EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Journey Through the Balkans (YD 2015)

CULTURAL DISCOVERY

TOURDURAT
12
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate
Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Standard
tour Code: YD

Tour Highlights - Journey Through the Balkans

- ✓ Kotor, Mostar and Trebinj - Discover the glittering cultural heritage of these picturesque cities
- ✓ Mount Zlatibor - Visit Sirogojno's famous open air museum and travel on the historic Sargan Eight Railway
- ✓ Visegrad - See the UNESCO listed Bridge Over the Drina - the subject of Ivo Andric's famous novel
- ✓ Sarajevo - Enjoy the cultural highlights of the city known as the 'Jerusalem of Europe'
- ✓ Dubrovnik - Explore one of the finest Medieval cities in the world

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	9 nights Standard Hotel 2 nights Simple Guesthouse
Included Meals:	10 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Dubrovnik airport
End Point:	Tour ends: Cavtat
Transport:	Bus, Boat
Countries:	Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Journey Through The Balkans

Travelling through the heart of former Yugoslavia, we discover four countries that have been shaped by a rich but turbulent history. Against a backdrop of jagged mountain peaks and dramatic coastlines, we explore several UNESCO World Heritage Sites, fascinating old towns and enjoy the beautiful scenery of 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.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

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 at Dubrovnik Airport

After joining the tour at Dubrovnik airport, a 40-minute drive will take us into Montenegro and to the small, beautiful coastal town of Djenovici - our base for the next two nights.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Walking tour of Medieval Kotor and a boat trip in the bay

This morning we visit the old Medieval city of Kotor, lying beneath the slopes of Mount Lovcen. With its engaging mix of European and Byzantine influences, Kotor was once an independent city republic, until the threat of Ottoman attacks saw it join with the Venetians. We'll take a wander through the old city, walking its walls to enjoy the views across the traditional rooftops and out over the fjord from the Ivan Tower. Under the Venetians, Kotor became one of the best fortified cities in the region, boasting walls twice the length of Dubrovnik; walls which today provide us with a fascinating glimpse into its turbulent past. After lunch, we will take to the waters of Kotor Bay, to explore some of the small islands that occupy the turquoise waters of what is essentially the southernmost fjord in Europe. An inspiration for artists and poets, the bay is considered one of the most beautiful in the world. Its breathtaking mix of rugged mountains and azure waters compliment its rich scattering of charming coastal towns that attest to its former domination by the Venetians and the Ottoman Turks.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Swimming at Sveti Stefan; opportunity of a boat trip on Skadar Lake

This morning's short journey to the resort of Sveti Stefan offers a chance to enjoy a swim on the beautiful Budva Riviera - a 35 kilometre-long strip of the Adriatic boasting some of the coast's best beaches. After our swim, we continue to the lovely town of Virpazar on the shores of Skadar Lake, where we will spend the night. The largest lake on the Balkan Peninsula, Skadar stretches for some 44 kilometres, encroaching into neighbouring Albania. You have the option to explore Skadar Lake and its surrounding national park on a boat trip or on dry land. This area is home to some 270 species of birds, including egrets, spoonbills and one of the largest cormorant colonies on the planet. The park is also a haven for rare plants. What's more, its collection of monasteries, villages and sacred monuments span over nine centuries of Montenegrin history.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4 Visit Moraca Monastery and walk in Durmitor National Park; arrive in Zabljak

Today we drive to Zabljak, on the edge of the Durmitor National Park. Our journey takes us via the monumental 13th century Orthodox monastery at Moraca, as well as the impressive Djurdjevica Tara Bridge. Spanning the gorge over the Tara River, the bridge towers some 135 metres above the river valley. Zabljak lies among the towering peaks, alpine lakes and high pastureland that is sandwiched between the Tara and Piva Canyons. Durmitor National Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that presents us with a magnificent setting for an afternoon walk. On arrival, we will hike up through the thick forest towards the waters of Crno Jezero. Translated as the Black Lake, it is so named because of the dark pine landscape that surrounds it. Of the 18 glacial lakes that pepper this spectacular karst landscape, the Black Lake is probably the most famous and is certainly the largest, feeding the river basins of both the Tara and the Komarnica Rivers. Besides its glacial lakes, the park also features 27 peaks that exceed 2200 metres; five canyons; lush expanses of ancient forest and a labyrinthine system of caves and sinkholes. After exploring these natural wonders, we'll return to Zabljak for the evening.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 Drive to Sirogojno (Serbia), visit the open air museum and Mileseva Monastery

