
FOR GROUPS:

« ESSENTIAL CROATIA » IN 12 DAYS

With the Essential tour you will discover all the great landscapes of Croatia, a country with a thousand facets:

- The continental part with the Pannonian plains in the Zagreb region
- The Dinaric mountain massif stretching through the Balkans
- The Dalmatian Mediterranean coast with 1,200 islands

The great variety of landscapes guarantees new surprises each day of the tour. To fully enjoy this adventure, we also included cultural discoveries such as our capital Zagreb, Trogir, Split, Korčula, Hvar and Dubrovnik and a wine tasting.

The hiking trails are a blend of the most renowned spots, national parks but also exclusive trails created by the Sveta Ana travel agency on the islands of Hvar, Korčula and Konavle region south of Dubrovnik.

These walks are level 2 to 3 and accessible to all. Our English-speaking guides are professionals, cherishing travel and nature.

The number of participants is between 4 and 15 The minimum number of bookings required is 4. For up to 7 travellers, the tour will be done by van (8 + 1 seats) with a driver – guide for the days 1 to 6. For the rest of the tour, local carriers will be used . From 8 travellers, the tour will be done by local carriers, with a driver and guide

The group's accommodation will be in small hotels and family guesthouses.



Sunset over Pelješac and Hvar –photo made by Sveta Ana travel agency in 2017 during a hike

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YOUR ITINERARY



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PROGRAM

Day 1: Arrival in Zagreb airport – overnight in Samobor

Arrival at Zagreb airport.

Meeting with your English-speaking tour guide.

Check in at hotel Lavica. The hotel is listed as a historical monument, set on the banks of the Samobor river and bordered by a beautiful promenade, a few steps from the town's baroque square. Samobor is a privileged spot for day breaks of Zagreb's inhabitants due to its typical setting and renowned restaurants offering specialties such as salami and the Kremšnita cake.

Dinner in hotel restaurant.



Day 2: Zagreb, Samobor nature park with the Okić fortress – overnight in Samobor

Breakfast.

Transfer to Zagreb.

Travel time: 30min

Time at leisure for a personal discovery of the city. Your tour guide will point out the Tourist information centre where you will get maps of the city centre with the main monuments.

We suggest visiting the two hills that mark the history of the Croatian capital and the green market. The Bishop's Hill Kaptol and the Lords' Hill Gradec or Grič, where the Croatian government and Parliament are still located today.



Traditional lunch in a microbrewery. You will feel the authentic city life of the Croatian capital. The brewery offers a very original choice of beers:

Menu

Starter: štrukle (local pastry with fresh cheese)

Main dish: Zagreb garlic sausage with leek puree and meat sauce

Seasonal salad

Dessert: cake of the day



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Transfer to the town of Klake. Travel time: 1h – 28 km

Walk along the "educational path" around the impressive mountain where the Okić fortress is set. You will cross a pretty forest to the mountain refuge, then by a short and somewhat adventurous climb you will reach the ruins of the Okić fortress (altitude 411m). The fortress was a strategic defense point against the Ottomans from the 12th to the 17th century when it was abandoned. From the peak you will enjoy a beautiful scenic view on the city of Zagreb and the region.

Descend from mount Okić and continue through the forest to the ethnographic house.

Effective walking time: 1h30 - Hiking time with breaks: 2h

Level: easy 2/5 (ascent to mount Okić: 3/5) - elevation: 100m



Return to Samobor. Travel time: 20min – 15km

Dinner in hotel restaurant.

Day 3: Plitvice lakes national park (UNESCO) – overnight in Krasno

Breakfast.

Your tour guide will prepare packed lunch.

Transfer to the Plitvice lakes national park. Travel time: 2h30

Visit the national park with the Upper lakes, the travertine waterfalls, the electric boat on the central lake Kozjak and the Lower lakes with the Big waterfall and the road train (entrance included).

Distance: 12 km. Effective walking time: 3h

Hiking time with breaks: 4h

Level: 2/5

The Plitvice Lakes are located in the mountainous Lika region, near the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The national park is a natural phenomenon, part of UNESCO natural world heritage sites. It consists of 16 lakes with crystal clear water which flow into each other in magnificent waterfalls. A paradise of nature.



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Proceed to the town of Krasno, renowned for cheese products. Travel time: 30min

Check in at the *Kod Jure* family guesthouse. You will appreciate the warm atmosphere and the traditional cuisine in an idyllic natural setting. The Krasno plateau means "the magnificent", a small haven of tranquillity in the heart of the impressive Velebit mountain range.

