

Croatia & Bosnia and Herzegovina

The Living History

Nine-night tour: 1 night in Zagreb, 3 nights in Rovinj, 1 night in Zadar, 2 nights in Split, 2 nights in Dubrovnik

HIGHLIGHTS

ZAGREB – the capital of the

ISTRIA – mystical land of alluring aromas

PLITVICE – the green fairytale

ZADAR – a walk through foregone centuries

SPLIT – the Vestibule of Paradise (UNESCO)

BRAČ – a tale of stone and sea

MOSTAR – crossroads of religion and culture

DUBROVNIK – the Pearl of Mediterranean (UNESCO)

EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES

- Private tour of the Museum of Naïve Arts in Zagreb with museum's Curator
- Private truffle hunting demonstration in Istria with a local farmer and his sniffer dog
- Private wine tasting in Franc Arman Winery in Istria
- Visit to the stonemasonry school in the village of Pucisca on the island of Brač
- Oyster tasting with a glass of wine in Bota – Šare restaurant in Ston

DAY 1: arrival to ZAGREB

Arrival to Zagreb airport; flight details TBA.

Meet your driver for a private transfer to the luxury hotel of The Regent Esplanade – an elegant hotel situated in the heart of historic Zagreb.

DAY 2: ZAGREB - ROVINJ

This morning meet your local guide at the lobby for a private sightseeing tour of the historic core of **Zagreb**.

The capital of Croatia illustrates both the continental and the Mediterranean spirit of the nation it spearheads. This is a city with tumultuous history, warm and inviting, and it will surely fulfill all your expectations. The façades of Zagreb's buildings reflect the ebb and flow of history, while its streets and squares bear witness to the coming together of the many cultures that have shaped its identity.



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Your guide will take you for a walk from Zrinjevac, through the avenues of trees and flowers to the main city square of Ban Jelacic, the heart of the city. You will continue the tour to the Upper Town and its mediaeval twin settlements: secular Gradec and ecclesiastical Kaptol, both preserved till today. You will discover its cobblestone streets, mediaeval towers, the vivacious green market; old houses and churches (Cathedral of Mary's Assumption in the neo-gothic style, St. Mark's church with the beautiful multi-colored roofs decorated with Croatian historical coats of arms...).



Then we will take you for a **CALVADOS CLUB Extraordinary Experience: Visit the Museum of Naïve Arts with the Museum's Curator.** Museum of Naïve Arts is located in the 18th century Raffay Palace in the Upper Town and it is considered the first museum of naïve art in the world. The museum keeps works of 1500 works of art - paintings, sculptures, drawings and prints, mainly by Croatian but also by other well-known world artists. Then you will continue by funicular or walk to the Lower Town, dominated by the impressive building of the Croatian National Theatre. The neo-baroque edifice is surrounded by numerous Art Nouveau buildings that represent Croatian architecture of the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century.

Later this afternoon, meet your driver for a private transfer to Rovinj. Upon arrival, you will check in to your hotel and enjoy the evening at your leisure. Monte Mulini Hotel is one of the most luxury properties in Croatia, a boutique hotel situated in a charming bay, not far from the center of Rovinj.

DAY 3: ROVINJ - GROŽNJAN - LIVADE - ROVINJ

This morning meet your guide and driver in the hotel for a full day exploration of the Istrian Peninsula. This region has always attracted a special kind of visitors: those who consider gastronomy as one of the most important reasons for traveling. The alluring character of this region lies not only in its beautiful coast but also in the inland, described as the terra incognita - an unknown, unexplored land. This magnificent region thus combines two different climates and forms a unique gastronomic entity consisted of the exquisite Mediterranean seafood of the coast and the products of the inland's gardens, orchards and



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vineyards. As a whole, the gastronomy of Istria represents a complete harmony of flavors and it is yours to discover...

As you drive through the rugged and hilly terrain you will come to **Grožnjan** - a small ancient hilltop town in northwestern Istria. Grožnjan takes great pride in its wealth of tradition, cultural heritage and natural beauty, all of which is ennobled by art. Today, numerous cultural and historical landmarks serve as backdrops for cultural manifestations and entertainment in approximately twenty private galleries and studios. You will continue to the picturesque village of **Narduči** where you will enjoy a private wine tasting at the famous Franc Arman winery. Grape-growing and winemaking have long been the economic mainstay of generations of families in Istria. Traditionally passed down from father to

