

Croatia has been making wine for about 4000 years. It was the Illyrians followed by Greek settlers who first introduced vineyards to the Croatian coast in the 5th century BC and wine production has flourished ever since.

Croatia has many successful wine regions, with vines gripping dramatic, lush hillsides, which drop steeply into the sparkling Adriatic Sea. They which produce world-famous, award winning wines - including Gold medal winning reds and whites at the Decanter World Wine Awards.

This may not be top of your list in terms of European wine regions, but it should be! Croatia is an undiscovered, outstanding location for wine-lovers to visit.

Visit Croatia with us: taste a variety of wines from across the country, discover the delicious local cuisine to complement the wines, and see Croatia, from the inland to stunning coastlines and picturesque islands.

As they say in Croatia, “Zivjeli,” — a toast to your good health!

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

- **Wine Tasting:** sample Croatia’s signature vino and learn about its diversity during on carefully curated wine-tastings across the country.
- **Famous whites:** discover Varaždin and its finest white wines
- **Golden Valley:** explore Slavonia and taste Graševina wine
- **Slovenian Alps:** marvel at the beautiful Lake Bled & Ljubljana
- **Primorska region:** learn more about undiscovered Slovenian wines
- **Truffle hunting:** experience & taste this rare delight in Motovun
- **Istria:** taste the ancient and regal Teran wine
- **Breathtaking Nature:** admire the beautiful Plitvice National Park.
- **Time travel:** experience Croatian village life at Ethnoland Dalmatia.
- **Unique vineyards:** explore the Primošten wine region, and see their unusual walled vineyards
- **Hvar Island:** home to the oldest continuously planted vineyard in the world
- **Oyster tasting:** taste Croatia’s best seafood in Ston
- **Unparalleled Beauty:** explore the Pearl of the Adriatic Sea – Dubrovnik.
- **Cobblestone Exclusives:** attend private concerts, cultural events, and workshops exclusively for Cobblestone Freeway Travellers.



The Destination

Zagreb - Slavonia

Day 1 TOUR START DATE | Zagreb (-/-/D)

Welcome to Croatia and its beautiful capital – Zagreb. Upon arrival, you'll be met at the airport and transferred to your centrally located hotel. Once you've checked in and freshened up, we will take you on a **city orientation**, and show you the nearest money exchange places, ATMs, best souvenir stores and local restaurants with the most delicious food!

Afterwards, you will be taken out for a traditional **Welcome Dinner** at one of the best restaurants in town! Rest of the evening at your leisure.

Day 2 | Zagreb – Varaždin - Zagreb (B/-/D)

Today we'll get to know **Zagreb** - the largest city and capital of Croatia.

Take a walking **City Tour**, and explore the historic old-town with its medieval feel. We'll even stop for a traditional Croatian coffee en-route! Visit the open-air markets in **Dolac**, to stock up souvenirs and taste some of the wonderful cuisine that Croatia has to offer! Enjoy some free time to grab lunch in one of the city's charming boulevard cafés.

In the afternoon, we will transfer to **Varaždin** – the ancient capital of Croatia and part of Hrvatsko Zagorje region. The region is quite hilly, and has been a winemaking area for centuries. Today, this area is known for its production of **white wines**, but recently reds have also started gaining prominence in the region. Enjoy a **tasting** of some of the finest wines from this area in a beautiful setting.

We will be immersed in some of the rich Croatian culture of this area with a **folklore experience**, before returning to Zagreb in the evening.

Day 3 | Slavonia (B/L/-)

Today we'll take a day to Eastern Croatia to **Slavonia** - the flat Pannonian part of the country, famous for its agriculture, and therefore making it an ideal **wine country**. Today is a day to indulge in nature, food, and most of all wines.

