

## INTRODUCTION – HIGH SCARDUS TRAIL

High Scardus Trail (HST) is a transnational mountain tourism product connecting the mountain ranges in the border areas of Albania, Macedonia, and Kosovo. The name originates from the Latin name for the Shar Mountain, the biggest massive in the region, *Scardus* or colourful mountain. And colourful is what the HST is in terms of landscapes, biodiversity, people, tradition, and food!

High Scardus Trail product is presented and promoted in a small guidebook, maps and at websites: <http://www.balkanhikingadventure.com>  
<http://www.peaksofthebalkans.com>



## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The mountain tourism product High Scardus Trail is a result of the project Future Prospects through Mountain Tourism, implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) over the course of 2017. The project's aim was to improve the employment opportunities in the tourism sector in the border region between Macedonia, Kosovo, and Albania by developing and promoting existing and new regional adventure tourism offers. The development of the product included: the marking and signposting of 33 hiking trails on five mountain massifs in the cross border region of Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia; identification, selection, and inclusion of accommodation and catering facilities along the trail, as well as points of interest linked to the cultural and natural heritage of the region. In order to upgrade the existing infrastructure, the project supported the start-up and extension of existing small accommodation and catering businesses. Through a tailor-made training programme on rural tourism, over 170 representatives of the targeted communities have increased their knowledge and skills for service provision in the segments of catering, accommodation, small scale production, artisanship, and guiding. The training facilitated creation of wide networks of different potential service providers, which serve to ensure quality tourism offer leading to income generation and new employment opportunities.

## ABOUT THE TRAIL

High Scardus Trail is a transnational hiking trail with a total length of 495 km that is found on the mountains in the border areas of Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo. The trail passes through six national parks, two in the Republic of Macedonia, one in the Republic of Kosovo, and three in the Republic of Albania. If you take into account the numerous connecting trails to the main trail, which start/lead to populated areas and serve as access or exit points of the trail, the High Scardus Trail can be seen as a system of interconnected trails. This is especially important for creating a tour.

For the passage of the main trail in its entirety, from its starting point in the northeastern part of the Sharr Mountains in Macedonia to its end the Prespa region in Albania, it takes about twenty days hiking, which is two to three times longer than the duration of an average trip in adventure tourism. However, the network character of the path, that is, the existence of a main path and connection links allow the creation of tours of different lengths, durations and difficulty levels, thereby creating numerous opportunities to meet the interests and needs of different categories of hikers and visitors.

more information:



[www.balkanhikingadventure.com](http://www.balkanhikingadventure.com)



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## TIPS

- Always be well-informed and prepared for the trail that you are traversing (professional mountain guides, guidebook(s), map(s)).
- If you do not have enough mountaineering experience, hire a professional mountain guide.
- Never hike alone.
- Be informed about the weather conditions.
- Always wear appropriate hiking clothes and equipment that is suitable for the actual weather conditions.
- Always carry sufficient quantities of water and food.
- Respect the environment.
- Follow the existing signalling (markings and signposts).

## TORBESHKI MOST – KORAB PEAK – VILLAGE OF RADOMIRË

HST – 07

| NAME OF THE TRAIL / ACRONYM    | HST – 07                             |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ALTITUDE OF THE STARTING POINT | Torbeshki Most – 1.331 masl          |
| HIGHEST POINT                  | Korab – 2.753 masl                   |
| ALTITUDE OF THE ENDING POINT   | The village of Radomirë – 1.265 masl |
| ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE            | 1.433 m                              |
| DURATION OF THE HIKING TOUR    | 8 – 10 h                             |
| LENGTH OF THE TOUR             | 23 km                                |
| DIFFICULTY OF THE TOUR         | ●●●●○                                |
| NECESSARY FITNESS LEVEL        | ●●●●○                                |

## Description of the trail

Location – mountain: Korab – (central segment) – part of Mavrovo National Park

The trail is one of the most visited trails in the Mavrovo National Park because of the peak, Golem Korab, (2.753 m) which is the highest peak in the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Albania. This stage of the trail starts from the farm under Bozhina Planina located on the road from Strezimir towards the tripoint between Macedonia, Albania, and Kosovo and continues eastward along the River Adzhina and up to the place where the path diverges right towards the border post "Karaula Pobeda" and left towards Strezimir. Following the dirt road for approximately one kilometer, turning left after passing a concrete bridge and walking up for approximately ten meters leads into the yard of the border post "Karaula Pobeda" at altitude of 1.475 m.

