



REPUBLIKA E SHqipëRIE
MINISTRIA E TURIZMIT,
KULTURËS DHE SPORTIT

family art guides



LEZHA CASTLE



Lezha is like a fairytale book made of stone...
Are you ready to discover it together with Mia?



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This book is dedicated to the
most important people on planet:

CHILDREN!

Hello everyone!

My name is Mia. I am
a very curious girl. I like
castles and mysterious stories!

Come with me, for many
fantastic adventures.



More Stories
In English

Mia wants to become an archaeologist when grows up.Or a historian. Do you know what's their job?Let's discover it together:




A historian is a researcher who tells and describes history, the events that happened in the past. To do this, he use the traces left by the past: he collect them, study them, sort them, reconstruct events, and where it's impossible, he make hypotheses about them.

An archaeologist is a researcher who wants to bring to light what is still beneath our feet. Archaeologists work to rebuild the path of our civilization, so that our heritage can be discovered and appreciated.



Children, hold on tight!

Take your parents and come visit
the castles of Albania.



It seems like a
fantastic journey.
I've seen many castles around the
world, but now I want us to go ex-
plore the Albanian castles. The biggest
and most important ones, but also the
ruins of ancient fortresses, the
castles of cities, the forgotten
strongholds.

Let these thousand-year-old stones speak to you:
you will discover **magical places** that never forget
who they are and that know how to welcome you
even better than your own home.

LEZHA CASTLE



WHERE?

Lezhë Castle is located in the city of Lezhë, to the east of the city, in northwestern Albania. It stands on top of a hill that rises 186 meters above the city.

WHAT?

In Lezhë Castle, our national hero Gjergj Kastrioti made a pact together with 12 Albanian princes at the League of Lezhë, an event that would be decisive for the history of Albania and Europe. This turned Lezhë into a symbol of national unity. After Skanderbeg's death in 1468, he was buried in Lezhë, and it is believed that his grave was inside the Church of St. Nicholas, near the castle.

WHEN?

The castle of the ancient city of Lezhë is surrounded by walls from different periods, dating back to the 4th century BC when the area was part of the ancient city of Lissos, an Illyrian colony. It has been demolished and rebuilt several times, with the last documented restorations in 1521 during the time of Sultan Suleiman. After the great earthquake of 1729, the castle began to be abandoned. The last residents of the fortress were a military garrison in 1913.





IV e.s

1521

1913

XXI

186 metra

0 metra



HOW?


The castle covers an area of 1.5 hectares divided into several courtyards. It has tall fortified walls, three entrances, and still standing are six defensive towers with windows for watchmen, cannons, and rifles. In 2002, after the restoration of the medieval castle's foundations, it was observed that the walls were up to 4.30 meters thick, and so far, the ruins of 12 gates and 48 defensive towers have been discovered.



WHY?

The castle is in a strategic position with wonderful views, rising on top of a hill overlooking the surrounding fields and the Adriatic Sea on the horizon. This made it ideal for controlling the area. Lezhë Castle is a landmark for visitors who want to learn about the most important events in Albanian history and culture.

Lissos City



In ancient times, the city of Lissos was an important trade and military center for the Illyrians of the Labeatae tribe.

In the Middle Ages, Lezhë and its castle played a key role in protecting the coastline and the roads that connected the north with the south of Albania.



With a fantastic view, visitors can clearly see the different building techniques used over the centuries, from constructions with uncut stones, to block walls, to those built with bricks, and more.



THE LEAGUE OF LEZHË

Andrea Topia, prince of the region between Kruja and Durrës, accompanied by his two sons and by his nephew Tanush Topia

Teodor Korona Muzaka, prince of Berat and several other princes of Myzeqe

Gjergj Arianiti (Komani), the prince of Kanina


Pjetër Spani, prince of the highlands of Shosh and Shala, accompanied by his four sons

Stefan Çernojević, prince of Montenegro

One of the most important dates in the history of the Albanian people is the League of Lezhë, also known as the Assembly of Lezhë, or the League of Albanian Princes, on March 2, 1444.

The League was created on the initiative of Gjergj Kastrioti, who had returned to Kruja a year earlier with the goal of uniting the forces of the Albanian principalities against the Ottoman Empire.





Gjergj Kastrioti from
the Kastrioti principality

Pal dhe Nikollë Dukagjini,
a principality whose stretched
from the Drin River in Kosovo
to the border of Serbia

Gjergj Stres Balsha,
prince of the region
between Kruja and Lezhë

Lek Zaharia Altisferi,
prince of Danja

Lek Dushmani,
prince of Zadrima

At the League, besides the
princes, representatives of the
Republic of Venice also
gathered as observers.

THE STORY OF GJERGJ KASTRIOT

I would love to know what Gjergj Kastrioti's childhood was like.
What was he like as a little boy?
What did he play with?

Here I am, Mia, at your age.
I will tell you my story.
I would have loved to play like you
imagine, like all my peers,
but an evil sultan named Mehmet
kidnapped me and took me away from my
family in 1421.



The Ottomans kidnapped many children like me at that time, and our whole country was enslaved by the Ottoman Empire.

I was the youngest child in my family. I had five sisters and three brothers. My mother, Vojsava, cried every day because she missed me, while my father, named Gjon, never lost hope that one day I would return to my homeland.

I grew up in the Sultan's court, where I made a military career. At first, the Sultan changed my name to Skënder, and later he gave me the title Bey. That's why they also call me Skanderbeg, even though I really like the name Gjergj, which my parents gave me.

