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Guide to Istria, Croatia

Istria used to be one of Croatia's best-kept secrets. Today it's a well-developed tourist area, with lots of different accommodation.

Istria is a large, peninsula in the northern Adriatic with some of the most beautiful landscapes in the world. Rolling hills, mountains and valleys, beaches, and coastline.

The coast and beaches are one of the most obvious attractions. Istria has many different kinds of beaches, ranging from large bays to hidden coves. In most beaches, it's advisable to wear shoes, as there are no sandy beaches. The mild climate and pristine air make Istria a perfect destination all year long. The summer can be quite warm and sunny, så don't forget to wear sunscreen. Throughout Istria, you can find outdoor activities like horseback riding, bike trails, and cross-country tracks. Activities like free climbing, mountain biking, parachuting, hang-gliding, mountain running, caving, paragliding or canyoning are easily found.

Istria has several small cities, which include Pula, Porec, and Rovinj. In the cities of Istria, you will often find local markets, festivals, wonderful dining, wine cellars, cultural events and much more.

Croatia beyond the Istria

If you bring your own or rent a car, destinations like Croatia's capital Zagreb and the beautiful Plitvice National Park are within reach for a day trip. But most likely you'll want to stay overnight, to make the most of it.

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Chapter 1

Croatia

Croatia (Croatian: *Hrvatska*) is a Mediterranean country that bridges Central Europe and the Balkans. It is on the eastern side of the Adriatic Sea, across from Italy on the western side. It is bordered by Slovenia to the northwest, Hungary to the north, Bosnia and Herzegovina to the southeast, Serbia in the east, and Montenegro to the south.

1.1 Regions



Map of Croatia

There are three distinct areas of Croatia: Lowland Croatia (cr: *Nizinska Hrvatska*), Littoral Croatia (*Primorska Hrvatska*) and Mountainous Croatia (*Gorska Hrvatska*) and these can be neatly split into five travel regions:

1.2 Cities

- **Zagreb** - the capital and largest city
- **Dubrovnik** - historic coastal city and UNESCO World Heritage site
- **Split** - ancient port city with Roman ruins
- **Pula** - biggest town in **Istria** with the Roman amphitheater (commonly called Arena)
- **Osijek** - capital of **Slavonia** and an important city
- **Sisak** - largest river port, city on three rivers and a city that has stopped the spread of the Turks in Europe in 1593, formerly *Siscia*
- **Slavonski Brod** - a once important star-fort on the Ottoman defensive line
- **Rijeka** - Croatia's largest and main port
- **Varaždin** - Croatia's former Baroque capital
- **Zadar** - biggest city of north-central Dalmatia with rich history

1.3 Other destinations

- **Krka National Park** – river valley near **Šibenik**
- Island of **Cres**
- Island of **Hvar**
- Island of **Brač**
- Island of **Krk**
- Island of **Šolta**
- **Makarska** on the Makarska Riviera
- **Plitvice National Park**
- **Žumberak** – mountainous region that spans the border between Slovenia and Croatia

1.4 Understand

1.4.1 Climate

Northern Croatia has a temperate continental climate, while the central and upland regions have a mountainous climate. The entire Adriatic coast has a pleasant Mediterranean climate. Spring and autumn are mild along the coast, while winter is cold and snowy in central and northern regions. The average temperature inland in January ranges from -10°C to 5°C ; August 19°C to 39°C . The average temperature at the seaside is higher: January 6°C to 11°C ; August 21°C to 39°C .

1.4.2 Terrain

It is geographically diverse with flat agricultural plains along the Hungarian border (Central European area), low mountains and highlands near the Adriatic coastline, and islands. There are 1,246 islands; the largest ones are **Krk** and **Cres**. The highest point is Dinara at 1,830 m.

1.4.3 History

The Croats settled in the region in the early 7th century and formed two principalities: Croatia and Pannonia. The establishment of the Trpimirović dynasty ca 850 brought strengthening to the Dalmatian Croat Duchy, which together with the Pannonian principality became a kingdom in 925 under King Tomislav. Independent Croatian kingdom lasted until 1102 when Croatia, after a series of dynastic struggles entered into a personal union with Hungary, with a Hungarian king ruling over both countries. In 1526, after the Battle of Mohács, where Hungary suffered a catastrophic defeat against Ottoman Turks, Croatia severed its relationship with Hungary and its parliament (Sabor) voted to form a new personal union with the Habsburg Monarchy. Croatia remained an autonomous kingdom within the Habsburg state (and later **Austria-Hungary**) until the empire's dissolution following defeat in World War I.

In 1918, a short-lived State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs (carved out of south Slavic parts of Austria-Hungary) joined the Kingdom of Serbia to form the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later renamed Yugoslavia in 1929. The new state was unitarist in character, erasing all historical borders within its new territorial division, which resulted in a strong movement for more autonomy for Croatia. This was achieved in 1939, only days before the start of World War II, when Croatia was granted broad autonomy within Yugoslavia as Banovina of Croatia. When Germany and Italy attacked Yugoslavia in 1941, the state was dissolved, parts of it annexed to Germany and Italy, and puppet governments installed in Croatia and Serbia. Almost immediately, a strong resistance movement was formed, led by communist leader Josip Broz "Tito" (an ethnic Croat), which gained broad popular support. After the end of World War II, a new, communist Yugoslavia was formed with Tito becoming "president for life". Tito ruled with a strong hand, using political repression and secret police to quell any separatist sentiments, with the official motto of the new country being "Brotherhood and Union". Still, because Yugoslavia didn't belong to the Warsaw Pact, having broken off political ties with the USSR in 1948, it was by far the most open socialist country in Europe and its citizens enjoyed more civil liberties and a higher living standard than the rest of the Communist bloc. After Tito's death in 1980, the weakening of political repression led to a period of political instability. Faced with the rise of nationalist sentiment, a decade-long recession, and the weakening of communist grip on power on the eve of the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, the first free elections were held in Yugoslavia in almost 45 years. In these elections, nationalist options won power in all Yugoslav republics, which led to a rise in inter-ethnic tensions, culminating when Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence from Yugoslavia in 1991. This led to open war in newly independent Croatia and later in Bosnia and Herzegovina which declared its independence in 1992. The wars ended four years later, in 1995, with a decisive Croatian victory in operation Storm, bringing peace to both countries. The anniversary of operation Storm is celebrated as Thanksgiving Day in Croatia every August 5.

After a period of accelerated economic growth in the late 1990s and 2000s Croatia joined NATO in 2009 and the European Union in 2013. Croatia today is a functioning liberal democracy, with a free market system and a robust welfare state.

1.4.4 Holidays

- **January 1:** New Year's Day
- **January 6:** Epiphany
- **Easter** (according to the Gregorian calendar)
- **Corpus Christi** (60 days after Easter)
- **May 1:** International Workers' Day
- **June 22:** Anti-Fascist Struggle Day
- **June 25:** Statehood Day
- **August 5:** Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day and the Day of Croatian defenders
- **August 15:** Assumption of Mary
- **October 8:** Independence Day
- **December 25:** Christmas



Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb



Croatia has 1244 islands

1.5 Get in

1.5.1 Entry requirements

Croatia is committed to implementing the **Schengen Agreement** although it hasn't yet done so. For citizens of the European Union (EU) or European Free Trade Area (EFTA) (i.e. Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland),



City of Hvar has average of 2726 hours of sunshine per year, likewise many other Croatian towns on Adriatic coast. Croatia is a land of urban culture which numbers more cities than any other part of the Mediterranean



Dubrovnik is a city in Southern Dalmatia. Croatia has 20 UNESCO heritage sites and treasures of tradition.

an officially approved ID card (or a passport) is sufficient for entry. Other nationalities will generally require a passport for entry.

Travel to/from any other country (Schengen or not) from/to Croatia will (as of now) result in the normal immigration checks, although customs checks will be waived when travelling to/from another EU country.

Inquire with your travel agent or with the local embassy or consulate of Croatia. Any person not covered by a visa exemption will need to apply for a visa at a Croatian embassy or consulate in advance. The application fee for a short stay Croatian visa is €35.

More information about visa exemptions and the visa application procedure is available at the website of the Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs .

1.5.2 By plane

The only flights from outside Europe are from **Tel Aviv** and **Doha**, and the occasional charter flight from **Tokyo** and **Seoul**. If coming from North America, you will have to transfer at a hub such as **London** or **Frankfurt airport**.

- Croatia Airlines, the national carrier and member of Star Alliance, flies to **Amsterdam**, **Berlin**, **Brussels**, **Düsseldorf**, **Frankfurt**, **London**, **Madrid**, **Milan**, **Moscow**, **Munich**, **Paris**, **Prague**, **Tel Aviv**, **Rome**, **Sarajevo**, **Skopje**, **Vienna**, **Zürich** and - during the tourist season - **Manchester**.
- **Adria Airways** - Slovenian national carrier flies from **Ljubljana** to **Split** and **Dubrovnik** (note: there are no flights from Ljubljana to Zagreb as the two are located close together and are around 2 hours by car/train/bus)
- **Aer Lingus Dublin** - **Dubrovnik**
- **Air Serbia** flies from **Belgrade** to **Dubrovnik**, **Pula** and **Split** in the summer
- **Austrian Airlines** flies from **Vienna** to **Zagreb**, **Split** and **Dubrovnik**
- **Alitalia** flies from **Milan Malpensa** to **Zagreb** and **Split**.
- **British Airways** flies from **London Gatwick** to **Dubrovnik**
- **CSA Czech Airlines** - SkyTeam member; flies from **Prague** to **Zagreb** all the year, and to **Split** during summer.
- **Darwin Airline** flies between **Geneva** and **Dubrovnik** (Thursdays and Sundays) as well as **Zürich** and **Dubrovnik** (Saturdays).
- **EasyJet** has flights to the following destinations in Croatia:
 - **London Gatwick** - **Split**
- **Nordica** is flying from **Tallinn** to **Dubrovnik**.
- **FlyBe** operates routes between **Dubrovnik** and two UK destinations **Exeter** and **Birmingham**.
- **GermanWings** - cheap connection from **Berlin**, **Cologne**, **Stuttgart** and **Hamburg**, to **Zagreb**, **Split**, **Zadar** and **Dubrovnik**
- **KLM** connects **Amsterdam** with **Zagreb**
- **Norwegian** connects **Oslo** with **Rijeka**, **Split** and **Dubrovnik**
- **Ryanair** flies from **Dublin** and **Karlsruhe-Baden** to **Zadar**.
- **Scandjet** is a Scandinavian low fare airline that connects **Sweden**, **Norway** and **Denmark** with Croatia. It flies from:
 - **Oslo** to **Split**
 - **Stockholm** to **Pula**, **Split** and **Dubrovnik**
 - **Göteborg** to **Zagreb**, **Pula**, **Zadar** and **Split**
 - **Copenhagen** to **Pula**, **Split**.

- TAP Portugal is flying from **Zagreb** to **Lisbon** via **Bologna** three times a week (Wednesdays, Fridays, Sundays).
- Vueling, a Spanish low-cost carrier flies between **Dubrovnik** and **Barcelona**.
- Wizz Air flies between **Zagreb** and **London** (Luton Airport)



• *Sisak is a city in Central Croatia, 55 km from Zagreb.*

Additionally you can use airports in neighboring countries which are within few hours of reach from **Zagreb** and **Rijeka** (apart from some of the listed options in Italy):

- **Ljubljana** (for EasyJet flights to London Stansted or other Adria Airways flights)
- **Graz** and **Klagenfurt** (for Ryanair flights from London Stansted)
- **Trieste** (for Ryanair flights from London Stansted). You can also use **Venice Marco Polo** (for British Airways flights from the UK) or **Venice Treviso** (Ryanair from Stanstead). **Ancona** is also an option (Ryanair from Stansted) for those who want to take ferry or hydrofoil to **Zadar** and **Split**. Ryanair also flies to **Pescara** which is a short drive away from **Ancona**.
- Some may decide to use Tivat Airport (in Montenegro) which is within easy reach from **Dubrovnik**.

1.5.3 By train

The rail network connects all major Croatian cities, except **Dubrovnik** (you can take a train to Split then take one of the frequent buses or the more scenic ferry to Dubrovnik, the train station is at the pier). There are direct lines from **Austria**, **Czech Republic**, **Switzerland**, **Germany**, **Hungary** (suspended due to immigrant crisis), **Slovenia**, **Italy**, **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Serbia**. There are indirect lines from almost all other European countries.

Tourists coming from or going to neighboring countries should note the following EuroCity and InterCity as well as EuroNight railway lines:

- EC "Mimara": Frankfurt - Munich - Salzburg - Ljubljana - Zagreb
- IC "Croatia": Vienna - Maribor - Zagreb, also by EuroNight train
- EN 414: Zurich - Zagreb - Beograd (can be booked online with SBB or any other railway agency by phone)

- IC “Adria”: Budapest - Zagreb - Split (suspended due to immigrant crisis, direct connection to Split only during summer)

The German Railways (Deutsche Bahn) has a Europe Special/Croatia, where they sell Munchen-Zagreb starting at €39.

Note: While Croatia is covered on some Eurail passes, staff at domestic ticket windows tend to have no idea about validating the pass on the first day of use. There are recorded instances of staff saying that the conductor would validate the pass, and the conductor simply treating it as a regular ticket. Fortunately, the international ticket staff (particularly in Zagreb) are aware of how to validate the pass, and have been known to validate it retroactively where necessary. They even ask for the details of the domestic ticket seller who gave the wrong information.

The traveller is therefore recommended to have already validated their Eurail pass on arrival in Croatia, or to have it validated at an international window even if the first trip on it will be domestic.

1.5.4 By car

To enter Croatia, a driver's license, an automobile registration card and vehicle insurance documents are required. If you need road assistance, you should dial 1987. The following speeds are permitted:

- 50 km/h - within built-up areas
- 90 km/h - outside built-up areas
- 110 km/h - on major motor routes
- 130 km/h - on motorways
- 80 km/h - for motor vehicles with a caravan trailer
- 80 km/h - for buses and buses with a light trailer

When driving in the rain, you should adjust speed to conditions on wet roads. Driving with headlights is not obligatory during the day (during Daylight Savings Time; it is obligatory during winter months). Use of mobile phones while driving is not permitted. Maximum permitted amount of alcohol in blood is 0.05% (matching neighboring Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina) although this has varied and was down to 0% until that was found to not be tenable in the country. Use of seat belts is obligatory.

Hrvatski Auto Klub is the Croatian Automobile Club dedicated to assisting drivers and promoting greater traffic security. Its site offers minute-by-minute updates, status of national traffic, weather, numerous maps and webcams located all over Croatia. Content is available in Croatian, English, German and Italian.

1.5.5 By bus

Very good network of buses once in the country - cheap and regular.

If you are coming from Italy there are two buses daily from Venice leaving at 11AM and 1:45PM going to Istria, with a final stop in Pula. These are operated by two different bus companies, but you can buy tickets for both buses at the A.T.V.O bus office at the Venice bus station. The office is in the bus station, but located outside on the ground level across from where all the buses park. Both buses pick up at spot b15. It is roughly a 5 hour bus ride, with stops in Trieste and Rovinj. You can also pick up the bus at the bus station in Mestre, fifteen minutes after the scheduled bus leaves Venice. Coming in from Trieste, Italy is popular among Europeans, for Trieste is a Ryanair destination. You cross the Italian-Slovenian border first, followed by the Slovenian-Croatian border, but they are very close to one another.

Dubrovnik and Split are the main destinations of international buses from Bosnia and Herzegovina or Montenegro, with daily buses traveling to cities such as Sarajevo, Mostar and Kotor (some lines such as Split-Mostar operate every few hours). Seasonal lines also extend through Skopje from Dubrovnik. Border formalities on the buses are extremely efficient, and do not involve leaving the bus (previous services from Dubrovnik to Kotor involved changing buses at the Croatian border).

Osijek is a very big bus hub for international travel to **Hungary**, **Serbia** and **Bosnia** in addition to its local buses, and the station is located conveniently next to the railway station. Many buses heading from Zagreb north into Hungary or **Austria** will pass through **Varaždin**.

- From **Germany** with Čazmatrans .

1.5.6 By boat

Ferries are cheap and go regularly between various places by the coast. Although not the fastest, they are probably the best way to see the beautiful Croatian islands of the Adriatic Sea.

Jadrolinija is the main Croatian passenger shipping line that maintains the largest number of regular international and domestic ferry and shipping lines. The following international lines are serviced by car ferries:

- Rijeka - Zadar - Split - Hvar - Korčula -Dubrovnik - Bari
- Split - Ancona - Split
- Korčula - Hvar - Split - Ancona
- Zadar - Ancona - Zadar
- Zadar - Dugi otok - Ancona
- Dubrovnik - Bari - Dubrovnik

Blue Line International also covers the international line:

- Split - Ancona - Split

Venezia Lines has regular catamaran lines between **Venice** and the Croatian cities of **Poreč**, **Pula**, **Rovinj** and **Rabac**.

1.6 Get around

1.6.1 By plane

National airline company **Croatia Airlines** connects major cities in Croatia to each other and foreign destinations. Due to the comparatively short distances and relatively high hassle of air travel - especially when you travel with luggage - domestic air travel is used mostly for getting to end points - e.g., Zagreb to Dubrovnik (see map) and vice-versa.

Another popular flight (available in the summer months only) is between Split and Osijek, saving a long trip back through Croatia, or alternatively through the middle of Bosnia.

1.6.2 By train

Train travel is definitely improving in Croatia, with money being spent on updating the aging infrastructure and vehicles. Trains are clean and mostly on time.

Croatia's rail network connects all major Croatian cities, except **Dubrovnik**. If you want to visit Dubrovnik, you will have to travel by train to **Split**, and then go on the bus for **Dubrovnik**. Trains to **Pula** are actually connected via **Slovenia** due to historical accident, though there are designated connecting buses from **Rijeka**.

Rail is still the cheapest connection between inland and coast, though not the most frequent. 160km/h "tilting trains" that connect **Zagreb** with **Split** and other major cities in Croatia such as **Rijeka** and **Osijek** have been introduced, resulting in higher levels of comfort and significantly faster journeys between cities (Zagreb-Split is now 5.5h from 9, Osijek is now 3 when other trains take around 4.5h). If you make a reservation early enough you can get a substantial discount, or if you are a holder of an ISIC card etc.

Information for the trains can be found on the Hrvatske željeznice - Croatian Railways site in Croatian and English has timetable and prices.

Tickets are not usually sold on board, except if you happen to get on the train on one of the few stations/stops without ticket sales. However, only local trains stop on such stations. In all other cases, a ticket bought on the train will cost considerably more than the one bought outside the train.

1.6.3 By bus

A very comprehensive coach network connects all parts of the country. Bus service between major cities (intercity lines) is quite frequent, as well as regional services. The most frequent bus terminal in Croatia is Bus Terminal Zagreb (in Croatian “Autobusni kolodvor Zagreb”). Despite the recent improvements in the railway network, buses are faster than trains for inter-city travel. See [Bus travel in the former Yugoslavia](#) for more information.

- [Autobusni kolodvor Zagreb](#) - Bus Terminal Zagreb, timetable information, content in Croatian, English
- [CroatiaBus](#) - bus company - timetable information, prices, content in Croatian and English.
- [Autotrans Rijeka](#) - bus company - timetable information, prices, content in Croatian and English.
- [Autobusni promet Varaždin](#) - bus company - timetable information, prices, content in Croatian, English and German.
- [Contus](#) - bus company - timetable information, prices, content in Croatian and English.
- [Libertas Dubrovnik](#) - bus terminal and company information in Dubrovnik, with international and domestic information. Content mostly in Croatian.

1.6.4 By boat

Croatia is endowed with a beautiful coastline which is best explored by ferry to access the hundreds of islands.

In many instances, the only way to get to the islands is by ferry or catamaran. If you plan on using either you should check these web sites because they have the regular ferry and catamaran information.

- [Jadrolinija](#) - Jadrolinija is the Croatian National ferry company, and as well as routes operating from the major cities to the islands, operate a ferry along the Adriatic Coast from Rijeka to Dubrovnik (and then across to Bari, Italy) calling at Split, Hvar, Mljet and Korčula. Check timetables as the schedules are seasonal. The boats are large and have sleeping facilities as the Rijeka-Split leg goes overnight.
- [SNAV](#) is an Italian company connecting Split with Ancona and Pescara. Check timetables as the schedules are seasonal.
- [Azzura lines](#), is an Italian operator connecting Dubrovnik with Bari Check timetables as the schedules are seasonal.
- [Split Hvar taxi boat](#) Taxi boat service that works from 0-24H and can take you anywhere you want.
- [Yacht Charter in Croatia](#), a charter company with one of the largest fleets, situated in Split ACI Marina.
- [A Yacht Charter Croatia](#) offers a variety of sailing yachts, gulets and catamarans.
- [Antlos](#) offers a selection of skippered yacht holidays in Croatia, including Split, Hvar, Brac and the whole of the Dalmatian Coast.
- [Navis Yacht Charter](#) services are intended for those who want to explore coast and hidden bays by sea for one week or more.
- [Europe Yachts Charter](#) Europe Yachts Charter offers you chartering services in Croatia and some other Mediterranean countries.
- [Croatia Cruise Cabin Charter](#) Discover a completely new cruising experience that gives you the freedom to sail individually or in smaller groups.

