



**Self-guided bicycle tour from Ohrid to Meteora:
13-day trekking with 11 challenging stages through
southwest Macedonia and northern Greece 2024
(MKFT314I)**

Also available as 14-day guided tour



*Our philosophy: active during the day, and in the afternoon a warm shower, a good meal
and a comfortable bed in a small-scale accommodation.*

We invite you to join us!



more information: www.annahiking.nl



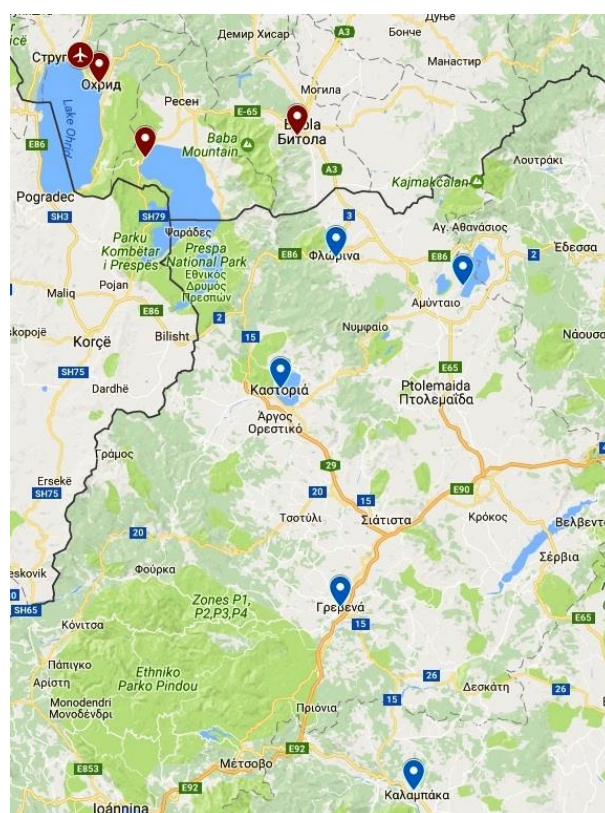
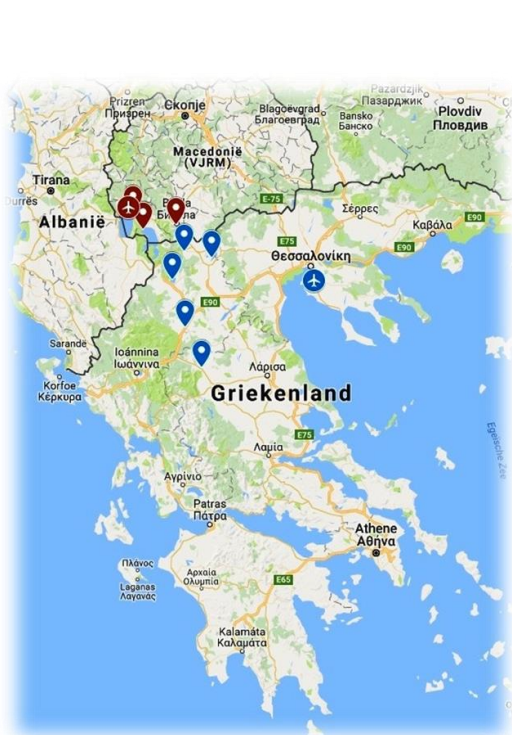
About AnnaHiking and Eye4Cycling

In 1991 Anna and Fred from AnnaHiking visited Greece for the first time. Our love for the country, the culture, the climate, the food, the language and the Greek has grown ever since. We feel at home here and want to communicate this feeling to others.

Many people are familiar with the Greek beaches: is there more? Sure! The mountainous mainland offers the traditional way of living, close to nature. Here you won't find beaches, but gurgling streams with waterfalls, small houses hugging the mountainside and welcoming people. This is the Greece we aim to acquaint you with. Macedonia offers a likewise splendid environment and thus fits our profile perfectly.

