausage consisting of ground meat with spices) should also find its place on your priority list when visiting the region. It can be consumed as an appetizer and also as the main course.

The most famous kind of vegetables of this region the bean called tetovec - a local variety that is well known for its quality and taste. The famous meal - Tavce gravce is prepared from this variety of bean. In this region, especially in Macedonia, there are large numbers

of chestnut trees, so baked sweet chestnut that you can try here is also one of the memorable tastes of the region.

The region is also famous for the wines you can taste at many places, and for its local alcoholic beverages such as rakija (type of brandy) which is mostly produced from grape or plum. When visiting the Sharra region, the Shar/Sharri mountain tea (siderites scardica) is something that you must try along with a spoon of honey. It is an endemic type of tea that you will have a privilege to drink only in this region. Luckily, you can take some home with you, to refresh your memories of the wonderful tastes of the Sharra area.

For acquainting with the region before visiting it, or for refreshing your memories and knowledge, here is a list of the traditional dishes and products with several recipes you should always have at hand.

Tavche Gravche (beans baked in pottery) is the most traditional dish of the region. It is prepared by boiling the beans and then mixing them with onion, peppers, tomato, oil, flour and various spices. Afterwards it is baked in clay pottery saucepans.

Ajvar is a relish made from red peppers (Kurtovska kapija). Depending on the local recipe, eggplant, carrots, garlic and chilli pepper may be added. It is traditionally homemade all over the region at the beginning autumn, and its preparation is especially charming because whole families participate in it.

Kachamak/Bakrdan is a traditional dish made of corn flour. It is prepared by boiling the mixture thick and then mashing while the pot is still on the fire. Depending on the local recipe, it can be combined with potato, white cheese and pork cracklings. It is usually served with sour cream or plain yogurt.

Pita (pie) is a very famous specialty in the region. You can find many local recipes with different techniques of preparation. Usually dough is filled with white cheese, ground meat, spinach, onion or beans. It is served with thick yogurt or sour cream (kiselo mleko).

Burek is a type of pie very popular throughout the region. There are different local recipes but mostly it is made from layers of thick dough, alternating with layers of other fillings in a circular baking pan. Usually it is filled with ground meat, white cheese or spinach.

Homegrown trout - This is a specialty which can be tasted in many restaurants that are farming trout. Usually it is prepared grilled or fried and served with potatoes and lemon. This should be on your 'must taste' list.

Homemade Suxhuk/Sudjuk is a dry, spicy sausage. Sujuk consists of ground meat with various spices including onion, cumin, garlic, salt, and red pepper fed into a sausage casing and allowed to dry for several weeks. It can be more or less spicy, but regularly fairly salty with a high fat content.

Flija is a dish made with saç / sach and is a specialty of traditional cuisine that is mostly prepared in mountainous areas. It is most certainly one of the typical Albanian dishes that everyone local will recommend. Flija could be considered a pie prepared from layered pack of pancakes (crepes). Flija is served with sour milk or yoghurt, pickled vegetables, cheese, honey, jam or ajvar.

Sarma is one of the best known specialties for gourmets made from previously pickled grape or cabbage leaves and minced meat. The leaves are stuffed with a mix of minced meat (usually beef, pork, veal), rice, onions, and spices (salt, pepper and various local herbs) then rolled and cooked.

Grilled meat (skara) is the specialty all the Balkan nations are known for. The Ottoman Empire brought the Mediterranean cuisine that has its influence until today. When you visit the region you must taste kebapcinja/qebaptore and grilled burger (pleskavica). These two most popular meals, best tasting with onions and beer, are found in the offer of many restaurants in the region. Shar/Sharri pleskavica is the most famous of them all and it is prepared with yellow cheese and kajmak (cream made of cow milk).

Village Meat (selsko meso) is a very famous dish prepared from different kinds of meat. Typical ingredients include pork, smoked meat, ground beef, meatballs, onion bits, tomatoes, mushroom, peppers, spices, wine and salt. In some recipes yellow cheese is put on the top. Traditionally it is prepared in big clay pot.

Shepherd's (Čobanska) Shop / Sharra Salad is a well known appetizer that suits perfectly with rakija. The vegetables (tomatoes, cucumber and onion) are usually diced and salted, and then lightly dressed with sunflower oil or olive oil. The salad is covered with thick layer of grated or diced white cheese (sirenje). In some salads vinegar is added depending on the local recipe.

Baklava is a sweet phyllo dough filled with chopped walnuts and semolina, sweetened and held together with syrup made from water and sugar. It is characteristic for the cuisines that derive from the former Ottoman Empire.

