



# Croatia

## Crossroads of the Adriatic with ETV Endowment of South Carolina

Stari Most bridge, Mostar

**The ETV Endowment invites you on a transformative journey through the geographic and cultural heart of the Mediterranean, where the elegance of Central Europe meets the spirited Balkans.** Once the seat of ancient Illyria, this region traces the historical fault lines of empires. From Venetian bell towers to Habsburg palaces, witness three distinct worlds converging along one of the most stunning coastlines on earth.

Begin your adventure in Dubrovnik, the “Pearl of the Adriatic,” where ancient walls embrace a vibrant seafaring history. Cross into Montenegro to explore the enchanting Bay of Kotor, a medieval treasure set against dramatic peaks. Then, unwind on Korčula, a storybook island famed for its picturesque lanes and ties to Marco Polo.

Head north to Mostar, where the iconic Stari Most (old bridge) unites East and West. Discover Split’s lively atmosphere within Diocletian’s Palace, then sail to Hvar, the sunniest Adriatic island, known for its lavender fields and Venetian charm.

Experience the natural beauty of Plitvice Lakes National Park, where turquoise waters and cascades offer a serene contrast to the historic coast.

Conclude in Opatija, the elegant “Old Dame” of the Adriatic. Stroll seaside promenades and enjoy the timeless grace of this Austrian Riviera before your journey’s grand Alpine finale.

Join us as we traverse these three culturally distinct regions with style: deluxe 5-star hotels, exquisite fine dining along with the authentic soul of local crafts and agritourism. Beyond the breathtaking scenery, you will enjoy expertly guided, private experiences and exclusive access designed specifically for our group. Best of all, you and your fellow travelers will be guided by one of the Endowment’s favorite people, the inestimable Alasdair Clayre of The Grand Tour. You won’t want to miss this wonderful trip!



Croatian olive tree

**October 11\*–22, 2026**

\*Tour begins October 12 in Dubrovnik



### TOUR HIGHLIGHTS



**LIMITED TO  
25 PARTICIPANTS**

Kvarner Bay, Opatija

- \$1,200 tax-deductible contribution to the ETV Endowment
- Deluxe 5-star accommodations in all three cities
- Private tours of principal sites in all three cities with expert guides, including walks in the ancient town centers
- Fine dining in some of the region’s best restaurants
- Exclusive boat excursion and oyster tasting at a private farm, refined wine tastings on the Pelješac Peninsula and intimate olive oil and agritourism experiences reserved solely for our group
- Day excursions to the Bay of Kotor in Montenegro, Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ljubljana in Slovenia
- Truffle hunting in Istria, followed by locally-prepared ‘truffle’ lunch
- Island visits by ferry including to the “Our Lady of the Rocks” islet, Korčula and Hvar
- Private motorcoach transportation throughout



# Daily Itinerary

Walls of Dubrovnik

## The Southern Bastions: Dubrovnik, Montenegro & Korčula

### Monday, October 12 *Dubrovnik*

#### Dobrodošli!

Arrival at Dubrovnik Ruđer Bošković Airport (DBV). Transfer by private motorcoach to Dubrovnik and check in to the 5-Star Excelsior Hotel perched above the Adriatic. Our introduction to the Baltics begins with an expertly curated walking tour through the limestone streets of Dubrovnik's Old City, the "Pearl of the Adriatic," where 16th-century walls guard a maritime republic that once rivaled Venice. We'll enjoy a **Welcome Reception** followed by an exclusive **Welcome Dinner** overlooking the city and the Adriatic.



