

# Croatia

Whether you call it the 'new Greece', the 'new Riviera' or the 'new Tuscany', Croatia has clearly become the latest European 'gotta go' destination for the glitterati. Yachts glide through its island archipelago, a procession of famous faces files through ancient streets and no Mediterranean cruise would be complete without a stop on its shores.

Yet, for all the hype, Croatia's pleasures are more timeless than trendy. Crystalline water laps gently at a 1778km-long coast and no fewer than 1185 islands. In pastel fishing ports children play on cobblestoned streets and family farmers sell their produce in the town square. A millennium of occupiers, from Romans and Venetians to Austrians, Hungarians and Italians, has left Croatia with a unique and slightly schizoid cultural identity. The interior has a strong central-European flavour, evident in the baroque architecture of Zagreb, while the coast could be an extension of Italy. The unifying factor is Croatia's Slavic soul, especially apparent during festivals and celebrations when centuries-old songs, dances and costumes animate towns and villages around the country.

Croatians retain a strong attachment to the land and traditions that nourished the dream of independence for so long. A fierce pride in their natural and cultural heritage has given them strength to hold out against the tide of developers and speculators ready to pave over the coast. Whether the country's natural beauty and traditional lifestyle can endure in the face of overwhelming commercial pressure is an open question. But so far the signs are promising.

CROATIA

## FAST FACTS

- **Area** 56,538 sq km
- **Capital** Zagreb
- **Currency** kuna (KN); A\$1=5KN; €1=8.35KN; ¥100=6KN; NZ\$1=4.12KN; UK£1=12.45KN; US\$1=6.63KN
- **Famous for** neckties, war, Tito
- **Official Language** Croatian
- **Phrases** *bog* (hello), *dovidenja* (goodbye), *hvala* (thanks), *pardon* (sorry)
- **Population** 4.5 million
- **Telephone Codes** country code ☎ 385; international access code ☎ 00





## HIGHLIGHTS

- Check out the heavy stone walls surrounding luminous marble streets and finely ornamented buildings in the Old Town of **Dubrovnik** (p163).
- Wander around the turquoise lakes and rushing waterfalls of **Plitvice Lakes National Park** (p149).
- Discover the Venetian architecture, welcoming harbourside promenade and vibrant nightlife of **Hvar** (p156).
- Witness the colour and spectacle of a *moreška* sword dance in **Korčula** (p160).
- Explore the lakes, coves and island monastery of **Mljet** (p160).

## ITINERARIES

- **One week** Spend a day exploring the museums and cafés of Zagreb, then head down to Split. Wander through Diocletian's Palace, make a trip to Trogir and then take ferries to Hvar and Korčula. End with three days in Dubrovnik, taking a day trip to Mljet.
- **Two weeks** Devote two days to Zagreb and three days to Pula, with day trips to Rovinj and Poreč. Head south to Zadar for a night and then go on to Split for a two-night stay. Take ferries to Hvar and Korčula before ending with three days in Dubrovnik and a day trip to Mljet.

## CLIMATE & WHEN TO GO

The climate varies from Mediterranean along the Adriatic coast – with hot, dry summers and mild, rainy winters – to the continental inland, with cold winters and warm summers. You can swim in the sea from mid-June until late September. Coastal temperatures are slightly warmer south of Split. The peak tourist season runs from mid-July to the end of August. Prices are highest and accommodation scarcest during this period. See the Climate Charts on p863 for more.

The best time to be in Croatia is June. The weather is beautiful, the boats and excursions are running often and it's not yet too crowded. The end of May and the beginning of September are also good, especially if you're interested in hiking.

## HISTORY

### Ancient History

The ancient Illyrians laid claim to what is now Croatia in about 1000 BC as they migrated into

### HOW MUCH?

- **Short taxi ride** 50KN
- **Litre of milk** 7KN
- **Loaf of bread** 3.50KN
- **Bottle of house white** 20KN
- **Newspaper** 5KN

### LONELY PLANET INDEX

- **Litre of petrol** 8KN
- **Litre of bottled water** 6KN
- **33cL of Karlovačko Beer** 10KN
- **Souvenir T-shirt** 75KN
- **Street snack (slice of burek)** 10KN

the region. Although generally warlike, they were no match for the Romans who started their conquest in 229 BC. Later, Emperor Augustus extended the conquest and divided up the region into the provinces of Illyricum (Dalmatia and Bosnia) and Pannonia (Croatia). The split of the Roman empire in AD 395 caused a schism in the region that has echoed for centuries: Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina stayed with the Western Roman Empire, while present Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia went to the Eastern Roman Empire, later known as the Byzantine Empire.

Around 625, Slavic tribes migrated from present-day Poland. The Serbian tribe settled in the region that is now southwestern Serbia. The Croatian tribe moved into what is now Croatia and occupied two former Roman provinces: Dalmatian Croatia along the Adriatic, and Pannonian Croatia to the north.

### Croatian Kingdom

By the early part of the 9th century Dalmatia and northern Croatia remained politically divided even though both settlements had accepted Christianity. The Frankish north and the Byzantine-influenced south were not united until 925 when the Dalmatian duke Tomislav established a single kingdom that prospered for nearly 200 years. That first Croatian kingdom established a sense of national identity that didn't come to fruition until 1990.

### Division

The spirit of unity only lasted until late in the 11th century when squabbling local

leaders weakened the central authority and split the kingdom. From then on, the northern and coastal parts of Croatia followed separate paths. The northern Croats united with Hungary in 1102 for protection against the Orthodox Byzantine Empire. Around the same time, the Adriatic coast turned to the Venetians even though Hungary continued to struggle for control of the region. Some Dalmatian cities changed hands repeatedly until Venice imposed its rule on the Adriatic coast in the early 15th century and occupied it for nearly four centuries. Only the Republic of Ragusa (Dubrovnik) maintained its independence.

