



Croatia Dubrovnik

Croatia and Dubrovnik

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Introduction & General information

Dobrodošli u Dubrovnik, welcome to Dubrovnik, a wonderful, more than thousand-year old museum-city situated on one of the most dramatic parts of the Adriatic shoreline of Croatia. Despite being one of Europe's hit holiday destinations, Croatia (as well as other Balkan states) doesn't feel like a place that has been thoroughly worked over by the tourist industry, which in many ways is a very positive thing. Dubrovnik riviera is undoubtedly the most popular holiday destination of this former Yugoslav republic. A lot of guests from all over the world easily become devout Dubrovnik-fans and come back to Dubrovnik every year longing for calm, safe and relaxing vacation. Still the infrastructure is blossoming and rural tourism is on the rise so everyone will definitely find something to their liking in this place of ideal blend of the past and the present.

Dubrovnik is absolutely worth a visit at any time of year, although spring and summer bring out the best of the city: gorgeous nature, crystal clear sea, summer festivals, busy cafe- and nightlife, and of course this is the best time to explore the historical core of Dubrovnik - the Old Town, and go to some interest-

ing excursions, which are many to choose from due to the geographical position of Dubrovnik (Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, islands and wonderful places around Dubrovnik with wine-tasting and best specialties of Croatian cuisine).

Did you know?

Dubrovnik is separated from the rest of the territory of Croatia by several kilometers of Bosnian land (in the small town of Neum), due to some historical reasons which take us back to the period of the Dubrovnik Republic. That's why all Croatian nationals as well as tourists must have a valid id-card or a passport with them when travelling by bus or by car to other places in Croatia situated northwest of Ston.

Official name: Republic of Croatia

Area: 56 594 km²

Population: 4,3 million (Dubrovnik area – 45 000)

Official language: Croatian (Slavic group of languages)

Capital: Zagreb

Religion: most religious people in Croatia are Roman Catholics, national minorities of Serbs, Bosnjkas and Albanians declare themselves as Christian Orthodox and Muslims respectively

Currency: Kuna (HRK), 1 kuna = 100 lipa, 1 euro = 7,4 kuna

Tap water: safe to drink

Climate: Mediterranean – mild and damp winters and hot humid summers

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Where to go

Be warned: Dubrovnik's popularity with cruise liners can lead to big crowds during the day, when the Old Town can resemble a vast souvenir shop for day-trippers. Of course, the Old Town is considered the main tourist attraction but still there are a lot of other different places and quarters in Dubrovnik which are absolutely worth a visit. It's quite normal that when on vacation in a foreign country you are interested in getting to know not only popular touristic landmarks but also get a little taste of the everyday life of the locals. In every reference book about Croatia you will find more than enough about restaurants and cafes which are in fact mostly for tourists. We would like to give you a few tips about places which are rather often not so good to find in most guides.

The Old Town (Stari Grad)

The main place of interest in Dubrovnik is undoubtedly its historical core, the Old Town. An essentially medieval town reshaped by Baroque planners after a disastrous earthquake of 1667 seems to have been suspended in time ever since. Take a walk along the city's main street named Stradun, explore wonderful churches, cathedrals and other elegant stone-houses relatively untouched by the 21st century. Experience Dubrovnik city walls, the ideal vantage point from which to enjoy the city's medieval and baroque splendours (70 kn). There are lots of cafes and restaurants (konobas) inside the walls of the Old Town but be aware that for having a cup of coffee on the main street you are supposed to pay twice as much as in other parts of Dubrovnik.

Arrival to the Old Town: Bus #10 from Mlini runs every half an hour in the direction of Dubrovnik. The fastest way to get to the Old Town is to get off on the bus stop right after the entrance to the city (after the traffic light), and go left following the signs "Grad". To get back to Mlini just catch the bus on the bus stop near the cable car (on Petra Krešimira IV street above the Old Town)

Lapad

Lapad is a gorgeous green peninsula on the bay which is famous for its beaches stretching from hotel Kompas to hotel Dubrovnik Palace. You can choose any beach you like and this place is rather safe for kids and there are a lot of facilities roundabout. Locals enjoy the beach of hotel Splendid very much as it's

small and rather isolated, with a nice café. In Lapad you will find the promenade (šetnica kralja Zvonimira) on both sides of which there are a lot of cafes and restaurants.

Arrival: bus #4 (goes through the whole Lapad peninsula) or #6 (get off at the post office and cross the street).