My father was right: at the first opportunity, with 300 fellow fighters, I escaped from the Sultan and returned to my homeland to fight for my freedom and the freedom of Albania.

The rest, I believe, you know, Mia: for 25 years, together with my warriors and the princes of the League of Lezhë, we gave Albania the freedom it deserved.



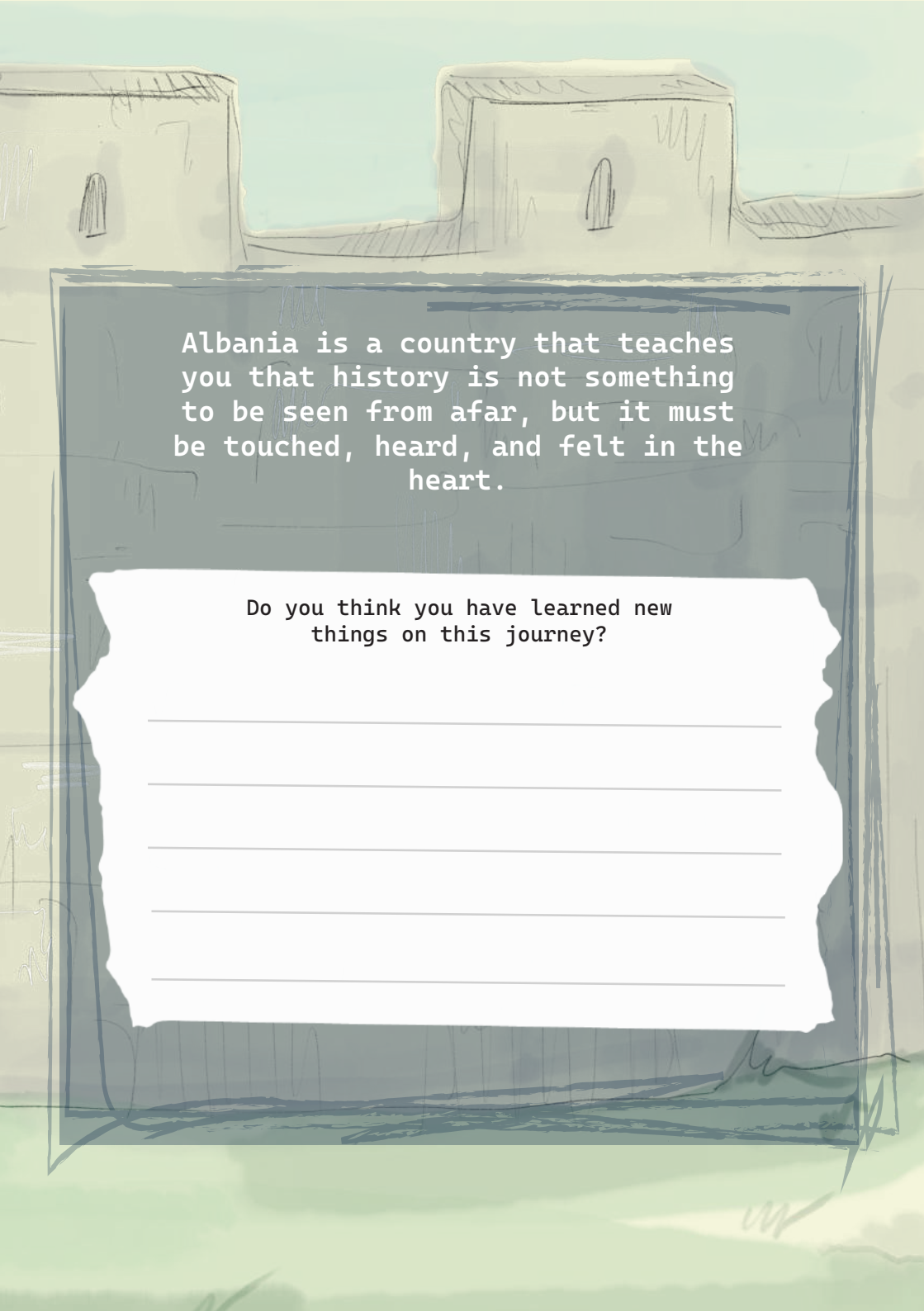
Now come, let's travel together.
I will show you my castle,
the one that belonged to my father, and that
I took back from the Ottomans to
turn it into the most
glorious Albanian castle; the Castle of Krujë.
Turn the page without fear!



So, Mia,
what have you learned on this
journey among the Albanian
castles?

Among the castles of Albania,
I learned that even the smallest stones
speak of courage and memory.
They speak of a people who have known
how to protect their spirit.
Every tower, every wall scarred by time,
tells a story of resilience and
love for the land.





Albania is a country that teaches
you that history is not something
to be seen from afar, but it must
be touched, heard, and felt in the
heart.

Do you think you have learned new
things on this journey?

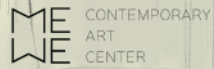
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I dream of an Albania where every child like me has the chance to explore deep culture, fascinating history, and beautiful nature through fun, creative, and joyful adventures!

Every museum, castle, and park becomes a magical place for learning, discovery, and play!





FAMILY ART GUIDES develops illustrated guides, educational games, and interactive materials that present Albania's cultural, natural, and historical heritage in a simplified way for children and families.

Each of our products is based on careful research, contemporary design, and clear language for the most important audience on the planet:

CHILDREN.

Digital
version:



THIS BOOK WAS
MADE WITH LOVE BY:

ME WE
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www.familyartguides.com