CAL DISCOVERIES TRAVEL

CROATIA'S DALMATIAN COAST—
SPLIT TO DUBROVNIK

Multi-Adventure    |    Casual Hotels
**DAY 1**

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 8 a.m. in the lobby of Cornaro Hotel (+385-(0)21-644-200), located at Sinjska 6 in Split, Croatia, about a 10-minute walk from the ferry, bus and train terminals. Please arrive dressed in your biking clothes and wear comfortable shoes for the bus transfer (flip-flops are a great choice). Bring your luggage and a daypack with your bathing suit, rain gear and anything else you may want for today’s bike ride (your luggage will be transported to our first night’s accommodations). Be sure to fuel up on a hearty breakfast before we meet.

**LATE TO THE TRIP START?** See “Arriving & Departing” for more information.

**SHUTTLE TO DINARA MOUNTAINS** 45 Minutes

**BIKING OPTIONS:**
- Kostanje Route: 14 Miles *(500’ elevation gain)*
- Omiš & Duće Route: 30 Miles *(1,800’)*

*with shuttle

Welcome to Croatia! After meeting in bustling Split, we shuttle toward the tiny villages in the Dinara Mountains. Here your Backroads Trip Leaders fit your bike and give a brief talk on biking techniques and safety, then you’re ready for a ride through the Croatian hinterland, where you’ll see for yourself that Croatia is anything but flat. Pedal through the mountains’ stunning karst landscape, passing through quaint villages and taking in spectacular views of the Adriatic Sea below.

Savor your first taste of fresh Croatian cuisine with lunch along the way, followed by your first taste of some big hills! Tracing the Cetina River to its confluence with the sea, wind your way to Omiš, a medieval pirate haven with a colorful history. Continue along the coast to Duće, a charming village nestled between imposing stone mountains and the Adriatic.

Settle into your room at tonight’s modern seaside abode, Hotel Plaža Duće, then cool off with a dip in the pool or at the adjacent sandy beach. This evening we gather for a festive welcome dinner of scrumptious regional dishes.  

**Lodging: Hotel Plaža Duće**

**DAY 2**

**BOAT TO BRAČ ISLAND** 45 Minutes

**WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:**
- Dol Route: 2.2 Miles *(300’ elevation gain)*
- Gazul Route: 6.2 Miles *(2,200’)*

*with shuttle

This morning we board a boat for Brač (pronounced BRATCH), the largest island of Dalmatia. With its arid scrub-covered uplands, cypress forests, orange and olive trees, drystone walls and famed cheeses, it is also the most Mediterranean of the archipelago. Since ancient times, Brač has been renowned for its milky-white marble, used in the construction of Diocletian’s palace in Split, numerous buildings in Venice and reputedly the White House in Washington, DC.

Once on terra firma in Postira, we set out walking through a picturesque fishing village before turning uphill for a short climb out of town. As you ascend, captivating views of Omiš, Split and the entire Dol Valley unfold. Make your way to beautiful Dol, where rustic stone houses surrounding tiny squares set the scene. After a short stop, continue on foot along the historic procession path, used by villagers every year for Easter celebrations. Then gear up to tackle a gradual steady climb through olive groves all the way to the shepherds’ village of Gazul, where a hearty lunch awaits.

After lunch we shuttle to Bol and board a private boat
bound for the island of Hvar, the swankiest and most popular destination of the southern Dalmatian archipelago. (The fact that the island receives an average of 2,718 hours of sunshine per year might have something to do with its draw.) A long thin strip of land, Hvar is filled with fragrant lavender, heather and pines, while ragged inlets lapped by translucent waters and a steep limestone ridge add to the landscape’s beauty.

Back on dry land, we head to our oceanfront abode for the next two nights, Hotel Amfora, where there’s time to cool off with a swim in the pool or take a relaxing walk along the beach. This evening you’re on your own for dinner in Hvar Town; your leaders are happy to recommend the best restaurants for such local delights as mussels, fresh fish and risotto. *Lodging: Hotel Amfora*

**DAY 3**

**BIKING OPTIONS:**
- Brusje Route: 23 Miles* (1,100’ elevation gain)
- Stari Grad Route: 28 Miles* (2,100’)
- Climbing on Hvar Route: 40 Miles (3,500’)
- Climbing on Hvar with Villages Route: 42 Miles (3,800’)

*with shuttle

We devote ourselves to an in-depth exploration of Hvar Island today. Our ride offers spectacular views throughout, which become increasingly dramatic as you ascend Sveti Nikola, the limestone ridge stretching across the middle of the island. Pedal past ancient stone terraces topped by tiny plots of lavender, veggies, grapevines, fig trees and olive groves. Enjoy the view from the top of the hill, looking back towards Brač. After a long winding downhill comes a stretch of mostly flat riding interspersed with some short steep climbs. Try the excellent gelato in the seaside town of Jelsa, then continue along narrow, lightly trafficked roads to the promenade of sleepy Stari Grad.

We sit down to lunch with our friends Vinko and Darinka Lupi, whose family has been making wine here for generations. They open their home to us and share their garden’s bounty, not to mention some homemade wine and grappa! Feel free to explore their home and gorgeous garden and, when you’re ready, tackle the hills back to Hvar or take a seat in the van.

This afternoon, spend time people-watching in Hvar Town’s central square, which is paved entirely with marble and is the largest in Dalmatia. An architectural gem certainly worth seeing is the stunning 15th-century Franciscan monastery with gardens overlooking the sea.