Gorica

The quarter called Gorica is situated just some 15 minutes walk from the Old Town on a green peninsula. Here you'll find one of Dubrovnik's 5-star hotels – Rixos Libertas. From the terrace of the Agora bar in Rixos you can enjoy the wonderful view over the sea and the cliffs. By the way Agora bar is one

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of the few places in Dubrovnik where you can be offered delicious cakes from the very own confectioner's of Rixos. All year round you are welcome to enjoy a special offer: a hot drink + cake (25-30kn), that's why Agora bar is very popular even among locals. In Rixos Hotel there is also the only one casino in town. Tennis Club Dubrovnik – a recently opened fully equipped tennis center with great 5 clay courts is also at your disposal.

Arrival: You can get to Gorica either by bus #2 or #4 leaving from Pile gate, the main entrance to the Old Town.

Iva Vojnovića street

Goes above Gorica and offers a whole range of nice cafes where Dubrovnik locals enjoy having a cup of coffee and reading a newspaper at daytime, as well as having a couple of drinks with friends in the evening. The most stylish is lounge-bar Culto, which interior was performed by a designer from Zagreb.

Arrival: bus # 2 or #4

Babin Kuk

Babin Kuk peninsula located next to Lapad is also a very picturesque place with great variety of beaches (Copacabana is the most famous one). From the beach of the hotel President you will get a gorgeous view over the Elaphite islands and the Big brige (named after Franjo Tuđman, the 1st president of independent Croatia). Be warned: the sea is much less calm here than in Lapad, so be attentive in windy weather especially with small children.

Arrival: bus# 6 (every 15 minutes from Pile) or #5.

Gruž

Gruž has always been a workers' quarter. Located in the lowland along the narrow bay. Here the main port and the bus station are situated, in Gruž you can get on a ferry to Mljet or Lopud or even enjoy a boat trip on karaka, an original ship from the 17th century. Starting from April most cruise ships are coming to Gruž (sometimes 2 or even 3 at a time). You can visit a green and fish market here.

Arrival: bus# 10 from Mlini will take you all the way to the main bus station

Mount Srđ

Towering 415 m high above the town to the north, Mount Srđ has always been a much-visited attraction in Dubrovnik. It reminds the citizens and the guests of Dubrovnik about its past. Built by Napoleon's occupying army in 1808, the summit-crowning Fort Imperial now houses the Museum of the Homeland War, as a reminder of 1991 siege of Dubrovnik by Yugoslav forces. Mount Srđ was successfully held by Dubrovnik defenders. Whichever way you get there you will be rewarded by a stunning view of the walled town below, with the panorama of the whole coast.

Arrival: a reopened in 2009 cable car (žičara), deliver passengers to Srđ from Petra Krešimira IV street (return ticket – 80 kn).

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Early 1990s is a very tragical period from Croatia as well as for the whole Balkan area due to the wars which ended only in 1996. The country has certainly come a long way since the early 1990s, when within the space of half a decade – almost uniquely in contemporary Europe – it experienced the collapse of communism, a war of national survival and the securing of independence.

Croatia is now once again an optimistic, welcoming and safe destination, which boasts typical Balkan hospitality. You will be understood in any language and never left alone lost or in trouble in case it happens. In Dubrovnik you can walk freely without worrying for your personal safety or belongings all night long, such thing as pick pocketing or theft don't really exist here. The homes or cars are rarely locked; local police is tolerant even towards drunk and noisy tourists. It's absolutely safe to travel on your own to another places in Croatia either by bus or by car.



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Outside Dubrovnik

Župa Dubrovačka

Ten kilometers out of Dubrovnik, the main Montenegro-bound road descends into Župa Dubrovačka, a string of settlements (former fishing villages) occupying a verdant coastal strip backed by impressive mountains. In fact Župa is the narrowest place of Croatia – in some places there are hardly 500 meters between the sea and the mountains where the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina begins. The Župa's westernmost resort is Kupari, a former Yugoslav-army-owned holiday settlement, with a beach that was considered one of the best beaches in entire former Yugoslavia. During summertime Kupari is a popular place for beach parties and DJ sets. Your first real taste of Župa is likely to be the next place along, Srebreno, which sits on the northwestern shoulder of Župa's broad bay. From here an enjoyable beach promenade with many cafes runs past well-landscaped stretches of park and an inviting sequence of beaches. After kilometer or two Srebreno fades into Mlini, the most attractive of Župa's settlements, boasting a fair number of traditional stone houses,

an attractive harbor and a centuries-old plane tree, and giving you the feeling of being the only owner of this gorgeous place.

