

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Walks and Coastal Towns of Croatia (CO 2017)



TRIPDURATION
8
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Accommodation
Grade: Standard

Tour Type: Small Groups
Trek Grade: Easy to Moderate

Trip Code: CO

Trip Highlights - Walks and Coastal Towns of Croatia

- ✓ Plitvice National Park - Walk round the UNESCO World Heritage Site with views of breathtaking travertine lakes and waterfalls
- ✓ Paklenica National Park - Spectacular coastal and mountain walking along the Adriatic coast
- ✓ Trogir - One of the oldest cities in Croatia, discover the city's medieval, Romanesque and Gothic architecture
- ✓ Premuziceva Trail - a highlight for hikers in Croatia
- ✓ Zagreb - Guided tour of the city known as a 'city of museums'

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 7 nights Standard Hotel
Included Meals: 7 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point: Join trip: Zagreb
End Point: Trip ends: Split
Maximum Altitude on Trek (m): 1600
Transport: Bus
Countries: Croatia

Walks & Coastal Towns Of Croatia

On this walking trip through Croatia's national parks, we explore the jagged mountain peaks of Dalmatia, the plunging gorges of Paklenica and admire the spectacular lakes and waterfalls of Plitvice. Along the way we also visit the pretty coastal cities of Split and Trogir, discovering a maze of cobbled streets, meandering alleyways and medieval architecture.

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.

Accommodation Grade: 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.

Trek Grade: Easy to Moderate

This grade is ideal if you want to enjoy both easy and moderate level walks on the same tour. You'll be walking mainly on good paths and at low altitude, with occasional more demanding ascents or descents.

Your trip 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.

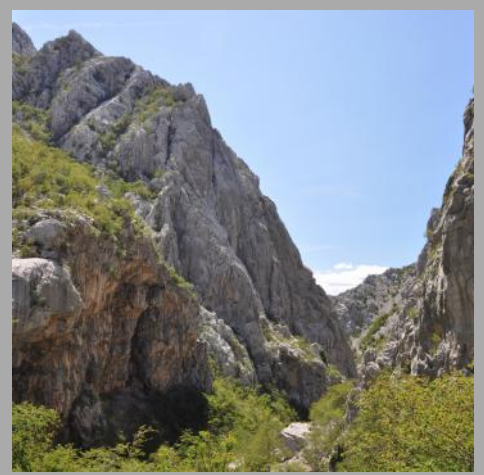
Your Tour Leader

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 in Zagreb, Croatia's capital

Joining the tour today in the evening we meet with the group and the Tour Leader.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available



 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 City tour of Zagreb, drive to Plitvice National Park

Today we start our day with a city tour of Zagreb. Famously called a city of museums as there are more museums per square foot than any other city in the world it also has many other architectural structures to boast of. Later in the afternoon we drive down to the magnificent beauty of the Plitvice Lakes, a sumptuous setting of forested hills and beautifully clear lakes that are, with good reason, Croatia's premier tourist attraction. Travertine terraces cascade down through the lush landscapes, presenting the visitor with a series of plunging waterfalls and turquoise, calcium rich lakes that are one of Europe's natural marvels. Little wonder then that this remarkable park was awarded UNESCO World Heritage status in 1979.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 3 Walk around lakes and waterfalls of the national park

Today we plan to spend our time walking a track of which the second half provides us with far reaching views of the lakes, waterfalls and surrounding pine clad hillsides from a higher vantage point. Over the millennia, the waters of these lakes have dissolved the limestone rock and carved out the valley in which they now lie. Through the sedimentation of calcium carbonate and the build up of special types of algae and moss, minerals have been deposited to form the natural dams that separate these lakes. The dynamic process still continues today, creating new falls as the water breaks through the slow growing barriers. Our route today gives us the opportunity to experience the rich variety of flora in this region, ranging from reeds, bull rushes and willow trees, which shade the lakes and line the wooden walkways, through to the myriad orchids of cyclamen, scabius and smoke bushes which can be found beneath the predominantly oak and beech forests. Walking approx 8-10 km, 4 - 5 hours.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 4 Hike part of the long distance Premuziceva Trail

After breakfast, we transfer to Zavizan to walk the Premuziceva Trail. The top parts of northern and central Velebit from Zavizan to Baske Ostarije are connected by a 57km long hiking trail. It was named after its designer, Ante Premuzi, the great builder of roads and trails on Velebit. The construction of the trail took only 3 years (1930 - 1933), but it required the labour of a large number of workers from sub-Velebit villages. The trail opened access to the most hidden and the most beautiful parts of Velebit. We will walk 16km of the trail (approximately 5-6 hours). Later we will transfer towards Paklenica National Park, which lies on the southern edge of the imposing limestone mass of the Velebit Mountains. The impressive mountains that make up this breathtaking landscape present an almost continuous wall of rock, rising up to separate the waters of the Adriatic from the rolling landscapes of the interior. This region contains some of the most spectacular walking country in Croatia, with majestic karst landscapes, plunging gorges and jagged mountain peaks to enchant and captivate the visitor.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 5 Half day walk in Starigrad Paklenica

After breakfast this morning we will depart the hotel and follow a trail that passes the villages lining the coast. Along this coastal area the rocky slopes tend to be favoured by a thick blanket of maquis and scrub which leads down to isolated pebble beaches. We will have the opportunity to swim undisturbed in the crystal clear water before stopping for lunch (optional). With the fabulous backdrop of the stark Velebit mountains we will have the chance to watch the changing colours of the sky and the sea as the sun sets on the coast, bring our first day in the region to a close. Alternatively we can extend our walk this afternoon into the foothills of the Velebit Mountains, passing through the Mirila (stone monuments to the deceased). Dating back to the 17th Century the people here made their living from animal husbandry and lived and died in the Velebit Hamlets. Mirila offers us an unique insight into the customs and the way of life of the early Dalmatians. Walking 10 km for the morning walk (no more than 50m ascent/descent) and 18 km including the extended walk (200m ascent/descent). 5-7 hours depending on the walk.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 6 Hike along the Paklenica Gorge

