

Croatia: Brač, Korčula & Mljet National Park

Air Package Itinerary

Set off to explore one of the most beautiful shorelines of the Adriatic. The Dalmatian Coast is a wonder of craggy mountain cliffsides, hidden coves, crystal clear waters, and islands so incredible that you'll feel like you've entered a seaside paradise. Discover Brač's luminous white-stone walls and rosemary fields, Hvar's legendary vineyards, and the wooded hills of Korčula. During exciting days of coastal walks, you'll visit beautiful medieval towns and stay at authentic waterfront hotels. Watch the sun set over the sea as you savor traditional Croatian delicacies like *pašticada* (Croatian braised beef) and fresh-grilled calamari. Join Country Walkers on this memorable Dalmatia walking tour steeped in Greek, Roman, and Venetian history where—around each bend in the trail—you'll find a postcard-worthy view.

Highlights

Sample Croatia's acclaimed *plavac*, a full-bodied red wine made from grapes grown along the beautiful Dalmatian coast

Trek across lush countryside to a secluded cove (perhaps taking a dip in the crystalline waters) as you explore the resort island of Hvar

Hike to Brač's stunning, cliffside monastery—originally a hermitage founded in 1551 by Glagolitic priests during the Ottoman advance

Discover the birthplace of the legendary Marco Polo as you walk the charming, medieval streets of Korčula's Old Town, guided by a local expert

Activity Level

This tour is one of our Guided – Flex Walking Adventures. It is rated easy to moderate, with most walks more on the moderate side and an average of 4 to 6 miles per day, with options on some days. There are daily ascents and descents, with climbing time on the ascents ranging from about 15 to 45 minutes. The terrain varies from paved and cobblestone streets (during organized city tours and other easy village exploration) to uneven, single-track trails with loose stones or gravel, rocky coastal paths, ancient ruins, and sets of ancient stone steps. The trails are often exposed to the sun. Days are quite full on this tour due to the inclusion of many ferry and catamaran transfers in order to island hop. While the Adriatic is typically calm during the months that the tour is offered, if you are prone to motion sickness, you may wish to bring a prescription or over-the-counter remedy. There will be times when you will have to carry your own luggage short distances, especially on and off ferries and catamarans. As one of our Guided – Flex tours, some days offer options for self-exploration, cultural visits, or free time to relax on your own.

DAY 1

Overnight flight from USA to Split, Croatia

Begin your adventure by departing from a convenient gateway city in the United States or Canada. Spend the first night aloft.

DAY 2

Arrive in Split, Croatia

Upon arrival at Split International Airport, a representative holding a Country Walkers sign meets you as you exit the baggage-claim area. A complimentary small-group transfer is provided to the Atrium Hotel, an approximate 30-minute shuttle. The remainder of the day is at your leisure. (No meals or activities included.)

If you are going to be delayed meeting our transfer representative for more than 15 minutes due to delayed or lost luggage, please contact Allianz Global Assistance to advise of your delay, and they will contact our transfer service on your behalf. Our drivers are generally able to wait for up to 45 minutes from the time your flight lands, after which you would be responsible for your own transfer.

Please note: If you arrive early, and your hotel room is not available prior to the designated check-in time, you may store your luggage with the reception desk.

Country Walkers provides you with City Information that includes recommendations on what to see and do in Split during your stay.

Accommodation: Atrium Hotel, Split

DAY 3

Join your *Croatia: The Dalmatian Coast* tour

Walk to Split port for ferry to Brac; Transfer to Postira and easy walking tour of town; 1-2 miles, easy

Breakfast is included at your hotel. Your guide(s) will meet you at the Atrium Hotel at 1:00 p.m. (after lunch on your own) in the lobby. Your guide(s) will be wearing a Country Walkers shirt. Please be dressed for city walking.

You gather in the lobby of the meeting-point hotel for a brief orientation followed by a 20-25-minute walk to the ferry terminal. Pass through Diocletian's Palace and the outdoor market before reaching the port and your (50-minute) public ferry to the large island of Brac. You disembark in Supetar, a vibrant little town on the island's north side dominated by a church.

