Best of Croatia & Bosnia
8 Days | Starts/Ends: Dubrovnik

**COACH TOUR:** A captivating journey through Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovinia, both steeped in medieval history, culture and natural beauty. See the bridge of Mostar, a new and vibrant Sarajevo, Zagreb and beautiful Plitvice Lakes before returning to Dubrovnik for a little R&R.

**HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS**

**Trip Highlights**
- Dubrovnik - UNESCO listed fortress, old city and Cathedral of Assumption
- Mostar - with its famous bridge over the Neretva River. Built by sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1557 in true islamic style, its still one of the nation’s most recognizable landmarks
- Sarajevo - the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, vibrant, cosmopolitan and historically interesting
- Osijek - fortified city centre, Old Fort, Cathedral and Baroque styled architecture
- Ethno Village of Stara Kapela - a small rural community preserving its cultural heritage dating back to 1275
- Zagreb - the city’s historical centre, the fortified Upper Town, St Mark’s Church, Croatian National Theatre and more.
- Plitvice Lakes - a stunning series of lakes, cascading waterfalls and travertines
- Trogir - UNESCO listed historical town and harbour
- Split – historical port & Diocletian Palace

**What’s Included**
- 7 breakfasts and 5 hotel dinners
- 7 nights 3 star hotels
- Guided sightseeing of Sarajevo, Osijek, Zagreb, Plitvice lakes, Split, Zadar and Dubrovnik. Commentary will be conducted in English and possibly one other language for other members of your group
- Escort by an English speaking, Croatian tour leader.
- Specialist local guides at some sites.
- Airport arrival transfer on day 1 and departure transfer on day 8
- Entrance fees to Plitvice lakes, Diocletian’s Palace in Split, and the Cathedral in Dubrovnik
- All relevant transport and transfers and transportation in private A/C vehicles.

**What’s Not Included**
- International flights and visa
- Entrance fees to sites, other than those listed
- Tip for your tour leader. As a guideline we suggest EUR 3–5 per person per day.

**DETAILED ITINERARY**

**Day 1: Dubrovnik**
Sunday. Welcome to Dubrovnik and the start of your holiday. Included transfer the airport to your hotel. Remainder of the day at leisure. **Overnight - Dubrovnik (D)**

**Day 2: Mostar & Sarajevo**
Dubrovnik – Mostar – Sarajevo. This morning we drive to Mostar, named after the bridge keepers who in the medieval times guarded the Stari Most (Old Bridge) over the Neretva River. The Old Bridge, commissioned by the sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1557, rebuilt in 2003 is still one of Bosnia and Herzegovina’s most recognizable landmarks, and is considered one of the most exemplary pieces of Islamic architecture. After an orientational walk of the city and free time for lunch we drive onward to Sarajevo.
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Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina is one of the historically most interesting cities in Europe. It is a place where the Western and Eastern Roman Empire split; where the people of the Roman Catholic west, Eastern Orthodox east and the Ottoman south, met, lived and warred. Throughout the ages it has been both an example of sectarianism and multi-cultural integration. Today, Sarajevo is very likable, vibrant and cosmopolitan place to live. City tour upon arrival. **Overnight - Sarajevo (B, D)**

**Day 3 : Osijek & Vuvovar**
Sarajevo – Osijek – Vukovar. Morning departure to Osijek, a mid sized city beautifully nestled upon the banks of the river Drava. The fortified city centre (Tvrdja) dates back to the 18th century, and boasts the splendidly neo-Gothic Church of St Peter and St Paul and the grand Europska Avenija, along which can be seen some excellent examples of the Art Nouveau architecture popular in this part of the world in the late 19th century. Located in one of the most fertile and certainly the largest agricultural area of Croatia, the town is its semi-official gastronomic capital. We see the Cathedral and Tvrdja - city centre before travelling onward to the river port city of Vukovar settled on the meeting point of the Vuka and Danube rivers. **Overnight - Vukovar (B, D)**

**Day 4 : Zagreb**
Vukovar – Zagreb. Passing through Djakovo we arrive the Ethno Village of Stara Kapela - a small rural community dedicated to preserving the cultural heritage of the village that dates back to 1275; before arriving to Zagreb, the nation’s capital. On a sightseeing tour of Zagreb we'll have an opportunity to see the fortified Upper Town, the city’s historical centre, St Mark’s church with its multi-coloured roof, the Cathedral, Croatian National Theatre and the University. Tonight offers the opportunity for you to dine independently. **Overnight - Zagreb (B)**

**Day 5 : Plitvice lakes & waterfalls**

Zagreb – Plitvice – Trogir – Split. This morning we depart for Plitvice National Park, a well known UNESCO World Heritage site. Explore the 16 crystal blie lakes that cascade into 92 spectacular waterfalls. Walk on the wooden promenades with magnificent views on the waters where every turn leads to breathtaking scenery and yet another waterfall. Surrounded by dense woods, Plitvice Lakes are a natural phenomenon of rare and unique beauty.

