



## CLASSIC CROATIA: A FAMILY ADVENTURE

Take it slowly and ease your family into the relaxed pace of Croatia. See it by land and sea and discover a truly enchanting part of Europe.

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Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries, Families & Multi-Generational Travel



Europe, Croatia



14 days from AU\$17,060 pp



Private

## Journey Overview

Take it slowly and ease your family into the relaxed pace of Croatia. Revel in the bucolic charm of Istria with its seaside villages, rivers, mountains and historic cities and venture down the Adriatic coast to the ancient walled town of Split and the medieval splendour of Dubrovnik. Hear legends of giants and pirates and dine on bountiful seafood fresh from the ocean. Explore hidden villages, pristine beaches, Roman monuments and charming islands. See it by land and sea and discover a truly enchanting part of Europe.

### Journey Highlights

- Discover the monuments of Rovinj and Pula on an architectural discovery of Istria
- Track down edible gold on a truffle hunting adventure in the Istrian countryside
- Walk in the footsteps of the ancients through Diocletian's Palace
- Take in Croatia's most beautiful beach on a private yacht trip to the island of Brac
- Dine on oysters and local wine on the Peljesac Peninsula



## Itinerary

### **Day 1: Arrive Istria**

Welcome to Croatia where your first stop is the enchanting Istrian Peninsula, a triangle of land at the northern end of the Adriatic area shared by Croatia, Italy and Slovenia. Arrive at your country estate, the charming Relais & Châteaux accredited Meneghetti Wine Hotel & Winery, an historic stone retreat nestled amidst vineyards and olive groves, with views of the sea beyond. Spend the rest of the day settling in.

### ***Meneghetti Wine Hotel & Winery***

### **Day 2: Istria**

Today is an opportunity to appreciate Istria's fine architecture in the company of a local expert. Starting in Rovinj, the architectural jewel of the Istrian peninsula, meander through the maze of narrow, shiny limestone alleyways filled with quirky art galleries, restaurants and bars. Stand in awe of St. Euphemia, the immense hilltop cathedral and its neighbouring bell tower, perfect for 360-degree views of the city and surrounding islands below. Spend some time strolling around the town's colourful streets soaking up the local vibe before continuing by road to nearby Pula. Home to some spectacular Roman-era monuments, admire the famous Roman amphitheatre (one of the six largest existing today), the Forum, the Temple of Augustus, the Twin Gate and the Gate of Hercules. After a full day of discovery, return to your hotel in the afternoon.

### ***Meneghetti Wine Hotel & Winery | Meals: B***

### **Day 3: Istria**

Today you venture into the heart of the Istrian countryside for an unforgettable truffle experience. Meet the family and their dogs who will take you into the Motovun forest in search of the prized gastronomic gems. A region known for some of the highest quality truffles in the world, wander through the woods and along the River Mirna watching the highly trained dogs at work. Keep your eyes peeled for the king of all truffles – the white tuber magnatum pico. After your fruitful adventure, continue to the hilltop town of Grožnjan – a town of artists. Strolling through the cobbled alleys, stop in at some of the 64 galleries that showcase a captivating variety of works. Follow your artistic appreciation with the opportunity to indulge in a tasting menu of truffle-centric treats, savouring the renowned produce before returning to your hotel.

***Meneghetti Wine Hotel & Winery | Meals: BL***

## **Day 4: Istria**

Today is yours at leisure to relax and unwind in your luxurious stone residence, or you may choose to partake in one of these optional activities:

### **Cook Like A Local**

Spend the day learning to cook, and eat, like a Croatian, starting with a visit to the thriving Pula market to seek out the finest seasonal produce. Istria's pristine coastline ensures bountiful seafood so today's menu may include brodetto - Istrian-style fish stew, seafood risotto, grilled scampi, octopus or spider crab salad finished off with a typical Croatian dessert like rožata (similar to crème caramel). Savour the fruits of your labour over lunch with the chef and learn about life in Pula.

### **Captain Morgan Coastal Bike Ride**

Pedal your way along the picturesque Istrian coastline. Starting in the small fishing town of Vrsar, cycle through the Kontija forest, travelling all the way through Lim Bay making a stop at an old pirate cave. Revel in the amazing views and pirate history before continuing through the forest to Kloštar village, where an abandoned 9th century Dominican monastery is sure to leave you in awe. Leaving the bay behind, pass the village of Morgani, named by British settler Captain Morgan. The final stretch takes you down the valley to the seaside town of Dvigrad, with some time to relax before transferring back to your hotel.