left: Oyster fisherman, Ston  
below: Our Lady of the Rocks

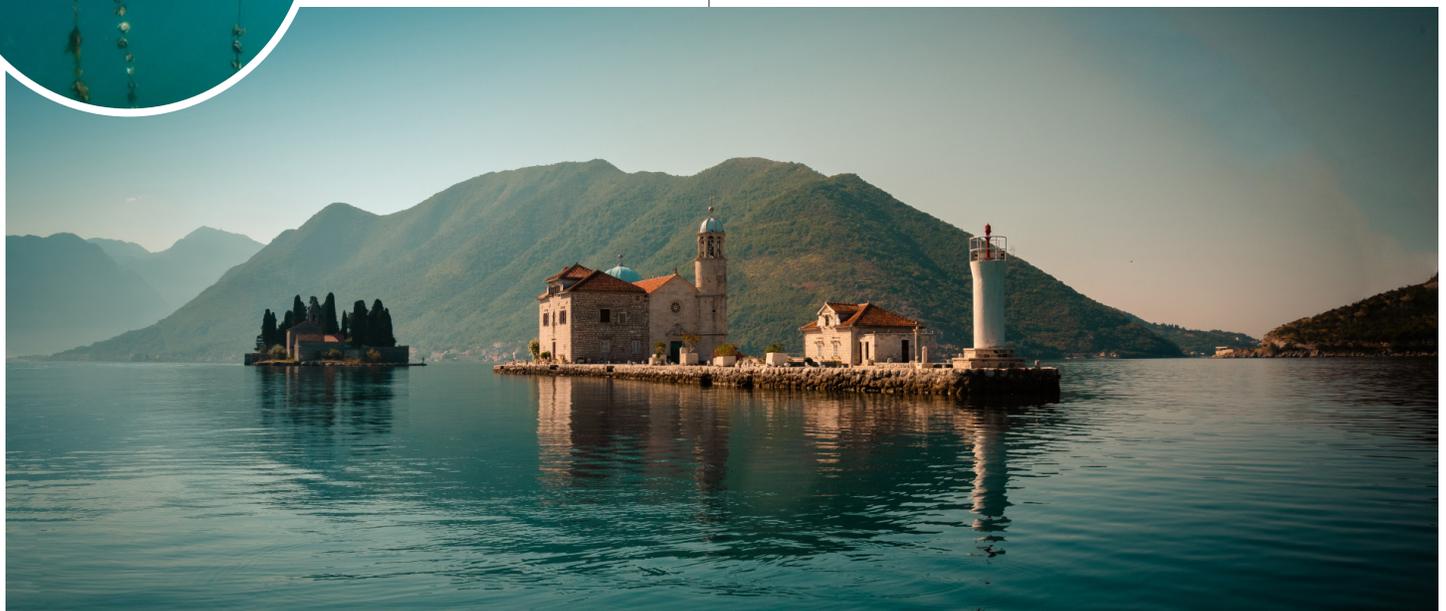
### Tuesday, October 13 *Dubrovnik*

The odyssey continues today as we travel to Montenegro and the Bay of Kotor (*Boka*), unique for its dramatic, fjord-like landscape—the only one of its kind in the Mediterranean—and its exceptionally well-preserved medieval heritage. A boat whisks us to "Our Lady of the Rocks," a picturesque, man-made islet in the Bay of Kotor, topped by a 17th-century blue-domed church that was built by local sailors who, according to legend, deposited a rock for every successful voyage. Afterward, we'll enjoy **lunch** in the countryside, prepared especially for the group, before heading back to Dubrovnik.

### Wednesday, October 14 *Dubrovnik*

Today's adventure takes us to the emerald island of Korčula, a "mini-fortress" of red-tiled roofs famously rumored to be the birthplace of Marco Polo. Along the way we'll enjoy an exclusive oyster tasting fresh from the sea with a local fisherman. Enjoy some free time in Korčula before boarding the ferry back to the coast for a visit to the award-winning winery, *Vina Grgić*, sister of Grgich Hills Estate in Napa, to sample its fine wines alongside a picnic **lunch** on the Peljesac Peninsula.