Alva is a traditional dessert prepared from fried walnuts, semolina, sugar and water. Upon cooking, it is put in a container or special mold to cool down. It is then cut into cubes and served with walnuts.

RECIPES
tasty, delicious, traditional food

FLIJA

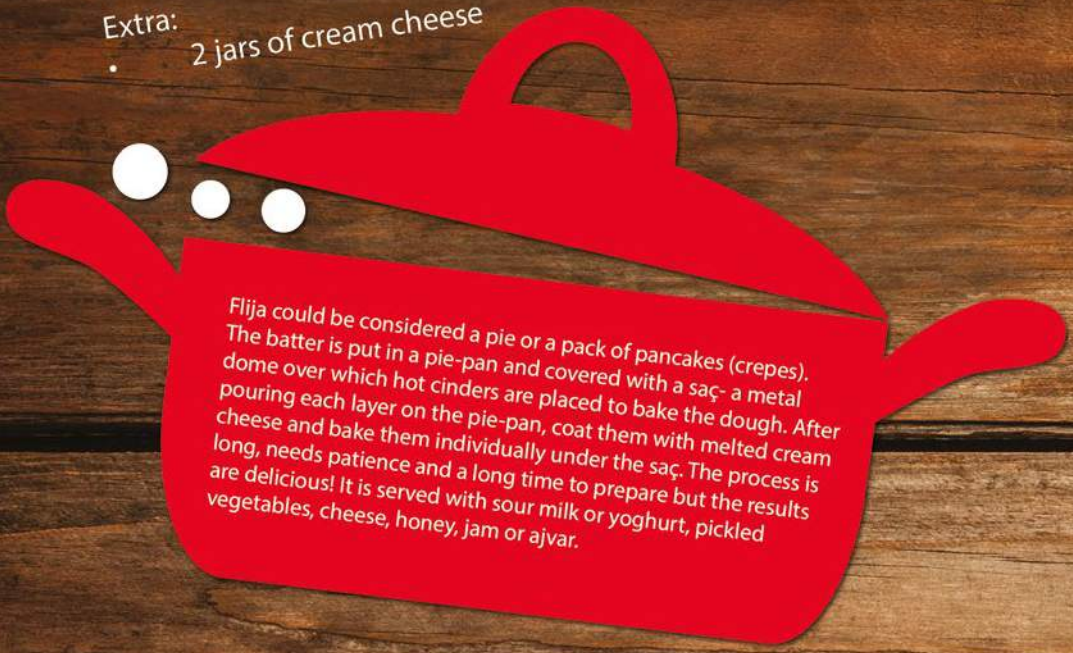
Ingredients

Batter

- 3 kg of flour
- 2 litres of water
- 2 spoons of salt

Extra:

- 2 jars of cream cheese



Flija could be considered a pie or a pack of pancakes (crepes). The batter is put in a pie-pan and covered with a saç- a metal dome over which hot cinders are placed to bake the dough. After pouring each layer on the pie-pan, coat them with melted cream cheese and bake them individually under the saç. The process is long, needs patience and a long time to prepare but the results are delicious! It is served with sour milk or yoghurt, pickled vegetables, cheese, honey, jam or ajvar.

TAVCHE GRAVCHE

Ingredients

- 500 gr of white beans
- 3 bulbs of white onion
- meat (optional): bacon, sausages, smoked ribs, etc.
- 3 dryed pepers
- 1 clove of garlic
- 80 g of sunflower oil
- 2 tablespoons of flour
- 1 tablespoon of red paprika powder
- fresh mint and and parsley
- 1 tablespoon of spice mixture (such as region-famous vegeta), salt and pepper

Wash the beans well and place them in a pot. Add water to cover the beans (let the water be 5 cm over the beans), then put them to boil, cook them for about 1-2 minutes, pour the water out and add fresh water to the pot.

Chop the onion in big pieces and add it to the beans. Add the meat chopped in a bitesize pieces. Boil the beans until they are ready, but be careful not to overboiled. The beans must be whole and soft inside, not a mush.

Put oil and flour in a hot pan and mix well until golden. Add the paprika, mix fast and add this to the pot with beans, onion and meat. Add the minced garlic, salt, pepper and spices. Stir well and cook for another 2 minutes.

Move the beans to a clay pot, add the dryed pepers and put them in the oven preheated to 250ºC. Bake until the beans have little liquid and a thin crust has been formed.

Serve with finely chopped parsley on the top.

