

Ndroq

1 Varoshi Castle

Varoshi Castle (a pre-Illyrian/Illyrian fortress) is a symbol of the ancient civilisation centres where many of the most ancient olive trees can be found. This suggests that the ancient civilisation centres were the oldest areas for olive tree distribution.

2 Olive Oil Factory

The olive oil factory is the first destination where you can get all the necessary information about the itinerary for visiting Ndroq. Oil-marinated olives, oil tasting accompanied by various locally sourced fruit jams or honey produced by beekeepers of the area create here a special feeling.

3 Erzen river

The Erzen is a mountain river which reaches the highest flow intensity in its upper part. After crossing the Skorana Strait, the river passes through a hilly and a plane area around the village of Ndroqi and eventually flows into the sea. Various services for recreation, sports and study activities are offered.

4 Ashik's Grave

"A young boy worked as a servant to a *bojar*. When the servant revealed to the *bojar* that he loved his daughter, the *bojar* promised her to another boy. The servant discovered that his girlfriend was getting married and he asked for her hand in marriage. The *bojar* rejected the servant's request and chased him away even though the servant warned him that they would rather prefer to die than abandon each other. When the wedding day came and the groom took the bride, a lovely boy appeared along the way and told the groom: "Oh good groom. The bride you have on the horseback is my girlfriend. "We have promised each other never to part." The bride raised her veil and said, "Brave men. I am not your bride, but the bride of this brave boy. The bride and the groom were surprised but they did not back down, because the custom was to take the bride to the groom's house where the wedding had begun. But when the groom left, the boy shot at the bride and she fell dead on the ground. Then the boy said: "Now we are getting married here, and he shot himself". The parents buried the two youngsters together in the same grave. And the story says that on the right of the carriageway road to Kavaja, near Ndroq, there is still a grave known as Ashik's Grave (The Lover's Tomb), under the shadow of a centuries-old plane tree.

5 Ndroqi Mosque

The mosque of Sauqet village is in the area of Ndroqi, near Tirana. This mosque was built on the Land donated by the believer Adem Taka.

6 Ndroq Maple Tree

The tree is located in the village centre. As early as the 1920s, a bazaar day was organised in the surrounding area for the whole province of Ndroq. Therefore, it is also known as the Rrapi i Pazarit. This 400-year-old maple tree is about 17 m high. It has been struck several times by a lightning bolt, leading to crown damage, burning and breaking of main branches.

7 Ndroqi Bazaar

Ndroq's old bazaar was located at the heart of the residential area and stretched along the former pedestrian street, with caravans and carriages. The Bazaar Quarter was one of the most important areas along with the house of Ibrahim Bey (Mansak Hahn's works prove that the Bazaar was an important economic centre before 1863).

Point of interest

8 Old Oil Mill

This is an old mill for the production of olive oil and made of *Ulmus campestris* wood (Alb: Dru Vidhi). It started to be used by the Pasmaçi family in Ndroq, in 1815. The Olive Oil Factory in Ndroq is open to visitors.

9 Ndroqi Fest

On September 8th, the "**Vera n'Shesh**" ¹ festival is held in Ndroq, offering the opportunity to promote traditional events which feature culinary, cultural, religious, and historical activities.

Marikaj

10 The Hamit Toptani Inn

The Hamit Toptani Inn is located in the garden of the Topani family house in the eastern part of Marikaj town centre. It can now be accessed through the old Marikaj street. Hamit Toptani was one of the signatories and organisers of the raising of the flag of independence in Durres in 1912. Being a representative of the Toptani family from the area of Vore-Shijak, he was buried in a grave near Marikaj.

11 Bio Farm

East of Marikaj village, this farm gathers a wealth of natural elements and is truly an oasis of calm and pleasure, featuring the concept known as "from farm to fork": bio-organic environment, livestock, vineyards, olives, greenhouses, fields, pomegranates, bees, lake, and forest. Delicious cuisine is offered here, and the ingredients are fresh. There is also an incubator of organic and rare products

12 Dramxhiku Natural water source

This spring is located east of the Marikaj Hills and was used in the past for drinking, irrigation, and bathing. There is a stone by the source that was used as a bowl for washing clothes. Near the springs, mud was once available for washing clothes whereas today it is used for cosmetic skin treatment.