Dinner in the guesthouse restaurant.



Day 4: The Velebit national park – overnight in Krasno

Breakfast.

Packed lunch pickup.

Transfer to Zavižan, one of the entrance points of the national park.

Travel time: 1h

Velebit is the biggest mountain range in Croatia, stretching on almost 200 km with peaks up to 1800m. It encloses the Kvarner bay in the mainland and offers splendid scenic views on the beautiful archipelago. The botanical diversity is exceptional due to steep slopes generating a large number of different niches over short distances. The wildlife is made of brown bears, wolves, lynx, deer, grouse, otters... (the entrance to the park is included).



Walk on the Premužić trail named after its creator, a 19th century biologist and forest engineer. The trail offers unforgettable views on the Kvarner bay, meandering between "dolmens with surfaces chiseled by the waters". The trail is a genuine masterpiece of engineering.

Distance: 15 km. Level: average 3/5. Effective walking time: 5:30h - Hiking time with breaks: 6:30h - Elevation: 500m



Picnic lunch in the national park.

Pick up for the transfer at the site Alan and return to the guesthouse. Travel time: 1h15

* For groups up to 7 travellers, the pick up point will be the parking on Zavižan.

Dinner in the guesthouse restaurant.

Day 5: The Paklenica national park and Trogir (UNESCO) – overnight in Trogir

Breakfast.

Packed lunch pickup.

Transfer to the entrance of Paklenica national park. Travel time: 1h30

Walk in the narrow canyon with high vertical cliffs and climb to the Manita cave. Visit the impressive cave chambers with stalactites, stalagmites and pillars forming an underground cathedral with organic shapes.

(the entrance to the park is included).

The Paklenica national park is formed by the Mala and Velika Paklenica rivers. The rivers carved two impressive gorges in the slopes of the Velebit mountain range with peaks at more than 1750m. The national park also harbours original karst formations, remarkable caves and a varied flora and wildlife due to the important climate contrasts. The canyons of the park were once used by mountaineers carrying bags of salt on their backs from the coast and bags of wheat from the fertile backcountry of the Lika region.

Effective walking time: 3h - Hiking time with breaks: 4h30.

Elevation: 340m

Level: easy-medium (2-3 / 5).

Picnic lunch in on a viewpoint near the Manita cave.



Transfer to Trogir. Travel time: 1h45

Time at leisure for a personal discovery of the old town.

The old town of Trogir is a small island, connected by short bridges to the mainland. Trogir was an ancient Greek colony founded in the 4th century BC, built on a small island connected by a bridge to the mainland. Lush palaces and the beautiful cathedral of Saint Lawrence remind us of its glorious past. To truly appreciate the charm of the old town, one must get lost in a maze of small twisted alleys where past and present meet. This effortless beauty earned Trogir the place on the UNESCO's list of Cultural heritage, as well as the discovery of the bas-relief of the Greek god Kairos, the divinity of the favourable moments... but beware: he runs very fast!



Transfer and check in at hotel Sveti Križ. Travel time: 10min

Sveti Križ is a 4-star hotel, located on the island of Čiovo connected by bridges to the island of Trogir and to the continent. The hotel is easily accessible, set on a peaceful location near the sea and the beach. The hotel features an outdoor swimming pool, a wellness, spa and fitness area. A convenience store is located below the hotel. Trogir old town is a 5 to 10 minutes' drive.



Dinner in hotel restaurant.

Day 6: Split (UNESCO) – overnight in Korčula

Breakfast.

Transfer to Split. Travel time: 30min

Luggage drop off at the luggage office of Split railway station.

Walk on the hill Marjan, a protected park, offering scenic views on the city of Split, the Kaštela and the islands Brač and Šolta.

Effective walking time: 1h30 - Hiking time with breaks: 2h - Elevation: 180m Level: medium 3/5



Time at leisure for a personal discovery of Split and lunch.

The city of Split is part of the Roman emperor Diocletian palace whose presence can still be felt today. During history, buildings of different styles were added to the palace resulting in an astonishing fusion of architectural styles in constant turmoil.



Luggage pickup and boarding a fast boat to the island of Korčula.

Low season - departure: 4:30 p.m. / arrival: 7:10 p.m.

Beginning of June to the end of September - departure: 5 p.m. / arrival: 8 p.m.

Transfer to *Hajduk* guesthouse.