We will visit the famous Golden valley of **Požega**. We'll stop for a delicious lunch, before learning about wine making tradition that hear dates from the Roman times. The wine cellars here are so ancient, they are protected cultural monuments. The specialty of the region is a white wine called "**Graševina**", the absolute Queen of Croatian white wines. The Slavonia region is synonymous with this variety, as this is where the Graševina grape produces the best results. Aswell as being the most planted grape variety in Croatia, Graševina is the most sought-after white wine in Croatia. No-one is sure about the true origin of it, some texts say France, others say Italy, while others go say neighboring Austria, but most of the experts agree that it has had the most remarkable expression right here in Croatia. And we'll discover all about this fabulous wine today!

Return to Zagreb in the afternoon. Our guide will take you to pick up some snacks for a special picnic lunch tomorrow! Rest of the day at your leisure.

SUGGESTED HOTEL:

"Academia" Hotel or similar | Zagreb
<https://www.hotelacademia.hr/en/>
3 nights



The Destination

Day 4 | Bled – Ljubljana – Rovinj (B/-/D)

After breakfast, we'll check out and head for a day trip in neighboring **Slovenia**. Our first stop will be the stunning **Lake Bled**, a lake and a small town in the Slovenian Alps. Take the chance to row a boat across the lake, and ring the bell of the ancient church that stands on an island in the middle. We'll stop by the side of the lake and have a **picnic lunch** while enjoying the beautiful views. Take some time to enjoy the beauty of nature around you, before continuing on our journey.

We will set off for Europe's smallest capital and a quaint city in the Slovenian Alps - **Ljubljana**. Explore the Capital City of Slovenia on a city tour. We'll explore the quaint streets, cross the famous Triple Bridge, and walk the leafy banks of the emerald-green Ljubljanica River.

We'll continue on to "**Primorska**", the famous Slovenian wine region. Of all the wine growing regions in Slovenia, Primorska has preserved the highest number of indigenous wine grape varieties, but also produces premium quality wine. We'll stop along the road for a wine tasting of some of the best varieties from this region. After we'll head back to Croatia to our next destination, Rovinj. Check in, evening at your leisure.

Day 5 | Rovinj – Motovun (B/L/-)

After breakfast, we will explore more of the Croatian region of **Istria**. Istria is listed as one of the 10 best wine destinations in Europe (listed by European Best Destinations), and with good reason! It also has a largely undiscovered wine region... But more about that later!

Firstly in the morning, we will visit the city of **Rovinj** – the star attraction of Croatia's Istrian coast! This town was originally an island, and was only connected to the mainland in 1763! Explore the city by going on a brief city tour. Soak up the sea air and beautiful scenery as you wander the streets of this romantic town.

After we'll head to the small town of **Motovun**, famous for a very special culinary delight... Many are aware of Italy's culinary truffle tradition, but did you know that neighboring Croatia's truffle industry is also booming? The town of Motovun serves as a base for exploring the surrounding truffle region in northern Croatia! And today, we are going to delve into it. First we will learn about the history and theory of truffle collection, before heading into the famous Motovun forest for some adventure – you'll get lay out a treasure hunt of truffles, for our expert host and their dogs to find! After, we'll continue the day with **tasting these truffles** – at a local tavern you'll enjoy a 2 course meal, including truffle pate, truffle cheese and finally pasta with truffles, all paired with delicious wine, that perfectly complements the dish!

In the afternoon, we will visit two **wineries** in the **Motovun** area, and enjoy some of the famous Istrian wines of the region, Malvazija being the most famous wine and the dominant grape variety in the region, and Teran – the most famous red wine. The first mention of **Teran** wine dates back to the fourteenth century, when it was served in ceramic bottles to imperial emissaries! Returning back to Rovinj, enjoy a free night at your own leisure, sample more local delicacies, or have a quiet night in back at the hotel.