Tonight we’re treated to a truly local experience in the island town of Milna. Our friends Mate and Michaela invite us into their home for dinner, serving us fresh seasonal dishes they’ve prepared from scratch. Weather permitting, we’ll savor their home cooking outside among the olive trees. **Lodging: Hotel Amfora**

**DAY 4**

**SEA-KAYAKING EXCURSION** 2 Hours

**BOAT TO KORČULA ISLAND** 2–3 Hours

Grab a paddle and shove off in your sturdy sea kayak to explore the coastal inlets and deep blue waters around Hvar Island. Before you head out, an instructor teaches you paddling strokes and safety skills. The kayaks are stable and easy to maneuver, so even if you’ve never picked up a paddle, you’ll feel comfortable in no time. Cruise through the Pakleni Islands to picture-perfect Palmizana Bay, an ideal spot for swimming. Continue buzzing around in your kayak or take a break at Palmizana Bay’s beach and seaside cafés. **Please note: You’ll need to wear sports sandals (or other sturdy shoes that can get wet) for today’s kayaking excursion.**

After lunch together at a local restaurant, our private boat picks us up for an afternoon sail to Vela Luka (or “Big Port”) on Korčula Island. Reach for your sunglasses and a
good book while you enjoy the ride. We dock next to our home for the night, the polished Hotel Korkyra. The rest of the afternoon is yours to explore Vela Luka or relax by the pool. This evening savor dinner in a traditional setting. Lodging: Hotel Korkyra

**DAY 5**

**SHUTTLE TO SMOKVICA** 30 Minutes

**BIKING OPTIONS:**
- Hill Booster Route: 15 Miles *(700' elevation gain)*
- Korčula Route: 19 Miles *(1,400')*
- Korčula with Lumbarda Route: 30 Miles *(2,200')*
- Whole Shebang Route: 41 Miles *(3,100')*

**BOAT & BUS TO DUBROVNIK** 2½ Hours

*with shuttle*

Gear up for several rigorous climbs on this morning’s bike ride, but don’t worry—the stunning island views will motivate you to keep cranking. Pedal through quaint villages past tidy rows of grapevines, olive groves and almond trees. Kick it into high gear with a 3-mile climb, followed by a welcome downhill into Korčula Town, the island’s elegant centerpiece and one of several reputed birthplaces of Marco Polo.

Huddled around St. Mark’s Cathedral, the atmospheric old quarter is known for its narrow rib-like lanes that branch off the “spine” of the main street—a clever layout designed to protect locals from the sun and wind. The Venetians came here in the 10th century and ruled on and off for more than 800 years, leaving a distinct mark on the town’s culture and architecture. Today, Korčula Town is a trove of rough-hewn stone Gothic and Renaissance palaces, courtyards, churches and graceful arched bridges. Korčula’s thick walls and imposing towers—once a defense against passing pirates and other enemies—date back to the 14th century. You’re free to explore the town and have lunch on your own at a local eatery.

Later, a sail and scenic drive on the Pelješac Peninsula leads us to Dubrovnik. Tonight we stay just outside of the city’s old town (a World Heritage site) at the Hilton Imperial Dubrovnik, whose modern décor with cool Mediterranean tones is sure to soothe you. Take a swim in the sunlit indoor pool or just soak up the surroundings. We regroup this evening to grab a refreshment, then head out for a spirited dinner in the city’s historic center. Lodging: Hilton Imperial Dubrovnik

**DAY 6**

**DUBROVNIK GUIDED WALK** 2 Hours

Enjoy the morning light on a guided walking tour of historic Dubrovnik, a World Heritage site surrounded by enormous defensive walls replete with turrets and towers. Along the way, take in commanding vistas of the old town the harbor and the Adriatic Sea. Our tour—and our trip—ends inside the city walls, where we say our goodbyes. Please see “Arriving & Departing” for end-of-trip logistics.

**KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE**

We are always seeking opportunities to enhance this itinerary. We’ll be certain to notify you of any important changes prior to departure; other changes may be communicated on trip by your leaders.
Our trips are designed to be flexible, giving you the freedom to experience the best of the region the way YOU want. Feel like you’re ready to go, go, go? We can show you the way! Want some downtime or prefer to head out on your own? No problem! Your Trip Leaders will make sure to tell you the best days to take time for yourself (if you want it) without feeling like you’re missing out. So feel free to shift gears and make it your day!

TRIP ACCOMMODATIONS

Casual Hotels*

1 Night
Hotel Plaža Duće
Views of the Adriatic and Brač Island abound at this modern seaside hotel. (pool, spa) | Duće | www.hotelplaza.hr | +385-(0)21-755-260

2 Nights (above)
Hotel Amfora
Set on an idyllic bay and surrounded by thick pines. (pool) | Hvar Town | www.suncanihvar.com/amfora | +385-(0)21-750-300

1 Night
Hotel Korkyra
Overlooking the port with a sleek contemporary design, this hotel is Vela Luka’s best option. (pool, spa) | Vela Luka | www.hotel-korkyra.com | +385-(0)20-601-000

1 Night
Hilton Imperial Dubrovnik
Located just outside the old town gates with plentiful amenities and a history of entertaining dignitaries and celebrities. (pool) | Dubrovnik | www.dubrovnik.hilton.com | +385-(0)20-320-320

*With 1 Premiere Hotel night at Hilton Imperial Dubrovnik
ARRIVING & DEPARTING

After reviewing the following information, please inform us of your arrival and departure plans on your Personal Information Form.

To make our morning meeting time, plan to arrive in Split at least one day before the trip starts.

All prices are in US dollars and subject to change.

The standard unit of currency in Croatia is the kuna (HRK). At the time of printing, 6.3 HRK = 1 USD. For the most up-to-date exchange rate, visit www.xe.com (Universal Currency Converter).

Meeting Time & Location

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 8 a.m. in the lobby of Cornaro Hotel (+385-(0)21-644-200), located at Sinjska 6 in Split, Croatia, about a 10-minute walk from the ferry, bus and train terminals. Please arrive dressed in your biking clothes and wear comfortable shoes for the bus transfer (flip-flops are a great choice). Bring your luggage and a daypack with your bathing suit, rain gear and anything else you may want for today’s bike ride (your luggage will be transported to our first night’s accommodations). Be sure to fuel up on a hearty breakfast before we meet.

Arriving Late to the Trip Start?