SELSKO MESO

Ingredients

- 1kg of pork meat (from thigh)
- 4-5 onion pieces
- 300 g of ground meat (for small meat balls)
- tomatoes or ketchup
- 700 g of mushrooms
- 300 g of dry smoked meat chopped into small pieces
- salt, pepper, spices
- white wine, cheese cream or yellow cheese

Prepare the meatballs first by combining ground meet with 1/2 grated onion, pinch of salt and black pepper. You can add any other herbs and spices that suit your taste. Mix the ingredients and form small balls. Fry the meatballs in an oiled pan for about 2-3 minutes until they just a little browned. Remove from the pan and set aside.

Cut pork into 3/4 inch cubes. Fry it in the remaining oil until it is browned on the outside but still rare inside. Add chopped onion and fry for 2 more minutes. Add tomatoes, mushrooms, smoked meat and red pepper, salt and spices. Sauté for about 5 minutes. Add the meatballs and add white wine.

Transfer the mix from the pan into the clay pot. Pour wine mixture over, cover and place in the oven. Set the oven to 250°C and let it cook for about 1 – 1.5 hour. Garnish with fresh herbs such as parsley or basil.

WHAT TO VISIT IN THE REGION

This area of wild lands, intact nature, preserved resources, powerful landscapes and healthy environment has a huge potential for tourism development which is a growing industry in the region of developing tourism products.

The mountain itself has provided for the development of mountain tourism. Mountain slopes are covered with ski paths and equipped with ski lifts, and the resorts possess accommodation facilities to host the visitors in every season.

Natural wealth of this predominantly rural area inhabited by hospitable people have provided for the development of rural tourism. There are more and more village households adapted for rural tourism.

Protected nature areas, rivers, lakes and other natural resources of immense beauty attract the visitors around special interest tourism offers. Mountain climbing and hiking, horseback riding, cycling, paraglyding, fishing, bird watching, etc. are some of the activities you can experience while visiting this region.

Cultural monuments that stand witness of rich regional history have influenced the development of culture tourism. Regional traditional cuisine provides for the development of gastro tourism, while event tourism is also a growing niche due to numerous regional festivities.

The Sharra region can pride itself with a diversity of men-made sites, historical monuments and cultural heritage. Here are some key attractions for starting to discover this largely undiscovered region.

Sharra Mountain National Park
The Park is extremely rich in biodiversity and characterized by the numerous species of fauna (165), ornito fauna (200), butterflies (147), flora (2000) and phytocenosis (over 120). This unique natural abundance puts this Park amongst the first ranking of regions rich in biodiversity not only in the Balkans, but in Europe.

Brezovica
This is a unique ski resort located on the north-west part of the Sharra Mountains at 900 - 2,520 meters above sea level. Favourable climate conditions make this region suitable for tourism, sport and recreation during the whole year.

The ski resort possesses 14 tracks with 2 chair lifts and 1 ski lift functioning, and several more to be repaired. The tracks cover 16 km of ski slopes of an average length of 3 km. The most well known hotels in Brezovica are: Hotel Narcis, Hotel Molika, Hotel Breza, Shtepija e Gurit and Woodland Hotel. In addition, there are also private houses for rent where you can accommodate yourself.

Prevalla
Prevalla is tourism village located in the Sharra Mountains, on the road from Shtrpce to Prizren, at the height of 1515 meters above sea level. The mountainous terrain, amazing landscape and fresh air make it a fantastic area for hiking, skiing and unwinding. Moreover, the Lepenci River derives in this territory, which makes it even more attractive and interesting for the visitors.

Brod Village
This unique an old stone village built in traditional style is located 12 km south of Dragash. It lies in a high mountain valley and is situated at around 1,200 meters above sea level, but the mountains above it reach 2,200 meters. As the people have been living and herding cattle there for hundreds and hundreds of years, the surrounding mountains are completely overgrazed and deforested, which makes them additionally beautiful. The construction materials for the houses has been taken from the area only, so everything is made out of mountain rocks. Several mountain springs run through the village on their way down to the flat plains.

Vermica Lake and Fierza Lake
Vermica Lake is a lake situated 15 minute drive away from Prizren. On the other side of border crossing Morine which divides Kosovo and Albania lies Fierza Lake. These two are connected in one basin, providing a magnificent sight. The breathtaking view and the grassy banks of the lake are a perfect destination for a picnic. Moreover it is a perfect spot for fishing. In addition, there are a number of restaurants near the lake, which offer an amazing view as well as delicious meals. They are especially well known for their well prepared fish.

Prizren Castle
Prizren Castle is an old fortress situated the old part of the city of Prizren. The fortress dates back to the Roman times and it was operational until 1915, when it was destroyed

during the First World War. It was built to protect Prizren from foreign attacks and consists of a great number of underground tunnels. Due to its long and interesting history, as well as the amazing view of the city, its ruins attract a great number of visitors nowadays.