Today we cross into western Serbia and head for the peaks of the Zlatibor massif. Covering some 300 square kilometres, Mount Zlatibor encompasses a range of mountains that stretch for 27 miles and makes up part of the Dinaric Alps. On today's route, we will stop off at the 13th century Mileseva Monastery near Prijepolje. Founded by King Vladislav between 1234 and 1236, the monastery is one of the country's most important spiritual centres. Guided round by a local priest, we will see some of its superb examples of 13th century fresco painting, including the famous 'White Angel', which depicts an angel visiting the grave of Christ. Tonight's accommodation is in the mountain-side village of Sirogojno - home to a remarkable open air museum that was declared a national monument back in 1983. Upon arrival, we will take a tour of this museum. Covering nearly 15 hectares, it contains a collection of traditional 19th century wooden buildings that have been assembled here from across the region, including a bakery, an inn and a dairy. All are authentic and provide a fascinating glimpse into Serbia's rural past.

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 Drive to Mokra Gora; chance to ride on the historic Sargan Eight Railway

Heading for Zlatibor's northern slopes, this morning we drive to the village of Mokra Gora, where there is the option to ride the historic narrow gauge railway, Sargan Eight. Travelling the 3.5 kilometres between Mokra Gora and Sargan Vitasi, the line is part of the former track that once ran between Sarajevo and Belgrade, until it was closed in 1974. The section over the Sargan Pass has been renovated by the Serbian government to recapture something of its 1920s heyday. Today, it represents one of the most beautiful sections of the old narrow gauge tracks that once crossed Europe. Before returning to Mokra Gora for the evening, we will visit the beautiful mountain setting of Kustendorf. This traditional village was built by international director, Emir Kusturica, for his film 'Life is a Miracle'. These days, it is home to an international film and music festival.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Visit the famed Bridge Over the Drina; drive to Sarajevo (Bosnia Herzegovina)

Crossing into Bosnia Herzegovina this morning, we drive to Visegrad on the Drina River. Here, we will find the inspiration for Nobel Prize-winning author, Ivo Andric's novel, 'Bridge over the Drina'. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it has been an iconic symbol of the region for generations and was the scene of some of the worst atrocities of the Bosnian War. In Andric's novel, the bridge is the main protagonist and carries the hope for change for all who encounter it. Later, we continue our journey to Sarajevo, Bosnia Herzegovina's vibrant capital. Famed for its diverse religious heritage and often called the 'Jerusalem of Europe', we can look forward to a two night stay here.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 Explore Sarajevo on our guided city tour

Located on the Sarajevo plain and surrounded by mountains, the city is the cultural and administrative heart of the country. This morning we will take a tour of some of its glittering highlights. Although it was a major settlement during the Middle Ages, it was the Ottoman Empire that founded much of the Sarajevo we know today, transforming a collection of villages into the largest city in the region. Annexed by the Habsburgs, Sarajevo became part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1908, going on to become the scene of the catalyst for the start of World War I, when Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated here on 28th June 1914. During the time of the Ottoman occupation, the city was home to Muslims, Catholics and Jews and Eastern Orthodox and many of its religious monuments have survived the city's turbulent past. Our tour will take in the beautiful old Serbian Orthodox Church of Saint Michael and Gabriel and the stunning 16th century Gazi Husrev Bey Mosque. Considered the most important Islamic building in the country, this is one of the finest examples of Ottoman architecture anywhere in the world. We'll also see the city's magnificent Gothic cathedral and its pseudo-Moorish styled Town Hall - a particularly grandiose building that dates back to the Austro-Hungarian period. A stroll through the centre of Bascarsija, in the heart of old Sarajevo, then offers a chance to explore something of the city's markets. The alleys that radiate out from the market square reflect the Ottoman tradition of naming streets after the traders who practised there and among these winding alleys and covered markets you can find bargains galore.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9 Drive to historic Mostar for a city tour and time to explore