Cavtat

Twenty kilometers away from Dubrovnik and 3 km off the main coastal highway, Cavtat is a dainty coastal town and resort which began life in the third century BC as Epidaurum, a colony founded by Greeks. Much of Cavtat's former charm survives in the old part of the town, which was mostly built in Renaissance style. Today Cavtat is a popular tourist destination with the seafront filled with shops and restaurants.

Arrival: Bus # 10 runs to Cavtat roughly every half an hour from Dubrovnik. The bus station in Mlini is just on the other side of the road.

Konavle

Konavle is a ribbon of fertile agricultural land squeezed between the mountains on one side and

the sea on the other. Traditionally Konavle formed the rural hinterland of the Dubrovnik Republic, keeping the city supplied with fresh victuals. Among tourists local restaurants (konobas) are considered a popular attraction, f.ex. Konavoski dvori, a tranquil mill-side spot in Grude just a few kilometers away from the Montenegrin border.

Čilipi

Two kilometers beyond the airport, the village of Čilipi is renowned for the folklore shows which take place in the village's flagstoned central square every summer Sunday. Organized by the local folklore society, performances are held in the late morning immediately after Mass.

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Orašac

Dubrovačko Primorje is a region situated northwest of Dubrovnik, a narrow strip of land with extremely picturesque nature and several interesting settlements such as Slano, Orašac and Trsteno.

Orašac - a small settlement just some 15 km from Dubrovnik. The bigger part of it lies above the highway on the slope of a hill, the rest is below, along the coastline.

According to the legend this village was founded around AD 1050 and boasted hazel trees that were many at that time up to the fall of the Dubrovnik Republic. They say all trees were used to build 15 sheeps in Dubrovnik. During the homeland war (1991-1995) the large hotel complex Vrtovi sunca (Dubrovnik Sun Gardens) was completely destroyed but recently reopened as Radisson Blu. Free entrance to the beach, lots of bars and restaurants provide not only good food and drinks but also a wonderful view on the Elaphite islands.

Trsteno

Just beyond Orašac there is a gorgeous place called Trsteno which is also absolutely worth a visit. It was here in 1502 that Dubrovnik noble Ivan Gučetić built his summer villa, surrounded by formal gardens extending along the terrace overlooking the sea. In the middle of the 20th century the Yugoslav Academy of Science took the place over and expanded it, turning it into an arboretum, which is now a wonderful place to take a walk in during summertime.

Arrival: Buses # 12 and 15 (direction Slano and Ston respectively) leaving several times a day in the northwest direction from the main bus station. Dubrovnik-Split buses also normally pick up passengers in the centre of the village.

Lokrum

Facing the Old Town is the wooded island of Lokrum, some 10 minutes away from Dubrovnik by boat. A lot of beautiful legends and superstitions are connected with this island. You will enjoy visiting this

little cozy place very much. Crystal clear emerald sea, the fascinating former monastery complex and lots of peacocks wandering freely all around the island are the main focus on Lokrum. More interesting is the botanical garden of the Dubrovnik Oceanographic Institute immediately north of the monastery. The best of Lokrum's rocky beaches are beyond the monastery on the island's southeast side, where you'll find a small salt lake named the Dead Sea (Mrtvo more) just inland. There's no traffic on Lokrum.

How to get there: boats leave for Lokrum from the Old Town's port every thirty minutes, and take 10 minutes (50 kn return)

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The Mlijet National Park

Island of Mlijet is one of Croatia's national parks. Mlijet is accessible by local ferry from Dubrovnik as well as by smaller private boats in high season. It will take you just an hour and a half to get to this thin strip of land some 32 km long and never more than 3 km wide running mainly parallel to the Pelješac peninsula. The most visited part of the island is the green and unspoiled west, where untouched Mediterranean forest and two saltwater lakes (Malo jezero – Small lake and Veliko jezero – Big lake) provide the focus of the Mlijet National Park, an area of arcadian beauty within which lie the villages of Polače and Pomena. There's no official entrance point to the Mlijet National Park, and by the time you arrive to Polače or Pomena you're already well inside it. However you're expected to buy a ticket (90 kn) from one of the kiosks. Both lakes are encircled by foot- and cycle paths. Feel free to swim in the lakes. Hourly boat from Veliko jezero will take you to St. Mary's Island, where the Benedictines established a monastery in the 12th century.



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Gastronomy

As it has been mentioned in many travel guides, Croatian cuisine has absorbed gastronomic traditions from different cultures. There is a sharp divide between the Italian-style cuisine on the coast and the Hungarian, Viennese and Turkish-style cuisine in the interior.

Each region has its own specialty, with the generally good-quality food, made from fresh seasonal ingredients, which can be found in the best restaurants along the Adriatic coast.

