

TOURISM INFORMATION OFFICE BERAT

Municipality of Berat



The Cathedral of the “Dormition of Saint Mary” (18th century) – Onufri Museum

Situated in a dominant place in the citadel, placed between the numerous houses, the cathedral was once part of the complex of the metropolitan bishop. The date preserved on the door of the nave indicates that the church was rebuilt in 1797. This is one of the most representative monuments of Byzantine architecture in the city. It is a three naved basilica covered with arches and domes. The naves are divided by two rows of stone columns with capitals. The central nave is vertically higher than the other two. On the semi-spherical domes above, parts of the original fresco, which once covered the wall surfaces of the church, can still be seen. The nave floor is paved with stone slabs, and in the center there is a solar mosaic and calendar which provides as visual chart if the Christian cosmos. On the western wall of the nave is a carefully crafted wooden gallery for musicians or women’s prayers.

The iconostasis, which is carved from wood and is covered in gold leaf, remains in good condition. Dating back to 1806, the iconostasis exhibits the most famous icons from the best known post-byzantine painter in Albania. the altar area, on the east, preserves parts from the original fresco. In this cathedral, the two famous *Codexes of Berat* (see feature) were hidden. Outside the church, on the southern side is the colonnaded portico built with pillars of different styles. Next to the portico is the church tower, whose stone steps can still be climbed. Currently, the Cathedral houses the “Onufri” National Iconographic Museum, which is visited by many local and foreign visitors during the tourist season.



Figura 1 inside the church



Figura 2 the external structure of the museum

Some of the most famous icons of Albanian artists have been collected from different churches in Berat and are now exhibited in this museum.