

# CROATIA & ITALY

(Note: This is only a sample tour)

**Day 1:** Depart today for **Croatia**, once part of the country of **Yugoslavia** and one of Europe's leading holiday playgrounds with spectacular natural wonders and a fascinating recent history. It is not only varied in its topography but is also diverse in its ethnic, historical and architectural treasures.

**Day 2:** Today you will arrive in **Split**. Meet assistant to your coach transfer to the hotel.

**Day 3: Hvar Island** is one of the treasures of the Adriatic. Hvar Town is one of the most visited on the Dalmatian Coast thanks to the treasures within the walls. Within the main St Stephen Square, see the Cathedral of St Stephen and the Benedictine Convent. Outside the walls the Franciscan Monastery and if you are up to the 20 minute hike, the huge Hvar Fortress. Further up the island is the 4th Century town of Stari Grad. Before heading back to Split, savor the historical sites in the main square. Return to Split and then join your guide for a walking tour of the Palace and charming Old Town. The Old Town grew up around the vast Roman Diocletian Palace one of the best preserved left from the Roman world. After two centuries of Byzantine rule Split became part of the Venetian territories under which the city flourished. Begin at the Golden Gate, the main entrance to the Palace. Discover the Peristyle, the interior courtyard of the Roman Complex. Visit the Cathedral of St. Dominus built in the 4th Century and the Baptistery of St John. Outside the walls, the village popped up. See the Peoples Square and the Iron Gate entrance. Tonight stroll the Riva the seaside pedestrian promenade.



**Day 4:** Continue today to Dubrovnik but first a visit to **Bosnia**. After meeting your guide, marvel at the sparkling **Kravice Waterfalls**. Continue to the Turkish Walled UNESCO World Heritage Site, the town of Pocitelj named as one of the 100 Worlds most endangered cultural heritage sites. During the 1992 – 96 war the entire historic urban site and all the buildings suffered extensive war damage. Continue to the beautiful medieval **Mostar** one of the most important cities in the Herzegovina region. Don't miss the Old Bridge, on the UNESCO World Heritage Site list, originally built in the 16th century, destroyed during the war but has been rebuilt. Then on to **Medjugorje** famous in the world as a pilgrimage site due to the 6 young people who claim to have seen the Virgin Mary.



**Day 5: Dubrovnik**, known as the Pearl of the Adriatic, is famous for its beautiful monuments, magnificent walls and welcoming atmosphere. The city flourished in the 15th and 16th centuries but an earthquake destroyed almost everything in 1667 so most of Old Town is post-quake. Meet your guide at Pile Gate, the main entrance to the old fortified center for the start of your Stradun Stroll, Dubrovnik's main promenade through Old Town. See Orlandos Column, Sponza Palace, the Rectors Palace, the Dominican Monastery and the Cathedral. Starting at Minceta Tower, walk the 10th century walls, a symbol of Dubrovnik.

**Day 6:** Spend today visiting the sites and museums you didn't have time for yesterday. They are so numerous you probably won't have time for all of them. Later take the cable car up to the Napoleon built fortress, Mount Srđ for spectacular views. While there spend some time at the exhibit called "Dubrovnik During the Homeland War". Enjoy your last evening in Old Town



**Day 7:** Fly to **Venice**. Check in at hotel and then transfer to Venice. Lose yourself along the back and side streets of this remarkable city. Wander until you find Piazza San Marco, enjoy lunch perhaps along the **Grand Canal** and some famous Italian gelato.

**Day 8:** Full day in Venice, a completely unique city rising in the middle of a lagoon with water flowing between streets and in front of houses and shops. It was as strange a thousand years ago as it seems today. Meet guide for a guided orientation walking tour. Later, lose yourself in the ambiance of this glorious city. See the Clock Tower, Piazza San Marco, the Grand Canal and the graceful **Rialto Bridge**. Perhaps you would like to arrange a ride on an authentic Venetian gondola.

**Day 9:** Morning departure for **Florence**. Founded by Julius Caesar, Florence is a small compact city; its narrow streets open unexpectedly into spacious squares. A visit to Florence is a visit to the living museum of Italian Renaissance. Meet guide for a guided orientation walking tour. See the gorgeous **Duomo, the Bell Tower, Pont Vecchio** the medieval district, and a central bustling food market.

**Day 10:** Morning visit to The **Uffizi Gallery**. The Uffizi is the result of a process of acquisition, selection and rearrangement stretching over several centuries and consists mostly of antique sculpture and paintings ranging from the 13c to 18c. Florence is a shopper's paradise - countless shops laden with jewelry of Florentine gold and silver, exquisite leather goods, chic fashion houses, and also of course, the straws market. Don't miss San Lorenzo Market. Afternoon to shop and visit the Santa Croce area where Galileo, Michelangelo and Dante have their monuments.

**Day 11:** Full day tour visiting the **beautiful countryside of Tuscany**. Stop in some of the lovely towns in **Chianti** as well as a stop is **San Gimignano**, a spectacular medieval city that has the feel of a museum. From a distance, the towers of this 13th century town that were symbols of power and wealth of the city's medieval families, dominate the lush landscape of wheat fields, olive groves and vineyards. Transfer to Bologna for overnight.

**Day 12:** Flight home.

**Note: Extend by a day and spend it in Montenegro or Korcula, Croatia.**

## **TOUR INCLUSIONS**

- Return airfare to Split return Bologna
- Flight Dubrovnik to Venice
- Assistance upon arrival in Split
- All return airport and train station transfers
- Coach and driver throughout tour according to itinerary in Croatia and day in Tuscany with drop off in Bologna
- Ferry crossings to islands
- Return train and vaporetto in Venice
- One way train Venice to Florence
- 10 nights hotel accommodation with private facilities
- 10 Breakfasts
- 4 dinners
- Guided tours
  - o Half day Split
  - o Full day in Bosnia
  - o Half day in Dubrovnik
  - o Half day Venice
  - o Half day Florence
- Entrances/visits:
  - o Hvar Fortress
  - o Kravice Waterfalls
  - o Dubrovnik Walls and Castle
  - o Cable Car to fortress Mt Srd
  - o Dubrovnik Cathedral
  - o Uffizi Gallery
  - o San Gimignano parking

