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THE OLD DOORS TRAIL OF THE CITY OF DURRËS



Villa Tedeschini

BULEVARDI EPIDAMN

The Tedeschini family is a noble family originating from the city of Vasto in the province of Chieti in Italy. Villa Tedeschini was built in 1843 by the brothers Josef and Francesco Tedeschini, consuls of Austria in Durrës, and has also served as the Austrian consulate, being known for welcoming many foreign diplomats. One of the well-known names was the albanianologist Johan Georg von Hahn. For many years a part of this villa has functioned as "Tedeschini Farmacy" where medicines are given free of charge to people in need.



Fani Family

RRUGA ADMIRAL ABDI MATI

Their house was built in 1923 by the two brothers Hysen and Mustafa Fani, well-known merchants and sailors of the time in the city. Built in the late Albanian liberty and neoclassical style, the house was supposed to have shops on the first floor and living quarters on the second floor. The Fani house was confiscated from the original owners and appropriated according to the laws of the communist system in Albania between 1946-48 and its owners did not live there, but other residents moved in.



Mima Family

BULEVARDI DYRRRAH

Mima's family is thought to have coexisted with the city of Durrës since before 1900. Built by Jovan Mima, his house has seen living 4 generations inside it, up to the grandchildren who are still alive today.

This building resisted from the earthquake of 1926, and continues to exist even today. Maybe few know the Albanian actor Prokop Mima, but he was born and raised in this house.



Near Saint Lucia Church

BULEVARDI EPIDAMN II

If we ask ourselves today where is located the well-known "Kala" neighborhood, we may find it through the iconic identifying objects. Take a walk around through the Fatih Mosque, and there you will know that once in the early Middle Ages there was a Byzantine church which during the Ottoman occupation was transformed into a mosque in honor of Sultan Mehmet II, Fatih. Cross the road and approach the Catholic Church of St. Lucia equipped with a bell tower together with the Bishop. Important families such as: Çelkupa, Tedeskini, Kurti, Hoxha, Bumçi, Parga and Beja lived near this space.



Nushi Family

Rr.MUSTAFA VAROSHI

Once a merchant in several countries and elsewhere the boy originally from Berat, Jani Nushi set his roots in Durrës. As a large family of eight children, his descendants would gain professions both in pharmacy and in architecture, teaching, and sports. Between the war, looting and greed, the villa was transformed at the beginning of 1916 into a hospital and sometimes as a refuge from the Austro-Hungarian forces. Once an iconic residence, filled with the footsteps and voices of family members and grandchildren playing in its yard, is now abandoned, empty, without knowing its future fate.



Elezi Family

RRUGA KASEM DURRESI

The apartment of Haxhi and Zija Elezi was built around 1928-30. After the liberation of the country, the whole neighborhood turned into a military zone, so the owners were forced evicted from their homes, and the soldiers, who came from the cities and villages of Albania, took shelter there. The house at the back had a large yard planted with various fruits. Often lunches and various games organized near the yard, and the yard turned into a center for the girls of the neighborhood to spend their free time. At that time, not everyone had a radio! "We had a Magnadyne radio, where we learned to dance..."



Bilali Family

RRUGA EGNATIA

The Bilali family was originally from Ulcinj in Montenegro. After living in Shkodër for a few months, they finally settled in Durrës, and here the three brothers of the family built their property. Known as merchants with the marine expedition of motor yachts, they proudly carried the Albanian flag on the lines with Yugoslavia. The building built in 1931 also functioned as a commercial environment on the first floor, while the second floors were designed for housing. The dark period of communism and the Labor Party drove its owners from their homes and persecuted them.



Koja and Jakoel Family

RRUGA GLAUKIA

The apartment lived in by the Jewish Jakoel family and the Albanian Koja family shows the mutual cooperation and understanding between them. According to the protocols and norms of the Civil Code of the time, the spaces had to be 140 m², so both families agreed to join the spaces between them. The building was built by Italian architects and at that time it was inhabited by individuals who traded wool and calico. With the advent of the communist system, the building was nationalized, and other residents settled inside it.



Toska-Bodikien Family

Rr.MUSTAFA VAROSHI

Originally from Berat, but with Armenian roots, the family of Aleks Toska Bodikien built his residence in 1937. Built in six weeks as a challenge with the construction workers, the building was built to serve the first floor for commercial premises, while the second floor for living. They chose Durrës to escape the Armenian genocide and here they formed a new shelter, far from their homeland.



