# LAKE ROUTES

## INNOVATIVE TOURIST ROUTES AT SKADAR LAKE



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ALBANIA - MONTENEGRO

LakeRoutes.com

## About Skadar lake

**Skadar Lake** is the largest karst lake in the Balkans, with a surface ranging from 345 to 505.8 km2 (depending on the water level) and its depth from the average 5 to the maximum 60m. It is known as cryptodepression – the lowest parts of the lakebed (mostly its underwater springs called "eyes") lie beneath the sea level. Approximately two thirds of the lake belongs to Montenegro, while one third is on the Albanian territory. The lake coastline is 168 km long, 110.5 km of which belong to Montenegro. The Montenegrin part of Skadar Lake was declared a national park in 1983. As one of the most important sweet water wetland habitats and due to richness and diversity of its ornythofauna, Skadar Lake was added to RAMSAR list in 1995. Special nature reserves in the park are the Monastery Deed, Pančevo Eye and Black Reed.

*The legend says Skadar Lake was made from the tears shed by Montenegrin fairy after God had refused to fulfill her wish of turning her blue eyes into black but punished her instead by leaving her blind.*

*The desperate fairy was crying so much that her tears created the lake. Impressed by the beauty of the lake and its surroundings God made the fairy see again. Once she saw the blue lake surrounded by green vines and yellow corns, she gave a joyful cry that it was the most beautiful area she had seen in her life where she would gladly live through eternity. God fulfilled her wish and gave her Skadar Lake with all the hills that surround it.*



**Skadar Lake** is a Montenegrin-Albanian natural jewel shaped by hundreds of years of natural, historical, cultural and economic processes. Beside unique nature, equally important and still not sufficiently explored and preserved is Skadar Lake cultural-historical treasure. Numerous medieval churches, monasteries, fortifications, archeological sites from V century, traditional compacted construction, picturesque fishing village houses but also narratives and legends that are fortunately preserved by the inhabitants, have the potential of fascinating the tourists. Remains from Greek, Illyrian and Roman civilization as well as from Vojislavljević, Nemanjić, Balšić and Petrović dynasties can all be traced at one place…

For the time being, Skadar Lake is a typical excursion destination. Excursions organized at Skadar Lake usually include boat cruising, presentation of natural and historical values, traditional cuisine, mostly fish and wine. Boat cruising is also organized within special events, i.e. celebrations and weddings. Apart from those, the offer consists of hiking trails, biking trails, sports fishing, horse riding, wind surfing, kayaking… The routes presented in this brochure are aimed at linking the diversities of Skadar Lake offer thus contributing to better economic and tourism valorization of the lake and Montenegro. All routes are created in cooperation with Skadar Lake National Park, tourism organizations and tourist agencies as well as tourist service providers operating in this area. The routes are created in communication with tourism organizations of Podgorica, Cetinje and Bar and agreed with numerous tourist agencies.

*Information about the project and service providers can be found at* ***www.lakeroutes.com***





# PHOTO ROUTE

## I ROUTE
## PHOTO ROUTE (photo tour, bird watching, wine tasting)

**Photo route** will leave breathless the true lovers of untouched nature and birds, especially those species that can hardly be seen in other parts of Europe. High mountains and water lilies flowers contrasted with blue lake and light blue sky, enriched with unique sights of pelican habitats are pictures worth turning into photographs.

Magnificent silence of the lake is rest for soul, which after a breathtaking photographing of the landscape from land or water is to be flavored with wine from hundreds of years old vineyards. The land part of the route includes Rijeka Crnojevića, Poseljani and Virpazar. The first stop is Pavlova strana offering an amazing view of the lake and is one of the most attractive locations for taking photos in Montenegro. The water part of the route includes boat cruising and visits to pelican habitats, the most important one being the Monastery Deed. The route ends in Virpazar where visitors can enjoy excellent domestic wines from **Klisić, Đurišić and Buk** wineries or domestic specialties of **Badanj** tavern.