Our Eye4Cycling agent offers a wonderful biking tour through southwest Macedonia and northern Greece. They are professionals and we gladly place you in their care.

The tour location



About the tour location

Until the beginning of the 20th century Macedonia was part of the Ottoman empire. After the various Balkan wars large parts of Macedonia were taken by Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece. The Greek district Macedonia is situated in northern Greece and borders to Albania, the Macedonian Republic and Bulgaria. The Greek district Macedonia at the moment has about 2.5 million inhabitants.

The Macedonian Republic (in Greek: FYROM) was part of former Yugoslavia and has been independent since 1991. The Macedonian Republic has around 2 million inhabitants, most of whom live in the capital Skopje. The population is mostly ethnic Macedonian (65%), ethnic Albanian (25%) and about 4% is of Turkish origin.

Both regions belong to the great 'unknown area' in the field of cycling. Strange, if you perceive that these regions offer all ingredients for a marvellous biking holiday: a rich



cultural history, good roads, pristine nature and a warm-hearted population. In short an absolute must to discover this area on bike!



General tour information

The tour starts in Ohrid, ‘the Jewel of the Balkan’. The first 4 days you’ll bike through the Macedonian Republic to the southeast towards the Greek border. The roads take you along the lakes of Ohrid and Prespa to the foothills of Pelister National Parc. Just before the Greek border you’ll pass the historical town Bitola, which was the most important trade centre of the Balkan during Ottoman rule.

Your first overnight stay in Greece will be in Florina on the foothills of the Pelister mountain range. On your way to the lake district near Agios Panteleimon you’ll pass one of the best wine regions in the world. On your way to Kastoria the road takes you along various nature reserves with rare birds.

During the rest day in Kastoria you may relax in the many outdoor cafés on the lake front. From there you’ll continue south, via sleepy villages and lovely scenic areas towards the old trade centre Grevena. Grevena is surrounded by rivers, waterfalls and century old forest.

The last part of the tour leads south again through the Pinios river valley towards Kalambaka (Thessaly), on the foot of the Meteora. Meteora is one of the most impressive monuments in the world and makes one of the highlights of the tour. The unique and awesome rock formations with age-old monasteries on top offer a truly surrealistic view.

The bicycle routes

All routes lead by paved (asphalt) roads with very little traffic. Most daily stages are in hilly terrain and some days you’ll meet a long ascent until 8%. Per ascent you’ll overcome about 600 meters altitude.

The two stages before and after the rest day in Kastoria are the most demanding with 80km distance and a good amount of altitude difference. The other daily stages you’ll bike 50 to 60 kilometers.





Possible extensions

You may travel to Ohrid before the tour starts and prolong your stay there. You may book overnight stays in all accommodations of the tour. You may also fly on Skopje airport and prebook a transfer to Ohrid.

You may combine the arrangement with (parts of) other tours we offer. We'll gladly advise you about the logistics.

From Meteora you may easily reach the [Pindos](#) area (bus to Ioannina) or the [Pilion](#) (bus via Thessaloniki to Volos). In both areas we offer hiking tours with various levels of difficulty and duration.

Should you want to bike even more, you may travel to Athens (flight or public bus) where our self-guided bicycle tour on the [Saronic Islands](#) starts. You may also fly to [Rhodes](#) for a self-guided trekking by bike over this island. By public bus you may travel to [Evia](#) for a self-guided bike tour. In all tours the rental bike is included.

For all your wishes: ask for advice and an estimate!

The accommodations

The accommodations are 2, 3 and 4 star hotels and once a 700-year old monastery.



Bookable/possible start date

The tour may start from 1 April until 18 October. At a surcharge you may be picked up at the airport of Skopje.