In the 14th century the Turks began pushing into the Balkans. The Serbs fell in 1389 and the Hungarians in 1526. With the defeat of the Hungarian protectors, northern Croatia turned to the Habsburgs of Austria for protection. Their long marriage with Austria began in 1527 and lasted until 1918. Austria also felt threatened by the Turks. To form a buffer against them the Austrians invited Serbs to settle the Vojna Krajina (Military Frontier) north of Zadar in the 16th century. The Serbs in the borderlands had an autonomous administration under Austrian control; these areas were reincorporated into Croatia in 1881 and then attempted to secede in 1991.

### Unity

After Napoleonic France shattered Venice in 1797, the French occupied southern Croatia, abolishing the Republic of Ragusa in 1808. Napoleon merged Dalmatia, Istria and Slovenia into the 'Illyrian Provinces', but following his defeat at Waterloo in 1815, Austria-Hungary moved in to pick up the pieces along the coast.

A revival of Croatian cultural and political life began in 1835, with leading intellectuals advancing the idea of south-Slavic unity. With the defeat of the Austro-Hungarian empire in WWI, the unity movement gained force across the region. Croatia became part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (called Yugoslavia after 1929), with a centralised government in Belgrade. But northern Dalmatia remained part of Italy. Italy had been promised control of the Adriatic coast as an incentive to join the war against Austria-Hungary in 1915 and it held much of northern Dalmatia from 1918 to 1943.

## War

After the German invasion of Yugoslavia in March 1941, a puppet government dominated by the fascist Ustaša movement was set up in Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina under Ante Pavelić (who fled to Argentina after WWII). At first the Ustaša tried to expel all Serbs from Croatia to Serbia. But when the Germans stopped this because of the problems it was causing, the Ustaša launched an extermination campaign that rivalled the Nazis in its brutality. Although there is much controversy over the number of victims, estimates indicate that from 60,000 to 600,000 ethnic Serbs, Jews and Roma were murdered.

Not all Croats supported these policies, however. Josip Broz, known as Maršal Tito, was himself of Croat-Slovene parentage and tens of thousands of Croats fought bravely with his partisans. Massacres of Croats conducted by Serbian Četniks in southern Croatia and Bosnia forced almost all antifascist Croats into the communist ranks, where they joined the numerous Serbs trying to defend themselves from the Ustaša. In all, about a million people died violently in a war that was fought mostly in Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina.

## The Tito Years

After the war, Maršal Tito became the prime minister of the new Yugoslav Federation and divided it into five republics: Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, and Macedonia. Even with a Stalin-style system of state planning, Croatia and Slovenia moved far ahead of the other republics economically, leading to demands by reformers, intellectuals and students for greater autonomy. The 'Croatian Spring' of 1971 caused a backlash and purge of the reformers, who were jailed or expelled from the Communist Party.

Tito's habit of borrowing from abroad to flood the country with cheap consumer goods produced an economic crisis after his death in 1980. The sinking economy provoked greater tension among Yugoslavia's ethnic groups, which came to a head when Serbian politician Slobodan Milošević whipped Serbs into a nationalistic frenzy over the aspirations of the Albanian majority in the province of Kosovo.

## Civil War

Fearing a renewal of Serbian hegemony, many Croats felt the time had come to end more

than four decades of communist rule and attain complete autonomy into the bargain. In the free elections of April 1990 Franjo Tudjman's Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica (HDZ; Croatian Democratic Union) easily defeated the old Communist Party. On 22 December 1990 a new Croatian constitution was promulgated, changing the status of Serbs in Croatia to a national minority.

The constitution's failure to guarantee minority rights, and mass dismissals of Serbs from the public service, led the 600,000-strong ethnic Serb community to demand autonomy. When Croatia declared independence from Yugoslavia on 25 June 1991, the Serbian enclave of Krajina proclaimed its independence from Croatia.

Heavy fighting broke out in Krajina (the area around Knin, north of Split), Baranja (the area north of the Drava River opposite Osijek) and Slavonia (the region west of the Danube). The 180,000-member, 2000-tank Yugoslav People's Army, dominated by Serbian communists, began to intervene on its own authority in support of Serbian irregulars, under the pretext of halting ethnic violence.

In the three months following 25 June, a quarter of Croatia fell to Serbian militias and the federal army. In September the Croatian government ordered a blockade of 32 federal military installations in the republic, gaining much-needed military equipment. In response, the Yugoslav navy blockaded the Adriatic coast and laid siege to the strategic town of Vukovar on the Danube.

In early October 1991 the federal army and Montenegrin militia moved against Dubrovnik to protest against the ongoing blockade of their garrisons in Croatia. On 7 October rockets from Yugoslav air force jets hit the presidential palace in Zagreb in an unsuccessful assassination attempt on President Tudjman. Heroic Vukovar finally fell on 19 November when the Yugoslav army ended a bloody three-month siege by concentrating 600 tanks and 30,000 soldiers there. During the six months of fighting in Croatia 10,000 people died, hundreds of thousands fled and tens of thousands of homes were deliberately destroyed.

## Independence

After the Croatian parliament amended its constitution to protect minority and human rights, the European Community (EC), suc-

cumbing to strong pressure from Germany, recognised Croatia in January 1992. This was followed three months later by US recognition and in May 1992 Croatia was admitted to the UN. Yet the country remained in turmoil.

In January 1993 the Croatian army suddenly launched an offensive in southern Krajina, pushing the Serbs back as much as 24km in some areas and recapturing strategic points. The Krajina Serbs vowed never to accept rule from Zagreb; in June 1993 they voted overwhelmingly to join the Bosnian Serbs (and eventually Greater Serbia).