Travel time: 10min

Check in Hajduk guesthouse. Dinner in guesthouse restaurant. This family owned guesthouse is located in the town of Dominče, 1.5 km from the town of Korčula. in the Školjka bay known for its beautiful beach. A seaside promenade connects Dominče to Korčula (30min). There are also private boat transfers from Školjka bay to the town of Korčula. The Hajduk guesthouse offers taxi transfers, traditional home cooking, and features a small fitness room and a large outdoor swimming pool.



Day 7: Nature reserve Kočje near the village Žrnovo and Korčula – overnight in Korčula

Breakfast.

The tour guide prepares packed lunch.

Hike to Žrnovo, a village made of typical family hamlets located in a valley. The climb offers pretty views.

Walk in the Kočje nature reserve with a path winding between impressive rocks. A maze-like setting.

Picnic lunch during the hike.

Return to Žrnovo through the maquis and the valley fields and continue to Dominče.

Effective walking time: 3h15 Time with breaks: 4h

Distance: 9km Elevation: 270m

Level: easy-medium 2-3 / 5



Stop in Hajduk guesthouse and continue on foot by on the seaside promenade to Korčula.

Walking time: 30min one way

Time at leisure for a personal discovery.

Korčula embodies the spirit of the Dalmatian islands marked by the Venetian domination especially through the still active brotherhoods, part of today's tradition. Korčula is also the birthplace of the great merchant and traveller Marco Polo. A small town full of heritage and life set on a shore of turquoise sea, a dreamer's paradise...



We recommend visiting the Icon Museum, the City Museum, the Cathedral and the Palace of Bishops located in front of the ruins of Marco Polo's house.

Return and dinner in the guesthouse restaurant.

Day 8: Island of Mljet with the national park – overnight in Korčula

Breakfast.

The guide prepares packed lunch.

Walk to Korčula. Walking time: 30min

10h00. Board on a fast boat (regular line) to the town of Pomena on the island of Mljet. Sailing time: 30min

Hike in the Mljet national park including the Saint Mary island with the 11th century monastery.

Effective walking time: 3h - Hiking time with breaks: 5h -

Difficulty: easy 2/10

According to a legend, Odysseus spent 7 beautiful years on the island of Mljet, in the arms of the nymph Calypso. Mljet is covered in pine and oak forests. The main feature of the island are two joined lakes, connected to the sea by a narrow passage. On the bigger lake there is another island, so we have an island on the island! This spot is perfect for swimming as the water temperature of the lakes is at least three degrees higher than the sea temperature.



The entrance ticket to the national park includes a boat trip to the islet of St. Mary and its old Benedictine monastery.

Picnic lunch.

Return to Korčula by boat and walk to the guesthouse.

Dinner in guesthouse restaurant.

Day 9: Island of Hvar – hike in Hvar – overnight in Korčula

Packed breakfast.

Transfer to Korčula.

Board on a fast boat (regular line) to the island of Hvar.

Departure: 6 a.m. / arrival: 7:35 a.m.

Coffee break on Hvar's the central square after the boat transfer.

The guide prepares packed lunch.

Hike to the Napoleon fortress overlooking the town of Hvar, 227m high. Continue on the hills along the Hvar fields and descend to the Borča bay. Possible swim stop. Walk to Hvar by a path following the coast. Distance: 15km



Effective walking time: 5h - Hiking time with breaks: 7h - Elevation: 485m

Difficulty: easy-medium 2-3 / 5

Stop for a picnic lunch during the walk.

Time at leisure for a personal discovery of Hvar.

Hvar is an island with a very mild climate and lots of sunshine, favourable for lavender growing and extraction of essential oils used in medicine and perfume industry. Tourism developed in Hvar at the end of the 19th century, similar to Opatija and Dubrovnik. The town of Hvar is a typical Dalmatian port built in stone houses and palaces with strong Venetian influence. Hvar is an elite tourist destination attracting the world's jet setters for more than a century.



Board on a fast boat (regular line) to Korčula.

Low season: Departure at 5:35 p.m. – arrival at 7:10 p.m.

Beginning of June to the end of September: departure: 6:05 p.m. / arrival: 8:00 p.m.

Transfer to Korčula and the Hajduk guesthouse. Dinner in guesthouse restaurant.

Day 10: Pelješac peninsula and Cavtat – overnight in Plat

Breakfast.

The guide prepares packed lunch.

Transfer to Dominče harbour. Board on a ferry and sail to the town of Orebić on the northern part of the Pelješac peninsula. Sailing time: 20min

Transfer to the village Kučište. Hike to the church of Our Lady of the Angels offering splendid views on the island of Korčula and the archipelago. Return to the coast.

