

Croatia

Highlights of Croatia - Split to Dubrovnik in 8 Days

- Time frame: 8/21 - 9/10, ideally during Labor Day weekend
- Plan: 3 days Dubrovnik, transit to Hvar (0.5 day), ~4 days Hvar (at least 9 full days)
 - Days 1-4: Dubrovnik
 - Day 5: Transit Dubrovnik -> Hvar (7:00 - 10:30)
 - Days 5-9: Hvar
 - Day 9: Transit Hvar -> Dubrovnik (17:55 - 21:25)
- Getting there
 - Cheaper to fly from SFO to ZAG (Zagreb) vs. Dubrovnik, starting an itinerary in the north and moving south along the Dalmatian coast.
 - \$850 RT from SFO > ZAG on Turkish Airlines
 - \$1,130-\$1400 RT from SFO > DBV on Turkish Airlines
 - \$984 from SFO > ZAG, DBV > SFO on Turkish Airlines
 - SFO to DBV:
 - 63,000 United miles + \$104 per person (Lufthansa LH + Croatian OU)
 - Bus shuttle service from airport to Dubrovnik
 - ~20 min from airport to city center by car
 - [To Some Place New - 3 days in Dubrovnik / Book bus shuttle service](#)
- Getting around: Book ferry tickets online, at least 3-5 days in advance
 - [Chasing the Donkey - How to Get from Zagreb to Dubrovnik](#)
 - 4.5 hr bus ride from Split to Dubrovnik, but account for more than an hour at the
 - Dubrovnik -> Hvar: 3.5 hour direct ferry from Dubrovnik city center to Hvar town, starting at €31.50 per person ([Ferry Schedule](#))
 - High speed ferries: 3 hr 10 min, \$48.44 per person. Typically departs at 16:30 and arrives at 19:40
 - Slower ferry: 2.5hr, typically departs at 7:00 and arrives at 10:30
 - Hvar - > Dubrovnik: typically departs at 17:55, arrives at 21:25
 - Dubrovnik -> Split:
 - 4.5 hour bus between Dubrovnik and Split, but expect delays at border of up to 1 hour
 - 5-6 hr ferry between Dubrovnik and Split ([Frank about Croatia](#))
 - **Jadrolinija** sails every day from June through September. The ferry departs Dubrovnik at 7 am, arriving in Split around 1 pm. It departs from Split at 3:30 pm and arrives in Dubrovnik at 9:25 pm. The one-way ticket costs 240 Kn per person. The boat also stops in Hvar, Bol, and Korcula along the way.
 - **Krilo** ferry Split Dubrovnik sails from April to end-October. It leaves Split at 7.40 am and arrives in Dubrovnik at noon. It leaves Dubrovnik at 4.30 pm (4.00 pm from Sept to late Oct) and arrives

to Split at 8.55 pm (8.25 pm from Sept to late Oct). It also stops in Milna (Brac Island), Hvar, Korcula, and Pomena (Mljet Island).

- [Chasing the Donkey - How to Get from Dubrovnik to Split](#)
- Hvar -> Split: 50 min on high speed ferry, starting at €18.50. First ferry departs 7:50
 - [Gecko Routes - Hvar to Split](#)
- Dubrovnik -> Korcula: 2 hr ferry
- Where to stay
 - Airbnb's in Dubrovnik start around \$75 and range up to \$150 in Old Town. Airbnb's in Hvar and Split range from \$50-100ish
- Dubrovnik
 - Walk the old city walls (Game of Thrones tours)
 - Explore the old town
 - Kayak around the coastline
 - Catch the cable car for city views
 - [Abroad with Ash - 2 Days in Dubrovnik & Extension Options](#)
- Split
 - Walk the old city
 - Visit Diocletian's Palace
 - Climb Marjan Hill / Bell Tower for a view of Split
 - Walk along Riva Promenade
 - SUP along coastline
 - Sunset cruise
 - Day trip: Plitvice Lakes
 - 3 hr drive from Split to Plitvice
 - 1-day customizable private transfer: [Octopus Transfers](#), €350, excluding food & drink, park entrance tickets, and gratuities
 - [Chasing the Donkey - How to get from Split to Plitvice Lakes](#)
- Hvar
 - Climb the Fortica (Spanish fortress) for views of the city
 - Explore Hvar Town
 - Visit beaches
 - Dubovica Beach: 8km from Hvar town
 - Pokonji Dol Beach - most beautiful beach! 20 min walk from Hvar town. Walk an additional 20 min through pine forest to reach Mekicevica Bay for secluded beach.
 - Bonj Beach: in front of hotel and Hvar Beach club in Hvar Town
 - Zarace
 - Kayak
 - Sunset cruise
 - Take a day trip to the Pakleni Islands, Blue or Green Caves
 - Coastal trail to Milna, Hvar ~4 mi / 2 hours one-way
 - Visit lavender fields
 - Tour a vineyard