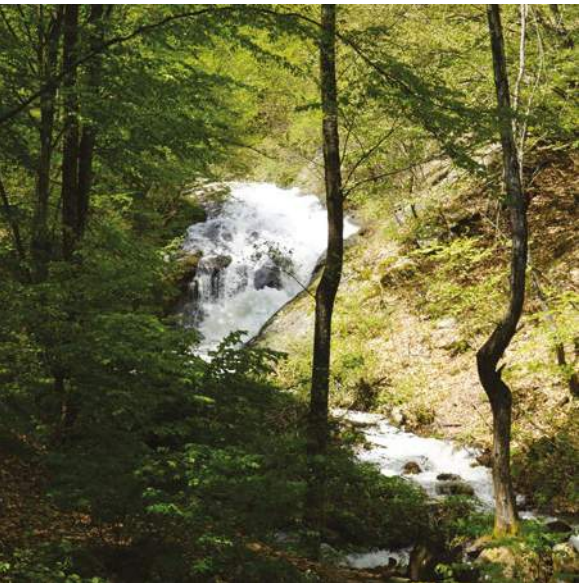
Albanian League of Prizren
This monument is located in the centre of Prizren which became historically important since 1878 when the League of Prizren was organized there. It was an assembly consisting of 300 representatives from all Albanian-inhabited territories gathered there to discuss about the foundation of an autonomic and unified Albanian state and liberation from Ottoman Empire.

Turkish Bath of Gazi Mehmet Pasha
This bath, which was built in 1573, was one of three biggest Tukish Baths in Balkans, after Turkish Bath of Husret Bey in Sarajevo and Turkish Bath of Daut Pasha in Skopje. Presently, galleries of Turkish Bath of Gazi Mehmet Pasha are mainly used for figurative and photo exhibitions, literary promotion meetings, chamber music concerts, etc.

Leshok Monastery Complex
The Monastery Complex buildings date back to the 13th century. The Monastery Church of St. Atanasius, which was built in the year 1335, and the Church of the Holy Mother of God, which was built in the 13th century and it is mentioned in the deed of Stefan Dechanski from the year 1326, are located within the complex. The grave and the memorial room of Kiril Pejchinovikj, one of the most prominent Macedonian reformers, are also a part of the complex. The major monastery celebrations and church gatherings take place on the feasts of St. Athanasius Day (May 15th) and on the Assumption (August 28th).

Village Brezno
This is a traditional Macedonian rural settlement where you can be familiarized with the traditional Macedonian architecture. Village Brezno has a number of traditional houses and is a pleasant places for picnic and enjoyment.

Ljuboten Mountain Hut
This is the oldest mountain hut in Macedonia which was built in 1931. It is placed above the beech forest and below the peak of Ljuboten at 1630 meters above the sea level. During all these years the structure has remained the same, with only minor changes introduced. It is considered a museum of the mountaineering history and mountain tourism in Macedonia.



Petachko Vodiche Picnic Area
At the lower part of the Shar/Sharri Mountain, between the villages Belovishte and Vratnica, just next to the River Belovishka, lies the picnic area Petachko Vodiche. At this picnic area there is a small spring of water that according to the local tradition has healing powers, especially for those who have eye problems. At this point the local inhabitants built a small church dedicated to St. Paraskeva (Sv.Petka), and the picnic area was named after this saint. There are several restaurants around the area where you can taste traditional food from this region.

Dobroshki Lakes (upper and lower)
Two wonderful glacial lakes (Gorno Dobroshko ezero and Dolno Dobroshko ezero) are situated at 2325 meters above sea level. These mountain eyes are worth seeing by any visitor to the Sharra region.

Meadow Lake (Livadichko ezero)
This glacial lake is probably the most beautiful and popular lake and among the most visited lakes and is an important tourist attraction. It is situated at 2210 metres above sea level on the Kosovo* territory, but it is also visited from the Macedonian side.

Belovishki Waterfalls (upper and lower)
Along the Belovis River there are two waterfalls situated at 1300 metres above sea level, Gorna and Dolna Ckala, more impressive being the lower waterfall (Dolna Ckala) which is 42 meters high. Recommended period for visiting is between April and May when the waterfall is rich with water. There is a rock nearby that gives an opportunity to enjoy in the wonderful view over the big waterfall.

Sharra Mountain Peaks
Several peaks of the Sharra mountain are absolutely worth visiting for the magnificent views they provide and for the wonderful feeling of reaching the top of the world.

Lake Peak (Ezerski vrv) (2580 meters a.m.s.l.)
The peak offers magnificent view of Piribreg and the wonderful lake Jazhichko Ezero and Chaushica Peak.