The self-proclaimed 'Republic of Serbian Krajina' held elections in December 1993, which no international body recognised as legitimate or fair. Continued 'ethnic cleansing' left only about 900 Croats in Krajina out of an original population of 44,000.

On 1 May 1995 the Croatian army and police entered and occupied western Slavonia, east of Zagreb, causing some 15,000 Serbs to flee the region. At dawn on 4 August 1995 the military launched a massive assault on the rebel Serb capital of Knin. Outnumbered by two to one, the Serb army fled to northern Bosnia, along with about 150,000 civilians whose roots in the Krajina stretched back centuries. The military operation lasted just days, but was followed by months of terror. Widespread looting and burning of Serb villages, as well as attacks on the few remaining elderly Serbs, seemed designed to ensure the permanence of this massive population shift. The actions of the Croatian army in this offensive are the subject of war crimes prosecutions in The Hague.

The Dayton Agreement, signed in Paris in December 1995, recognised Croatia's traditional borders and provided for the return of eastern Slavonia, a transition that was finally completed in January 1998.

Croatia's first president, Franjo Tudjman, died in 1999 after presiding over a regime notable for corruption, cronyism and suppression of dissent. The centre-left coalition that took power in 2000 swiftly made known their desire to enter the European mainstream but was left with serious economic problems. Although the road to privatisation has been bumpy and unemployment remains stubbornly high, the massive influx of tourists has provided an economic lifeline. The country's infrastructure has been much improved. Croatians are especially proud of the new highway linking Zagreb and Split that will

eventually extend to Dubrovnik. Croatia is currently involved in negotiations preceding eventual membership in the EU and may join before the end of this decade. A major sticking point remains the return of Serbs who fled during the war. In many cases Croats have occupied their homes, and legal mechanisms to compensate returning refugees have proven cumbersome. Although membership in the EU was highly sought in the late 1990s, public opinion on the subject has become much more nuanced. Most Croatians can see the economic benefits of joining the EU, but there is increasing concern that Croatia's unique culture and way of life will become homogenised to meet EU standards.

## PEOPLE

Croatia has a population of roughly 4.5 million people. Before the war Croatia had a population of nearly five million, of which 78% were Croats and 12% were Serbs. Bosnians, Hungarians, Italians, Czechs, Roma and Albanians made up the remaining 10%. Today Croats constitute 89% of the population, as there was a large influx of Croats from other parts of the former Yugoslavia after the war. Now, slightly less than 5% of the population is Serb, followed by 0.5% Bosnians and about 0.4% each of Hungarians and Italians. Small communities of Czechs, Roma and Albanians complete the mosaic. Most Serbs live in eastern Croatia (Slavonia) where ethnic tensions between the Serbs and Croats run highest. The largest cities in Croatia are Zagreb (780,000), Split (188,700), Rijeka (144,000), Osijek (114,600) and Zadar (72,700).

Croats are united by a common religion, Catholicism, and a common sense of themselves as European. If you ask a Croat what distinguishes Croatian culture from Bosnian or Serbian culture, the answer is likely to be a variant of 'We are Western and they are Eastern'. Even Croats who bear no particular ill will towards other ethnicities will nonetheless note that their former compatriots in Bosnia and Hercegovina, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro eat different food, listen to different music, have different customs and, of course, go to different churches.

Although the shelling of Dubrovnik and the atrocities committed in eastern Slavonia and the Krajina have left a bitter taste in those regions, many Croatians are increasingly open to questioning the conduct of the 'Home-

land War'. Self-examining books and articles are a staple of the country's intellectual life, but the extradition to The Hague of accused war criminal Ante Gotovina has been highly unpopular.

## RELIGION

Croats are overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, while virtually all Serbs belong to the Eastern Orthodox Church. In addition to doctrinal differences, Orthodox Christians venerate icons, allow priests to marry and do not accept the authority of the Roman Catholic pope. Long suppressed under communism, Catholicism is undergoing a strong resurgence in Croatia and churches have good attendance on Sundays. The Pope has visited Croatia several times and religious holidays are scrupulously observed. Muslims make up 1.2% of the population and Protestants 0.4%, with a tiny Jewish population in Zagreb.

## ARTS

The exhibition pavilion (p130) in Zagreb is a good place to keep up with the latest developments in Croatian art.

## Literature

Croatia's towering literary figure is 20th-century novelist and playwright Miroslav Krleža, who depicted the concerns of a changing Yugoslavia in novels such as *The Return of Philip Latinovicz* (1932). Long ignored by international publishing companies, contemporary Croatian authors are finally seeing their works translated into English. Dubravka Ugresic has written two noteworthy books, *The Ministry of Pain* and *The Museum of Unconditional Surrender*, dealing with the loss experienced by Croats exiled by the 'Homeland War'. *Croatian Nights* is a lively anthology that mixes narratives by British and Croatian writers to offer a freewheeling look at Croatian life.

## Visual Arts

Vlaho Bukovac (1855–1922) was the most notable Croatian painter in the late-19th century. Important early-20th-century painters include Miroslav Kraljević (1885–1913) and Josip Račić (1885–1908). Post-WWII artists experimented with abstract expressionism but this period is best remembered for the naive art that was typified by Ivan Generalić (1914–92). Recent trends have included minimalism,

conceptual art and pop art. Contemporary artists that are attracting notice include the multimedia works of Andreja Kulunčić and the installations of Sandra Sterle.

