EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

On Foot in Montenegro (FO 2014 DUBROVNIK)

WALK & TREK

TOUR DURATION **8** DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Comfort: Standard
Tour Type: Small Groups
Trek Grade: Easy to Moderate
Tour Code: FO

Tour Highlights - On Foot in Montenegro

- ✓ Durmitor National Park - Walk amidst the spectacular landscapes of lakes and mountains
- ✓ Kotor - Spectacular UNESCO designated medieval walled town scenically located on the coast
- ✓ Skadar Lake National Park - Boat trip on the largest lake in the Balkans
- ✓ Ostrog Monastery - Visit the 17th century Ostrog monastery dramatically located on a cliff
- ✓ Virpazar - characterful village located on Skadar Lake

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	7 nights Standard Hotel
Included Meals:	7 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Dubrovnik
End Point:	Tour ends: Dubrovnik
Maximum Altitude on Trek (m):	2145
Transport:	Bus
Countries:	Montenegro

On Foot In Montenegro

From the lakes, canyons and mountains of Durmitor National Park to the towering ramparts of the medieval city of Kotor, we explore the spectacular landscapes and fascinating cities of Montenegro. Along the way we hike to the summit of Mount Vrmac, sail on Skadar Lake, explore the fortified city of Kotor and walk in the picturesque Durmitor National Park.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join tour Dubrovnik Airport, transfer to Virpazar

Join the tour at Dubrovnik Airport and transfer to Virpazar hotel. If the group flight arrival time allows we will take an optional transfer to the village of Godinje where we can enjoy a walk around this historical village. We may also have the opportunity to do some local wine tasting.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Rooms Available

DAY 2 Exploring Skadar Lake National Park, transfer to Zabljak

Today we set out to explore the Skadar Lake National Park on a boat. The largest lake in the Balkan Peninsula, it is known for diverse flora and fauna. While sailing we pass by a number of establishments such as the old fishermen village, Grmozur island prison and Lesandro Turkish fortress among many monasteries, churches and scared monuments located here. If we are lucky enough we may spot migratory birds which occasionally flock to this region. This afternoon we will transfer to Zabljak. En route we come across the impressive Moraca Canyon where we visit the 13th Century Moraca monastery. Before we arrive in Zabljak which is located in the

heart of Durmitor National Park, we will see one of the most beautiful bridges in this part of the world - Djurdjevica Tara. Built before the second world war its arches stand 100 metres above the Tara River leaning on the walls of the deepest European canyon.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Rooms Available

DAY 3 Walking tour of the Lakes in Durmitor National Park

Durmitor National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that covers some 40,000 hectares, encompassing a rich landscape of towering peaks, alpine lakes and high pastureland, sandwiched between the Tara and Piva canyons. Today we will begin our exploration of this magnificent setting with a walk around the lakes, a journey that begins with a gentle hike through pine forests to the Crno Jezero (Black Lake). Of the 18 glacial lakes that pepper this spectacular landscape, Crno Jezero is probably the most famous and is certainly the largest, feeding the river basins of both the Tara and the Komarnica Rivers. We'll take a walk around the lake, named after the dark pine landscapes that surround it, and then continue on towards the Zminje Jezero (Serpent Lake), where we can enjoy a picnic lunch before the imposing backdrop of the Durmitor Plateau. After lunch we head back towards Zabljak, passing by the serene waters of Lake Barno en route, continuing to enjoy the majestic setting of these karst ranges as we go. Aside from its glacial lakes, the park also features 27 peaks that exceed 2200m, five canyons, lush expanses of ancient forest and a labyrinthine system of caves and sinkholes that number in the hundreds. Total walking approx: 18km, 4-5 hours. Elevation gain 50m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Rooms Available

DAY 4 Hiking the Bear Circuit

Heading out again after breakfast this morning we take a trail that snakes passed the Black Lake once more and then up into the mountains, heading through a changing landscape of fir forests and low alpine vegetation and onto the snow covered peaks. Our destination is the Previja Pass (2145m), located beneath the heights of Medjed (Bear) peak (2287m), where we will enjoy a quite spectacularly scenic lunch overlooking the majestic vistas below us. Whilst bear and wolf are rarely sighted in the park, there is a chance of spotting chamois on the high mountain slopes, as well as fox, weasels and badger. The area is also rich in birdlife, with 130 different species being recorded here, including grey mountain eagles, white-headed vultures and crossbills. From spring to mid summer the landscape becomes a blaze of colours, with the alpine meadows blanketed in a rainbow of hues from gentians, anemones, violets, soldanellas and wild strawberries. After our lunch stop we will head back down to Black Lake, following a trail that takes us via a shepherd's camp at Lokvice, before returning to the hotel. Total walking approx: 15km, 6 hours. Elevation gain 685m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Rooms Available