Dalmatian cuisine is considered as one of the healthiest in the world based on olive oil, garlic, fish, vegetable and herbs. Food products in Croatia are usually of very good quality and mostly of domestic origin.

Croatia's range of seafood is extensive. Mali Ston is famous for its great seafood especially oysters. They say that oysters are most delicious after St. Joseph, in March. In Mali Ston you will find several family restaurants which offer excellent oysters, fish and other

seafood ("Kapetanova kuća", "Bota Šare").

In the terms of fast food, ćevapčići (spicy beef or pork meatballs), a typical Balkan specialty served with chopped onion and white bread. Can be also eaten with kajmak (salty cheese). There are no "ćepapnice" (a special place only for eating ćevapčići) in Dubrovnik like in Sarajevo but ćevapi can be bought in almost every fast-food booth.

In every part of Dubrovnik you will find a bakery (pekara) where apart from bread you can try local pastry (croissants, pincerota, and burek (heavy pastry stuffed with meat or cheese), popular among Croats, especially the younger generations).

Desserts

Ice cream is superb in Croatia great in its taste and quality. No hot Adriatic summer's day would be complete without at least one. Fruit salad or strudel is a healthy option. Pancakes are usually filled with jam,

chocolate and ice-cream. The most original dessert of Dubrovnik is rozata, a delicious creamy jelly made of sugar and eggs. In most restaurants you can also try panakota (cold creamy dessert with sour syrup of berries) and sufle - a hot chocolate dessert served with vanilla ice cream.

Coffee and alcoholic beverages

Coffee (*kava*)

Coffee is a very important part in the life of Croatians. Drinking coffee is one of the oldest habits borrowed from the Ottoman Empire. Tea is not a common drink for this region, only in case of illness. You will hardly find "coffee to go" in Dubrovnik, this mega polis habit is absolutely unacceptable for most Croatians. Drinking coffee is actually a ritual, which won't tolerate hurry. Everywhere in Croatia you will get a great strong coffee with delicious aroma and thick foam. Filter coffee is almost nowhere to find. Prices for coffee are rather reasonable: from 5 to 8 kunas

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for black coffee and from 7 to 12 for coffee with milk.

Coffee drinks you can try in Dubrovnik:

Espresso (kratka kava)

Macchiato: espresso with a dash of milk

Americano: coffee prepared by adding hot water to espresso

Coffee with milk or white coffee (Bijela kava): coffee mixed with scalded milk with thick milk foam

Cappuccino: coffee with milk and a steamed milk foam

Nescafe: instant coffee drink with different tastes

You will hardly find a coffee machine in a Croatian home. Usually they start their day with so called Turkish coffee boiled in a pot (džezva in Croatian or cezve in Turkish), with added sugar (depending on taste). You are not likely to find Turkish coffee in cafes in Dubrovnik but you will have an opportunity to try it in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) prepared

in a real cezve made of copper and served in small cups called fildžans.

Alcoholic beverages (Alkoholno piće)

A range of alcoholic drinks impresses. Pivo (beer) is a popular drink, especially in summer time. The two best are Karlovačko which has a clean, crisp flavour and a pleasant aftertaste and Ožujsko, a heavier taste lager beer. Dark beer is not common but still you will be able to try Tomislav, local dark beer.

Wine production has a long history in Croatia. We would recommend you to ask for local regional wine. Both white and red.

To the guests' astonishment locals enjoy drinking different mixtures of wine and non-alcoholic drinks, such as:

Bevanda: a mixture of red wine and water

Gemischt: a mixture of white wine and mineral water

(refreshing in hot weather)

Bambus: a mixture of red wine and cola

Domestic spirits are hugely popular and found in most bars and restaurants. They include the fiery grappa digestive such as home made šljivovica (plum brandy), travarica (herbal brandy), lozovača (vine brandy), orahovica (nut brandy) and višnjevača (cherry brandy).

Night life

This is a fact that Dubrovnik area is actually a place for calm, safe and relaxing vacation. But still active club-goers and people who enjoy busy night life won't be disappointed especially during the summer. Good to know that normally Croatians don't go out before 12 o'clock. It's common to have a drink or two in a cafe or bar before moving to a club.

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Night Club “Revelin”

Is a new gorgeous spacious club opened in the Old Town inside the Revelin fortress. Open every day during the summer. DJ's and concerts of Croatian and foreign singers. Entrance fee depends on the concert (normally from 30 to 80 kn). Sometimes you can get flyers for free from the Revelin hostesses in the Old Town.