son, vineyards were cultivated and worked by hand, often with little or no mechanisation, well into the mid-twentieth century. Established in 1850, Franc Arman Vineyards and Winery, headed today by Franc and Oliver Arman, continues the family tradition and core values set out by founding father Edoardo, while taking the art and science of winemaking to new levels. After the wine tasting, you will head out to the village of Livade, one of the most important centers of truffle farming in Europe. Here you will enjoy a **CALVADOS CLUB Extraordinary Experience: truffle hunting demonstration with a local farmer and his sniffer dog**. Until recently the Istrian white truffle was unknown on the world's stage of luxury gastronomy. Only those who are the true connoisseurs of this magical fungus come to visit the small corner of the world from which this delicacy originates. We recommend you to try the exceptional cuisine of the famous **Zigante Restaurant** (cost of lunch is not included). It's owner, Mr. Zigante, has earned his place in the Guinness Book of Records as the one who has found the biggest (2.88lbs!) white truffle in the world. The restaurant offer truffles, as well as the other Istrian delicacies such as Pršut (Prosciutto) and local cheeses and meats, complimented by wines from Croatia's vineyards and the native grappa of the region. Not far from Livade, you may wish to visit the medieval ruins of the town of **Motovun**, an excellent example of the ancient townships that dotted the Istrian peninsula.

You will complete your tour in the charming town of **Rovinj**. The Old Town of Rovinj rises up on a peninsula and is a witness to times gone by and the valuable accomplishments of its past artisans. Experience the sights of this magical town while strolling with your guide down narrow streets to the magnificent church of St. Euphemia, the town's most important monument. This baroque building made in Venetian style was dedicated to the saint and martyr whose sarcophagus was miraculously washed ashore somewhere around 800. The town of Rovinj was declared a cultural monument in 1963.

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DAY 4: ROVINJ - BALE - VODNJAN - PULA

Meet your guide and driver in the hotel lobby for a private full day tour of Istria's finest sights and towns. First you will visit **Bale (Valle)** – a hidden pearl of Istria inland. A town of exquisite beauty, it was rather forgotten in the past and thus it avoided the abrupt tourist development that destroyed so many cities. A magical town is all made in stone and once allegedly attracted the great lover Casanova in the 18th century. The agricultural land around the town of Balle, called “stancije”, is known for the good quality olive oil and wine. This area is also known as the butterfly county –with over 390 butterfly species, many of them are protected and endangered species.

Then you will continue towards the small town of **Vodnjan** where you will visit Giacometti-Moscarda Family cellars. Ms. Lorela and her family have been producing award winning wine and olive oil for generations and they're known for their famous Babos brand of home made products. The family will treat you with private olive oil and wine tasting, as well as with a light snack. You will taste home made grappa with different traditional tastes of mistletoe or honey, homemade red and white wine, olive oil, home made prosciutto, cheese and olives. At the end of the tasting, you will receive a present - a small bottle of Giacometti-Moscarda's olive oil. After this light lunch, you will continue towards the town of **Pula**, where your guide will take you for a private walking tour of this beautiful, 3000 year old Roman town. Pula is the largest town on the Istrian peninsula and offers a



diversity of attractions to lovers of culture. The rich itinerary, where every step you take through the old town is a landmark, begins and ends with the Roman amphitheatre, popularly called the Arena of Pula. Built in the 1st century AD, at the same time as the magnificent Colosseum in Rome, it was once the site of gladiator fights. In the Middle Ages it was the site of knights tournaments and fairs and today it is the venue for summer performances. While strolling through Pula you will come across numerous monuments of Roman architecture: the Triumphal Arch of the Sergi from the 1st century B.C., Hercules' Gate and Twin Gates, the Temple of Augustus, Arena and Small Roman Theatre in the town centre. In the afternoon, your guide and driver will take you back to your hotel. Overnight in Rovinj.

DAY 5: ROVINJ - PLITVICE - ZADAR

This morning meet your driver in the hotel for a private transfer to Zadar. On your way, you will stop to visit the **Plitvice Lakes**, the most beautiful national park in Croatia, protected by the UNESCO as the World Natural Heritage. Upon arrival, you will meet your local guide for a private tour of the park area. Enjoy the unspoiled beauty of a grand collection of waterfalls, gallery of lakes, forests



and diversity of animal life. The beauty of the National Park lies in its sixteen lakes, inter-connected by a series of waterfalls, and set in deep woodland populated by deer, bears, wolves, boars and rare bird species. The lakes are renowned for their distinctive colors, ranging from azure to green, grey or blue. Discover the mesmerizing ever-changing landscape - created by water, gravity, limestone and time - in this unique park of nature. Your guide will take you through the park by a well-laid out system of wooden walkways that allow you to experience the best of your visit.

In the afternoon, you will continue with your driver towards Zadar. Upon arrival, you will check in to your centrally located boutique hotel Bastion and enjoy the evening at your leisure.