### **Walk the Trail of Giants**

Set out on a delightful river walk admiring the beautiful local scenery and colourful regional towns. Start in Buzet and continue to Kotli village with its monumental old mill. Carry on to Benčići, where you'll discover traditional stone houses which have stood proud for centuries. Climb towards the world's tiniest town, humble Hum. Home to just 24 people, it sits on a hill and boasts breathtaking views of the countryside and Ucka mountain. Relax with some free time before being privately transferred back to your hotel.

### ***Meneghetti Wine Hotel & Winery | Meals: B***

### **Day 5: Istria - Split**

After breakfast today, say farewell to Istria and continue the journey to Split, stopping en route to soak up some of Croatia's most stunning scenery in Plitvice Lakes National Park. Often described as one of the greatest natural wonders of eastern Europe, the shimmering turquoise lakes and cascading waterfalls are linked by emerald forests and meadows of wild flowers, the whole region a UNESCO-listed heritage site. Explore the park on foot with your expert local guide, immersing yourself in the expansive natural wonders before journeying onward to Split, a vibrant port city and Croatia's second largest.

***Hotel Cornaro | Meals: B***

### **Day 6: Split**

Head out this morning on a guided tour of the city where extraordinary Roman monuments sit against a backdrop of the sparkling Adriatic. Explore the UNESCO-listed Diocletian's Palace, the best preserved example of Roman palatial architecture in the world. Built in the fourth century AD as a summer villa and sea fortress, and later a place of retirement, for the Roman Emperor Diocletian, the palace contains within its stone walls a maze of narrow streets and squares dotted with shops, churches, restaurants and houses. Soak up the atmosphere and watch daily life go by.

This afternoon you can explore at your leisure, or head out on an optional tour of Krka National Park, home to cascading waterfalls, glistening lakes and beautiful hiking trails. Take to the water on a boat trip and swim among the waterfalls of the Lower Lake. On your return to Split, stop to visit the UNESCO listed towns of Sibenik or Trogir, both overflowing with architectural curiosities and captivating local life.

***Hotel Cornaro | Meals: B***

### **Day 7: Split**

Another day at leisure to explore the thriving city or explore the dramatic coastline.

Alternatively, discover rural Croatia on an optional privately guided cycling adventure along the Cetina River. Your riverside tour will take you through the colossal Cetina canyon to Omis, a town separated by a deep ravine with many architectural wonders and spectacular vistas across the Adriatic Sea.

***Hotel Cornaro | Meals: B***

## **Day 8: Split - Hvar**

Today an adventure by private motor-yacht awaits. Heading out from the marina, your skipper speeds you across the turquoise waters to the island of Brac and Croatia's most spectacular beach, Zlatni Rat (Golden Horn). A unique geomorphological phenomenon, this golden sandy beach changes shape and direction according to the prevailing wind and currents. Spend time exploring the island, meander along pine-scented paths, pause for lunch in a fishing village or simply relax on the water. At day's end you will be delivered to your waterfront hotel on the beautiful island of Hvar.

### ***Palace Elisabeth | Meals: B***

## **Day 9: Design Your Day Hvar**

Plot your own course today with a selection of Design your Day activities:

### **Hvar Town on Foot**

Discover the ancient attractions of Hvar on a guided walking tour. Built by the Venetian doges, Hvar boasts Renaissance palaces, ancient monasteries and an elegant marina, making it one of the most glamorous resorts on the Adriatic Sea. Don't miss the old theatre, built in 1612, the arsenal, and the 15th century patrician palaces and soak up the breathtaking views from the gleaming limestone walls of the Spanjol Fortress which perches high above the town

### **Islands and beaches by yacht**

Take to the water aboard your own skippered yacht and head for the beautiful island of Vis, exploring its wildly beautiful south coast. Drop anchor in Stiniva Bay, ringed by high cliffs which conceal it from the open sea, and head ashore to the stony beach. Swim in the clear blue waters of Srebrna (Silver) beach and sail to the nearby island of Ravnik with its hidden beaches and picturesque Green Cave, before returning to Hvar.