- **Crewed Yacht Charter in Croatia** Lion Queen charter offers Gulet Cruises Croatia as one of the main specialist in this area.
- If traveling as an individual or small group tour operators like **Med Experience** offer individual spots on a yacht trip down the coast.
- **Map with Croatian yachting marinas** There are 6 main regions where you can charter a yacht: Istria, Kvarner gulf, Zadar region, Sibenik region, Split region and Dubrovnik. All of them all well-communicated with Croatian airports.

Outside the summer months it is often difficult or impossible to make a day trip to the more remote islands. This is because ferry schedules are made to suit commuters who live on islands and travel to the mainland, not vice versa.

1.6.5 By car

Roads in Croatia are usually well maintained, but usually very narrow and full of curves. Some local roads in Istria have been worn down to a smooth surface from regular wear and tear, and can be extremely slippery when wet. It's difficult to find a true highway with more than one lane per direction, the only exceptions being the ones connecting Rijeka, Zagreb, Osijek, Zadar and Split. Speed limits are thus low (60–90 km/h), and it's not recommended to drive faster (although most locals do), especially at night. Be aware of animals crossing the road. In case you want to overtake a slow vehicle on a narrow road, often the drivers in front of you will set the right yellow turning lights, and drive on the very right side, to sign the drivers behind, that it is ok to overtake. But on your own risk.

Renting a car is around the same price as in the EU (from around €40). Almost all cars have a manual transmission. Most rental agencies in the Balkans allow you to rent a car in one country and drive in the neighboring countries however try to avoid a renting a car in Serbia and driving it into Croatia (or vice versa) in order to avoid negative attention from nationalists.

On Croatian Motorways toll fees apply (and may be paid in either kuna or euros). The A6 motorway between Zagreb and Rijeka was finished at the end of 2008, while the main motorway A1 from Zagreb to Dubrovnik is still under construction (the current ending point is in Vrgorac, which is 70 km from Dubrovnik). Note that to reach southern Dalmatia including Dubrovnik, you need to cross a short portion of Bosnia-Herzegovina, so check if you need a visa or other special requirements for entry into Bosnia (EU and US citizens don't need a visa). Another major motorway is the A3, linking the Slovenian border (not far from Zagreb) with eastern Croatia and the Serbian border (120 km from Belgrade). The general speed limit on motorways is 130 km/h (81 mph). You will probably encounter cars driving much faster, but following their example is of course highly unsafe.

When exiting a toll motorway, ask the receipt at toll booth if it is not given to you to be sure you do not get overcharged (you could receive along with the receipt some unexpected change compared with the price you were given verbally)

If an unknown person flashes their car lights at you it may be a sign that they've recently passed a police unit doing speed limit checks. Ensure you are in compliance with all the traffic rules and regulations to avoid being stopped and fined.

Trying to find a parking space near Croatia's coastal old towns in the summer can be an exercise in futility. Even though prices range from the merely expensive 7 kn in Split to the extortionate 30 kn per hour in Dubrovnik, the spaces fill up very quickly. However, away from the old towns, parking is convenient and often free at shopping malls and large supermarkets, sports venues, near residential tower blocks and at restaurants (free for guests).

1.6.6 By taxi

You can use a taxi service by calling 970, or sometimes another number for a private company – check individual city articles. The taxi usually comes within 10 to 15 minutes from the call except in the busy summer season where it depends on how much business they have. Croatian taxis are generally rather expensive.

You can also book the transportation in advance which is great when you are in a hurry or have a larger number of people in need of transportation, or you just want everything organized in advance.

You can also prearrange a taxi service by E-mail in advance to have even more comfort and to save money since this taxi operators are cheaper than the regular taxi service.

1.6.7 By thumb

Hitchhiking is generally good. If you can get to a highway toll stop simply ask people to take you with them as they open their windows to pay the toll. The toll collectors usually won't mind. The tricky part, of course, is to get to the toll stop. If you are in **Zagreb** and you are, like most people, heading south, take the bus 111 from the Savski most station in **Zagreb** and ask the bus driver where to get off to get to the toll stop. Next best place to ask people to pick you up are gas stations. And finally, just using the good old thumb will work too if everything else fails. On some roads, hitchhiking is not permitted. Roads on which you cannot hitchhike are usually denoted by a sign with the word 'autostop' crossed out ('autostop' is Croatian for 'hitchhiking').

1.7 Talk

See also: Croatian phrasebook

The main language is **Croatian**, that is a Slavic language which is very similar to **Serbian** and **Bosnian**.

Many Croats can speak English to some level, but **German** and **Italian** are also very popular too (largely because of the large annual influx of German and Italian tourists). Elderly people will rarely speak English, although they may be able to converse in German or Italian. If you know **Polish** or **Czech** then these languages have some similarities to Croatian. Some people might also speak **French** or **Russian**. Many older people can speak Russian but this has largely been supplanted by English among the younger generations.

1.8 See

Croatia has an impressive history, a fact that is best explained through the vast array of sites worth visiting. Most towns have an historical centre with its typical architecture. There are differences between the coast and the continental part, so both areas are a must. The most famous town is probably **Dubrovnik**, a prime example of the coastal architecture, but by no means the only one worth visiting. Equally important is the capital and largest city, **Zagreb**, with a population of about 1 million. It is a modern city with all the modern features, yet it has a laid back feel. In the east, in the region of **Slavonia** with its regional capital **Osijek** and the war torn **Vukovar** are awe inspiring. Scattered throughout the region are vineyards and wine cellars, most of which give tours and tastings.

Throughout the country there are numerous cultural venues that are worth seeing. Croatia has 7 **UNESCO** protected sites, 8 national parks and 10 nature parks. In total, the country has 444 protected areas. Beautiful Adriatic sea stretches along 1,777 km (1,104 mi) of coastline, there are 1,246 islands to be seen making Croatia an attractive nautical destination.

1.9 Do

1.9.1 Sailing

Sailing is a good way to see the coastal islands and networks of small archipelagos. Most charters leave from **Split** or the surrounding area on the North or the South circuit, each offering its own pros and cons. A good way is to book a package with a company at home, although many Croatian companies also offer both bareboat and crewed charters.

Booking of a charter vessel is basically done in two parts. Fifty percent of the charter price is paid right away, after which the booking is confirmed. The other fifty percent of the charter fee is usually paid four weeks before the charter date. Before the first payment of the charter fee you should request to see the charter contract from the agency where you chartered a boat. Pay close attention to cancellation fees because many times if you cancel your charter vacation you could lose the initial fifty percent you already paid when you booked a charter so take a close look at that in the charter contract. After that you are set for a sailing vacation.

When you arrive to marina where your chartered yacht is situated you need to do the check in (usually Saturday around 16:00) and you have to do the shopping for the charter vacation. Don't neglect the groceries shopping because the sea is unpredictable and you don't want to get stuck on the boat without anything to eat or drink.

You can do the shopping in a marina (although the prices are much higher there) or you can order from yacht provisioning services who usually deliver the products to your chartered yacht at no extra fee. This is convenient because it takes the load off you and the things you must do when you arrive at the marina for your sailing holiday.

1.9.2 Naturist resorts

Croatia was the first country in Europe to start with the concept of commercial naturist resorts. According to some estimates about 15% of all tourists that visit the country are naturists or nudists (more than one million each year). There are more than 20 official naturist resorts as well as a very large number of the so-called free beaches which are unofficial naturist beaches, sometimes controlled and maintained by local tourist authorities. In fact, you are likely to find nudists on any beach outside of town centres. Naturist beaches in Croatia are marked as “FKK”.

The most popular nudist destinations are Pula, Hvar and island Rab.

1.9.3 Medical tourism

Increasingly Croatia is becoming a popular place for health tourism. A number of dental surgeries have experience in treating short term visitors to Croatia. Croatian dentists study for 5 years in Zagreb or Rijeka. Harmonization of training with EU standards has begun, in preparation for Croatia's accession.

1.9.4 Croatia for the disabled

Facilities for the disabled are not as developed as elsewhere, but there are exceptions to this and certain hotels, camp sites and beaches have facilities for the disabled and wheelchair access.

1.9.5 Lighthouses

One of Croatia's more “wild” holiday offers are the lighthouses. Most of them are situated on a deserted coastline or in the open sea. The speciality of this is that you are able to cut yourself off from the rest of the world and take the time to “smell the roses”. Sometimes the best way to relax is to take part in a Robinson Crusoe style holiday.

Croatia has 11 rent-a-lighthouses along the Adriatic coast: Savudrija, Sv. Ivan, Rt Zub, Porer, Veli Rat, Prisnjak, Sv. Petar, Pločica, Sušac, Struga and Palagruža.

1.10 Buy

1.10.1 Money

Croatia's official currency is the kuna, denoted by the symbol "kn" (ISO code: HRK). Although many tourist business owners may accept euros, they are not legal tender in Croatia. Any amount of kuna you have left at the end of your stay can be converted to euros at a local bank or exchange office.

Prices are around 10% to 20% lower than most other EU countries. Tourist destinations and articles are much more expensive.

1.10.2 ATMs

ATMs (in Croatian *bankomat*) are readily available throughout Croatia. They will accept various European bank cards, credit cards (Diners Club, Eurocard/MasterCard, Visa, American Express etc.) and debit cards (Cirrus, Maestro, Visa electron etc.). Read the labels/notices on the machine before using.

1.10.3 Tipping

Tipping is not particularly common, although it may occur in restaurants and bars. Prices are usually already adjusted upwards, and labour laws ensure a minimum wage for all workers, therefore tipping is usually not expected.

Taxi drivers and hairdressers are often given tips by rounding up the displayed price to the nearest multiple of 5 or 10 kuna.

A unique practice of tipping exists among the pensioners who receive their pension via mail in rural settlements. They may leave any coinage to the postman who delivers it as a sign of appreciation.

1.10.4 Tax-free shopping

If you buy goods worth more than 740 kuna you are entitled to a PDV (VAT) tax return when leaving the country. Note that this applies to all goods except petroleum products. At point of purchase ask the sales person for a PDV-P form. Fill it out and have it stamped on the spot. On leaving Croatia the receipt will be verified by the Croatian Customs service. A PDV refund in Kunas can be obtained within six months, either at the same shop where you bought the goods (in that case the tax will be refunded to you immediately), or by posting the verified receipt back to the shop, together with the account number into which the refund should be paid. In this case the refund is dealt with within 15 days of receipt of the claim. There is another, much easier way to receive the refund. Buy your goods in shops with a “CROATIA TAX-FREE SHOPPING” label. This label is displayed on the shop’s entrance, usually next to the labels of credit and debit cards this particular shop accepts. Using an international coupon, refund is possible in all countries-members of the TAX-FREE international chain. In this case the service charge is deducted from the tax refund amount.

Croatia now uses the Global Blue system. They will do the refund and take a commission. You can do this at the airport or post it once you get home.

1.10.5 Natural cosmetics

The ingredients used (herbs, olive oil, etc.) are grown in Croatia. In comparison to some world famous beauty products, Croatian natural cosmetics present real value for the money.

Ulola manufacturers soaps, bath salts, body butters and more. It’s all natural and comes in combinations like: orange and cinnamon, goats milk and almond oil, etc.

S-Atea manufacturers soaps, shower gels, body butter and more. Seaweed, olive oil, rosemary and lavender are some of their main ingredients.

Brac fini sapuni (Brac quality soaps) manufacturers a wide range of natural soaps, the latest addition to their bath line is Aurum Croaticum made from virgin olive oil and thin leafs of 23 carat gold!

1.10.6 Croatian clothing designers

There are many Croatian designers and clothing specialists.

Etnobutik “Mara” (designs by Vesna Milković) offers a range of really unique clothing and accessories inscribed with “glagoljica” (glagolitic script; old Slavic alphabet). Some of her designs are protected as Authentic Croatian produce.

I-gle Fashion Studio by two female designers Nataša Mihaljčičin i Martina Vrdoljak-Ranilović. Their clothing is sold in Harvey Nichols in Knightsbridge (London).;

Nebo (“Sky”) is a fashion house that makes really nice, funky clothes and shoes.

Nit (“Thread”) is definitely not widely known even among Croats but is definitely worth visiting as they have some “funky and arty but serious” clothing items that are “value for money”.

Borovo is a well-priced and stylish shoe company which makes everything from flip-flops to desert boots and high heels.

1.11 Eat

Croatian cuisine is quite diverse so it is hard to say what meal is most typically Croatian. In the eastern continental regions (Slavonija and Baranja) spicy sausage such as *kulen* or *kulenova seka* is a must-try. *Čobanac* (“shepherd’s stew”) is a mixture of several different kinds of meat with a lot of red spicy paprika. In Hrvatsko Zagorje and Central Croatia pasta filled with cheese called *štrukli* is a famous delicacy (it is said that the best štrukli in Croatia is served in the Esplanade Hotel restaurant in Zagreb), as is *purica s mlincima* (baked turkey with a special kind of pastry). *Sir i vrhnje* (sour cream with cottage cheese) can be bought fresh on the Zagreb main market Dolac. Croats love a bit of oil and you will find plenty of it in *piroška*. In mountainous regions of Lika and Gorski Kotar meals made of mushrooms, wild berries and wild meat are very popular. One of typical dishes in Lika is *police* (oven-baked potatoes covered with bacon) and several kinds of cheese (smoked cheese and *škipavac*).

The coastal region is well known for truffle delicacies and soup *maneštra od bobić* (Istria), Dalmatian *pršut* and *paški sir* (Pag-island cheese). Dishes made of fresh fish and other products of the sea (calamari, octopus, crabs, scampi) shouldn’t be given a miss! Many places serve fish delivered from the local fisherman the night before - find out which ones!

Croatian cuisine has yet to come up with a Croatian fast food representative. The market is dominated by globally ubiquitous hamburgers and pizzas but you will also find “burek” and “ćevapčići” imported from the medieval Ottoman empire which stretched from Turkey to neighboring Bosnia. The latter two dishes are widely popular in the entire South and Eastern Europe. Burek is a type of cheese-pastry whereas *ćevapčići* are seasoned minced meat shaped in finger-size portions served in bread and often covered with onions. Although definitely not a fast meal (takes several hours to prepare) also foreign in origin is the so-called *sarma* or sauerkraut rolls filled with minced meat and rice. For those coming back from nightclubs at 4 or 5AM as is common in Croatia, it is popular to go to the local bakery and get fresh bread, burek or krafne (Croatian chocolate filled donuts) straight out of the oven. Delicious! As far as fast food goes, who needs it when you can buy delicious prsut during the day and warm bread at night to compliment it. Most Croatians generally look down at fast food.

Desserts: What it lacks in the fast food department Croatia makes up with a myriad of desserts. Probably the most famous is its delicious creamy cake called *kremšnite* but different kinds of *gibanica*, *štrudla* and *pita* (similar to strudel and pie) such as *orehnjača* (walnut), *makovnjača* (poppy) or *bučnica* (pumpkin and cheese) are also highly recommended. *Dubrovačka torta od skorupa* is delicious but hard to find. *Paprenjaci* (pepper cookies) are said to reflect the Croatian tumultuous history because they combine the harshness of the war periods (pepper) with the natural beauties (honey). They can be bought in most souvenir shops though fresh-made are always a better choice. *Rapska torta* (The Rab island cake) is made with almonds and locally famous cherry liquor *Maraschino*. It should be noted that this is hardly an exhaustive list and even a casual glimpse in any Croatian cookbook is likely to be worth the effort. Chocolate candy “*Bajadera*” is available throughout shops in the country and along with “*Griotte*” is one of the most famous products of the Croatian chocolate industry.

An unavoidable ingredient in many meals prepared in Croatia is “Vegeta”. It is a spice produced by “Podravka”.

Olives: a lot of people claim that Croatian olives and their olive oil are the best in the world, which is not even well known in Croatia and less worldwide. Many brands exist and some of them have several world awards. Try to buy olive oil from Istra (although oil from Dalmatia is also excellent) and choose only Croatian brands for olives (most notable ones, few times awarded as the world’s best!). Try to read the declaration before buying to ensure you are buying Croatian olives and oil, since there are a lot of imports (usually cheap products from Greece). All of this can be found in most of the supermarkets, but you should be really aware of the imports, most of the Croatian people aren’t experts and prefer cheaper products, so they dominate. The olive oil is an irreplaceable “ingredient” in the coastal cuisine, but you should be aware of the use of cheaper, not Croatian, oil in restaurants because most of the tourists don’t notice the difference so the restaurants don’t find it profitable to use excellent oil; they rather use cheaper Spanish or Greek. Usually, asking the waiter for a better oil (and looking like an expert) helps, and soon he gets you a first-class oil from a hidden place.

1.12 Drink

Alcoholic: **Rakija**, a type of brandy which can be made of plum (*šljivovica*), grapes (*loza*), figs (*smokovača*), honey (*medica*) and many other types of fruit and aromatic herbs, is the main distilled beverage served in Croatia. **Pelinkovac** is a bitter herbal liquor popular in Central Croatia, but is said to resemble cough-medicine in flavor. Famous **Maraschino**, a liqueur flavored with Marasca cherries, which are grown around Zadar, **Dalmatia**.

Croatia also produces a broad palette of high quality wines (up to 700 wines with protected geographic origin), beers and mineral water. On the coast people usually serve “bevanda” with meals. Bevanda is heavy, richly flavored red wine mixed with plain water. Its counterpart in northern parts of Croatia is “gemišt”. This term designates dry, flavored white wines mixed with mineral water.

Two popular domestic beers are “Karlovačko” and “Ožujsko”, but “Velebitsko” and “Tomislav pivo” have received a semi-cult status in the recent years. It is served only in some places in Zagreb and Croatia. Many well-known European brands (Stella Artois, Beck’s, Carling, Heineken and others) are made under license in Croatia.

Non-alcoholic: Mineral water, fruit juices, coffee (espresso, Turkish or instant), tea, Cedevita (instant multivitamin drink), and drinkable yogurt. Sometimes although very rarely you may find “sok od bazge” (elderflower juice) in the continental region. Worth trying! Also, in Istria there is a drink called “pašareta” and it is a sparkling red drink with herbal extracts. Very sweet and refreshing! In some parts of Istria (especially south) in local basements, you can try ‘smrikva’ - a non alcoholic refreshing drink made out of berries which grow on one sort of pine tree. The taste is a bit sour but very refreshing.

Alcoholic drinks can't be sold or served to anyone under 18, though this rule isn't strictly enforced.

1.13 Sleep

In Croatia there are 6 major types of accommodation:

- Apartments
- Small private hotels
- Two- and three-star hotel resorts, for typical mass tourism
- Five-star luxury hotels
- Lighthouses
- Private islands

1.14 Learn

European Union citizens have the same status as Croatian citizens when applying to Croatian universities. Full English-language courses in computer science and medicine are available in Zagreb and Split.

1.15 Work

1.15.1 Volunteering

Croatia is the destination of many worldwide volunteer organizations that send groups of volunteers throughout the year to help with agriculture, community development, education, animal welfare, and more. These programs are put together by nonprofits, community groups and volunteers to help locals improve their economy and way of life. With rich cultural history and stunning coastline, Croatia is truly is the jewel of eastern Europe. If you would like to travel to Croatia as a volunteer, visit these websites for volunteer programs, accommodations, travel dates, and tours.

- [Essential Croatia](#)
- [ISV Croatia](#)
- [Volunteers Centre Zagreb](#)

1.16 Stay safe

During summer make sure you use adequate SPF to protect yourself from sunburn. There are no ozone holes over Croatia but it's fairly easy to burn in the sun. If this happens make sure you get out of the sun, drink plenty of fluids and rehydrate your skin. The locals will often advise covering the burnt spot with cold yogurt bought from the supermarket.

In case of an emergency you can dial 112 - responsible for dispatching all emergency services such as fire departments, police, emergency medical assistance and mountain rescue.

Since the hostilities ended in 1995, there remain an estimated 46.317 landmines in Croatia. However these are not to be found in areas visited by tourists. If you plan to hike consult locals before you go. The mine suspected areas are marked with 13.274 mine warning signs. Although mine are still problem for Croatia, it is highly unlikely you will spot any minefields in Croatia today.

If you find yourself in area that can be potential contaminated with mines, do not stray from marked roads or known safe areas. For further advice refer to Wikivoyage's [war zone safety](#) section.

Watch out for *bura* wind danger signs. The bura can be particularly strong in the Velebit area, where it can blow up to 200 km/h and overturn lorries. However, if the wind is strong enough to pose a significant danger to all traffic on a road section, that section will be closed. During strong bura wind, avoid any activity on the sea. Accidents caused by wind occurs every year and claim tourists lives in Croatia. From sailing accidents to drownings due to high water.

Avoid strip clubs at all costs. They are often run by very shady characters, and often overcharge their guests. Recent cases include foreigners who were charged 2000 euros for a bottle of champagne. These clubs overcharge their customers to the extreme, and their bouncers will not have any mercy if you tell them you can't pay. You will soon find yourself in a local hospital. Using common sense is essential, but due to the nature of the clubs this may be in short supply, and you may be better advised simply to steer well clear of these clubs.

Abuse of **LGBT** people is possible in Croatia, so travelers should avoid public displays of same-sex affection.

1.17 Stay healthy

No vaccinations are required when going to Croatia.

If you're going camping or hiking in continental Croatia during summer, you should be aware of ticks and tick-carrying diseases such as *encephalitis* and *lyme disease*. Approximately 3 ticks in 1000 carry the virus.