On the road to Split, a short stop is made at the UNESCO protected town of Trogir. St. Lawrence’s Cathedral with its western facing entrance - a masterpiece of Radovan, represent the most significant work of the Romanesque-Gothic style in Croatia. **Overnight - Split (B, D)**

**Days 6-7 : Split & Dubrovnik**

After breakfast, we embark on a walking tour of Split discovering the UNESCO protected Diocletian’s Palace with its charming little streets, peristyle open colonnade and court, Jupiter’s Temple and Cathedral. Leaving Split we drive south along the Dalmatian coastline to Dubrovnik - the Jewel in the nation’s crown.

We tour the UNESCO listed old city with its towering fortress wall (entrance fee not included) and enter the Dubrovnik Cathedral - Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin, (Cathedral entrance fee included, Treasury entrance fee not included), built in Roman Baroque architectural style. Dinner is included this evening. Day 7, offer free time for you to independently explore.

**NEUM CORRIDOR VISA REQUIREMENTS**
Enroute to Dubrovnik we cross the Neum Corridor, a 9km stretch of territory owned by Bosnia & Herzegovnia allowing them access to the Adriatic Sea. Although passports are checked at the crossing, UK, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada passport holders do not require a visa to enter Bosnia & Herzegovnia, nor to re-enter on the Croatian side. If you were returning to the north after the completion of your holiday again you would not need an additional visa to cross this territory. If travelling on a South African passport you require a visa to enter Croatia, obtainable prior to departure and a visa for Bosnia & Herzegovnia. The best visa to obtain would be a Schengen Visa (multiply entry) which will allow multiple entries to both countries. We ask that you please re-confirm this information with your nearest embassy for each of the above listed countries as the regulations are changing as Croatia continues to enter the European Union. Visa requirements are subject to change. Visa procurement is also the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours. **Overnight - Split (B, D, T)**

**Day 8 : Dubrovnik**
A leisurely day for you to further see the sights of this beautiful city, before included departure transfer to the airport. (B)

**TOURING ARRANGEMENTS**
This tour is operated in conjunction with other tourist groups, not solely On The Go. Some travellers may have different start and end points for their holiday so the group mix may change on a day to day basis. For sightseeing and transfer the group size may vary between 10 - 38 persons.

**KNOW BEFORE YOU GO**

This information has been compiled with care and good faith. They give an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. Any costs shown are subject to change, though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.
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Visas
Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Croatia.

UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and USA passport holders don’t require a visa for a stay of less than 90 days.

South African passport holders REQUIRE a visa (issued before departure). Requirements for the procurement of a Croatian visa are subject to change but application requirements include the need to show proof of sufficient funds to cover duration of stay, proof of pre-paid accommodation or documentation regarding the purpose and means of travel (such as a return or onward ticket, details of holiday arrangement etc).

Health Requirements
You should seek medical advice before travelling to Croatia from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide Diphtheria, Hepatitis A and Tetanus is strongly recommended. The tap water in Croatia is generally considered safe to drink, but as a precaution against stomach upsets you may want to drink bottled mineral water, which is readily available from shops, hotels and restaurants.

Holiday Money
The official currency in Croatia is the Croatian Kuna.

Any money paid locally for optional excursions that you may wish to partake in can be paid in local currency - Kuna or Euros.

If travelling with Euro, British Pounds, US Dollars and other major currencies these can be exchanged locally or in advance of departure. Internationally recognized debit/credit card can be used for cash machine withdrawals (available in all bigger towns). It’s advisable to request bank notes in smaller denominations, as it can sometimes be hard to get change from large notes and smaller notes are handy for smaller purchases and gratuities. Traveller’s Cheques are not recommended as they’re often difficult to exchange and incur high fees.

Time & Voltage
Croatia is 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Meantime (GMT). From the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October, Croatia observes Daylight Saving and is 2 hours ahead of GMT. Standard voltage is 220 volts, AC 50Hz. Primary sockets generally require European plugs, of the two round pin variety. We recommend that you pack a universal travel adaptor. You will need a voltage converter, and plug adaptor in order to use U.S. appliances.