### **Hidden villages of Hvar**

Get an authentic look at Croatian life on a guided day hike from village to village. In Velo Grablje, admire the charming traditional architecture and learn about its lavender growing heritage. Wander through the deserted village of Malo Grablje and down to Milna with its beautiful beaches and seafood restaurants. Meet locals along the way, taste homemade wine or sit down to lunch by the sea.

### **Hvar by bike**

From Hvar town, head to Stari Grad, the oldest town in Croatia, where your cycling trip begins. Pedal down the waterfront promenade, soaking up the architecture and the seaside bustle, and head out of town to explore unspoilt villages and the UNESCO listed Stari Grad Plain, an agricultural landscape of vineyards and olive trees that has been in continuous use

since ancient Greek times. Stop at a small farm for a rustic lunch with local produce and wines and admire the panoramic views.

### **Hvar by Jeep**

Head to the deserted village of Malo Grablje, with time to wander its abandoned streets, before continuing to Vidikova and the peak of St Nikola for great views over the surrounding islands and the Stari Grad Plain. Travel down to Sveta Nedija, a village surrounded by vineyards renowned for its red wine production. As you explore, you'll be enthralled by Hvar's landscapes: vineyard-covered hills, olive groves and undulating fields of rosemary and lavender.

### **Wine Tasting**

Journey through centuries of Hvar's vineyards, an expert local guide bringing the rich history of the island's wine legacy to life. Visit one of the island's renowned wineries and enjoy a tasting paired with some traditional snacks and local delicacies before a visit to heritage listed Vrboska village, known as 'Little Venice' because of its canals and bridges.

This evening, why not have a picnic packed and head for Sveti Nikola? Settle in at the island's highest point, perfect for taking in the magical views and a breathtaking sunset, while enjoying a gourmet selection of local treats.

### ***Palace Elisabeth | Meals: B***

### **Day 10: Hvar - Dubrovnik**

Journey by road the length of Hvar island through vineyards, olive groves and lavender fields, before a ferry ride back to the Croatian mainland. Drive south to the Peljesac Peninsula, celebrated for its white wines and Europe's finest oysters. Learn how oysters are harvested and perhaps enjoy the excellent local drop before a traditional lunch. Arrive at your Modernist hotel in the historic heart of Dubrovnik late this afternoon with the evening at leisure.

### ***Hotel Excelsior Dubrovnik | Meals: BL***



### **Day 11: Dubrovnik**

This morning a guided visit to the Maritime Museum and the old harbour will bring Dubrovnik's maritime history to life. Later, venture inside the medieval walls and understand why this city is one of the most enticing in Europe. Stop by the Franciscan and Dominican Monasteries, the Rector's Palace and Dubrovnik Cathedral. Climb the stairs close to Pile Gate to the top of the city's storied walls and continue the tour along the entire length admiring the surrounding fortresses along the way. The charming terracotta roofs of Dubrovnik's old houses stretch out before you, a breathtaking sight. Your evening is at leisure.

***Hotel Excelsior Dubrovnik | Meals: B***

### **Day 12: Dubrovnik**

Journey to the heart of the Konavle Valley today, accompanied by your private guide. Situated in the hinterlands beyond Dubrovnik, this rural area is known for its carefully-preserved folk customs, rich national costumes and cuisine. Receive a warm village welcome from your host, learning of local life as you try some homemade liquors and pastries. Learn how to make traditional bread before collecting ingredients for a cooking class, uncovering the secrets behind the regional fare. Afterwards, enjoy the fruits of your labour over lunch.

***Hotel Excelsior Dubrovnik | Meals: BL***

### **Day 13: Dubrovnik**

Today is at leisure in Dubrovnik. For an active adventure, consider an optional sea kayaking excursion in Zaton Bay. The deep bay, surrounded by mountain ridges, offers calm seas and a rugged coastline of towering bluffs and caves. Paddle to a private cove camouflaged by coastal cliffs - the ideal spot to swim, snorkel, cliff-jump and relax on the beach before stopping at one of the small villages for a cool drink or lunch.

***Hotel Excelsior Dubrovnik | Meals: B***

### **Day 14: Depart Dubrovnik**

Transfer privately to Dubrovnik airport for your onward flight.

***Meals: B***

## Map



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