DAY 5 Drive to Kotor Bay via the Monastery at Ostrog

Leaving the mountain landscapes of Durmitor behind this morning we head south, towards the warm waters of the Adriatic and the Bay of Boka. Our journey to the small town of Kotor Bay takes us via the monastery at Ostrog, built by St Vasilije (Basil) in the 17th century. Stopping to visit the lower monastery - the Church of the Holy Trinity - we then take a 30-minute climb along the pilgrim's path to the higher one. Set before the imposing backdrop of sheer vertical walls the whitewashed walls of the upper monastery makes for an inspiring spectacle. The monastery contains the bones of St Basil, reverentially housed in a sepulchral sanctuary that is linked to another chapel by an atmospheric series of caves and passages. The walls are crammed with offerings and pleas from the faithful and the entire atmosphere of the monastery is one of reverential piety. Departing the monastery after lunch we then continue to Dobrota, stopping off en route to enjoy the views above the Budva Riviera, before descending to the town, where we should arrive later this afternoon.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Rooms Available

DAY 6 Morning visit to Kotor, free afternoon

This morning we visit the old medieval city of Kotor, lying beneath the slopes of Mount Lovcen. An engaging mix of European and Byzantine influences, Kotor was once an independent city republic, until the threat of Ottoman attacks saw it throw its lot in with the Venetians. We'll take a wander through the old city, walking its city walls to enjoy the views across the medieval rooftops and out across the fjord from the Ivan Tower at the top of the ramparts. Under the Venetians Kotor became one of the best fortified cities in the region, boasting walls twice the length of Dubrovnik, and these same walls provide us with a fascinating glimpse into its turbulent past. After lunch the afternoon is free to continue exploring at your leisure. We can recommend a boat trip out into the fjord, taking in some of the small islands that occupy the turquoise waters off the coast and visiting Gospa Skrpjela, Sv. Djodje and the historic town of Perast. Of course you may just wish to continue enjoying the delights of Kotor, perhaps taking in the Romanesque grandeur of St Tryphon's Cathedral, or visiting the fascinating maritime museum.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Rooms Available

DAY 7 Vrmac Mountain hike

Today we hike Vrmac Mountain which looms above Kotor town. The trail starts from Kotor town and starts to ascend immediately. It is an ancient path used for trading and the army (last time the Austro-Hungarian and Italian army in the Second World War). The panoramic views of Kotor and the Fjord become more and more spectacular as we climb. The zigzag trail takes us in and out of pine forest and once we reach the end, we take a dirt track which follows the ridge of Vrmac Mountain. At certain points we will have stunning sea views on both sides of the Fjord (Tivat and Kotor). Later, we descend to Markov Rt beach where you can cool off and enjoy a dip in the sea. From here we return to Kotor Bay for our final evening.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Rooms Available

DAY 8 Tour ends Dubrovnik Airport

This morning we will transfer back to Dubrovnik Airport where the tour ends.

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 0 lunches,0 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Godinje village - Wine tasting €5-10.
Kotor - Kayaking Kotor Fjord depends on group size, allow approximately €40, Kotor Fjord boat trip €90 per group.

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly you should allow approximately £20 for gratuities for local staff.

In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

Montenegro

ATM Availability: Most towns have ATM’s for cash withdrawal.

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are also generally accepted.

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be exchanged for the local currency.

Local Currency: Euro.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Sterling and US dollars.

Where to Exchange: Banks or 'Forex' offices in main towns/cities. Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

For passengers making their own travel arrangements, please ensure you join the group as described on day one of the tour itinerary. If you are considering purchasing your own airline tickets, you can book these through any travel agent, directly with an airline or through an online flight consolidator. In all cases, we would be happy to arrange transfers to and from the joining point of your tour if required.

Joining Tour Abroad

Clients booked on **'Land Only'** arrangements should make their own way to the joining point. Please refer to separate **'Joining Instructions'** for time and place of rendezvous with tour leader

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining **any** of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable.