From here, the trail continues through beech forest until it reaches the sheep farm Belandja at altitude of 1.750 m where the pastures begin to spread out. Above the sheep farm, at 1.860 m, there is a spring, which is the last in this part of the mountain. The next spring is in the foothill of the Golem Korab peak. The trail is visible, easy to follow and marked.

From Kobolino Pole starts a southward traverse until reaching an altitude of 2.450 m where a view towards Golem Korab, which is at 2.753 m opens up. The climb towards this point is through the north – east slopes of the peak on a visible and marked trail. The descent is made through the western slopes of the peak until reaching the village of Radomirë. The trail passes through pastures and a small rocky part. While descending, several glacial lakes are can be seen and the trail is visible until entering the village of Radomirë.

## VILLAGE OF RADOMIRË – GRAM

HST – 08

| NAME OF THE TRAIL / ACRONYM    | HST – 08              |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ALTITUDE OF THE STARTING POINT | Radomirë – 1.260 masl |
| HIGHEST POINT                  | 2.000 masl            |
| ALTITUDE OF THE ENDING POINT   | Grama – 1.780 masl    |
| ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE            | 1.080 m               |
| DURATION OF THE HIKING TOUR    | 6 – 7 h               |
| LENGTH OF THE TOUR             | 14 km                 |
| DIFFICULTY OF THE TOUR         | ●●●●○                 |
| NECESSARY FITNESS LEVEL        | ●●●●○                 |

## Description of the trail

Location – mountain: Korab – (western side)

This trail connects the village of Radomirë with the mountain pasture of Lake Grama (in maps referred to as 'Bjeshka e Zonjave' as well). From early June to the end of September there are shepherds in the area and one of them has a couple of simple huts to accommodate hikers.

From the two hotels located near the center of the village (400 m east of the mosque), the trail moves onto a dirt road heading towards the Stordok neighborhood. This dirt road was built for a water supply but has been in very bad condition for a few years and is impassable for cars.

The dirt road continues with gently uphill southwest, with the river gorge on the right and the steep meadows on the left. Passing a few shepherd huts on the way, it soon hits the river at an altitude of 1.840 m. At this point, it crosses the stream and ascends towards the west for about 1,5 km until it reaches a dirt road that goes down (south) towards Lake Grama. From here, moving in a south-westerly direction, the trail gets close to the rocky mountain ahead. The only accommodation (at the time of publication of the maps in 2017) is by the stream that separates the meadow of Lake Grama and the rocky mountain at an altitude of 1.780 m.

## GRAM – THE VILLAGE OF ZAGRAD

HST – 09

| NAME OF THE TRAIL / ACRONYM    | HST – 09            |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| ALTITUDE OF THE STARTING POINT | Grama – 1.780 masl  |
| HIGHEST POINT                  | 2.300 masl          |
| ALTITUDE OF THE ENDING POINT   | Zagrad – 1.190 masl |
| ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE            | 500 m               |
| DURATION OF THE HIKING TOUR    | 5:30 – 6:30 h       |
| LENGTH OF THE TOUR             | 12 km               |
| DIFFICULTY OF THE TOUR         | ●●●●○               |
| NECESSARY FITNESS LEVEL        | ●●●●○               |

## Description of the trail

Location – mountain: Korab – (western side)

This trail connects the summer pasture of Grama with the villages on the foot of Deshat mountain range via the mountain of Grama (2.345 m). From the hut, the trail moves uphill on the left side of the stream until it reaches the meadow and then continues the climb south, traversing along the left side of the gorge with the stream on the right. After a gentle uphill of about 2 km, the climb continues towards the east, to the highest point of the pass at 2.992 m.