*The route is created in cooperation with tourist agency Montenegro Adventures Podgorica* ***(http://www.montenegro-adventures.com )****, tourist agency Explorer* ***(http://www.explorer.co.me)****, tourist agency Explore Skadar Lake (http://www.exploreskadarlake.com ) and tourist agency PI-EM Podgorica* ***(http://www.pi-em.me/)***



# WATER ROUTE

## II ROUTE
## WATER ROUTE

**Water route** brings 100 percent pleasure out of Skadar Lake atmosphere and is complete only if it covers the lake's famous landscapes, breathtaking cultural-historical monuments, swimming in warm lake water, lying at sandy beaches and enjoying domestic food and drinks that will please the senses of even the choosiest gourmets.

In summers, water route is the most attractive segment of the tourist offer at Skadar Lake. It is tailored to fit the needs of tourists and varies in length: it can last from one to six hours and, depending on the package chosen, it includes visits to **Lesendro, Grmožur, Seoce, Raduš, Dodoši, Karuč, Murići** as well as to monasteries **Beška, Kom and Starčeva Gorica.** After taking the water route, tourists can have a meal at **Badanj** tavern, drink an old wine at winery **Đurišić** and buy souvenirs at souvenir shops of **Brankica Đalac and Jasmina Mistović.**

*The route is created in cooperation with Jelena Dabanović, a registered boat cruising operator at Skadar Lake* ***(http://lakeskadar.me/)***



ACTIVE ROUTE



## III ROUTE
## ACTIVE ROUTE (hiking, biking and kayaking) and horse riding

**Active route** is ideal for nature lovers and adventurers who like to test their own limits and explore old trails and caravan roads, picturesque villages and monasteries but also for those who enjoy unique flavors of domestic cuisine and drinks.

Active route is created to cover four different types– kayaking, horse riding, hiking and Skadar Lake – adventures route. The first one will satisfy the appetite of adrenaline lovers and comprises kayak ride down Morača river starting from Galeb beach in Podgorica to Aluminum plant and continuing from Morača bridge in Zeta plain towards Plavnica and Vranjina. Horse lovers will enjoy the horse riding route which will carry them to Utrg village, one of the oldest in this region, offering also an opportunity for tasting domestic specialties if so wanted. An old country road will take them to a former railway line and a tunnel through which they will reach Tuđemile village and Ribnjak monastery. The third route will take tourists hiking the old caravan road, through the woods and by ottoman bridges, to waterfalls and springs where they can take a bath in crystal pure water. If they decide to walk from Zabes to Godinje village, they will be met by unique Crmnica architecture and viewpoint Brčelice providing scenery of Crmnica and a major portion of Skadar Lake and its hinterland, but also ten springs of potable water in Godinje and the summer house that belonged to Balšić dynasty. Finally, the fourth route is suitable for adventurers who love to combine hiking, biking, fishing and boat riding and includes country trails, undiscovered regions, fortifications, caves… The starting point of this route is Briđi village in Lješanska nahija.

*This route is created in cooperation with Tourism Organization Podgorica, Kayak club Moraca* ***(http://kkmoraca.webs.com/)****, tourist agency Explorer* ***(http://www.explorer.co.me)****, tourist agency Explore Skadar Lake* ***(http://www.exploreskadarlake.com/)*** *and tourist agency PI-EM Podgorica* ***(http://www.pi-em.me/)***





# HISTORICAL ROUTE

## IV ROUTE
## HISTORICAL ROUTE

**Historical route** is like an imperial treasury, its jewels witnessing the past times, preventing it fall into oblivion. Settlements, monasteries, fortifications and bridges tell a unique story about Duklja and Zeta states and reign of Vojisalvljević, Nemanjić, Balšić, Crnojević and Petrović dynasties – about Montenegrins as they are and used to be.

