

# Croatia & Cruising the Dalmatian Coast

**Air Program: 12 days/11 nights (includes 1 air night)**

**Land Program: 11days/10 nights**

**Breakfasts: 10**

**Lunches: 7**

**Dinners: 4**

*B | L | D denotes included breakfasts, lunches and dinners.*

- **A special note about air:** If you have purchased only the Land Program, please book flights that arrive on Day 2, the first day of the Land Program. The date is listed at the top of your Reservation Confirmation.
- This itinerary is subject to change due to operational conditions.
- This **active program** is designed for people who are in good health and can comfortably participate in a demanding daily schedule of physical activities. The itinerary may feature **full days of ongoing activities**.
- Excursions on this program require:
  - walking distances of up to 3-5 miles, sometimes uphill or downhill
  - walking up/down and along cobblestones, unpaved terrain and paths and/or uneven and slippery surfaces.
  - getting on/off motor coaches and motor yacht.
- Depending on the excursion, more leisurely alternatives may be available.
- Due to specific mooring conditions and requirements in some Croatian ports, the cruise line's vessels may be moored side by side, making it necessary for guests to cross from one vessel to another with gaps in between to get to the shore. In such cases, guests need to take special care when crossing and do this at their own risk. It is advised to ask a crew member for assistance when crossing. Note that movement between the ships is the passenger's responsibility.
- During rough weather, movement on the ship should be minimized and done with care as floors can be wet and slippery.

### Day 1 | Depart gateway city

AHI FlexAir passengers depart for Zagreb, Croatia. Please check your luggage from your gateway city to your arrival city. Your claim checks should have the following airport code: ZAG.

### Day 2 | Zagreb, Croatia

Esplanade Zagreb Hotel

D

Arrive at Zagreb Airport. Proceed through immigration to the baggage claim area and retrieve your luggage. After completing customs, AHI FlexAir passengers traveling on flights that qualify for the group arrival transfer and Land Program passengers who have purchased seats on the group transfer should exit the baggage claim area and proceed to the Arrivals Hall, where an AHI Travel representative will meet you.

Transfer to the Esplanade Zagreb Hotel. Please note, if you arrive before check-in time, your room may not be immediately available.

Gather with your fellow travelers to enjoy a Welcome Reception, followed by a Welcome Dinner.

### Day 3 | Zagreb

Esplanade Zagreb Hotel

B

**Enrichment: *Contemporary Croatia*.** Join a local expert to gain a thorough understanding of recent events that have shaped the stable, independent Croatia of today.

**Zagreb.** Tucked between the sparkling Sava River and the forested slopes of Mount Medvednica, Zagreb intertwines European elegance with a delightful Balkan spirit. Following a panoramic tour of Zagreb's modern Lower Town, drive outside the city center to visit Mirogoj Cemetery. Designed by architect Hermann Bollé, this gem is filled with tiled arcades, creeping ivy, sculptures and green copper domes. Back in Zagreb's beautifully preserved Upper Town, admire a rich array of Austro-Hungarian architecture and see more treasures by Bollé: The

Cathedral of Assumption and St. Mark's Church. Originally erected in the 13th century, St. Mark's Church features a brilliantly tiled mosaic roof.

**Free Time:** Spend the remainder of the day at leisure in Zagreb. The city offers many wonderful museums to fill your time, including the Museum of Broken Relationships, the Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museum of Illusions.

## Day 4 | Zagreb

Esplanade Zagreb Hotel

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**Free Time:** Take part in today's elective activity or enjoy a full day at leisure in this vibrant capital city. Treat yourself to an idyllic morning browsing the Museum of Contemporary Art or enjoying the quirky Museum of Broken Relationships. Observe local life in Zagreb's Jelačić Square or wander through the farmer's market and sample organic fruits and honey.