We can look forward to spending today and tonight in historic Mostar. Set on the banks of the Neretva River, this is the largest and most important city in the Herzegovina region. Also, one of the most beautiful towns in the entire country, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is divided by the Neretva, with Croats on one side and Muslims on the other, reflecting its rich cultural heritage. Founded by the Turks during the 15th century and expanded by the Habsburgs 300 years later, the town and its historic old bridge (the Stari Most) were badly damaged during the Balkan conflict of the early 1990s. The old Ottoman bridge was rebuilt after the war and much of the old city has also been restored to its former glory. The five year-long programme of reconstruction went a long way to restoring peace to this shattered region, with international and ethnic co-operation helping to rebuild cultural as well as historic bridges. Today, the city is host to a number of international festivals, including prominent music and traditional dance events, as well as the annual bridge jumping festival. After a tour of the city the rest of the day is free to explore this lovely old town at your own pace.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 10 Stop at Tvrdos Monastery with the chance for a wine tasting; city tour of Trebinje

Heading back towards the Adriatic, we pay a visit to the charming 15th century Tvrdos Monastery, located on the cliffs above the town. Belonging to the Serbian Orthodox Church, the monastery has endured a somewhat violent past, having been destroyed by Turks, Venetians and a massive earthquake in the 17th century. The building we see today was reconstructed during the 1920s and is the headquarters of the bishop of Herzegovina, as well as being home to a number of monks who still live behind its monastic walls. It is particularly famous for its wine cellar and there is the opportunity to enjoy a wine tasting during our visit. We will spend the rest of today and tonight in Trebinje and can look forward to a tour of the old city. Lying along the banks of the Trebisnjica River, just across the border from Dubrovnik, this town once commanded the road between Ragusa and Constantinople and its environs are scattered with old mills and bridges. The attractive Ottoman Arsalangic Bridge is of particular note. Built in the 16th century, it is considered by many to be one of the finest of its kind in the country.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11 Discover Dubrovnik on foot

After enjoying breakfast in a local pastry shop, we set out on your journey to the beautiful city of Dubrovnik. Regarded as one of the finest examples of a fortified Medieval town anywhere in the world, it was granted UNESCO World Heritage status in 1979. The old city is a wonderful mix of monasteries, museums and red-tiled buildings that hark back to the glory days, when it was one of Europe's greatest maritime cities. A guided walking tour will give us a feel of the layout of the town and its wealth of architectural masterpieces. Fully restored to its former grandeur following the Siege of Dubrovnik (1991-92), the old Medieval town still exudes a unique atmosphere and charm. George Bernard Shaw once wrote, 'those who seek paradise on earth should come to Dubrovnik'. So, in the company of a local guide, we will discover the majesty of its Pile Gate, the city's Dominican church and the great Franciscan monastery, as well as the old port and the Rector's Palace. This afternoon is free to continue exploring in your own time, perhaps taking a walk around the city walls to take in the views across the twisting alleyways and the glittering waters of the Adriatic. Later, we will transfer to the beautiful coastal town of Cavtat, a picturesque fishing village that once found favour among the wealthy families of Europe. The old town still retains much of its endearing charm and it is a fitting place in which to enjoy our last evening of the tour.

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12 Tour ends in Cavtat

Our tour ends after breakfast this morning in Cavtat.

Included Meals: None

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 10 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.

Food

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.

Croatia

Lunch £: 15.00

Dinner £: 18.00

Montenegro

Lunch £: 9.00

Dinner £: 11.00

Serbia

Lunch £: 8.00

Dinner £: 12.00

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Lunch £: 5.0

Dinner £: 8

Drink

The prices for 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.