From the pass, a steep zigzag trail moves down. Losing about 340 m of altitude over approximately 1 km, the trail towards Zagrad continues left (west), traversing the grassy slope where it gains about 150 m of altitude over a 2 km stretch. This almost level stretch leads close to the border, where it descends south along a steep meadow trail. Within 1.5 km it passes by a shepherd's hut and from there the trail continues the descent southwest towards the village of Zagrad on a gravelly trail.

## VILLAGE OF ZAGRAD – HINOSKË

HST – 10

| NAME OF THE TRAIL / ACRONYM    | HST – 10                     |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ALTITUDE OF THE STARTING POINT | Zagrad – 1.190 masl          |
| HIGHEST POINT                  | 2.005 masl                   |
| ALTITUDE OF THE ENDING POINT   | Hinoskë pasture – 1.690 masl |
| ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE            | 1.060 m                      |
| DURATION OF THE HIKING TOUR    | 6 – 70 h                     |
| LENGTH OF THE TOUR             | 11 km                        |
| DIFFICULTY OF THE TOUR         | ●●●●○                        |
| NECESSARY FITNESS LEVEL        | ●●●●○                        |

## Description of the trail

Location – mountain: Deshat

This trail climbs from the village of Zagrad back to the meadows of the Deshat range and follows the ridge along the border, finishing in the summer pasture of Hinoskë, at the foot of Velivar peak (2.373 m). The hike starts steeply uphill heading northwest on a gravel trail. It moves right from the shepherds' hut (the left one goes towards Gramë) and after awhile reaches the meadow where the grassy trail continues south gently undulating. Approximately 1,5 km from this point, there are a few shepherds' huts on the meadows on the right. There is another trail that descends to the village of Rabsdit but this trail continues along the meadow trail that stays fairly level for a while before it continues to climb towards the ridge that crosses the border into Macedonia, this way avoiding the rocky terrain on the Albanian side of the border. The trail stays fairly level on the Macedonian side for about 2 km and then crosses the border again back into Albania, losing about 300 m of height over the last two-kilometer-stretch towards the Hinoskë mountain pasture.

## HINOSKË – POPINAR – GRAZHDAN

HST – 11

| NAME OF THE TRAIL / ACRONYM    | HST – 11                     |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ALTITUDE OF THE STARTING POINT | Zagrad – 1.190 masl          |
| HIGHEST POINT                  | 2.005 masl                   |
| ALTITUDE OF THE ENDING POINT   | Hinoskë pasture – 1.690 masl |
| ALTITUDE DIFFERENCE            | 1.060 m                      |
| DURATION OF THE HIKING TOUR    | 6 – 70 h                     |
| LENGTH OF THE TOUR             | 11 km                        |
| DIFFICULTY OF THE TOUR         | ●●●●○                        |
| NECESSARY FITNESS LEVEL        | ●●●●○                        |