Piribeg Peak (2530 meters a.m.s.l.)
The ski-lift from the Brezovica ski centre ends here, and three radio transmitter stations are placed at this peak.

Livadica Peak (2514 meters a.m.s.l.)
This peak offers a wonderful view of the ski-center Brezovica. There is a breathtaking view of Livadichko Ezero after a slight descent in direction towards the peak of Ljuboten.

Ljuboten Peak (2499 meters a.m.s.l)
Although not being the highest peak of the range, this is certainly the most attractive peak of the Shar/Sharri Mountain. This peak opens a wonderful view towards the Western part of the mountain, Livadichko Lake, Polog Valley and a part of Kosovo*. The oldest mountain hut in Macedonia is placed below this peak.

WHAT TO EXPERIENCE IN THE REGION

The Sharra region is memorable because of its huge spaces of preserved natural wealth, wonderful scenery, and the diversity local population is proud of - the diversity of nature, the diversity of people and diversity of cultures. Besides the resources Mother Nature has given to this area, this region has a number of cultural and historic monuments from different periods, nations and religions.

The magnificent mountain and its pastures, forests, lakes and rivers are complemented with charming towns and cute villages full of places to be visited. This undiscovered gem will be best discovered if you take some of the trails, routes and tours that will take you to the well-known places of this region, but to the hidden ones as well.

Ljuboten Mountain Hut Trails
One of the trails starts at the info board in the village Staro Selo, goes through the forest belt and ends at Mountain Hut Ljuboten. According to the difficulty, this is an easy - medium trail suitable for all ages and groups of visitors, especially families. During the summer days, when the trail can also be used by the cyclists, every visitor will feel the shadow of the oak trees, while in winter you can make the first snow treads along the trail and taste the delicious tea prepared in the mountain hut. Hikers can use this opportunity to climb the very mountain peak.

- **Specific points:** village Staro Selo 900 meters a.m.s.l.
  - Mountain Hut Ljuboten 1630 meters a.m.s.l.
- **Length:** 7 km
- **Duration:** 2.30 h
- **Additional Information:** fully marked trail / available drinking water in the village and the mountain hut.

If the visitors opt for staying in the hut for the night, they can have a full second day. They can take the most exciting track because it passes through three different mountain relief landscapes. It is a medium hard hiking trail that starts from the mountain hut Ljuboten and traverses the biggest rocky talus in Macedonia, above the peak of Ljuboten, passing through the specific rock Kozja Stena. It continues to the top ridge of Shar/Sharri Mountain and from there it descends to Livadichko Lake.

- **Specific points:** Kozja Stena 2100 meters a.m.s.l. – Livadichko Ezero 2210 meters a.m.s.l.
- **Total length:** 7 km
- **Total time:** 4 h
- **Information:** This hiking trail passes through pastures and rocky terrain. There is water at Kozja Stena and the springs above Livadichko Ezero.

The two-day tour with overnight stay at the oldest mountain hut in Macedonia can be fully experienced when visitors taste traditional dishes freshly prepared by the hands of the hosts at the hut. They can choose among the traditional homemade pies, stews and soups, roasted meat, salads, other traditional meals cooked in clay pottery and desserts from forest berries. Certainly the domestic brandy (rakija) and wine will complete the experience.

Trail to the Belovishki Waterfall
The trail starts at the info board placed in the village Belovishte. It is an easy mountain trail with an exciting finish because at its end you reach a cliff that requires certain attention to pass and which reveals magnificent view over the waterfall. Recommended period to take the trail is April and May when the vegetation is not as lush and when the waterfall has the full water potential.

- **Specific points:** village Belovishte 750 meters a.m.s.l. - Belovishki Waterfall 1300 meters a.m.s.l.
- **Length:** 3 km
- **Duration:** 2.30 h
- **Additional Information:** This marked trail passes through forest terrain. There is drinking water in the first part of the trail.

Trail of the wild (horse) chestnut in the village Brezno
This trail is recreational and goes through the biggest wild (horse) chestnut natural colony on Shar/Sharri mountain rising by the right side and lower stream flow of river Bistrica between the villages Brezno and Tearce. The trail starts from the info board placed in front of the municipal building in village Tearce and leads to village Brezno. Apart from the wild chestnut, the admirers of the nature and its flora can explore huge variety of endemic plants, depending on the season. After the arrival in village Brezno the traveler can visit traditional Macedonian rural household and also to familiarize with traditional Macedonian architecture. Village Brezno has a number of such traditional buildings and pleasant places for picnic.