Beside open hearts, what you need for this route is a good camera to record the traces of this region famous history which is told through six variations of the route. The utmost of the route is felt in combination with Photo and Water route. Each variation include unique locations such as: monasteries Vranjina, Kom, Starčevo, Beška, Moračnik and Prečista Krajinska, islands Lesendro, Grmožur and Tophala, Balšić Palace in Godinje, Bishop's House, Danilo's Bridge and Obod in Rijeka Crnojevića, Poseljani, Gornji and Donji Brčeli and Orahovo.

*This route is created in cooperation with tourism organizations of Podgorica, Cetinje and Bar and can be utilized by all tourist agencies.*



# THE ROUTE FOR TWO

## V ROUTE
## THE ROUTE FOR TWO – LOVERS

**The route for two** is ideal for marking important dates in lovers' lives : anniversaries, birthdays, special moments but also for "heating up" the love for is there a more ideal place than Skadar Lake, the beauty of which impressed even God, to celebrate the most delicate feeling of human soul?

This route can be taken as – **winter route** (November – February) and **summer route** (March - October). Both have the same content; unless when due to unfavorable weather conditions in winter months some parts of the winter route have to be left out. The route is divided into four segments: **The Wine of Love**, **The Food of Love**, **The Scent of Love**, **Romantic Getaway** and a summer variation - **The Lake of Love**. **The Wine of Love** is a segment that includes a visit to a chosen winery, a story about wine and love and wine tasting spiced with domestic mesa and delicacies. **The Food of Love** is a logical follow-up and means having a meal in a chosen winery or a restaurant in Virpazar and enjoying salt or sweet dishes of domestic cuisine. The next is The **Scent of Love** i.e. a visit to a workshop of homemade soaps where couples will buy "love soaps" which basic purpose is to "keep their love clean and aromatic". **Romantic Getaway** is the last segment of the route and includes a visit to a souvenir shop, where couples will wrap up their tour with another gift – a "souvenir of love", to remind them of that day. **The Lake of Love** includes one of the routes presented in Water Route section whereby couples will be served domestic finger-food i.e. cheese, grapes, melon, figs, strawberries and ham, domestic spoon sweets or honey in honeycombs with nuts and apples.

*This route can be organized in direct communication with service providers. Information is available at* ***www.lakeroutes.com***





# WOMEN'S ROUTE

## VI ROUTE
## WOMEN'S ROUTE –
### visiting female entrepreneurs

**Women's route** promotes culture, tradition and customs of Skadar Lake villages, with special focus on female entrepreneurs who impress every visitor with their skills and diversity of contents they offer.
The route includes: Transportation to **Ostros** which brings the joy of sightseeing of unique and fairytale like sites on the way to the destination (chestnut forest, numerous lookouts...). Upon their arrival in Ostros, tourists are offered a warm welcome and a real Gourmet collection of selected, traditional specialties which are prepared by the recipes of the area, followed by the opportunity to shop the unique handicraft of female entrepreneurs – **NGO "Kranjanija"** members (crocheted tablecloth, hand woven covers and pillows, unique jewelry...). After returning to Virpazar, there is a one hour cruise and a get together with **Jelena Dabanović** on the boat "Milica" to tell stories on lake legends and enjoy the amazing nature packed with beautiful landscapes and cultural and historical landmarks. The route is completed by paying a visit to handicraft workshops of **Brankica Đalac** and **Jasmina Mistović** who produce original, certified souvenirs. Pelican shaped souvenir – a bird which is a trademark and a main attraction of the lake – is one of the best gifts and, also, a beautiful memory of this unforgettable trip.

*The route is carried out with assistance of the NGO "Kranjanija", tourist agencies PI-EM* ***(http://www.pi-em.me/)*** *and Explore Skadar Lake* ***(http://www.exploreskadarlake.com/)****, as well as Tourism Organization Bar.*





# FAMILY AND HEALTHCARE ROUTE

## VII ROUTE
## FAMILY AND HEALTHCARE ROUTE

**Family – educational route** is particularly adapted to active leisure and enjoyment for all of the family members. According to visitors' needs, it can be a one-day, two-day or multi-day route.

