

My Very Special

12-Day Croatia Program

By

IN QUEST OF THE CLASSICS

Dear Reader:

When I first visited Croatia (in 1971 – it was part of Yugoslavia then) I fell in love with it and decided to leave my native country (England) and live and work there. For over 8 glorious years I worked in the travel industry and explored every corner of Croatia – planning travel programs and guiding them. In 1980 I moved to the USA and eventually started In Quest of the Classics. My love for Croatia has continued and, over the years, IQOTC planned, promoted, sold and sent thousands of U.S. travelers to this wonderful part of Europe. Recently someone asked me if I could plan my own trip to Croatia, and I only had 2 weeks away, what would I like to do? Well, here it is! And I hope one day you'll enjoy it as much as I did!

Sincerely,

Brian Mundy

President & C.E.O.

In Quest of the Classics, USA

DAY 1: VENICE / BRTONIGLA. Guests arrive Venice airport, are met by an English-speaking driver/guide and private vehicle, and transferred east approximately 2 hours to Slovenia. Just inside the border guests will have a private tour of the original Lipizzaner breeding farm (founded in 1580) before continuing a short distance into Croatia and the small village of Brtonigla and the lovely San Rocco Hotel – www.san-rocco.hr. 2 nights here on a bed/breakfast basis.



DAY 2: LOCAL TOURING. A full day to explore Istria, the “Tuscany of Croatia.” The driver/guide will focus on three amazing visits. First the tiny hamlet of Livade, where (in 1999) a local farmer and his dog discovered the largest white truffle in the world – see the Guinness Book of World Records. Time to taste various amazing truffle recipes (and purchase some!), before heading a short distance to the next stop... Surrounded by vineyards, the medieval hilltop town of Motovun is not packed with tourists, allowing guests to leisurely explore the cobblestone alleys and maybe drop by a local inn for a bite of lunch – truffle pasta perhaps?!



The highlight of the afternoon (possibly the entire trip) is another entry in the Guinness Book of World Records – Hum, the smallest city in the world! Maybe guests will luck out and meet some of the (official) 17 inhabitants of this incredible city, perched on a hill above the Mirna Valley? And don't forget to try the mistletoe brandy! Return to the San Rocco Hotel for a second overnight.

DAY 3: RAB. After breakfast guests have two options: 1. Continue with their driver/guide and private vehicle to Rab; or 2. Their driver/guide takes them to Opatija, where they will collect a rental vehicle and continue to Rab with this self-drive option. Spend time in the sophisticated resort of Opatija before heading south along the Adriatic coast through Senj and on to the small port of Jablanac to catch the ferry to the magical Island of Rab. Upon arrival it's about a 20-minute drive to the town of Rab, where 3 nights are included on a bed/breakfast basis at the luxurious Arbiana Hotel – www.arbianahotel.com



DAYS 4/5: RAB. 2 full days to relax, explore the town and the surrounding villages. Those who have visited the island unanimously say it's the loveliest and most unspoiled in the Croatia Adriatic. You may wish to take a boat trip to see the beautiful bay of Zavratica, or to see some dolphins at the natural dolphin reserve on Losinj; a boat trip to the Island of Pag, famous for its "moon crust" landscapes and traditional hand craftwork, cheese and meats; or see the Island of Cres – the only place in the world where the griffon vulture still nests. You may wish to go trekking on Mount Velebit, or do some sea diving. There is plenty of local history and culture to see, including the Prince's Palace, which holds a collection of stone monuments dating from the Roman period to the Renaissance; the Church of St Andrew with the nearby monastery of Benedictine nuns, founded in 1020; the church of St. Mary the Great, which was consecrated by Pope Alexander III in 1177; the sacral art exhibition at the church of St. Justa (1573-78) situated in Upper Street (Gornja ulica); or just relax in a café at the harbor and watch the yachts & boats arriving.

DAY 6: TROGIR. After breakfast it's back to the ferry (with a local driver/guide and car, or with the rental) and across to the mainland and Jablanac. From here continue south, possibly stopping for a visit to Zadar, the oldest Slav city on the Adriatic, before arriving in Trogir. The rich culture of Trogir 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" and a place on UNESCO's World Heritage list. Trogir's medieval core, surrounded by walls, comprises a preserved castle and tower and a series of dwellings and palaces from the Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque periods, complemented by buildings from the Venetian period. The Cathedral of St. Lawrence with Radovan's portal at the entrance, is the most famous town monument. Fortress Kamerlengo, at the west end of Trogir islet, was built by Venetians as a naval base. The Fortress of St. Marc, situated on the north-west end of Trogir islet, was built by Venetians in the 15th century for defense from the Turks.



Other attractions include the 15th century city gate, loggia and city walls; the Duke's Palace; and, the big and small palaces Cipiko.

Overnight on a bed/breakfast basis at the Villa Sv. Petar – www.villa-svpetar.com.

DAY 7: SPLIT / HVAR. A short drive into Split (with a local driver/guide and car or with the rental) and time to explore the Palace of the Roman Emperor, Diocletian, and the bustling open-air market. Mid-afternoon ferry to Stari Grad on the beautiful Island of Hvar. Again, tickets for the vehicle, passengers and (if selected) the driver/guide will be included for this 2-hour trip. Upon arrival it's a 25-minute drive to the town of Hvar, where 2 nights on a bed/breakfast basis at Hotel Park – www.hotelparkhvar.com



DAY 8: HVAR. A full day to relax and explore Hvar Town and the surrounding area. Relax and soak up the beauty of this Adriatic island. Hvar has many olive groves, lavender fields and vineyards. Because of its exceptional climate, with over 2700 hours of sunshine a year, Hvar is known as the Croatian Madeira. Hvar Town is full of historical wealth and if you tire of it you may also prefer making your own way by with the rental (or taxi if the driver/guide option selected as you'll be on your own today) to Stari Grad, the historical heart of the island. It was built on the place where a deep bay passes into an Arcadian valley with its many vineyards and olive-groves. The town is surrounded with pine tree forests and cooled with a refreshing ocean breeze.

DAY 9: DUBROVNIK. This morning guests head back (rental or another driver/guide and car) to the mainland (ferry) and then continue south on the Adriatic coast road to Dubrovnik. For those who wish, we can arrange a detour to visit the famous Pilgrimage site of Medjugorje, and have a local guide conduct a tour. Upon arrival in Dubrovnik, 3 nights bed/breakfast accommodations at Hotel More – www.hotel-more.hr. Guests will either say farewell to their driver/guide upon check in at the hotel, or drop off their rental car upon arrival in Dubrovnik and take a cab to the hotel.



DAY 10: DUBROVNIK. A 3-hour walking tour of the famous Old City of Dubrovnik with a local guide. Balance of the day free to walk the medieval city walls, explore the alleyways off the main street, shop, and enjoy an optional sea-food lunch in one of the many restaurants inside the Old City.



DAY 11: DUBROVNIK OR MONTENEGRO. Today we suggest either a final day free in Dubrovnik, or a day trip south to the spectacular Republic of Montenegro.



DAY 12: DEPART. Guests can either call a taxi, or IQOTC can arrange a private transfer to Dubrovnik airport.

Exclusive property of In Quest of the Classics www.iqotc.com