13 Kecje natural water source

This spring is located east of the Dramxhik spring and was once used for drinking and washing clothes. Nowadays, this place is used for livestock drinking and also to organize tours travelling by bicycle or hiking along the path surrounding the hills.

14 Ancient olives

The AOO is located near the village of Mal Subash in the hilly area of the administrative unit of Marikaj. This is an olive grove with a density of 140-150 plants/hectare. It includes 70 trees. The trees are about 550-600 years old. Outdoor walking and cycling, motorbike and contemplation, are the main activities organized in the olive grove and along the hills. Camping in the olive grove is another activity that can be offered, both as part of guided tours and for individual visitors who are eager to embark on adventure tourism.

15 Lake of Gjakë

Gjoka Lake is located about 17 km from Tirana, in the eastern part of the hills of Marikaj, Gjoka village. The hills around Gjoka lake feature memorable reliefs and in a stunning landscape you can ride your bike. The lake surrounds a number of mini-islands.

Preza

16 Preza Castle

Preza Castle, built at the beginning of the XVth century, is one of the most important cultural monuments on Preza hill. This castle was used as a strategic watchpoint. Residents say that Mamica Kastriot's wedding was celebrated inside the castle. According to many scholars and residents, the square in front of the castle which includes the village centre, the school, the administrative unit, and the former two-storey school/shop (which is thought to date back to the period of King Zog) was once the Bazaar Square, where besides permanent shops, the bazaar was held on some days of the week. Today, this is the place where the "**Preza Festival**" ² takes place on **April 23**, featuring a variety of handicraft fairs, area services, events focussing on gastronomic values and olive oil by-products, environmental qualities, and biodiversity.

17 Prezë Mosque

This mosque is located inside Preza Castle and dates back to the XVIth century. It bears testimony to the values and the way the Albanians went along to change their religion. One specialty is that unlike other mosques, the mihrab i.e., the niche-like area, is not on the bottom here, but in the centre.

18 Well with a dome!

The well, located near the castle, is part of the historical attractions offered by the village. The folk legend makes it even more appealing. This well is known for its antiquity and dates back to the time of Osmane Empire. Today, the well is acknowledged as "Cultural Monument of Category I", as declared on the sign placed on the walls of the building where it is located. The well water has traditionally been considered unfit for human consumption because a popular legend says that a girl was drowned there not to fall alive in the hands of the Turks. Until the 1960s the well water was used but never for drinking.

19 Eco - tourism

Around Preza castle some agritourism services are available to visitors. They can have the opportunity to taste traditional recipes of the region such as Tirana frying pan, earthen casserole, village bird, etc. Locally sourced products are also offered such as the wine coming from a well-known winery of the area, olive oil, especially the highest quality known as the White Olive of Tirana, processed products from wild plants and also from medicinal plants such as pomegranate, manna, raspberry, cornel (*Cornus mas L.*), rose, etc.

20 Lake of Shargë

The lake is located to the north-west of Preza Castle and features a special ecosystem. It combines a hilly landscape and a scenic view of the bay of Durres and offers recreation services, bicycle trips and hiking.

21 Old Oil Mills

In Preza (hilly area) there are old mills for artisanal olive oil processing: the (Hysen) Kaziu operational mill, (Isuf Kaziu stated that he had learnt from his grandfather that this mill was 400 years old, and that it was among the oldest mills in the area). Another ancient mill was that of Mahmut Demirxhiu (on Preza hill), known to be 350 years old. Beqir Brusha Mill (in Palaq) is 300 years old; Sul Alushi (in Palaq) is so old that the great-grandchildren maintain that the exact building date cannot be determined. Even today, the very old mill of Murat Terziu in the village of Palaq is still working. Some other very old mills, aged more than 200 years, are the following: Sure Huqi (still operational), Hajdar Mullah (only a stone left as a testimony). The mill



of Sul Shamku (still running) and the mill of Rexhep Vrana (in operation until 4 years ago) are very close to each other. On the hill around Preza, there is the mill of Bajram Axha (today, only the millstone is left). Very close to this mill there was also that of Xhepi (Rexhepi) Hoke Vajes, Sadik Kepi, where the stones are the only remain. Xhemali Kurti mill was built 200 m below the castle, across the olive groves, on the eastern side of Preza hill, where the mill owner also had his house.