In Eastern Slavonia (particularly around the Kopački Rit near Osijek) wear long sleeves and take insect repellent.

Tap water in Croatia is perfectly safe, and in some areas considered the best in the world. However, you can still choose from several brands of excellent bottled water (Jamnica being the most popular, and Jana, several times awarded as the world's best bottled water).

Though the water may be some of the best in the world, avoid drinking the home-made wine sold in refilled plastic jugs in many local farmers' markets as it may cause intestinal distress.

1.18 Respect

Keep in mind that the 1990s were marked by ethnic conflict and the bloody and brutal war in Croatia is still a painful subject, but generally there should be no problem if you approach that topic with respect. Visitors will find that domestic politics and European affairs are everyday conversation subjects in Croatia.

Visitors should avoid describing Croatia as a Balkan country, as Croats prefer to think of their country as Mediterranean and Central European, and some will take offence at the word "Balkan." Geographically, southern and coastal Croatia is part of the Balkans, while areas north of the Sava and Kupa rivers are not.

Socially, displays of affection among the younger generation are the same as Western European standards, but the older generation (over 65) are still quite conservative.

When driving on rural roads, particularly when a driver has to pull in to allow you to pass, it is customary to wave a thanks to the other driver by raising your hand from the steering wheel.

Most Croats will respond to “thank you” with something along the lines of “It was nothing” or “not at all” which is equivalent to the English “Don't mention it”.

1.19 Connect

1.19.1 Telephone

Croatia uses the GSM 900/1800 system for mobile phones. There are three providers, T-Mobile (also operates the Bonbon prepaid brand), Vip (also operates the Tomato prepaid brand) and Tele2. Over 98% of the country's area is covered. Since 2006 UMTS (3G) is available as well, and as of 2013 also HSDPA and LTE. If you have an unlocked phone, you can buy a prepaid SIM card for 20 kn. There have been promotions in which SIM cards were given away for free with newspapers (7 kn) and sometimes even literally handed out on the street. GSM phones bundled with T-Mobile or Vip prepaid SIM cards can be found in post offices, grocery stores and kiosks at varying prices.

An alternative to using a mobile phone is Calling Cards which can be found in postal offices and kiosks, there are two providers, Dencall and Hitme. You can buy cards from 25 kn.

Area Codes: When calling between cities (actually between counties) or from a mobile phone, you must dial specific area codes: (area code)+(phone number)

Zagreb (01) Split (021) Rijeka (051) Dubrovnik (020) Šibenik/Knin (022) Zadar (023) Osijek (031) Vukovar (032) Virovitica (033) Požega (034) Slavonski Brod (035) Čakovec (040) Varaždin (042) Bjelovar (043) Sisak (044) Karlovac (047) Koprivnica (048) Krapina (049) Istria (052) Lika/Senj (053) Mobile phones (091) (092) (095) (097) (098) or (099)

1.19.2 Internet

ADSL is common in Croatia. A 4 Mbit connection with unlimited downloads costs 178 kn (€24) per month via T-Com and just 99 kn with some other providers like Metronet or Iskon. Cable internet is available from B.net with a wide range of speeds and prices.

Internet cafés are available in all major cities. They are relatively cheap and reliable. A free Wi-Fi signal can be found virtually in every city (cafés, restaurants, hotels, some libraries, schools, colleges). Private unsecured networks have become uncommon.

1.19.3 Postal service

Croatia's postal service is generally reliable, even if sometimes a bit slow. Every city and town has a post office. [Here](#) you can find their exact locations, and [here](#) is the price list (the prices change often).

1.19.4 Television, radio and printed media

HRT, the public television broadcaster, operates four channels, while the commercial networks RTL and Nova TV have two channels each. Foreign films and series are shown with sound in the original language (English, Turkish, German, Italian...) and Croatian subtitles. Only children's programming is dubbed. Many hotels and private apartments have some channels from other European countries (mostly from Germany).

Radio stations that feature English-language pop/rock music are HRT-HR 2, Otvoreni and Totalni. They all have occasional traffic reports, but only HR 2 translates them into English, German and Italian during the summer. Other nationwide stations are HRT-HR 1 (news/features), HRT-HR 3 (mostly classical music), Narodni (Croatian pop) and HKR (Catholic radio).

Newspapers and magazines from Germany, Austria, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Russia, Slovenia, Serbia and other countries are available in Croatia. In Zagreb and the northern coastal areas some foreign newspapers arrive on the cover date, elsewhere they are late.

Chapter 2

Istria

Istria (Croatian: *Istra*) is the north-westernmost region of **Croatia**. In a triangular shape, it is bordered in the north by **Slovenia**, east by the **Kvarner** region of Croatia and on the south and west by the Adriatic Sea.

2.1 Cities

- Buje
- Motovun
- Pazin
- Poreč
- Pula
- Rovinj
- Umag

2.2 Other destinations

- Beram
- Brijuni
- Cape Kamenjak
- Groznjan
- Hum
- Limski kanal
- Vrsar

2.3 Understand

Formerly part of the Venetian Empire, this region has seen many empires such as Byzantine, Roman, Austro-Hungarian, and Yugoslavian (Communist). The cultural legacy of Istria is thus very rich and diverse.

After defeating the Illyrian Histri tribe, the Romans settled in the peninsula and left a large heritage, turning **Pula** into an important administrative centre and building villas, amphitheatres and temples. After the fall of the **Roman Empire**, the inner land remained a feudal territory occupied by Slavs, Frankish, Byzantines and finally Austrian Habsburgs,

while the coast fell under control of the Republic of Venice in the 13th century. Intermittent combats were held between both powers until the fall of Venice in 1797. Since that date, the Croatian population of Istria struggled for autonomy and were severely repressed both by Austrians and Fascist Italy (after World War I), eventually ending with a revenge from Yugoslav partisans after the World War II, forcing most autochthonous ethnic Italians to leave. A small ethnic Italian community still lives in the coastal towns. Relatively spared from the Yugoslav Wars, Istria is now a prosperous region. Latter years have seen a growing regional sentiment and a reconciliation with its previously conflictive Italian identity.

The peninsula offers stark contrasts: the interior is very unspoiled and mountainous with ancient walled cities atop hills with surrounding fertile fields, whilst the coast has numerous beaches -do not expect any sand in them, though- and stunning scenery of rocky walls plummeting into the sea. The Istrian coast is arguably the most developed tourist destination in Croatia. Hordes of Italian, German and French tourists enjoy package tourism during the crowded high season.

Although **Pula** is the main town, according to population and culture, relatively rural **Pazin** is the administrative centre of the peninsula.

2.4 Talk

Croatian is the official and most common language, but in these formerly Venetian lands Italian is nearly universally understood. There is still an Italian ethnic community in many coastal towns. German is also very widely spoken. Most restaurants in the main town also have an English speaker or two on staff. Some market sellers will initially address you in all four ("Izvolite, Prego, Bitte, How can I help you?").

2.5 Get in

Pula is the main transportation hub for Istria so most people will arrive there if they are not driving. Some boat lines arrive to **Poreč**, too.

2.5.1 By bus

Buses run from **Trieste** in **Italy**, **Zagreb** and other major cities to **Pazin** in the centre of Istria, and most to **Pula** in the South.

2.5.2 By air

Ryanair provides a connection **London** (Stansted) to **Pula** three days a week, and **Dublin Pula** also. Scandjet connects **Pula** to **Oslo**, **Copenhagen** and **Stockholm** once a week (on Saturdays) during the summer. Eurowings also serves **Pula**.

2.5.3 By train

Trains run daily between **Ljubljana** in **Slovenia** and **Pula**, and from **Rijeka** to **Ljubljana**. Unfortunately due to historical accident, the two train lines do not meet up despite some works having been commenced on a rail tunnel to link the two short distances.

2.5.4 By Boat

Venezia Lines is a high speed ferry operator that operated its first trip in May 2003. Operating in the North Adriatic, Venezia Lines links the North Adriatic's coasts of Italy and Croatia. From May 2003 to October 2009, Venezia Lines has carried more than 450.000 passengers between Venice and the Northern Coast of Croatia. In the North Adriatic Venezia Lines is currently utilising 2 vessels, San Frangisk and her sister vessel San Pawl, both with a capacity of 310 passenger. They are currently deployed on routes between Venice, Italy and the Croatian ports of Mali Losinj, Porec, Pula, Rabac and Rovinj.

2.6 See

- **Roman structures** in **Pula**, including the Arena and Forum.
- The old Venetian town of **Rovinj**.
- **St Euphrasius Basilica** in **Poreč**.
- The many **beaches** along the coast.
- **Brijuni** (Brioni) Islands - private playground of Tito including an international zoo, dinosaur footprints and Roman and Byzantine ruins.
- Hill-top villages of **Groznjan** and **Motovun**, populated by artist communities.
- Magnificent frescoes of **Our Lady of the Rocks** chapel in **Beram**.

2.6.1 Itineraries

Istria is a fine region to practise hiking and biking, as much in the mountainous inland as in the coast.

The Southern end of Istria is arguably the best place for biking. Ask for a bike map in **Pula** Tourist Office, showing well-marked routes around the coast and in the **Cape Kamenjak**.

With diversity at the heart of Istria, you'll delight in new culinary experiences and reconnect with traditional flavors.

2.7 Do

- Visit Lovran, Istria, near Opatija, for the **Days of Cherries Festival** in June
- Join the **Truffle Days** festival in the **Motovun/Buzet** area in late September
- Attend a music or folklore performance in the unique atmosphere of the **Pula Arena**
- **Motovun Film Festival**, Motovun (*On the main road between Buzet and Buje*), ☎ +385 1 374 07 07. Internationally-renowned film festival in the hilltop Northern town of Motovun.
- Visit Groznjan and its jazz Festival

2.8 Eat

Istrian gastronomy is known by its huge diversity. Pasta, gnocchi, risotto and polenta, as well as its high-quality vegetables (which can be found, at a cheap price, in any of the numerous open-air markets present in almost every Istrian town), accompany main dishes, as an Italian heritage. Especially, Istrian peppers have international recognition.

At the coast, fresh fish and seafood are a tradition. Scampi is the favourite, together with squid and sole. In the inland, air-cured ham (Prsut) and sausages are the highlights.

But the gastronomic pearl is no doubt the **truffles**. After the beginning of the season, in late September, truffles can be found accompanying any dish and sauce. Especially recommended is pasta with truffles. Also, olive oil with truffles is a typical product of the region.

Typical Istrian goodies

Simple but tasty “*meštra*” (*minestrone*), made from seasonal vegetables, is still prepared nowadays. A characteristically Istrian minestrone is made from “bobici” (corn), fennel, barley, etc. All of these dishes are spiced with pesto. It is the ingredients, and not just the flour, that makes Istrian dishes so thick.

Home-made pastas such as noodles, lasagne, macaroni, “bleki” or “posutice”, and the very Istrian “fusi”, are used in soups and side dishes. Fusi are offered as a starter or side dish and are prepared in various ways with sauces. Polenta and gnocchi have been prepared in Istrian homes for ages, but these dishes have their origins elsewhere.

Due to the plentiful sunlight and the vicinity of the sea, vegetables, which are widely grown in Istria, have a very special taste and naturally, interesting local names. Various **vegetables**, from “verzot” (Brussels sprouts) to “cikorija” (radicchio), “koromač-finoči” (fennel root), “cuketi” (zucchini), mangold, “melancani” (eggplant), peas, and “kapus” (cabbage), are used to prepare side dishes, with the obligatory olive oil and plenty of garlic.

Meat dishes (fish, mutton, poultry, beef) are well known for their method of preparation, “gvacat” (squazzetto) is a meat dish with sauce containing native Istrian spices. Many dishes are prepared in a “padela” (a frying pan with a handle) or under a “črepnja” (cover for cooking over embers). These dishes are more commonly found in the vicinity of Koper than in the town itself, but with a little effort you will be able to find excellent fish soup, marinade, or similar dishes even within the town itself. Despite some attempts to preserve and revive authentic Istrian cuisine, there is a tendency in Koper towards more modern culinary ideas, which offer the most varied dishes, from fish, meat, pasta, and pizzas – something for every pocket.

Olive oil, which has been used in Istrian cuisine since the old days, has the most suitable ratio between saturated and unsaturated fat. It has a high percentage of oleic acid and a suitable quantity of essential fatty acids. In the fruits of the area, there are also sugars, cellulose, and minerals such as calcium, potassium, iron, and copper, which have a beneficial effect on the veins, heart, and digestion. Bon appétit!

Typical products from Istria

Fig loaf

This wonderful treat is made from ground dried figs, mixed with fig or grape juice, shaped into a loaf and lightly rolled in flour. Cut into slices, this is a delicious, healthy and natural snack without added sugar and preservatives.

Istrian jota

This version of the traditional dish jota, made from sauerkraut and beans, differs from its Karst counterpart in that it does not contain any potatoes. It is served with white or yellow polenta, as a main course and in many other ways.

Fritaja

This egg dish is a typical characteristic of Istrian cuisine. Fritaja species are very different. Selection and preparation depends on the imagination, taste, and from what we have in the refrigerator. You can prepare fritaja with ham, bacon, asparagus, eggplant, mushrooms, truffles, baby onions or other vegetables, or cheese.

Piran salt

Piran salt, this precious product of the Sečovelje Salina Nature Park, is the result of restless finds, warm sun, and the hardworking salt-pan workers. It is made manually, according to traditional methods dating back more than 700 years. In the past also Koper had soltfealds.

Khaki

The homeland of khaki - golden apples is the East Asia. In Europe and the USA are khaki's produced from the second half of the 19th century. In Europe it was brought about in 1870, produced mainly by the Mediterranean countries. The Slovenian Istria and Primorje started growing khaki a little later, during the first decades of the last century. Most of the khaki's is produced in the valley Strunjan. In Strunjan so each year in the first week of November have Khaki Day, where visitors can taste various kinds of khakis, khaki spirit, khaki jam, various khaki desserts (pies, krostate, cakes, tarts) and so on.

The olive trees

These ancient trees, which originate in the Mediterranean, can reach a respectable age. Olives were picked from wild olive trees in prehistoric times. Later they were ennobled and the ancient Greeks allegedly knew around fifteen species of olive trees. The oil produced was used for many purposes: food, lighting, worshipping the gods and as one of the more important trade goods. The Babylonian code from 2500 BC includes regulations regarding the olive oil trade. The Phoenicians and the Greeks even had special ships for transporting amphorae containing olive oil. Due to its increasing importance, the Romans planted olive trees all across their empire, wherever it was able to grow. Olive trees have been growing in Istria since the Roman times and even the most respected classes of Roman society had olives on their menus – including the imperial kitchen of Emperor Augustus. Slovenian Istria is one of the northernmost regions where olive trees grow successfully. Olive oils from this region are undoubtedly one of the best and they are known as oils with exceptional aromatic and medicinal properties, mostly due to the special Mediterranean climate where they grow.

Asparagus

Wild asparagus or “šparoga”, is a characteristic Mediterranean plant. It grows at the edge of the forests of Slovenian

Istria and it grows up to one meter high. It is born each year in the spring months from half of March to half of May. An old istrian proverb says: “April spareser, Maio sareser” (April of asparagus, May of cherries).

Lavender

The lavender is one of the plants that you immediately associate with the Mediterranean. However, it can also be found in an ornamental garden. We recognize it by its dark blue or violet flowers and a typical fragrance. It has a relaxing and beneficial action on the body. It is used as a healing plant, because lavender flowers are full of active substances. The lavender is used to treat migraine, dizziness and flatulence. In addition, lavender is also used for decoration in bouquets of dried flowers and potpuri. Because their fragrance dried flowers are put in wardrobes since drive away moths.

2.9 Drink

Istria is a land of vineyards. **Wines** are sweet and fruity, with a wide variety of grapes present, such as white malvasia, red teran and muscat. The most famous vineyard area is Kalavojna, on the Eastern coast.

Regional liquor **grappa** is widely produced in here, with several varieties available.

2.10 Stay safe

2.11 Go next

The hilly **Cres** island in the Gulf of **Kvarner** can be reached by car ferry from Brestova.

Chapter 3

Brijuni

Brijuni is in the **Istria** region of **Croatia**.

3.1 Understand

The **Brijuni** archipelago lies off **Istria**'s west coast, a 15 minute boat journey from **Fažana**, just north of **Pula**. Most of the 14 islands are off-limits to the public. You have to be a member of the world's elite to get an invite here. Luckily there is so much to see on the other two you're unlikely to feel hard done by.

3.1.1 History

Brijuni is preserved as an open-air time machine, recording 5,000 years of human history and 150 million years of prehistory when dinosaurs patrolled the islands. More recently, the islands were used by Marshall Tito to conduct diplomacy and entertain visitors such as Queen Elizabeth II, Princess Margaret and Elizabeth Taylor. The safari park today consists of many animals donated by these visitors, including Sony and Lanka, two Indian elephants from Indira Gandhi.

3.1.2 Landscape

Brijuni consists of hectares of well-maintained, green parkland surrounded by the dazzling Adriatic and planted with avenues of prehistoric-looking pines.

3.1.3 Flora and fauna

3.1.4 Climate

3.2 Get in

3.3 Fees/Permits

3.4 Get around

3.5 See

3.6 Do

You can book excursions plus yachting, golf and diving expeditions. The organized tour (160kn) passes Veliki Brijuni's main sights on a little train with an accompanying guide. It takes about 4 hours including the sea crossing from Fažana. Independent travellers can hire a bike or a little electric buggy.

3.7 Buy

3.8 Eat

3.9 Drink

3.10 Sleep

3.10.1 Lodging

3.10.2 Camping

3.10.3 Backcountry

3.11 Stay safe

3.12 Go next

Chapter 4

Fažana

Fažana is a village in the **Istria** region, **Croatia**. As a tourist destination it's mostly known as transport hub for boat trips to the popular **Brijuni** archipelago. However, this fishermen's town with its small port is a pleasant place itself too.

4.1 Understand

4.2 Get in

Fažana lies on the regional road from **Vodnjan** to **Pula**.

4.3 Get around

4.4 See

4.5 Do

- **Hippocampus Diving Centre**, inside the camp Bi village (*2km from Fažana*), ☎ +385 99 400 6922. Open every day 10am-6pm. Authorized diving centre that organizes daily scuba dives and fun dives in **Brijuni** National Park and also gives PADI scuba diving courses. Brijuni's seabed is a protected and well preserved underwater area with rich flora and fauna. (updated Nov 2015)

4.6 Buy

4.7 Eat

4.8 Drink

4.9 Sleep

4.10 Connect



Parish church of St. Kosmas and Damian

4.11 Go next

Chapter 5

Motovun

Motovun is a hilltop town in **Istria**.

5.1 Understand



Motovun

5.2 Get in

5.3 Get around

5.4 See

The spectacular views from the town over the surrounding countryside.

5.5 Do

5.6 Buy

There are various little artisan shops scattered within the town.

5.7 Eat

Region is known for truffles which are served at the restaurants in the town.



Motovun



Town centre

5.8 Drink



Views of the surrounds

5.9 Sleep

5.10 Connect

5.11 Go next

Chapter 6

Poreč

Poreč (Italian: Parenzo) is on the Adriatic coast of Croatia.

6.1 Get in



Euphrasian Basilica, interior

- **Venezia Lines** sail from Venice to Poreč during the summer months (April–October).

Timetable : All departures from Venice are at 5:00pm - Arrival at Porec 7h30pm Return from Porec to Venice at 8h00 a.m. and Arrival in Venice 10h30 a.m.

6.2 Get around

Poreč is very small, and it's almost impossible to get lost in the town. There is a bus station, and taxi rank nearby if you are staying at one of the many hotel/apartment complexes out of town. If you enter into the old town, which is to the right from the bus station, you will see a tourist office (logo has blue i). The tourist office will give you a map of the area.

6.3 See

- **Euphrasian Basilica.** A UNESCO World Heritage Site, rebuilt in the 6th century during the Byzantine Empire.
- **Streets.** its Decumanus and Cardo Maximus still have Roman structure original forms.

6.4 Do

6.5 Buy

6.6 Eat

- **Ulixes, ☎ +385 52-451 132.** Decumanus 2. This cosy little restaurant was a surprise to find in the very touristy Poreč. There's the choice of dining in a candlelit stone-clad interior outside in the sunny terrace. The service is very friendly and helpful (speaking English, Italian, German and Croatian!). Between two people you can have a whole fresh fish, with baked vegetables, quite simple but absolutely delicious. Worth visiting this town just to eat here. Prices are quite expensive for Croatia.