- **Specific points:** village Tearce 550 meters a.m.s.l.
  - village Brezno 970 meters a.m.s.l.
- **Total length:** 4 km
- **Duration:** 1:30 h
- **Additional Information:** This is a marked trail that leads through forest area and drinking water is available at several specific points.

Trail to Petachko Vodiche from village Belovishte
At the lower part of the Shara Mountain between the villages Belovishte and Vratnica, just next to River Beloviska, at 900 metres above sea level is the picnic spot Petachko Vodiche, a place that is especially cood during summer days and warm and cozy during winter.

The trail starts in the center of the village Belovishte, goes through the picnic area and passes along River Belovishka. Cozy and and very easy trail is suitable for visitors of all ages. Along the river there are several fish restaurants built in traditional style and every visitor can taste the homemade rakija (type of brandy mostly made from grape or plums), the traditional appetizers made from fresh vegetables and homegrown river trout with homemade white or red wine.

- **Specific points:** village Belovishte 750 meters a.m.s.l.
  - Petachko Vodiche 900 meters a.m.s.l.
- **Length:** 1 km
- **Duration:** 30 min
- **Additional Information:** This is a recreational open trail.

Contact information:
Mountaineering Club Ljuboten
+389 75 64 93 93
+389 44 333 226
contact@sharamountainguide.com.mk
kontakt@pkljuboten.org.mk
info@sharplanina.com.mk
Jovan Bozinoski

Apart from the trails that will lead you through some hidden parts of the region, here is a suggestion of a route you can take individually or in a group in order to experience the whole region through its landmark spots.

SEVEN DAYS
IN THE SHARRA REGION

Day 1.
Arrival to Prizren Tourism Information Centre
Accommodation in private houses, hostel or hotel
Traditional dinner in the Shadervan Square Centre

Day 2.
Traditional breakfast in accommodation facilities
Walking guided tour around Prizren (visiting 15 historical monuments and museums)
Traditional lunch with the host organization
Visiting local products producers and local artists
Travel to Kukes, Albania and arrival to its Tourism Information Centre
Short break and preparation for dinner
Traditional dinner (city restaurants or restaurants at Fierza Lake)

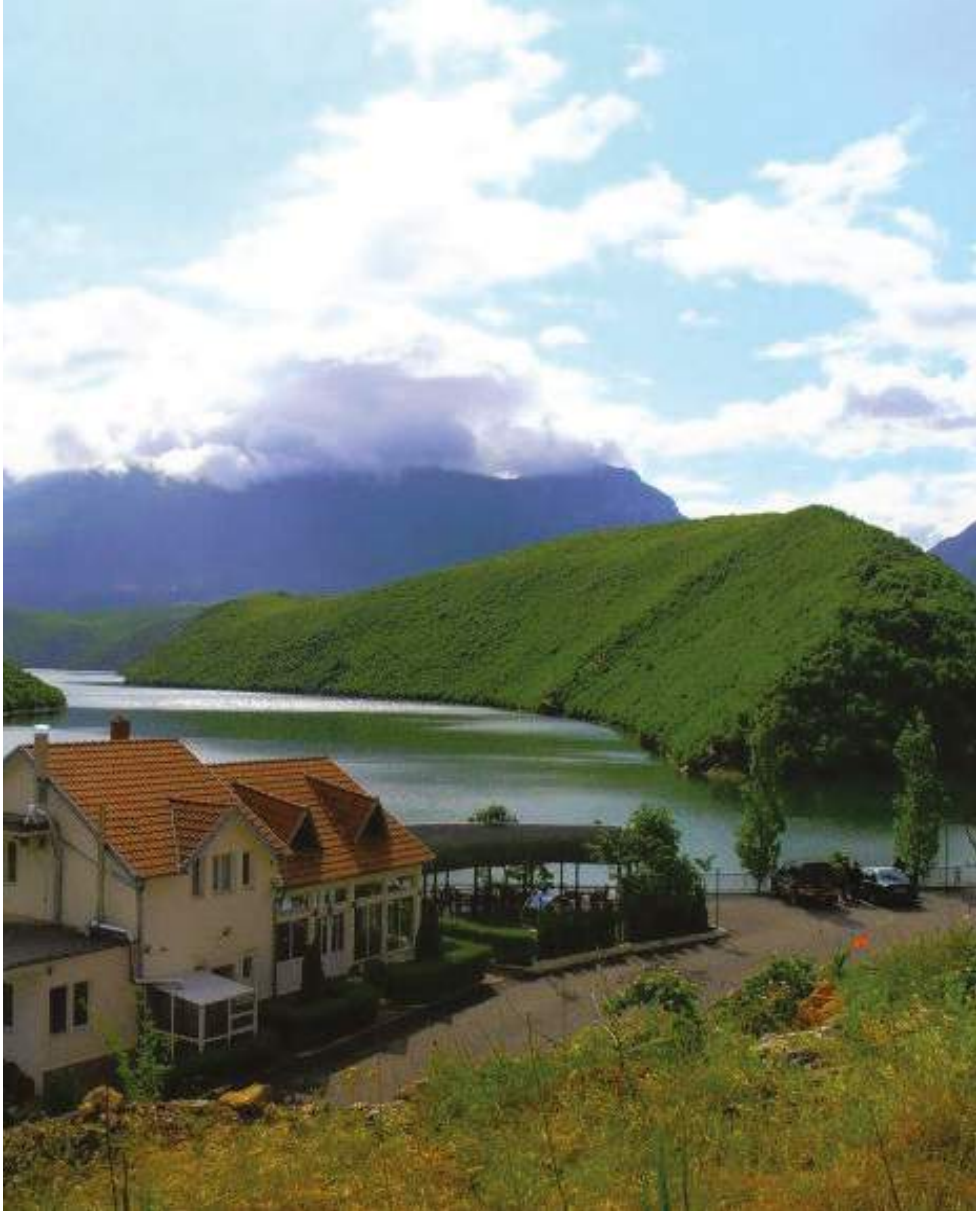
Day 3.
Traditional breakfast in accommodation facilities
Tour to Fierza Lake with ferry
Lunch at a fish restaurant at the bank of the lake
Tour to the Gjallica Mountain (options for visiting the Bad Stairs Canyon, Shishtavec Area)
Departure and travel to the Recreation Centre Arxhena – Brod, Kosovo*
Traditional dinner at Arxhena Restaurant

