

# *A Custom Designed Itinerary to*

## *Croatia and Montenegro*

*By*

### *IN QUEST OF THE CLASSICS*

Ref: 606044

**DAY 1: VENICE/LOVRAN.** Upon arrival at the Venice Airport, you will be met by an English-speaking driver and transferred to Lovran, Croatia. Here you will check in for three nights at the **Hotel Villa Eugenia**. Situated to the east of the old part of the fishing village of the Lovran, on a mild slope, the villa was originally built in 1910 for a representative of the Austro-Hungarian aristocracy and then converted into a hotel. It shows the harmony and simplicity of the Art Nouveau style. In 2003 Villa Eugenia was completely reconstructed into a modern, deluxe hotel. Villa Eugenia is surrounded by lush greenery, and the seaboard, with the famous Lungo Mare promenade, is only fifty meters away. Lovran is rich in history and a 100-year tradition in tourism. It was named after laurel that grows abundantly in evergreen groves in the region. Lovran is a charming place, with paved streets, numerous steps and clustered houses with small windows.



**DAY 2: LOVRAN/CRES.** A full day excursion to Cres today by ferry and with your own private English-speaking driver/guide. Cres is an island in the northern Adriatic. It has 29 settlements and 3,238 inhabitants. In the central part of the island there is a large fresh water lake. The northern part of the island is richer with forests, while the southern part has more scarce vegetation. The largest settlements are: Cres, Osor, Martinšćica, Valun and Beli. The island has been inhabited since Neolithic times (the cave settlement Punta Križa). There is also a special ornithological reserve. Lubenice, at the top of a sheer rock on the western side of Cres, is 4000 years old and now has no more than forty souls living in it. Its strange name (meaning "*watermellons*" in Croatian) is probably derived from a Latin word "*hibernicius*" meaning "*wintry*", due to the wind that seldom ever stops, and the not so rare harsh winters with snow. When speaking of this place many will tell you about the past, rarely anyone about the present, and no one about the future as no man here is less than 65 years old. Spend part of your day exploring on bikes or hiking around the island.



**DAY 3: LOVRAN/ISTRIA.** Today you will tour Istria, the "Tuscany of Croatia." Meet your English-speaking driver/guide after breakfast at your hotel and set off to Hum, listed as the Smallest City in the World in the Guinness Book of Records. An amazing medieval place with 17 official inhabitants! From here it is on to the fortified town of Motovun, a medieval town in western Istria on the top of a cone-shaped hill, 277 meters above sea level, in the romantic and bountiful Mirna River Valley. If you like you may climb the stairs up to Motovun. With its 1,052 steps, it is the longest stairway in the world. Motovun grew around a core settlement surrounded by well-fortified walls.



You can see many interesting things in its narrow streets, shops and alleys. There is a thirteenth-century bell-tower, a church and numerous palaces. Motovun was once a true city with several thousand more inhabitants than it has today. Its streets come to life during the summer, when visitors from all parts of Croatia and from abroad pass through the town. Motovun's surrounding lowlands are equally interesting.



The town is surrounded by picturesque vineyards and fertile fields, and, most notably, the Motovun Forest, in which skilled seekers can find the highly prized truffles. (The largest white truffle ever found in the world was discovered here in 1999) You will enjoy some wine tasting at a local vineyard in the area before returning to Lovran for the night.

**DAY 4: PLITVICE.** Today your driver/guide will take you inland via the amazing village of Slunj and on to Plitvice, where you will check in for two nights at the **Hotel Jezero**, located in the center of the Plitvice Lakes National Park. The hotel features two restaurants serving local foods of the region, plus a nightclub, swimming pool, fitness center, sauna, Turkish bath and whirlpool.



**DAY 5: PLITVICE.** Spend the day in the Plitvice Lakes National Park, widely considered the loveliest National Park in central Europe. Situated in a gorge between two mountain ranges, 16-crystal clear lakes interconnect by a series of spectacular waterfalls and cascades. Special walkways allow guests to experience the wonders of nature up close. The hotel can suggest various walking tours to suit your ability and desire.