If you require travel insurance for your tour, Explore Worldwide is an appointed representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority. Our travel insurance policy is specially tailored to the needs of the adventure traveller and will cover you for any included activity on any Explore trip. You can either purchase this at the time of booking or call us on 0844 499 0903 after you have booked.

Visa Information

Montenegro: Visas are not required by UK, US, Canadian, Australia and New Zealand citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

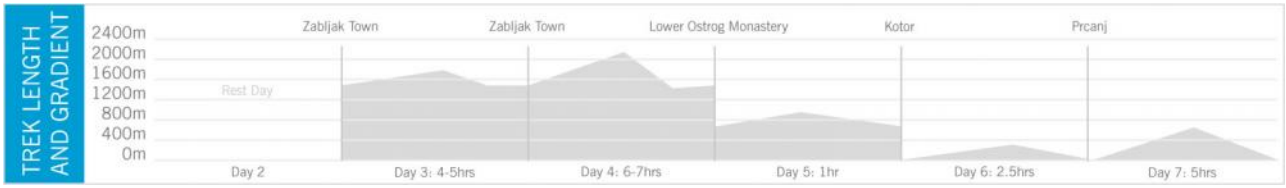
All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Vaccinations & Protection

Montenegro

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against Hepatitis A, Polio, Tetanus, and Typhoid. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Tour



Trekking Details

The tour includes 4 days of trekking with about 4 to 6 hours of walking each day. This tour is graded easy to moderate.

Maximum Altitude on Trek (m)

2145

Climate

Montenegro

Montenegro has a mediterranean climate, hot dry summers and autumns and relatively cold winters with heavy snowfall inland There is a chance of sporadic rain in spring and autumn, though generally this is in the form of short showers. The best times to visit Montenegro is spring and autumn. As we are in the mountains for this trip the temperature will be a few degrees cooler then the low lying areas. Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at http://www.explore.co.uk/weather. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Clothing

July and August are the hottest months, but early and late in the season go prepared with clothing to suit drops in temperature and the showers. You'll need your swimming costume and light rainwear may be needed at any time of year. A warm fleece/jacket is recommended for cooler evenings and nights. Early in the season there may still be some snow.

Equipment

A water bottle, sunhat and high factor sunscreen are all essential, and a torch is useful in case of power cuts or emergencies. Insect repellent. Walking poles are available for hire locally.

Footwear

Trail boots, plus trainers, shoes or sandals for relaxing.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Food

The prices for meals and drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive. The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Montenegro

Lunch £: 9.00

Dinner £: 11.00

Drink

Montenegro

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00

Water £: 1.10

Country details

Montenegro

Population: 684,736.

Size of Country: 14,026 sq km

Major Language: Serbian, Bosnian, Albanian, Croatian

Religion: Orthodox, Muslim, Roman Catholic.

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

Montenegro

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: The Sunshine Orphanage (which cares for abandoned children in Luxor, Egypt), Education for All (sponsoring children through their secondary education in Morocco), The Hope Foundation (helping an Indian Village to recover from the 2004 Tsunami) and the Mufindi Orphanage, which support AIDS orphans in Tanzania.

We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation, Travel Operators for Tigers (helping save the Bengal Tiger from extinction) and Friends for Conservation. We have also adopted a beautiful Sri Lankan Elephant called 'Serendip'.

We are delighted to have received a Five Star sustainable tourism status from the Association of Independent Tour Operators in recognition of our on-going commitment to sustainable tourism.

Cool Earth

Explore are delighted to support Cool Earth to reduce carbon emissions through preventing the illegal deforestation of the South America rainforest. One of the top sources of global carbon emissions, rainforest deforestation equivalent to the USA's annual emissions, it also destroys flora and fauna, sometimes to the point of extinction. It also degrades the lives and communities of the 350 million residents of the rainforest.

Cool Earth prevents the deforestation through its support of local communities as forest guardians and by focussing on areas in immediate danger of deforestation. It has so far protected over 350,000 acres of rainforest, with each acre saving an emission of 260 tons of CO2, as well as protecting rare animals and plants. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year. In addition to mitigating emissions, when you travel with Explore, you are helping to protect the source of 20% of the world's fresh water and oxygen, as well as the livelihoods of the 1.6 billion people who are reliant on the rainforest. www.coolearth.org

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2013 and 31st December 2014.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2014 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2014. 2015/16 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2015.

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