Day 4
Traditional breakfast in accommodation facilities
Walking tour (2km) to Brod Village, visit to the oldest traditional houses and artisans
Traditional lunch in a rural family
Renting a horse and ride to the grazing lands of Sharra
Departure to Brezovica and arrival to the Tourism Bureau
Dinner

Day 5
Traditional breakfast in accommodation facilities
Tour of Brezovica ski center
Traditional lunch with the host family or in a traditional restaurant
Tour of the Prevala tourism village
Traditional dinner in the village and return to Brezovica

Day 6
Traditional breakfast in accommodation facilities
Going from Brezovica to Livadicko Lake
Hiking form Livadichko Lake to the Ljuboten Mountain Hut
Sightseeing with certified mountain guide
Accommodation and traditional diner at the hut

Day 7
Traditional breakfast at the hut
Tour to the villages Leshok, Varvara and Brezno famous for cultural and traditional architecture
Visiting traditional houses and cultural and religious monuments such as Monastery Complex in Leshok
Traditional lunch organized in one of the villages.
Departure



WHERE TO STAY AND EAT IN THE REGION

The Sharra Region offers wide range of accommodation facilities, most of them being hotels, motels, hostels and rural households that can give you the notion of the original daily life in this mountainous area. This region is made even more attractive for the hospitality of its people who generally speak English. There are also some places you can easily understand each other in German or Italian. Here are several places you could stay when visiting the region:

Monastery Complex of the Church of St. Athanasius and
Church of the Holy Mother of God

This is a wonderful place where you can enjoy in the pleasant atmosphere of this complex and breathtaking nature. There are nine bedrooms with 36 beds and restaurant where traditional Macedonian food is served.

Contact information
Village Leshok, Tearce, Macedonia
+389 44 380 000;
+389 78 448 875;

Villa Ljuboten

Villa Ljuboten is situated 6 km away from Staro Selo village, at an altitude of 1700 meters, with a wonderful view of the mountainous surrounding, immediately adjacent to the mountain hut Ljuboten. There are four bedrooms with 16 beds and a fully equipped kitchen for food preparation. Different types of traditional food can be prepared by the hosts if preordered.

Contact information
Village Staro Selo, Jegunovce, Macedonia
Vase Vidoeski +389 75 403 777 and +389 75 408 500
vase.vidoeski@yahoo.com (for Macedonian language)
Miroslav Vidoeski +389 75 439 999; +389 78 439 999
miroslavvidoeski@yahoo.com (for English language)
www.vilaljuboten.com

Motel Restaurant Koha

Located at the corner of the Prevalla tourism village, across the ski-lift and the altitude of 1515 metres above sea level, Motel Koha is a beautiful place with a lovely view for all season's adventures. In addition to 17 beds accommodation, it also offers skiing lessons and snow-mobiles. During summer time horse riding is also possible.