A full day in the park sees us follow a different route, affording us with a variety of entrancing views. Leaving the hotel by jeep, we will follow a zigzag road with stunning views of the coast, stopping for a visit at the centuries old Mirila; stone monuments signifying the place where the departed would greet the sun for the last time. We then continue on foot to the abandoned summer village of Ramici, occupying the Njive Plateau. Making our way through the broadleaved forest we then descend into the upper reaches of the gorge, following a mountain trail lined with fragrant thyme and sage, all the while surrounded by stunning views of the dramatic karst gorge. We take our time as it is uneven terrain. Continuing up the gorge we will stop for lunch at a traditional mountain hut before returning through the spine of the gorge along a gentle stream. We wind our way through the window and chimney bellflowers and smoke bushes with a steep decent out of the gorge. There is the option to descend the other side of the gorge and continue our walk along pine forested paths, returning to the hotel via a steep ascent with far reaching views. As our route circles back towards the hotel it meets the coast, affording some opportunities for a refreshing swim, if time allows, before we head back for dinner. Walking approx walking 18km, 7 hours (please note this walk is weather dependent, if it is not available the Tour Leader will suggest a shorter walk).

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 7 Explore Trogir and the Dalmatian city of Split

Today we transfer to Split. En route we stop at Trogir with free time for sightseeing and optional lunch. Trogir has a rich history that dates back to the 3rd century BC, with a delightful collection of cobble stoned squares and medieval architecture, and a Romanesque cathedral that is considered one of the most exquisite in the entire Adriatic. Spanning some three centuries it boasts a superb entranceway in its west portal, carved in the 13th century by the master mason Radovan. The town also boasts Venetian Gothic mansions, an impressive clock tower and a comprehensive collection of church artwork displayed in the 13th century Church of St John. What makes Trogir such a delight to wander around though are its meandering alleyways, filled with cafes and restaurants and its elegant riverfront promenade, which leads up to the Kamerlengo Fortress, a 15th century edifice with imposing battlements and a huge octagonal tower. After lunch we continue towards Split. Today's Split is the product of 17 centuries of building, renovating and remodelling. After a guided walk of the city you may wish to visit more of the Diocletian's Palace (optional), the palace that Emperor Diocletian built for his golden years at the turn of the 4th century which became the heart of the city. The mausoleum of the pagan Roman emperor evolved with time into the world's oldest Roman Catholic church. What began as an imperial residence and fortified camp is today an intriguing maze of narrow cobblestone streets where pre Romanesque churches nestle alongside Gothic chapels.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 8 Tour ends in Split

The tour ends in Split this morning after breakfast.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners included in the price of this trip. 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 Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip 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 £: 8.00 - 10.00

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Dinner £: 18.00

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

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

Paklenica National Park - Rock climbing €45

Trip to Zadar - €34.00

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 recognized 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. £10 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 and cities have ATM's for cash withdrawal.

Credit Card Acceptance: Generally accepted throughout including most restaurants and hotels.

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

Local Currency: Croatian Kuna.

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

Where to Exchange: Most major towns and cities - your Explore Leader will advise you on arrival. Only exchange money at reputable places like banks, ATM's and official Forex Offices.

Joining your Trip

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.

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

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>.

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 booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

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DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducing Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

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 www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

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

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Vaccinations & Protection

Croatia

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend being up-to-date with your routine vaccination courses and boosters as recommended in the UK including protection against measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, diphtheria, hepatitis A, typhoid and polio. Tick-borne encephalitis protection is recommended by some medical sources at certain times of the year. Ticks are most active between spring and late autumn. Check the 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. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

Preparing for your Trip

DAILY DISTANCES

Day 3	10km	4hrs
Day 4	16km	5.5hrs
Day 5	8km	4hrs
Day 6	9km	4.5/1.5hrs

Optional Walks

Maximum Altitude on Trek (m)

1600

Trekking Details

We trek on 4 days during this trip, with approximately 4 to 6 hours walking each day.

Climate

Croatia

The Croatian Adriatic has a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and warm, dry, sunny summers. There is a chance of sporadic rain in spring and autumn, though generally it is in the form of short showers. Thunderstorms can occur in summer, generally helping to cool the air. Hvar Island gets the most sunshine in summer with 10-12 hours each day, followed by Split, Korcula Island and Dubrovnik with around 7-8 hours. Temperatures from May to October are generally in the low to mid 20's (in °C), but can reach into the 30's (in °C) in July and August. Trip itineraries with boat cruises can occasionally be disrupted due to bad weather.

Clothing

July and August are the hottest months, but the weather is changeable all through the year. Be prepared with clothing to suit drops in temperature whilst at altitude - a warm fleece and jacket are recommended. Light rainwear may be needed at any time of year.

Equipment

A torch, water bottle, insect repellent, suncream (at least factor 15), good quality sunglasses and a lipsalve with sun protection. Trekking poles might be useful.

Footwear

Lightweight trail boots with ankle support, trainers for canyoning and sandals for relaxing. It may be advisable to pack some waterproof shoes for rocky beaches.

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 trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Croatia

Population: 4,190,700

Size of Country: 56,594 square kilometres

Major Language: Croatian

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

Croatia

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 & tailor-made holidays.
- Award-winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of 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, 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.

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

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, 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) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

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.

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 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip 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: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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