- Things to do
 - [Places of Juma - 15 Best Beaches in Croatia](#)
 - [Wanderlust Chloe - 7 Day Itinerary Croatia](#)
 - [Drink Tea Travel - Things to do in Hvar](#)
 - [Jetsetting Fools - Things to do in Hvar](#)
 - [We are Craving Adventure - 3,5, and 7 day itinerary Hvar](#)

Dubrovnik

Restaurants

[Time Out - 38 Best Restaurants in Dubrovnik](#)

[Tour Guy - 10 Best Restaurants in Dubrovnik](#)

[Wonderful Wanderings - 15 Croatian Foods to Try](#)

- Proto: fine dining for fish and seafood
- [Restaurant Dubrovnik](#)
- **Azzurro Restaurant:** fresh Adriatic fish, modest taxi from Gruz
- [Bistro Tauvulin:](#) mussels in white sauce, octopus ragout (recommended by Bridget).
Some bad reviews on TripAdvisor
- **Forty-four Restaurant:** Croatian dishes, incl. Signature risotto with truffles and scallops.
Rated 4.8 on Google.
- Dalmatino Dubrovnik: Traditional dishes
- **Barba:** street seafood restaurant
- **Restaurant Taj Mahal:** Bosnian dishes
- Lokanda Peskarija: cooking of local fisherman families. Try black risotto. Location, vibe, and service are good, but quality may be inconsistent
- Konoba Tanak: homemade cooking, 30 min walking from old town
- Peppinos gelato
- Victoria Restaurant and Lounge Bar

Coffee

- Cogito Coffe: Ploce Gate and Old Town
- Coffee Break: excellent espresso
- Time Out Caffè: speciality coffee drinks with terrace
- Soul Caffè and Rakhija Bar: old town
- Pupica: locals
- Cafe Festival: near Franciscan monastery
- Buza Bar: coffee or drinks with best views of Lokrum

Walking Tours

[History of Dubrovnik - Early Morning & Late Afternoon](#)

- \$26 / person for 90 min
- Tue, 8/30, **Weds, 8/31, Thur, 9/1:** 7:00 - 8:30 am: Learn about the history of Dubrovnik. visit key landmarks, and enjoy sweet treats from farmers' market

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- Rated 5 stars for expertise and insight

[Dubrovnik Sweet Discovery](#)

- \$23 / person for 2 hours
- Top rated host, 24 hour cancellation flexibility prior to schedule, well worth the price
- **Thur, 9/1: 9:00 - 11:00 am, 4:00 - 6:00 pm** or Fri, 9/2 9:00 - 11:00 am: Learn about Dubrovnik's history and enjoy ice cream
- Rated 5 stars (119 reviews)

[City Walls and Old Town](#)

- \$40 / person for 2 hours, but need to pay extra for admission to city walls (~\$37 USD / person). You can also purchase a 1, 3, or 7 day [Dubrovnik pass](#). The 1 day card costs as much as city walls but includes admission to museums and transit.
 - 1 day: \$37 USD
 - 3 day: \$40
- **Tue, 5:00 - 7:00 pm**, Weds, 4:00 - 6:00 pm, Thur, 9:00 - 11:00 am / 4:30 - 6:30 am: Book for private tour

Boating

[Sea, sun, and fun by boat](#)

- \$187 / person for 8 hours, private boat tour to Elaphiti Islands. Visit Blue Cave and swim and snorkel. Rated 5 stars
- Tue, 8/30: 10 am - 6pm

[Magic Dubrovnik Sunset Tour](#)

- \$96 / person for 2 hours
- Tue, 8/30, Weds, 8/31, Thur, 9/1: 6:00 - 8:00 pm
- Rated 5 stars. Sail from old town Dubrovnik to Lokrum.

