

# Albania

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Visual Newsletter Issue Five! Entering the winter season, the temps start to drop and the holidays come fast. Here's some of my last couple of months before preparing for hibernation... (Castle of Berat, Albania)

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**Top; Local man and little girl in Berat, Left; winding entrance, Above; Mom and Dad rest during our visit to Berat.**

## Living History

Berat, Albania. It's quite literally a place of living history as people inhabit the age old ruins made out of the same stone pieced together long ago. The difference? Cars now slowly hobble down the cobblestone streets and the guard tower no longer requires archery practice from the knights. However, it was an incredible sight to see the crumbling walls perched on the hill and the wear of the weather on the bricks. If walls could speak, I'd love to hear the stories these would tell.

Living history also exists all around Tirana in the form of graffiti. The closer attention you pay to it, the more you see trends and patterns, like the style of one artist contrasted with that of another. The artist below uses bright colors and an almost paisley pattern with his work, while others resort to entirely different styles and color palettes.





## Expanding Local Business = Jobs

One of our clients owns and operates a car mechanic shop. The above picture isn't of our client, instead, it's a shot of one of his employees working on a car in the shop. Microfinance doesn't just impact the person who gets the loan, it can impact the whole community as the expanding businesses create more jobs. The inset picture is completely unrelated, but I was walking down the sidewalk and almost stepped on an ear. Whatever it was, it is no longer...may that cow/pig rest in peace. It's all part of the daily adventure here in Albania...you just never know.



**Genti carries his bike through an impossible section. As the winter rain arrives, some of the great riding trails become torn up, requiring us to improvise...and get really muddy.**



**My friend, Brett, briefly chats with a local man leading a donkey across this old bridge near one of our regular riding routes.**

Merry Christmas and Happy New Years! Thanks for coming on my fifth visual tour.

Continue to track my journey in whatever way suits you best... It's a journey I'm passionate about and I hope to share some of those experiences with you as well.

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A morning frost chills the falling leaves in Voskopoje, Albania.