If you have a delay or emergency on the day your trip starts and need to contact Backroads, please email your Trip Leaders (you’ll receive an email 24 hours prior to the trip start with their contact info) or call the Backroads office at 800-462-2848 (domestic) or 510-527-1555 (international), 6 a.m.–6 p.m. Pacific time.

If you miss the pickup at Cornaro Hotel in Split, please work with Cornaro’s reception desk to arrange transportation to Hotel Plaža Duće, our first night’s accommodations.

Conclusion of the Trip

Our trip ends at around 10:30 a.m. in Dubrovnik. Our last night’s hotel, the Hilton Imperial Dubrovnik, can help you arrange transportation to the airport. If you’re flying out of Dubrovnik on the last day of the trip, we suggest booking a departure for after 2 p.m.

Flight Arrangements

This trip starts in Split and ends in Dubrovnik, Croatia. We suggest flying into the Split Airport, also known as Resnik Airport (airport code: SPU; www.split-airport.hr), and out of Dubrovnik Airport, also known as Čilipi Airport (DBV; www.airport-dubrovnik.hr). Because of our early meeting time, plan to arrive in Split the day before the trip starts. Many people have found it cost-effective and convenient to purchase round-trip tickets from home to a European gateway city, and then buy two one-way tickets: one to Split, and one to return from Dubrovnik.

If you’re having difficulty booking a flight into the Split Airport, you can also contact Croatia Airlines (www.croatiaairlines.com) directly. You can book online or their agents can assist you with your flight arrangements.

For help arranging air transport to and from your Backroads trip, please work with your own travel advisor or you may choose to work with the Backroads Travel Desk at Dimensions in Travel. Their professional expert travel advisors are ready to share their insiders’ knowledge of Backroads and our worldwide destinations and are available to assist you with any of your travel needs. Call 800-GO-ACTIVE (462-2848) to be connected with an advisor. Please note that consulting or ticketing fees may apply, depending on the services requested. The Backroads Travel Desk at Dimensions in Travel is open Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific time.

Transportation from Split Airport to Central Split

The Split airport is about 16 miles from central Split.

Taxi service from the airport to Cornaro Hotel takes about 40 minutes and costs around $50.

Pleso Transport Company Ltd. (www.plesoprijevoz.hr; +385-(0)21-203-119) provides bus service to the city center (Lazareta Beach) with buses departing shortly after arrival of regularly scheduled
foreign and domestic flights. The trip takes about 1 hour, and the fare is around $6. In addition, local bus service is available, departing from the airport every 20 minutes.

**Transportation from Dubrovnik to Split**

Buses leave regularly for Split from the bus station near the ferry docks in Dubrovnik harbor. The trip takes about 4 hours, but be aware that the posted schedules are often incorrect.

You may prefer to rent a car and drive the 135 miles; EuroCar and Budget have proven themselves to be reliable companies with helpful employees. Croatia Airlines ([www.croatiaairlines.com](http://www.croatiaairlines.com)) may also be able to arrange transportation for you.

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** Prices & Schedules **

All prices and schedules were current at the time of printing, but are subject to change at any time.

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**DURING YOUR TRIP**

**Trip Leaders**

Each of your Trip Leaders plays many roles during your vacation: guide, host, caretaker, naturalist, chef, historian, troubleshooter, interpreter. These remarkable individuals have highly developed instincts for making people comfortable, for seamlessly handling the logistics of travel and for successfully navigating a wide range of unexpected situations. They’re passionately committed to ensuring you enjoy an exceptional vacation—smooth, flexible and tailored to your needs. According to past guests, the caliber of our leaders is what sets Backroads apart from all other travel companies. With their knowledge, professionalism, enthusiasm and service ethic, they’re the number-one reason people return to travel with us again and again. We look forward to having you meet them.

**A Word about Gratuities**

*We think our leaders are unparalleled at what they do—*you be the judge.*

Gratuities for most services during your trip are included in the price. While we’ve thought about including a Trip Leader tip as part of the overall trip cost, we acknowledge that gratuities are customary in the industry as a way to recognize excellent service on a more personal level.

We offer specific Trip Leader tip recommendations because our guests have consistently asked for them. The exact amount is up to you.

**Our recommended gratuity for this trip is $190 per guest.**

This amount can be covered via cash (preferred) or PayPal. To learn more about PayPal and how to sign up, visit [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com). You will receive a contact list for Trip Leaders at the beginning of the trip which also serves as their PayPal information. Regardless of the number of leaders on your trip, you can pay the full amount to any one of them. Cash and PayPal gratuities are then divided among your Trip Leaders and other Backroads support staff (van drivers, etc.).
Accommodations

Though tourism in Croatia dates back to well before the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, the tourism industry and its infrastructure are in the process of redevelopment. As a result, you may notice that many hotels are either converted communist-era buildings or brand-new hyper-modern buildings, which some may consider lacking in character. The accommodations on this trip were selected for their location and amenities, and are the best options available. It is common for the rooms to vary in size and style. Also, service can seem slow when compared with the high standards of customer service found elsewhere. Your best bet is to be patient, keep a sense of humor and appreciate the cultural differences that abound.

If you’re a light sleeper, you may want to pack some earplugs to ensure an undisturbed night’s sleep during our stay at Hotel Amfora. Its central location means we’re near all the action, with easy access to lively Hvar Town and all it has to offer!

Cell Service & Internet Access

Cell phone and data service is limited in some of the locations we visit on this trip. Internet access is available at all of our hotels, although the connection may be slower than ideal.

Meals

Food is an important part of the Backroads experience. For lunch we look for the best way to capture the essence of the region. It may be local fare at a carefully chosen setting along the day’s route; a boxed lunch; a packed lunch; a meal together at a favorite restaurant; or the opportunity to have lunch on your own.

Our dinners highlight the region’s fresh vegetables and locally produced olive oil, as well as its grilled meats and assortment of seafood dishes.

All breakfasts, four lunches and four dinners are included in the trip price.

Because dining is an event unto itself in Europe, our restaurants encourage you to slow down and enjoy a leisurely paced meal.