Slovenia – Rovinj - Motovun

SUGGESTED HOTEL:

Valdibora Hotel or similar | Rovinj

<https://www.valdibora.com/>

2 nights



The Destination

Plitvice - Šibenik - Split

Day 6 | Plitvice Lakes- Šibenik (B/L/-)

After breakfast, we'll check out and head to one of Croatia's most beautiful destinations – the **Plitvice National Park!** This collection of lakes and pools, provide some of the most spectacular natural scenery in Croatia. The lakes are renowned for their distinctive colors, ranging from azure to green, grey or blue. The colors change constantly depending on the quantity of minerals or organisms in the water and the angle of sunlight. We'll walk around the upper and lower lakes, exploring small bays under the pine trees, and feel at one with nature. You will spend 3-4 hours exploring this beautiful park, including a scenic boat ride. Have a light lunch in the park before continuing the trip.

We'll head to **Šibenik**, one of Croatia's unique towns. A somewhat overlooked a tourist destination, the town has some fantastic sights, which make you feel as though you've stepped back to Venetian times.

Check in to your hotel, before enjoying an evening at your leisure to explore Šibenik.

Day 7 | Šibenik - Split (B/-/D)

This morning we'll discover more of this charming town of **Šibenik**. Explore the delightful Old Town, amaze of cobblestoned alleyways and worn stone steps. Discover historic churches and bustling squares, and marvel at the St James Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After, we'll get to better understand the spirit of Dalmatia as we visit "**Etnoland Dalmati**". Etnoland Dalmati is a unique combination of culture, tradition and history. It offers a rare opportunity for people to discover old crafts and traditional customs, making it a cultural monument of sorts dedicated to the heritage of the Dalmatian hinterland. Take a tour of the village, and get to know how the Dalmatian people used to live, their culture, traditions and values.

After we'll visit a winery in the **Primošten** area, to try a famous red wine called **Babić**. The Babić grape is unique, in that the shrubs grow best in small pockets of land, on small lot, enclosed by specially built drywall. The rows and rows of these small pieces of earth are an impressive sight to behold!

Afterwards, we'll set off for **Split** - this vibrant town is known as the soul of Dalmatia. We'll visit its most iconic sights on a walking tour –marvel at the roman structures, still standing, and centuries old! Explore the historic **Diocletian's Palace** with its cellars (featured in the two last seasons of the Game of Thrones), the Peristyle square, with its own intact Egyptian sphinx. Split is a town filled with history, and stunning historic buildings. After the waking tour, enjoy a free evening to relax in one of the Dalmatian taverns in the city center.

SUGGESTED HOTEL:

Hotel Solaris Ivan or similar | Šibenik

<https://www.amadriapark.com/>

1 night

Hotel Trogir Palace or similar | Split

<https://hotel-palace.net/>

1 night



Day 8 | Hvar (B/L/-)

After breakfast at the hotel we will transfer to the quayside, as we will be taking a trip to the island of **Hvar**, the most famous of all 1244 islands of Croatia! Visiting Croatia and not seeing the islands is like visiting Rome and not seeing Pope.

The island of Hvar is famous for its rich history and legacy but primarily for its stunning scenery. Hvar town is the jewel of the island, featuring stately Venetian architecture along a welcoming harbour. It's also one of the best wine locations in all of Croatia! With its abundance of natural fields, more than 2718 sunny hours per year, and perfect climate, no wonder Hvar is known as the **island of wine**.

Did you know, Croatia has the oldest continuously planted vineyard in the world? The **Stari Grad Plain** on Hvar Island has been planted with wine grapes for 24 centuries, since the ancient Greeks first planted their vines in 384. BC. It was added to the **UNESCO** World Heritage List in 2008.

Vineyards are spread across the island and carefully nurtured to produce the best crops. It is no wonder that over the centuries, this tradition has been perfected in order to create some of the world's best wines.

Upon arrival on the island, we'll take a **Panoramic Tour** of the island before checking in to the hotel. Take some free time for lunch, before we delve into his island's rich wine culture! In the afternoon, we'll have a wine tour of the island, visiting two of the best wineries.