**Elective Activity: *Croatia's Countryside.*** Travel from Zagreb through Croatia's scenic north country to Klanjec. Visit its Antun Augustincic Museum and Gallery and the Church of St. Mary before traveling to Kumrovec, a quaint village nestled near the Sulta River and Slovenian border. Recognized as the birthplace of Tito, the village features the Kumrovec Staro Selo Museum, an open-air museum with well-preserved houses from the end of the 19th century. During your visit to the museum, gain insight into the lifestyles of an authentic Zagorje village. Then enjoy regional specialties during lunch at a family-run eatery that offers stunning views of Croatia's countryside. **(Moderate)** *Available at an additional cost.*

## Day 5 | Zagreb | Plitvice Lakes National Park | Zadar

MV Infinity

B | L | D

After breakfast, transfer to Zadar. Along the way, stop at Plitvice Lakes National Park to explore this scenic wonder.

***Plitvice Lakes National Park.*** Enjoy a refreshing escape to one of Croatia's most spectacular natural wonders. This UNESCO World Heritage site flaunts sixteen crystal lakes that are laced together in a series of awe-inspiring waterfalls and cascades. The vibrant landscape is a vision of unsurpassed beauty where the waters shimmer and constantly change color, a result of the karst terrain.

Wander planked walkways and trails amid a fragrant forest of beech and pine. The park is also home to nearly 160 species of birds as well as many rare, endemic species, including the endangered European brown bear.

Following this sojourn, enjoy a lunch of regional dishes.

Continue to Zadar and board your ship. Later tonight, after unpacking and exploring the amenities of your ship, gather for a Welcome Aboard Reception and Dinner. If you wish, walk along Zadar's promenade to see modern attractions, including the sea organ, a musical art installation that is fueled by the ebb and flow of the currents.

### **Day 6 | Zadar | Šibenik**

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**Zadar.** This storied university city features a bevy of cosmopolitan cafes, museums and Roman ruins. Witness the impressive Roman Forum and the St Donat church. Enjoy the city's modern attractions at its waterfront promenade, including the sea organ, a musical art installation. Listen to its unending melody, which is fueled by the ebb and flow of the sea's currents. Nearby is the 72-foot Monument to the Sun, which celebrates Zadar's incredible sunsets.

Sail on to Šibenik this afternoon and enjoy lunch on board.

Upon arrival in Šibenik, disembark to find dinner on your own. Perhaps share a basket of bread, satisfying salad, soup and mouthwatering grilled meats or seafood.

### **Day 7 | Šibenik | Split**

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Made entirely of stone, Šibenik is a proud city built entirely by Croats. Due to the town's strategic position in the Adriatic, it was a desired location by larger Mediterranean powers. Thus, the city's rulers built large, sturdy fortresses, fortified city walls and commanding towers to protect themselves. Today, the city welcomes visitors with historical sites, lovely alleys and squares, and striking buildings.

**Šibenik.** Uncover the architecture of Šibenik while visiting the UNESCO-listed Cathedral of St. James, one of Europe's most significant monumental cathedrals. This magnificent church was built only in stone during the 15th and 16th centuries. It was also featured on the "Game of Thrones." **(Moderate)**

Sail to Split. Watch the scenery unfold before you: picturesque islands, hidden coves and azure seas! If luck is on your side, you may see dolphins!

**Exploring Split.** Continue on a walking tour of Split and delight in the city's historical wonders. Visit the incredible living ruin of Diocletian's Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage site that has been continuously inhabited since the Roman emperor abdicated his throne in A.D. 305. See the cellars, temple ruins, the elaborate Cathedral of St. Domnius and the Golden Gate, and witness the Peristyle, a rectangular open court that was the heart of the palace. Roaming this complex's tangle of passageways, courtyards and underground chambers is one of Croatia's most enchanting experiences.

The boat overnights in Split. Invite friends for a great meal and good company during an evening at leisure.

### **Day 8 | Hvar Island | Korčula**

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B | L | D

**Hvar's Stari Grad.** Visit sunny Hvar, a Croatian favorite lauded for its sunny shores, lavender plantations, olive groves and idyllic beaches. With a history dating back to 6,000 B.C., Hvar brims with cultural and historical heritage, plus a tranquil Mediterranean ambience. Uncover a slice of paradise in the ancient port town of Stari Grad, Croatia's oldest town. Admire the churches, quaint squares and orange-tiled rooftops clustered around the charming marina.

