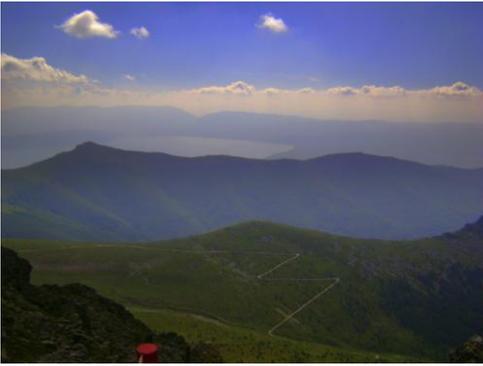


GUIDE TO THE PELISTER MOUNTAIN HUT SYSTEM – Golemo Ezero



Pelister National Park was the first of its kind established in Macedonia, and it's surprisingly easy to access the park, hike, and sleep on the mountain – if you know who to call to make reservations!

The Pelister Mountaineering Club privately maintains two huts – **Golemo Ezero** and **Kopanki** – within Pelister National Park. During the summer months (and sometimes during the “off season,” with guides from the Mountaineering Club), the huts are available for hiking groups on weekends. See below for an in-depth description of **Golemo Ezero**, photos, pricing and other details.

GOLEMO EZERO (Големо Езеро/BIG LAKE)

ELEVATION: 2,218m (7,277 ft)

TRAILHEAD ACCESS: Detski Kamp, Nize Pole (1,100m/3,609ft)

HIKING TIME: 3.5 – 4 hours

ELEVATION GAIN: 1,218m (3,996ft)

HIKE LEVEL: Strenuous (steady uphill)

AMENITIES: More than 40 beds, including pillows and blankets; full kitchen, use of tableware and cookware; common room with woodstove; outhouse; picnic area; fresh water spring.



PRICE PER NIGHT: 100MKD (Mountaineering Club Members); 400 MKD* (Foreigners/Non-members)

**On weekdays, the cost is negotiable, but expect it to be higher; the Club members have to open the hut at extra expense to them (heating, etc).*

CONTACT: Peter “Pepo” Nolev, **075/458-782**, pnolev@gmail.com (*he speaks excellent English*)

Essentials to Carry with You:

- Your own food for all meals (can be cooked in hut kitchen)
- Extra warm clothes (dorm rooms are not heated, and even in summer, it can get chilly when the sun goes down)
- Deck of cards, other easy-to-carry entertainment
- Headlamp or flashlight (for finding the outhouse)
- Extra money – alcohol and other beverages can be purchased in the hut

Getting to the Trailhead:

Grab a taxi in the center of Bitola at Hotel Epinal for the starting point.

To Nize Pole (Ниже Поле) (~250MKD):

Tell the taxi driver to take you to the Detski Kamp, and drop you past the cabins, to the gate. Proceed 100m on foot past the gate, and you'll see the entrance to the Pelister trail (see next page for trail directions).

GOLEMO EZERO (CONTINUED)



View of Golemo Ezero hut, as seen when coming up from Nize Pole



Interior view, common room



Heading back to the hut for some dinner and sleep after hiking to the Antenna and back.

Suggested Hiking Itinerary:

- ❖ Start out early in the day from the Nize Pole trailhead, hike up to the Golemo Ezero.
- ❖ Continue above the Hut to the peak of Pelister (**2,601m; 8,533ft**), at the Antenna, via Malo Ezero (approx. 4-6 additional hours hiking, round trip back to the Golemo Ezero)
- ❖ Sleep at the Golemo Ezero hut
- ❖ Continue on in the morning for Brajcino, on the other side of the mountain ridge (approx. 5-6 hours hiking, mostly downhill)
- ❖ Sleep at the Monastery of Sv. Petka in Brajcino, enjoy a meal at Milka's restaurant (contact Milka to reserve beds at the monastery – 300-400MKD/night, **075/501-830** – She speaks English)

Trail Info from Nize Pole:

At this time, there are few good electronic maps of the region. However, the trail from Nize Pole to Golemo Ezero is well-marked. Here are a few tips to get you there safely:

- Ask your taxi driver to take you all the way up the driveway, through the Detski Kamp – you'll see the camp buildings on either side of the car. At the fence you can't drive through, you walk.
- Follow the paved road up about 100m, going over the small bridge and past a few nicely-kept homes. When you see the big sign, that's the trailhead.
- The trail diverges and converges a lot – but as long as you're going up, you're on the right track. Look for the **trail blazes – red dots surrounded by white circles** – as you climb. Stick to the ridge, but you can also take the trail that detours more to the left and follows the southern creek. All trails lead to the Lake, so enjoy the walk.
- About 2-2.5 hours in, you'll pass a water springs, as the trail starts to switchback up the mountain. You're heading for the middle part of the saddle up above. From here on in, the northern creek will more or less be with you.
- Once you cross the creek, you're only about 20-30 minutes away. The trail will be accompanied by iron poles – follow these up to the hut! From there to the peak, speak to the hut caretaker to find the trailhead – it starts behind the hut.