



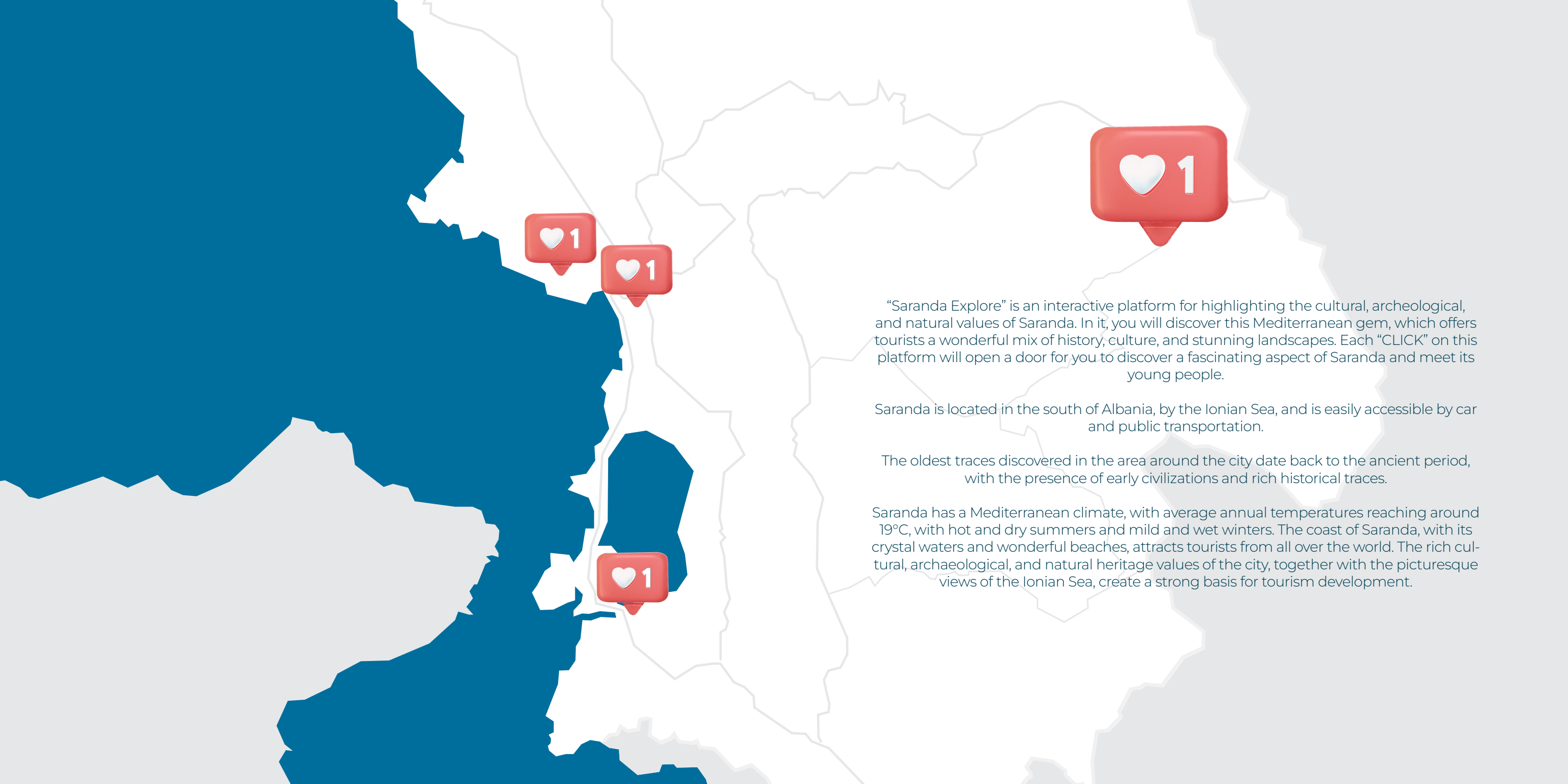
Financuar nga  
Bashkimi Evropian

Ky projekt mbështetet nga:

# #ReLOaD

Programi Rajonal mbi Demokracinë  
Vendore në Ballkanin Perëndimor



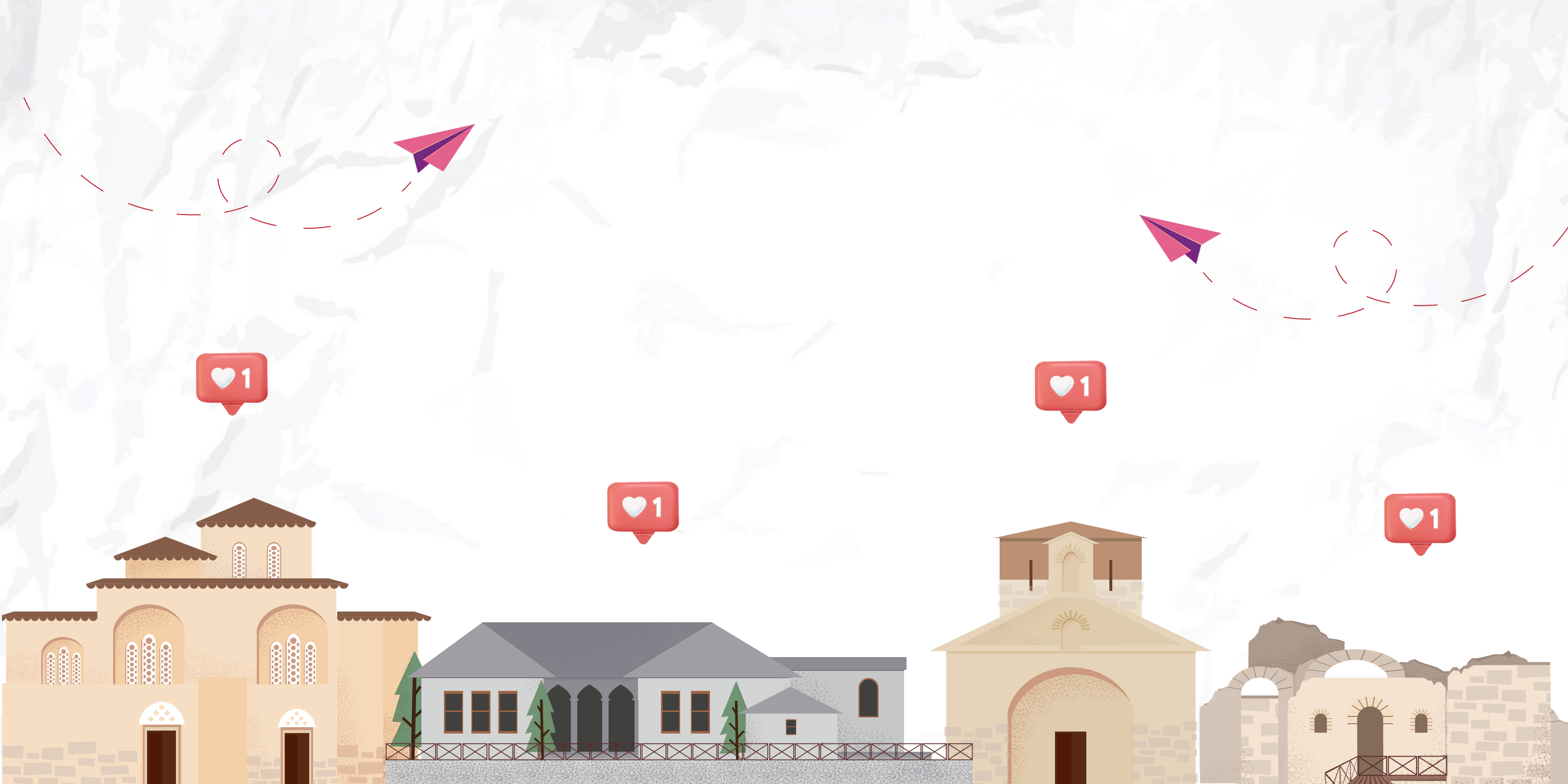


“Saranda Explore” is an interactive platform for highlighting the cultural, archeological, and natural values of Saranda. In it, you will discover this Mediterranean gem, which offers tourists a wonderful mix of history, culture, and stunning landscapes. Each “CLICK” on this platform will open a door for you to discover a fascinating aspect of Saranda and meet its young people.