Prices per person 2024 including hybrid rental bike and luggage transport

# travellers	room type	1-4 / 14-6 16-9 / 18-10	15-6 / 15-9
2 persons	twin/double room	€ 1450	€ 1540
2 persons	2 single rooms	€ 1705	€ 1795
1 person	single room	ON REQUEST	

Note:

- Price is per person excluding the flight and including airport transfer, luggage transfers and hybrid rental bike.
- The dates apply to the start date of the tour.
- From January 1st 2018 in Greece an 'overnight tax' is applicable. This tax has to be paid at check-in at your accommodation. Tourorganisations are not allowed by law to pay this tax.

The rates per room per night were until 2023: € 0,50 for 2*-hotels, € 1,50 for 3*-hotels, €



3,00 for 4*-hotels and € 4,00 for 5*-hotels.

It seems they'll be lifted to: €1,50 for 2*-hotels, €3,00 for 3*-hotels, €7,00 for 4*-hotels and €10,00 for 5*-hotels.

MIND: this tour has different cancellation terms!

If the arrangement is cancelled the traveller has to pay the following cancellation cost, apart from the due reservation cost:

- cancellation until the 42nd day (excluding) before the departure date: 25% of the tour price;
- cancellation from the 42nd day (including) up until the 28th day (excluding) before the departure date: 50% of the tour price;
- cancellation from the 28th day (including) up until the 21st day (excluding) before the departure date: 55% of the tour price;
- cancellation from the 21st day (including) up until the 14th day (excluding) before the departure date: 65% of the tour price;
- cancellation from the 14th day (including) up until the 5th day (excluding) before the departure date: 90% of the tour price;
- cancellation from the 5th day (including) before the departure date up until the departure date: 100% of the tour price.

Start and finish: airport Ohrid / Kalambaka (Meteora)

- You'll be picked up at Ohrid airport (transfer fee included). At a surcharge you may be picked up at Skopje airport.
- For the return flight you'd best travel by public bus to Thessaloniki (total time 2h45', change bus at Trikala). From Thessaloniki there are several carriers for your flight home.

Included

- 12 overnight stays including breakfast in hotel rooms with en suite bathroom.
- Rental bike Ghost Hybride – Panamo X3 (*e-bike available at a surcharge, see below*).
- 11 challenging bike tours (8 for the trekking, 3 optional circular tours).
- Airport transfer from Ohrid (*transfer possible from Skopje airport at a surcharge, see below*).
- Luggage transfers.
- Road maps.

Not included

- Flight and insurances (neither for the bikes!).
- Transfer to the airport at the end of the tour.
- In Greece: overnight tax (see above). We as travel organisation are not allowed to pay this tax.
- Diner, lunch, drinks and other personal expenses.
- Helmet, gps device.
- Contribution to the guarantee fund GGTO.
- Everything else not mentioned under "included".

Surcharges and reductions

- Surcharge e-bike: €140 p.p.
- Surcharge pickup from Skopje: €215 (maximum 4 persons).
- Surcharge loaded gps device: €55 per device.



- Reduction if you don't want luggage transfers, only if the whole party chooses so: € 225 p.p.

Luggage

Luggage is transported, unless you choose to book without luggage transport.

On your rental bike you'll find: a watertight side bag with spare tyres, pump, bidon holder with bidon, lock, repair set and tools.





Day to day

(You can download the elevation profiles separately.)

The altitude difference indicates the total amount of ascent.

Day 1: Arrival in Ohrid



You'll be met at Ohrid airport and after a 15 minute transfer you'll reach your hotel in Ohrid where you'll stay for 2 nights. In and around Ohrid are lots of places of interest. The bazar in the town centre is within walking distance or you may stroll along the splendid monasteries and through the old town. We also recommend a boat tour on the lake.

The old centre of Ohrid is a must-see! Ohrid is a real open-air museum with lovely age-old churches, like the magnificent Sveti JoFrom Kaneo, built on an overhanging cliff above the lake, and Sveti Clement near Plaosnik with special frescoes and icons. At the hilltop the medieval castle of the Bulgarian tsar Samuil is located, built in 1018, and of which the remnants still are to be admired. The castle offers a marvelous view over Ohrid and the lake.