Climate
Croatia is a northern hemisphere destination with Mediterranean and continental climatic conditions. The continental climate is predominant with hot summers and cold winters. Along the Adriatic coast, dry summers are experienced with mild winters. Our cruises operate during the Croatian summer, when temperatures are generally high (particularly from June through September), so pack sunscreen and a hat, as the sun can be strong.

Bosnia And Herzegovina Country Guide

Bosnia: Fact File
Official Name: Bosnia and Herzegovina
Capital: Sarajevo
Population: 4.6 million
Total Area: 51,129 square kilometres
Official Language: Bosnian, Serbian and Croatian. The Croats and Bosniaks use the Latin alphabet, whereas the Serbs use the Cyrillic.
Religions: 45% Muslim, 36% Orthodox, 15% Roman Catholic, 4% Protestant, Jews and other denominations.
Voltage: 220 volts AC, 50Hz. Two-pin plugs are in use.
Dialing Code: +387
Time Difference: GMT/UTC + 1. For other time differences please visit www.timeanddate.com

Bosnia: Brief history
Bosnia and Herzegovina has been inhabited since the Neolithic age (around 9500 BC) and has been occupied by the Illyrians, the Romans, the Byzantines and later the Slavs in the medieval period. The Turks dominated during the 400 year-long Ottoman rule of 1463-1868 and reorganised society along class and religious lines. During this period of relative peace and prosperity, Islam became the dominant religion with Orthodox and Catholic Christians in large minorities. Many of the country’s most important architectural achievements were made during this time, including the Stari Most (bridge at Mostar) and Gazi Husrev-Beg Mosque in Sarajevo. During the last 100 years of Ottoman rule, the situation deteriorated with plagues, military failures and revolts, and in 1875 a widespread peasant rebellion lead to the Ottomans succeeding power to the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1878. The Austro-Hungarian leaders built catholic cathedrals and encouraged a pluralist multi-religious nation, as well as introducing coal mining, railways and other infrastructure. Political unrest rose as Bosnia’s Catholic and Orthodox population started to identify themselves with neighbouring Croatia or Serbia respectively. After a Serb nationalist assassinated the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne in Sarajevo in 1914 sparking the beginning of World War I, Bosnia and Herzegovina joined the South Slav Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which became known as Yugoslavia in 1929. Tensions remained over national identities within the kingdom and the map was redrawn many times in an effort to erase traditional geographical divisions between major ethnic groups and formerly separate nations. Yugoslavia was invaded by Germany in 1941 during World War II and Croatia sided with Germany to persecute Croatia’s and Bosnia’s Jewish and Serbian population. Bosnia and Herzegovina declared its independence from the former Yugoslavia on 3 March 1992, which was followed by three years of civil war between Bosnian Serbian forces and Bosnian Muslims as well as between Muslims and Croats. A peace agreement was signed in 1995 and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina was created (Muslim & Croat), alongside the Serb republic Republika Srpska. Parliament has since been centralised in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the country has a democratically elected parliament.
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Bosnia: Geography and weather
Often referred to as ‘heart shaped’, Bosnia and Herzegovina share borders with Serbia in the east, Montenegro in the southeast, and Croatia to the north and west. It has a short Adriatic coastline of 20km (12 miles) to the south. Two major rivers to the north (Sava) and east (Drina) shape the countries borders.

Much of the terrain is mountainous and hilly. The climate is variable with moderate continental climatic conditions marked by very cold winters and hot summers. Snowfall can often last until April.

Visit www.weather2travel.com to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your tour.

Bosnia: Visas
A valid passport is required for entry. You should also have a copy of your return ticket if requested. Most nationalities do not require a visa, however visa regulations change frequently so it is important you consult with the embassy prior to travelling to ensure you have the correct visas. In some cases you will be crossing the borders on overnight trains and if you do not have the correct visa you will not be allowed to enter the country and will be asked to leave the train. It is the responsibility of the traveller to obtain all correct visas prior to departure. Visa services like www.travcour.com can be very helpful.

Bosnia: Money
Please note: ALL prices stated in this dossier are given as a guide only and are subject to change.

Prices quoted in this country dossier are in euro or Konvertibilna Marka (KM) unless otherwise specified.

Local Currency
The monetary unit in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the Konvertibilna Marka (KM). For up to date exchange rates with your own currency visit www.oanda.com or www.xe.com.

Notes come in denominations of KM200, 100, 50, 20 and 10 feninga. Euro notes (but not coins) are also widely accepted, prices can also be found in euros.

Changing money, credit cards & ATMs
Most major currencies can be exchanged at banks and bureaux de change, however the pound sterling is less popular than the euro and US dollar. Credit cards are widely accepted. Most banks will give cash advances on credit cards with a passport. Cash machines can be found in cities like Sarajevo, Mostar, Banja and Luka. Travellers cheques can be changed in only in selected banks. Carrying cash is advisable.