Brac, the third-largest island of the archipelago, is best known for its luminous white stone, from which both Diocletian's Palace and elements of the White House in Washington, DC, were constructed. A short minibus transfer along the tranquil northern coast brings you to your hotel, a comfortable property with a pool overlooking the sleepy village of Postira. After getting settled, you gather for a welcome meeting and stroll along the pretty waterfront of the town to a favorite restaurant, where you can savor the first of many delicious dinners featuring the bounty of this distinctive coast.

Accommodation: Hotel Lipa, Brac

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4

Postira to Splitska and Škrip, and Lovrecina cove to Postira

5 miles, easy to moderate, 800-ft. elevation gain; 3 miles, easy

Today's walk takes you along a pine-clad northern coastal path from Postira to the fishing village of Splitska. A steady ascent winds through olive groves and cultivated terraces, culminating at the village of Škrip, the island's first settlement, founded by the Illyrians in 1000 BC. Remains of the original wall can still be seen around the citadel. You stop for a brief visit to the tower and Roman mausoleum, today a museum dedicated to the history of the island, before indulging in a memorable lunch of *pasticada*, a traditional Dalmatian specialty of slowly braised beef served with homemade gnocchi.

The afternoon presents two options. Join your guide(s) along the lungomare, or seaside trail, from Lovrecina cove to Postira, passing ruins of a Roman basilica en route to your hotel. Or you may opt to return to the hotel via minibus. Either option allows for time to relax poolside before dinner on your own at the hotel or one of the many waterfront eateries.

Accommodation: Hotel Lipa, Brac

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5

Blaca Monastery, Zlatni Rat beach, and Vidova Gora summit. Transfer to Hvar Island

3-5 miles, moderate, 1,400-ft. elevation loss

After a breakfast of fresh fruit, homemade bread, cheese, and yogurt, you set out to explore some of the island's finest attractions. A 45-minute transfer by minibus takes you to the trailhead, which leads to the 16th-century Pustinja Blaca, originally a hermitage founded in 1551 by Glagolitic priests during the Ottoman advance. A rocky dirt path descends gradually to the monastery, where you stop for a visit before continuing to a secluded cove. Here, a short transfer by private boat brings you past the famous Zlatni Rat, or "Golden Cape." Afterward you proceed to a former shepherd's hamlet for a traditional *peka* lunch (meat and vegetable stew simmered slowly over hot coals under a dome-shaped lid).

This afternoon, you take a drive to Vidova Gora, the highest point on the island, for a panoramic view over

the islands you will explore during the course of the journey.

Later today, you board a large catamaran ferry for a short transfer to the chic island of Hvar, famous for its lavender production. After you check into your comfortable seaside hotel, the evening is yours to stroll the promenade and admire Hvar town's main historical buildings, including the old theater—the first in Europe to be open to the public. For dinner, you are free to choose from among the many restaurants and cafés, with recommendations from your guides and hotel staff.

Accommodation: Hotel Adriana (or equivalent), Hvar

Or Hotel Amphora, Hvar (September 15-21 and September 22-28 tours only)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 6

Hvar's northern coast: Vidikovac Lavanda to Stari Grad. Independent exploration of Hvar

5.5 miles, easy to moderate, with challenging sections, 1,200-ft. elevation loss

After a buffet breakfast of fresh fruits, cereals, *prsut* (Dalmatian smoked ham), and eggs, you embark on a scenic excursion on the island's northern coast. Today's exploration begins with a short transfer to Vidikovac Lavanda and your trailhead. From this vantage point, you take in stunning views to the north, across to the island of Brac and to the south, the Pakleni islands. You descend steadily for approximately two and a half hours along a true hiking trail, the final portion of which includes some challenging, rocky terrain before reaching the tranquil town of Stari Grad (literally Old Town). Considered one of Croatia's oldest towns, dating to the 4th century BC when it was a Greek colony called Faros, it lies on the edge of a UNESCO-preserved agricultural plain in a deep and protected cove. Upon arrival to town, you visit the fortified castle of poet, and native son, Petar Hektorovic, before an independent lunch at a konoba (tavern) or café of your choice.

Returning to Hvar by minibus, a free afternoon affords several options for you to explore Hvar independently—on land or sea.