DAY 6: ZADAR - SPLIT

This morning meet your local guide for a private sightseeing tour of this beautiful town. An ancient Greek foundation under the name of Iader, later an important jewel in the Venetian crown as Zara and today the centre of the region, Zadar is a town-monument with layers of history that can be revealed on every step. Centuries-old tumultuous history, numerous destructions and reconstructions have left scars but also a rich



historical legacy and today's valuable monumental heritage of the city. Your guide will take for a walk through the cobblestone streets, from the church of St. Donat and the Cathedral of St. Anastasia Cathedral, to the Benedictine convent of St Mary and the largest Roman forum on the East of the Adriatic, founded by the first Roman Emperor Augustus. You will also discover some contemporary attractions of Zadar. One of

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them is the Sea Organ, the site that is a blend of human ideas and the energy of the sea, a place for relaxation and contemplation while listening to an endless concert of the "Orchestra of Nature". Walking further down the waterfront, you will discover the "Greeting to the Sun", an impressive urban installation. Simultaneously with the "most beautiful sunset in the world", the lightning elements turn on and produce a marvelous light show in the rhythm of the waves and the sounds of the sea organ.



You will continue with your driver towards **Split**. Upon arrival, you will check in to your hotel - the Vestibul Palace - situated in the heart of the historic Diocletian's Palace so you will have a unique chance to stay in the former suites of the Roman emperor.

In the afternoon, meet your local guide for a private walking tour of Split, a 1700 years old town with famous Diocletian's Palace. The first inhabitant of Split was the Roman emperor Diocletian who started to build his palace in this friendly bay around 293 AD. After his abdication he withdrew to this luxurious palace to enjoy the rest of his days. Your guide will take you for a walk through this living monument and all its magnificent sights. You will discover the basement halls of the Palace and their unique role in the history of Split. Then you will continue to the Peristyle, the main square of the Palace that preserved the cult of emperor as the son of god. You will visit the Cathedral of St. Domnius, the patron-saint of Split, the temples of the Palaces, as well as the suites of the Emperor. You will explore the waterfront promenade of Split, the lively open green market and the monuments not only from antiquity, but also from the Middle Ages, Renaissance and Baroque. After the tour, you can enjoy some time at your leisure to immerse yourself into town's famous Mediterranean charm, the mixture of historic layers and the silent beats of history.

DAY 7: tour of the island of BRAČ



This morning you will meet your guide and driver in the hotel for a full day excursion to the island of **Brač**, one of the most beautiful islands in the Adriatic. You will take the morning ferry from Split to the town of **Supetar**, the largest port on the island. Upon arrival, your exploration of this marvelous island can start. The old tale says that, at the dawn of history, the heaps of stone and the hill forts were first silhouetted on the ridges of Brač. The stone, so

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crucial for the life of this island, made it also world-famous: it is embedded in many magnificent buildings throughout the world. Let us just mention the 1700 years old Diocletian's Palace in Split, the glorious Dubrovnik city walls and the White House in Washington, DC... Today your guide will take you to a charming Mediterranean village of **Pučišća**, where people for centuries live from the stone and for the stone. You will get a chance to visit the



Stonemasonry School that recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. This unique educational institution that schooled so many superior craftsmen is preciously intertwined with the history and tradition of the island. You will continue with your guide and driver to the town of **Bol** – a Mecca for all the sea lovers. Hidden in the solitude of the southern coast and surrounded by crystal-clear translucent sea, Bol is also home to the word-famous beach: the Golden Horn (Zlatni Rat). The shape of this fine pebble beach constantly changes, attempting to conform to the will of the waves and gentle sea currents. Today you will also visit the Dominican monastery of Bol from the 15th century that houses a rich collection, from the extraordinary collection of underwater archaeology and prehistoric items to the early Christian sarcophagus and Venetian paintings. After some time for lunch, you will continue to the **Vidova Mountain**, the highest peak in Adriatic with the spectacular views of the surrounding islands and mainland. Your tour will end in the charming village of **Škrip**, a typical Brač rural settlement. You will visit the Museum of the island of Brač, so conveniently located in this picturesque village that is, in a way, an exhibition itself. The Museum's collection covers archaeological remains from prehistoric and Roman times, as well as the remains of the early Croatian structures and interesting exhibits of the history of the island. In the late afternoon, you will take a ferry back to Split for an evening at your leisure.



