

ADVENTURES

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PEARLS OF THE CROATIAN COAST

Trip Summary

HIGHLIGHTS

- Visiting Split and Dubrovnik, two of Croatia's most vibrant and completely different cities
- Hiking off the beaten path on Hvar, Korcula, and the Peljasic Peninsula
- Sea kayaking on the Adriatic Sea
- Savoring Croatian wine and cuisine, including oysters and olive oil tastings
- Experiencing a culture which melds both Italian and Balkan influence into a unique blend

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TRIP AT A GLANCE

Location:	Dalmatian Coast, Croatia
Activities:	Hiking
Arrive:	Arrive in Split by 1:00 PM on Day 1.
Depart:	Depart anytime from Dubrovnik on the last day.

Trip Overview

Located on the Balkan peninsula and stretched out along the Adriatic Sea, Croatia's Dalmatian Coast is a unique meld of cultures. This is most noticeable at the start and end of our trip in the contrasting cities of Split and Dubrovnik, as well every place we go along the way. We'll visit ancient Diocletian's Palace in Split, sea kayak in the Adriatic Sea, enjoy the sun on Hvar, sample local specialties on Korcula, taste wine and oysters on the Peljasic Peninsula, and walk the walls of Dubrovnik. We'll go beyond sightseeing as we journey off the beaten path on little-known hikes to explore parts of Croatia not often explored by tourists. Maximum group size: 12

Rating

This trip is designed for active women in good physical condition who want to combine hiking off the beaten track in Croatia, with learning about its history and local culture, visiting two of its best known cities, and savoring fresh cuisine. A rating of 2 is suitable for any woman who regularly walks at a **brisk** pace 3 to 4 days a week for 35 - 45 minutes. These trips typically involve 3 to 5 hours of daily activity on hilly terrain. **Rating:** 1 **2** 3 4 5

What's Included

- A local guide and an AGC guide (depending on group size)
- 7 nights lodging
- All meals from dinner the first day to breakfast on the last, unless noted otherwise on the itinerary
- All transportation (private bus, ferry, private boat) from the time you arrive at our hotel in Split to the time you leave
- All entrance fees and activities as described in the itinerary

Not included: Transportation to Split (SPU) or back from Dubrovnik (DBV), airport transfers, two dinners, alcoholic beverages, drinks besides water, and guide gratuities and travel insurance.

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Welcome to Split! Our trip starts at 3:00 PM at our hotel in Split. After a welcome and introductions, our Croatian guide will take us on a walking tour of the Old Town of Split, a jewel of a city that is more than 1,700 years old. Split is best known for Diocletian's Palace, an ancient palace built for the Roman emperor in the fourth century AD, and today makes up about half of the Old Town of Split. The co-existence of ancient Roman Walls and current commerce is fascinating and a visit to the palace will give insight into ancient history and how it integrates with the modern world.

Once we've had our fill of busy city life, we will explore the city's largest and most beautiful park on a short hike on the south slopes of Marjan, the "lungs of Split". Enjoy hiking through intertwined pinewood trees and rest in the shade of medieval churches. Marjan is a great way to get in touch with the natural side of Split - learn the various uses of Mediterranean herbs and plants and soak up the forest's meditative atmosphere, just a few minutes away from the hustle and bustle of the city center.

Later this evening, you will enjoy a group welcome dinner at a local restaurant, before you enjoy the rest of your evening at leisure.

Overnight: Hotel Peristil, Split (D)

DAY 2

After breakfast we will depart on a transfer to the hinterland of Split. Just up over the hills that separate the coast from the interior is a region of timeless, forgotten border villages that stood in between the great Turkish and Venetian empires. Here, along the fields and hermits' caves dotted archaeological findings, people lived for centuries balanced between two great cultures.

The old trail we'll take is a fascinating stroll through history. Trace the footsteps of travelers, tradesmen, outlaws, and livestock on a path that winds through natural beauty and sparsely populated hamlets. Learn about the complex history of the region while soaking in the beautiful scenery.

At the end of the tour, we will visit a small, abandoned village, where a local family has carefully restored a traditional stone home. They will be our hosts for traditional lunch, typical for that region. A delicious, home-cooked meal in a historic setting awaits!

After, we will return to Split, and you'll have the rest of the afternoon at leisure to rest or explore until we meet for group dinner.

Hiking 6 miles, rolling hills with some steep sections. Overnight: Hotel Peristil, Split (B, L)

DAY 3

Today, we depart on a passenger ferry from Split to Hvar, known as the "sunny island". It is about a 1-hour journey. Although now known as a summer resort, Hvar's history is long and compelling. We'll learn about some of it on our hike today in authentic Dalmatia, passing through the villages of Malo and Velo Grablje on a medieval route.

A short transfer, with beautiful views of the surrounding islands, brings us to our starting point - the village of Velo Grablje. From here, we'll walk towards Malo Grablje along a historic trail, which in medieval times used to be the main road connecting Hvar with Stari Grad on the north side of the island. It will be easy to enjoy the views today as the entire trail is downhill. We will enjoy lunch at a small local tavern in Malo Grablje.

In the afternoon, we will continue our hike through villages soaking in a mix of traditional architecture and nature. Along with the history of the area, learn about medical herbs, traditions, challenges of island life, and much more.

If you'd like to hike even further, there is an option to extend your hike and walk from Milna back to Hvar along a small, rocky trail.