Artisanal olive oil grinding mills are located in private apartments and can be accessed only through guided tours organized in the area by tourist agencies of the area or in Tirana

22 Typical Olive Oil Vases

In Preza and also in all villages around Tirana, olive oil was preserved in olive oil vases handcrafted by potters in the area of Vora who were also known as skilled producers of clay pots. This artwork is now continued by the young generations and personalized to produce souvenirs sold in Preza old town.

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CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM, THROUGH VALORIZATION OF RURAL CULTURAL HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION OF NATURAL ASSET OF AREAS WITH ANCIENT OLIVE GROVES

Ndroq | Marikaj | Preza
Albania
Community map

¹ <https://po.al/ndroq-zhvilohet-vera-nshesh-nje-risi-per-te-promovuar-produktet-vendase>
² www.scan-tv.com/ekonomi-ne-festen-e-prezes-shqiperia-duhet-te-vizitohet-nga-ne-vete



Point of interest

Ndroq

- 1 Varoshi Castle
- 2 Olive Oil Factory
- 3 Erzen river
- 4 Ashik's Grave
- 5 Ndroqi Mosque
- 6 Ndroq Maple Tree
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- 8 Old Oil Mill
- 9 Ndroqi Fest

Marikaj

- 10 The Hamit Toptani Inn
- 11 Bio Farm
- 12 Dramxhiku Natural water source
- 13 Kecje natural water source
- 14 Ancient olives
- 15 Lake of Gjakë

Preza

- 16 Preza Castle
- 17 Prezë Mosque
- 18 Well with a dome!
- 19 Eco - tourism
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- 21 Old Oil Mills
- 22 Typical Olive Oil Vases

Ndroq | Marikaj | Preza
Albania
Community map

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- A** Old City of Bar
- B** Remains of Saint Urban's Church
- C** Old mill Hostel "The grove"
- D** Newly renovated ancient stone bridge
- E** Ancient stone bridge next to the mill
- F** Hiking trail
- G** Remains of old skin tannery
- H** Aqueduct
- J** Clock tower
- K** House of olives
- L** Watercourse Kajnak
- M** View Point
- Old Olive trees
 1. 42°05'18.907"N 19°08'20.988"E
 2. 42°05'19.646"N 19°08'19.983"E
 3. 42°05'17.469"N 19°08'19.074"E
 4. 42°05'17.041"N 19°08'18.803"E
 5. 42°05'16.129"N 19°08'19.258"E
 6. 42°05'16.472"N 19°08'20.888"E
 7. 42°05'12.165"N 19°08'33.259"E
 8. 42°05'13.143"N 19°08'33.388"E
 9. 42°05'13.511"N 19°08'25.753"E
 10. 42°05'13.455"N 19°08'25.325"E
 11. 42°05'15.182"N 19°08'20.535"E
 12. 42°05'19.383"N 19°08'16.236"E
 13. 42°05'18.999"N 19°08'16.426"E
 14. 42°05'19.207"N 19°08'15.351"E
 15. 42°05'22.437"N 19°08'15.304"E
 16. 42°05'23.459"N 19°08'15.346"E
 17. 42°05'24.196"N 19°08'15.954"E
 18. 42°05'24.342"N 19°08'16.701"E
 19. 42°05'25.050"N 19°08'16.833"E
 20. 42°05'25.472"N 19°08'16.100"E
 21. 42°05'25.783"N 19°08'16.660"E
 22. 42°05'26.341"N 19°08'16.672"E
 23. 42°05'26.739"N 19°08'16.153"E

Point of interest



E Ancient stone bridge next to the mill
 The ancient stone bridge situated next to the mill is the most attractive from the tourist point of view. It is part of the hiking trail and connects Kajnak watercourse with Džidžarin olive orchard. Standing on this bridge, tourists can enjoy the river canyon, grandiose hills and mountains, stone walls of the Old town, the olive groves and mills as well as the other cultural treasures and natural pearls of the area.

F Hiking trail
 The local mountaineering association has marked and arranged hiking trails that lead from the olive groves in Bartula and Džidžarin to the villages Menke and Mikulići, which abound in natural attractions, such as the amazing waterfalls. The main ancient trail originates from the Roman period and represent itself a cultural treasure.

