



20 hours of bliss in Prizren

How to make the most out of your day in Kosovo's capital of culture

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I arrived in Prizren on a hot day in late May, after an overly complicated bus journey from Shkodër in Albania. What should have been a three-hour bus ride took a total of eight hours, including two hours of transit in Tirana. I finally arrived at the bus station at 6pm and walked for another 15 minutes to get to my hostel.

As I walked to the hostel, I felt the same sense of happiness that I felt when I first arrived in Sarajevo, Bosnia. At first, I could not understand why, but then I realised that it seemed familiar, because it actually looked like Sarajevo—with the river flowing through the centre of town, the churches, the mosques, the old town, the cobbled streets, the lively music and the welcoming people. I was in love from the get-go.

Here are my recommendations to make the most out of your trip to Prizren:

Accommodation: I don't usually write raving reviews of my accommodations, but it won't be an exaggeration to say that part of the reason I love Prizren so much is the hostel I stayed at, Driza House. It is impeccably clean, has bunk beds fitted with bed lamps and plugs, and there are curtains to ensure privacy. The rooms are spacious and beautifully decorated, and come with breakfast—for only eight euros a night per person, it is a bargain! It's run by a lovely young couple who are friendly, kind, and big travel lovers themselves. I suggest you book directly through their website to avail their 10 percent discount.

Food: Kosovan cuisine, much like

Albanian food, is meat-based. You will find all the traditional Balkan food like *burek*, grilled meat, stuffed peppers and so on. Since I was a vegetarian, I pretty much lived on *burek* (a thin crispy layered pastry filled with cheese, spinach, pumpkin or meat and is served with a heap of sour cream), potatoes and pizza during my time in the Balkans. In Prizren, I ate a particularly fresh, delicious vegetarian pizza, in a restaurant by the central river for three euros. There are plenty of options for you in the restaurants that dot the river that divides the city.

The oldest cinema in the Balkans: One of the oldest cinemas in the Balkans is housed in Prizren. The Lumbhardi was dilapidated at one point, but Kosovans

came together to save it from privatisation and renovate it. Today, it boasts an indoor and open-air cinema and a lovely cafe where you can sit with friends and have a beer or coffee under the starry night sky.

The Sinan Pasha mosque: The Sinan Pasha mosque is a beautiful landmark situated on the main street in Prizren. Built in 1615 in the Ottoman style, this mosque is spectacular. I have nothing but love for this mosque; since it was Ramadan, I went inside and prayed there. It filled me with a sense of peace.

Our Lady of Ljeviš: This beautiful structure is a 14th-century Serbian Orthodox church in Kosovo.

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