## Description of the trail

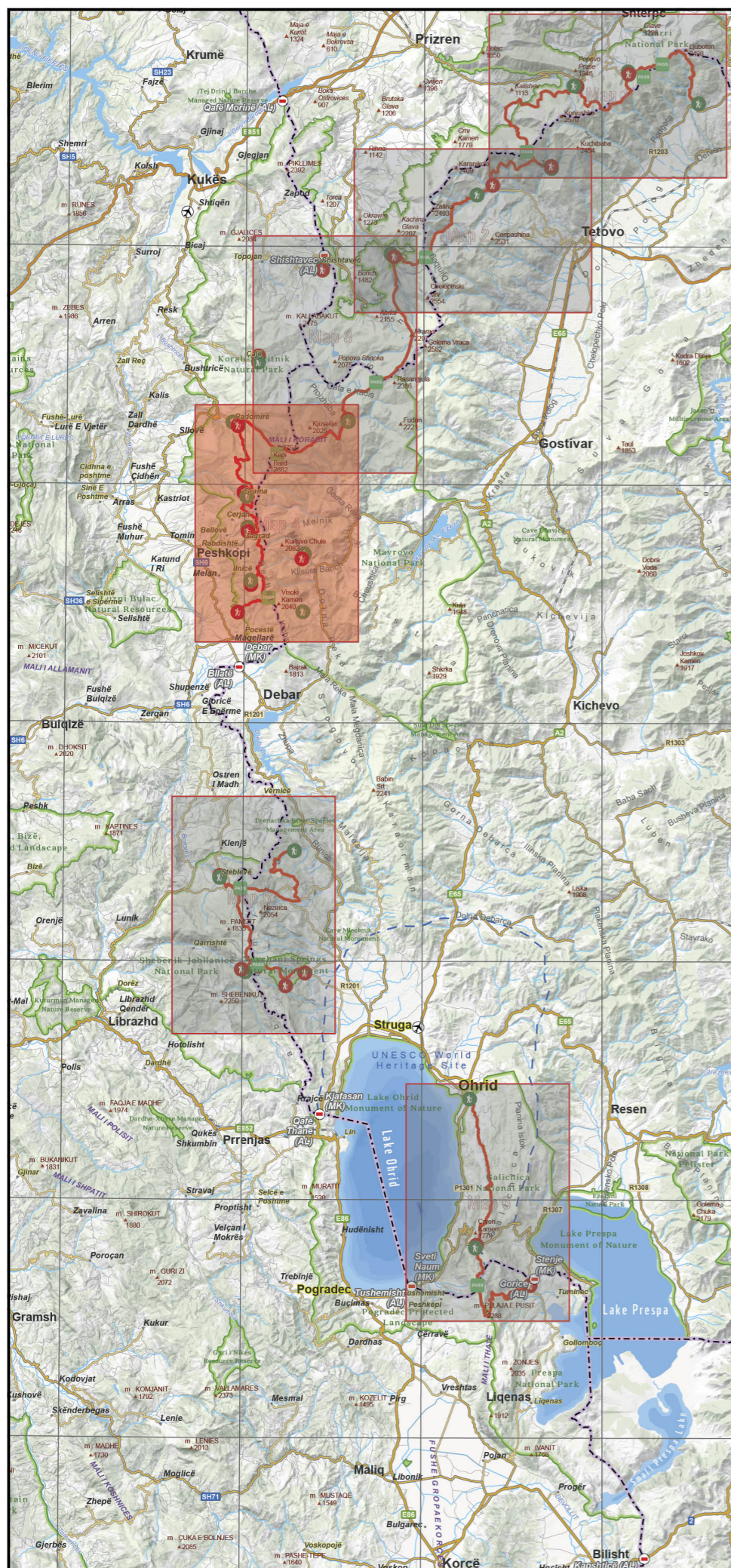
Location – mountain: Deshat

Due to the trail from Hinoskë being at a high altitude, there are two options to trek to the next point. The suggested itinerary along the main trail goes back to the ridge and to walk along the border, behind Velivar peak, and on the Macedonian side of the border, with an optional climb of the southern slope of the peak. From there the trail descends to the villages of Popinar and Grazhdan, back on the Albanian side. The second shorter option takes a different trail in a southern direction that leads through the forest, reaching Popinar after about 6 km with an elevation gain of 180 m, from where the trail continues on further to Grazhdan.

The main trail (HST 11), goes back northeast towards the border and then follows the border line on the Macedonian side with little ups and downs for about 4,5 km. Eventually, the trail reaches the ridge (the border line), from where the approach to the peak is shortest (1 km, 320 m, ~ 1:15 h). From here, the southwestern descent leads to the village of Popinar and further down to Grazhdan (main trail), while the south-eastern descent leads in the direction of the village of Bitushë.