### Sculpture

The work of sculptor Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962) is seen in town squares throughout Croatia. Besides creating public monuments, Meštrović designed imposing buildings such as the circular Croatian History Museum (p130) in Zagreb. Both his sculptures and architecture display the powerful classical restraint he learnt from Auguste Rodin. Meštrović's studio in Zagreb (p130) and his retirement home at Split (p152) have been made into galleries of his work.

### Music & Dance

Croatian folk music has many influences. Roma-style violinists or players of the *tambura*, a three- or five-string mandolin popular throughout the country, accompany the *kolo*, a lively Slavic round dance where men and women alternate in the circle. The measured guitar-playing and rhythmic accordions of Dalmatia have a gentle Italian air.

A recommended recording available locally on CD is *Narodne Pjesme i Plesovi Sjeverne Hrvatske* (Northern Croatian Folk Songs and Dances) by the Croatian folkloric ensemble Lado. The 22 tracks on this album represent nine regions, with everything from haunting Balkan voices reminiscent of Bulgaria to lively Mediterranean dance rhythms. Traditional Croatian music has influenced other musicians, most notable the Croatian-American jazz singer Helen Merrill who recorded Croatian melodies on her album, *Jelena Ana Milcetic a.k.a. Helen Merrill*.

On the radio, you're likely to hear a lot of 'turbofolk': charged-up folk music that is widely popular throughout former Yugoslavia. Split-born Severina Vuckovic enjoys tremendous popularity along with Doris Dragović and Mirakul Gibonni.

### ENVIRONMENT The Land

Croatia is half the size of present-day Serbia and Montenegro in area and population. The republic swings around like a boomerang from the Pannonian plains of Slavonia between the Sava, Drava and Danube Rivers, across hilly central Croatia to the Istrian

Peninsula, then south through Dalmatia along the rugged Adriatic coast.

The narrow Croatian coastal belt at the foot of the Dinaric Alps is only about 600km long as the crow flies, but it's so indented that the actual length is 1778km. If the 4012km of coastline around the offshore islands is added to the total, the length becomes 5790km. Most of the 'beaches' along this jagged coast consist of slabs of rock sprinkled with naturists. Don't come expecting to find sand, but the waters are sparkling clean, even around large towns.

Croatia's offshore islands are every bit as beautiful as those off the coast of Greece. There are 1185 islands and islets along the tectonically submerged Adriatic coastline, 66 of which are inhabited. The largest are Cres, Krk, Lošinj, Pag and Rab in the north; Dugi Otok in the middle; and Brač, Hvar, Korčula, Mljet and Vis in the south. Most are barren and elongated from northwest to southeast, with high mountains that drop right into the sea.

### National Parks

When the Yugoslav Federation collapsed, eight of its finest national parks ended up in Croatia, occupying nearly 10% of the country. Brijuni near Pula is the most carefully cultivated park, with well-preserved Mediterranean holm-oak forests. The mountainous Risnjak National Park near Delnice, east of Rijeka, is named after one of its inhabitants: the *ris* (lynx).

Dense forests of beech and black pine in the Paklenica National Park near Zadar are home to a number of endemic insects, reptiles and birds. The abundant plant and animal life (including bears, wolves and deer) in the Plitvice Lakes National Park between Zagreb and Zadar has warranted its inclusion on Unesco's list of World Natural Heritage Sites. Both Plitvice Lakes and Krka National Parks (near Šibenik) feature a dramatic series of cascades and incredible turquoise lakes.

The 101 stark and rocky islands of the Kornati Archipelago and National Park make it the largest in the Mediterranean. The island of Mljet near Korčula also contains a forested national park, and the North Velebit National Park includes Croatia's longest mountain range.

### Environmental Issues

The lack of heavy industry in Croatia has left the country largely free of industrial

pollution, but its forests are under threat from acid rain from neighbouring countries. The dry summers and brisk *maestral* winds pose substantial fire hazards along the coast. The sea along the Adriatic coast is among the world's cleanest, especially throughout Istria and the southern Adriatic. Waste disposal is a pressing problem in Croatia, with insufficient and poorly regulated disposal sites.

### FOOD & DRINK

Croatian cuisine is one of the high points of a visit. Don't expect fancy sauces or elaborate presentation, although you can find them if you wish. It's the quality of the ingredients that gives each dish a special flavour boost. Most of Croatia's produce is home-grown and the fish is likely to come from local waters.

As you travel throughout the country, you'll notice sharp differences in local taste. Coastal cuisine reflects its Italian heritage with an emphasis on risotto, pasta and fish, usually grilled with a garlic sauce. Up north, the continental climate has induced a reliance on hearty meat and bean dishes.

Whatever your budget it's hard to get a truly bad meal anywhere in Croatia. The price and quality of meals vary little as there is an upper limit to what the local crowd can afford to pay, and a bottom line to what they find acceptable. Croatians have little money for dining out, but when they do they expect the food to be worth it, which it usually is.

### Where to Eat & Drink

A *restauracija* or *restoran* (restaurant) is at the top of the food chain, generally presenting a more formal dining experience and an elaborate wine list. A *gostionica* or *konoba* is usually a simple, family-run establishment. The produce may even come from the family garden. A *pinjica* is more like a pub, with a wide choice of beer. Sometimes there's a hot dish or sandwiches available. A *kavana* is a café. The only food you're able to order in a *kavana* is cake and ice cream, but you can nurse your coffee for hours. A *slastičarna* serves ice cream, cakes, strudels and sometimes coffee but you usually have to gobble your food standing up, or take it away. Breakfast is usually consumed at home in Croatia (if it's consumed at all). In this chapter, hotel prices include breakfast, unless stated otherwise.