6.7 Drink

6.8 Sleep

- **Apartments Lanterna Vagriba,** Porec, HR 52440. A cluster of apartments about 15 km away from Poreč itself. It's cheap (£54 a night for a four bed apartment), but you'll need a taxi to get into town (or wait for the infrequent bus). The places themselves are clean, with dining/living room, shower, balcony and kitchen, there are a few restaurants and bars on site plus a cheesy disco. It's mainly populated by mainly German tourists with frightening hair and orange tans.
- **Apartment Sunshine Porec.** Self-catering apartment Sunshine Porec is located on the outskirts of Porec, a 1.5 km from the sea and 3km from the center of Porec. Apartment consists of one bedroom, open-plan living room with fully equipped kitchen, bathroom and a balcony with beautiful views over Istrian countryside. Accommodates 2; daily prices from €40.
- **Valamar Club Tamaris.** Valamar Club Tamaris is located on the Lanterna peninsula surrounded by Mediterranean vegetation, open from April to October, 390 rooms: single, twin and family rooms, studio apartments; Valeta à la carte restaurant, restaurant and bar at the pool, cocktail-bar, lobby bar, # wellness contents, beauty center, cardio-gym, outdoor swimming pool and pool for children, whirlpool, pebble beach 100 m from the hotel; prices from €57 single room, €88 double room
- **Valamar Crystal Hotel,** Porec, HR 52240. The Valamar Crystal Hotel is family hotel, it's open from April to October. Info: 223 rooms / 453 beds, 6 floors; rooms: single, twin and triple rooms, twin rooms with extra bed, quad rooms and suite; two restaurants and bars; outdoor swimming pool and swimming pool for children, whirlpool; beach 150 m from hotel; other: evening music, sport center, tennis courts near, 2 meeting rooms, internet corner; price: from €72 twin room



Euphrasian Basilica, exterior

- **Valamar Diamant Hotel**, Porec, HR 52240. The Valamar Diamant Hotel in Poreč, is located in the shade of green pine trees close to the sea, and is a ten minute walk from the picturesque centre of Poreč itself. The wide selection of food, spacious wellness centre, imaginatively designed indoor and outdoor pools, as well as the large number of sporting facilities
- **Valamar Pinia Hotel**, Porec, HR 52240. Pinia is located directly on the sea, ten minutes walk from Porec's ancient town centre. For families with children and active holiday.



Obala maršala Tita, a street along the seacoast

- **Valamar Rubin Hotel**, Porec, HR 52240. Open from April to October, 258 air-conditioned rooms / 483 beds, 9 floors, 2 lifts; single rooms, twin rooms with extra beds, triple and family rooms; restaurant, bars; outdoor swimming pool and swimming pool for children; beach 100 m from the hotel; sport/entertainment center; prices starts from €40 single room, €56 twin room.

6.9 Go next

Buses leave from the town's bus station every couple of hours to **Pula** and **Rijeka**. Buses leave about four times a day to Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. You can buy your tickets at the bus stations on the day of departure.

Chapter 7

Pula



Zlatna vrata

Pula (Italian Pola, Slovene Pulj) is a nice town at the tip of the **Istrian** peninsula, **Croatia**.

7.1 Understand

Its history started about 3000 years ago when it was built by Illyrians. Romans occupied **Istria** in 177 B.C. After the destruction of Western Roman empire, Istrian peninsula was devastated by Ostrogoths. Slavs came in Istria during migration period in 7th century but mostly lived on countryside. At that time Pula was still inhabited mostly by Italians. Landlords in Pula changed quite frequently in middle ages from republic of Venice to Genoa to Illyrian Provinces to Austria–Hungary and many others. After second world war it has been part of **Croatia**. In that time Italians fled to mother Italy and Pula was inhabited by Croats. Although most of the population still consists of Croats there are lots of quite big minorities in Pula such as Serbs, Italians, Bosniaks and Slovenes.

Most tourists visit in the summer months, with most tourist trips and restaurants closing between October and May.

7.2 Get in

Map of Pula

7.2.1 By plane

Pula has its own international airport with daily flights to Zagreb, and direct services from many European cities including Amsterdam, Edinburgh, London, Manchester, Oslo, Vienna and Zurich. Ryanair operates direct flights from London three times a week. Many flights to Pula are charter rather than scheduled, while other flights are seasonal (summer only).

There is a scheduled bus service from the bus station in town to the airport. Buses are operated by Brioni and connect to most major flights. The cost of a one-way ticket is HRK25. A taxi from the bus station to the city should be around HRK85 in the low season and much higher in the summer.

It is possible to also consider Rijeka Airport on the island of Krk and Trieste Airport in nearby Italy to access Pula as they are close by and offer flights to different destinations.

Buses from the Pula bus station to Pula airport leave at the following times. The cost is HRK30. (last updated 6-Apr-2014)

7.2.2 By land

The large and modern bus station is on the edge of the 'old town' district and is the hub of local, domestic and international bus routes. There are direct buses from Zagreb, Rijeka, Split, Trieste, Ljubljana, Belgrade and Venice. Online timetables are listed at [and](#) .

There is also a train station near the waterfront with services serving Istria and into Slovenia due to historical circumstance rather than back towards the rest of Croatia (though a connecting coach service operates for services to Rijeka and Zagreb). Ticket prices, timetables and other information are on the [Croatian Railways website](#).

Hitchhiking from Zagreb works very well. In Zagreb start from the petrol station after the “Billa” supermarket on the southside of the Sava river. In Rijeka ask people to drop you off at the little SOS stop after a pretty sharp right bend of the motor way around Rijeka.

7.2.3 By sea

Hydrofoil services operate from the wharf both around the Croatian coastline, and across to Venice. These are pricey, though provide a quick journey and provide some great views.

Venezia Lines ferry connects Pula with Venice. It runs five times a week, travel time is around 3h.

7.3 Get around

For local transport you can use the Taxi Service which has gotten cheaper since January 2012. There's a company offering taxi services now for 15-20kn/5km. Search for Taxi Cammeo on every phonebook, or hail one of their vehicles down. Local, owner operated taxis are more expensive. Buses are known to be expensive (11kn per card, per person, per ride), however, if you plan on using the PulaPromet only, you should make yourself a BusCard. The BusCard is an electromagnetic ticket that you can fill with money and then use cheaper bus rides. The price of a buscard is 30kn but they usually sell them for 70kn since they are prefilled with 40kn you can use on the bus. The BusCard reduces drastically the price of the ride making it a 6kn per hour on the city lines (lines 1 to 9). Also, up to 5 people can use the same BusCard at the same moment, for the same bus. Also, the money on the BusCard is forever, meaning you can save it for the next time you come to Pula without fearing money loss.

If you want to take a small backpack with you on an Autotrans bus, first ask the driver if this is OK before buying the ticket. Otherwise you might be refused entry on the bus and your ticket will not be refunded, even if you have



Forum

bought it off the driver just 2 minutes earlier (the Brioni company seems OK -onboard small backpacks are allowed, but you have to insist.)

All buses have a luggage area. The service is charged separately from the ticket and it usually costs 7kn. Every ticket can be refunded at the ticket office (a fee will be charged). There should be no problem taking a small backpack or a small suitcase on the bus as long as you can fit it in the overhead compartment (which is rather small) or under your seat/legs..

7.4 See



The Roman arena.

- **1 Arena** (*Roman amphitheatre*). The 6th largest surviving Roman amphitheatre. Towering over the nearby buildings this huge structure was barely saved from destruction several times during its life, mostly by various Venetians with plans to take it to Venice stone by stone as demonstration of the might of the Venetian empire. Many stones were taken to build houses and other structures around Pula, but fortunately this practice was stopped before the whole structure was destroyed. Entry gives you access to wander the inside of the Colosseum and visit the caverns beneath. The audio tour is very worthwhile. HRK20.
- **1 The Forum**. The “Forum” is the main square in the centre of the city. The square is built on the site of the ancient Roman forum. On the square there is a city hall that was built in the 10th century (parts of an old temple were used for the building as it can be seen on the rear side of the hall) and the Temple of August, from the first century.
- **Archeology Museum** (HRK12).
- **Zlatna vrata** (Triumphal arch, 1st century BC), **Dvojna vrata** (Twin gate, 2-3rd century), **Herkulova vrata** (Hercules gate, 1st century BC).
- **St. Francis church and monastery**, 14th century
- **Orthodox church**, 6th century
- **Kaštel**, a Castle from the 17th century features Istrian history museum
- **Malo rimsko kazalište**, Little Roman theatre behind the Archeology museum
- **Mornaričko groblje**, Sailors’ cemetery (1866. - about 150 000 soldiers of Austro-Hungarian nations were buried there) and **Mornarička crkva**, Sailors’ Church

7.5 Do

- Visit **Brijuni**. Group of islands famous for their scenic beauty. They are a holiday resort and a Croatian National Park. They were also settlement in roman times and were part of Republic of Venice. There is also now famous Tito (leader of former Yugoslavia) residence. Boats go from small town near Pula named Fažana .
- Go on **Fish picnic**. You can take a walk through local marina and check out timetables and prices. Prices are usually around HRK250 (€30) per person.
- Visit **Pula Film Festival** takes place in the Arena, 18-25 Jul.
- Walk down the **Sergijevaca** street where are many small shops, souvenir shops, bars and even sweet shops.
- Spend a whole day on beaches of **Kamenjak** , near **Premantura** (8km from Pula). This peninsula is southernmost point of Istria, and features stunning landscapes and protected nature.
- Discover abandoned Austro-hungarian fortresses , constructed just before WWI, when Pula was most fortified city in Europe. Some of those fortresses are hidden in the forests, and some are now occupied by Pula residents for different purposes, including **Punta Christo**, which operates as a summer club and music festival venue .

7.6 Buy

- **Truffles**. Istria is famous for its truffles and various truffle products.
- **Malvazija** and **Teran**. Autochthonous Istrian wine sorts.
- **Medica**. A honey rakija ,
- **Biska**. A rakija with mistletoe.



View of marina in Verudela

7.7 Eat

- Restaurant **Farabuto**. Excellent light and delicious slow food.
- Restaurant **Galeb**. You won't find this one in any tourist guide, but everyone in the city knows the place: they serve best “chevapchichi” (minced meat, 2in long, 1/2in wide) in the city.
- Restaurant **Gina**. Excellent food in a unique setting that combines elegance with history.
- Restaurant **Asterix**. The best pizza in town. You should try the Asterix pizza, which means you can have a pizza divided into thirds, with a different set of toppings (kinds of pizza) on each one.
- Pizzeria **Bambino**. Good quality pizza and grill.
- Pizzeria **Jupiter**. Near Arena, the Roman amphitheatre - very good pizza.
- Restaurant **El Pulari**. A mexican restaurant.
- Restaurant **Biska**.

7.8 Drink

Drinking is a pleasurable pastime in Croatia

7.9 Sleep

Tourist information can provide you with a list of accommodation in Pula, although they will not make reservations for you.

7.9.1 Budget

- **1 Hostel Pipištrelo**, Flaciusova 6 (na Rivi), ☎ +385 91 223-0769, e-mail: info@pipistrelo.com. Located in the centre of Pula, close to the main town square forum, the rooms are individual mini art galleries and the whole hostel is a design project bursting with spirit. €17-23.50.
- **1 Pula Art Hostel**, Marulićeva 41, ☎ +385 95 846-6517. Small, family-run, newly refurbished art hostel in the centre of Pula. This hostel offers 2 fully equipped kitchens and beds for couples; grill on terrace; Free Wi-Fi; 24h access; Cable TV. €17-27.
- **Youth Hostel**. And youth camp. Not such a nice looking place, but it is situated some ten meters from the beach, so you can almost jump directly from your bedroom right into the sea. (To get there, take bus 2a from the city (3a to return) and get off at Zlatne Stijene then follow the signs.)

7.9.2 Unclassified

- **Hotel Riviera** (1-star). Fabulous looking hotel built in 1907 for the high-ranking officers in the Austro-Hungarian army. Never properly refurbished since then it is now showing its age, but structurally it is impressive and looks oh-so-grand from the outside. The rooms are currently decked out with 1960s/70s fittings (orange bed covers, brown wooden panelling, lime green phone), with the sparseness showing the lack of funds for upkeep. Having said all that, it's clean, tidy, and comfortable. No doubt within a few years someone will make the investment to bring it back to its former glory. Quite expensive for its facilities.
- **Villa Mihaela**. 3 apartments for 2-4 persons. Each of the apartments has a parking lot, and is equipped with air conditioner, SAT TV, and all other appliances that will make your stay pleasant.
- **Apartments Alexandra & Erika**, Kozada 12/a, Štinjan, Pula, ☎ +385 52 223505. Attractive apartments in the proximity of the well known Brijuni Islands national park. A quiet place in a family house, built in 2004. in Štinjan only a few kilometres away from the centre of Pula. Air-con, SAT TV, fridge with freezer, kitchen with all the accessories, cooking stove (electricity+gas), washing machine, balcony.
- **Apartments with Swimming pool Slivar** (*Apartments pool Pula*), Samagher 17 (*veli vrh, Pula North*). Check-in: 14:00, check-out: 10:00. 3 modern fully equipped apartments for 2-6 persons in a calm part of Pula 150m from the sea and 3km from the beach. The spacious swimming pool is situated in our award winning garden (over 1500m²). Our apartments feature: SAT TV, microwave oven, coffee machine, and two apartments also offer a wash machine and air condition. We also offer free of charge the use of grill and bikes and a save place
- **Amfiteatar Hotel**, Amfiteatarska (100m from the Roman Amfiteatar and the Marina), ☎ +385 52375600. Small modern hotel with en suite, flat screen TV, A/C, free Wi-Fi and a top class restaurant. Conveniently situated for bus, rail and ferry, just 12 minutes from the airport.

7.10 Go next

- **National Park Brijuni** - The beautiful Brijuni islands (also referred to as Brioni) stretch alongside the south-west coast of the Istrian peninsula. The national park offers too many attractions for all of them to be described here (dinosaur footprints, archaeological finds and sites, a little zoo, extremely rich flora and fauna, beautiful beaches, a former resort for European royals) so visit their website for more information .
- **Rovinj**, Rovigno

- **Poreč**, Parenzo
- **Grožnjan**, Grisignana
- **Motovun**, Montona

Chapter 8

Rovinj



Rovinj

Rovinj (Italian: *Rovigno*) is a city in **Istria**. The city is officially bilingual (Croatian and Italian).

8.1 Understand

8.2 Get in

8.2.1 By plane

Rovinj is served by **Pula** airport approximately 30 km south. The easiest way to reach Rovinj from the airport is to drive - the journey takes approximately 40 minutes. Although cars are not permitted in the old town, Rovinj



View of Rovinj at sunset



Old town harbor

is sufficiently small so that parking is available close to most of the city. Prices are around 2 HRK per hour (the

park-o-meters accept only coins).

There are also buses from Central Pula.

8.2.2 By boat

Venezia Lines is a high speed ferry company in the North Adriatic, linking Venice to the Istrian coast and in particular Rovinj. Departure (in season) every day at 5.00PM and arrival at 8.00PM.

8.3 Get around

The old town and the surrounding area are small, and are easily accessible on foot. Bicycle hire is quite inexpensive in Rovinj and there are very good cycle tracks up and down the coast.

8.4 See



In the old town

The old town is best explored on foot. Worth seeing are the original entrance into the city, the Balbi Arch; the market at Valdibora; the cathedral of Sv. Euphemia; the artists' street of Grisia, described as "Rovinj's Montmartre"; and the harbour in the centre of the town.

There are also taxi boats and excursions to St Katherine's Island, in the harbour.

8.5 Do

- **Walk** around in the old town.
- **Climb** the campanile of the cathedral of Sv Euphemia in the middle of the old town.
- **Shop** for truffles, olive oil, seafood or fruit and vegetables in the open air market, between 7am and 4pm.
- **Cycle** there are miles of cycle tracks to the south through pine forest that follow the coast line. Cycle Hire is relatively cheap for good quality bikes.
- **Swim** right there, below the church you can clamber over the rocks and take a dive in the Adriatic.
- **Rovinj Heritage Museum**, Trg marsala Tita 11/52210 Rovinj, ☎ +385 52 816 720. 9am-3pm, 7pm-10pm (late opening, summer only). The Museum is housed in a Baroque palace that in the 17th and 18th century belonged to the Califfi counts. It was founded in 1954 by a group of artists from Rovinj with the intention of collecting and exhibiting works of art. Today it serves as a town gallery and as a place where its rich bank of works of art is permanently exhibited. 15.00 HRK.

8.5.1 Rock climbing

There is a big climbing area just half an hour by foot from the city centre (follow signs to the *Park Hotel*, then 10 minutes further down the road).

There are several other climbing areas in the region, but you need a car to get there:

- Linski Canal
- Dvigrad

8.6 Buy

The excellent market on Valdibora sells fresh fish straight from the boat; truffles and truffle oil; olive oil; plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables.

8.7 Eat

Be sure to carry cash, as not all places accept cards, and in those which do, the feature is usually "temporarily out of order". Many establishments close over the winter.

- **Calisona**, Trg Pignaton 1 (*Opposite the museum*). Multilingual menu, with pizza, pasta, risotto, as well as speciality meat and fish dishes. Reasonable prices, excellent service. Sit and watch everyone go by, located just away from the crowded seafront squares. 40-120kn.
- **Neptun**, Joakima Rakovca. 11am - 10pm. Quiet, quirky restaurant specialising in seafood, pizzas and veal cooked in the *peka* - a slow-cooking method using live coals and a long-handled pan. You need to order two days in advance for this. main course 45-120kn.
- **Lampo**, Sv. Križa 22, Rovinj. Great restaurant with nice waiters, the food is excellent and the view is stunning. Make some fun with the waiters, they will start to like you and serve you better. main course 45-120kn.
- **Basilica**, Cesta za Valaltu-Lim 5 (*Drive towards camping Valalta, and pay attention to the right side of the road, there will be a big sign that says Basilica*). A very good restaurant with excellent staff, the owner is called Dominic, a very friendly guy that only accepts new waiters that have been to a hotel school. So you can expect the waiters to clean everything that's on the table, for example, if you extinguish one cigarette in the ashtray, they will get a new ashtray for you. The food is excellent and comes in good amounts. You should definitely try the steak, because Dominic also owns a steakhouse in New York and he uses the same recipe. main/high course 45-200kn.

8.8 Drink

- **Cocktail Bar Valentino**, Rovinj. Fantastic location by the sea with atmospheric under sea lighting and seating on the rocks. Unfortunately heavy sales pressure on arriving female customers to buy champagne, rude service and over priced chemical cocktails that haven't seen fresh fruit.

8.9 Sleep

- **Villa Baron Gautsch** (*follow the signs to the Park Hotel located in the same street*), ☎ +385-52-814042, fax: +385-52-840537. Nice guesthouse with very friendly personal. Clean, small rooms, single rooms available. Between 20 and 37 € per day and person including breakfast, depending on the season.

8.10 Go next

Rovinj is well-placed for visiting the **Limski Kanal** (Lim Canal), where the film *The Long Ships* was shot. Excursions can also be made to the **Brijuni Islands National Park**, and to many of the other cities in Istria, such as **Pula**, **Novigrad**, **Porec**, **Pazin**, and **Opatija**. A slightly longer journey could take you to **Rijeka**; **Izola** or **Piran** in **Slovenia**; or **Trieste** in **Italy**, all of which fall within the ancient boundaries of Istria. There is a daily high-speed ferry during the warmer months to **Venice** from the harbour in Rovinj. The ferry takes about 2 hours and takes you to almost the centre of Venice.

Chapter 9

Umag

Umag is a town in Istria on the Adriatic coast of Croatia.



Panorama of Umag

9.1 Understand

Umag is a picturesque small Mediterranean town - harbour, the Croatian gate to Europe, the first tourist destination you come across on arrival to the northern part of the Adriatic coast. Umag has excellent road and air connections with all large towns in the world (at only 50 nautical miles from the famous Venice!). It is located in an attractive bay with one of the most prestigious ACI marinas awarded the Blue Flag. Its natural beauties, the history and tradition of the old town of Umag and of the surrounding Istrian area, a warm Mediterranean climate with an abundance of sunshine during most months of the year and high quality hotels, campsites, apartments and bungalows make Umag an ideal vacation place for the whole family. The history of Umag is exceptionally interesting: In ancient times it

was discovered by Roman aristocracy who adopted it for their summer residence. The town has preserved parts of the town walls and defence towers, Renaissance and Baroque houses and churches, the most famous among them being the parish church of the Assumption of Virgin Mary and the church of St. Peregrine. Umag is a widely known site of the international ATP tennis tournament, which has been successfully organized since 1990.

9.2 Get in

9.2.1 By plane

- Trieste International Airport (45 km)
- Airport Pula (65 km)

9.2.2 By train

- Rail Station Pazin (35)
- Rail Station Buzet (40)

9.2.3 By car

- From North:

Ljubljana - Kopar - Border Kaštel / Plovanija - Umag

- From East:

Zagreb - Rijeka - tunnel Učka - Buzet - Buje - Umag

- From South:

Pula - Vodnjan - Bale - Sv. Lovrec - Porec - Novigrad - Umag or Pula - Vodnjan - Bale - Sv. Lovrec - Baderna - Vižinada - Buje - Umag

9.3 Get around

- **Arena in Pula**

The Arena in Pula, the Roman amphitheatre is located in the centre of Pula. It was built in 1st century BC and took its present form in 1st century when it could seat about 20,000 spectators. It served for gladiator fights that took place in it until 5th century.

- **Brijuni Islands - national park**

- The Cretaceous Park with fossilized dinosaur footprints, Byzantine castrum and the remains of Roman villas, archaeological and natural-science collection, the exhibition “Josip Broz Tito on Brijuni”, the Mausoleum of Kuželwieser family are only some of the sights you should not miss. And while walking along the islands you will be accompanied by numerous tame bird species, deer, mouflons and other big game.

- **Euphrasian Basilica – part of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage**

In the town of Poreč, near Umag, there is one of the most beautiful early Byzantine churches in Europe called Euphrasian Basilica after the bishop of Poreč who had this marvellous three-nave church built over the site of an older church. Of special interest are the impressive mosaics over the apse of precious stones and mother-of-pearl.

