

**USAID's Rritje Albania Program for
COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT
AND**

**The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports
CORDIALLY INVITE YOU TO**

The reception for

“The Western Balkans: Land of Discovery”

*A special supplement of the National Geographic
Traveler Magazine, supported by the U.S. Agency
for International Development (USAID)*

Wednesday, July 21, 2010
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Rogner Hotel Europapark
Tirana

R.S.V.P. by July 19, 2010

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Albania 
A New Mediterranean Love

P R O G R A M

Welcoming Remarks

Mr. Victor Luboyeski,

Chief of Party, USAID's Rritje Albania Program

Guest Speakers

Mr. Ferdinand Xhaferaj,

Minister of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports

Mr. Joseph C. Williams,

USAID/Albania Mission Director

Mrs. Edith Harxhi,

Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

Reception

A photograph showing a stone wall on the left and a narrow, paved path leading up a hillside on the right. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The wall is made of rough, grey stones, and the path is made of concrete or stone steps. In the background, there are more stone structures and a clear sky.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
TRAVELER

THE WESTERN BALKANS

Land of Discovery

46 Outstanding Ways to Experience Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia

ALBANIA WHERE CIVILIZATIONS LEFT THEIR MARKS

The Albanian coast is a mosaic of ancient ruins and modern architecture. From the stone walls of the Roman city of *Byzantium*, in the heart of the country, to the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, the coast is a testament to the country's rich history.

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ALBANIA ARTFUL RESILIENT

Tirana has had a long history of resilience. From the ruins of the Roman city of *Byzantium*, in the heart of the country, to the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, the coast is a testament to the country's rich history.

ALBANIA BIG, RARE BIRDS IN QUIET PLACES

The Albanian coast is a mosaic of ancient ruins and modern architecture. From the stone walls of the Roman city of *Byzantium*, in the heart of the country, to the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, the coast is a testament to the country's rich history.



ALBANIA FOLK CAPITAL IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Novelist Ismail Kadare wrote of his childhood in *Gjirëkasta*, "Everything was old and made of stone," covered with "gray slates like gigantic scales." The image evokes a living creature, and it fits. *Gjirëkasta*, named a World Heritage site in 2008 for its perfectly preserved Ottoman urban center, bustles with culturally vibrant energy.

One recent visitor was delighted to hear falcon a capella in the streets. "People were practicing polyphonic [vocal] singing," says Gwen Al Sawi, "and the following evening there was folk dancing." *Gjirëkasta* is arguably the folk culture capital of the Balkans. Every five years, the city hosts a National Folk Festival with hundreds of performers from around the region, though you



can be treated to great music and dance any weekend. After the show, head for the restaurant on the ramparts of the Kalaja fortress for a great view, a drink, and a bite to eat. —John Marks



The Western Balkans: Land of Discovery

*A USAID Special Supplement for National
Geographic Traveler Magazine*

Both regionally and at the country-level, USAID is helping to promote Albania's image as an inviting and unique tourist destination. In June, the National Geographic Traveler magazine published a 47-page supplement on the Western Balkans that has been distributed to over 200,000 households across Europe. "The Western Balkans: Land of Discovery" showcases the historical and cultural treasures of six Balkan countries, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia..

The issue highlights Albania's rich history and culture with information and photos from Albania's UNESCO sites, its annual national folk festival, flavorful cuisine, unique restaurants, special wildlife and scenic beauty.