Be aware that vegetarian/vegan, gluten-free and low-carb dishes are not always available. If you have special dietary requirements, please indicate them on the Personal Information Form. Your Trip Consultant will pass on the information to your Trip Leaders. Alcoholic beverages at meals are not included in the trip price, unless otherwise noted.

Recommended Dinner Attire

Restaurants on this trip are casual. You’ll feel comfortable wearing anything from jeans and T-shirts to slacks and dressier shirts.

That said, Europeans do tend to dress up for dinner. Slacks and collared shirts are certainly appropriate for men, and women won’t feel out of place in skirts and blouses.

Some of the dinners on this trip are served outdoors, so be sure to bring a warm layer for cool evenings and flat shoes comfortable enough for walking on gravel.

Lost Luggage

On any flight, there is the possibility of lost luggage. Backroads believes that it’s a great idea to take a small carry-on bag with enough clothing and supplies to last a day or two. Also be sure to bring with you any personal gear you deem indispensable on the trip. This way, in the event of lost luggage you won’t have to spend time replacing essential items and miss activities while you wait for your bags to catch up. Please note that Backroads does not assume responsibility for any luggage lost or damaged during your trip.

Security

When traveling, there is always a possibility of theft. While you’re enjoying the sights, remember to stay alert and always be aware of your immediate surroundings, especially in crowded locations and tourist areas. The best rule of thumb is to carry only the cash you need for the day, along with a copy of your passport, on your person and leave the rest in a locked safe in your room. If no safe is available, it’s a good idea to keep your cash and passport in a money belt worn under your clothes. For more safety tips, refer to the Country Specific Information page on the US State Department’s website at travel.state.gov.

Spa Treatments

Spa treatments are not included in the trip price.
Advance reservations are recommended. Also, be sure to review the spa’s cancellation policy to avoid any unexpected charges on your credit card.

Days 2 & 3

Hotel Amfora: The Amfora does not have a full-service spa, but massages are available. On Day 2 book an appointment for after 6 p.m.; dinner is on your own. On Day 3 book an appointment for after 4 p.m.; dinner starts at 7 p.m.

Important Information on Shuttles & Ferries

Our travel time by shuttle and private boats ranges from 30 minutes to 2½ hours on most days. We recommend bringing a book, games, a tablet or other diversions with you to pass the time.

In case of rough weather and high seas, we may have to use the public ferry instead of our private boat to transport us from island to island. It’s also possible, but unlikely, that the ferry would be unable to transport us due to the weather. In these circumstances, certain daily activities may be modified or delayed to ensure the safety of the group. We’ll do our best to make the necessary adjustments and appreciate your flexibility.

Comfort at Sea

While the bodies of water we travel on are generally calm, if you are prone to seasickness, it’s a good idea to carry Dramamine (or an equivalent) with you. Another option is using acupressure wristbands, which help alleviate the symptoms of seasickness and are available over the counter at most drug stores or pharmacies.

Beaches & Swimming

Beaches on the Dalmatian Coast typically consist of pebbles or rocky limestone instead of sand. We suggest packing beach footwear, such as sport sandals, sturdy enough to handle this type of terrain. If you have sensitive feet, consider bringing water shoes for swimming, since the sea floor is rocky in spots and sea urchins are quite common. There are plenty of places to purchase cheap water shoes in Croatia if you prefer to pack less.

It’s usually possible to swim in the Adriatic anytime from May to October, but keep in mind that water temperatures will be colder during May and October.
DESTINATION DETAILS

Climate
The Dalmatian Coast enjoys a Mediterranean climate, characterized by hot dry summers (temperatures in the 90s are common) and mild winters. July and August can be downright hot. Bring plenty of moisture-wicking clothing, including lightweight long-sleeved shirts, to stay as comfortable as you can while active. Temperatures in May and October can be cooler, so if you’re traveling with us during these months, please be prepared with warmer attire. (Also keep in mind that it may be too cool to swim.) Even though the islands receive minimal rainfall, it’s still important to bring lightweight breathable rain gear with you, since storms are always possible. On most days, you’ll be comfortable in a short-sleeved shirt, although when you head out in the morning you might want to wear a lightweight jacket or vest. No matter when your trip is, bring a jacket for our boat rides, as it can be chilly on the water.

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Temperatures in this region are measured in degrees Celsius. Zero degrees Celsius is 32 degrees Fahrenheit. For a quick conversion, double the Celsius reading and add 30 to determine the approximate temperature in degrees Fahrenheit.

Time Zone
Croatia is 6 hours ahead of eastern time and 9 hours ahead of Pacific time.

In Europe, the 24-hour clock is used. Times are the same as what you’re used to in the United States up until noon. From then on, just keep going: 1 p.m. becomes 13:00, 2 p.m. becomes 14:00 and so forth. To convert these times into “p.m.” times, simply subtract 12 and add p.m. (19:00 minus 12 is 7 p.m.).

Phone Facts
Many US cell phones can operate internationally. Check with your service provider before leaving home for information about international calling and data plans, and on making and receiving international calls. If your cell phone is unlocked and operates using a SIM card, you may want to consider purchasing a SIM card from a local cell phone company. These should be readily available at airports and convenience stores, and typically come loaded with prepaid credit which can be used for domestic and international calls and data service. Rates will vary.

Alternatively, it may also be possible to rent a phone for use during your international travels. We recommend Cellhire, which offers a wide range of wireless rental
options in more than 180 countries. Visit www.cellhire.com or call 877-244-7242 for details and reservations.

**International Dialing Instructions**

The international phone numbers in this Travel Planner are listed using the following format:

+385-(0)##-###-###

385 is Croatia’s country code, followed by a 0 (used only when dialing from within Croatia), a two-digit area code and six-digit local number.

To place an international call to Croatia, dial + or the international access code of the country from which you’re calling (e.g. 011 from the US) - 385 - area code - local number. Always omit the initial 0 when calling from outside Croatia.