- **Motovun walls**

The walls surrounding the small medieval hilltop town of Motovun present an invaluable cultural and historical heritage of Istria. The very well preserved old town core is surrounded by impressive defence walls.

- **Hum – the smallest town in the world**

According to the Guinness Book of Records, with its 23 inhabitants, Hum is the smallest town in the world. It is situated in the central part of Istria and famous for the Alley of the Glagolitic priests – a unique memorial to the old Croatian Glagolitic script.

- **Lim Channel**

It is a geo-morphological phenomenon with overgrown canyon cliffs rising up to 150 m above sea level. With its narrow, 11 km long inlet it represents one of the most beautiful landscapes in Istria.

- **Nature Park Učka**

The Učka mountain and its highest peak Vojak at 1401 m offering breathtaking 360° panoramic view over the Istrian peninsula, north Adriatic islands, Gorski Kotar mountains, Venice, Italian Alps...

9.4 See

- **Old town of Umag**

Due to Umag's stormy history the buildings from the Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages were completely destroyed. The present historical core has inherited the urban structure of the Middle Ages. There are numerous reminders of that era: wall remains, Venetian villas and above all, picturesque narrow streets. The one that is best preserved is also the oldest one – the west tower now housing the Museum of Umag, keeper of a valuable collection of archaeological artefacts found on the site of the town of Umag.

- **Church of St. Peregrine**

Not far from Umag, on the Rosazzo promontory there is a small, very old Church of St. Peregrine. It was built by the inhabitants of Umag to mark the spot where, during the Diocletian era.

- **Lighthouse in Savudrija**

The oldest lighthouse on the Adriatic Coast built in 1818, 36 m high with the light visible from the distance of 32 kilometres. The construction of the lighthouse is connected with a love story of Count Metternich, who although married, fell in love with a local girl and had the lighthouse built to her honour.

- **Sipar Promontory**

Between Savudrija and Umag during low tides a small 200 m long and 50 m wide promontory and a pile of stones rise from the sea: These are the only remains of the ancient Castle of Sipar from the 5th century. The town of Siparis existed here during the Roman era, a proof of this being the foundations of villas and houses, mosaics, marble, ceramic, urns and coins found in this location, all dating from the era of Constantine and Valerius. Sipar was totally plundered and destroyed in 876 by the Neretvian pirates led by the Ban Domagoj and never regained its previous significance.

- **Villa Tiola**

A real paradise for divers! This luxury villa had its own Roman spa, water cistern, huge dwelling quarters lavishly decorated with mosaics on the floor and frescos on the walls. The remains of a pier measuring 30 metres in length and 6 metres wide are located in the sea near the villa, while the remains of an enormous construction can also be recognized, most likely a pool of another Roman villa.



Umag - the old town

9.5 Do

9.6 Buy

9.7 Eat

9.8 Sleep

9.8.1 Hotels

- **Hotel Meliá Coral.** The first 5 stars hotel in Istria.
- **Hotel Sol Umag.** Elegance, details, style, relaxation...
- **Hotel Sol Garden Istra.** The sport & family hotel with an impressive water park.
- **Hotel Sol Aurora - All Inclusive.** Impressive natural surroundings and the interior provides the warmest Mediterranean atmosphere.
- **Hotel Sipar.** Waking up with a view of the open sea and to the sound of waves.
- **Guest house - Komfor Adriatic.** An unforgettable view of the whole town of Umag and its surroundings.
- **Rooms for rent Moj Mir.** The place where you can be yourself, sheltered from the rest of the world.

9.8.2 Resorts

- **Meliá Istriian Villas.** The cape stretching far into the open sea, where the green arches the clearness of the sea and the sun warms the beaches hidden from the rest of the world.
- **Sol Amfora.** Sol Amfora apartments are in the centre of the Stella Maris Resort, a breathtaking seaside destination in Umag.
- **Sol Stella.** The most beautiful croatian beach
- **Polynesia.** The resort is bathed in sun and crystal-clear sea, with a long beach at the very promontory.
- **Kanegra.** Entertainment, games, contests, cocktails, DJ music all day long, dancing till dawn in a new discotheque...
- **Savudrija.** The tourist resort is located near the oldest lighthouse on the Adriatic Coast from 1818, the history of which hides a tragic love story of Count Metternich of Austria.

9.8.3 Campsites

- **Campsite Park Umag.** Campsite Park Umag is one of the largest Mediterranean campsites.
- **Campsite Finida.** Peaceful, intimate atmosphere and secluded bays, providing a real experience of nature.
- **Campsite Stella Maris.** Modern campsite for families and individuals who enjoy active holidays and nature.
- **Campsite Pineta.** Protected from everyday noise, in the atmosphere of a picturesque fishermen's village.
- **Kanegra FKK.** This naturist campsite offers natural holiday experience.

9.9 Connect

9.10 Go next

Chapter 10

Vrsar

Vrsar is a millennia-old little town in **Istria**. Vrsar used to be a fisherman's village, now more famous as a family tourist destination. Just off Vrsar's coast lies one of the most beautiful Istrian archipelagos with 18 uninhabited islands.

10.1 Get in

10.2 Get around

10.3 See

10.4 Do

10.5 Buy

10.6 Eat

- **Fancita**, Dalmatinska 38. Beautiful bar and best pizza in all of Istra. They deliver, and the locals partake in it often as well.

10.7 Drink

10.8 Sleep

- **Maistra Hotels & Resorts** (*Top Hotels & Resorts in Vrsar*), Obala V. Nazora 6, ☎ +38552800250. Enter the world of comfort, quality and style in Maistra hotels and resorts in two beautiful and colorful Mediterranean towns - Rovinj and Vrsar.

High-end accommodation, excellent service, the best amenities and our experience and expertise create a perfect blend with the surrounding area, turning our hotels and resorts into an ideal choice for a weekend getaway, holiday, active or Wellness & Spa holiday or a business trip. Maistra features hotel Pineta and 6 resorts in Vrsar (Belvedere, Petalon, Funtana, Riva, Naturist park Koversada Villas and Naturist park Koversada Apartments).

- **Camping Vrsar** (*Top campsites in Vrsar*), Obala V. Nazora 6, ☎ +385 52800200. Maistra's campsites are awarded as best campsites in Croatia. All campsites are located near the sea and most of them also offer swimming pools. Campsites in Vrsar: Valkanela, Porto Sole and Naturist park Koversada Campsite.

10.9 Connect

10.10 Go next

Chapter 11

Zagreb



Ban Jelačić Square

Zagreb is a city in Central Croatia and the capital of Croatia.

11.1 Understand

Zagreb is a vibrant city of around 800,000 people (metropolitan area: 1,200,000). The city boasts a charming medieval 'old city' with architecture and cobbled streets reminiscent of Vienna, Budapest, Prague and other Central-European capitals. In 2005 it was visited by over half a million tourists, mainly from Austria, Germany and Italy.

11.1.1 Tourist Information

- **1 Turistički informativni centar** (*Tourist Information Centre - Ban Jelacic Square*), Trg bana Josipa Jelačića 11. Mo-Fr 8:30-21:00; Sa-Su 09:00-18:00. (updated Sep 2016)

Other information points are located at the airport, bus station, railway station and at the Lotrščak Tower.

11.2 Get in

11.2.1 By plane

- **1 Zračna luka Zagreb** (*Zagreb International Airport*) (in the locality of Pleso in 17 Km south-east from the city centre). The 2nd terminal is under construction. **W** (updated Sep 2016)

Flights

- Croatia Airlines, the national carrier and member of Star Alliance, flies to Amsterdam, Athens, Barcelona, Brussels, Copenhagen, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Gothenburg, Istanbul, London, Madrid, Moscow, Munich, Paris, Podgorica, Pristina, Tel Aviv, Rome, Sarajevo, Skopje, Vienna, Zurich. Domestically, Croatia Airlines operates numerous flights to Split, Dubrovnik, Zadar, Osijek (seasonal) and Pula.
- THY-Turkish Air Lines flies to/from Istanbul daily
- Lufthansa flies several times a day to Munich and Frankfurt, and low-cost carrier German Wings flies to and from Cologne, Stuttgart, Hamburg and Berlin (Schönefeld).
- Austrian operates many flights to Vienna each day.
- TAP Portugal flies from Zagreb to Lisbon three times a week (Wednesdays, Fridays, Sundays) via Bologna in Italy.
- Iberia operates flights to Madrid from Summer 2009.
- SAS operates flights to Stockholm. - but this service is currently suspended since mid-2009
- Air France operates flights to Paris-Charles de Galle.
- Aeroflot flies to Moscow.
- flyDubai flies to Dubai.
- KLM flies to Amsterdam.
- Air Serbia flies to Belgrade.
- LOT flies to Warsaw (resumes 2 January 2016).
- Qatar Airlines flies to Doha.
- TradeAir flies to Osijek, Rijeka.
- Vueling flies to Barcelona (seasonal).
- AirFrance flies to Paris.
- Air Transat flies to Toronto (begins 15 June 2016) (seasonal).

Neighboring airports in Rijeka, Ljubljana, Graz, Klagenfurt and Trieste are serviced by low-cost carriers and are often a viable alternative to travelling directly to Zagreb. EasyJet flies to Rijeka, Ljubljana and Ryan Air flies to Pula, Graz and Klagenfurt.

Airport facilities

- Restaurant, cafe, bars
- Post
- Bank, ATMs
- Limited Free Wifi, or Paid access to the Internet (via terminal)
- Numerous car renting outlets
- Open 24 hours with 6 cots on the upper level outside security if you need to sleep in the airport

Ground transportation to/from airport

- **Pleso prijevoz** (*At the main bus station, airport buses leave from its northeast wing (toward the city)—look for “Croatia Airlines” and “Eurolines” banners on the building.*), ☎ +385 1 6331-982, e-mail: plesoprijevoz@plesoprijevoz.hr. Buses leave the airport at 07:00 and every 30 minutes between 08:00 and 20:00. Beyond these hours, there are buses leaving for the bus station every time a Croatia Airlines plane lands. In the opposite direction, from the bus station towards the airport, the buses are scheduled between 04:30 and 20:30. A journey takes approx. 30 min. Single 30 Kn; Return (on day) 40 Kn. (updated Jan 2017)

11.2.2 By bus

- **1 Autobusni Kolodvor Zagreb** (*Zagreb Bus Terminal*), Av. Marina Držića 4 (*to the south-east of the railway station - approximately 10 minutes walk, or 3 stops by tram (lines 2 and 6)*), ☎ +385 1 6112 789. Timetable information and prices can be found at the AKZ website. Numerous Croatian and International coach operators maintain scheduled lines covering all major domestic and European cities. (updated Sep 2016)

International destinations are as far as London, Paris, Rotterdam and Amsterdam, numerous cities in Germany, Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, many destinations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia. Direct buses from Budapest, Hungary to Zagreb by Eurobusways.

- **Left luggage** (*at the arrival terminal № 106*). 24/7. For baggage up to 15 Kg: 5 Kn per piece per hour up to 4 hour, afterwards 2.5 Kn; otherwise 10 Kn per hour. (updated Sep 2016)

11.2.3 By train

- **1 Zagreb Glavni kolodvor** (*Main railway station*) (*close to the main bus terminal*). There are direct services to major European cities such as Vienna (6 hours), Budapest (6.5 hours, one way approx. 9,000 HUF), Zurich, Munich, Salzburg, Ljubljana, Sarajevo (one-way ticket costs 59 BAM), Belgrade as well as domestic services to all major towns (except Dubrovnik). There is also an all-year-round overnight train (with sleeping compartments) between Zagreb and Split (6 hours). **W** (updated Sep 2016)

As for the local destinations, then despite of introduction of new “tilting trains” (up to 160 Km/h) connecting Zagreb with Split and other major cities in Croatia such as Varaždin, Osijek and Požega. Trains are not everywhere fast in the country. A journey to Split takes approx. 6 hours while by bus it takes about 5 hours, while other destinations along the coast practically are not reachable by train.

Tourists coming from or going to neighbouring capitals should note the following EuroCity and InterCity as well as EuroNight railway lines:

- EC “Mimara”: Frankfurt - Heidelberg - Stuttgart - Munich - Salzburg - Ljubljana - Zagreb
- EC “Croatia”: Vienna - Maribor - Zagreb, also by EuroNight train
- IC “Kvarner”: Budapest - Zagreb



Glavni kolodvor - Zagreb's Main Railway Station

- B "Lisinski": Munich - Salzburg - Ljubljana - Zagreb
- B "Zürichsee": Zurich - Innsbruck - Ljubljana - Zagreb - Belgrade, also by EuroNight train
- EC "Sava": Munich - Salzburg - Ljubljana - Zagreb - Belgrade

The most of the services are operated by the Croatian Railways. EuroNight trains can be booked via ÖBB (Austrian railways), DB (German railways) or SBB (Swiss railways), or any other ticketing agency by phone.

11.2.4 By car

Almost all highways (motorway; *autocesta* in Croatian) in Croatia start or end in Zagreb.

Travellers from Vienna can pass by Graz and Maribor and then take the A2 highway upon entering Croatia. Mind the toll in Slovenia.

Travellers from Budapest can pass by Székesfehérvár and then use the Croatian A4 motorway. It also connects Varaždin. You will have to pay toll from shortly after entering Croatia until shortly before reaching Zagreb.

Travellers heading from Serbia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Greece and Turkey can use the Croatian A3 motorway to reach Zagreb.

Travellers heading from Ljubljana can use the A3.

Travellers coming from the west - Italy, as well as Rijeka or Istria - can use the A7 motorway (near and bypassing Rijeka), A6 motorway (Rijeka-Bosiljevo) and then the A1 (Bosiljevo-Zagreb).

Those travelling from Italy can bypass the expensive motorway toll in Slovenia by using the state route SS21 through Trieste, route E61 through Slovenia (in a bad shape) and then A7 south to Rijeka, then Rijeka bypass, then A6 east to Bosiljevo and A1 northeast to Zagreb.

Travellers heading from the south - Dalmatian coast ([Zadar](#), [Split](#), [Dubrovnik](#), ...) or from [Montenegro](#) - can use the A1 highway, often combined with the state roads D8 (by the coastline) and D1 (through the hinterland).

To use highways in [Croatia](#) you must pay a toll either in Croatian national currency, the Kuna, or in Euro. One may also pay by credit card- American Express, Diners, MasterCard, Maestro or Visa cards. A third option is to use the HAC Smart Card, which can reduce the cost of travelling on the Croatian highways by 10-25%. It is issued by [Hrvatske Autoceste](#), but pays off only if travelling more than 500 km (that's a return trip Zagreb-Zadar or Zagreb-Serbia) or 250 km for a seasonal Smart Card (a return trip Zagreb-Rijeka or two return trips to Zagreb from Austrian border). You can find a toll calculator [here](#) (click Calculator on the left navigation bar).

11.3 Get around

?""UNIQ--maplink-00000000-QINU""?

Map of Zagreb

Zagreb has a well-developed and efficient public transport system that consists of trams, buses and trains.



Zagreb Tram

11.3.1 Tram

The tram network ([route map](#)) operates 24 hours a day - from 4AM to 12AM there are 15 “day-time lines” (tram lines 1-9, 11-15 and 17), and from 12AM to 4AM there are 4 “night” lines (tram lines 31-34) which cover most of the day-time lines on a reduced (around 30-40 minute) frequency. Occasionally, buses replace trams on night lines. Tram lines 1, 3, and 8 do not operate Saturdays, Sundays and on public holidays. There are maps of the tram lines on almost every stop, so if you know the nearest stop to your destination you can simply figure out the shortest trip while you're at the stop.



Zagreb Bus

11.3.2 Bus

As for the buses, there are 138 day-time and 4 night lines. ZET buses cover the area outside the city center, as well as some neighboring towns that administratively belong to Zagreb county. The buses use the same ticketing system as the trams.

11.3.3 Funicular

A historic funicular railway (*uspinjača* in Croatian), one of the steepest and shortest in the world, operates between the lower and upper towns with a travel time of just one minute. Monthly, daily as well as single tram/bus ticket can be used, otherwise there is a 4 kn ticket for a ride. The funicular operates every 10 minutes, for a fee of 20 kn (in addition to regular tickets for everyone on board) an immediate start can be purchased.

11.3.4 Trains

Trains operated by Croatian Railways (Hrvatske Željeznice) run every 15 minutes from east to west, connecting the suburbs of Zagreb with the central railway station. They are usually the quickest form of transport for those coming from the areas of Zagreb far from the railway station (Glavni kolodvor), or beyond the tram network.

11.3.5 Ticketing System

As of October 2013 (price list of 01-Oct-2013 in Croatian), the price of a single one-zone ticket valid for 1.5 hours in one direction is 10 Kuna (~ 1.3 €), between midnight and 4 AM 15 Kuna. The different prices when buying at the driver or the kiosk or using the electronic ticket (*E-vrijednosna karta*) have been removed. The ticket can only be paid in the local currency **Kuna**. There is also a day ticket (*dnevna karta*), valid until 4 AM of the next day, available at 30 Kuna (~ 4 €). For longer stays there are tickets available for 3 (70 kn, ~ 9 €), 7 (150 kn, ~ 20 €), 15 (200 kn, ~ 26 €) and 30 days (400 kn, ~ 52 €). Buy a ticket and stamp it (insert it) in the little orange machine once you enter to validate. All single tickets are transfer tickets valid in multiple vehicles travelling in a single direction, so you won't need a new ticket when switching trams and/or buses. Tariff zone system exists, but only for townships and communities outside of Zagreb city limits, all trams are in zone 1, as well as buses in the City of Zagreb. If you plan on taking more than two rides, buy a daily ticket.

11.3.6 Zagreb Card

Travelers who intend to visit many museums should consider buying the **Zagreb Card**. The card offers unlimited travel on public transport in Zagreb, discounts at virtually all of the city's museums, reduced prices at many restaurants,



Funicular Railway

shops, and service providers and many other concessions. As of September 2013, it costs 60 kuna (approx. €8) for 24 hours or 90 kuna (approx. €12) for 72 hours from the date and time entered on the card. Holders of the card also receive a special booklet with a list of all of the establishments and the discounts available to them. The card can be purchased at any of Zagreb's Tourist Information Centers, at the reception desks of the majority of Zagreb's hotels, and ordered online (shipping cost is added).



Suburban Railway

11.3.7 Bicycle

Since 01-Jun-2013 there are automated public bicycle rental stations in Zagreb. It started with a three-month pilot period during which approx. 50 bikes were available at 6 stations in the city centre: at the main train station; in front of the Technical Museum at Savska Street; at the intersection of Petrinjska and Amruševa; at the intersection of Gundulićeva and Varšavska; in front of the National University Library; at Šubićeva Street at the green market on Kvaternik Square. The pilot was successful, three more stations have already been added, one of them in Novi Zagreb next to the Avenue Centar Mall at the tram/bus stop museum of contemporary art (muzej suvremene umjetnosti).

Payment can only be made with credit or debit cards from VISA, MasterCard und Diners, in addition a mobile phone (can also be foreign) is required. The registration at [nextbike Zagreb](#) is free, account activation requires transferral of 79 kn (~ 11 €), which can be completely be used for bike rental. As of September 2013 there are two tariffs: In the standard tariff, which does not cost a monthly fee, per day the first half hour is free of charge, then each started hour costs 8 kn (~ 1,30 €) up to a maximum of 5 hours (including the free first half hour), a longer rental costs a flat fee of 79 kn (~ 11 €) up to a total of 24 hours. Warning: If a bike is not returned to a station no longer than 24 hours after it was removed, a late fee of 750 kn (~ 110 €) is charged! The nextbike tariff costs a monthly fee of 20 kn (~ 3 €), for that on each rental process (even several times per day) the first 30 minutes are free, the next up to 4.5 hours are only 4 kn (~ 0,60 €) each, and the flat fee for rentals between 5 and 24 hours is reduced to 39 kn (~ 5,60 €). Even here if the bike isn't returned after no more than 24 hours the late fee of 750 kn (~ 110 €) is charged. A customer card for easier rental (instead of using a smartphone app or activation SMS) cost a one-time 20 kn (~3 €) fee.

11.3.8 Walks

Zagreb is a compact city and can be best explored by walking. For the lower town (Donji Grad) the six squares of Lenuci Horshe and the Botanical Garden can be covered in about 2 - 3 hours of walking. This area is also the home of Zagreb's major museums, galleries and theatres. The upper town (Gornji Grad) can also be covered in about 2 - 3 hours of walking and includes the Cathedral, St. Mark's Church and Square and the Museum of Broken Relationship.

11.3.9 Taxi

There are three taxi companies in Zagreb:

- **Radio Taxi Zagreb** phone: **1777**. Starting rates as of January 2012 are fixed at 9.90 kn (~1,25 €), the price per kilometer is 4.90 kn/km (~0.7 €/km), waiting by the hour is 40 kn/h (~5,5 €/h) and an additional fee for luggage is charged (3 kn per piece (0,4 € per piece of luggage)). Taxis are readily available at the Pleso international airport. Taxis are obliged to have their taxi-meter on and you won't fare well if you try to bargain.
- **Taxi Cammeo** phone: **1212**. Starting rate is HRK 15 (about €2) and includes 2 free kilometres. The price for every next kilometre is 5 HRK (€0,7). Due to regulations, they are not able to pick up customers at the Pleso Airport.
- **Ekotaxi** phone: **060 77 77**. Start 8.80 kn, 5 kn per kilometre.

