
FOR GROUPS : « VIA DINARICA » SOUTHERN CROATIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND MONTENEGRO IN 11 DAYS

Via Dinarica stretches from Slovenia to Greece following the Dinaric alps mountain range crossing the vast Balkan peninsula and unifying different cultures and landscapes. The main natural feature are limestone soil and water magically sculpting the rock to create canyons, lakes, waterfalls, caves....

We invite you to discover the Adriatic portion of the Via Dinarica with the Dalmatian coast in Croatia. You will explore an exceptional area with mountains slopes falling abruptly into the sea.

Then the journey takes us to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The arid region of Herzegovina converges upon the city of Mostar and its famous bridge. On the other hand, the region of Bosnia is very green with extensive forests preserved due to few human settlements. The best example is the Sutjeska national park and the strict nature reserve you will discover in a one-of-a-kind visit with park rangers. Finally, the trip takes us to Montenegro, a dreamlike setting with impressive mountains and wild landscapes.

This tour combines hiking with culture and allows the discovery of the main sites such as Split and Dubrovnik in Croatia, Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kotor in Montenegro, the essentials of the northern Balkans.

Our goal is to offer the best experience on site so we don't organize this tour in July and August due to long waiting times at border crossings and conditions that are not ideal for hiking.

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

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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, family pensions or private apartments (the group can be divided between several houses with a mutual restaurant) which offers an authentic and rich experience!



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YOUR ITINERARY

Central Balkan Region



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PROGRAM

Day 1: Arrival at Split airport – Trogir (UNESCO) – overnight in Trogir

Arrival at Split airport.

Meeting with your tour guide.

Transfer to Trogir. Travel time: 15min

Check into the family owned hotel Pašike, a typical stone house located in the historical centre of the town. Considering the small size of the hotel, some travellers can be accommodated in other houses of the same style but always in the medieval part of town.



Time at leisure for a personal discovery of the town.

Trogir is set on a small island, connected to the mainland by bridges. Trogir is 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!



Overnight in Trogir.

Day 2: Split (UNESCO) and the Marjan hill – overnight in Trogir

Breakfast.

Transfer to Split. Travel time: 20min

During the walk through the protected forest park on the hill Marjan, enjoy the 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. A stroll through history.



Transfer to Trogir. Travel time: 30min
Dinner in hotel Pašike restaurant.

Day 3: Explore the Biokovo mountain range on the Dalmatian coast – overnight in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Breakfast.

Transfer along the scenic coastal road to Makarska. Travel time: 1h45

Short stop for a visit.

Makarska is the central town of the Biokovo massif and the region with the biggest difference in altitude in Europe. Top of the massif, Saint George, peaks at more than 1750m above the town. The town's centre is a typical Dalmatian fishing village with stone houses. Makarska has a particular landscape shaped by a cape dividing the coast in two bays!



Preparation of packed lunch with produce from the local market.

Proceed to Zaostrog. Travel time: 40min

Hike to the ancient village of Zaostrog perched on Biokovo and continue on the mountain side offering splendid views of the Split archipelago, the islands of Brač, Hvar and the peninsula of Pelješac. Proceed to the 650m Paškal peak, an incredible panoramic sight of the islands, the Neretva river delta and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Descent to the town of Gradac on the coast.



Effective walking time: 4h - Hiking time with breaks: 5h30 - Distance: 10km

Level: intermediate 3/5 – Elevation: 650m

Stop for a picnic during the hike.

Transfer to Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Neretva river delta.

Travel time: 1h45

Arrival at Villa Fortuna, in the historical part of town.

Surrounded by a lush garden, Villa Fortuna is located only 150m from the UNESCO-protected Old Bridge in Mostar. All rooms are air conditioned, the design is a fusion of the old Herzegovinian style with modern comfort.



Dinner of local specialties in a restaurant of the old town. Overnight in Mostar.

Day 4: Herzegovina with the Goranci mountain range - Mostar (UNESCO) – overnight in Tjentište

Early morning breakfast.

Transfer to the town of Goranci. Travel time: 20min

Climb to the 886m high Gradina peak. The path begins in a dry wood and soon opens on an impressive rocky landscape of Herzegovina.