G Remains of old skin tannery
 Nearby the secret cave passage, there are remains of the tannery. Those were simple stone structures used for treating animal skin in order to produce leather. The process included degreasing, desalting and soaking in water as well as applying an acidic compound called tannin. These remains reveal commercial character of local farmers that used to combine agricultural and livestock activities.

H Aqueduct
 One of the most stunning objects in this area is an aqueduct built during the 16th and 17th centuries, which supplied inhabitants with water from a spring three kilometers away. Settled on the northern side of the Old City of Bar, it is the only preserved object of this type in Montenegro and it is functional even nowadays.

L Watercourse Kajnak
 Watercourse Kajnak is located in the foothill of the Old city of Bar grandiose walls. Watercourse Kajnak and Džidžarin olive orchard are connected by the well-known legend about local young man who was growing olives; however, due to the water scarcity, the trees yielded

very low. He was disappointed and threw the tool from the stone walls, when the inexhaustible drinking water started flowing from the five sources and therefore Kajnak is nowadays also known as "The five wheels" spring.
 Few attractive viewpoints are located in Džidžarin olive orchard. Those places provide spectacular views to the ancient olive forests and other typical Mediterranean landscapes, the Old city of Bar and Clock tower, the Adriatic sea and Port of Bar, Selimye Mosque and to the other cultural and tourist attractions in Bar.

M View Point
 Few attractive viewpoints are located in Džidžarin olive orchard. Those places provide spectacular views to the ancient olive forests and other typical Mediterranean landscapes, the Old city of Bar and Clock tower, the Adriatic sea and Port of Bar, Selimye Mosque and to the other cultural and tourist attractions in Bar.

J Clock tower
 Clock Towers is a dominant building in the Old City of Bar and it represents the left marks of the Ottoman architecture. The building originates from the late Middle Ages and it leans on the wall of the medieval gate. It suffered damages during the turbulent events throughout the history; however, it was restored and remained a recognizable symbol of Bar.

K House of olives
 House of Olives is newly constructed facility located nearby Old City of Bar that serves as a mill, exhibition area, olive museum, hall for presentations etc. It is foreseen to be gathering place for local and national olive producers, as well as the head office for the future National Association of Olive growers. Furthermore, by visiting the House of Olives, the tourist have a chance to experience why Bar is known as "the olive town".



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Bar | Džidžarin Montenegro Community map