Korčula



## Cultural Confluence: Mostar, Split & Hvar

### Thursday, October 15 *Split*

We begin our journey north as we cross the border into Bosnia and Herzegovina and enter Mostar, a city defined by the Stari Most (old bridge), a 16th-century Ottoman masterpiece that arches gracefully over the emerald Neretva River, connecting the city's Christian and Muslim quarters. A UNESCO World Heritage site and a mesmerizing tapestry of Ottoman architecture, narrow cobblestone bazaars and traditional stone houses echo Mostar's complex role as a bridge between East and West.

**Lunch** at a fine restaurant overlooking the Stari Most. We'll arrive in Split and check in to the 5-star Palazzo President in a prime location in the heart of the city.

### Friday, October 16 *Split*

Step back 1,700 years into the living heart of the Roman Empire with a private tour through Diocletian's Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage site that remains the vibrant center of modern-day Split. Our walk traces the historical layers of a palace that has never stopped being a home, capturing the enduring "crossroads" of Adriatic life. We'll enjoy a Mediterranean **lunch** today outside of the city at an excellent "oleo-tourism" farm before visiting tiny Trogir, another designated UNESCO World Heritage site, often called a city museum with its Cathedral of St. Lawrence, a Romanesque-Gothic masterpiece featuring the intricately carved Radovan's Portal from 1240, and Kamerlengo Fortress, the 15th-century Venetian stronghold that still guards the sun-drenched waterfront promenade.

### Saturday, October 17 *Split*

Today we board a local ferry and travel to the island of Hvar, the "sunniest spot in the Adriatic" and a beautiful mix of Venetian architecture and Mediterranean nature. Famous for its lavender-scented hills and olive groves, the island features the Stari Grad Plain—a UNESCO World Heritage site where the original Greek farming layout has remained unchanged for more than 2,400 years. **Lunch** is prepared at a local working farm that cultivates vines, olives, lavender and many other vegetables in ancient traditions.

top: Diocletian's Palace  
below: Hvar farm



Old town Split

## Northern Elegance: Plitvice & Opatija

### Sunday, October 18 *Opatija*

Turning inland we depart Split and continue our journey on to Opatija via Plitvice Lakes National Park, a natural wonderland of 16 turquoise lakes and waterfalls. Enjoy **lunch** at a restaurant honoring the Peka tradition or cooking "under the bell," which dates back thousands of years in Dalmatia. After lunch we continue along the northern coast to Opatija, the "Austrian Riviera." Defined by its Belle Époque villas and the scenic Lungomare promenade, it is here that aristocratic sophistication meets the sea. Check in to the 5-Star Hotel Milenij, a magnificent Habsburg-era villa perched above the sparkling Adriatic and surrounded by parks.

### Monday, October 19 *Opatija*

We travel today to visit the romantic port of Rovinj, with its pastel-colored Venetian facades, narrow, winding cobblestone streets and artistic spirit that has flourished for centuries. Once an island, this "gem of the Adriatic" is crowned by the Baroque Church of St. Euphemia with its copper spire overlooking the harbor filled with traditional fishing boats. After **lunch** with a modern twist on traditional Istrian cuisine, we'll spend the afternoon in Pula—a living museum of Roman antiquity, dominated by the Pula Arena, one of the world's six largest and best-preserved Roman amphitheatres. Pula, a city layered with history, is considered the gateway to Istria, where Roman ruins stand alongside bustling shipyards and charming plazas, perfectly capturing the region's transition from an imperial past to a spirited modern identity.



Pula Arena



Ljubljana

## Tuesday, October 20 *Opatija*

Today, we begin in tiny Motovun, a medieval gem, in the heart of inland Istria. Encircled by robust 13th-century Venetian walls, this “town in the hills” is famous for its narrow cobblestone streets, Gothic architecture and breathtaking 360-degree views of the surrounding vineyards and forests. Motovun offers a mystical, old-world charm that feels like a fairytale come to life and is also renowned as the truffle capital of the region. Here, we’ll experience the authentic thrill of truffle hunting with expert guides and trained dogs in the legendary Motovun Forest. After our adventure, we’ll enjoy a **lunch** made of delicious truffle-inspired delicacies

## Wednesday, October 21

The last ascent on our journey leads us into one of Europe’s most sustainable and charming capitals, where Alpine freshness meets Mediterranean warmth in Ljubljana, Slovenia. Often described as a “living drawing room,” the city’s heart is a car-free sanctuary of Baroque architecture and lively riverside cafés. We’ll ascend by funicular to Ljubljana Castle for panoramic views of the Julian Alps, a fitting finale that overlooks the historical “crossroads” where our odyssey began.