### Staples & Specialities

Croatian meals often start with a dish of locally smoked ham or Pag cheese with olives. A Zagreb speciality is *štrukli* (boiled cheesecake), served either plain as a starter or sugared as a dessert. In the north you also might begin with a hearty *Zagorska juha od krumpira* (potato soup Zagorje-style) or *manistra od bobica* (beans and fresh maize soup), while coastal folk follow the Italian habit of beginning with a serving of spaghetti or risotto. *Risotto neri* (black risotto) made from squid in its own ink is a particular delicacy.

For a main meal, the Adriatic coast excels in seafood, including scampi (look for *scampi bouzzara*), *prstaci* (shellfish), *lignje* (calamari) and Dalmatian *brodet* (fish stew served with polenta). Istria is known for its *tartufe* (truffles), which frequently appear in risotto or pasta dishes or as a flavouring for meat. In Zagreb and in the north you'll find exquisite spit-roasted goose, duck and lamb. Turkey with *mlinci* (baked noodles) is another Zagrebian wonder.

For fast food you can usually snack on *čevapčići* (spicy beef or pork meatballs), *ražnjići* (shish kebab), *burek* (a greasy layered pie made with meat) or *sira* (cheese), which is cut on a huge metal tray.

It's customary to have a small glass of brandy before a meal and to accompany the food with one of Croatia's fine wines – there are about 700 to choose from! Croatians often mix their wine with water, calling it *bevanda*. Croatia is also famous for its *šljivovica* (plum brandies), *travarica* (herbal brandies), *vinjak* (cognacs) and liqueurs, such as maraschino (a cherry liqueur made in Zadar) or herbal *pelinkovac*. Italian-style espresso is popular in Croatia.

Zagreb's Ožujsko *pivo* (beer) is very good but Karlovačko *pivo* from Karlovac is even better. You'll probably want to practise saying *živjeli!* (Cheers!)

### Vegetarians & Vegans

Outside of Zagreb, vegetarian restaurants are few and far between but Croatia's vegetables and salads can be quite tasty. *Blitva* (Swiss chard) is a nutritious side dish often served with potatoes. Pasta, risotto and pizza are often made from scratch and lacto-ovo vegetarians will appreciate Croatia's wide variety of cheese. Look for the sharp lamb's-milk cheese from the island of Pag.

# ZAGREB

☎ 01 / pop 780,000

Too often overlooked by tourists making a beeline for the coast, Zagreb is a fascinating destination on its own, combining the best of Eastern and Western Europe. The sober Austro-Hungarian architecture in the town centre houses stylish boutiques, sleek cocktail bars and a smorgasbord of restaurants. The baroque buildings in the upper town are slowly being restored, lending Zagreb's oldest neighbourhood a look that recalls Prague.

Spoiled by a coastline that lies only three hours away, Zagreb's residents have a lively appreciation of the outdoors. Even in winter, the long, refreshing stretch of park that bisects the town centre is rarely empty. With the first breaths of spring, everyone heads to their favourite outdoor café to soak up the sun. On weekends, Maksimir Park in the east is a major destination for bikers, strollers and joggers.

No matter the weather, there's a wealth of diversions in Zagreb. A proper pub-crawl could take weeks; there's an assortment of museums and galleries to explore; regular concerts for the culturally minded; and enough fine shopping to max out a wallet of credit cards.

## HISTORY

Medieval Zagreb developed from the 11th to the 13th centuries in the twin villages of Kaptol and Gradec, which make up the city's hilly Old Town. Kaptol grew around St Stephen's Cathedral (now renamed the Cathedral of the

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary) and Gradec centred on St Mark's Church. The two hilltop administrations were bitter and often warring rivals until a common threat in the form of Turkish invaders emerged in the 15th century. The two communities merged and became Zagreb, capital of the small portion of Croatia that hadn't fallen to the Turks in the 16th century. As the Turkish threat receded in the 18th century, the town expanded and the population grew. It was the centre of intellectual and political life under the Austro-Hungarian empire and became capital of the Independent State of Croatia in 1941 after the German invasion. The 'independent state' was in fact a Nazi puppet regime in the hands of Ante Pavelić and the Ustaša movement, even though most Zagrebians supported Tito's partisans.

In postwar Yugoslavia, Zagreb took second place to Belgrade but continued expanding. The area south of the Sava River developed into a new district, Novi Zagreb, replete with the glum residential blocks that were a hallmark of postwar Eastern European architecture. Zagreb has been capital of Croatia since 1991 when the country became independent.

## ORIENTATION

The city is divided into Lower Zagreb, where most shops, restaurants and businesses are located, and Upper Zagreb, defined by the two hills of Kaptol and Gradec. As you come out of the train station, you'll see a series of parks and pavilions directly in front of you and the twin neo-Gothic towers of the cathedral in

## STREET NAMES

Particularly in Zagreb and Split, you may notice a discrepancy between the names used in this book and the names you'll actually see on the street.

In Croatian, a street name can be rendered either in the nominative or possessive case. The difference is apparent in the name's ending. Thus, Ulica Ljudevita Gaja (street of Ljudevita Gaja) becomes Gajeva ulica (Gaja's street). The latter version is the one most commonly seen on the street sign and used in everyday conversation. The same principle applies to a square (*trg*), which can be rendered as Trg Petra Preradovića or Preradovićevo trg. Some of the more common names: Trg svetog Marka (Markov trg), Trg Josipa Jurja Strossmayera (Strossmayerov trg), Ulica Andrije Hebranga (Hebrangova), Ulica Pavla Radića (Radićeva), Ulica Augusta Šenoje (Šenojina), Ulica Ivana Tkalčića (Tkalčićeva) and Ulica Nikole Tesle (Teslina). Be aware also that Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog is almost always called Zrinjevac.