Picnic lunch and swimming opportunity.

Effective walking time: 1h - Hiking time with breaks: 1h30 - Elevation: 150m

Level: easy 2/5

Proceed along the Pelješac peninsula, renowned for the best wines in the country. Stop in the town Putnikovići and wine tasting.



From Putnikovići hike to the town of Ston on a trail built during the Napoleon era.

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Effective walking time: 1h - Hiking time with breaks: 1h30

Distance: 5km - Level: easy 2/5

Time at leisure for a discovery of Ston and oyster tasting (not included).

The town of Ston is has the second longest defensive walls in Europe and is renowned for shellfish farming as one of the rare sites where the Mediterranean oyster has been preserved. You will also see the old saltworks from the Dubrovnik Republic era, still operating today!

Transfer to the hotel Villas Plat.

Travel time: 15min

Check-in in one of the Villas Plat.

Dinner in hotel restaurant.

The Villas Plat hotel is a 3-star hotel complex consisting of 4 villas with apartments and 2 villas with rooms located in the Plat village, set by the sea and surrounded by nature. The rooms have a balcony with sea-view. The hotel features a swimming pool, a restaurant by the sea and a small shop.



Day 11: Ronald Brown's trail, Cavtat and Dubrovnik (UNESCO) – overnight in Plat

Breakfast.

Transfer to the village Velji Do near the Stražište peak in the region of Konavle, the southernmost part of Croatia.

The hike starts with a panoramic climb to mount Stražište peaking at 701m, offering splendid views on the entire Dubrovnik riviera. From the peak you will see the mountains of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. Stražište houses a monument dedicated to the US Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown and 34 passengers who perished here in a plane crash in 1996. Return to the village Velji Do then descend to the town of Cavtat on the coast.

Distance: 9 km - Effective walking time: 3h00 –

Hiking time with breaks: 3h45 - Level: medium-easy 2-3 / 5



Stop in Cavtat.

Cavtat is one of the most beautiful villages in Dubrovnik region. The specific natural location sheltered by two capes, was decisive for the Romans who chose this enchanting place to found the "Epidaurus" colony.

The Croats stormed ancient Cavtat and forced the inhabitants to leave. The refugees left and founded Dubrovnik, linking closely the history of the two towns. Today Cavtat is a typical fishing village with lush captain's residences. Visit the family Račić mausoleum made by the famous Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović, the house of the impressionist painter Vlaho Bukovac, and the Franciscan monastery. Stroll on the beautiful seaside promenade around the capes.



Transfer by boat (regular line) to Dubrovnik. You will Cruise along the Dubrovnik riviera and arrive to the old harbour like in the ancient times, by the sea.

Time at leisure for a personal discovery of the town and lunch.

Dubrovnik was a Mediterranean city-state which managed to preserve its freedom and avoid conflicts by means of a very skilful diplomacy. The prosperity of the old Republic is palpable on every stone in Dubrovnik, one of the best-preserved medieval cities in the world. "The Pearl of the Adriatic" is the part of the UNESCO World Heritage.



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Transfer back to Plat.

Dinner in hotel restaurant.

Day 12: Departure from Dubrovnik airport

Group breakfast in a restaurant on the seafront.

Transfer to the Dubrovnik airport. Travel time: 15min

Departure flight.

TOUR PRICE

The price includes:

- Accommodation for 11 nights in guesthouses and small 3* hotels on half-board basis. Namely: 2 nights in hotel Lavica 3* in Samobor, 2 nights in hotel Jure 3* in Krasno, 1 night in hotel Sveti Križ 4* in Trogir, 4 nights in guesthouse Hajduk 3* in Korčula and 2 nights in hotel Villas Plat 3* in Plat
- Transport by van (up to 7 travellers) or minibus with associated costs (tolls, parking fees, driver)
- Boat transfers
- English speaking tour leader with associated costs
- Entrances to national parks mentioned in the program
- Lunch in a restaurant in Zagreb and 7 packed lunches
- Wine tasting in Putnikovići
- Luggage storage in Split
- Assistance, insurance and organization costs of Sveta Ana travel agency

Note: at this stage Sveta Ana does not guarantee the accommodation in hotels mentioned in the program, options are not taken in advance. The accommodation will be confirmed after partner's request for specific dates. If at the time of confirmation, the accommodation listed in the program is no longer available, Sveta Ana travel agency will undertake necessary steps to find similar accommodation, nearby the hotels listed in the initial offer. Travellers may be accommodated in different but neighbouring hotels.