Working out your budget
Our Europe pre-departure information booklet includes a general list of all the things you should take into consideration when budgeting and an estimate of what you should allow per day for spending money.

Entrance fees
Generally speaking most entrance fees will be covered by the recommended spending money on your tour dossier. There are, however, other sites and museums that are not part of the tour programme which you may wish to visit in your free time. If you have an International Student Card you will often be entitled to reduced entrance fees.

Tipping
It is customary to give round up the taxi fare and leave an extra 1-2 KM extra at restaurants. (If you are unsure your tour leader will advise a suitable amount). Tipping guides at the end of excursions is always appreciated and your tour leader will advise you on the amount for this.

Bosnia: Optional excursions
A full list of the main excursions available on each tour can be found on daily itinerary on these trip notes. All prices given are approximate and are subject to change due to local inflation or exchange rates.

Bosnia: Local transport
The safety and condition of urban roads in Bosnia and Herzegovina are generally fair, but rural road maintenance is poor. During winter and spring, block ice and landslides can make driving difficult. In Sarajevo you will find a fairly efficient tram network. Tickets are sold from kiosks. One of the most popular and reliable ways of getting around on your own in large cities in is by taxi and Sarajevo has many. Try to find out what the going rate for journeys is before you hop in to ensure you are not being overcharged – only some taxis will have meters. Your tour leader will be able to provide advice on this in each major city.

Bosnia: Safety & Security
Generally people find Eastern Europe to be safe and feel confident wandering alone during the day. However if you are unfamiliar with an area it is recommended that you exercise more caution at night and take taxis rather than walk, especially if you are a lone female traveller. In some cities bag snatching can occur so always keep a firm hand/eye on your personal items. Petty theft is becoming increasingly common. If there is a safe available in your hotel it is recommended you use it for any items of value.

The risk of landmines has decreased in recent years, as most mines remaining from the war are now clearly marked. However, visitors are still advised to exercise caution when travelling outside main cities and towns and you should be careful not to stray from roads and paved areas without an experienced guide. Caution should also be taken when driving at night or during winter. Drivers should keep to the main roads. There are also many abandoned houses which are booby trapped with mines, even within towns and cities so it is advisable to stay well clear.

Bosnia: Local food and drink
Some breakfasts are included in your tour. Breakfasts can be basic so if you tend to get hungry it may be a good idea to buy some fruit or snacks to eat during the day. All other meals, extra snacks and drinks on the tour are at your own expense.
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Ask your tour leader if they can recommend any restaurants in the area to suit your taste or budget or have fun exploring independently.

Food

You will find that the region’s traditional cuisine exhibits Turkish influences, with plenty of grilled meat dishes. You may want to try national specialties such as jagajetina (flame-grilled lamb or mutton), bosanski ionac (meat stew cooked on an open fire), cevacici (small sausages made from a lamb and beef mix), burek (layered meat or cheese pie made with filo pastry), Baklava (sweet nuts and honey in pastry) and tufahije (apple cake).

Drink

Spirits made from fruit are popular, so look out for slijivovica (homemade plum brandy) and ioza (made from grapes). Turkish-style coffee is also widely available. Popular wines to try are zilavka (white) and blatina (red).

All drinks such as bottled water or soft drinks are at your own expense at all times and are fairly inexpensive. Alcoholic drinks vary in price, with wine and beer generally being the cheapest options. The legal drinking age is 18 years-old.

Vegetarians

Vegetarians may occasionally struggle to find suitable dishes, although you may find vegetarian versions of dolma (vegetables such as peppers or aubergines stuffed with rice) and zeljanica (spinach in a flaky filo pastry), as well as plenty of pasty options, kljukuša (batter with shredded potatoes, baked) jjevača (batter with vegetables, baked); vegetable soups and salads.

Croatia Country Guide

Croatia: Fact File

Official Name: Republic of Croatia
Capital: Zagreb
Population: 4.5 million
Total Area: 56,542 square kilometres
Official Languages: Croatian (others Serbian, Italian, Slovenian, Hungarian, Czech). English is widely spoken in the main cities. If you tour also spends time in smaller towns and villages you may wish to bring along a phrasebook to help you pick up a few words of the local language.
Religion: Roman Catholic 88%, Orthodox 4.4%, Muslim 1.3%
Voltage: 220-240V. Sockets are of European two pronged round pin variety.
Time Difference: GMT/UTC + 1. For all time differences please visit www.timeanddate.com

Croatia: Brief History

Croatia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until the end of World War I. In 1918, the Croats, Serbs, and Slovenes formed a kingdom known as Yugoslavia. Following World War II, Yugoslavia became a federal independent Communist state under the strong hand of Marshal TITO. Although Croatia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, it took four years of sporadic, but often bitter, fighting before occupying Serb armies were mostly cleared from Croatian lands. Under UN supervision, the last Serb-held enclave in eastern Slavonia was returned to Croatia in 1998.