**DAY 6: TROGIR/SPLIT/HVAR.** Today your driver/guide will take you to Split. Along the way you will stop in the UNESCO heritage city of Trogir for sightseeing. The city has 2300 years of tradition. Its rich culture was created under the influence of Greeks, Romans and Venetians. Trogir's concentration of palaces, churches, towers, and a fortress on a small island has earned it the nickname "THE STONE BEAUTY". The Cathedral of St. Lawrence, with Radovan's portal at the entrance, is the most famous town monument. The Fortress Kamerlengo is situated at the west end of Trogir islet, built by Venetians as a naval base. The Fortress of St. Marc is situated on the northwest end of Trogir islet, built by Venetians in the XV century. The Trogir Waterfront is one of the top attractions in Trogir. Renovation of the water bank and surrounding areas was finished in 2002. During summer, the "Riva" is mostly reserved for mega-yachts.



From Trogir you will continue on to Split, where you have some free time for sightseeing. Split is a fascinating ancient city originally founded in the 4th century by Diocletian as his retirement home. The remains of his palace are incorporated into the Old Quarter of Split. Bid your driver/guide farewell when he drops you off at the port, where you will board the catamaran to Hvar. (Ferry tickets will be included)

When you arrive on the island, you will be met and taken to your hotel, the **Hotel Park**, where you will check in for two nights.

**DAY 7: HVAR.** Spend the day enjoying this delightful island. Hvar has many olive groves, lavender fields and vineyards. In Stari Grad there are Greek ruins and the fortified castle of Peter Hektorovik. Because of its exceptional climate, with over 2700 hours of sunshine a year, Hvar is known as the Croatian Madeira. You may hire some bikes and explore on your own. In addition, we can arrange a visit to a local wine cellar.

**DAY 8: DUBROVNIK.** A private transfer this morning to the port, where you will board the ferry for an amazing trip south (about 7 hours) to Dubrovnik. (Ferry tickets included) When you arrive you will be met and privately transferred to your hotel, the 5-star **Grand Villa Argentina**, where you will check in for two nights. One of the finest hotels on the Croatian Adriatic, it is situated only a short walk from the historical center of Dubrovnik. Dubrovnik, known as “The Pearl of the Adriatic,” is perhaps one of the most incredible medieval walled cities in the region. Today it is an UNESCO protected city.



**DAY 9: DUBROVNIK.** A full day to explore the city.

**DAY 10: KOTOR/SVETI STEFAN.** This morning you will meet your new English speaking driver/guide and a/c vehicle and head south into the Republic of Montenegro. The Bay of Kotor is Southern Europe’s longest, deepest fjord. The old town of Kotor is one of the best-preserved medieval towns in the Mediterranean region. The narrow streets and squares, with numerous monuments of medieval architecture, contributed to Kotor being placed on UNESCO’s world natural and cultural inheritance list. After a visit, you will continue on the panoramic route to the village of Njegusi, where you can enjoy a tasting of dried smoked ham and home made cheese. Then continue on to the island of Sveti Stefan. Here you will check in for two nights at the **Hotel Sveti Stefan**. This well-known hotel is located on the site of the former medieval fishing village of Sveti



Stefan and enjoys a unique island location. The island is connected to the mainland and two glorious beaches by a small sand isthmus. The village or hotel complex hosts a network of narrow streets and picturesque squares, churches and elegant houses built in typical Mediterranean style and surrounded by pine trees and attractive flowers.

**DAY 11: SVETI STEFAN.** A day at leisure to enjoy the resort town of Sveti Stefan.

**DAY 12: DUBROVNIK.** Today your English-speaking driver/guide will take you back to Dubrovnik. Along the way you will stop for sightseeing in Budva. Budva is a 2500-year-old town on the Montenegro coast. When you reach Dubrovnik, check in for a final night at the **Grand Villa Argentina**.



**DAY 13: DEPARTURE.** A private transfer this morning to the airport in Dubrovnik in time for your flight home.

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