



## TRAVEL MATTERS - PUTOVANJA NA ŠESTU

HIKING HOLIDAYS  
BRAČ + HVAR + KORČULA + MLJET

# 4 ISLANDS

## COASTAL HIKES IN CROATIA

**15 DAYS / 14 NIGHTS**  
**FLIGHTS NOT INCLUDED**

**This trip starts with your arrival at Split Airport and finishes with your departure from Dubrovnik Airport.**

Each day, you will take part in a guided hike on quiet trails, with the Adriatic Sea as a constant background. All hikes are graded 'moderate'. You'll hike a total of 148 kilometres, which are split over twelve days of hiking, with some days being a mere six kilometres and others being approximately sixteen kilometres. You'll hike light, carrying only a daypack with what you need for the day.

There are daily ascents and descents, with climbing time on the ascents ranging from about twenty minutes to two hours. The footpaths we take vary from uneven rocky trails to smooth trails covered with pine needles. Sometimes the trails are exposed to sun.

### DAY 1 - \* SPLIT AIRPORT - SPLIT

Please advise us of your flight schedule, and we will meet you at Split Airport. You need to arrive by 5.00 pm at the latest. Upon arrival, we'll be transferred to the centre of Split, Croatia's second largest city. After getting settled into comfortable private accommodation, we'll gather for a welcome dinner to savour the first of many delicious meals the southern region of Croatia has to offer.

Dinner is included on this day.

### DAY 2 - \* SPLIT - BRAČ ISLAND

After breakfast, we'll check out and embark on our first hike on the Marjan Peninsula, a forest-park known as 'the heart, soul and the lungs of Split'. Marjan is a peninsula, a hill, and a forest-park all in one. We'll hike to its highest peak Telegrin (178 m) which offers spectacular views out to nearby islands and the surrounding mountains. On the way down, we'll stop at the Vidilica viewpoint with wide-ranging views over the city and harbour. After the hike, we'll have a homely lunch in a local tavern situated in Veli Varoš district, originally founded by farmers and fishermen in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. After lunch, we'll take a walking tour with a local guide. We'll visit the underground chambers of Diocletian's Palace and the Jupiter's Temple.



You'll be amazed to discover the Peristyle, the central courtyard where Diocletian would have made his public appearances seventeen centuries ago, you'll stroll along charming narrow streets and you'll pass through the narrowest street in the world. Finally, you'll walk along the large Riva, the main city promenade, a place to see and be seen. Later in the afternoon, we'll catch a 50-minute public ferry to Brač Island, followed by a short transfer by minibus to Pučišća, a seaside town on the northern shore of the island. After checking into a luxury heritage hotel, we'll have a stonemason's dinner.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 6 km

Ascent: 178 m

Descent: 178 m

### DAY 3 - \* VIDOVA GORA

After breakfast, we'll be transferred to Gažul, a small village from where we'll start today's hike to the top of Vidova Gora (778 m), the highest peak in the Adriatic Islands. Gažul is a picturesque settlement with old stone houses, located at 574 metres above sea level. The first part of our hike will be uphill through the forest of black pines. A little further ahead, we'll cross a large flat area covered with grass. It won't be long before the top of Vidova Gora appears. At the top, the remains of the church of St. Vitus after which the mountain was named can still be seen. The view from the top takes in the whole of Hvar Island, with Vis Island, the Pelješac Peninsula and Biokovo Mountain filling the horizon. The summit also offers a bird's-eye picture of Croatia's most famous beach - Zlatni Rat. After taking photos, we'll have lunch in a restaurant with a million dollar view. Suitably replenished, we'll hike down a rocky slope of Vidova Gora to reach the pretty town of Bol where we'll be rewarded with great wine tasting. Later on, we'll stroll along the charming seafront promenade where we'll visit the Branislav Dešković Gallery. It bears the name of Croatian sculptor Branislav Dešković (1883 - 1939), born in Pučišća, renowned for his bronze figures of animals, especially dogs. The collection of the gallery concentrates on 20<sup>th</sup>-century Croatian artists who have been inspired by Dalmatia. Later in the afternoon, we'll take a transfer back to the hotel where the remainder of the day is at your own leisure.