Example: Day 1 – Morning cycling tour (max 30 min) from Virpazar to the village **Zabes** where the family will be accommodated, at the village household **Đurišić**. Upon their arrival, there is a range of contents offered that will stimulate all the senses and will grant the guests a true pleasure and relaxation: traditional breakfast which is a real treasury of unique flavors and aromas, tour of the property accompanied by the host (vineyards, orchard...), recreational horse riding or walking to a nearby village (our recommendation: village **Godinje**), one of a kind lunch in the nature to taste the local gastronomic specialties, returning to the property (getting acquainted with local customs, engaging in household activities: picking grapes, extracting honey, preparation of meals), joint dinner. Day 2 – Departure for **Virpazar** and a boat cruise accompanied by the guide, while touring the landmarks of cultural and historical heritage of Skadar Lake, followed by a lunch break with the sound of chirping birds at the amazing **Pješačac** beach which is tucked in the forest. Visit to the souvenir shops in Virpazar upon the return. *The route is created in cooperation with tourist agency Explore Skadar Lake* ***(http://www.exploreskadarlake.com/).*** **"Healing Tourism" route** – The visitors of **Brnović** family property in the village **Bridi** (between Podgorica and Cetinje) which exudes hospitality, beauty of preserved nature and fresh air, will enjoy the charming accommodation, the rich offer of diverse flavors of traditional home cooking, drinking natural tea and medicinal beverages, the relaxing work in the garden...The offer can also include light walking and cycling tours, meditation at the lake, visiting the locals, as well as many other things the visitors show interest in.

Within this route, you will discover charms of true enjoyment and relaxation and will realize that spending time in the nature has a therapeutic effect on people! *The route is created in cooperation with tourist agency PI-EM* ***(http://www.pi-em.me/)***



## BUSINESS-PLEASURE ROUTE

## VIII ROUTE
## BUSINESS - PLEASURE ROUTE

People say that the best working stay in a country is characterized by a combination of business success and beautiful memories that will never fade. For those who wish to get those same impressions from Montenegro, this route is the way to go! It is possible to arrange different types of short routes to Skadar Lake in consultations with tourist operators.

The contents of the routes are created based on the interest of the visitors: 1) **Wine route** – with the transportation from the hotel provided, the guests tour the selected wineries in the households at Skadar Lake area, they socialize with winemakers and enjoy the charms of local wine tasting – there is even an opportunity to purchase them. We suggest **Đurišić, Klisić, Buk, Bogojević** and **Kopitović** wineries, as well as visiting Vinska kuća in Cetinje which can be organized with the support of Tourism Organization Cetinje. 2) **Gastronomic route** – after getting acquainted with the rich gastronomic offer of Skadar Lake traditional cuisine, tourists choose the sites themselves, as well as national meals they wish to taste at those locations. 3) **Water route** – the contents of the offer are planned depending on the guest's free time availability and includes a one of a kind experience which is revisited by everyone who had it at least once.

*The route is created in cooperation with Tourism Organization Podgorica and tourist agency Montenegro Adventures* ***(http://www.montenegro-adventures.com/)***





# CHILL OUT ROUTE

## IX ROUTE
## CHILL OUT ROUTE

It is difficult to find an ideal place for vacation during the summer heat wave – a place which will entertain and freshen you up, and is also relaxing and calming. Since it is widely known that sites near the water are a great solution for escaping the city crowd, heat and daily stress, the Chill out route is really the right choice for you! It offers a complete indulgence – a boat trip and spending time at the beautiful, romantic beach **Pješačac** which natural surroundings with accompanying activities ensure absolute harmony with nature.