The path towards Popinar is well trodden, initially on meadows and later on gravel trails. The descent passes a few shepherds' huts on the way and after approximately 5 km reaches the small village of Popinar, surrounded by lots of chestnut trees. Popinar is connected with the small town of Maqellër only via a dirt road, so it is advisable to continue the descent further to Grazhdan, which is located along the main road that connects Peshkopi with the official border crossing point to Macedonia.

To continue the trek after Grazhdan, a taxi can be taken to Debar (in Macedonia, about 1000 ALL / € 8 by taxi) and then further on to Modrich, the trailhead of the next hike.



## KORAB, DESHAT & KRCHIN MOUNTAINS

MACEDONIA – ALBANIA

HIKING MAP

1 : 5 0 . 0 0 0

Trails:

HST – 07

HST – 08

HST – 09

HST – 09/1

HST – 09/2

HST – 09/3

HST – 10

HST – 10/1

HST – 10/2

HST – 10/3

HST – 11

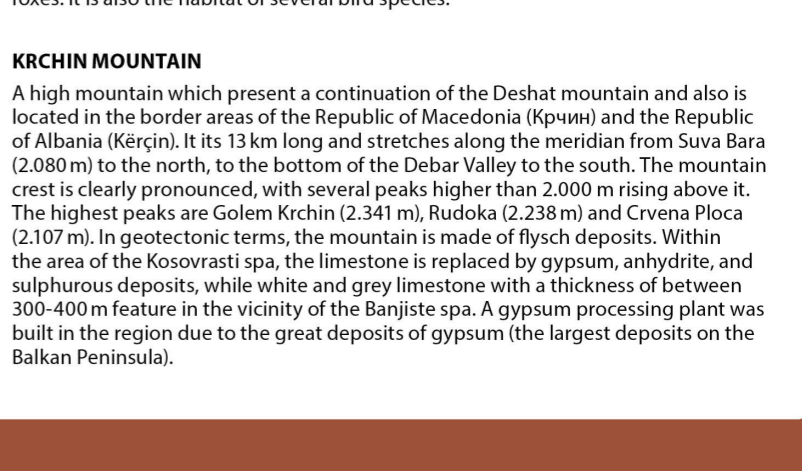
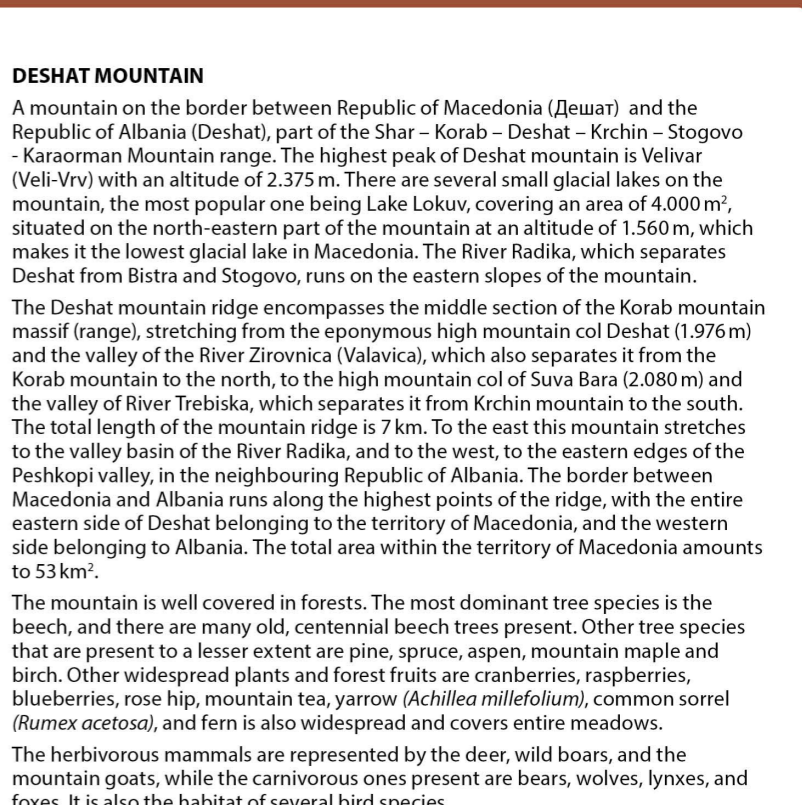
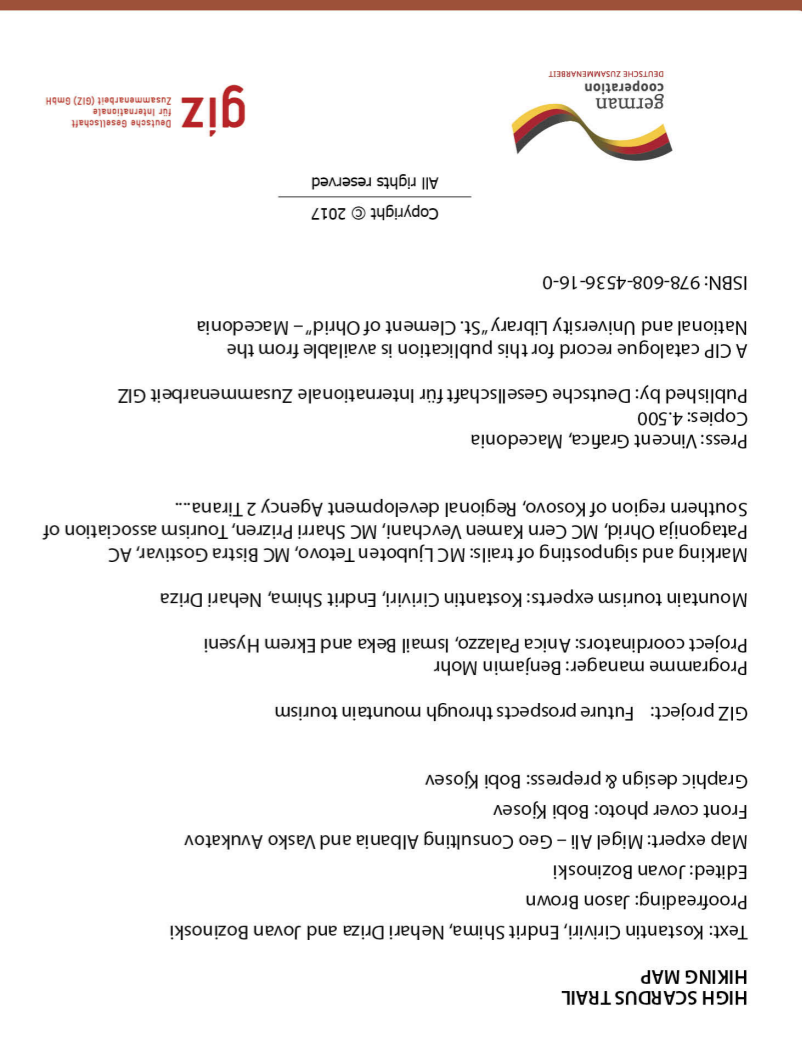
HST – 11/1