To place an international call from Croatia, dial + or 00 (Croatia’s international access code) - country code of the country to which you’re calling (e.g. 1 for the US) - area code - local number. For example, to call the US, dial 00 - 1 - area code - local number.

To place a call within Croatia, drop the country code 385 and dial area code - local number.

For additional information on placing international phone calls, visit www.countrycallingcodes.com.

**Money Matters**

The standard unit of currency in Croatia is the kuna (HRK). At the time of printing, 6.3 HRK = 1 USD. For the most up-to-date exchange rate, visit www.xe.com (Universal Currency Converter).

The best way to access cash is to use ATMs. Before you leave home, it’s a good idea to verify with your bank that your card will work overseas and inquire whether or not your financial institution has a local partner bank that will waive ATM fees. Most international ATM keyboards have only numbers, so if your PIN contains letters, make note of the corresponding numbers. Additionally, most international ATMs only accept four-character PINs, so if yours is longer, arrange to have it changed before your trip.

If you need to exchange cash or traveler’s checks, avoid exchange bureaus, which charge sky-high rates. The rates at banks are slightly better, but still expensive. It may also be possible to exchange cash and traveler’s checks at airports, train stations, post offices and some tourist offices.

**Electric Current**

Europe’s electricity runs on a 220-volt, 50- to 60-cycle current. A plug adapter is necessary if you plan to bring appliances from home. You may also need a converter, but many newer appliances, such as computers and digital devices, are designed to work/charge over a wide range of voltage levels. Check the manufacturer’s label on the back of your appliances to see what level of input they can handle. Converter/adapter kits can be purchased at travel, hardware or electronics stores for $40–$60; an adapter alone costs about $4.

**Helpful Information**

Visit www.backroads.com/trip_prep for links to other websites offering helpful travel information.

**Tourist Information**

Croatia National Tourist Board
www.croatia.hr

Split Tourist Board
www.visitsplit.com

Split-Dalmatia County Tourist Board
www.dalmatia.hr
The more you know about your destination before you go, the more you’ll appreciate all that you’ll see when you get there. We’ve selected a few of our favorite books to help capture the essence of the region.

- The Balkans: A Short History, Mark Mazower
- Croatia: A Nation Forged in War, Marcus Tanner
- The Balkans: From Constantinople to Communism, Dennis P. Hupchick
- Croatia (Through Writers’ Eyes), Barnaby Rogerson

TRIP DOCUMENTS & MORE

Travel Documents
A valid passport is required for travel to Croatia. A visa is not required for US citizens, provided you are staying in the country less than 90 days.

Note that some countries require your passport to be valid for a specified amount of time beyond your departure date (up to 6 months). Be sure to check the expiration date and physical condition of your passport and verify the travel document requirements with the consulates of the countries you are planning to visit during your trip. Passports issued to minors under the age of 16 are set to expire every 5 years. Check your expiration dates carefully!

The best way to ensure you have the most current information on entry requirements is by contacting the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia (us.mvep.hr; 202-588-5899). You may also find helpful information on the US State Department’s website: travel.state.gov.

IMPORTANT: Each time you renew your passport, you are issued a new passport number. Depending on the trip, some of our service providers (like hotels or airlines) may require current passport information for each guest, so if you renew your passport after booking your trip, please make sure to update us with the new information prior to your departure date.

We recommend that you make two photocopies of your airline ticket/e-ticket confirmation and your passport. Leave one set of copies at home with a friend or relative, and bring one set with you, keeping it separate from the original documents.

Cancellations & Refunds
If you must cancel your reservation, a fee will be charged. Please review your trip invoice for cancellation policy details. Exceptions to this policy cannot be made for any reason, including those of weather or personal emergencies. There is no refund for joining a trip late or leaving early. Private rooms and staterooms, bike rentals and internal air charges are considered part of the trip price and are subject to cancellation fees. You are required to provide a signed Release of Liability.
Assumption of All Risks and Arbitration Agreement and a completed Personal Information Form prior to your trip departure. If you fail to provide a signed release form, you will not be allowed to join the trip and will be subject to Backroads’ cancellation policy.

On the rare occasions when Backroads must cancel a trip, all payments received to date will be refunded, which constitutes full settlement. Backroads is not responsible for expenses incurred in preparation for any cancelled trips, such as airline tickets or for costs incurred due to travel delays, flight cancellations or illness.

**Itinerary Changes**

If unforeseen circumstances require a change in the trip itinerary, Backroads will make every effort to select alternative accommodations of the same quality and to keep the activity modifications minimal.

**Electronics & Other Valuables**

It is best to leave valuables at home. If you must bring valuables on the trip, please understand that they are 100 percent your responsibility, regardless of what anyone (including leaders) might tell you. Cash, jewelry and passports are especially important to keep in your possession. It’s not safe to leave valuables in Backroads vans; while not common, break-ins do happen. You may choose to lock them in your room’s safe, if one is available to you. If you’re concerned about forgetting items in the safe (easy to do!), a good trick is to leave something on top of it that you can’t forget, such as a single shoe.

On Biking and Multi-Adventure Trips, if detachable bike bags are available to you, you can store your valuables in the bag and take it with you when you’re not biking. **Please note that our bike bags are water resistant but not waterproof.** Be sure to protect your valuables from the elements accordingly.

Although we will transport your valuables during your trip as a convenience, **we do not assume responsibility for any damage or loss.** This policy applies to personal electronics as well as other items, such as luggage, jewelry, and fragile and delicate accessories, whether purchased on the trip or otherwise.
GETTING ACTIVE FOR YOUR TRIP

NAVIGATION OPTIONS ON THIS TRIP

Turn-by-turn paper directions included.
Downloadable GPS files available for use on your own device—log into your account at My.Backroads.com 2 weeks before your trip for more details.

Terrain
Part of the beauty of the Dalmatian Coast is the dramatic hills, which we’ll be tackling on both hiking and biking routes. Please be prepared to climb! There is very little flat or gently rolling terrain on our itinerary.