Considering that water temperature is around 25o-30o C, the tourist complex is of ethno Mediterranean style, the gastronomic offer of local lake specialties is irresistible and the music is awesome – you're guaranteed to have fun! A beautiful sand beach, hidden within a hug of dense forest and hills, offers a handful of possibilities for entertainment, especially for the youth. A swimsuit and cheerful mood are mandatory props during summer days. And then at night, when the Sun goes to rest, the entire setting becomes magnificent, bathed in light of the forged torches and unreal shadows on the stone paths and walls of this amazing complex. A truly unique experience!

Maximum number of group members: 25-30 The route is created based on the **all inclusive** concept.

*The route can be organized in direct contact with the host Radovan Vukašević - **http://www.pjesacac.com/***



BETWEEN
DREAMS
AND REALITY

## X ROUTE
## BETWEEN DREAMS AND REALITY

Stunning flora and fauna, as well as richness of archaeological heritage, make just one part of Skadar Lake charms. As an integral segment of this site's tourist offer, numerous stories and legends with allure that causes sighs and takes your breath away especially stand out. While cruising on the lake, the guests have the opportunity to listen to tales about ancient cultures, mythical creatures, disappeared settlements and sacred objects, and then become familiar with the old crafts which are still cherished in village households around the lake, humbly defying the spirit of oblivion and influences of modernization. Visiting the mystical setting of old family wineries is also an unforgettable experience, spiced up by traditional hospitality of the head of the house and the opportunity to taste wine and national specialties from their cuisine.

This route activates all senses, stimulates imagination and inspires guests to become more familiar with the sites from tales and legends and to additionally explore their, still undiscovered, secrets.

*The route is created in cooperation with tourist agency Explore Skadar Lake* ***(http://www.exploreskadarlake.com/)*** *and tourist agency PI-EM Podgorica* ***(http://www.pi-em.me/)***



# INFO/ CONTACTS

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# SKADAR LAKE NATIONAL PARK – HOW TO GET THERE?

**You can easily reach Skadar Lake** via highway and railroad, having in mind that it is located on the main lines of transportation (highway Podgorica – Petrovac; railroad Podgorica – Bar). Both roads go over the lake through settlement Virpazar. Small town Virpazar is situated along the middle of the highway and railway from the capital Podgorica (28 km) and from the Port of Bar (30 km).

At 800 m from the center of this small town, there is a railway station "Virpazar" where the local trains stop. Transportation along the lake shore is carried out via a local asphalt road. It is possible to stop on certain road extensions and watch Skadar Lake and its surroundings.

All information on tourist offers, accommodation and restaurants can be obtained at the **Center for Visitors of the National Parks of Montenegro** in Vranjina. **E-mail:** np-skadarlake@t-com.me, **phone number:** + 382 020 879 100, 879 103, 879 097.

**GPS: 42°16'18.57"N 19° 7'23.94"E**



# TRANSPORTATION

There are two international airports for the travelers who are coming to Montenegro by plane: Podgorica and Tivat. Golubovci Airport is 12 km far from the center of Podgorica and 18 km from Virpazar. Tivat Airport is 80 km far from Podgorica and 110 km from Virpazar.

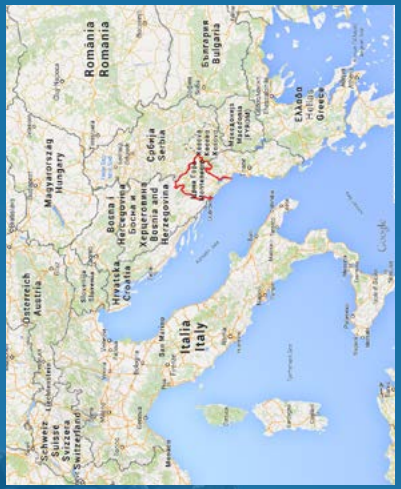
**Montenegro Airlines (operates from Tivat and Podgorica)**
http://www.montenegroairlines.com
Podgorica: + 382 (0)20 664 411; 664 433
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