Also, at the end of a number of addresses in this chapter, you'll notice the letters 'bb' instead of a street number. This shorthand, which stands for *bez broja* (without a number), is used by businesses or other nonresidential institutions, indicating that it's an official place without a street number.

## ZAGREB IN TWO DAYS

Start your day with a stroll through **Strossmayerov trg**, Zagreb's oasis of greenery. While you're there, take a look at the **Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters** (p130) and then walk on to the town centre, Trg Josip Jelačića. Avoiding being hit by a tram as you cross the square, head up to Kaptol for a look at the centre of Zagreb's (and Croatia's) religious life, the **Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary** (p130). As long as you're 'uptown', pick up some fruit at the **Dolac** (p130) fruit and vegetable market or have lunch at **Kaptolska Klet** (p132) and head over to Gradec for a church and museum tour. Don't miss **Meštrović's studio** (p130). Try the nightlife along **Tkalčićeva** (p133) and sup at **Baltazar** (p133).

On the second day, make a tour of the Lower Town museums, reserving a good two hours for the **Museum Mimara** (p131). Have lunch at **Boban** (p132) before tackling the **Archaeological Museum** (p130). Refresh yourself at the museum's outdoor café. Early evening is best at **Bulldog** (p133) before dining at one of the many scrumptious Lower Town restaurants and sampling some of Zagreb's nightlife.

Kaptol in the distance. Trg Jelačića, beyond the northern end of the parks, is the main city square of Lower Zagreb. The bus station is 1km east of the train station. Trams 2 and 6 run from the bus station to the train station, with tram 6 continuing to Trg Jelačića.

## INFORMATION

### Bookshops

**Algoritam** (Gajeva; Hotel Dubrovnik) Off Trg Jelačića, Algoritam has a wide selection of books and magazines to choose from in English, French, German, Italian and Croatian.

### Emergency

**Police station** (☎ 45 63 311; Petrinjska 30) Assists foreigners with visa problems.

### Internet Access

**Art Net Club** (☎ 45 58 471; Preradovićevo trg 25; per hr 20KN; ☎ 9am-11pm) Zagreb's flashiest internet café, it frequently hosts concerts and performances.

**Sublink** (☎ 48 11 329; Teslina 12; per hr 20KN; ☎ 9am-10pm Mon-Sat, 3-10pm Sun) It was here first and has a comfortable set up.

### Laundry

If you're staying in private accommodation you can usually arrange with the owner to do your laundry, which would be cheaper than the two options listed below. Five kilograms of laundry will cost about 60KN.

**Petecin** (Kaptol 11; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri)

**Predom** (Draškovićevo trg 31; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri)

### Left Luggage

**Garderoba** (per day 10KN; ☎ 24hr) In the train station.

**Garderoba** (per hr 10KN; ☎ 5am-10pm Mon-Sat, 6am-10pm Sun) In the bus station.

### Medical Services

**Dental Emergency** (☎ 48 28 488; Perkovčeva 3;

☎ 24hr)

**KBC Rebro** (☎ 23 88 888; Kišpatičeva 12; ☎ 24hr) East of the city, it provides emergency aid.

**Pharmacy** (☎ 48 48 450; Jelačića 3; ☎ 24hr)

### Money

There are ATMs at the bus and train stations and the airport, as well as numerous locations around town. Exchange offices at the bus and train stations change money at the bank rate with 1.5% commission. Both the banks in the train station (open 7am to 9pm) and the bus station (open 6am to 8pm) accept travellers cheques. **Atlas Travel Agency** (☎ 48 07 300; Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinskog 17) is the Amex representative in Zagreb.

### Post

**Main post office** (☎ 49 81 300; Branimirova 4;

☎ 24hr Mon-Sat, 1pm-midnight Sun) Holds poste

restante mail. This post office is also the best place to make long-distance telephone calls and send packages.

### Tourist Information

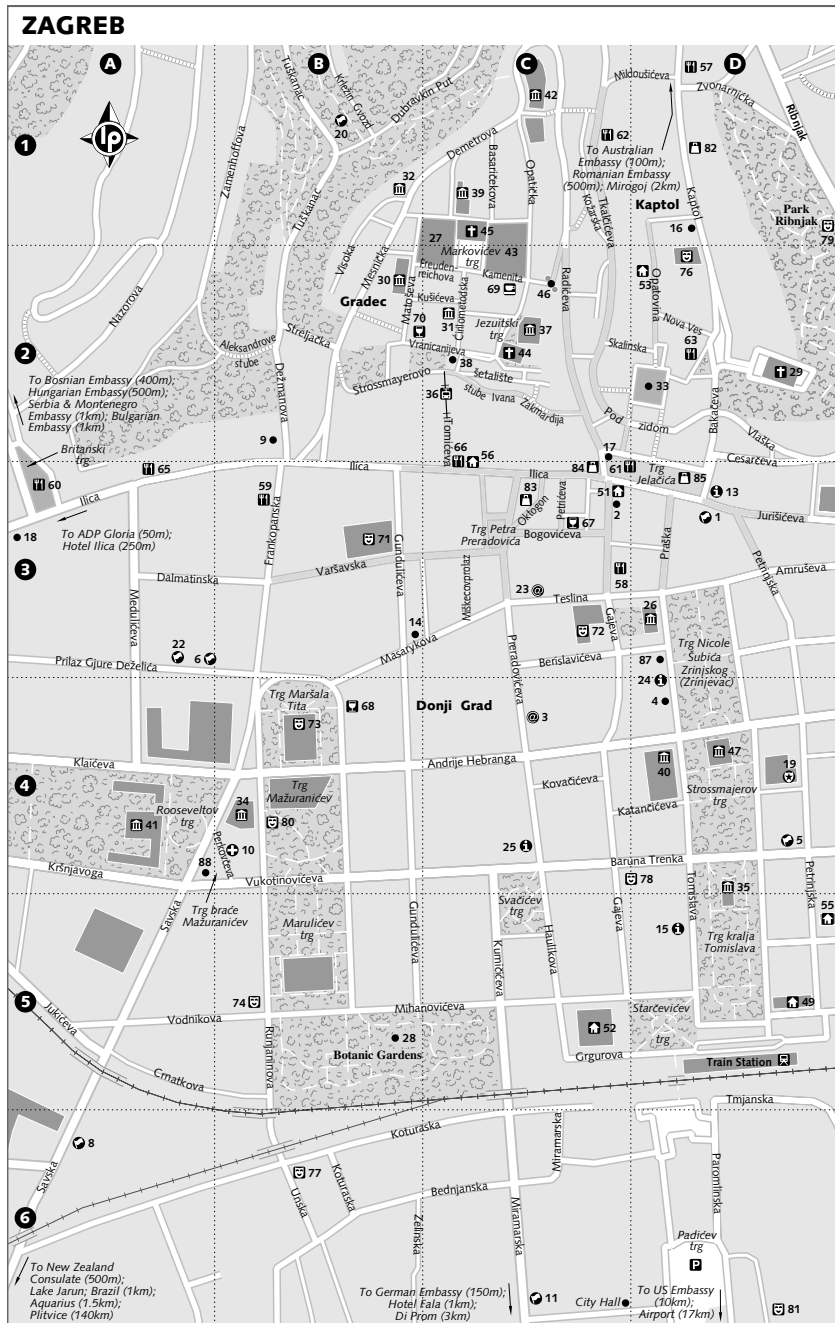
**Main tourist office** (☎ 48 14 051; www.zagreb