Barushi-Subashi Family

RRUGA ENVER ZAZANI 12-14

It was built by Ibrahim Subashi, not for living but as a residence. After the 1926 earthquake destroyed the city, Italian engineers were hired for its construction in 1928 who, in addition to the anti-seismic technique, also applied the fascist architectural decoration of the time. The three-story apartment was also completed with two doors in the form of arches in iron material, which were carved by artisans and ironworkers from Bari, Italy. Although the apartment was subject to confiscation and internal structural changes, during the communist regime the owners of the family were evicted. The top floor of the apartment is closely related to the name of one of the most popular citizens of the city, doctor Cara.



Jorgji Family

BULEVARDI EPIDAMN

Once, near Mantho Jorgji's apartment, there was Porta e Jalli, the entrance gate to the city from the sea side. Quickly built in two years by the architect Kristo Sotiri, it was ready to host the economist's family in 1932. The two granite lions that decorated the villa were removed from the villa, just as the offspring were removed from their nest during communism. Once inhabited by four generations, it hosted the first Yugoslav engineers, who took shelter during the construction of the first Albanian railway. Another artistic figure like the writer and playwright Minush Jero lived there for a long time. While after the 1990s it became an art shelter for the art gallery of Durrës. Today, it is left alone, but still remains the magnificence of the details carved on the surface of the facade.



Veli Family

SHESHI LIRIA

Built by the two brothers Ramazan and Hysen Veli in 1937-38, the building was conceived and designed since the beginning as a shopping center, so much so that the original elevator is still preserved inside it today. All their property was confiscated and used by the regime for other functions. From 1945 to 1970 it was the headquarters of the Party Committee. From 1970 to 1990, it functioned as the Durrës Investigation office. From 1994 to 1996, the ferry company "La Vichinga" was located there. During the 1998-1999 Kosovo war, the building was transformed into the headquarters of the Belgian Red Cross. From 2000 until a few years ago, it served as the location of the first private television of the city of Durrës, "TV Teuta". Currently, the building is closed without any function.

Welcome to the Cultural Trail of the 12 Old Doors of the city of Durrës!

This trail was created as part of the project "When the past meets the future - the revitalization of the cultural heritage of Durrës", implemented by the Durrës Active Center in cooperation with MuZEH Lab, within the EU4Culture program funded by the European Union and implemented by UNOPS in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture.

Our overall objective is to revitalize the monuments of Durrës by connecting the collective memory of the city with its archaeological heritage and creating new cultural attractions, such as the doors of the 19th and 20th centuries. In cooperation with the artisan community, we have brought these doors to life with unique and artistic craftsmanship, aiming to revive the echoes of the past.

Through handicrafts, cultural events, cultural footprint and empowerment of artisans, this map will contribute to the economic growth and creation of opportunities for the city of Durrës. Handcraft doors, made with spears and hooks, were created by artisans: Ezmerina Kasa, Liljana Arifaj, Myzejen Rexhepi, Lumturije Kasa and Manushaqe Arifaj. To visit these works, you can find them along the cultural path, in the Durrës Active Center, the MuZEH Lab museum and the Durrës Municipality.

This printable map aims to provide you with essential information about the 12 Old Doors Cultural Trail in Durrës. It will guide you through the city, highlighting important monuments, historical sites and cultural attractions along the way. As you explore the trail, you'll immerse yourself in the rich history and vibrant culture of Durrës. Discover the stories of the families behind each door, appreciate the intricate craftsmanship and witness the fusion of past and present.

Along with the physical map, you will also find the cultural trail online at www.theolddoorstrail.com



Scan me!

To find the exact location of the door, search the name of the family on google maps.

We invite you to start this cultural journey, connecting with the heritage of Durrës and supporting local artisans. Enjoy the trail and let the ancient doors of Durrës reveal their secrets and beauty before you.

Connect with Durrës Active Center

<https://durrësiaktiv.al>

Connect with MuZEH Lab

<https://muzehlab.org/>

Connect with EU4Culture Albania

<https://eu4culture.al/sq/>

Some of the handcrafts doors made by artisans