Latino Club “Fuego”

Located on Pile. Entrance fee: 30-40 kn

Beach club “Eastwest”

Roomy place right on Banje beach offering lounge-bar furnishings and an impressive choice of cocktails. DJs. Open daily 22 p.m. - 04 a.m.

“Capitano” Bar

A few steps north of Pile gate, this place gets busy after around midnight. You can also choose to sit outside on the wall.

Bars and cafes in the old town: Irish pub, Casablanca, Sky bar...

Excursions and active holiday

Dubrovnik offers a great variety of interesting excursions. Due to its geographical position (close to the Montenegrin and Bosnian borders) tourists have a wonderful opportunity to get to know the rich history and fascinating culture of neighboring states and towns. Everyone will be able to find something to their liking.

Montenegro

Located just an hour away from Dubrovnik, Montenegro is an ideal combination of incredible natural beauty and rich history. A trip all the way to Kotor will definitely stun you with its spectacular landscapes. All thanks to the medieval architecture and numerous monuments of important cultural heri-

tage, Kotor is put on the UNESCO's list. The town is known for its nautical tradition and its own trade fleet. There are both Orthodox and Catholic churches, the major landmark is St. Tryphon's Cathedral from the 12th century.

Budva is one of the oldest settlements on the Adriatic sea and the most developed touristic centre of Montenegro, with dozens of cafes, restaurants, night clubs and beautiful sandy beaches.

Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

Over the centuries Mostar and the region have been the meeting place of different cultures and religions that have left visible traces.

The trip usually begins with a pleasant drive along the Adriatic coast with the first stop in Neum, where the trip continues towards the inland part of Herzegovina through the picturesque delta of Neretva river. On the way to Mostar you'll have an opportunity to

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observe an old mosque in Počitelj, a well preserved example of oriental architecture.

Mostar got its name after “the bridge keepers” (mostari) who guarded the Old Bridge (Stari Most) over Neretva river. The Old Bridge is one of the most crucial structures of the Ottoman era. Since 2005 it's been on the UNESCO's World Heritage list. Enjoy other places of interest such as the Old Bazaar with traditional handicrafts and numerous mosques.

Ston and Korčula

A pleasant drive along the picturesque Adriatic coastline will take you to Ston, a small fortified town on the isthmus which joins the Pelješac peninsula to the mainland. An important salt-producing town, Ston was swallowed up by Dubrovnik in 1333, becoming the most important fortress along the republic's northern frontier (its well kept medieval walls are the second largest in Europe). Ston is also well known for its mussel- and oyster production.

The tour continues towards the inside part of the Pelješac peninsula, through the famous wine-producing regions towards a small town of Orebić which is situated just a short 15 minutes ferry-hop from Korčula.

Korčula is one of the best preserved fortified medieval towns in the Mediterranean, where a famous traveler Marco Polo is believed to be born. Experience the neat beauty of the medieval walled city ribbed with a series of narrow streets.

On the way back you will visit one of the famous Pelješac wineries for wine-tasting.

The Elaphite Islands

A pleasant cruise to the three most beautiful islands of the Dubrovnik archipelago – Koločep, Lopud and Šipan, known as the Elaphite Islands. The lush, vegetation-carpeted islands (Elafiti) present the perfect opportunity to savour the Croatian Adriatic at its unspoilt best.

Just 30 minutes from Dubrovnik by ferry, the islet of Koločep is normally the first destination of all boats sailing towards the Elaphite Islands. Koločep is a little over 2,6 km² in area and has a population of less than 150 concentrated in two main hamlets overlooking the small bay.

The largest of the populated Elaphites, the island of Šipan is a delightful combination of craggy hills strung out around a long fertile plain dotted with the occasional hamlet with the 16th century summer residence of the Skočibuha family.

The island of Lopud is known for its long maritime tradition and wonderful sandy beaches. It used to be the favoured weekend retreat of the city's nobles. Take a walk along the shoreline to the Franciscan monastery from the 15th century, visit the beautiful Đorđić-Mayneri park. Enjoy the sandy beaches. The best of Lopud beaches is Šunj bay some 30 minutes walk from the Lopud village.

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Active holiday

Dubrovnik offers a lot of opportunities for sports and other activities. First of all – several tennis clubs: Tennis Centre Dubrovnik (Tenis centar Dubrovnik) <http://www.dubrovniktenis.com/>

A new fully equipped tennis club located in Gorica (Gospino polje), 5 tennis courts with excellent clay surface, experienced instructors.

Tennis is also available in Babin Kuk and Lapad.

Gyms and SPA-centres are mostly located inside the hotels of the city



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We will be happy to help you in organizing your vacation!