**Lavender Farm, Terra Arhaica & Vrboska.** Soak up the purple beauty and delightful fragrance of lavender during a visit to family-run lavender farm. The blossoms are grown for medical, cosmetic, cooking and other products. Next, step into old Dalmatia at Terra Arhaica. See how people dressed, lived and prepared food, and taste local treats delicacies and traditional treats. Continue to Vrboska, a hidden treasure filled with fig-covered courtyards, intricate dwellings and pretty alleyways.

Chat about your day during dinner at a local restaurant with a beautiful view.

## Day 9 | Korčula

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B | L

Relax over breakfast on board. Continue your sailing journey to Korčula.

**Korčula.** The spectacular “Emerald Isle” juts into the Peljesac Channel and brims with beauty, harbor-side restaurants and thriving vineyards. Its medieval streets are designed like fish bones, branching off from a central square, and the medieval old town is decorated with red rooftops, similar to those found in Dubrovnik. In the center of town sits a pretty Gothic-Renaissance church. The island is also rumored to be the birthplace of famous Italian explorer Marco Polo! (Allegedly, the home of Marco Polo is located in the old town on Ulica Depolo street.)

Tonight, set out to find dinner at your leisure.

## Day 10 | Ston & Mali Ston | Dubrovnik

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B | L | D

**Idyllic Pelješac Peninsula.** Beloved for its historical heritage and stunning beauty, the rugged Pelješac peninsula is abundant with fjords, quiet bays and picturesque vineyards. It is also celebrated for its fresh oysters and salt, an extremely valuable commodity in past times.

Hop aboard a boat in the fishing village of Mali Ston and ride across the bay to visit an oyster farm. These crystal-clear waters are home to world-famous oyster beds. Enjoy tasting delicious bivalves, just plucked from the sea. (Oysters here are usually eaten raw with a drop of lemon.)

Next, gain insight into the centuries-old practice of salt harvesting while visiting one of the world’s oldest salt pans. Due to its geographical position, plus a perfect combination of salinity, sea and wind, this region has been a crucial salt harvesting site for over 4,000 years. Salt is still collected using traditional methods where workers use their hands instead of heavy machinery.

From afar, witness the beautiful 14th-century stone walls set on the steep slopes of the lush foothills. Built as a defense to protect the lagoon’s salt ponds from

predatory pirates, these impressive snaking walls join Ston to neighboring Mali Ston. About 20 out of the original 40 towers are still standing!

Reunite with your ship in Dubrovnik and gather for a Farewell Reception and Captain's Dinner.

### Day 11 | Dubrovnik

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B | L

**Dubrovnik.** This beautiful city was relentlessly shelled during Croatia's Homeland War in the early 1990s, but the medieval churches, graceful fountains and squares have been restored to their former glory. Visit the baroque cathedral and admire the loggia and ornamentation inside of the Rector's Palace. Pass by the medieval Sponza Palace, which houses priceless ancient manuscripts, and visit the 14th-century Franciscan Monastery's Romanesque cloister. Its small apothecary is the oldest working pharmacy in Europe.

**Free time:** You may wish to walk around the old walls of the city, an experience that offers splendid views of Dubrovnik's distinctive orange rooftops, the harbor and the vast stretch of blue sea. For dinner at leisure, consider trying *manestra*, a typical bean soup found along coastal Croatia, or *brudet*, a fish stew simmered with chili pepper and polenta. Finish off your meal with *rozata*, a sweet pudding with a flan-like texture.

### Day 12 | Depart for gateway city

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After breakfast, bid farewell to this beautiful region of Europe. AHI FlexAir passengers traveling on flights that qualify for a group transfer and Land Program passengers who have purchased seats on the group transfer depart for Dubrovnik Airport for your return flights home. Your Travel Director will provide the details.