11.4 See

The city of Zagreb is mainly divided into two parts **Gornji grad** (Upper Town) and **Donji grad** (Lower Town). They are the cultural, religious, and commercial hubs of Zagreb. These are where most of the restaurants, bars and tourist sights are located. The Upper Town, which is the medieval core of the city, developed as two separate (and often warring) towns - *Kaptol*, the seat of the Bishop (where the imposing Cathedral now stands), and *Gradec*, the free town where tradesmen and artisans lived (proclaimed by King Bela of Hungary in the 12th century) merged in the 1770s to form the northern section of historic Zagreb. Following this, the city expanded south of today's Trg Bana Josipa Jelačića (Jelačić Square) to the railway station and the Sava River. Apart from the two main parts the City of Zagreb extended both is North - South and East - West. The Northern part consists of the mountains and wilderness while the Southern part extends beyond the River Sava and consists of modern Zagreb and is known as **Novi Zagreb**. So Zagreb can be classified under four areas:

- Upper Town (Gronji Grad)
- Lower Town (Donji Grad)
- Northern Zagreb
- New Zagreb (Novi Zagreb)

11.4.1 Gornji Grad (Upper Town)

Churches and Religious Structures:

- **1 Zagreb Cathedral** (*Kaptol*). The Zagreb Cathedral with its twin spires is the most well known landmark of the city. The original cathedral dates back to 1217 but the present structure dates back to 1906. The chief architect was Hermann Bollé. Free. (updated Jul 2015)
- **1 St. Mark's Square** (*Crkva sv. Marka*) (*St. Mark's Square*). Located at the centre of St. Mark's Square, St. Mark's Church is known for its colourful roof tiles depicting the coat of arms of Croatia and Zagreb. St. Mark's Church was constructed in 1499. Free. (updated Jul 2015)
- **1 St. Catherine's Church** (*Crkva sv. Katarine*), St. Catherine's Square (Upper Town). Baroque style church
- **1 Old Town Gate**, at the top of Radićeva street (Upper Town). now a shrine to virgin Mary - the "**Kamenita vrata**" where you can light a candle and, as the locals believe, your wish will be granted. Please be silent, even if just passing through the Gate. The portrait of Mary is said to be sacred, because it is the only thing that survived the large fire. Near the Old Town Gate is the sculpture of St. George having slain the dragon. The other statue, him fighting the dragon, is located on the Marshal Tito's Square near the Croatian National Theatre (roughly 1 km away).

*Zagreb Cathedral*



St. Mark's Church



St. Catherine's Church

Parks:



Old Stone Gate

- **1 Ribnjak Park** (*Next to Zagreb Cathedral, Kaptol*). the Ribnjak is an English-style park complete with exotic plants, sculptures, and a children's playground. The park was originally the site of Bishop's fish pond.

Museums: Most museums and historical sights close at 1PM on Sundays and do not reopen until Tuesday.

- **1 Museum of Broken Relationships (Muzej prekinutih veza)**, Sv. Ćirila i Metoda 2, ☎ +38514851021, e-mail: info@brokenships.com. every day from 9AM to 9PM (from October till May), during summer time from 9AM to 10:30PM (from June till September). What remains after a break-up? Museum's permanent display is an opportunity to experience a unique emotional journey through dozens of love leftovers collected from all around the world. Museum is also the winner of Kenneth Hudson Award 2011 for the most innovative museum in Europe. Admission fee: 25kn.
- **1 Klovićevi Dvori Gallery** (*Galerija Klovićevi Dvori*), Jezuitski trg 4 (*Upper town, close to funicular (uspinjača) and stone gate (kamenita vrata)*). Bus line 150 (except Sunday) from Trg bana Josipa Jelačića, exit Kamenita vrata or Markov try; back to Trg bana Josipa Jelačića enter at Katarinin trg.), ☎ +385-1-485-1926. Tue-Fri 11:00-19:00, Mon and holidays closed. This gallery in the old Jesuit monastery with changing exhibitions



Museum of Broken Relationship

introduces Croatian and foreign cultural and artistic heritage across all eras. In most exhibitions, photography without flash is permitted. around 30 Kuna, varies by exhibition. (updated Apr 2015)



Klovićevi Dvori Gallery



King Tomislav's Statue at King Tomislav's Square

11.4.2 Donji Grad (Lower Town)

Parks: Other city parks are connected in the “Lenuci Horseshoe”, an unfinished project of combining small green squares and parks at the core of the center of the town.



Pavilion at Botanical Garden

- **1 Strossmayer Square** (*Strossmayerov trg*). Named after Josip Juraj Strossmayer, politician and Roman Catholic Bishop, the Strossmayer Square occupies the central position of the eastern wing of the Lenuci Horseshoe. (updated Jan 2017)
- **1 Zrinjevac Square** (*just south - east of the main square*). the park of the Academy (connecting the Zrinjevac and Tomislav parks).
- **1 King Tomislav Square** (*Trg kralja Tomislava*) (*south of Zrinjevac, just outside the main Train Station*). King Tomislav Square is the square overlooking the main railway station (Glavni Kolodvor) of Zagreb. Decorated with floor beds and fountains and lined with trees it is dominated by a horse mounted statue of King Tomislav. (updated Jan 2017)
- **1 Botanical Gardens** (*Botanički vrt*) (*south of the K. Tomislav Square, near the Hotel Esplanade*), ☎ +385 1-4844-002. (updated Jan 2017)
- **1 Mažuranić Square**. The central square of the western wing of Lenuci Horseshoe. It is named after Croatian poet Ivan Mažuranić
- **1 Marulić Square**. Marulić Square is the South Western square of Lenuci Horseshoe. It houses the Croatia State Archive. It also has a statue of Marko Marulić.
- **1 Square of Maršal Tito** (*Trg maršala Tita*). One of the largest and greenest squares of Zagreb. It is located on the North Western corner of Lenuci Horseshoe. It has the Croatian National Theatre in its centre.

Museums: Most museums and historical sights close at 1PM on Sundays and do not reopen until Tuesday.



Mimara Museum

- **1 Muzej Mimara (Mimara Museum)**, Trg Franklina Delanoa Roosevelta 5, e-mail: mimara@mimara.hr. Tue-Wed,Fri-Sat 10AM-5PM; Thu 10AM-7PM; Sun 10AM-2PM. Houses some 3,700 works of art donated by Ante Topić Mimara. The collection comprises more than 1,500 exhibits dating from the prehistoric period up to the 20th century. Some of the most famous exhibits include works by Lorenzetti, Raffaello, Giorgione, Veronese, Caravaggio, Canaletto, 60 paintings by the Dutch masters Rembrandt, Van Goyen, Ruisdael, 50 works by the Flemish masters Van der Weyden, Bosch, Rubens, Van Dyck, more than 30 by the Spanish masters Velasquez, Murillo, Goya, some 20 paintings by the German masters Holbein, Liebermann, Leibl, some 30 paintings by the English painters Gainsborough, Turner, Bonington and more than 120 paintings by the French masters Georges de la Tour, Boucher, Chardin, Delacroix, Corot, Manet, Renoir, Degas.
- **1 Archaeological Museum (Arheološki Muzej)**, Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog 19, ☎ +385 1-4873-101. Possesses over 400,000 objects, not all of them being exhibited. The holdings include evidence of Croatian presence in this area as well as rare samples which have made the museum known to the whole world. The most famous are the Egyptian collection, the Zagreb mummy and bandages with the oldest Etruscan inscription in the world (Liber Linteus Zagrabiensis), as well as the numismatic collection. A part of the museum is set aside for the collection of stone monuments dating back predominantly to the Roman period. (updated Jan 2017)
- **1 Art Pavilion in Zagreb (Umjetnički paviljon u zagrebu)**, Trg Kralja Tomislava 22 (*tram stations Glavni kolodvor (lines 2, 4, 6, 9, 13) or Zrinjevac (lines 6, 13)*), ☎ +385 1-487-6487, +385 1-484-1070, e-mail: info@umjetnicki-paviljon.hr. Tue-Thu 11:00-20:00, Fri 11:00-21:00, Sat-Sun 11:00-20:00, Mon + holidays closed, closed between exhibitions. Designed by the Hungarian architects Korb and Giergl for the Millennium Exhibition 1896 in Budepest, its iron frame was transported to Zagreb after the exhibition, where the permanent pavillion was built by the famous Viennese designers of theatres in Central Europe Hellmer and Fellmer. It is a neo-classical exhibition complex and one of the landmarks of the city center. The exhibitions are also held in the impressive Meštrović pavilion on Trg žrtava fašizma. Current exhibition: Auguste Rodin - Rodin in Meštrović's Zagreb (until 20-Sep-2015), showing 55 large and small sculptures, 2 paintings and 10 scetches by Rodin and 10 early photographs of Rodin's work by then-famous photographers. Photography is not permitted



Archaeological Museum

by order of the Rodin museum in Paris despite the fact that Rodin's work is now in the public domain. adults 40 Kn, reduced 30 Kn, family (2 adults, 2 children) 130 Kn. (updated May 2015)

- **1 Croatian National Theatre** (*Hrvatsko Narodno Kazalište*), Trg Kralja Tomislava 22 (*Located at the centre of Marshal Tito Square*), ☎ +385-1-4888 418, e-mail: infocentar@hnk.hr. Croatian National Theatre, Zagreb is located at the centre of Marshal Tito Square. It is built in 1895. There are also Croatian National Theatres in Split, Rijeka, Osijek, Varaždin and Zadar.
- **1 Moderna Galerija (Modern Gallery)**, Hebrangova 1. Comprises all relevant fine artists of the 19th and 20th centuries.
- **People and Art House Lauba (Kuća za ljude i umjetnost Lauba)**, Prilaz baruna Filipovića 23a. Every day from 3PM to 11PM. Presents works from the **Filip Trade Collection**, a large private collection of modern and contemporary Croatian art and current artistic production.
- **1 Technical Museum** (*Tehnički muzej*), Savska cesta 18. <http://tehnicki-muzej.hr/hr/muzej/vrijeme/>. Has a lot of technical inventions, fire engines, a cabinet of Nikola Tesla, a planetarium and an underground mine. 20kn (cca. US\$4, €3).

Street Architecture:

- **1 The Grounded Sun** (*Prizemljeno Sunce*), Bogovićeve Street 6 (*Head south from the Ban Jelačić square to the Dubrovnik hotel, then turn right into the Bogovićeve street. You can't miss it.*). Prizemljeno sunce by Ivan Kožarić is a 1971 sculpture, a 2 meter wide bronze sphere, which represents the scale model of the Sun, with 9 planets of the solar system in their scaled size compared to this Sun. Mercury is in Margaretska street, a couple of hundred meters to the west, turn right after reaching Cvjetni trg, you should see it on the wall to the right after passing a dozen or so meters. Venus is on the pole of the building with Hypo bank on the Ban Jelačić Square. Earth is in Varšavska street to the left. For other models, click the link of the sculpture above.



Art Pavilion



Croatian National Theatre

11.4.3 Northern Zagreb

- **1 Maksimir Park & Zagreb Zoo** (tram #7 if you are coming from the Central Bus Station or trams #11 and #12 from the main square or the #4 of your coming from the railway station). The biggest park in Zagreb. Great



Museum of Contemporary Art

place to chill out, drink coffee, eat lunch (picnic or at the park's restaurant) or take nice long walks through the forest or by the small lakes. Good for joggers, cyclists, also child and dog friendly. Offers lake rowing. The 85-year old zoo has red pandas.

- **1 Mirogoj Cemetery**, ☎ +385 1-4696-700. Mirogoj is the central cemetery of Zagreb. It was opened in 1876 north of the city center. The mortuary, the impressive and picturesque arcades with the church of Christ the King (architect H. Bollé, 1883-1914) make it one of the most impressive cemeteries in the world. Here stand the tombs of notable personalities (including that of basketball hero Drazen Petrovic) who are relevant to Croatian history. To arrive from the central square, go to the nearby Cathedral and take bus number 106 (Kaptol - Mirogoj - Krematorij). The ride takes approximately 10 minutes. Note: the Croatian Day of the Dead is on November 1st. You may find the sight of hundreds of thousands of candles after nightfall impressive and worth seeing, but you may take note that on that day and a few preceding and following days the cemetery will be very busy and quite different from usual peaceful appearance; on those days buses to the cemetery are very frequent but crowded. (updated Jun 2015)
- **1 Medvednica and Medvedgrad**. The imposing mountain overlooking Zagreb (Medvednica) contains a preserved fortress (Medvedgrad) and fascinating views of the city. Being respectful in the fort is a good idea, since it is the site of the Altar of the Homeland memorial, dedicated to Croatian soldiers who died in the Homeland war. There are several historical festivals during the year, including knights tournaments. (updated Jun 2015) (updated Jul 2015)

11.4.4 Novi Zagreb

Lakes Zagreb has two very popular lakes:

- **1 Jarun** (at the south part of the city. Tram #5 or #17). Jarun Lake is a recreational area based around a large lake where locals go to relax, exercise - and party! The centerpiece of the area is the actual lake itself, which is used for windsurfing and has a large rowing section with spectator stands. There are also shingle beaches surrounding the water, alongside which are several bars that get very busy during the weekends but are also nice for a sunny lunchtime snack. All the bars there are considered 'fancy' places and usually play commercial music.



Grounded Sun

- **1 Bundek.** hosts horticultural shows, firework festivals, workshops, concerts and music festivals (mostly during the summer).

Museums:

- **1 Museum of Contemporary Art** (*Muzej Suvremene Umjetnosti*), Avenija Dubrovnik 17 (South of Bundek Lake), ☎ +385 1-6052-700; +385 1-6052-701; +385 1-6052-798, e-mail: msu@msu.hr. Follows and presents



Entrance to Mirogoj cemetery

contemporary trends in fine arts. 30 kuna. (updated Jan 2017)

- **1 Croatian Museum of Naïve Art** (*Hrvatski Muzej Naivne Umjetnosti*), Sv. Ćirila i Metoda 3. Houses more than one thousand works belonging to Croatian naïve art.

11.5 Do

- **Strossmayerovo šetalište.** (eng. Strossmayer's walkway) In the summer, it is an outdoor scene for painters, musicians and other artists offering food, drinks, performances and concerts. Popular meeting place for all ages, with a great view of the Lower Town.
- **Snow Queen Trophy.** Ladies Night Slalom : Zagreb is the only capital in the world that hosts a Ski World Cup race. The slalom event - known as the "Snow Queen Trophy" (Snježna kraljica) - usually takes place in January. It is the most expensive race on the women's world cup tour and an exceptionally popular sporting event in Croatia that attracts a crowd of around 25 thousand people. As of 2007 best skiers in men's competition are also expected to compete on Mount Sljeme that overlooks the city. If you fail to secure your ticket, you can watch the whole event on a giant screen in the Ban Jelačić Square.

11.5.1 Cinemas

- Most English-language movies are subtitled, not dubbed; only children's movies are dubbed.
- A ticket will cost you 20-33 HRK (2,7-€4,4)
- About 30 HRK is the combined price of a medium popcorn and cola.



Ariel View of Jarun Lake



Bundek Lake

- **CineStar Zagreb**, Branimirova 29, ☎ +385 1 46-86-600 (ticket reservation). A multiplex cinema (13 screens) in the vicinity of the Sheraton Hotel. The website is in Croatian, but can be understood using a Croatian-English online dictionary.
- **CineStar Novi Zagreb**, Avenue Mall, Avenija Dubrovnik 16. A multiplex cinema (9 screens) in the vicinity of the Museum of Contemporary Art.
- **CineStar Arena IMAX** (the only IMAX movie theatre in Croatia), Lanište 32 (west from Arena Zagreb). Located in a large mall.
- **Cineplexx Centar Kaptol**, Nova Ves 11, ☎ +385 1 56-33-888. A multiplex cinema (5 screens) within the Kaptol Shopping Center situated to the north of the Cathedral.
- **Cineplexx City Center one East**, Slavenska Avenija 11D, ☎ +385 1 563-2400. A multiplex cinema (7 screens) located on the east side of Zagreb.
- **Kino Europa**, Varšavska 3. - this cinema is located in the city center.
- **Kino Croatia**, Katančičeva 3; +385 1 48-13-711.
- **Kino Jadran**, Ilica 42; 062-100-100 (within Croatia).
- **Kino Central**, Petrinjska 4; 062-100-100 (within Croatia).
- **Kino Tuškanac**. Showing much more than just European filmography, alternative and older films, sometimes for free, usually costs about 10 HRK (€1.50)

11.6 Learn

The University of Zagreb combined with the Croatian Heritage Foundation *Matica Hrvatska* offers comprehensive Croatian language courses for foreigners. The courses occur in the fall and spring semesters along with an intensive one month course in July. All courses cost around €600. More information can be found by visiting the University's website.

Many universities in Croatia accept a small group as international students every year, who stay in dorms and learn Croatian.

FER (*Fakultet elektrotehnike i računarstva*, trans. Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing) is a globally appreciated school of computer related learning. It is part of the University of Zagreb and accepts around ten international students a year.

11.7 Work

For creative types, Croatia is occupied by some street performers and many stands selling jewelery or other hand-crafted products, so the populace has an open mind to casually buying things from an interesting stand near the main square or dropping a few coins into a musician's case.

11.8 Buy

There are many small grocery stores around Croatia such as Konzum and Diona. There you can buy most necessary foods, hygiene products and items like cigarettes and alcohol. If you have a more specific need (like appliances, cutlery) or wish to go bulk shopping then try one of the larger Konzums, Kaufland or Mercator. Bread in Croatia is sold unsliced and is generally inedible after the second day of life, so if you don't eat bread much then ask for half a loaf "pola". Most brands that you likely know from home, like Nutella or M&M's, can be found in the larger stores but are rather expensive. Trying a domestic alternative or knock-off is not a bad idea.

Zagreb also has designated areas, the singular being a "platz", where you can buy and barter for clothes and shoes as well as perfume, chocolate and souvenirs. Illegally imported cigarettes are also often sold for cheap there (because of high importation taxes).

11.8.1 Souvenirs

- **Turistički Informativni Centar**, Trg bana Josipa Jelačića 11 (*in the central square*). Sells everything ranging from postcards and books to pottery and crystal
- **GEA Gallery**, Radićeva Street 35. a wide range of souvenirs that are handmade in Croatia and are very reasonably priced. Very knowledgeable staff.
- **Millennium**, Radiceva 9 (*off Jelacic square*). Pottery, crystal, costume jewelry, and other gifts.

11.8.2 Foreign books

- **Algoritam**, Gajeva 1.
- **Profil Megastore**, Bogovićeva 7.

11.9 Eat

Tobacco smoking is banned in all enclosed public spaces, including restaurants and some (but not all) bars and cafes. The smaller bars / cafes could opt (and some did) to allow smoking.

11.9.1 Budget

There are many take out, pizza-cut, sandwich bars and fast foods around the city. Most are located in the city center (main square - Ban Jelačić and surrounding blocks). There are also food chains such as the “McDonald’s”, “Daily Fresh”, “Mlinar”, “Pan Pek”, and the preferred “**Dubravica**”. Sandwich prices around the city varies from 10 to 20 kuna. You can also find many kebabs and pancake-to-go places.

- **American Doughnut**, Teslina St. A sandwich bar that also serves salads and deserts.
- **Baschiera 2**, Selska cesta 215 (*On the end of Savska street and beginning of Horvaćanski zavoj*), ☎ +385 1 3698-999. Pizza.
- **Bonita**, Flower Square. Popular sandwich bar that also serves pancakes and hot wine in the winter.
- **Colonia**, Božidara Magovca 21 (*In New Zagreb, in Mamutica*), ☎ +385 1 6698-153. Pizza.
- **Dvojka**, Nova Ves 2 (*On Kaptol close to Centar Kaptol*), ☎ +385 1 4817-462, +385 1 4666-111. Pizza.
- **Gigi**, Petrovaradinska 39, ☎ +385 1 3885-092. Be sure to visit this pizzeria if you're going to the Jarun lake.
- **Karijola**, Kranjčevićeva 7, ☎ +385 1 3667-044. Pizza.
- **Koykan World Food**, Gajeva 8 (*Go south from Trg Bana Josipa Jelačića square past the Dubrovnik hotel until you reach Gajeva street (Ulica Ljudevita Gaja Street=Gajeva Street)*), ☎ +385 1 4827-223. Italian piadinas, Japanese teriyaki sticks, oriental wraps, Bubble tea from Taiwan and Japanese mochi cakes. 0-10USD.
- **Mamma Mia**, Ilica 63, ☎ +385 1 4846-093. Pizza.
- **MOCA**. Newly open at the main square serves great and cheap fried, deep fried and baked potatoes with a large variety of dips for takeout. 10 kuna.
- **Nocturno**, Skalinska 4 (*On Kaptol, between Tkalčićeva street and Cathedral*), ☎ +385 1 4813-394. Pizza.

