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Croatia

Top Highlights

Dubrovnik: Founded 1300 years ago, Dubrovnik's appeal lies in the old town of Stari Grad, with its narrow cobbled streets and marble-paved squares. Although heavily shelled in the war, Dubrovnik's magnificent walls have withstood the ravages and the buildings have been restored to their former glory.

One of the best ways to see the city is by walking along the top of the 2km long walls which surround the old city. At 25 metres high, the view of orange slate roofs, 16 bell towers, ancient buildings, and people promenading is magnificent. No motorised transportation is permitted in the old city.

Places of interest within the old city include the Placa (pedestrian promenade), Pile Gate, Clock Tower, Franciscan monastery, St Blaise's Church, Onofrio Fountain and Rector's Palace. Dubrovnik's Summer Festival is held annually from mid July to mid August, a program of theatre, concerts and dance are presented on open-air stages throughout the city. Book accommodation early if planning to visit Dubrovnik during this time!



Zagreb: The capital of Croatia since 1557, a lot of the medieval city still exists today. It is a very cosmopolitan city with plenty of affluent design-clad locals promenading the streets and sitting outside the many cafes sipping coffee for hours. There are three historical parts of the city: Upper Town (Gornji Grad), Kaptol and Lower Town (Donji Grad). The best way to see Zagreb is to take a stroll around the town, as many streets in Upper and Lower Town are closed to cars. Zagreb has its fair share of excellent museums, galleries, cathedrals and other buildings of historical significance, including The Stone Gate which dates back to the Middle Ages.



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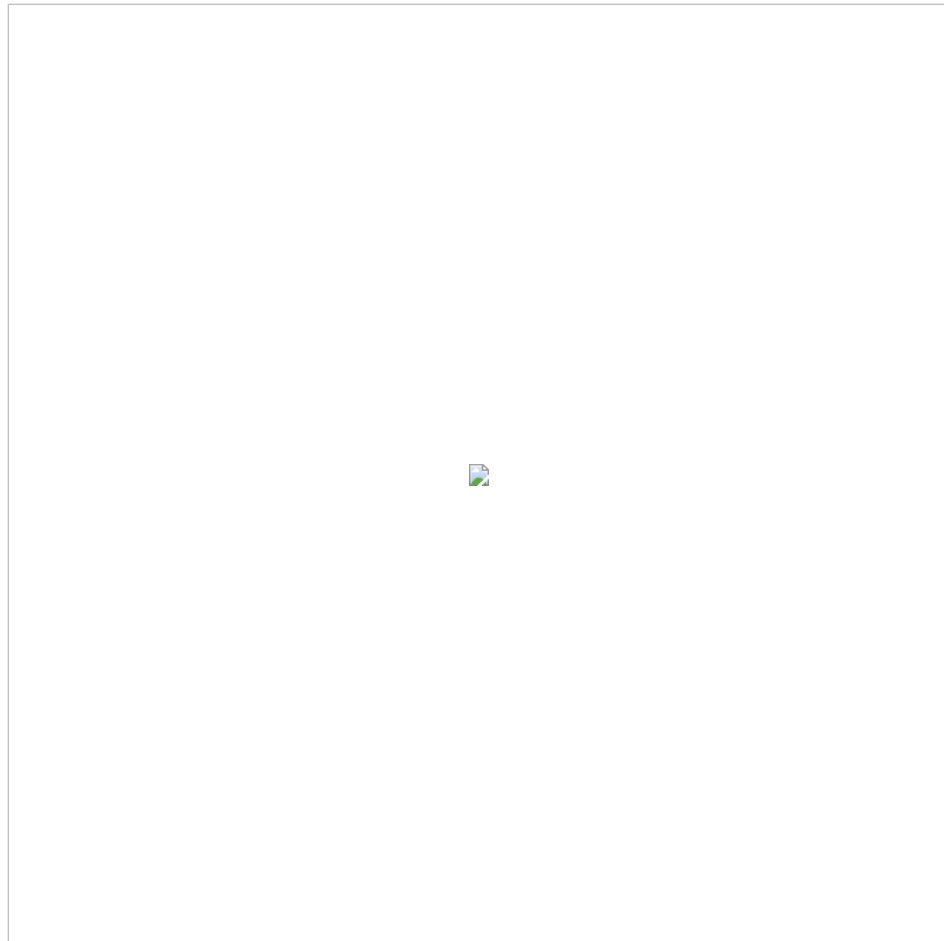
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Bled Lake



Split: Croatia's second largest city, Split is one of the sunniest places in Europe with a Mediterranean climate. The oldest part of the town is located within the Diocletian's Palace which has witnessed 17 centuries. Now a UNESCO Heritage site, the 220 buildings within the palace boundaries are home to over 3,000 people and house shops, cafes and restaurants. The palace took 10 years to build and white-stone from the island of Brac was used, along with marble from Italy and Greece.



Plitvice National Park: Sixteen beautiful crystal-clear blue-green lakes spill in to each other forming cascades and waterfalls with walkways between them, along with forests, rich plant and animal life. The Park attracts nearly one million nature lovers every year.



Cruise the Dalmatian Coastline: Travelling by boat, stopping off at the many islands and cities en route is a great way to explore the stunning Dalmatian coastline. Choose from a vintage sailing cruise or a luxury small ship cruise.





Popular Islands

Near Zadar are the **Kornati Islands** - a group of 125 islands and reefs that form a wall of vertical cliffs facing the open sea, the highest of which is over 100 metres. The islands are uninhabited and are very popular with yachties.



Brac - the largest island in Central Dalmatia boasts over 2700 hours of sunshine a year. Famous for its well photographed beach of Zlatni Rat (near the town of Bol), numerous olive groves and excellent seafood. The island is also known for its stone, and two famous buildings have been built with it, the Diocletian's Palace in Split and the White House in Washington DC. Access the island via car ferry from Split.



Hvar - called the 'Croatian Madeira', the island is renowned for its lavender, rosemary, heather and translucent cobalt sea. Stari Grad (the old town) is older than Hvar town, and was founded in 385BC. Access the island by car ferry from Split.



Korcula - Marco Polo was reputedly born in Korcula (1254). The island is famous for its history, stonemasons, sculptors, craftsmen, vineyards, olive groves and beaches. A typical medieval Dalmatian town, it hugs a small, hilly peninsula with its round defensive towers and red-roofed houses. Korcula is also known for the colourful and traditional Moreska Sword Dance.



Vis Island - Once a military base until 1989, the island has an unspoiled beauty and allure of the forbidden. The island is well known for its vineyards and Vugava (white) and Plavac (red) wines. Can be reached by car ferry from Split in two hours.



Trogir - The walled town of Trogir sits on a wide waterfront promenade that encloses a maze of medieval streets. In 1997 UNESCO named Trogir a World Heritage Site, due to the Romanesque and Renaissance architectural styles within 15th century city walls, and the Cathedral of St Lovro. An ideal day trip from Split.



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