-touristinfo.hr; Trg Jelačića 11; ☎ 8.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat, 10am-2pm Sun) Distributes city maps and free leaflets. It also sells the Zagreb Card, which costs 90KN and includes 72 hours of free transport and a 50% discount on entry to museums.

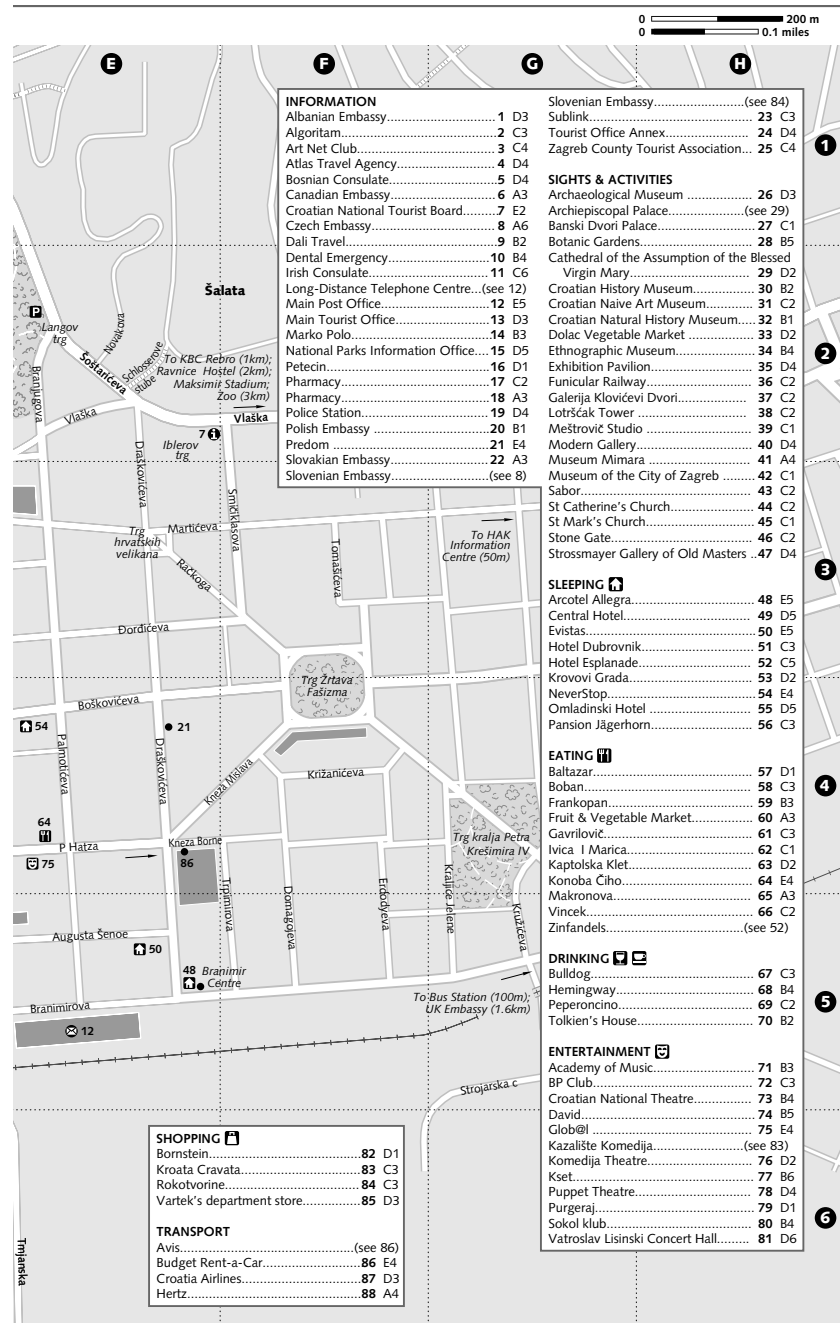
**Marko Polo** (☎ 48 15 216; Masarykova 24) Handles information and ticketing for Jadrolinija's coastal ferries.