- **Nova**, Ilica 72/1. Vegetarian.
- **Oliva**, Jarunska 5 (*located at the Jarun near the students' hall Stjepan Radic at the Eastern part of the volleyball center.*), ☎ +385 1 3020 777, e-mail: restoran.oliva@gmail.com. 11-24. Italian restaurant (pizza, pasta)
- **Pizza Cut Duck**, Nikole Tesle 15. A pizza-slice bar that also serves fresh tortillas with veggie and/or meat filling.
- **Sandwich Bar Pingvin**, Nikole Tesle 10 (*on one of the central streets, close to the Flower Square and Trg Ban Jelcica*), ☎ +385 1 48 11 446. Classic sandwich bar with a wide menu and reasonably good mix of languages. One of the most popular dishes is the *toplo/hladno* (hot/cold), a grilled chicken and vegetables sandwich.
- **Šestica**, Medulićeva 6, ☎ +385 1 4846-248, +385 1 4846-562. Pizza.
- **Stara Sava**, Savska cesta 208 (*Close to rotor and Mladost sports center*), ☎ +385 1 3634-322. Arguably the best pizzeria in Zagreb.
- **VegeHop**, Vlaška 79. Closed Sunday. Vegetarian.
- **Žirafa**, Maksimirska cesta 64. Cheap Mexican food and drinks. Nice summer terrace.

11.9.2 Mid-range

- **1 Royal India**, Kaptol, 27 (*Located in Kaptol, 2 minutes walk from the Zagreb Cathedral*), ☎ +385 1 4680 965, e-mail: royalindiazg@gmail.com. Serves authentic Indian Dishes. (updated Jul 2015)
- **Asia**, A. Šenoe 1, ☎ +385 1 48 41 218. 12AM-12PM. Chinese restaurant
- **Caramba**, Frankopanska 6. Mexican food.
- **Ivica i Marica**, Tkalčićeva 70, ☎ +385 1 481 7321, +385 1 482 8999. Tu–Su 12PM-11PM. Wonderful food made only from natural ingredients, many sourced locally. Offers traditional, lite, diabetic, and organic cakes, ice creams and such.
- **Mali Medo**, Tkalčićeva 36, ☎ +385 1 4929 613. Another traditional Croatian restaurant. Lively atmosphere, youthful clientele, and all very affordable. Excellent *ćevapčići* and *gulaš*, not to mention superb beer. Mains: 25–60 kuna.
- **Manzoku**, Gajeva St. An excellent and so far only Japanese take-out in Zagreb. Tasty but rather expensive.
- **Mex Cantina**, Savska cesta 154, ☎ +385 1 6192-156. Mexican food. Good service, great food, on Mondays they offer live music by the best Croatian mariachi band, Los Caballeros starting at 9PM.
- **1 Nishta Restaurant**, Masarykova ul. 11, 10000, Zagreb (*Located in between Marshal Tito Square and Oc-tagon*), ☎ +385 1 8897 444. 100% Vegetarian food
- **Pivnica Medvedgrad**, Samoborska cesta 217, Božidara Adžije 16, Tkalčićeva 36. Great food and beer for reasonable prices. Make sure to try '*čvarkuša*' (4 HRK). 500ml beer: 12 HRK.
- **Restaurant Kvatric**, Maksimirska 9, ☎ +385 1 2330 070. Croatian restaurant with very nice food for a reasonable price. Has a nice terrace in the back garden. Close to tramstop 'Kvaternikov Trg'.

11.9.3 Splurge

- **Boban**, Gajeva 9. Italian food.
- **Feniks**, Jurisiceva 19 (*5 minutes walk from the Zagreb's main square*), ☎ +385 1-481 44 11. Mexican food.
- **1 Le Bistro**, Mihanovićeve 1, ☎ +385 1 45 66 666. Daily 8:30-23:00. A French restaurant within the Regent Esplanade Hotel.
- **Panino**, Nova Ves 11 (*Centar Kaptol*), ☎ +385 1 46 69 013. Nice little restaurant with great service and wonderful food. If you are into French and Istrian style food you will probably love this place.
- **Restaurant Suhina**, Dr. F. Tuđmana 1, Orešje (*near the Podsused bridge*), ☎ +385 44 1 33 71 562. An old family-run restaurant on the old Samobor road that offers a variety of roasted food.
- **Srčeko**, Vinogradska 135, ☎ +385 1 373 10 07. M-Sa 12AM - 11PM, Su 12AM-6PM. A very romantic little restaurant.
- **Takenoko**, Nova Ves 11, in Kaptol Centar Shopping Center (*Centar Kaptol*), ☎ +385 1 48 60 530. Zagreb may not be synonymous with sushi restaurants, but this is one is superb. It is not cheap, but sushi they make is incredible.
- **Velika Klet Obitelji Bunčić**, 20km from central Zagreb, ☎ +385 1 2781-132. A very popular place that offers Croatian cuisine, live music on weekends, a stable, fish pond and basketball courtyard.

11.9.4 Desserts

- **100% juice bar**, Tkalčićeva 5 (*in the center of Zagreb. Down some stairs - look for the small sign*). Pricey but a good place to get a healthy snack or fruit smoothie.
- **SladoMazo**, Zelinska 7. A pancake restaurant with a wide range of crazy both sweet and salty filling ideas.
- **The Cookie Factory**, Tkalčićeva 21 (*Head north of the large clock on the Ban Jelačić square towards the Dolac market, and turn left before the stairs. Head into the Tkalčićeva street and when you see the statue of Marija Jurić Zagorka the Cookie Factory should be to your left. You'll notice it by the decorated outside with funny drawings.*), ☎ +38599 4949400. 9AM - 10PM. Homebaked American Sweets. Cookies, brownies and bars, krispy treats, muffins, cupcakes, banana breads, scones, cobblers, biscotti, top notch coffee, smoothies, cakes and pies.
- **Torte i To**, Nova Ves 11, second floor of the Kaptol Centar. A great little cafe offering the best cheese cake in town, and other great cakes
- **Vincek**, Ilica. Closed on Sundays.. The local, best known ice cream and cake palace in town center. Offers diet foods.
- **Konoba Didov San**, Mletačka 11, Upper Town, ☎ +385 14851154. The best atmosphere restaurant in Zagreb with excellent food, unique menu, large portions and great location!!

11.10 Drink

11.10.1 Bars and pubs

Many bars are located around Flover square (Cvjetni trg), the main square (Trg Bana Josipa Jelačića), Preradovićeve, Tkalčićeva, Radićeve, Bogovićeve, and Gajeva streets.

- **Booksa**, Martićeva 14d. A cafe/bookshop/library famous with local young intellectuals.
- **Harlekin**, Tkalčićeva 50, ☎ +385 99 3864 720. 9AM- 02 a.m.. Cozy atmosphere, excellent English, free Wi-Fi, delicious drinks, very reasonable prices, great coffee, DJ or live music on weekends.
- **Cica**, Tkalčićeva. Bar mostly known for its great and varied choice of the local schnapps (rakija). Interesting always changing, gallery-like interior. The whole bar is small but offers outdoor seating. Very popular and crowded, brimming with young business and student clientele.
- **Funk club**, Tkalčićeva 52, ☎ +385 98 672 338. 11AM- 02 a.m.. Cafe / bar that offers various music night programmes in the basement (mostly alternative, dj-s, world music) and spacial backpacker evenings. Very good atmosphere, lots of character, cheap and tasty Rakija shoots and excellent electronic music: funky, electro, jazz, d'n'b, house, dubstep.
- **Golf**, Preradovićeva. Until 2AM. Popular golf-themed cafe/bar.
- **KIC**, Preradovićeva. Offers free internet and cheap international call center. Hosts a cinema with various alternative movies.
- **Kino Grič**, Jurišićeva. Newly re-decorated old cinema. Hosts movies, festivals, music nights and Zagreb's hipster crowd.
- **Krivi Put (Wrong Way)**, Savska 14.
- **Mali Medo**, Tkalčićeva. Offers a good choice of local beer and food. Indoors smoking prohibited. Has a terrace facing Tkalčićeva street.
- **Melin**, Tkalčićeva. A cheap bar brimming with young people and students. Offers indoors, a roofed terraced leveled seating and an open terrace facing Tkalčićeva street. Known for crowds of people often drinking even around the bar, in the park and playground in front of it.
- **Oliver Twist**, Tkalčićeva. A choice of good Irish beer with a great atmosphere. Big summer terrace in front.
- Café de Paris
- **Pivnica Medvedgrad**.
- **Bar Plan B**, Tkalčićeva 84, ☎ +385 14811285. A cafe/wine bar/sports bar. Attracts a mix of locals and tourists. You can expect music from every genre, and decade, from Jazz to Alternative/Indie.
- **Portal**, Tkalčićeva. Next to Melin, offers same service, the Portal and Melin crowds often mix at the outdoors terraces.
- **Purgeraj**, Park Ribnjak. A bar/club located in the Ribnjak park in the city center. Offers mostly rock, blues and alternative music. Daily happy hour when you get two drinks for the price of one. Sometimes hosts concerts. Popular with student crowd esp on Thursdays when it hosts the newly popular "take me out" evening offering a mix of indie and alternative music. In the summer, outside Purgeraj, in the Ribnjak park there are live concerts and various workshops offering summer fun under the name 'Park In Zagreb'.
- **Tolkien's House**, Opatovina. A small fantasy cafe/bar for Tolkien lovers. Offers a variety of beers, cider and hot drinks.

11.10.2 Clubs

- **Aquarius**, Aleja Matije Ljubeka bb (Jarun Lake). Saturday night is drum'n'bass & dancehall music, Friday is hip-hop/r'n'b night. Good concerts.
- **BP Club**, Nikole Tesle 7, ☎ +385-1 481 44 44. Open daily from 10PM to 2AM. Jazz and blues lovers should check it out.
- **Funk club**, Tkalčičeva 52, ☎ +385 98 672 338. 11AM-2AM. Very good atmosphere, lots of character, cheap and tasty Rakija shoots and excellent electronic music: funky, electro, jazz, d'n'b, house, dubstep!
- **Jabuka**, Jabukovac 28, ☎ +385 1-48 34 397. Cult club for alternative, punk music. Cheap drinks opened on weekends, often concerts of alternative bands. Mostly visited on weekends, especially Fridays. Admission fee: 25 Kn.
- **KSET**, Unska 3. A popular student club. Offers various indie and alternative programmes every night of the week. Indoors smoking prohibited. Serves only beer and non alcoholic drinks. Entrance prices from 10kn (students) to 45/60kn for concerts..
- **Medika**, Pierottijeva 11. A local alternative club/legalized squat usually loaded with people during weekends, playing various music genres until the early morning. Best Croatian beers for 10 HRK.
- **Močvara**, Prisavlje. A local alternative club (rock, punk, metal, indie)with various concerts and theme nights/programmes. Sometimes hosts festivals, young indie talent concerts, movie nights, exhibitions etc.
- **SAX! - Klub hrvatskih glazbenika**, Palmotičeva 22/2, ☎ +385-1 48 72 836. A great place to enjoy live music of a wide array of styles including blues, jazz, rock and pop.
- **Sirup**, Donje Svetice 40. Interesting interior and atmosphere. Good electronic music. A bit expensive entrance fees, but worth seeing.
- **The Best**, Jarunska 5 (*out near the Jarun Lake complex*), ☎ +385 1 3011 943. Largest club in Zagreb. Mainly dance style music.
- **The Jazz Club**. Open daily. Jazz, blues, and funk bands, often from other countries.

11.11 Sleep

11.11.1 Budget

Hostels

- **1 All 4 seasons Hostel**, Gundulićeva 50, e-mail: all4seasonszg@gmail.com. All 4 seasons is lovely, unusual and pretty much artistic apartment-hostel located just 10 minutes walking distance from the strict center of Zagreb and the Ban Josip Jelačić main city square. Dorm bed: €15 (115 kuna).
- **Buzz Hostel**. Furnished with modern, ikea furniture. Also a location in Split. Dorm bed: 120 kuna.
- **1 Chillout Hostel Zagreb**, Fra Andrije Kačića Miošića 3b, ☎ +38514849605, e-mail: info@chillout-hostel-zagreb.com. Check-in: 2PM, check-out: 11AM. A brand new hostel in the city centre, free linen, free towels, free wifi, 0-24h bar and reception Dorm bed: 97-127 kuna.
- **Dizzy Daisy Hostel Zagreb**. Dorm bed: 100-150 kuna.

- **1 Fulir Hostel Zagreb**, 2 rooms, including a 12-bed dorm. Great place to meet people, but can be a wait to use the bathroom.
- **Funk Lounge**, Ivana Rendića 28b (*From main train station: Take a tram number 4 (direction Dubec), and get off on the 7th station (Masiceva). Continue along Maksimirska street until you see 'Dublin Pub' across the street on your left side, cross the street and go behind 'Dublin' on the right side in 15 story building. Just by Mlinar bakery and hair stylist is the entrance.*), ☎ +385 1 555 2707, e-mail: booking@funklounge.hr. Check-in: from 1PM, check-out: until 11AM. dorm from: €13, private from: €20.
- **1 Hobo Bear Hostel**, Meduliceva 4. Check-in: 1400, check-out: 1100. A cozy hostel very near the town center. There is a basement hang out lounge with a TV, including cable and many DVDs, as well as free (fast) internet and computers. The staff is amazingly helpful and speak perfect English, the beds are comfortable and come with free linens and blankets, and there is also a well stocked kitchen facility. Dorm bed: 105 kuna.
- **Hostel Carpe Diem**, Milana Sufflaya 3. Dorm bed: 80 kuna.
- **Hostel Lika**, Pašmanska 17. Small and cozy hostel a bit out of the city center. Dorm bed: 100 kuna.
- **Hostel Mali Mrak Zagreb**, Dubicka 8. Dorm bed: 100 kuna.
- **Nokturno Hostel**, Skalinska 2a. Free internet access, free linens and towels. Dorm bed: 130 kuna; Single: 200 kuna.
- **Logistics Youth Centre**, Jakuševička 87, ☎ +385 1 6626 035. Logistic youth center, also works as a regional information center. From the host, you can get complete information about everything that interests you. The space has 10 rooms, lobby with fireplace, dining room, kitchen and a cinema hall, where you can stream movies from your laptop. The most interesting part is the terrace with space for tents and 30 seats. Located further from downtown, but the center has its own bus which runs as needed. Parking for approximately 30 vehicles.
- **Old Town Zagreb Hostel**, Dordiceva 24 (Ulica Ignjata Dordica). Dorm bed: 100 kuna.
- **Palmers Lodge Zagreb**, Branimirova 25 (*300m from the main train station, 700m from the main bus station.*). Dorm bed: €15 (115 kuna).
- **Ravnice Youth Hostel**, I. Ravnice 38d.

11.11.2 Mid-range

- **1 Hotel Jägerhorn**, Ilica 14, ☎ +385 1 48-33-877. 3-star hotel Founded in 1827, Hotel Jägerhorn is the city's oldest standing hotel.
- **1 Arcotel Allegra**, Branimirova 29 (*300 meters from the central railway station (Glavni kolodvor)*), ☎ +385 1 46-96-000. 4-star hotel which is Zagreb's first "lifestyle" hotel. All rooms are spacious and air-conditioned and feature mini bar, safe, internet connection, bigscreen TV and DVD player. A very cool touch are the free apples supplied in your room in a very funky holder!
- **Best Western Premier Hotel Astoria**, Petrinjska 71 (*not far from the central square of Ban Jelačić*), ☎ +385 1 48-08-900. 3-star hotel
- **1 Panorama Hotel Zagreb**, Trg Kresimira Čosića 9 (*in the business district of Zagreb some 2.5 kilometers away from the central railway station (Glavni kolodvor)*). 4-star hotel.
- **Hotel Aristos**, Cebini 33, Buzin (*in the vicinity of the Zagreb airport at the southern gates of Zagreb, in the Buzin commercial center*), ☎ +385 1 66-95-900. 4-star hotel.

- **Hotel As**, Zelengaj 2A (2.5 km north-west of the railway station (Glavni kolodvor)), ☎ +385 1 46-09-111. 4-star hotel.
- **1 Hotel Central**, Branimirova 3 (150 meters from the railway station (Glavni kolodvor)), ☎ +385 1 48-41-122. 3-star hotel refurbished in 1996.
- **Hotel Dora**, Trnjanska cesta 11 (behind the Lisinski Music Hall (south of the main railway station - Glavni kolodvor)), ☎ +385 1 63-11-900. 3 star hotel.
- **1 Hotel Dubrovnik**, Gajeva 1 (overlooking Zagreb's main square - Ban Jelačić Square), ☎ +385 1 48-63-500. 4-star hotel. Clean, centrally located, good service. Some rooms are small.
- **1 Hotel Holiday** (at the western entrance to Zagreb not far from the Zagreb Fair), ☎ +385 1 34-96-621. 3-star hotel.
- **1 Hotel I**, Remetinečka cesta 106 (near the southern entrance into Zagreb, south of the Sava and in the vicinity of Zagreb Fair), ☎ +385 1 65-42-238. 3-star hotel.
- **1 Hotel International**, Miramarska 24 (several hundred meters south of the central railway station), ☎ +385 1 61-08-800. 3-star hotel.
- **1 Hotel Jadran**, Vlaška 50 (in the city center some 500 meters east of the Cathedral), ☎ +385 1 45-53-777. 3-star hotel. There is a big shopping center near-by - the Importantne Gallery.
- **Hotel Laguna**, Kranjčevićeva 29 (near the Cibona Business Tower), ☎ +385 1 30-47-000. 3-star hotel.
- **Hotel Phoenix**, Sesvetska cesta 29 (in an eastern suburb of Zagreb - Sesvete. It is located some 500 meters from the motorway on the main road that leads from Zagreb to Dugo Selo.), ☎ +385 1 20-06-333. 3-star hotel



Hotel Esplanade, Zagreb, Croatia

- **1 Palace Hotel**, J.J. Strossmayer Square, ☎ +385 1 48-14-611. 4-star hotel. It was built in the Secession style in 1891 and converted into a hotel in 1905. The Arts Pavilion is 50 metres away.



Palace Hotel

11.11.3 Splurge

- **1 Esplanade Zagreb**, Mihanovićeva 1 (just across the central railway station), ☎ +385 1 45-66-666. Built in 1925 for passengers of the famous **Orient Express** train, which connected **Paris** and **Istanbul**. If you can, check the Emerald Ballroom with its soaring dome shaped roof. The hotel also includes the Zinfandel's Restaurant, Le Bistro and the Esplanade 1925, the hotel's lounge and cocktail bar.

- **1 Sheraton Zagreb Hotel**, Kneza Borne 2, ☎ +385 1 45-53-535. Features air-conditioned rooms and suites with classic furniture and marbled bathrooms. It also includes King Tomislav Restaurant, Fontana Restaurant, Piano Bar, Café Imperial, 17 meeting rooms and an 800-square-meter Grand Ballroom.
- **1 Westin Zagreb**, Kršnjavoga 1 (*next to the Mimara Museum and the Croatian National Theatre*), ☎ +385 1 48-92-000. The hotel was renovated in 2004. It features the legendary Heavenly Bed and Heavenly Shower and probably offers the best view in the city.

11.12 Connect

11.12.1 Internet

- **Art Internet Caffee**, Tkalčićeva 18, “Art” is an internet cafe bar, situated in the very center of Zagreb (Tkalčićeva 18), just a few steps from the Ban Jelačić square. In this modern and comfortable bar you can enjoy a fine selection of beverages as well as a large variety of computer services. Tel:+385 1 48 11 050. Open M-Su 08.00 - 23-00.
- **Aquarius net**, Kralja Držislava 4.
- **Art Net Club**, Preradovićeve 25.
- **KIC**, Preradovićeve 5/1.
- **Klub SC**, Savska 25.
- **Mama**, Preradovićeve 18, is one of the coolest and cheapest cyber cafes in the city. They charge 10kn (1.36E) per hour or you can pay by the minute. Wireless connection, Skype, cool juices and coffee are available. The place is run by Multimedia institute, a nonprofit organization working in the fields of new media culture and digital technology, so there's chance of meeting some of the local and international cutting-edge artists or attending some interesting program.
- **MMC Zagreb**, Gajeva 17, “MMC” is an internet point (Gaming & Surfing & Call & Fax), situated in the very center of Zagreb (Gajeva 17), just a few steps from the Ban Jelačić square. Tel:+385 1 48 72 671. Open Mon-Sun 09.00 - 23-00.
- **Sublink**, Teslina 12.
- **Vip**, Preradović square 5.
- **Vip**, Ibler square.

11.13 Stay safe

As other cities in Croatia, Zagreb is very safe, but just as anywhere else dark alleys, parks during the night, etc. should generally be avoided, and common sense should be followed. The chance of getting in trouble in Zagreb is fairly low, especially in the center where most of the hotels and restaurants are located, and for foreigners who are in general respected and welcome. Visitors soon realize that Zagreb is way safer than the vast majority of other European capitals such as London, Paris, Vienna, Rome, Budapest, etc.

Pickpocketing isn't a particularly common occurrence in Zagreb, but you might be approached by beggars and similar people on the street - ignore them and they will go away.

Also, outbursts of homophobic behaviour have been known to occur, so it is advisable for homosexual couples not to show affection when near large groups of bald people or people that look like football hooligans. A lesbian couple from UK was assaulted by an angry passenger in a tram, and they suffered minor injuries, and the perpetrator was apprehended by the police. Watch out for aggressive people like that one.

Park Ribnjak, located very close to the city centre, is safe during daytime and worth visiting, especially for children. However, it has recently become a night-time meeting place of alternative youngsters, and subculture violence involving “skinheads” and similar violent young people has occasionally occurred. It's best to steer clear of Ribnjak after dark, which shouldn't be a problem because of a lack of interesting content for most tourists anyway.

