

Curricular hike: Biovizhdë – Gryka e Kazanit - Biovizhdë

Trail distance: 16.4 kilometers

Elevation min: 671 meters, max: 1,952 meters

Cumulative height uphill: 1,399 meters, downhill: 1, 300 meters

Difficulty level: Moderate

Time: 8 hours

Markings: white/red/white ?

Gryka e Kazanit is the name of the gorge that lies on foot of Nëmërçka wall. This face of Nëmërçka is very dramatic thus this hike offers amazing views. In the border area there are huge meadows and is populated by shepherds during the summer time from both sides of the border. The hike is relatively long but the ascent is very gentle and the trail finding is easy. The trail starts in the entrance of the village, 20 meters north of the statue (WP 1). A good orientation point is the first house on the right side when you approach the village from the car road. Next to the first house the trail ascends steeply on a mule path that generally takes the crest of the hill until it arrives at the former military viewpoint of the border (WP 2). Close to the military building is a water source – the only one on this hike. From here the trail takes right (west) on a visible mule track that initially keeps the same height and later on ascends very gently through the woods. After walking for approx. 2.4 kilometers mostly through the woods in a trail that is impossible to be missed, we arrive on a good viewpoint (WP 3) towards Gryka e Kazanit where rocky faces of Nëmërçka opens in front of us. Now the trail becomes steeper ascending in zigzags through the woods keeping southwest direction and after a while it exit the forest (WP 4) for starting a very gentle ascent south on a grassy trail. Having passed the forest a breathtaking view of Nëmërçka opens in front of us. Even though the grass is knee long (Sep. 2012) the mule trail is surprisingly very visible.

The ascent is now following south very gently crossing a number of dried up streams. One can see the remaining of avalanches in this part.

At the 8th dried up stream – the biggest one – one trail follows the stream and goes up to the border area and our trail crosses this stream and climbs up following the main trail south west (WP 5). After approx. 600 meters the trail reaches the ruins of the border police station (WP 6). From here we leave the main trail that follows down to the gorge and we follow the ascent southwest, pass a bunker after approx. 100 meters and the trail follows through the woods for few hundred meters. After the forest exit we pass a gravelly trail and continue southwest on a grassy terrain easily identifiable.

Before descending to the last meadow with shepherds' huts which lays on the foot of Nëmërçka wall, turn left (south east) leaving the main trail for taking another mule trail which ascends southeast initially gently and then steeply with zigzags towards the crest of the border (WP 7) –

an inviting place to rest awhile and enjoy the views from the both sides of the border. The trail keeps following the crest of the border northeast with great views towards the mountains of Greece and Vjosa valley in the right side and Gryka e Kazanit gorge with the cliffs of Nëmërçka falling into the gorge in our left.

After approx. 1.3 kilometers, on the top of the mountain, we reach the pyramid no. 12 of the border (WP 8). After this the trail steeply descends into a nice meadow to another border pyramid (WP 9). From here one can either follow the accent for reaching the summit of Mount Silivit (1852 m) or eastern slope of this mountain that keeps north east in more or less the same altitude. After approx. 700 meters the trail starts a steep decent (WP 10) in zigzags. The orientation is easy – one can even see the village of Biovizhdë on the high points of the trail. The path takes initially right (east) and arrives in a nice meadow with plump trees and a shepherd hut after some minutes (WP 11). The trail follows northeast on a visible trail, reaches a pond for cattle at the WP 12, takes east for approx. 500 meters and after that enters the forest (WP 13). From here the trail changes the direction on northwest.

Take right at the junction (WP 14) and follow northeast. After few minutes cross a dried up stream and meet the trail at the border military viewpoint (WP 2).

UTM Waypoints

1. 34 T 460536 4438801, Biovizhdë entrance, 669 m
2. 34 T 459845 4438169, former military viewpoint, 951 m
3. 34 T 457614 4438740, viewpoint, 1093 m
4. 34 T 457542 4438463, forest exit, 1234 m
5. 34 T 457622 4437452, dried up stream, 1384 m
6. 34 T 456978 4437015, border military ruins, 1531 m
7. 34 T 456403 4434980, border ridge, 1865 m
8. 34 T 457288 4435831, border pyramid no. 12, 1952 m
9. 34 T 458049 4436414, border pyramid no. 11, 1738 m
10. 34 T 458595 4436849, start descending, 1723 m
11. 34 T 459077 4436937, meadow, 1528 m
12. 34 T 459408 4437141, cattle pond, 1368 m
13. 34 T 459782 4437183, forest entrance, 1210 m
14. 34 T 459606 4437522, junction, 1146 m

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