Croatia: Geography and weather

Croatia is situated in southeastern Europe, bordering the Adriatic Sea, between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia. Geographically diverse, the country has flat plains along the Hungarian border, low mountains and highlands near Adriatic coastline and islands. The climate is predominantly continental with hot summers and cold winters, although the coast is more Mediterranean with mild winters and dry summers.

Croatia: Visas

Many nationalities (including citizens of the UK, Australia, Canada, the US and EU citizens) do not need a visa to enter Croatia or Slovenia. However, visitors must hold an onward ticket, all documents required for their next destination and sufficient funds. If your nationality is not listed please consult your nearest Croatian consulate before you travel.

Croatia: Money

Prices quoted in this country dossier are in euros unless otherwise specified.

All prices stated in this dossier are given as a guide only and are subject to change.

Local currency

The monetary unit in Croatia is the kuna (HRK). For up to date exchange rates with your own currency visit www.oanda.com or www.xe.com. You might find kuna difficult to obtain overseas, however it should be no problem to change currency on arrival

Changing money, credit cards & ATMs

The easiest way to obtain money in Croatia is to draw it out of an ATM (cash machine) on a credit or debit card (e.g. visa or cirrus). ATMs are widely available throughout Eastern Europe and credit cards are accepted in many restaurants and shops. Another option is to bring cash, in either US dollars or euros (pounds sterling and other currencies cannot always be easily changed) but we advise against bringing all your money in this form, in case of theft. In all of the cities that we visit there are many places to change money and your tour leader will be able to show you where to get the best rates of exchange.

Please note: Travellers cheques are not recommended for travel anywhere in Eastern Europe as these can be difficult to change and attract poor exchange rates or exorbitant commission.

Working out your budget

Our Europe Pre-Departure Information includes a general list of all the things you should take into consideration when budgeting and an

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TRIP NOTES

updated on 22-01-2016

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estimate of what you should allow per day for spending money. Below are some specific notes relevant to our trips travelling through Croatia.

Entrance fees

Generally speaking most entrance fees will be covered by the recommended spending money. There are, however, other sites and museums that are not part of the tour programme which you may wish to visit in your free time. If you have an International Student Card you will often be entitled to reduced entrance fees.

Tipping

In a restaurant, round up the bill unless a service charge has already been added or the service was not up to standard. You should also round up bar bills and taxi fares.

Croatia: Optional excursions

A full list of the main excursions available on each tour can be found in the daily itinerary on these trip notes. All prices given are approximate and are subject to change due to local inflation or exchange rates.

Croatia: Security

Most people find Croatia a very friendly and safe and feel quite comfortable wandering around alone during the day. However, as with any area you are not familiar with (particularly in the capital cities) it is recommended that you exercise more caution at night especially if you are a lone female.

Croatia: Local food and drink

Some breakfasts are included in your tour. Breakfasts can be basic so if you tend to get hungry it may be a good idea to buy some fruit or snacks to eat during the day. All other meals, extra snacks and drinks on the tour are at your own expense.

Ask your tour leader if they can recommend any restaurants in the area to suit your taste or budget or have fun exploring independently.

Food

Croatian specialities include Dalmatian or Istrian prosciutto, Pag or Lika cheese, sheep’s cheese, Slavonian paprika-flavoured salami (“kulen” and Samobor or Zagorje garlic sausages (“ščunjovka”). There is also a wide selection of meat dishes, including turkey with a special pasta known as “mišinci”, roast lamb, roast suckling pig, and boiled or baked “štruklji” (pasta with cheese). Croatian vineyards produce reasonable wine – particularly red and you will almost certainly come across plum brandy, a national favourite.

Drink

All drinks such as bottled water or soft drinks are at your own expense at all times and are fairly inexpensive. Alcoholic drinks vary in price, with wine and beer generally being the cheapest options.

Croatia: National holidays

1 January - New Year's Day
6 January - Epiphany; Easter Sunday & Easter Monday
1 May - Labour Day; Corpus Christi
22 June - Anti-Fascist Resistance Day
25 June - Statehood Day
5 August - Victory Day and National Thanksgiving Day
15 August - Assumption Day
8 October - Independence Day
1 November - All Saints’ Day
25-26 December - Christmas Holidays

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