Breakfast and lunch are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 16 km

Ascent: 204 m

Descent: 778 m

### DAY 4 - \* CLIFFSIDE MONASTERY BLACA

After breakfast and check out, we'll set off into the island's rocky interior. Soon after we find ourselves in the middle of nowhere, a rocky dirt road will appear. The objective of today's hike is the remote 16<sup>th</sup>-century monastery, in an extraordinary location, on the side of a rugged, isolated valley - Pustinja Blaca. It's simply stunning! You'll have the feeling that its peace and tranquility are almost palpable. We'll need about half an hour to get there. The trail, trodden for centuries by many



mules and horses, is wide, rocky and exposed to sun. The monastery was founded by monks from Poljica, on the mainland, who fled here to escape the Turks. After taking in the spectacular setting and visiting a former hermitage, we'll continue downhill towards the southern shore. We'll pass through a narrow gorge before reaching a shingle beach. From here, the trail takes us past delightful coves and their miniature beaches. Then, we'll take a short transfer to the town of Bol where we'll allow ourselves a stroll on Croatia's most famous beach – Zlatni Rat. Lunch will be served in a local tavern before boarding a catamaran ferry for a short transfer to our next island – Hvar. We'll disembark in Jelsa, a fishing town built around a natural harbour. After checking into private accommodation, we'll meet on the seafront promenade for our evening meal.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 16 km                      Ascent: 74 m                      Descent: 560 m

#### DAY 5 - \* STARI GRAD – VRBOSKA – JELSA

Breakfast today is followed by a short transfer to Stari Grad, the island's oldest settlement. There we'll take a morning hike northwest of the town. It's an easy hike along wide tracks and woodland paths, offering amazing views of Stari Grad's deep inlet, and beyond, Vidova Gora on Brač Island. We'll make a loop passing the summit of Glavica on the way back to Stari Grad. Then we'll wander through the narrow streets behind the harbour, stumbling across hidden gems like the Renaissance fortified mansion, known as Tvrđalj, built by the local poet Petar Hektorović (1487 – 1572). He worked on the construction of his summer villa obsessively and persistently throughout his life, creating a small, enclosed world where all divine creatures – fish, birds, plants and people had a space to live. After visiting an unusual residence, we'll walk to the Stari Grad Plain, a large, fertile plain where the marks of the Greek parcelisation two and half thousand years ago are still visible. We'll walk along paths that crisscross the rectangular plots of the plain. A homely lunch will be served in a tavern in the middle of the plain. After lunch, we'll continue across the plain towards Vrboska, known as Little Venice. Situated at the very base of a deep bay, Vrboska is a quiet place with old houses reflecting in the water. We'll stroll along fishing harbour in search of the fortified Church of St. Mary. Later in the afternoon, we'll take a coastal walk back to Jelsa. The remainder of the day is at your own leisure.

Breakfast and lunch are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 11 km                      Ascent: 146 m                      Descent: 146 m

#### DAY 6 - \* THE HIGHEST PEAK OF HVAR ISLAND

After breakfast and check out, we'll be transferred to the village of Svirče from where we'll start our hike up to the highest peak of Hvar Island, Sveti Nikola (628 m). It's a good two-hour ascent to the top. The route to the summit traverses olive groves,



lavender fields, shady woodlands and, in the upper reaches, bare hillsides. At the top, you'll be surprised by an extraordinarily wide-ranging view. The summit hosts a large cross and a small chapel in the vestibule of which we'll take a break. After enjoying spectacular views, we'll follow a wide track along the island's east-west ridge, towards the village of Velo Grablje, and then Malo Grablje, the latter completely abandoned. Here, you'll be far away from the tourist-favoured coast. After visiting Malo Grablje, we'll descend to Milna, a seaside hamlet on the southern shore, where we'll have lunch in a restaurant close to the sea, followed by a short transfer to Hvar Town. Here, we'll explore the main square Pjaca, bordered by the cathedral and the bishop's palace, and wander through the Old Town, before catching a 90-minute public catamaran ferry to Korčula Island. In the evening, we'll arrive in Korčula Town on the eastern tip of the island. After checking into private accommodation, we'll have dinner in a restaurant in the Old Town.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 18 km