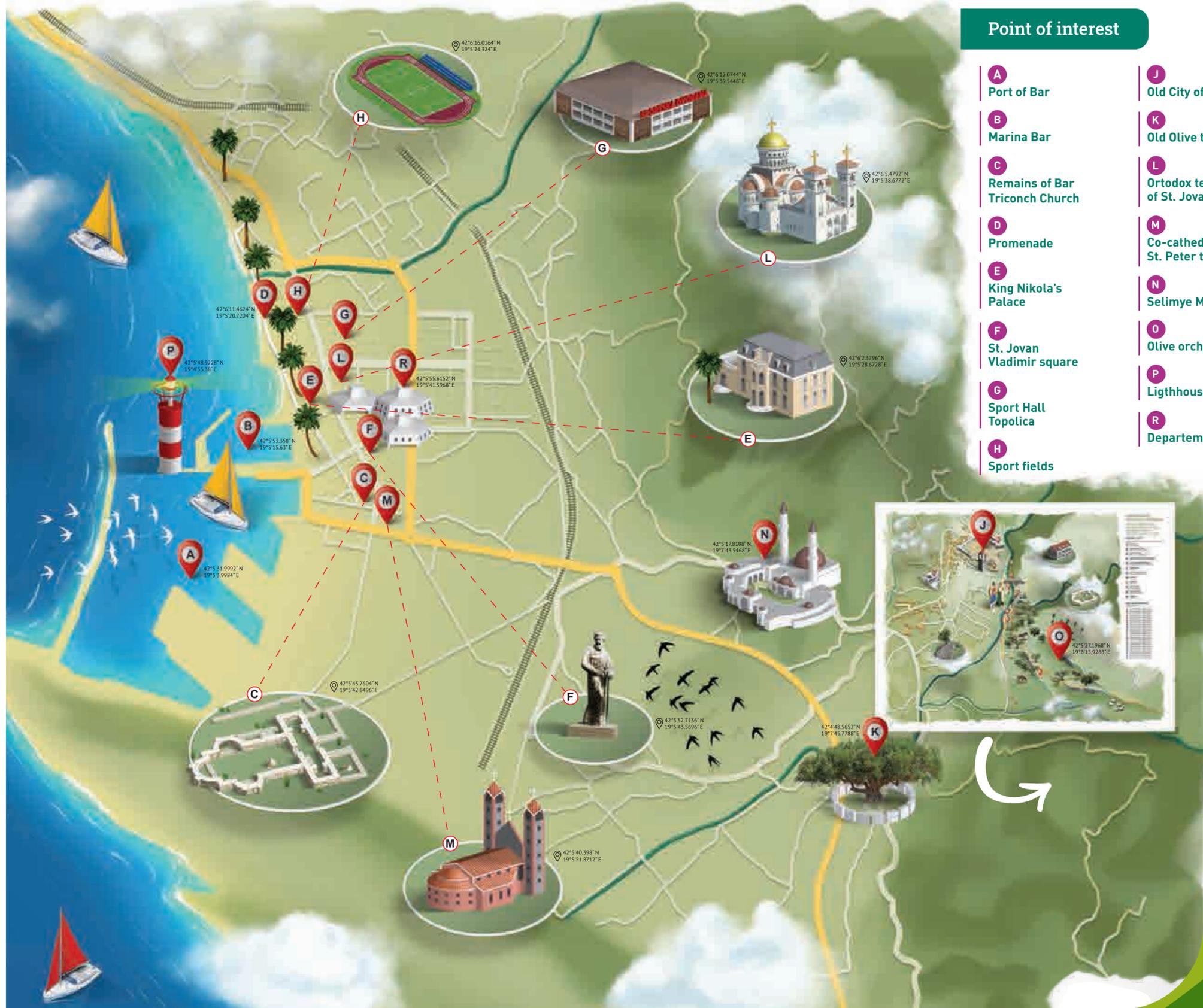
A Old City of Bar
 Raised and isolated on the high rocks in order to control and defend the area throughout the turbulent history, surrounded by gigantic mountains, the Old City of Bar is an exceptional cultural landscape that has historical, archaeological, artistic and ambient features. The walls are surrounding the remains of about 600 buildings, thus representing an open-air museum, as well as the largest unique medieval archaeological site in the Balkans. It testifies to the continuity of life in this area for almost 5000 years.

B Remains of Saint Urban's Church
 Remains of the Catholic Church – chapel of St. Urban's are located at the fork of two main directions within Džidžarin olive orchard. The remains were excavated in 2016, during the road construction. This cultural-historical asset of great importance, estimated that dates back from the XIII century, was professionally conserved and an adequate informative table was placed. Today, it is often a resting point for tourists and local visitors.

C Old mill – Hostel "The grove"
 One of the greatest attractions within Džidžarin is the Old mill of Duke Mašo Vrbica, historically known as the first mill with iron presses in Bar olive sub-region. This mill started processing in 1882, while in 1888 the first soap and flower factory "Soaps from Bar" was established within the complex and supplied Montenegrin royal family with their cosmetic products. Nowadays, it operates as an attractive hostel, owned by the group of young entrepreneurs from the Great Britain and Australia.

D Newly renovated ancient stone bridge
 One of the most attractive spots in Džidžarin is the ancient bridge situated at the estuary of Suva to Bunar river dating back from the XIX century. Fruitful collaboration between the Association of olive growers of Bar and Tourist organization of Bar in 2017 enabled professional restoration and conservation of the bridge. The bridge provides a stunning view to the ancient olive trees and the old mill – ex soap factory.