[Small Group Kayak Tour](#)

- \$68 / person for 3 hours
- Paddle around Lokrum and Dubrovnik city walls, explore caves, and stop to swim and snorkel. End at St. Jakob beach with a gourmet snack and wine.
- Tue, 8/30 9:00 - 12:00 pm / 4:00 - 7:00 pm (\$68 pp)
- **Weds, 8/21: 9:00 - 12:00 pm** (\$59 / person) / 4:00 - 7:00 pm (\$68 pp)

Culinary Experiences

[Hands-on Cooking with Dalmatian Herbs](#)

- Fri, 9/2: 11:00 am - 1:30 pm: Learn to bake Croatian fried pastry and skinless sausages. 5-star rating from 100% of guests

[Authentic Peka Dinner](#)

- \$74-80 / person
- Tue, 8/30 or Weds, 8/21: 7:00 pm - 10:30 pm: Learn about Croatian food and culture. Eat charcuterie, prepare Peka, and enjoy fruit for dessert. Seems like a better cultural experience.

Beaches

- Banje Beach: 5 min walk from Old Town, just outside the eastern Ploce Gate
- Sulic Beach: near old town Pile Gate. Enjoy views at Beach Bar Dodo, which has swings. Best hidden places to swim. Can rent kayaks.
- Dubrovnik Walls Public Beach: walk to the old port and follow walkway out to breakwater and lighthouse. Climb over the breakwater wall (stairs! And walk on the path that hugs the outside of the city walls to platform). One of best spots for swimming
- St. Jakob: most picturesque, 30 min walk from city. Steep staircase to get to beach, which is pebbly and rocky. Good for sunsets.
- Buza Bar (Bard Mala Buza): great for sunset

Hvar

Restaurants:

- Macondo: known for Gregada, local seafood stew. Offers fresh seafood and fish
- Fig Cafe Bar: relaxed cafe with creative food and drink inspired by the owners' global travels
- Giaxa: finer dining for traditional Croatian with a modern twist
- Konoba Menego: traditional Croatian food, specializing in Dalmatian cuisine

Coffee:

- Kava 37 / speciality coffee shop
- Sweet Republic Hvar
- Kantun: coffee, fresh juices, healthy snacks
- Glod: pastries

Bars:

- Falko Bar: hammocks, sunset views, laid back vibes
- Vunetovo Craft Beer

[Chasing the Sunset in Kayak - Makarska \\$40 pp](#)

[Morning version](#): Sun / Mon 8:30 - 11:00 am

- Rated 5 stars, excellent value, and super storytelling
- 3 hours primarily kayaking, with one stop for snorkeling and fresh fruit
- Sun, 9/4 and Mon, 9/5 from 4:30 - 7:30 pm

[Sea Kayaking to Pakleni Islands, \\$54 pp / 3.5 hrs](#)

- Kayak 3-5 km with one beach stop
- Sun, 9/4 and Tue, 9/6: 10:00 - 1:30 pm
- Rated 5 stars

[Sunset sailing in yacht \\$60 pp](#)

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- BYOB food and drinks. Free cancellation up to 24 hours before start time
- Sun / Mon 5:30 - 7:30 pm
- Rated 4.89

[Pakleni Islands Half-Day Sailing Tour \\$76 pp](#)

- Sun, 9/4 10:00 - 2:00 PM
- Includes welcome drinks
- Sailing and stop in a cove for swimming / snorkeling / paddling
- Free cancellation up to 24 hours before start time
- rated 4.95 (19 reviews)

[Sail and Escape - Hvar to Pakleni Islands \\$75 pp](#)

- BYOB food and drinks
- Sailing and two stops for swimming
- Free cancellation up to 24 hrs before start time
- Rated 4.92 (92 reviews)
- Tue, 1:00 - 5:00 pm

[Island Vis Discovery Day Tour \\$85 pp](#)

- Sun, 9/4 or Mon, 9/5 10:30 am - 6:00 pm
- Explore island of Vis with lots of swimming and snorkeling, including Blue Cave, Green Cave, Pakleni islands

(Actual) Itinerary

Dubrovnik

- Day 1:
 - Old City Walls
 - Cogito Coffee
 - Restaurant Taj Mahal: cevapi and half half
 - Banje Beach
 - Mt. Srd to watch sunset
 - Dalmatino: black risotto, mussels buzzara, and makaruni with beef cheeks
 - Boccapiene: pistachio and salted caramel ice cream
- Day 2:
 - Walking tour of Old Town
 - Dubravka 1836: coffee with continental breakfast overlooking Fort Lovrjenac and Sulic Beach (film sites for Red Keep and Blackwater Bay from Game of Thrones)
 - Kayaked from Banje Beach to city walls and Betina Cove. Beautiful coastline and sea! Rented kayak for 1 hour for 170 KN (\$23), which was a much better deal than a 3.5 hour kayak tour for \$68 per person on Airbnb