DAY 8: SPLIT - MOSTAR - STON - DUBROVNIK

This morning meet your driver for a private transfer to Dubrovnik. On your way, you will visit **Mostar** – the unofficial capital of the region of Herzegovina. From Illyrian times until the Ottoman invasion, the ancient settlement of Blagaj was the centre of political power and Mostar was no more than a tiny settlement along

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the banks of the Neretva. It is believed that before Herzegovina fell to the Ottomans, the settlement of Mostar had only 19 houses with a small suspension bridge that united both banks. The men that guarded this bridge were called „mostari“ (the bridge keepers) and it is presumed that the town is named after them. Upon arrival, you will meet your local guide for a walking tour of the Old Town of Mostar. If there is any city in Europe that effortlessly



straddles east and west, it is Mostar. You will walk along the Old Bridge and to Mostar's cobbled Ottoman Quarter, which houses the city's artists and craftsmen, as well as beautiful 16th - century mosques, museums and cafes. Spend some time on your own before your transfer to Dubrovnik, via **Ston** - a small town known as the paradise for sea food lovers. Famous Ston oysters are known as the best aphrodisiac from the Roman period. You will get a unique opportunity to try these delicacies in one of the best sea food restaurants in Croatia - Bota Šare. Enjoy **oyster tasting with a glass of wine** and should you wish, stay for lunch and try the wide palette of seafood plates prepared as per original local recipes. Ston was also an important military fort of the Ragusan Republic, which was well protected by massive city walls and used Pelješac to build another line of defense. At Pelješac's narrowest point, just before it joins the mainland, a wall was build from Ston to Mali Ston. With over 5 km of length; the mediaeval walls from the 14th century are the biggest city walls in Europe. The wall meant to protect the precious salt pans that contributed to Dubrovnik's wealth, which are still being in use today. The history of the salt works in Stone lasts for more than 4,000 years. It is the oldest salt mine in Europe, and among the working ones, also the oldest in the world.



Upon arrival to Dubrovnik, check in to your hotel and spend the evening at your leisure. You will enjoy the Bellevue Hotel - the splendid location, stunning views and chic ambiance.

DAY 9: tour of DUBROVNIK & KONAVLE

This morning meet your guide and driver in the hotel lobby for a private full day exploration of Dubrovnik region - a true essence of Dalmatia. The region of contrasts and exceptional beauty, mountains and valleys, green hills and naked stone; inclines down to the cozy coves of small fishermen villages.

Your first destination is the ancient Mediterranean town of **Cavtat**. Like many Dalmatian towns, Cavtat began as a Greek settlement,

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called Epidaurus, and later became a Roman colony. Your guide will take you for a stroll through this picturesque little town – its cobbled streets with traditional red-roofed houses, narrow stairways and charming promenade along the shore. Your walk will take you to the top of the hill, where you will discover the extraordinary Mausoleum of Račić Family, a work of Ivan Meštrović, the most prominent Croatian sculptor. Then you will continue your exploration of the



countryside of **Konavle**. In the village of Čilipi, the local family Novaković will welcome you at their humble estate that has a small ethno museum presenting Konavle region history, a tavern with a wine cellar and a variety of agricultural structures. You will taste their home-made products such as grappa, liquors and wine in a unique ambiance of a private vault of a stone-built house. While you enjoy their hospitality, they will serve a light snack of their home-made cheese, prosciutto and bread, dipped in a golden liquid of the finest olive oil.

After this light lunch, your guide and driver will take you back to **Dubrovnik** for a private walking tour of one of the most beautiful stone-built cities in the world. More than a thousand-year history is reflected in every part of the town. An important maritime port and a one-time state, it has always been a cultural metropolis. As one of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Dubrovnik owes its special charm to the historic monuments which testify to its rich history. The works of artists, writers and scientists of Dubrovnik have been woven into the texture of the town. You will experience the splendour of its stone and the redness of its roofs, the walk through its lively streets and the unforgettable beauty of this living monument. While strolling with your guide down Stradun, the main street, you will stop to visit the Franciscan monastery of the “Order of Little Brothers” that preserves one of the three oldest pharmacies in Europe. You will continue down to Orlando Column and the Sponza Palace and visit the Church of St. Blasius, the patron-saint of the town. You will also discover Rector’s Palace, the magnificent structure of the dukes of Dubrovnik, and the Cathedral of the Virgin Mary with a treasury containing the originals by Tiziano and Rafaelo and many other valuable relicts. After the tour, you may join your guide for a funicular ride up to the Srđ Hill. Enjoy the spectacular panoramic views of the Old Town of Dubrovnik, sea and the nearby islands.

The rest of the day is at your own leisure. Overnight in Dubrovnik.

DAY 10: DUBROVNIK – onward

This morning meet your driver for a private transfer to the airport for and your flight onward.



We wish you a memorable journey...



RECOMMENDED HOTELS

ZAGREB

The Regent Esplanade Hotel

ROVINJ

Monte Mulini Hotel

ZADAR

Bastion Hotel

SPLIT

Vestibul Palace Hotel

Marmont Hotel

Luxe Hotel

Le Meridien Lav Hotel

DUBROVNIK

The Pucic Palace Hotel

The Bellevue Hotel

Excelsior Hotel

Villa Dubrovnik Hotel

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