Contact information:
Village Prevalla, Prizren, Kosovo*
Burim Sallauka
+377 44 616 660
koha.prevall@gmail.com

Hotel Centrum
This new modern hotel with a mix of traditional and modern style motives situated in the heart of the town of Prizren. The hotel has 26 rooms, including 3 fully equipped suites.
Contact information:
Bujtinat 1, Prizren, Kosovo*
+381 29 230 530
info@centrumprizren.com

Amerika Hotel
Amerika Hotel is a charming hotel located at the heart of Kukes, beside the Council and the Municipality of Kukes. The stylish décor of this elegant hotel is of the highest quality, with meticulously styled interiors arranged with attention paid to the smallest details make this a true living experience. The hotel has over 50 rooms at 8 floors.
Contact information:
Kukes city centre, Kukes, Albania
+355 024 223 278
office@baramerika.com

Restaurants in the Sharra region are mostly traditional, but very often you can find the ones serving the dishes of international cuisine with prevailing Italian influences. In most of the region's restaurants you can taste the delicious meat and freshly prepared Shara trout that is grown in the streams passing by the restaurants. It is very common in every restaurant to have its own specific domestic brandy - rakija and homemade red and white wine. The list of some of the region's restaurants follows.

Restaurant Bella Vista
The restaurant attracts the visitors with its beauty, atmosphere and surroundings. Overlooking the Polog Valley, this place is away from the city noise. The restaurant offers the Macedonian specialties. Besides the restaurant there is a swimming pool, and there is also a possibility for placing tents in the surrounding area.
Contact information:
Village Belovishte, Jegunovce, Macedonia
+389 78 500 414
miredzabala@gmail.com

Restaurant Relax

Wonderful surroundings of the restaurant with a garden will provide you unforgettable moments with you closes friends and family. Here you can taste the famous freshly prepared Shar/Sharri trout and enjoy in the magnificent view. The name says it all!

Contact information:
Village Dobroshte, Tearce, Macedonia
+389 70 590 587; +389 70 557 196 (for Macedonian and Albanian languages)
+389 71 374 796 (for English language)
restorant.relax@gmail.com

Restaurant Koha

The restaurant is located at the center of Prizren, on the first floor of an 300 years old traditional house, beside the Lumbardhi/ Bistrica river and old Stone Bridge. It is a lovely place where you can enjoy the beauties of the town and taste traditional dishes.

Contact information:
Str. Bazhderhane, Prizren, Kosovo*
+377 44 190 122
Ibrahim Sallauka
ibrahimsallauka@facebook.com

Restaurant Ambient

The restaurant is located beyond the Prizren Castle, nearby the Lumbardhi River.
This quiet two-floor restaurant with family ambience has 90 places available inside, and the same number available outdoor at the terrace. The restaurant offers different types of traditional and international dishes.

Contact information:
Shadërvan / Prizren, Kosovo*
Krenar Krajku
+377 44 119 964
+386 49 119 964
krenarkrajku@hotmail.com

Vila Park

The family restaurant Vila Park is a warm place with a beautiful garden located in Zhupa Valley next to Lumbardhi/Bistrica River, 20 kilometres from Prizren. The restaurant offers high quality traditional specialties.

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SHARRA REGION

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The Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South Eastern Europe (SWG RRD) is an International Intergovernmental Organization consisting of members from governmental institutions in South Eastern Europe (SEE) responsible for agriculture and rural development in respective member countries and territories. The SWG is a platform for networking and regional cooperation in SEE in the field of agriculture and rural development.

The SWG is carrying out the project Preparation for Implementation of the Area Based Development (ABD) Approach in the Western Balkans - 2nd phase which works on building the capacities and structures within the SWG and selected regions in order to be able to implement the forthcoming ABD programmes. The project's objective is the contribution to sustainable economic growth of the target regions: Drina – Sava (cross-border region between B&H, HR, SRB), Drina- Tara (cross-border region between B&H, SRB, MNE), Prespa (cross-border region between ALB and MK) and Sharra (cross-border region between ALB, MK and KOS*) by strengthening the cooperation of public administrations and other public bodies, the private sector and NGOs in the fields of local development and regional cooperation by building-up local and regional cross-border capacities. The project will create framework conditions within the SWG as organization and the SWG member countries for implementation of the area based development approach and in that way contribute to the sustainable growth of the rural cross-border areas of the SEE region.

This document has been prepared and published with the aim to present the region and its attractions, thus contributing to attracting visitors to the Sharra cross-border area.

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*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence

South Eastern Europe SWG RRD Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group

ABD PROGRAMME Area Based Development Programme in the Western Balkan countries

SHARRA CROSS-BORDER REGION

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