The lake of Ohrid has been part of the UNESCO inheritance since 1980 and is partly situated in Albania. The altitude of this unique lake is 700 meters, bordered by the Petrino and Galicica mountains.

overnight stay: Ohrid

Day 2: Free day to spend on your own in or around Ohrid



No official program yet on this day. There is a short tour (30 km) in the environment. Of course you may also further explore Ohrid itself.

distance: 30km

altitude difference: -

overnight stay: Ohrid



Day 3: From Ohrid to Sveti Naum



The first part of this tour leads through the valley north of Ohrid. The wide valley is renowned for her fertile soil and many orchards. Cherries, apricots, grapes, apples and most of all: prunes. These prunes are usually the main ingredient for the national drink Rakia. Narrow roads and sleepy farmer villages characterize the environment.

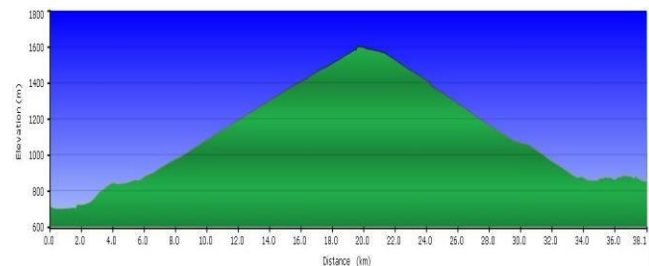
The second part rounds the east side of Ohrid lake towards the monastery Sveti Naum. This 700 year old monastery is also today's overnight stay. A splendid setting on the border of the lake.

distance: 55km

altitude difference: 450m

overnight stay: Sveti Naum

Day 4: From Sveti Naum to Otesevo



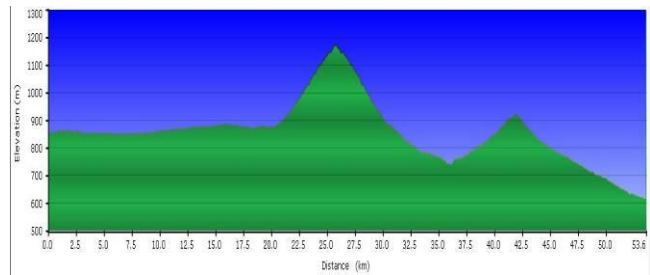
A substantial tour through the heart of the Galicica National Parc. You'll bike from the Ohrid lake to the Prespa lake. Both lakes are divided by the Galicica mountain and are connected underground. Today's summit is at 1550 m altitude which you'll reach after about 25 km.

Descending unfolds a wonderful view over the bigger of the Prespa lakes. This Great Prespa lake belongs partly to Albania, Greece and Macedonia and is a paradise for bird spotters. The hotel is situated directly on the lake.

distance: 38km

altitude difference: 800m

overnight stay: Otesovo

**Day 5: From Otesevo to Bitola**

Today's tour starts with a visit of the old town Resen. Until the beginning of the 20th century this region was very prosperous, which shows in the stately mansions. The valley is characterized by fruit cultivation. The first 20 kilometers are completely flat. Then follows an ascending part by the old connection road to Bitola with scattered almost deserted villages.

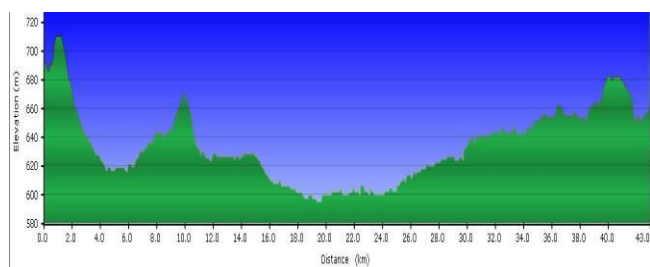
The lively historical town was known as the most important trade centre of the Balkan until the beginning of the last century. The Ottoman rule from the past still shows in the streets: Ottoman architecture, cobblestoned shopping streets and the bazar.