Further, if you are going out at night (especially on weekends) steer clear of any drunk and rowdy groups of young people you might encounter in the street or night trams as random beatings have been known to occur. It is not uncommon for such groups to start unprovoked attacks on passersby, although they target mainly younger crowd and teenagers. These are not common but they do happen occasionally, and people have been killed by such attacks in the past, so take precautions. It is advisable for men not to wear overly pink clothes.

Avoid clubs which play what is known in Croatia as “Turbo-folk” music. These clubs are often featured in the local newspapers as violence erupts in them quite easily.

Also, **avoid strip clubs at all costs**. Zagreb is not famous for such clubs and they are rare, however most of them are often run by very shady characters, and often overcharge their guests. Recent cases include foreigners that were charged €2000 for a bottle of champagne. These clubs overcharge their customers to the extreme, and their bouncers will not have any mercy if you tell them you are unable to pay. You will soon find yourself in a local hospital. This not only applies to strip clubs in Zagreb, but also all over Croatia.

11.14 Cope

11.14.1 Reading and Speaking

Croatian children start learning a foreign language in primary school, and for the majority it is English, so younger people can usually speak the language well enough, and many older people know some. You may also try German or Italian, as both are popular (for historical and cultural reasons).

It is also advisable to learn a some basic **Croatian** words and phrases - because Zagreb can be a vibrant, busy city, a few basic *molim* (please), *hvala* (thanks) or *oprostite* (excuse me, pardon me, I'm sorry) will go a long way to avoid being ignored by a busy local.

11.14.2 Visiting during summer

Summer time is traditionally time in Zagreb for maintenance and road repairs. If you visit Zagreb at that time, you should do some research on what streets are open and what aren't and also be prepared to get stuck in traffic jams during rush hours.

11.14.3 Embassies

- **Albania**, Jurišićeva 2A, ☎ +385 1 481 0679, fax: +385 1 481 0682, e-mail: embassy.zagreb@mfa.gov.al.
- **Australia**, Centar Kaptol, 3rd Floor, ☎ +385 1 4891 200, fax: +385 1 4891 216, e-mail: AustEmb.Zagreb@dfat.gov.au.
Monday to Friday: 8:30 - 16:30, except for public holidays.
- **Austria**, Radnička cesta 80, 9th Floor, ☎ +385 1-488 1050, fax: +385 1-483 4461, e-mail: agram-ob@bmeia.gv.at.
Consulery department Mon-Fri 09:00 - 12:00.
- **Canada**, Prilaz Gjüre Deželića 4, ☎ +385 1 488 1200, fax: +385 1 488 1230, e-mail: zagrb@international.gc.ca.
Monday to Thursday: 10:00 - 12:00 and 13:00 - 15:00 Friday: 10:00 - 13:00.
- **China**, Mlinovi 132. Tues and Thurs: 09:00 - 12:00.
- **Finland**, Miramarska 23, HR-10000 Zagreb, ☎ +385 1 6312 080, fax: +385 1 6312 090, e-mail: sanomat.zag@formin.fi.
Mo-Fr 9AM-11AM.
- **Germany**, Ulica grada Vukovara 64, ☎ +385 1-6300 100, +385 98-227 136 (Emergencies & also SMS), fax: +385 1-6155 536, from inside Germany 030/1817 67231. Mon-Fri 09:00 - 12:00 public access, office hours Mon-Thu 07:45-17:00, Fri 07:45-13:45.
- **Greece**, Opatička 12, ☎ +385 1 4810444, +385 989 228 848 (Emergencies), fax: +385 1 481 0419, e-mail: gremb.zgb@mfa.gr greece-embassy@grembassy.hr, gremb.zgb@mfa.gr. 09:00 - 15:30.
- **Japan**, Boškovićeva 2, ☎ +385 1 4870 650, fax: +385 1 4667 334. 08:30-12:00, 13:00-17:15.

- **Macedonia**, Kralja Zvonimira 6/1, ☎ +385 1 457 2812, fax: +385 1 462 0369, e-mail: zagreb@mfa.gov.mk.
- **Norway**, Grand Centar Hektorovićeve 2, ☎ +385 1 6273 800, fax: +385 1 62730 899, e-mail: emb.zagreb@mfa.no. 08.30 – 16.00 Monday to Friday (15. September- 14. May) and 08.30 – 15.00 (15. May - 14. September).
- **South Korea**, Ksaverska cesta 111/A-B, ☎ +385-(0)1-4821-282.
- **Switzerland**, Bogovićeve 3, ☎ +385 1-487 88 00, fax: +385 1-481 08 90, e-mail: vie.rkc@eda.admin.ch zag.vertretung@eda.admin.ch, vie.rkc@eda.admin.ch.
- **United Kingdom**, Ivana Lučića 4, ☎ +385 1 6009 100, fax: +385 1 6009 111. Mon-Thurs: 0830-1700; Fri: 0830-1400.
- **United States**, Ulica Thomasa Jeffersona 2 (*Buzin, near the airport, bus lines 166, 229, 268 from Glavni Kolodvor, stop Odra (the first of the 3 Odra stops, stop after Buzin)*), ☎ +385 1-661-2200, +385 1-661-2300 (Consular Services). 08:00 - 16:30.

11.15 Go next

- **Samobor** - a picturesque medieval town with well preserved old lore and long tourist tradition. 25 km west of Zagreb, accessible by bus (~30 min distance from Zagreb, ticket price ~20 HRK).
- **Sisak** - a beautiful town at the intersection of 3 rivers with long history. 50 km southeast of Zagreb, accessible by fast train (about 30 min), and bus.
- **Vrbovec** - a town for all who would like to see the typical way of Croatian life. 32 km northeast of Zagreb, accessible by bus.
- **Karlovac** - a stunning town at the intersection of 4 rivers. 45 km southwest of Zagreb, accessible by bus.
- **Ljubljana, Slovenia**.

Chapter 12

Plitvice National Park



Turquoise-colored lakes

Nacionalni park Plitvička jezera (*The Plitvice Lakes National Park*) in **Croatia** is considered to be one of the most beautiful natural sights in **Europe**. Due to its beauty and significance, this system of 16 interlinked lakes and a large forest complex around it were set aside as a national park in 1949. In 1979 the park was inscribed on the **UNESCO** World Heritage List.

12.1 Understand



Galovac Lake

12.1.1 History

Humans have inhabited the Plitvice Lakes area for thousands of years. It has been settled in turn by Illyrians, Thracians, Celts, Japods, Romans, Avars, Slavs and Turks. In 1528 the area fell to the Ottomans before being retaken by the Austrian Empire 150 years later. The Austrians subsequently incorporated it into their Military Frontier and, in addition to the native Croats who already inhabited the region, Serbs who had fled Ottoman repression settled there.[citation needed]

The Plitvice Lakes had become a major tourist attraction in the late 19th century. The first hotel was built there in 1896, and as early as 1893 it already had a conservation committee - the predecessor of today's national park authority. In 1949 the communist government of Yugoslavia nationalized the lakes and made them a national park. The park was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1979 in recognition of its "outstanding natural beauty, and the undisturbed production of travertine (tuff) through chemical and biological action".

The park soon became one of Yugoslavia's most popular tourist attractions. However, in March 1991 it became the scene of the Plitvice Lakes incident - the first armed confrontation of the Croatian War of Independence that resulted in fatalities. The park was held by forces of the Republic of Serbian Krajina during the conflict and suffered some damage in the process, with hotels and other facilities being used as barracks. At auto-camp Grabovac there was massacre of civilians (three children) by the Yugoslav Army in September of 1991[1]. It was retaken by the Croatian Army in August 1995 during Operation Storm, which ended the Croatian war.

The war led UNESCO to add the park to its List of World Heritage in Danger. Due to the economic importance of the park, the Croatian government made it a priority for its de-mining efforts, and in December 1998 UNESCO recognised the park's newly mine-free status by removing it from the list of endangered sites. However, the surrounding Plitvice municipality outside the park boundary still has some problems with mine contamination.



Large Water Fall, near Lower Lakes



Walkway leading into the forest

12.1.2 Landscape

The lakes are situated on the eponymous Plitvice plateau, between the mountains of Lička Plješevica (Gornja Plješevica peak 1,640 m), Mala Kapela (Seliški Vrh peak at 1,280 m) and Medveđak (884 m). The sixteen lakes are separated into an upper and lower cluster formed by runoff from the mountains, descending from an altitude of 636 m to 503 m over a distance of some eight km, aligned in a south-north direction. The lakes collectively cover an area of about two km², with the water exiting from the lowest lake to form the Korana River.

The Plitvice Lakes lie in a basin of karstic rock, mainly dolomite and limestone, which has given rise to their most distinctive feature. The lakes are separated by natural dams of travertine, which is deposited by the action of moss, algae and bacteria. The encrusted plants and bacteria accumulate on top of each other, forming travertine barriers which grow at the rate of about 1 cm per year.

The lakes are renowned for their distinctive colours, ranging from azure to green, grey or blue. The colours change constantly depending on the quantity of minerals or organisms in the water and the angle of sunlight.

The lakes are divided into the 12 Upper Lakes (Gornja jezera) and the four Lower Lakes.

12.1.3 Flora and fauna

The Plitvice Lakes national park is heavily forested, mainly with beech, spruce, and fir trees, and features a mixture of Alpine and Mediterranean vegetation. It has a notably wide variety of plant communities, due to its range of microclimates, differing soils and varying levels of altitude.

The area is also home to an extremely wide variety of animal and bird species. Rare fauna such as the European brown bear, wolf, eagle, owl, lynx, wild cat and capercaillie can be found there, along with many more common species. At least 126 species of birds have been recorded there, of which 70 have been recorded as breeding there.

12.1.4 Climate

The area knows a mountainous land climate, with hot summers and cold winters. Although generally cooler than coastal Croatia because of its altitude, sunny days in summer get very hot with temperatures up to 35°C. As there are



Fish in Galovac Lake

few opportunities to buy refreshments in the park, visitors should bring plenty of water along for rehydration. In the evening, occasional thunderstorms can unleash large amounts of rain in a short time, so make sure to keep an eye on the weather forecast to avoid being surprised by heavy rain in the absence of shelter. The many calm streams in the park may quickly transform into wild water torrents, so stay away from the water in case of heavy rain.

In winter, heavy snowfall can be expected, enabling the Mulinje Ski Resort to operate from December to early March. Fog is common in the morning and can occur very locally, making driving up and down the often narrow roads in the park hazardous.

12.1.5 Tourist information

- **Nacionalni park Plitvička jezera**, Josipa Jovića 19, Znanstveno - stručni centar “Dr. Ivo Pevalek”, HR 53231 Plitvička jezera, ☎ +385 53 751 015, e-mail: info@np-plitvicka-jezera.hr. 07:00-20:00. Aug 180 HRK; Apr-Jun, Sep-Oct 110 HRK; Nov-Mar 55 HRK; 2 days cards 90, 180, 280 HRK respectively; discounts for students (an ISIC student card is required) and children; tickets sold at the both entrances and they are also valid for park’s internal buses and ferries. (updated Aug 2016)

12.2 Get in

12.2.1 By bus

Some buses from **Zagreb** (83 HRK) and **Zadar** or **Split** take a route along the road which passes by the park entrances. Ask the driver beforehand to make a stop at the either park entrances: **1 entrance 1** or **1 entrance 2**. Among the other direct connections are **Biograd na Moru**, **Vodice**, **Šibenik**, **Primošten**, **Trogir** and even **Novalja** (island of **Pag**). Also there is a direct bus connection to the **Krka National Park**.

Keep in mind that buses in Croatia often do not run on time. They can come early or late, and either way they stop

only long enough to pick up riders and then continue on their way. Especially in a place like Plitvice, which is quite a distance from other stops on a bus route. So get to the bus stop early and plan on waiting for awhile. Bus schedules are usually posted at the tickets office at the both of the entrances, but bear in mind that they may not reflect seasonal changes.

12.2.2 By taxi

Taxi drivers will await near the bus stations and will offer to drive for the same price of the bus ticket if around 10 persons are willing to take the taxi. It costs the same, takes an hour less and most probably they wouldn't charge for the extra baggage (The bus service charges extra). If the taxi driver is kind enough, he will also provide something like a tour guide and will leave you close enough to your destination. If for example you are waiting for the Zadar bus at 5pm, a taxi driver will be waiting 15 minutes early to attract customers, and when arriving at Zadar, if your are going to take the ferry, the driver might leave you near the pier.

12.3 Get around



Cascades of Plitvice

12.3.1 On foot

The paths near the entrance of the park are extremely well maintained and it is a relatively short walk (about 1 hour) around the nearest lake.

Paths, mostly made of wooden planks or gravel, will take you through the whole park. In most places they are wide, but since the park is extremely well visited they can feel very crowded during the day. The park have made some different routes through the park so it is easy to choose how much you want to or have time to see. A walk from one end of the park to the other normally takes around 4h, but due to the unique views the park offers it is a shame to be in a hurry. Take your time and enjoy it. As told elsewhere both buses and boats are free so it is possible to plan a walk zig-zagging up or down the lakes and the many waterfalls, and then not have to walk back the same way.

Many of the paths can be used by disabled persons, but since there is a few steps here and there is some height differences between the lower and the upper lakes it will take a strong helper to get around with a wheelchair.

12.3.2 By boat

2 lines of small electric ferries connect far banks of the *Jezero Kozjak*, a bigger lake close to the entrance #2.

12.3.3 By bus

2 shuttle bus lines run along the lakes (which are useful to take you up hills and to the entrances).

The costs these buses and ferries are included into the entrance ticket.

12.4 See

Plitvice Lakes National Park is perhaps the most beautiful natural wonder in Croatia. In addition to the numerous waterfalls, a bevy of wildlife can be seen, including fish, frogs and a variety of bird species. Special attractions at Plitvice include the Veliki Splat, a 100 foot waterfall surrounded by nearby boulders to which tourists have access. There is also a large waterfall complex that can be access via a cave in the surrounding rock face.

12.5 Do

The main attraction is obviously the hiking and walking in the area. Keep in mind that swimming is not allowed anywhere in the park.

12.5.1 Walking

- **1 Upper Lakes**, Plitvička Jezera National Park. A series of smaller lakes and waterfall cascades between Proscansko lake and Kozjak lake. Numerous walking trails lead visitors around the lakes. The lakes can be reached from Entrance 2 by crossing Kozjak lake with a ferry, which is included in the admission fee. Alternatively, a shuttle bus can be taken to the highest lake and then descended back to the ferry terminal by foot to avoid the climb. There are good indications of walking trails in the park, so a map is not necessary. (updated Aug 2016)
- **1 Lower Lakes**, Plitvička Jezera National Park. A series of lakes below Kozjak lake, carved out in a canyon. Walking trails lead visitors around and over the lakes. The Lower Lakes can be reached from Entrance 1, or from Entrance 2 after traversing Kozjak lake by ferry, which is included in the admission fee of the park. The largest waterfall (Veliki Slap) can be found near Kaludarovac lake. (updated Aug 2016)
- **1 Šupljara cave**, Plitvička Jezera National Park. A cave system between Gavanovac lake and Kaludarovac lake. Stairs are carved out into the rocks, allowing visitors to ascend up to the canyon ridges, or descend down to the hiking trails along the waterfront. The stairs are moist and steep, so good walking shoes are required. Not recommended for children. (updated Aug 2016)

Tip: If you arrive at the same time as a big group, walk one of the very well established routes in reverse. You'll probably be walking uphill for most of the trek, but you'll probably not see another person for a few hours.

NB: Walking trails through the park, most of which are along the shores of the numerous lakes, are rarely steep. However, expect to climb a substantial fraction of your visit, and especially in the hot summer months this can quickly lead to dehydration. Few opportunities to buy drinks are available in the park, and the drinks sold at stands are expensive, so visitors are advised to bring the necessary water along with them into the park. Between 1 and 2 liter of water per person per day is advised. A hiking backpack is essential to comfortably carry water over long distances.

12.5.2 Boating

- **1 Plitvička Jezera Boat Rental**, Plitvička Jezera National Park. 09:00-19:00. Rental service for wooden rowing boats, 60 kn per hour. Visitors can explore Kozjak lake and its numerous waterfalls from the water front. Fresh water snakes can often be found sunbathing on tree trunks along the water. Note that it is not allowed to swim or fish in the National Park. Although it is possible to cross Kozjak lake, the boats must be returned to the pier where they are rented. (updated Aug 2016)

12.5.3 Hiking

A few hiking trails are described at [park's web page](#) and their flyers.

12.5.4 Skiing

- **1 Ski Center Mukinje**, Mukinje 55, Plitvička Jezera. In winter, the Ski Center of Mukinje is open, offering skiers 3 slopes with a total length of 1 km. Primarily targeted at beginners, the lift is located in the center of the town. Ski equipment can be rented locally. (updated Aug 2016)

12.6 Buy

Numerous souvenir shops can be found near the entrances of the park. Caution is advised however, as many overpriced souvenirs sold as “authentic hand crafts” from Croatia are in reality made in China.

- **1 Robni Centar**, D1, 53231, Plitvička Jezera, ☎ +385 53 751 099. 09:00-20:00. Supermarket selling a variety of drinks, cooled and uncooled. The most common bottled water of Croatia is JANA, available as mineral water or in many flavored versions. Around 5 - 10 kn per bottle. (updated Aug 2016)

12.7 Eat

The park itself offers few opportunities to buy food, with the exception of food stalls and restaurants around the entrances and ferry terminals. A large picnic area can also be found near the ferry terminals. All restaurants are managed by the park authority, and the food quality they serve is low compared to the prices they typically charge. Restaurants in the numerous hotels at the park entrances suffer the same problem. Visitors are advised to bring their own food into the park if possible (and of course, take the trash out as well!). The neighboring villages offer better eating opportunities, but require a short walk from the park entrances.

A local specialty are pancakes, which are typically served with Nutella or ground walnuts. Prices between 15 and 25 kn. Most restaurants or konobas have them on their menu in the desert or snack section.

- **1 Bistro Vučnica**, Mukinje 55, 53231, Plitvička Jezera, ☎ +385 51 751 282. 07:00-22:00. Mid-range restaurant in the center of Mukinje, on a 15 minute walk from park entrance 2. Large selection of fresh pizzas for 60 - 90 kn. The largest pizza size is meant for 2 to 3 people. Indoor and outdoor seating available. (updated Aug 2016)
- **1 Robni Centar**, D1, 53231, Plitvička Jezera, ☎ +385 53 751 099. 09:00-20:00. Supermarket selling drinks, energy bars, croissants and local pastries for breakfast or lunch, or bread and a wide variety of toppings. Fair prices. Conveniently located on the shortcut path leading from Mukinje to Entrance 2 of the park. (updated Aug 2016)

12.8 Drink

Nightlife — none

12.9 Sleep



Water, water everywhere

There is a travel agency at the entrance to the park. From here, you can organize for a homestay. There are numerous locals who will rent bedrooms in their house and provide food for a competitive price.

12.9.1 Lodging

Several large hotels have been built near Entrance 2 of the park. These largely cater to middle or high class European tourists. Expect to pay very high prices for the luxury of spending the night close to the park entrance.

Alternatively, private house and apartment owners in the nearby villages of Mukinje and Jezerce, both on walking distance from Entrance 2, offer rooms for better prices. In addition, visitors will have the chance to explore the lifestyle of rural Croatia and meet with local inhabitants. [OpenStreetMap](#) provides an overview of private guest houses and apartments in the area.

- **1 Guesthouse Bor**, Mukinje 59, 53231, Plitvička Jezera. A small guest house in the center of Mukinje, next to the skiing facilities and the only bistro of the town. 80€. (updated Aug 2016)
- **1 Miric Inn**, Jezerce 18, 53231, Plitvička Jezera. A small inn, offering mid-range lodging. A bus connection leads to the entrances of the park. (updated Aug 2016)

12.9.2 Camping

There is also a camping site in the nearby town, mostly used by people visiting the park. Facilities are fine, good clean toilets, a small shop, and a couple of dining places. Camping can be made wherever you want; it is possible to choose a place between the trees, or a cosy hole in the hills or a more open place with a magnificent view.

- **1 Cvetkovic Camping**, Cvetkovic, D429, Mukinje, Plitvicka Jezera. Camp site 10 minutes from the park entrance. A bus stop at the main road takes guests to the park entrance. (updated Aug 2016)

As long as you are staying at the camping site, your ticket to the park can be renewed for free at the information office. It's a good way to spend more time at the park and visit it outside the busier hours. Parking at the park is free, but if you don't want to drive the camping site arranges buses to and from the park in the main season.

12.9.3 Backcountry

The National Park is a restricted area, limiting the opportunities for backcountry lodging. Firewood gathering and campfires are prohibited, just like fishing and berry gathering. In addition, areas outside the National Park boundaries may still be contaminated with land mines left over from the Croatian Independence War, making it dangerous to wander into the forests and leave the marked roads.

12.10 Stay safe

It's worth noting that this area is one of the only remaining regions of Europe where bears roam. It would probably more interesting than dangerous to see a bear, but were you to surprise a mother and her cub because you did not expect to see bears at all, you could be in danger. A lone bear is more frightened of you than you are of it. Yell and bang something that makes loud noises, and the bear will almost always run off. Bears can run and climb faster than you can, and running signals "prey," so don't run.

12.11 Go next

- **Zadar**, a port city and destination of many of the long distance coaches traveling through the Plitvice area.
- **Rijeka**, the largest city in the Kvarner region.
- **Split**, the second largest city of Croatia and home to another UNESCO Heritage site, Diocletian's Palace.

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