Typically, our biking routes follow consistently hilly terrain, where you can expect several 1- to 3-mile climbs followed by several 1- to 3-mile descents. There are very few climbs longer than 5 miles, unless you choose the longer options. The average grade is about 5–6 percent and several steeper climbs around 8–9 percent. (If your trip is in the summertime, please be aware that the heat can make the routes tougher.)

Remember, take your time and go at your own pace—you’re on vacation! Your Backroads Trip Leaders are there to provide the support you need when you’re ready for a snack, a cool drink, or a lift back if you’re done for the day. Most days you’ll have a choice of mileage options, so you can decide how active you want to be—it’s always up to you.

Conditioning Tips
Every Backroads trip is designed to appeal to a wide variety of interests and fitness levels. We know your pace may vary from one day to the next—and your traveling companions’ may differ somewhat from yours. So we present a range of mileage options, and each day you decide exactly what and how much you want to do.

Before your trip, we suggest biking and hiking regularly and hitting a few hills whenever you can. Review the activity level information below to get an idea of the level of activity you should feel comfortable with before your trip starts. But mostly, just show up and have fun!

Cadence & Gearing
The steady rate at which you pedal is called “cadence.” Ideally you should try to maintain a constant high cadence in any gear. This technique not only lets you bike for longer periods without tiring, but also puts less strain on your knees. Shifting to lower gears when riding up hills will help you maintain the same cadence you established on more level terrain and get you up the hills without overextending yourself. Using lower gears also helps you to be more efficient when riding against the wind.

Pacing & Endurance
It’s important to pace yourself throughout the day, so you have the stamina to ride or walk as far and as long as you’d like. Keep your energy level constant by eating high-energy snacks (your leaders will have plenty on hand). Drink fluids often—before you are thirsty—to avoid dehydration.

Some people find that a water-pack hydration system, worn like a backpack and equipped with a plastic tube for drinking, is a good accessory on long outings or in hot climates, since it enables you to carry more water and drink regularly without having to stop.

Resources
One book we recommend is The Bicycling Big Book of Cycling for Beginners by Tori Bortman. It offers valuable advice for new cyclists, from choosing the proper clothing to basic riding and etiquette skills.

Visit Bicycling magazine’s website at www.bicycling.com to browse for tips on how to improve your technique—as well as advice on nutrition, gear and safety, and basic bike maintenance.

The American Hiking Society website is packed with all sorts of useful information related to walking and hiking.
Visit americanhiking.org.

Your local outdoor store can be an excellent resource too; ask to speak with an experienced employee.

The routes on this trip are rated Levels 2–4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY LEVEL</th>
<th>BIKING</th>
<th>WALKING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2–3 hrs</td>
<td>8–22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2–4 hrs</td>
<td>18–32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3–5 hrs</td>
<td>26–42</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4–6 hrs</td>
<td>36–54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5–7+ hrs</td>
<td>48–70+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review the “Activity Level” section on the web for more details on daily route options.

Q: Should I buy a pair of biking shoes for my trip?
A: Rigid shoes maximize the power of your pedaling stroke, but there’s really no need to purchase a pair of biking shoes just for this trip. Any athletic shoes—provided they have stiff soles—will be sufficient.

Q: Do I need to bring hiking boots for my trip?
A: Varying weather conditions and terrain can make any trail challenging, whether you’re hiking up a mountain or walking through a valley. We recommend hiking boots or sturdy hiking shoes (sometimes called “light hikers”) with robust tread, ample ankle support and waterproofing. Your average running shoes often have inadequate tread and stability for terrain like gravel and mud—though even these may be suitable if you know that’s what works for you. Most importantly, your shoes should be comfortable and well broken in before your trip starts.

Q: It’s not really going to rain during the trip, is it?
A: Well, it just might! Rain is possible no matter where you travel. Your best bet for staying comfortable during a shower is to wear quality rain gear that is both waterproof and breathable.

Q: Does wearing layers really make a difference?
A: Yes! The trick for staying comfortable in fluctuating temperatures is to wear three basic non-cotton layers of lightweight clothing: innerwear (to wick moisture away from your skin), insulating garments (for warmth) and outerwear (to protect against wind or rain). The different layers let you add or remove clothing in response to changes in the weather or your internal temperature.

Q: How do I prevent soreness while bicycling?
A: Think padding! Padded shorts make sitting on the bicycle seat a lot more comfortable, and padded bicycling gloves help prevent blisters and hand numbness.

Staying Comfortable: FAQs
BIKING SAFETY & GEAR

Rules of Biking Safety

Good judgment and alertness are the most important factors for safe bicycling. Follow these rules at all times to ensure your safety and the safety of those around you.

- **Wear a helmet.** Bicycling without a helmet is extremely dangerous. Backroads requires that all guests wear helmets while biking.

- Ride predictably, defensively and in a straight line.

- When biking with others, ride single file and maintain several bike lengths between cyclists. Allow more distance when riding downhill.

- Do not use headphones while biking; you might not hear traffic coming up behind you.

- Be as courteous to motorists as you would like them to be to you, and get completely off the road when you stop.

- Keep your speed under control on downhills. Use both brakes simultaneously, but be aware that the front brake is more powerful than the rear. Gently pump your brakes on long descents for maximum effectiveness. Check brakes frequently to make sure nothing is loose or dangling.

- Wet slippery roads require extra caution and greater stopping distance—especially on downhills. Wet brakes must be dried by pumping before they have an effect, so start braking early in damp weather.

- When riding on sand or gravel, downshift into low gear so you can spin your pedals faster while still going slowly.

- Obey all traffic regulations. Stop at all stop signs and red lights, yield the right-of-way and use hand signals when turning, slowing down or stopping. Ride on the right side of the road (except in countries where traffic moves on the left), at a safe distance from traffic.

- Do not ride too close to the bike in front of you; keeping several bike lengths between you and the bike ahead gives you more time to brake or go around obstacles.