Accommodation: Hotel Adriana, Hvar

Or Hotel Amphora, Hvar (September 15-21 and September 22-28 tours only)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7

Brusje to Milna. Milna to Hvar (optional and ferry schedule dependent). Transfer to Korcula Island

3-4 miles, easy to moderate and 5.5 miles, moderate, 600-ft. elevation loss

This morning, after a copious breakfast, perhaps on the harborside terrace, depart for a walk through the surrounding villages. A short minibus transfer takes you inland to just outside the former shepherds' settlement of Brusje and the trailhead. The rocky path winds past terraced hillsides dotted with olive trees, lavender, and drystone walls. You reach the abandoned village of Malo Grablje (a name derived from the fact that it is "lower" or Malo and "grab" or hornbeam bush—a plant that grows on these uplands), recently restored and turned into a wonderfully preserved open-air museum of sorts. Take time to explore the village before reaching the peaceful cove of Milna, where you may opt for a swim in the turquoise sea. A light lunch refuels you before transferring (or walking, depending upon ferry schedule) back to Hvar town, where you have time for a stroll or perhaps a gelato before you bid the island farewell. Late afternoon is spent relaxing on a scenic public ferry (catamaran) transfer to Korcula Island, the sixth-largest Adriatic island. Settle in at your hotel, a seaside property and your base for the next two nights, before dinner on your own—either at the hotel or at one of the many konobas in town. (Your guides and hotel staff will provide you with suggestions!)

Accommodation: Hotel Liburna, Korcula

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 8

Žrnovo to Lumbarda, Independent exploration of Korcula

5 miles, easy to moderate, 450-ft. elevation loss

After breakfast in the panoramic dining room, you set out to explore the wooded hills above Korcula, an island rich in vineyards and olive groves, and sprinkled with picturesque villages. Traditional culture has

been preserved on this island, from religious festivals to folk music and dance to shipbuilding. A short transfer brings you to Žrnovo, where you explore the village and St. Martin's Church before continuing along a wide, rocky path dotted with cypress and aromatic Mediterranean maquis (low-lying vegetation). As you emerge from the wooded trail, you spy beautiful views of the Peljesac Peninsula just across the channel. A special lunch rewards your efforts.

This afternoon affords free time to enjoy an activity of your choice in or around the UNESCO-preserved Old Town of Korcula.

Later, reconvene as a group for an (optional) guided walking visit of Old Town—often referred to as a miniature Dubrovnik for its beautiful medieval buildings and stonework. Dinner is a special affair this evening at a friend's restaurant up in the hills above Korcula. A traditional feast awaits and features a seasonal menu that may include prawns, calamari, grilled meats, and salad of sheep's cheese and olives, paired with a local wine or beer. Returning to town, you may have enough energy for an after-dinner stroll along the narrow streets of Korcula town, providing perfect closure to the day.

Accommodation: Hotel Liburna, Korcula

DAY 9

Peljesac Peninsula: Viganj to Orebic. Transfer to Dubrovnik. Your Croatia: The Dalmatian Coast tour concludes

5 miles, easy to moderate, 700-ft. elevation gain and loss

Your tour concludes with a walk along the Peljesac Peninsula (likened to California's wine country). Enjoy an independent lunch in the maritime center of Orebic before continuing on to Dubrovnik —“The Pearl on the Adriatic,” as Lord Byron so famously described it. This much-celebrated town, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is completely encircled by over a mile of beautifully preserved walls built between the 13th and 16th centuries. Historically, they provided protection against all intruders, from the Saracens to the Turks, coming by way of the sea. You bid farewell to your guides and travel companions and settle in to the Grand Villa Argentina, where you spend a post tour night. (Dinner is on your own, and may be enjoyed at the hotel's terrace restaurant, or the hotel concierge can provide recommendations for dining out.)

Accommodation: Grand Villa Argentina, Dubrovnik

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10

Departure

Zbogom! (Goodbye!) This morning, a complimentary small-group transfer is provided to the Cilipi International Airport in Dubrovnik based on your departure time. (The departure transfer time will be communicated to you on tour by your guides.)

What's Included

Air Package

Tour Only

Exceptional boutique accommodations

13 on-tour meals: 6 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 3 dinners

Local guides with you throughout land tour

Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary

Emergency travel assistance hotline available 24/7

Roundtrip airfare

One extra night in Split and one extra night in Dubrovnik

Airport car service for arrival &

What's Included

Air Package

Tour Only

departure

Business-class upgrades available