Point of interest

- | | |
|---|--|
| A
Port of Bar | J
Old City of Bar |
| B
Marina Bar | K
Old Olive tree |
| C
Remains of Bar
Triconch Church | L
Ortodox temple
of St. Jovan Vladimir |
| D
Promenade | M
Co-cathedral of
St. Peter the Apostle |
| E
King Nikola's
Palace | N
Selimye Mosque |
| F
St. Jovan
Vladimir square | O
Olive orchard Džidžarin |
| G
Sport Hall
Topolica | P
Lighthouse |
| H
Sport fields | R
Departement store |

Point of interest

- 18 Arnold von Harff - a German traveler of the 15th century. He went on pilgrimage to many countries, collecting languages and cultural information. His lexicon of words collected around the area of Ulcinj is the second oldest known document in the Albanian language.
- 19 On the map, a local communicating with a German traveler, whereas he learns the word "mish" (meat). The local girl shown carrying a basket with "Kafërma meat", a special preparation technique with olive oil and salt, used for preserving the meat on long sea journeys.
- 20 The old way of harvesting olives, by picking them directly from the ground. As seen on the illustration, it used to require a lot of physical strain and effort, yet people of all ages used to do it with passion.
- 21 A traditional way of hiding working tools, whereas the locals used to fit them inside the olive trees.
- 22 The legend of Bego Boboti. Shown helping fairies untangle their hair. Afterwards, he would gain great strength and become a famous sailor.
- 23 The old plane tree, estimated to be around 300 years old, located near the well and an old laundry tub, is in the middle of a cross-road that leads to olive groves and remains of an old bridge. Illustrated is a woman doing laundry in the traditional way.
- 24 An old fountain. Located at the intersection of the paths with one leading to Valdanos, while the other leads to the city. The fountains were placed on the most frequented paths, in order to serve as many people as possible.
- 25 Bashbylyk fountain, which has an engraving in old Ottoman - "In honor of Osmanag Manola, built by Osman Lazoja".
- 26 Orthodox Church of St. Nicolas, built in 1890.
- 27 The Museum of Ulcinj is situated in the northern part of the Old Town and it comprises several buildings: the church-mosque which hosts the archaeological museum, the BalshajKulla (tower) which is used as an art gallery, the Ethnographic Museum, and the museum office, the ground floor of which used to be a customs office and prior to that a seamen's bar.
- 28 Pasha's Mosque built in 1719. This mosque also has a hammam, built before the mosque was completed and is the only hammam of this type in Montenegro.
- 29 The City Center Roundabout - Three olives and an old rock olive mill are located in the middle of the roundabout, as a testimony of the city's connection to the olive.
- 30 Lami's Mosque, built in 1689.
- 31 Located next to the museum premises - the Cyclopean Illyrian wall, dating back 2500 years ago. Also interesting as a common point with our project partners from Venafro.
- 32 Mujo Ulqinaku (Cakuli), born in Ulcinj in 1896, went on to become a sergeant of the Royal Albanian Navy and a People's Hero.
- 33 Xhefko Kashoxha, one of the most skilled craftsmen in Ulcinj, has been making models of ancient ships and boats for more than 30 years in his workshop.

- 34 Riza Shurdha, the first photographer in Ulcinj. He belonged to the Afro-Albanian community of Ulcinj. Africans were brought in as slaves in the 18th century but gained their freedom in the 19th century and integrated in the local community.
- 35 The golden weapons of a brave local man, as portrayed in the song "O ti Tahir", where he says that he has hanged his golden weapons on an olive branch in order to shine bright on the whole city.
- 36 Bottle of "miracle liquid" that is proven to be very efficient against burns, also containing locally produced olive oil. It is applied on skin using a feather soaked in the liquid.
- 37 Drywalls are present in most of the olive groves, featuring an ancient technique of building olive grove terraces without using concrete, by laying stone over stone.
- 38 A sophisticated ancient drainage system is incorporated within the olive groves, providing perfect balance in watering the olive trees, also securing ways of escape for large quantities of water.
- 39 Remains of old stone routes are still present and visible in a few places, but badly preserved and affected by the new wave of real estate construction throughout the olive groves.
- 40 The Old Town in Ulcinj is one of the oldest urban architectural complexes along the Adriatic Sea. In this enchanting citadel resembling a stranded ship, life has been booming for 25 centuries, civilizations have been exchanging, each leaving vivid traces still visible today. The Old Town represents a cultural-historical monument of invaluable significance due to its Illyrian walls, its citadel, the street net, the markets and squares, some house blocks and valuable architectural edifices, and especially due to its town landscape and silhouette.