Effective walking time: 2h - Distance: 4km - Elevation: 220m
- Level: easy 2/5

Transfer back to Mostar. Time at leisure for a personal discovery of the town and lunch.

The city of Mostar is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as a remarkable blend of Eastern and Western cultures. The result of this melting pot is found in people's looks, architecture, bazaar... a puzzling atmosphere disturbing the historical benchmarks.



Proceed to Tjentište in the Republic of Srpska of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Travel time: 2h15

Check into hotel Mladost, built during the Yugoslav period, today part of the *Tjentište national park*. *The hotel features a restaurant offering local specialties.*

You will be accommodated in newly refurbished rooms. Dinner in hotel restaurant.

Day 5: Perućica, the strict nature reserve of the Sutjeska national park – overnight in Nikšić, Montenegro

Breakfast and packed lunch pick up.

Tjentište is located on the banks of the Sutjeska river, in the Sutjeska national park. It's the oldest national park in Bosnia (1962.) with the highest peak in the country Maglić (2386m) located on the border with Montenegro and the strict nature reserve Perućica, one of the last two virgin forests in Europe. The park is also known for the Battle of Sutjeska, World War II (1943.), when Partisans led by Marshal Josip Broz Tito defeated the German forces. In the park you will find monuments commemorating this battle.



During this exceptional tour you will discover a strict nature reserve in the company of park rangers. Attendance is limited to 15 people per day (with prior reservation) in order to preserve the flora and the wildlife. The national park boasts an almost entirely preserved fauna with bears, wolves, deer... The flora consists of trees reaching monumental sizes, grown on steep slopes. Any kind of human intervention is strictly forbidden. A true alliance with wild nature.



Effective walking time: 3h30 - Walking time with breaks:
5h30 - Distance: 8.5km - Level: average 3/5
Elevation: 400m

Picnic lunch in the national park – beware of bears 😊

Proceed to the border crossing with Montenegro “Klobuk” and continue to Nikšić.

Travel time: 3h

Check into hotel Trim 4*.

The Trim Hotel is an old-style stone building set in the shade of pine trees, near the city centre of Nikšić renowned for its brewery. You can enjoy a stroll in the woods with beautiful panoramic views of the city, tennis courts, fitness centre, wellness and spa area as well as an art gallery.



Dinner in hotel restaurant.

Day 6: National park Skadar lake, the largest lake of the Balkans – overnight in Nikšić

Breakfast.

Transfer to the town of Virpazar, on the entrance of the Skadar national park. En route stop in the coastal town of Petrovac.

Travel time: 1h30

Skadar is the largest lake of the Balkans, shared between Montenegro and Albania. The national park is a uniquely preserved natural ecosystem, a refuge for many birds, especially pelicans, the park's mascots.

Cruise on the lake (approximately 2h). The entrance to the national park is included. During the cruise you will have a local snack with small donuts, cheese, honey and local red wine.



Return to the hotel Trim in Nikšić. Travel time: 1h

Dinner in hotel restaurant.

Day 7: The three lakes of the Durmitor national park, the emblematic mountain range of Montenegro – overnight in Nikšić

Breakfast. Pick up of packed lunches.

Scenic road to the entrance of the Durmitor national park, near the town of Žabljak.

Travel time: 1h30

You will discover the three major lakes in Durmitor National Park. Massif Durmitor is the symbol of Montenegro with 48 peaks rising over 2000m above the sea level. Its legendary peak Bobotov Kuk is 2523m high. The lower parts of the park are plateaus of meadows, then the vegetation changes in vast coniferous forests to finally reveal the high rocky peaks. The national park is protected as a biosphere reserve on international scale for its great variety of flora and fauna. The hike begins at Black Lake (Crno Jezero), 1416m high, then climbs to the mountain hamlet Bosača and continues to the steep mountainside of Crvena Greda overlooking the Jablan lake at the altitude of 1971m. While descending, you will discover the Zminje lake with its distinctive green colour.



Effective walking time: 5h - Hiking

time with breaks: 7h - Distance: 17km - Elevation: 750m - Level: easy 2/5

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Picnic lunch on the shore of the Jablan lake.
Return to Nikšić. Dinner in hotel restaurant.