Ascent: 548 m

Descent: 628 m

#### DAY 7 - \* SOUTHEASTERN SHORE OF KORČULA ISLAND

After breakfast, we take a short transfer to Žrnovo village, located inland, just 4 km from Korčula Town. From here, we'll start to follow an ancient path that goes up passing small dry stone houses before heading over into a delightful undergrowth. When the bushes become more sparse, the path bends left and leads southeastwards, offering a magnificent view of Lastovo Island. Further on, we'll continue downhill on a shady path carved out by rainwater. Our objective is to reach some of the most remote beaches on the island the locals like to keep for themselves. Of course, you can jump into the sea and swim for as long as you want... After taking a dip in the turquoise sea, we'll have lunch in a tavern that appears out of nowhere. You'll meet a local family that grows their own vegetables, makes their own olive oil and cultivates vineyards. Their place is stunning! We'll sit on the terrace, with a nice breeze, away from the rest of the world, and enjoy locally grown food prepared in a traditional way. You couldn't wish for more. But seriously, there is more - our other bite of the cherry is a fairytale beach with almost no-one on it. From the tavern, we'll need about half an hour to get there. After stretching out on the beach, we'll hike uphill amongst dense vegetation. The ascent is strenuous and magical at the same time. Just one hour more, and you'll be rewarded with the breathtaking view over the open sea. The hike ends in Žrnovo from where we'll be transferred to an organic farm for honey tasting. We'll meet a local beekeeper and learn about life in a beehive, the different jobs the bees are doing, how they make honey and why they are always as busy as a bee. Return to Korčula Town where you'll have some free time, before we take a short transfer to a rustic tavern for a finger-licking good dinner.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 12 km

Ascent: 360 m

Descent: 360 m



## DAY 8 - \* THE PELJEŠAC PENINSULA

Breakfast today is followed by a private boat transfer across the channel from Korčula Town to Kučište, a small village on the Pelješac Peninsula that will surprise you with its big houses. At the end of the village, we'll start to climb a steep path, and further on, we'll come out onto the main road. From here, we'll continue on a narrow path that gains height gradually through the arid rocky landscape. The path leads to the Franciscan Monastery of Our Lady of the Angels, offering stunning panoramic views across to Korčula Island. If you look downwards, you'll see woods of pine trees and cypresses... In no time, our hike will take us to the Church of Our Lady of Carmen. From here, we'll start the descent towards Orebić, a town of sea captains, at the foot of Mount St. Elias. From Orebić, we'll take a private boat to visit Korčula's Archipelago consisting of nineteen islets. They lie close to the Old Town, to the east, strewn like pearls from a divine bracelet. We'll have lunch in a restaurant on Vrnik, the only inhabited islet. The population stands at around three people. Return to Korčula Town by boat for some traditional sweet pastries tasting. Having satisfied our sweet craving, we'll have some free time, and in the early evening, we'll take a guided walking tour through the medieval streets of the Old Town which are laid out in a fishbone pattern. Marco Polo? Of course, you'll see the birthplace of Marco Polo. If you don't believe that he was born here, it's fine by us. After you hear our story, you'll believe it anyway! Dinner in the Old Town.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 10 km

Ascent: 180 m

Descent: 180 m

## DAY 9 - \* KORČULA ISLAND

Breakfast today prepares us for a 30-minute transfer to Blato, an intriguing inland settlement where the streets have numbers instead of names. First, we'll hike up to Kom Peak, the second highest peak on Korčula Island, then we'll have a homely lunch, and finally we'll explore Blato as the cherry on the cake. At the beginning, the path to Kom Peak climbs fairly steeply upward. After a few zigzags, we'll emerge out of dense vegetation, catching the first sight of the slender Hvar Island. Just, wow! A little bit further on, the path becomes smooth, the green of the forest mellow, and our steps cheerful. This beautiful ascent is in fact short, with a total length of about two kilometres. Before the top, there's a place with rough-and-ready benches where we can rest for a while. And after a total elevation gain of 360 metres, we'll reach a spacious summit, with plenty of comfortable stones to sit on and from which to absorb the amazing vistas over Korčula's undulating forested interior. Let's see if you can name all the nearby islands... After taking a break, we'll hike down a rocky path, exposed to sun and scented with aromatic plants. The path descends steeply, then swings right across the slope, and suddenly enters into a pine forest. From here, we'll follow an amazing path covered with pine needles. The hike ends where Blato village starts. The name of the village in Croatian translates as 'mud' in English. But in Blato,



there's no mud. We'll have a homely lunch in a local tavern. After lunch, we'll meet the Barilo family and visit their rich ethno collection of household implements and accessories. And we won't leave without tasting some local brandies. Later on, we'll be transferred to Smokvica village for tasting of Korčula's iconic white wine - Pošip. Back in 1967, Pošip wine was the first white wine in Croatia with a denomination of origin. This wine tasting will give you undeniable evidence that the Pošip grape is one of the world's best grape varieties. Honestly, it's the cream of the crop! Joyful, we'll return to Korčula Town where the remainder of the day is at your own leisure.