Saranda is located in the south of Albania, by the Ionian Sea, and is easily accessible by car and public transportation.

The oldest traces discovered in the area around the city date back to the ancient period, with the presence of early civilizations and rich historical traces.

Saranda has a Mediterranean climate, with average annual temperatures reaching around 19°C, with hot and dry summers and mild and wet winters. The coast of Saranda, with its crystal waters and wonderful beaches, attracts tourists from all over the world. The rich cultural, archaeological, and natural heritage values of the city, together with the picturesque views of the Ionian Sea, create a strong basis for tourism development.



# MONASTERY OF THE 40 SAINTS

1.

The Monastery of the 40 Saints is located east of the city of Saranda, on the dominant part of the Hill of Gjashta. Known as "Agi Saranda," meaning "40 Saints," this site carries the history and legends closely tied to Saranda.

The basilica was built in late antiquity and served as a pilgrimage center dedicated to the cult of the "40 Saints," attracting Christian believers from various parts of the Balkans and the Adriatic coast. It functioned as a monastery with additional facilities, which began to be abandoned over time. However, the church continued to be used until the mid-19th century by a small community of monks. It's walls remained standing until the 1940s when they were demolished by bombings during World War II. Italian archaeologist Luigi Maria Ugolini, who studied this monastery in the mid-1920s, remarked that the church was perhaps the most beautiful he had seen in Albania.



Saranda Explore



# KSAMIL'S ISLANDS

2.



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Ksamil's Islands are relatively small rocky islands located near the coast of the Ionian Sea, offering stunning views with turquoise waters and lush wild vegetation. They range between 8 and 15 meters above sea level and are situated close to each other, creating an attractive and unique landscape for visitors.

Part of the Butrint National Park, Ksamil's Islands cover an area of 7.1 hectares and hold significant importance for science, biodiversity, and tourism. Visitors can reach these islands by boat or even by swimming due to their short distances from the shore.



Saranda Explore



# ANCIENT CITY OF BUTRINT

3.





Butrint, the ancient port city, is a fragment of Mediterranean world history. The ancient city is the most visited cultural tourist destination in the country. Many of the monuments visited in the ancient city were excavated by the Italian Archaeological Mission, led by Luigi Maria Ugolini, who worked in Butrint for nearly 10 years (1928-1939).

What Butrint offers today is a fascinating journey through epochs of history, beginning in the 8th century BCE. The former city and its heritage preserve unique evidence of Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Venetian, and Ottoman cultures and civilizations.

According to classical mythology, the ancient city known as Buthrotum was founded by migrants who left Troy after its fall. In the epic poem "Aeneid," the Latin poet Virgil recounts the visit of Aeneas to Butrint during his journey to Italy.

The ancient city was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1992.



Saranda Explore





MUZEUM

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5



# BUTRINT NATIONAL PARK



Butrint National Park is one of the most important sites of cultural and natural heritage in Albania, covering a total area of 9,424.04 hectares. Since 2003, it has enjoyed the status of a nationally important wetland area. This rare area constitutes the natural habitat for around 800 plant species, with 16 considered endangered and 12 rare species.

Up to now, within the Butrint wetland complex, 246 bird species, 105 fish species, and 39 reptile species have been identified, including many with special conservation status. The combination of diverse habitats makes Butrint an attractive destination for tourists and scientists alike.



# MONASTERY OF SAINT GEORGE, DEMA-ÇUKË

5.

The Monastery of Saint George stands proudly atop a high hill, dominating the landscape of Ksamil. The church, along with three remaining buildings, marks its rich history. The strong stone walls and embrasures protect the structure, while the strategic position offers a panoramic view of the entire peninsula.