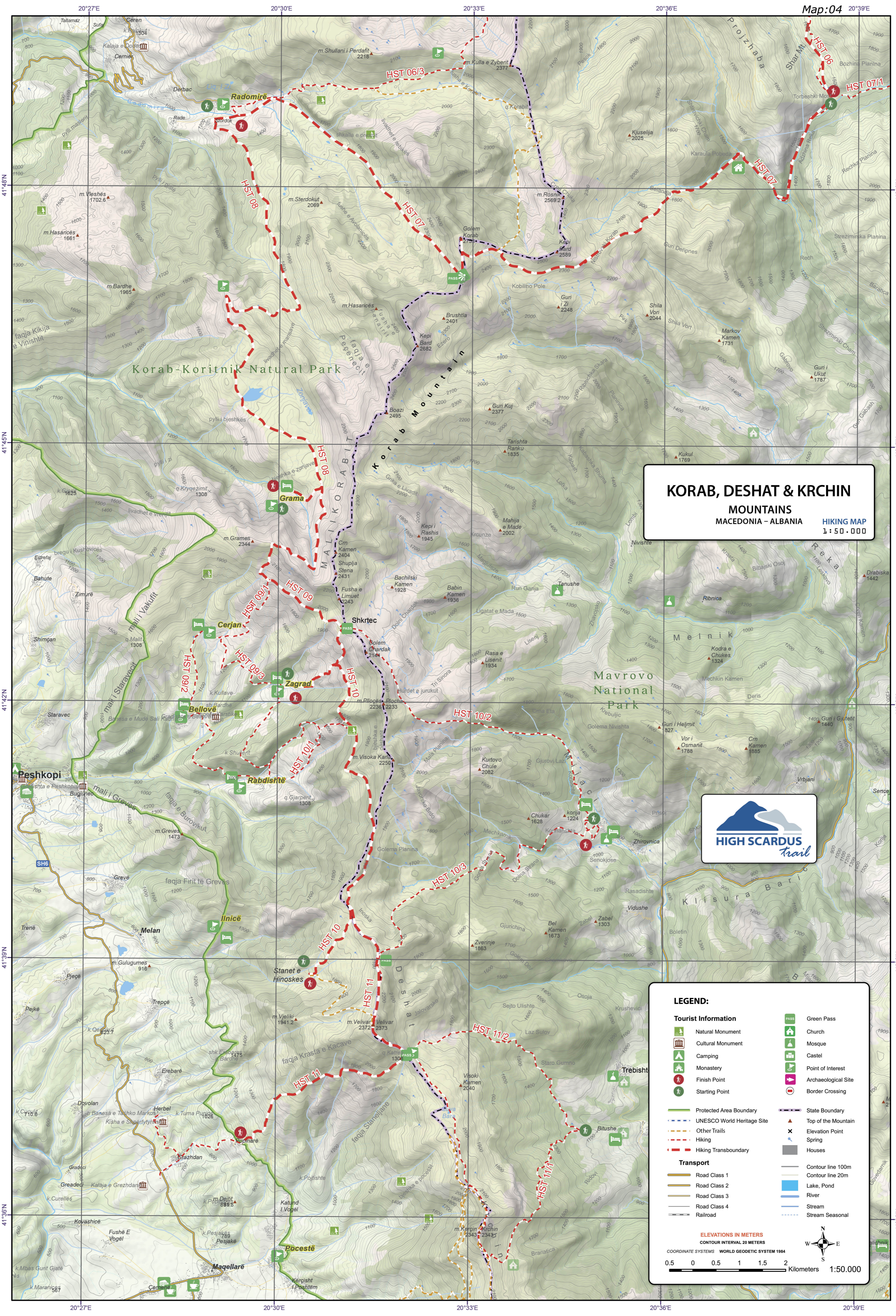
HST – 11/2

Colourful trekking adventure in the heart of the Balkans



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# KORAB, DESHAT & KRCHIN MOUNTAINS

MACEDONIA - ALBANIA

HIKING MAP  
1:50.000



**LEGEND:**

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
|  | Green Pass          |
|  | Church              |
|  | Mosque              |
|  | Castel              |
|  | Point of Interest   |
|  | Archaeological Site |
|  | Border Crossing     |
|  | State Boundary      |
|  | Top of the Mountain |
|  | Elevation Point     |
|  | Spring              |
|  | Houses              |
|  | Contour line 100m   |
|  | Contour line 20m    |
|  | Lake, Pond          |
|  | River               |
|  | Stream              |
|  | Stream Seasonal     |

**Transport**

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
|  | Road Class 1 |
|  | Road Class 2 |
|  | Road Class 3 |
|  | Road Class 4 |
|  | Railroad     |

**ELEVATIONS IN METERS**  
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 METERS

COORDINATE SYSTEMS: WORLD GEODETIC SYSTEM 1984

0.5 0 0.5 1 1.5 2 Kilometers 1:50.000