Breakfast and lunch are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 12 km

Ascent: 360 m

Descent: 440 m

#### DAY 10 - \* KORČULA TOWN - MLJET NATIONAL PARK

We'll check out after breakfast and board a 30-minute catamaran ferry to our next island - Mljet, the western third of which is protected as a national park. We'll disembark in Pomena, a seaside hamlet at the western tip of the island. From here, we begin our first hike in the Mljet National Park which includes two inlets which, due to their extremely narrow links to the sea, are regarded, and indeed are called, lakes: the Great Lake and the Small Lake. The objective of today's hike is to reach the Zakamenica viewpoint above the waves breaking on the rugged south coast. The path goes up meandering among dense vegetation. We're in shade, but there is no view at all. Just wait a while! Shortly, a charming view of St. Mary's Islet will open up. After reaching the Zakamenica viewpoint, we'll descend to the shore of the Great Lake where we'll take a boat to St. Mary's Islet which boasts the 12<sup>th</sup> century Benedictine Monastery. During the time of Yugoslavia, the monastery was turned into a hotel. After the visit of the Romanesque Church of St. Mary, we'll have lunch in the restaurant on a serene islet. Yes, we know, you will not want to leave the table. But, there's more - a boat ride to the Small Bridge for another short hike around the Small Lake. Here and there, the narrow shaded path almost touches the lake. You'll be struck by the colour of the water. Emerald green! When have you ever seen a green sea? Exactly. The hike will end in Pomena. Time to check into private accommodation and tuck into a fisherman's dinner.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 10 km

Ascent: 86 m

Descent: 86 m

#### DAY 11 - \* MLJET NATIONAL PARK

After breakfast, we begin our hike in the direction of the village of Govedari, the oldest village within the park. There we'll discover old threshing floors used for threshing wheat and beans. Our hike will continue towards Veliki Gradac Hill. It won't be long before we find ourselves on the bare slope of the hill with an amazing view over the Great Lake. The path is quite steep and uneven, but the view is definitely worth every effort. Further on, we'll proceed towards Montokuc Hill,



meandering on a smooth path through the pine forest. The view from the top encompasses the whole National Park, the Pelješac Peninsula and the islands of Korčula and Lastovo. After taking a break, we'll hike down a rocky path scented with sage plants. The path descends steeply to the Soline Straits where the Great Lake meets the open sea. There are several houses on the Soline Straits, one of which is our restaurant... Suitably replenished, we'll head towards the Great Bridge which was built recently on the site of the old one, and the old one was demolished in 1958 by Tito to enable his yacht to pass into the Great Lake. Then it's a hike along the Lakes back to Pomena where you'll have some free time, followed by our evening meal.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 14 km

Ascent: 400 m

Descent: 400 m

#### DAY 12 - \* MLJET NATIONAL PARK

Breakfast today prepares us for the last day in the Mljet National Park. We'll start to hike from Pomena towards the northern shore of the island. Shortly, a view of surrounding islets will open up. The rocky path leads through Mediterranean undergrowth along the coast. A little further ahead, the path starts to climb, and after a magnificent view over the islet of Maslinovac, we'll continue downhill scrambling over boulders. The final part of this hike will be on a flat, smooth path around an indented bay. We'll arrive in Polače, a seaside hamlet with Roman ruins. After visiting the remains of a fourth-century Roman palace, we'll have lunch in a local tavern. In the afternoon, a short transfer takes us to the village of Babino Polje, in the middle of the island. From here, we'll hike to the Odysseus Cave. Legend has it that after surviving a shipwreck, Odysseus found shelter in the cave which bears today his name. This hike is steep with a lot of jagged rocks. After seeing the cave and the waves breaking on the rugged south coast, we will retrace our steps - uphill. Like the greatest Homeric hero, you will be mystified by this place. Then we'll take a transfer back to Pomena, followed by some free time. Dinner.