The church is carefully preserved and was fully restored in 2008. The interior architecture is notable for its large nave with a dome on a drum and the details of the cylindrical vault, creating an attractive harmony between the exterior structure and the voluminous interior.

Besides the church, the courtyard also contains other buildings, such as the abbot's residence and a two-story building where monks and pilgrims stayed.

From the top of the hill where the Monastery of Saint George is located, you can enjoy a stunning view of the Ionian Sea and the Butrint Lake. This can be a fantastic destination for those who enjoy hiking or nature walks.





# MUSEUM OF TRADITION

6.



# Saranda Explore



The Museum of Tradition is a place that, through elements of material culture, creates the landscape of life in another era. Located in the center of Saranda, this unique space intertwines history with local culture. The museum offers a narrative of the cultural wealth of the Saranda area by showcasing distinctive items of daily life. Additionally, in the Museum of Tradition, visitors can discover original clothing from various communities such as Cham, Greek minorities, and the Delvina region.

The distinguished poet Naim Frashëri worked in this place during the years 1874-1876.









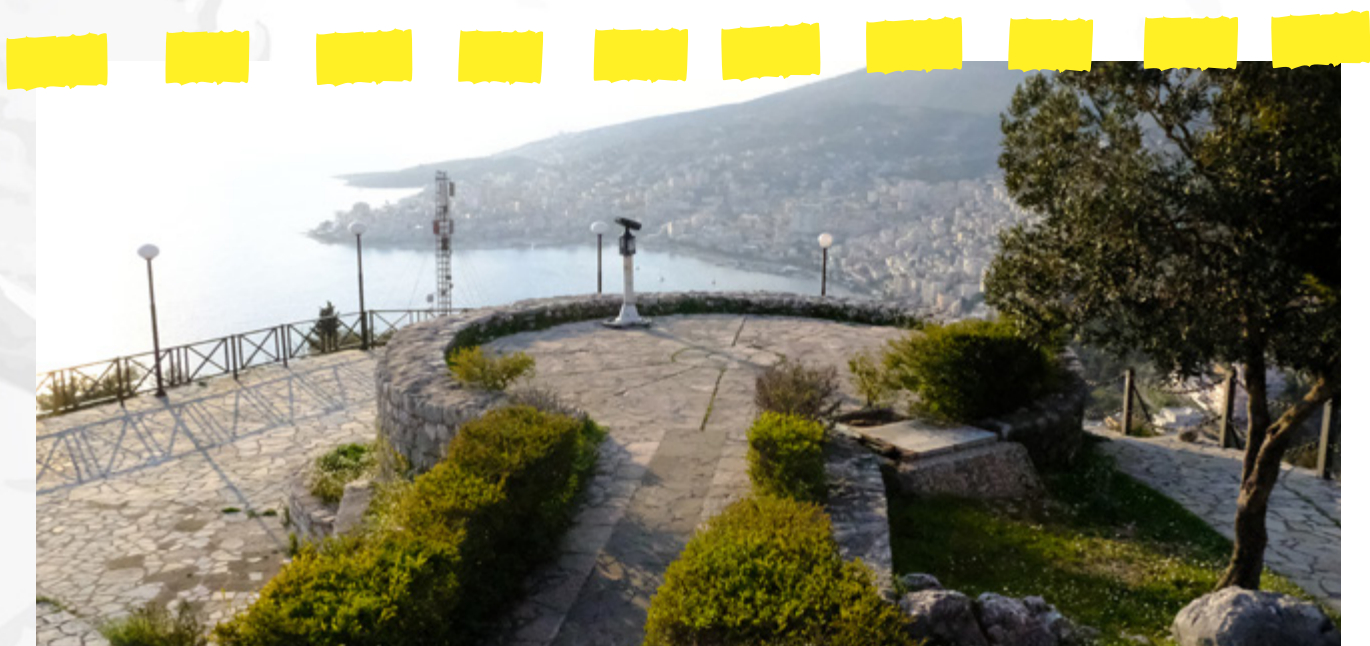
# LEKURSI CASTLE



7.