Those who are interested in the process of independence from the Ottoman rule may enjoy the museum in Bitola. Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish republic, is a prominent feature in this museum. He studied at the military academy and is the most famous student of the town. The hotel is situated right in the town centre.

distance: 54km

altitude difference: 400m

overnight stay: Bitola

Day 6: From Bitola to Florina in Greece

During this tour you'll pass the border to Greece. Florina is the capital of the county with the same name and is situated on the river Sakoulevas, at 700 m altitude and amidst forest. The city prospered only after the railway from Thessaloniki was finished in 1893.

There are two alternative routes; you decide after lunch which one you'll take. The longer tour loops with a sharp ascent through nature scenery. The highest point is at 1,300 m altitude. The altitude difference to overcome is thus 600 m in 10 km. After a lovely descent through the valley you'll reach Florina.

distance: 45km or 65km

altitude difference: 300m or 800m



overnight stay: Florina

Day 7: From Florina to Agios Panteleimon



Today you bike north towards a cluster of lakes of which the Vegoritida lake is both the larger and the lower. The lakes are interconnected by various channels and tunnels. The Vegoritida lake is a refuge for rare birds and protected nature area.

The first 25km are almost flat before the road gradually ascends to 950 m altitude. From there you descend through Amindeo, one of the world's 4 finest vineyards.

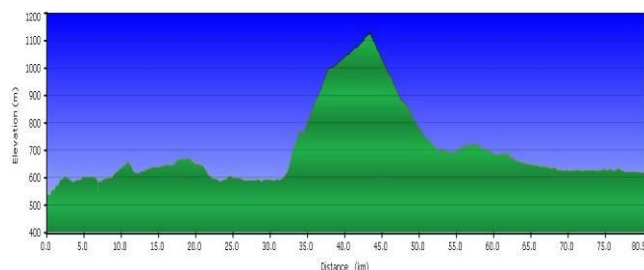
The last part of the tour is along the lake. The hotel offers a fine view over the Vegoritida lake and a swimming pool.

distance: 65km

altitude difference: 500m

overnight stay: Agios Panteleimon

Day 8: From Agios Panteleimon to Kastoria



You'll head off southwest for one of the longer trips of this holiday. The first part is almost flat and takes you through Amindeo village and along the Chimaditida lake, stopping place for pelicans and other rare birds.

After 30 km a not too heavy climb of 500 m altitude in 10 km takes you to the top. From here you'll have a wonderful view over the valley and the Kastoria lake. After a long descent you'll reach the historic town Kastoria, overnight stay for the next two days.

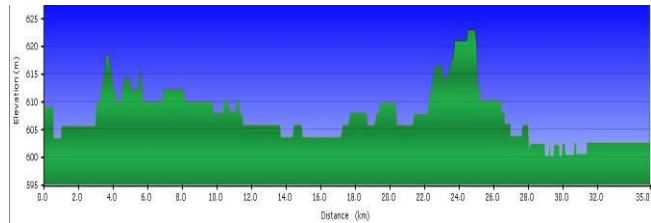
distance: 80km

altitude difference: 600m

overnight stay: Kastoria



Day 9: Rest day or short tour around Kastoria



Kastoria is a lovely old town where lots of action takes place. It's situated partly on a peninsula amidst a large lake surrounded by plane trees. The outline is 30 km and is provided all around with a bicycle road. The splendid route takes you through various villages on the lake.

During this circular tour you'll pass the 'Dragon Caves' (Spileo tou Drakou), a speleologic experience over 300m with several underground lakes. In the caves the remainders were found from bears that lived here 10,000 years ago.