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 11 km

Ascent: 250 m

Descent: 250 m

#### DAY 13 - \* MLJET ISLAND - DUBROVNIK

We'll check out after breakfast and board a 80-minute public catamaran ferry to Dubrovnik, followed by a short transfer to the Old Town. Welcome to amazing Dubrovnik! Firstly, we'll take a normal walking tour with a local guide, although nothing can be described as normal in Dubrovnik. You'll walk within the walls of the Old Town as if you're walking in a museum - the whole of the Old Town is a living museum. You'll see all the major sights, and some minor sights as well. You'll learn about the history of Dubrovnik Republic, and particularly about its multifaceted ingenuity. We'll have lunch in a restaurant in the Old Town. Later in the afternoon,



we'll walk on the Dubrovnik Walls as if we're walking on the roof of the world. We guarantee you an experience you won't get anywhere else, and delight which will grip you for days... Then it's a short walk to the hotel for our final check in. The evening in Dubrovnik is at your own leisure.

Breakfast and lunch are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 6 km                      Ascent: 36 m                      Descent: 36 m

#### DAY 14 - \* DUBROVNIK

Breakfast. Later in the morning, our hike will take us 412 metres above Dubrovnik Old Town. We'll reach the top of Mount Srđ which towers above Dubrovnik as a natural rampart. From the top, a stunning view stretches as far as the eye can see. To descend, we'll make a loop, and you'll see the Old Town from several different angles. Our last lunch will be in an amazing restaurant in the Old Town. The remainder of the day is at your own leisure.

Breakfast and lunch are included on this day.

Hiking distance: 6 km                      Ascent: 412 m                      Descent: 412 m

#### DAY 15 - \* DUBROVNIK

After breakfast, sadly, it's time to check out and say our farewells. You will be transferred to Dubrovnik Airport where we will wish you a pleasant flight, and hope to see you again in the not-too-distant future. Cheerio!

Breakfast is included on this day.

#### HIKING PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- transfers from Split Airport and to Dubrovnik Airport, and all transfers in-between as in the itinerary
- accommodation for 10 nights in a private room or apartment
- accommodation for 4 nights in luxury hotels
- daily breakfast
- 13 lunches and 9 dinners in hand-picked restaurants and taverns
- honey tasting
- wine tasting on Brač Island
- wine tasting on Korčula Island
- traditional sweet pastries tasting
- entrance ticket to Diocletian's Palace
- entrance ticket to the Jupiter's Temple
- entrance ticket to the Branislav Dešković fine arts Gallery in Bol
- entrance ticket to the Hermitage Blaca Museum
- entrance ticket to the Hektorović's Renaissance mansion - Tvrđalj





- entrance ticket to the Barilo ethnographic museum
- entrance ticket to the Mljet National Park
- entrance ticket to the Walls of Dubrovnik
- private boat for the Korčula's Archipelago visit
- local English-speaking hiking guide with you throughout the trip
- local English-speaking guide for the sightseeing tour in Split
- local English-speaking guide for the sightseeing tour in Korčula
- local English-speaking guide for the sightseeing tour in Dubrovnik

### **HIKING PACKAGE DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

- flights or other transport from your home base to Split Airport, and from Dubrovnik Airport to your home base
- lunch on day 1 and day 15
- dinner on day 3, day 5, day 9, day 13, day 14 and day 15
- drinks with the included meals
- personal expenses
- travel insurance

### **HIKING PACKING LIST**

Here you will find a packing list with the basic clothing and equipment for your hiking holiday:

- daypack to carry what you need for the day
- waterproof daypack liner
- hiking shoes, ideally waterproof - please ensure that you have worn them a few times before the start of your holiday to avoid blisters
- waterproof jacket with a hood
- warm fleece jacket
- quick dry hiking trousers
- quick dry hiking shorts
- T-shirts
- hiking socks
- two water bottles of 1l or one water bottle of 2l
- sunglasses, sun cream and a sun hat
- swimsuit and towel
- sandals or flip-flops
- personal first-aid kit
- insect repellent
- headlamp or handheld torch
- camera
- binoculars - if you so wish
- rubbish bag to leave no trace
- toilet paper

Please note that hiking sticks are available at no extra cost.



Please note that there will be times when you will have to carry your own luggage short distances, for example, on and off ferries and catamarans, and while checking into your accommodation.

We reserve the right to rearrange or alter itineraries and departure times, or to cancel any of the hikes outlined in the itinerary should we deem it necessary in the interests of protecting your safety.

We reserve the right to refuse participation to hikers who are dressed inappropriately or with inappropriate footwear since this will put the well-being and safety of the group at risk.

Organiser: Travel Matters - putovanja na šestu, Cvjetno naselje 44, 20260 Korčula, Croatia

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