- Lounged at Banje Beach to escape the heat. Rented two lounge chairs, an umbrella, and towel for 370 KN (\$50) for the day, about 5 hours. Well worth it to escape the heat!
- Visited Fort Lovrjenac and enjoyed beautiful views of Sulic Bay, perimeter of Dubrovnik, and Lokrum! Late afternoon is a great time to visit when it's cooler, and lighting is good for photos!
- Tried Kopun, where we shared Kopun and Brodet. Kopun is rooster made with fruits, and Brodet is seafood stew. Good quality of food, but I think flavors could be better.
- Tried gelato at Gelateria Dubrovnik
- Day 3:
 - Visited the Franciscan monastery and Rector's palace since admission was included in our 3-day Dubrovnik pass. Not a must-see unless you like museums.
 - Enjoyed coffee on the terrace at Gradska Kavana Arsenal in Old Town. Same menu as Dubravka 1836, but city versus sea view.
 - Shared octopus burger and calamari with potato salad at Barba Seafood. Definitely a favorite! They do takeout and dine in.

Tips:

- In the summer, it's best to explore Old Town in the early morning before 9:30 am or in late afternoon after 5:30 at least. Relaxing at Banje Beach or doing water activities are good ways to escape the heat unless you're staying nearby.
 - Buy and bring water socks. Beaches are pebbly.
- Take a taxi to Mt. Srd for the sunset. It's cheaper than taking the cable car. The best view is about a 5-10 minute walk uphill from Konoba Dubrava.
- Buy the Dubrovnik 1-day pass if you're planning to walk the Old City Walls. There's only one admission per cultural institution. Recommend getting to the walls at 8:00 am to avoid heat or around sunset. We started around 8:30-8:45am, and while it wasn't crowded, it got hot quickly.
- Take a tour of the Old Town and/or Walls first thing to truly appreciate the sights.
- For families traveling with young kids: Dubrovnik is small and walkable, even for toddlers, but stairs and their endurance for heat are the key things to consider.
 - Recommendation is to bring a light stroller and/or baby carrier and rent a hotel or Airbnb that is close enough to the town for a midday retreat, particularly in the summer. If at a hotel, a place with a pool would be ideal for kids, as the sea is calm, but beaches are pebbly, and the water can get deep quickly (5-10 feet in the swimmable areas, but 5 feet after a few steps into the water).
 - The town itself is flat, where there are the majority of attractions and restaurants. We saw a number of parents with toddlers and strollers.
 - Paid public restrooms are available outside the city Gates.
- Food is expensive in the Old Town, particularly for most restaurants recommended online. We easily spent 50 Euros for lunches or dinners, with just two main dishes and a beer. Barba was one of the best and cheapest meals we had for 30 euros, splitting a burger and calamari.

- For pregnant women: Dubrovnik is easy to explore at one's own pace. Stairs and heat are the only considerations, but both are manageable with sufficient breaks and water. My parents warned me about the steep, uneven, and slippery stairs to climb the old city walls, but I found them easy even at 7 months pregnant! It's completely dependent on your own health and fitness level.

Hvar

- Day 5:
 - Ferry from Dubrovnik to Hvar
 - Fig Cafe
 - Bonj Beach
 - Spanish Fortress
 - Macondo: gregada
- Day 6:
 - Kava 37: coffee shake and chocolate chip hazelnut cookie (similar texture to Levain)
 - Known for baking croissants with sourdough
 - Pokonji Dol: walked 20-30 min along the promenade to Pokonji Beach, where we rented an umbrella and two sun beds for about 220 HRK
 - If you prefer to swim or stay in the sun, I'd recommend just popping into the sea along the paved pathway. It's more peaceful than swimming at the beach, unless you'd feel more comfortable with amenities (bar, refreshments, lounge chairs) or plan to be waterside all day.
 - Sunset along the promenade, toward the beach clubs. The best views of sunset are at Falko Bar, but we were too lazy to walk all the way there and back for dinner. There are plenty of benches along the promenade, so we watched sunset from the benches and the rocks along the water.
 - Alviz: this family restaurant was recommended in a blog (Culture Trip?), primarily for pizza. We went for seafood pasta and a Croatian burger, and I wouldn't recommend. Bland.
- Day 7:
 - Trekked from Hvar to Milna, ~4 mi (it took us 3.5 hours to complete because we stopped to swim and got a bit lost toward Milna, but most blogs say it takes 1.5-2 hours)
 - Wear sneakers. It's feasible in sturdy sandals, but the trail can get rocky, and you can travel faster with shoes.