Day 8: Perast with the cruise in the Kotor bay (UNESCO) – Kotor – overnight in Radovčici, Croatia

Breakfast.

Transfer to Perast in the Kotor bay. Travel time: 1h30

The bay of Kotor has an organic appearance with steep mountain slopes reminding a fjord.

The entire town is listed as historic patrimony. Perast is a museum village with baroque architecture and beautiful palaces witnessing the great maritime past. After a pleasant seaside stroll, we will board a boat and sail to the islet and the church of Our lady of the Rocks located just opposite of the village.

Crossing time: 10min

Visit the votive church, built on an artificial island by the inhabitants of Perast as an homage to the icon of the virgin which, according to a legend, was found on a rock on the high seas. Austere from the outside, you will be impressed by the largest collection of votive offerings in the world and by the beauty of the baroque paintings.



Sail to Kotor through the magnificent scenery of the bay, part of the UNESCO world heritage. Arrive in Kotor like in the old days, by boat!

Time to Kotor: 45min

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Time at leisure to discover Kotor (UNESCO).

Kotor is a fortified medieval city which built its reputation on trade and maritime transport. A meeting of cultures where you will find both Catholic and Orthodox churches.

We suggest you to climb the Kotor walls to the 280m high Saint John's fort, offering beautiful views on the bay.



Proceed to Croatia, the town of Radovčići by a route including a ferry crossing of the bay of Kotor (10 minutes crossing).

Travel time: 1h30

Check in at one of the agritourism association guesthouses. Depending on the capacities, the group may be accommodated in different neighbouring houses. Dinner will be served in one of the agritourism restaurants. If needed, a transfer will be organized for dinner.

The goal of the evening is to discover the life of the rural area and meet the locals.



The Konavle region is the southernmost area of Croatia bordering with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. Radovčići is a typical settlement made of stone houses. The village is set in a cypress forest near the Konavle cliffs on the coast with a nice seaside promenade.

Day 9: Hike on the Konavle cliffs, the Pasjača beach and a traditional dinner - Cavtat – overnight in Radovčići

Breakfast. Packed lunch pickup.

Hike on the Konavle cliffs trail. The trail starts in Radovčići and ends on the Pasjača beach. Walking time: 1h approximately. To fully enjoy this magical spot, we suggest a swim stop.



Picnic lunch during the hike.

Continue on foot to Cavtat. Walking time: 4h

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

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 to Radovčići. Travel time: 20min

Dinner in one of the agritourism restaurants.

Day 10: Dubrovnik (UNESCO) and mount Srđ – overnight in Radovčići

Breakfast.

Transfer to mount Srđ. Travel time: 30min

You will discover one of the most beautiful scenic spots of Croatia, a picture-postcard view of Dubrovnik and the archipelago.

Walk to the medieval town of Dubrovnik.

Walking time: 1h

Walking tour with a local guide. During the tour you will discover the main street Stradun, the Franciscan and Dominican monasteries, the cathedral, the Saint Blaise church, the Rector's and the Sponza palaces and the old harbour.

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 of Dubrovnik, one of the best-preserved medieval cities in the world. "The Pearl of the Adriatic" is part of the UNESCO World Heritage.



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

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Transfer to Radovčići. Travel time: 30min
Dinner in one of the agritourism restaurants.

Day 11: Departure from Dubrovnik airport

Breakfast.

Transfer to the airport. Travel time: 15min

Departure flight.

TOUR PRICE

The price includes:

- Accommodation for 10 nights in guesthouses or small 3* and 4* hotels on half-board basis. Namely: 2 nights in hotel Pašike 4* in Trogir (1 night without dinner), 1 night in villa Fortuna 4* in Mostar, 1 night in hotel Mladost 3* in Tjentište, 3 nights in hotel Trim 4* in Nikšić and 3 nights in a 3* agritourism in Radovčići or the surroundings
- Transport by van (up to 7 travellers) or minibus with associated costs (tolls, parking fees, driver)
- Boat transfer in the Kotor bay from Perast to Kotor
- English speaking tour leader with associated costs
- Entrances to the national parks: Sutjeska (tour with park rangers), Skadar (boat tour), Durmitor
- 5 packed lunches
- Dubrovnik walking tour with a local guide
- 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.