Hiking: 3 -5 hours depending on the option you choose. Overnight: Villa Nora, Hvar (B, L, D)

DAY 4

Croatia is defined by its location on the Adriatic and today we will be exploring it by sea - in a kayak! After a short transfer, we'll be treated to a view of the island from the water on a sea kayaking tour. While paddling around the bay, you will see remains of an ancient Roman villa, mysterious tombs, and a picturesque church nestled on the bare rocks at the bay's point.

Hopefully you've built up an appetite from paddling because the next stop is a family-owned, ECO certificated olive grove, where you'll enjoy a picnic lunch. Not only will you be able to sample fresh olive oil produced from hand-picked olives grown on site, you'll also be able to enjoy a wine tasting. Lunch will be served alongside wines from a young wine-producer in the region who specializes in the centuries-old family tradition of wine production.

After the picnic lunch you will have the opportunity to visit the town of Jelsa to enjoy a chocolate tasting and more exploration. Jelsa is situated in the middle of the north coast of the island of Hvar. It is the only place on the island with an abundance of freshwater, which is the cause of more lush vegetation than in the other areas of the island. At first sight, Jelsa appears to be a relatively new town with 19th-century characteristics. However, a deeper look reveals that it is an old town with a history dating back to ancient times. Tightly packed around the picturesque square, which reaches the waterfront, the town branches off into a labyrinth of small streets that are a delight to explore on foot.

After Jelsa, you'll have some free time in Hvar to explore.

Overnight: Hvar (B,L,D)

DAY 5

After breakfast we get on a local ferry for travel to Korcula. Korcula is a historic and fortified town on the east side of the island, populated even before the Greeks arrived. Later Venetians built the city there in the shape of a fishbone, which served as natural air conditioning by regulating the wind flow, and with walls that protected it not just from possible attack but also from stormy and cold winds in winter. Korculans claim it as the birthplace of the intrepid traveler Marco Polo.

Soon after we leave the town, we will hop on a trail that takes us to the village of Zrnovo - one of the oldest settlements on the island. Its skilled inhabitants are known to be some of the best in wine and olive oil making, agriculture, and stonemasonry. Take time to slow down and appreciate the churches in this little village and notice the wide range of architectural styles.

From Zrnovo, the trail continues to a magical place known as Kocje. It is a labyrinth of strangely shaped dolomite rocks overgrown with ivy and surrounded by holm oak and ferns. Flora is delicately interwoven with cave-like spaces between rocks dressed in moss. We'll spend some time exploring its green corridors, aromatic herbs, and looking for the "Fairies' spring".

On the way back from Kocje, we pass through Zrnovo again, on a different route. Along the way, stop to enjoy a traditional meal at the local tavern. At the end of the hike, you'll end up back in the town of Korcula for some free time. Dinner is on your own tonight.

Overnight: Hotel Port 9, Korcula. (B,L)

DAY 6

Today we explore the Peljesac Peninsula. We will depart on a private boat transfer from Korcula to the Peljesac peninsula, only a 30 minute journey across the channel. Our trail for the morning starts not far from the small village of Viganj. We will ascend on a rocky trail through vineyards and stone terraces onto a ridge with stunning views of the Adriatic and Korcula. We then descend to the port of Orebic to end our hike.

After the hike we will proceed to the small town of Ston. The peninsula is known as a paradise of seafood, with oysters being a local favorite. Visit a local producer and learn about oyster growing. Get ready to taste some of the best oysters in Europe! But don't fill up too much - we'll also enjoy a locally prepared lunch.

In the afternoon, you'll transfer to your hotel in Dubrovnik.

Overnight: Hotel Lapad, Dubrovnik. (B,L,D)

DAY 7

Dubrovnik - a city of exceptional beauty, known as the Pearl of the Adriatic! Pictures can't do it justice, and now is your chance to see it with your own eyes. From the amazing perspective of the city walls, admire the sea of red roofs on ancient stone houses, towers, churches and impressive palaces spread across this traffic-free city. The Republic of Ragusa, the historic name of Dubrovnik, was an independent state for four and a half centuries. The city's history dates back long before that, with archeological findings suggesting it was founded by Greek sailors. The Republic's independence, maintained for centuries against the Ottomans and Venetians, ended with the arrival of Napoleon's troops. Today, you'll meet a local guide for a city tour of Old Town and learn about the past and present of this majestic city.

After the city tour depart on a transfer outside of Dubrovnik to an area known as Konavle. After lunch at a family-owned tavern, we'll visit one of the last places where we can still see the process of handmade silk production. In the past silk was a very important material in this area, and we will visit a family who demonstrates the traditional manufacturing process, from the cocoon to the delicate details of traditional costumes from Dubrovnik.

Tonight we'll share one final dinner together, raising a glass to toast each other and our new found appreciation of Croatian culture, history, and cuisine.

Overnight: Hotel Lapad , Dubrovnik (B,L,D)

DAY 8

Sadly, it's time to say goodbye. You are free to leave anytime this morning. (B)

ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

Getting There

The trip starts in Split, Croatia at our hotel. Public buses, taxis, and Uber are all options from the airport. More details will be provided on how to get to the hotel from the airport in the Pre-Departure Document.

Note that the trip starts Split (SPU) and ends in Dubrovnik (DBV).

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exitto Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Exitto charges a one-time, non-refundable processing fee of \$50 per passenger.

Accommodations

We will be staying in small 3 star hotels. This trip spends 2 nights in Split, 2 nights in Hvar, 1 night in Korcula and 2 nights in Dubrovnik.

Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit www.travelexinsurance.com or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. All products listed are underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.

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