- Be cautious around road obstacles. It is safest to dismount and walk your bike across railroad tracks and cattle guards. If you decide to bike across them, do so at right angles. Avoid potholes, metal grates, glass, rocks and thorns. Ride at a safe distance from parked cars and watch for vehicles pulling out and/or doors opening in your path.

- You must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians. Do not ride on sidewalks.

- When making a left turn (or a right turn in countries where traffic moves on the left), it is safest to pull off the road, dismount, look both ways for traffic and then walk your bike across the road. Never follow other riders when turning without confirming for yourself that it is safe to do so.

- Listen carefully for approaching motorists. (Look over your shoulder only if you can do so without swerving.)

- We do not bike after dark on Backroads trips. If you decide to do so on your own, you must bring your own bike equipped with a white light on the front, a red light on the rear and reflectors on the spokes and pedals.

- If a dog chases you and you are not able to ride away quickly, stop your bike and walk out of the dog’s territory, keeping the bike between you and the animal.

- Wear appropriate clothing for bicycling. Brightly colored clothes make you more visible to motorists. Double-tie shoelaces and tuck them inside your shoes.

- You should wear corrective lenses while bicycling if you use them while driving.

**Bringing Your Own Gear**

Backroads provides everything you’ll need to participate
WHERE TO STAY BEFORE & AFTER YOUR TRIP

For help making hotel reservations for before and after your Backroads trip:

- Work with your own professional travel advisor.
- Contact the Backroads Travel Desk at Dimensions in Travel by calling 800-GO-ACTIVE (462-2848), Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific time. Please note that consulting or ticketing fees may apply, depending on the services requested.
- Book directly with the hotel or through a discount website.

If you plan on extending your stay after the trip at our last night’s hotel, the Hilton Imperial Dubrovnik and would prefer not to change rooms, please email reservations.dubrovnik@hilton.com or call the hotel directly (+385-(0)20-320-320) and let them know you are traveling with Backroads. In addition, request either a Hilton King Executive Sea View, Hilton King Guestroom Sea View or a Hilton Twin Guestroom Sea View room. If you do not book one of these room categories, it is likely you will need to change rooms after the trip.

Once you have booked your room, please send your room confirmation number and room type to Backroads. (Please note Backroads does not guarantee hotel availability before or after the trip.)

The following is a selection of recommended properties that span a range of prices, amenities and locations. Refer to the Hotel Room Rates guide for the starting double-occupancy rates, which were accurate at time of printing. Note that rates are subject to change and some hotels may require a minimum stay.

Cornaro Hotel in Split is our meeting location on Day 1. See the following for more information on this hotel.
Split

Historic Split is worth exploring if you have a little extra time. Home to the spectacular Diocletian’s Palace, a World Heritage site, and set against a dramatic mountain backdrop, Split is home to numerous museums, galleries, wine cellars and the Marjan Forest Park, an oasis of greenery with pleasant promenades, nature paths and vista points. Additional attractions include the seasonal festivals and concerts scheduled throughout the warmer months of the year. For more information on visiting Split, go to www.visitsplit.com.

Hotel map: bit.ly/SplitHotels

Hotel Vestibul Palace

This small boutique hotel within Diocletian’s Palace blends centuries-old history with 21st-century design. A Small Luxury Hotels of the World Member. | Iza Vestibula 4 | www.vestibulpalace.com | +385-(0)21-329-329 | 7 rooms & suites | Rates: ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Cornaro Hotel

Conveniently located a stone’s throw from Diocletian’s Palace and within walking distance of the city center, seafront promenade and ferry terminal, this four-star hotel offers contemporary accommodations in the heart of historic Split. | Sinjska 6 | www.cornarohotel.com | +385-(0)21-644-200 | 36 rooms & suites | Rates: ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Hotel Park

Offering simple yet pleasant accommodations, Hotel Park features air-conditioned guest rooms, a health club and a restaurant with a big palm-shaded terrace. To reach the city center, plan on a 15- to 20-minute walk. | Hatzeov Perivoj 3 | www.hotelpark-split.hr | +385-(0)21-406-400 | 57 rooms & suites | Rates: ✦ ✦ ✦

Le Méridien Lav

This stylish, full-service resort features landscaped gardens, a casino and nightclub, eight restaurants and bars, a spa and tennis courts—all just 5 miles south of Split in Podstrana. (pool, spa) | Grljevacka 2A, Podstrana | www.lemeridienlavsplit.com | +385-(0)21-500-500 | 381 rooms & suites | Rates: ✦ ✦ ✦

Hotel Peristil

Located within Diocletian’s Palace, smack-dab in the middle of the emperor’s former living room, is the charming Hotel Peristil. | Poljana Kraljice Jelene 5 | www.hotelperistil.com | +385-(0)-21-329-070 | 12 rooms | Rates: ✦ ✦

Private Accommodations

Private accommodations are also available in Split. You can book through Turist Biro (www.turistbiro-split.hr; +385-(0)21-347-100).

Dubrovnik

We highly recommend adding a couple days to your trip to explore Dubrovnik. Note that the old town has very few hotels; the Ploce area is located just east of the city walls within a 10-minute walk of the old town; Lapad is located a little farther away and has many lodging choices. Buses run regularly from Lapad to the old town to the “Pile Gate” entrance. Look for buses #1a, #1b and #6. On average, the trip into the old town from Lapad takes about 10 minutes.