-  Presumed to be an ancient olive tree, older than 400 years.
-  Ancient olive tree, whose age was determined through scientific measurement, number indicating estimated higher age.
-  Ancient olive tree, whose age was determined by scientific measurement, receiving the title of the oldest tree within Ulcinj Olive Orchards.
-  Selling point where olive derived products and souvenirs alike are sold.
-  Location of olive oil production facility.
-  Selling point where local traditional and culture-related products or souvenirs are sold.
-  Location of the beach bar, serving drinks and alike.
-  Location of restaurant, takeaways, i.e., food selling points.
-  Location of a public City beach.
-  Itinerary route direction, start or detour point, with corresponding route number, as defined within this map.



Walking routes - itineraries

In order to know a region, you must know its roads. To get to know the ancient olive orchards of Valdanos and its surroundings, we have drawn old routes that will lead you through the olive orchards to the sea, the old town, or to the city. The routes are designed to let you experience the magic of the olive groves while enjoying a walk through the nature. We defined eight routes, among which you can choose one or combine more, depending on your interests and time available. These routes are illustrated in this map, indicated by the letter R for route and corresponding number of route. Below are the aforementioned routes with corresponding descriptions:

- R1 **The Plane tree route:** The first walking route is the main route that in the past used to connect the Old Town with the Olive Orchards. Its starting point is the Orthodox Church, through Liman Street 1, heading towards the old plane tree, which connects to the Meteriz route, i.e., route R2 described below. *Route length: 500 meters.*
- R2 **The Meteriz route:** The second walking route is considered as a connection route for the residents of Meteriz to the olive orchards, the starting point being at the right side of the fifth turn, while moving uphill from the orthodox church - red gate as a recognizable point of route start. It also reaches the old plane tree, continuing towards the paved road where the olive orchards are situated, and where the true olive journey starts. The route might be considered as a biodiversity route, since along its path you can find a wide range of diverse trees and typical plants of the region. *Route length: 700 meters.*
- R3 **The Anamalit route (Mountain side route):** This route is a delight of its own, as it starts from lowest altitude, climbing and reaching high altitude, thus allowing to experience the beauty of viewing olive orchards, and getting the best view of the whole olive orchards around, ending right at the paved road. The starting point is on the right side of the road leading towards Valdanos from the city center and is located about 370 meters from the Meteriz route endpoint, direction city center, right where the inhabited part of the city ends - green metal gate as a recognizable object on the right side of this route start. *Route length: 900 meters.*
- R4 **The Bashbylyk route (circular route):** The longest one, and considered as the most difficult, since it declines towards the sea, reaching the old Bashbylyk fountain, then starting elevation to return to the starting point. Although this is the longest route, it is worth every step as you get to walk through various ancient olive groves while enjoying the view of the sea and hearing the waves hitting the seashore. Starting point is right at the end of the Meteriz Route - on the left side of the road leading towards Valdanos, the electric supply wooden pole is viewed at the right side of the route start, while on the left of the starting point, there is a stone wall with a black metal gate. *Route length: 1200 meters.*
- R5 **Beg's route** - we named it "Beg's route", since it features one of the most beautiful and romantic fountains, built at this location by Beqir Beg of the Resulbegu family. It starts on the right side of the road leading towards Valdanos, at about 230 meters from the entrance to the Bashbylyk route, the endpoint being the paved road. Recognizable start of route is cast in concrete. *Route Length: 500 meters.*



- R6 **Old olive route:** It is the continuation of Begs route, in fact it was one route, before the asphalt road cut it in half, so its start is just on the opposite side of the road, at the end of Begs route. This route is one of the most exciting, because it will lead you to the oldest olive tree identified by now, also reaching the military zone. Ending point at the oldest olive identified. *Route length: 600 meters.*
- R7 **Valdanos route:** Before this area became military property, this route would lead you straight to Valdanos bay. The route starts right in the middle of the old olive route, heading at the intersection left, i.e., downwards. Since the rest of the route is invaded by roots and overly grown wild vegetation, this route is short and will end at the point where the road is wide and secure, continued at own risk. *Route length: 170 meters.*
- R8 **Continuation of Anamalit route:** Opposite the paved road, right where the Anamalit route ends, there is an extension of this route, which offers a great experience of viewing the olive grove terraces below, as well as the magnificent view of the sea and Valdanos bay. A route definitely worth living. *Route length: 450 meters.*

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Valdanos Montenegro Community map



Valdanos is a peaceful bay, a bay of beauty and love with a 376-meter-long beach, as well as a natural monument. The olive orchards in Valdanos are the biggest living monument of olive cultivation in Montenegro of extraordinary cultural, economic, and ecological value. Including the Bashbylyk area and Anamalit area, there are around 80,000 ancient olive trees in this complex, which has been placed under special protection of the state by the Law on Olive Cultivation in Montenegro. Many trees are more than a thousand years old.