The best wine to taste here is **Plavac Mali**, a well-known red wine grape native to Croatia, which provides the basis of many of the nation's most sought-after red wines. It is one of Croatia's most planted varieties, and is known for producing dense and robust reds with black cherry flavors and notes of pepper, smoke and spice. Plavac Mali wines are high in alcohol and tannins, and have excellent aging capabilities, a trait not often seen in Croatian wines.

After enjoying sampling these delicious wines, take the rest of the evening to relax and enjoy the views out over the sea!

Day 9 | Hvar (B/L/-)

Enjoy a **free day** on the island of Hvar.

Optional Suggestions: Take a swim, or a boat trip; read a book, sunbathe on the beach, explore secluded coves, small fishing villages and local vineyards. Eat some delicious fresh seafood, or taste the famous Pašticada –veal meat prepared in plums dip made in a special way for days accompanied with gnocchi. There is also the possibility to take various day trips from Hvar or on Hvar; the Blue and Green cave, Pakleni Islands, Bike Tour, Wine Tour, Kayak Tour, Scooter adventure and more.

Our guide will be available to make suggestions where you may need them.

SUGGESTED HOTEL:

Hotel Pharia or similar | Hvar

<https://hotelpitaria-hvar.com/>

2 nights



The Destination

Ston - Dubrovnik

Day 10 | Ston - Pelješac -Dubrovnik (B/L/-)

After one last morning enjoying the island views, we'll hop on a ferry to the mainland.

We'll head to the town of **Ston**, just outside of Dubrovnik. Often overlooked, Ston is known for three main things – its town **walls**, its **saltworks**, and its **oysters**!

The town was founded in 14th century as part of Dubrovnik Republic, and was fortified to protect its salt plains. The walls are more than 5km in length, and form an irregular shape of pentagon, with large towers on the corners. It took about 200 years to build these walls! We'll visit these walls on our visit, before stopping to taste the local specialty – oysters!

Mali Ston is a little fishing village, known for the **best seafood** in Croatia. Here in the bay you will find oyster beds that produce what are said to be the most delicious **oysters** in the world! Enjoy a **tasting** of these delicious oysters, and maybe some wines to compliment them...

After, we'll explore more of the **Pelješac wine region**. Peljesac is famous for its premium red wines, such as Dingac and Postup, discover some of the best examples while discovering this beautiful wine region on our way to Dubrovnik. Upon arrival in Dubrovnik, check in to your hotel, and enjoy an evening at your leisure. Our guide will suggest some spots to grab some dinner in the area.

Day 11 | Dubrovnik (B/-/D)

This morning we'll discover the beautiful city of **Dubrovnik** – known as the pearl of the Adriatic Sea, its beautiful Old Town never fails to take your breath away. This picturesque, white-stone city is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Take a tour of the wonderful and historic Dubrovnik, and discover its many stories. We'll visit iconic places such as the stunning Franciscan monastery and Onofrio's fountains; marvel at the Orlando Column and the St. Blaise Church. You may recognise some spots on our tour from Game of Thrones, or Star Wars, as many famous scenes were filmed here!

In the afternoon, we'll treat you to a panoramic **boat tour** of the city, followed by some free time to walk the City walls.

After, we'll transfer to the **hinterland** of Dubrovnik where we will enjoy a **Farwell dinner** and wine tasting. Konavle is another wine-area gem famous for rich, flavoured red wines. Taste some real delicacies of the region and experience true Croatian hospitality. Enjoy a performance of traditional Dubrovnik dance, and maybe even join in to show us your moves! This will be an unforgettable way to round off your trip.

Day 12 TOUR END DATE | Dubrovnik (B/-/-)

After a free morning to stock up on souvenirs we will transfer you to the airport where, sadly, we will have to say our goodbyes!

SUGGESTED HOTEL:

Hotel Lero or similar | Dubrovnik

<https://hotel-lero.hr/>

2 nights



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