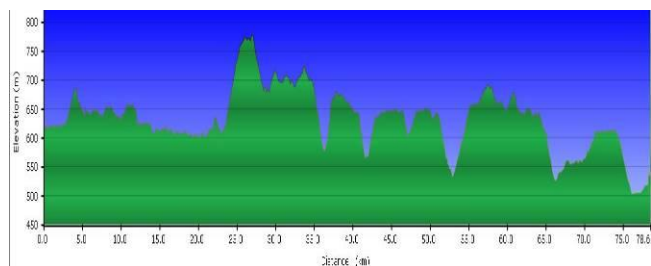
Kastoria is characterized by lots of beautiful mansions and Byzantine monuments. From the 17th until into the 19th century fur trade lead to great economical wealth. Along the waterfront you'll find lots of tavernas and outdoor cafés.

distance: 35km

altitude difference: -

overnight stay: Kastoria

Day 10: From Kastoria to Grevena



Heading south after 10km you'll reach the interesting village of Argos Orestiko with narrow streets, little squares and neoclassical buildings. Also this village shows the wealth out of fur and rug trade. The special compound of the earth makes excellent soil for the growing of lavender and legumes like lentils and beans.

After about 25 km the scenery becomes hilly and you'll continue through one of Greece's most important nature areas. In the higher regions still live wolves and brown bears. The tour proceeds along streams and villages in rapid succession of short ascents towards Grevena.

Grevena is situated on the borders of the rivers Doxaniti and Greveniti. The lively town with many tavernas and restaurants played an important strategic role in the Byzantine period and was also the region's trade centre.

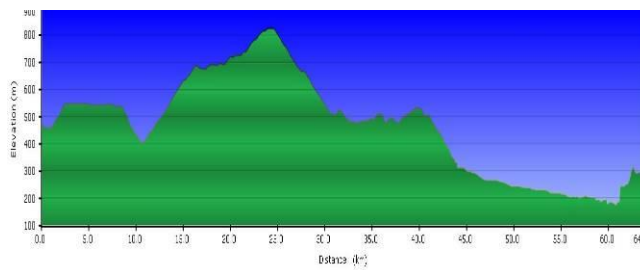


distance: 78km

altitude difference: 1200m

overnight stay: Grevena

Day 11: From Grevena to Kastraki (Meteora)



Leaving Grevena you'll find yourself immediately in open country. The views are splendid and you're bound to spot circling birds of prey. The harder part is in the beginning of the trip. After 10 km the road starts ascending and you'll have to overcome 400 m altitude in 15 km. The highest point is reached after 25 km. You'll continue downhill towards the valley of the Pinios river.

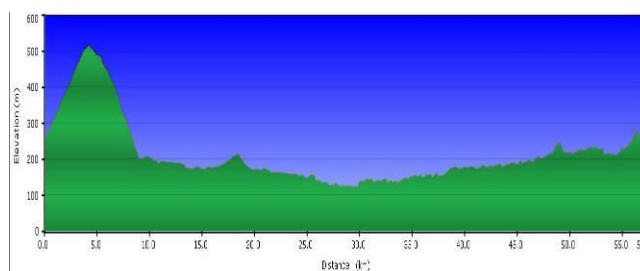
Gradually descending one of the tour's highlights unfold itself: Meteora! This incredible scenery on the borders of the Pinios river is characterized by monasteries built on pillars of rocks. Once this Thessalian plain was an inland sea and by aeons of wind and water erosion the rock formations turned into their specific outlook. The overnight location for the next two days is situated literally next to these formations and awaking with this view is amazing!

distance: 64km

altitude difference: 800m

overnight stay: Kastraki

Day 12: Rest day or circular tour Meteora-Pinios valley



Those who want to make a last bicycle tour will be provided with a lovely route with views on the limestone formations and the magnificent monasteries on top. Building began in the 11th century. The monks towed up the materials by ladders and ropes, real donkey work! At the moment still 6 inhabited monasteries operate and are to be visited. They are real works of art, also in the light of the building process. The second part of the trip leads along the wide river valley with distant views of Meteora.

The area also lends itself perfectly for hiking.



distance: 58km

altitude difference: 400m

overnight stay: Kastraki

Day 13: Departure

After breakfast your arrangement ends. You travel on your own accord to f.i. the airport of Thessaloniki. We gladly advise you about the logistics.