

Hiking trails in Montenegro South

'The fame of the distant land of the Black Mountains slowly penetrated Europe, which, at the word Montenegro, imagined a wilderness of barren limestone mountains. But there are more Montenegros than the world knows.' According to Dutch writer and Balkan expert A. den Doollaard (07-02-1901 - 26-06-1994).

Indeed, high limestone mountains in the northern Durmitor National Park. In the south, towards the Mediterranean Sea is also a Montenegro. Where it is also excellent walking.



Vranovo Brdo

For example, walk with the *Coastal Transversal hiking trail* from west to east, between the border with Croatia and the border with Albania. This takes you through no less than 3 national parks: the Bay of Kotor, the National Park Lovćen and the National Park Skadar Lake. Inside, as the crow flies, a distance of less than 100 km. Montenegro is a small country, 650,000 inhabitants and only since 2006, after the split from Serbia, independent. The walking infrastructure is still in full development. Not everywhere are the markings optimal, nor the maps, or the possibilities for shelter. Make use of local travel agencies or people who know the country and its hiking opportunities well. And who, where necessary or desired, can take care of, for example, travel over longer distances. Then there is a good chance that you will take home unforgettable hiking experiences.

The Bay of Kotor

Take, for example, the Orjen Nature Park, bordering Croatia and Bosnia. The first day of walking; rarely seen such impressive vistas. Or try to arrange an arrival or departure in Perast. Beautifully situated on the smaller bay of Kotor, *Verige*. A baroque town with an impressive, rich seafaring history. This can still be clearly seen in the cultural and historical heritage, with many baroque "palaces". Within the bay the *Gospa od Skrpjela* ("the lady on the rock"), a church on an island with a beautiful legend about the origin of the island.



Bay of Kotor

From Perast, 30 km southwest from Perast, you can make a day-walk to Orahovac via the remains of the fortress Vranovo Brdo (743 m), of Austro-Hungarian origin. From the fortress a beautiful view of the azure blue bay of Kotor. Here you can, if you want, feel like ruler of seafaring. The climb is tough, but doable.

For another world-famous view of the Bay of Kotor – superlatives are now lacking – the route between Gornja Lastva and Kotor is extremely suitable. Be sure to provide a good map here, or instructions in advance from people who are familiar here.

Lovćen National Park

The walled old port city of Kotor is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. For a trip through part of the National Park Lovćen we started a route in Njeguši to Ivanova Korita (1261 m). Njeguši is the birthplace of the royal dynasty of Montenegro (1696 to 1918). Here the hiker can get acquainted with Montenegrin history, folklore, traditions and culture. For various reasons, the Montenegrins speak of this Park with reverence. It is a historically charged area. Nature lovers praise the exuberant flora and rich fauna.



Hiking in Montenegro, on the way to the mountains of Lovcen NP

Lake Skadar

After all the beauty of the past few days, you will come close to the third National Park during this hiking tour: the Skadar lake. This after a walk through a hilly, wooded and typical Mediterranean area. Again, be well prepared! Fairytale beautiful is the view at Virpazar on the lake, from the Besac castle. The castle is a legacy of Turkish (Ottoman) rule. Unfortunately, we were too early for the massive flowering of the water lilies in the lake, to sail through it by canoe. You can't have everything. But if you want to propose to someone; There is no more romantic place!



Descent to Skadar lake. In background mountains in Albania

General hiking tips

- After a flight to Dubrovnic (Croatia) it is another 50 km to Herceg Novi (Montenegro);
- Bring plenty of drinks and food. There are few options to buy anything on the route;
- Hire a (local) travel agency for all kinds of practical matters such as transport, possible travel, accommodation, route information, etc.;
- Difficulty of this route: average, with some tough climbs. Total length of this route: 75 km;

Source: *The Land Behind God's Back* (1956), Querido's publishing house



view on Lake Skadar



NP Lovcen



Lady on the rock



Descend to Lake Skadar



Basalt