Croatia

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00

Water £: 1.50

Montenegro

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00

Water £: 1.10

Serbia

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 1.00

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 1.20

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

Skadar Lake - 4 hour boat trip on the lake - €18.00
Šargen Eight railway - €5.00
Tvrdos monastery and wine tasting - €4.00

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 approx. £25 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

Croatia

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

Credit Card Acceptance: Generally accepted throughout including most larger restaurants (make sure you have informed your credit card company that you are travelling abroad as some companies will reject payments)

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can only be exchanged in banks.

Local Currency: Croatian Kuna.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Sterling pounds, US Dollars and Euro cash can all be exchanged for the local currency.

Where to Exchange: Most major towns have a Bureau de Change

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.

Serbia

ATM Availability: Generally widespread but limited in more rural areas.

Credit Card Acceptance: Accepted in major restaurants and hotels.

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be exchanged for the local currency but only in banks (Croatia and Bosnia) and in banks, hotels and travel agencies in Serbia and Montenegro.

Local Currency: Dinar.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Euros, US Dollars and Sterling can all be exchanged for local currency. However, Euro is the best currency for exchange and can be done so at most of the places. Only Bank of England issued bank notes are recognised or exchanged in Montenegro. Scottish and Northern Irish pounds sterling bank notes are not accepted. Please consult your tour leader for more information on currency exchange.

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

Bosnia and Herzegovina

ATM Availability: Generally widespread but limited in more rural areas.

Credit Card Acceptance: Accepted in major restaurants and hotels.

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be exchanged for the local currency but only in banks

Local Currency: Bosnian Mark.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Euros, US Dollars and Sterling can all be exchanged for local currency. However, Euro is the best currency for exchange and can be done so at most of the places. Please consult your tour leader for more information on currency exchange.

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

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

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. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip from 01 January 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited. who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Visa Information

Croatia: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Bosnia Herzegovina: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Serbia: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Montenegro: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

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

Vaccinations & Protection

Croatia

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against hepatitis A, polio, tetanus, and typhoid. Tick-borne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Eastern Europe, at specific times of the year. Check latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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.

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.

Serbia

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against Hepatitis A, Polio, Tetanus, and Typhoid. Tick-borne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Eastern Europe, at specific times of the year. Check latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against Hepatitis A, Polio, Tetanus, and Typhoid. Tick-borne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Eastern Europe, at specific times of the year. Check latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. 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

Climate

Croatia

The Croatian Adriatic has a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and warm, sunny summers. There is a chance of sporadic rain in spring and autumn, though generally it is in the form of short showers. Thunderstorms occur in summer, generally helping to cool the air. Itineraries with boat cruises can occasionally be disrupted due to bad weather.

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.

Serbia

Serbia has a continental climate with cold winters and hot summers. Spring and autumn offer the best chance of moderate temperatures. There is a chance of sporadic rain in spring and autumn, though generally this is in the form of short showers. Thunderstorms occur in summer generally helping to cool the air.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia, with only 20km of coastline on the Adriatic Sea, has weather more typical of inland eastern Europe, with cold winters and warm summers. Summer is the wettest season. Much of the country is mountainous or hilly, rising to a height of 2,386 m and winter snow lies for long periods in the higher regions.

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 odd shower. Please note air conditioning is not normally available.

Equipment

A torch, water bottle, insect repellent, suncream (at least factor 15), good quality sunglasses and a lipsalve with sun protection.Also bring a swimsuit for swimming opportunities on the trip.

Footwear

Comfortable shoes/trainers plus 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

Country details

Croatia

Population: 4,290,612

Size of Country: 56,594 sq km

Major Language: Croatian

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

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

Serbia

Population: 7,120,666

Size of Country: 88 361 sq km

Major Language: Serbian

Religion: Orthodox, Catholic, Islam

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Population: 3,843,126

Size of Country: 51,197 sq km

Major Language: Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian

Religion: Christian

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

Croatia

2 Pin Round

Montenegro

2 Pin Round

Serbia

2 Pin Round

Bosnia and Herzegovina

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, self-guided, private journeys & 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: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

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 andÂ security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. ForÂ UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link atÂ 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 LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â 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.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

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 2014 and 31st December 2015.

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: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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