Hotel map: bit.ly/DubrovnikHotels

Pucić Palace

Set on Dubrovnik’s picturesque main square, this 300-year-old former nobleman’s house retains its traditional atmosphere. | Ulica Od Puca 1 | www.thepucicpalace.com | +385-(0)20-326-222 | 19 rooms & suites | Rates: ✦ ✦ ✦ ✦
Grand Villa Argentina
The Grand Villa Argentina consists of four villas and one hotel—each with its own distinctive and elegant atmosphere—surrounded by gardens. (pool, spa) | Frana Supila 14 | www.gva.hr | +385-(0)20-440-555 | 131 rooms & suites | Rates: ✦ ✦ ✦

Hotel Stari Grad
Once the home of an aristocratic family and now a cultural monument under UNESCO’s patronage, this small hotel offers simple but comfortable rooms. (spa) | Od Sigurate 4 | www.hotelstarigrad.com | +385-(0)20-322-244 | 8 rooms | Rates: ✦ ✦ ✦

Dubrovnik Palace Hotel
Restored after the 1990s’ conflicts nearly destroyed it, this chic four-star resort is a wonderful base from which to explore Dubrovnik’s old town (just a 10-minute bus ride away). (pool, spa) | Masarykov Put 20 | www.dubrovnikpalace.hr | +385-(0)20-430-830 | 308 rooms & suites | Rates: ✦ ✦ ✦

Valamar Lacroma Dubrovnik Hotel
This sprawling ultra-modern resort—one of the newest kids on the block—is earning fans with its up-to-date amenities, excellent service and lovely setting amid peaceful woodland near the sea. (pool, spa) | www.valamar.com/best-hotels-in-dubrovnik | +385-(0)52-465-400 | 401 rooms & suites | Rates: ✦ ✦

Hotel Uvala
Noted for its contemporary design by Split architect Dinko Kovaccicc, the Uvala prides itself on providing a "culture and spirit of wellness." (pool, spa) | Masarykov Put 6 | www.dubrovnikhotels.travel/hotel-uvala-dubrovnik | +385-(0)20-433-580 | 51 rooms | Rates: ✦ ✦

Private Accommodations
Private accommodations are often less expensive than hotels but occasionally involve sharing a flat with the owner’s family. Be sure you confirm the location of the apartment in advance. For a listing of apartments in Dubrovnik, visit the Dubrovnik Office of Tourism’s website at www.tzdubrovnik.hr and select the "Accommodations" link.
EXTENDING YOUR VACATION

Bosnia-Herzegovina

If you have time before or after your Backroads trip, we recommend a visit to Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia-Herzegovina and its largest city. It’s the historical crossroads of East and West, whose character has been shaped over the centuries by its sheer diversity of cultures and religions. It’s this diversity—the mélange of mosques, churches and synagogues, an Ottoman bazaar, grand Austro-Hungarian buildings and broad avenues, and austere, socialist-style high-rises—that makes Sarajevo one of the most fascinating cities in Europe. It’s been said, “If you want to experience Vienna, Istanbul and Belgrade at the same time, go to Sarajevo.” Sarajevo is about a 6-hour drive from Dubrovnik. For more information on traveling in Bosnia-Herzegovina, visit www.bhtourism.ba.

Montenegro

Journey farther south along the Adriatic Coast and you’ll discover the newly independent nation of Montenegro. We recommend visiting the historic walled town of Kotor, a World Heritage site. Situated at the head of southern Europe’s deepest fjord, picturesque Kotor boasts Montenegro’s most dramatic setting. Here you can stroll the winding cobbled streets of Stari Grad (or “Old Town”) to discover small squares containing ancient churches and former aristocratic mansions. Some sites worth a stop include the Church of St. Luke, the Maritime Museum and St. Tryphon Cathedral, a stunning example of Romanesque architecture. From Dubrovnik, you can get to Kotor by bus in approximately 3½ hours.

Nature lovers can head up into the mountains of northwest Montenegro to explore Durmitor National Park, a pristine landscape of glacial lakes, old juniper-fir forests, sparkling fast-moving rivers and spectacular canyon valleys. The park also claims a number of cultural monuments, including ruins dating back to medieval times. For more details on visiting Montenegro, go to www.visit-montenegro.com.
SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

LUGGAGE REMINDERS
Please limit your luggage to one medium-sized suitcase (we recommend 25”–28”, preferably not hard case) and one small carry-on bag. Be sure to mark your luggage with your contact information.

Essential

Travel Items
- international travel documents (i.e. passport, visa, etc.)
- photocopy of front page of passport (kept in a separate place from passport)
- wallet (credit cards, bank cards & ID)
- cash for incidentals & leader gratuities
- airline tickets/e-ticket confirmation details
- sealable, quart-size plastic bags for stowing small liquid containers, swimsuit, etc.
- toiletries (including sunscreen & lip ointment)
- medications & copies of prescriptions
- list of important addresses & contact numbers

Active Clothing & Gear
- biking shoes (& pedals) or stiff-soled sneakers
- light hikers or boots
- biking & hiking socks
- biking shorts (preferably with padding/chamois)
- walking/hiking shorts and/or lightweight pants
- short-sleeved biking jerseys
- non-cotton base layers of varying weights
- short-fingered biking gloves
- lightweight biking/hiking jacket or vest
- hat with brim
- daypack/waistpack (for water, camera, snacks)
- sunglasses (with retention strap)

Non-Active Clothing
- clothing & shoes for downtime & restaurants
- lightweight jacket (like fleece) or warm sweater
- warm hat

Optional

- camera & charger (remember to enter our Guest Photo Contest!)
- cell phone & charger
- voltage converter/plug adapter (if applicable)
- alarm clock
- helmet and/or saddle (if you prefer your own)
- bike mirror
- clear glasses/replaceable lenses for rainy days
- CamelBak or similar hydration backpack
- guidebook and/or field guides
- notebook/travel journal & pens
- local language dictionary/phrase book (if applicable)
- reading material
- earplugs
- insect repellent

Rain Gear & Cold Weather Clothing
You may not need all of the items listed here, but they are necessary to stay comfortable in case of rain or unseasonably cold weather.
- waterproof (breathable) rain jacket & pants
- arm & knee/leg warmers (for biking)
- toe covers/booties (worn over bike shoes)
- waterproof/water-resistant warm gloves
- lightweight, but warm, cap that fits under helmet (skullcap) or headband that covers ears
- sport sandals and/or flip-flops
- swimsuit
GREAT GEAR VENDORS

For a list of some of our favorite gear and gadget retailers, visit www.backroads.com/gearup.