As part of the IPA CBC Italy-Albania-Montenegro EU-funded project "Cross-border cooperation for sustainable development and tourism, through valorization of rural cultural heritage and conservation of natural assets in areas with ancient olive groves", the project team of the Association for Sustainable Regional Olive Farming - Valdanos " took the effort of producing an ancient olive orchards community map. With the intent of incorporating as many elements as possible, it was a time-consuming task, but at no time did we regret the effort taken, since we believe we are honoring countless generations of people who took care of the orchards for centuries. Many elements of local folklore, stories, lifestyle, customs, and legends were incorporated within this map. We are however aware that there are additional elements that we might have missed, and we hope to enrich the map in the future with additional inputs from the community. With the hope that the map you are holding in your hands will contribute to local development and further valorization of this area, we leave it to you to use it as a guide to enjoy and experience this magnificent area.

Point of interest

- 1 The legend says that a fisherman trapped the mermaid within his fishing net and fell in love with her, took the fabric off her, thus turning her into a human. They married and had children. The mermaid eventually found the fabric, went back into sea and never came back.
- 2 Sailors' Well - located on the western part of Valdanos Bay shore. Used by sailors in the rich and vibrant maritime past of Ulcinj.
- 3 Valdanos Beach - a unique pebble beach on the shores of this bay, about 150 meters long. The beach is lined by pine trees and surrounded by ancient olive groves. It is known for its peaceful ambiance and fresh air, even on hot summer days
- 4 Gusharaveli, also known as Dumsharaveli, is an Afro-Albanian dance performed only in Ulcinj during festivals or local holidays. It is believed that the dance originates from a combination of African rhythm and a bit of local Albanian rhythm.
- 5 Leopold de Wenzel (1847-1923), a well-known Italian composer, inspired by Ulcinj traditional dances such as Gusharaveli, wrote the Dulcigno Polka for piano around 1880.
- 6 The yellow dotted line depicts the frontier of the military zone, which was claimed 40 years ago by the military authorities with the purpose of building a military base. The military base was never built, and thousands of trapped olive trees were left unattended, with the area turning into almost a forest.
- 7 A belvedere constructed right above Valdanos Bay. Best time to visit is at dawn or dusk, with magnificent views. We depicted a painter there to give an idea of how this space could be used to benefit tourism and the arts.
- 8 The legend of a pregnant fairy who sent for the local midwife to assist her in giving birth.
- 9 Once an important trade route port, Ulcinj was famous for sailing, piracy, and shipbuilding. It was also a battleground. Left - Liburna, an Illyrian ship. Right - British and French ships at battle with Dulcignottes (Ulcinj pirates) in 1772. On the ship: the legendary pirate LikaCeni (Ali Kaceni) and sea captain Haxhi Aliu.
- 10 The Mendra Lighthouse. Known as the oldest lighthouse in Montenegro.
- 11 Location where it is believed there used to be a small church. A local brave man, the legend goes, made a bet that he would plunge a knife in front of the ruins of this church in the middle of the night. He ended up losing his bet and life, as he had plunged the knife on his own coat and died of a heart attack.
- 12 Ymer Agë Ulqini and his wife. He was a prisoner of war and asked his wife to wait for him for 9 years. He was released from prison in order not to lose his wife, by promising the daughter of the king that he would return to prison. He returned and because he kept his "Besa", the king set him free.
- 13 Related to the legend mentioned in n.9. The local midwife being led in the middle of the night to the pregnant fairy, to assist her in giving birth.
- 14 The Fountain of the Beg, built in the 1800s, showing the cult of providing water to others, so that your good deeds continue even after death.
- 15 Wall steps which are very common within the olive orchards of Ulcinj. An ancient technique used for accessing olive terraces.
- 16 An interesting natural phenomenon, whereas olive tree roots are used as steps.
- 17 The "Hug me olive tree". A tree which is leaned over the path, as if it needs a hug from the passersby.

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