We end our travels in Zagreb, Croatia’s vibrant capital, a city of two distinct halves—the medieval Upper Town (Gornji Grad) and the grand, 19th-century Lower Town (Donji Grad). Check in to the 5-Star Esplanade Zagreb Hotel in the Donji Grad, opened in 1925 as a stopover for the Orient Express. Our gala **Farewell Dinner** tonight is at the hotel where we’ll toast to our time together in the crossroads of the Adriatic. Živjeli!



Mostar

## Thursday, October 22

### Do ponovnog susreta, Hrvatska!

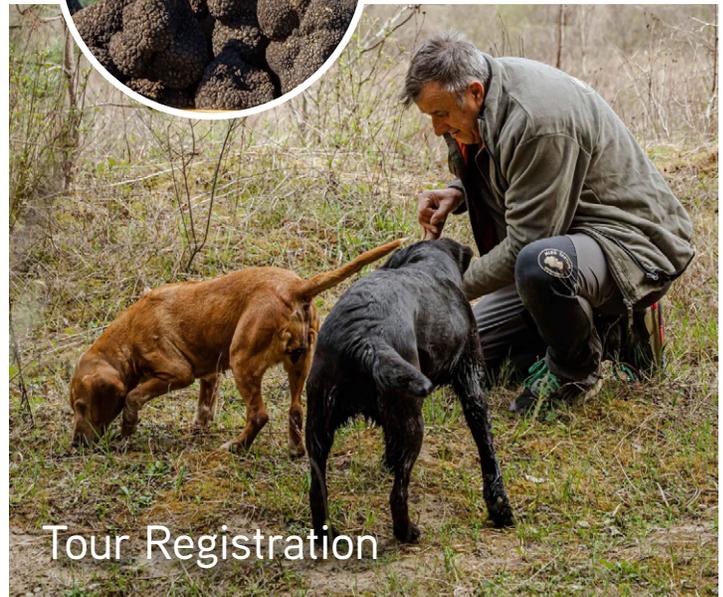
Tour ends after breakfast. Private coach transfer to Zagreb Franjo Tuđman Airport (ZAG) for suggested early morning flights back to the US, returning the same day.

Itinerary subject to change.

Meals in **bold** included in the price of the tour.



Istrian truffles



## Tour Registration

Truffle hunting in Motovun

**Tour cost: \$8,449 per person, ground only, based on double occupancy.** \$1,200 tax-deductible contribution to the ETV Endowment is included in the price of the tour.

**Single supplement: \$1,085**

**Deposit: \$1,200 per person, due upon registration,** first come, first served. Non-refundable.

**Balance deadline: Friday, August 14, 2026**

After that date, call for availability. Tour limited to 25 participants.

**To reserve your place,** complete your registration at [etvendowment.org/croatia](http://etvendowment.org/croatia) or email your registration form with check or credit card information to Amy Raffo at [araffo@etvendowment.org](mailto:araffo@etvendowment.org).

**Please note:** There is moderate to active walking on the tour, sometimes over varied, uneven or slippery terrain and up and down ancient steps. You should feel comfortable participating in full days of activities.

**Questions?** Contact Amy Raffo at ETV Endowment at 864-591-0046 or [araffo@etvendowment.org](mailto:araffo@etvendowment.org).

*Crossroads of the Adriatic* tour is an exclusive presentation by ETV Endowment of South Carolina and is organized by The Grand Tour Travel Company, Peterborough, New Hampshire.