Lekursi Castle is situated among the ruins of the village of Lekurs on the top of a hill. It is believed to have been built in 1537 when Sultan Suleiman attacked Corfu, making it necessary to control the port of Saranda and the Saranda-Butrint road, as the latter was occupied by the Venetians. The castle has a pyramid shape with two towers positioned towards the sea. The walls were surrounded by a parapet with embrasures for cannons.

Today, Lekursi Castle serves as an ideal spot where history, panoramic views of Saranda, and entertainment come together.



Saranda Explore



# ART GALLERY SARANDA

8.

The Art Gallery Saranda is located on the main boulevard of Saranda, next to the Museum of Tradition. The gallery offers visitors a permanent collection of works belonging to two eras: the period of Socialist Realism and the modern period. The exhibited items include abstract sculptures, modern paintings, and paintings depicting the folklore and history of the region.

The gallery continually welcomes both Albanian and international artists to showcase their work.



# BASILICA SYNAGOGUE

9.

The archaeological findings of the Basilica-Synagogue are located within the walls of the Medieval Castle of Onhezmi, on one of the main streets of the city of Saranda. The Basilica-Synagogue underwent three construction phases, starting from the 4th century BCE to the 6th century CE. This archaeological monument is named so because it was once a large Paleo-Christian Basilica, with several rooms on its western side that served as a Synagogue.



A prominent feature of this site is its mosaics, which reveal much about the stages this structure has undergone. The early phase of the Basilica's floor presents Roman-style mosaics (two sea lions). The second phase of the floor is characterized by mosaics with geometric decor, and the third phase is represented by a later mosaic, also with geometric decor.

The presence of the Synagogue indicates the existence of a representative Jewish community in Onhezmi in the 5th century BCE. Of particular interest is the mosaic floor that features a seven-branched candelabrum (Menorah). It also includes an etrog (citron) along with a shofar (ram's horn), both significant Jewish symbols.

# ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH IN VOLLODË

10.

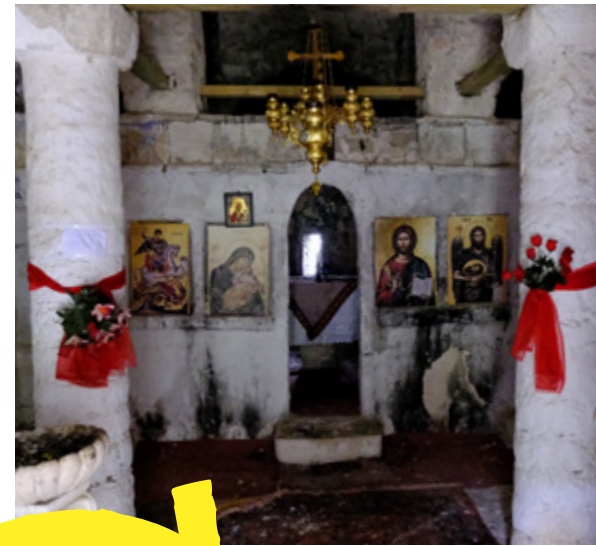




Saranda Explore



St. George's Church is located in the village of Vollandë, Saranda. This is an ancient Orthodox worship site that has withstood the test of time. Surrounded by lush meadows, the church appears as an element of a stunning painter's landscape. Constructed with stone masonry, detailed particularly around the entrance, the church features a high-pitched roof with a central peak, supported by four massive stone columns. Inside, fragments of frescoes can be seen, though they have been damaged by time. This place evokes a sense of idyllic life, close to nature and challenging the passage of time. If you are looking for a picnic spot, this is the perfect location.





# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM



The Archaeological Museum, also known as the Mosaic, was discovered in 1968 by archaeologist Dhimosten Budina and dates back to the late antiquity period. The hall where the mosaic was found is part of the old PTT building, representing a 3rd-century setting. The mosaic measures 12.8 m x 11 m and is constructed with small stones and lime mortar. The eastern part is different from the western part, featuring geometric figures and birds. Its restoration in 2009 by Italian and local specialists has ensured that the mosaic is now in optimal condition and an interesting attraction to visit.





*Be the change*



**A.L.T.R.I.**



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