

Macedonia

12th February 2019

Around Lake Ohrid

MACEDONIA

**12th February entered Macedonia then crossed the border into
Greece 17th February 2019**

We left the small village of Tushemisht in Albania and we were just a few minutes from crossing the border into Macedonia our 12th country. No visa required for us so no issues at the border.

It was a steep climb up to the border and then once across the border it was a continuous step climb up all the way to the Gallicica National Park. What I remember it was all mountains all the way to Ohrid.

Ohrid was a lovely town on the lake, the people are really helpful and very cheap for us English. We were able to get a SIM card for Macedonia at the VIP phone shop on the Main Street down to the lake.

We had lunch in one of the restaurants and ate their traditional Goulash and we even took some away with us for later as we knew we would not want to cook later on as it was getting freezing cold so it was something quick to heat up on the stove when we were wild camping.

We wild camped twice one spot just off the main road outside Ohrid then up in the mountains just in a field on the way to Bitola. At this camp spot we made friends with a lovely dog that had made its home there we didn't realise till the morning as it was hiding in the bushes just next to us. It was starving so we gave him a hearty breakfast he was so happy.

There are so many stray dogs here and most of them just come running out of the trees at you very aggressive and continue to chase you down the road. Also it's sad to see but everywhere is covered in litter all along the road sides and in the lakes it's so pretty here but spoiled by the waste problem.

There are water taps along the way for people to come and fill up their bottles with water so no problem of running out of water.

We did three days of continuous mountain climbing in the freezing cold with snow. So on the third day I was determined to get to Bitola so I could get some accommodation and a hot shower as I had had enough , it was a hard slog to get there as I was mentally tired. We were then just nine miles from crossing into Greece.

We had found a place they on [booking.com](https://www.booking.com) it said €20 euros a night but when we turned up they wanted to charge us €30 for some reason but it worked out better for us as we found a great place right in the middle of the town in the center, it had its own bar and restaurant called “ Travellers Pub” and they were really helpful with accommodating our bicycles. We were staying two nights but stayed for three nights. There was a spa 2mins away and as it was Valentines we treated ourselves. Chris had a massage, I had a facial, it was so relaxing and a good price. Also there is no launderette in Bitola but there is a laundry service at one of the jewellery shops in the town again two mins from the hotel. Our clothes were in desperate need of a proper laundry wash.

Hotel - Hotel Shirok Sokak €20 per night /double room

Spa - Aura Spa Center in the Hotel Espinal

Laundry Service - In the silver jewellery shop next to the Spa entrance.

Roads - road surface hit and miss after awhile you get used to the cut up roads and dodging the pot holes.

Traffic - fast drivers , they don't have any road rules, drivers over take on bends , they do get a little close to you when going past and you have to be aware of drives overtaking on the other side of the road and coming towards you. But they like cyclists they wave and shout well done as you cycle past.

Smoking - You are allowed to smoke anywhere in Macedonia, inside bars, restaurants everywhere. Not very pleasant when you are not a smoker .

Locals - The people are friendly and helpful.

You can see the route we did if you go to our “ Track Us “ page on the main menu.

Also you can see were we have wild camped each night.

From Bitola it was a nice flat easy ride all the way to the Greek border.

Great views of the mountains in the distance.