**National Parks Information Office** (☎ 46 13 586; Trg Tomislava 19; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri) Has details on Croatia's national parks.





CROATIA



CROATIA

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**Tourist Office Annex** (☎ 49 21 645; Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinjskog 14; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) Same services as the main tourist office, but stocks fewer publications.

**Zagreb County Tourist Association** (☎ 48 73 665; www.tzzz.hr; Preradovićeva 42; ☎ 8am-4pm Mon-Fri) Has information about attractions in the region outside Zagreb.

## Travel Agencies

**Dali Travel** (☎ 48 47 472; travelsection@hfh.hr; Dežmanova 9; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) The travel branch of the Croatian YHA. Can provide information on HI hostels throughout Croatia and make advance bookings.

## SIGHTS

### Kaptol

Zagreb's colourful **Dolac vegetable market** (☎ 7am-2pm) is just up the steps from Trg Jelačića and continues north along Opatovina. The twin neo-Gothic spires of the 1899 **Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary** (formerly known as St Stephen's Cathedral) are nearby. Elements of the medieval cathedral on this site (destroyed by an earthquake in 1880) can be seen inside, including 13th-century frescoes, Renaissance pews, marble altars and a baroque pulpit. The baroque **Archiepiscopal Palace** surrounds the cathedral, as do 16th-century fortifications constructed when the Turks threatened Zagreb.

### Gradec

From Ul Radićeva 5, off Trg Jelačića, a pedestrian walkway called stube Ivana Zakmardija leads to the **Lotrščak Tower** (☎ 48 51 768; admission 10KN; ☎ 11am-8pm Tue-Sun) and a **funicular railway** (one way 3KN; ☎ 6.30am-9pm) built in 1888, which runs every 10 minutes and connects the lower and upper towns. The tower has a sweeping 360-degree view of the city. To the east is the baroque **St Catherine's Church**, with Jezuitski trg beyond. The **Galerija Klovičevi Dvori** (☎ 48 51 926; Jezuitski trg 4; adult/student 40/30KN; ☎ 11am-7pm Tue-Sun) is Zagreb's premier exhibition hall where superb art shows are staged. Further north and to the east is the 13th-century **Stone Gate**, with a painting of the Virgin, which escaped a devastating fire in 1731.

**Gothic St Mark's Church** (☎ 48 51 611; Markovičev trg; ☎ 11am-4pm & 5.30-7pm) marks the centre of Gradec. Inside are works by Ivan Meštrović, Croatia's most famous modern sculptor. On the eastern side of St Mark's is the **Sabor** (1908), Croatia's National Assembly.

West of the church is the 18th-century **Banski Dvori Palace**, the presidential palace,

with guards at the door in red ceremonial uniform. Between April and September there is a ceremony at noon at the weekend for the changing of the guard.

Not far from the palace is the former **Meštrović Studio** (☎ 48 51 123; Mletačka 8; adult/concession 20/10KN; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat & Sun), now housing an excellent collection of some 100 sculptures, drawings, lithographs and furniture created by the renowned artist.

Other museums nearby include the less-than-gripping **Croatian History Museum** (☎ 48 51 900; Matoševa 9; temporary exhibitions adult/concession 10/5KN; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat & Sun); the lively and colourful **Croatian Naive Art Museum** (☎ 48 51 911; Čirilometodska 3; adult/concession 10/5KN; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat & Sun); and also the **Croatian Natural History Museum** (☎ 48 51 700; Demetrova 1; adult/concession 15/7KN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat & Sun), which has a collection of prehistoric tools and bones plus exhibits on the evolution of plant and animal life in Croatia.

The best is the **Museum of the City of Zagreb** (☎ 48 51 364; Opatička 20; adult/concession 20/10KN; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat & Sun), with a scale model of old Gradec, atmospheric background music and interactive exhibits that fascinate kids. Summaries in English and German are in each room of the museum, which is in the former Convent of St Claire (1650).

### Lower Town

Zagreb really is a city of museums. There are four in the parks between the train station and Trg Jelačića. The yellow **exhibition pavilion** (1897) across the park from the station presents changing contemporary-art exhibitions. The second building north, also in the park, houses the **Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters** (☎ 48 95 117; adult/concession 10/5KN; ☎ 10am-1pm & 5-7pm Tue, 10am-1pm Wed-Sun). When it's closed you can still enter the interior courtyard to see the Baška Slab (1102) from the island of Krk, with one of the oldest inscriptions in the Croatian language.

The fascinating **Archaeological Museum** (☎ 48 73 101; Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinjskog 19; adult/concession 20/10KN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat & Sun) has a wide-ranging display of artefacts from prehistoric times through to the medieval period. The ambient sounds and light can put you in a contemplative mood. Behind the museum is a garden of Roman sculpture that is turned into a pleasant open-air café in the summer.

### West of the Centre

The **Museum Mimara** (☎ 48 28 100; Rooseveltov trg 5; adult/concession 20/15KN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue, Wed, Fri & Sat, 10am-7pm Thu, 10am-2pm Sun) houses a diverse collection amassed by Ante Topić Mimara and donated to Croatia. Housed in a neo-Renaissance palace, the collection includes icons, glassware, sculpture, Oriental art and works by renowned painters such as Rembrandt, Velázquez, Raphael and Degas. The **Modern Gallery** (☎ 49 22 368; Andrije Hebrangova 1; adult/concession 20/10KN; 10am-6pm Tue-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat) presents temporary exhibitions that offer an excellent chance to catch up with the latest in Croatian painting. The new permanent exhibition provides a sampling of Croatian art from 1800 to 2000.

The neobaroque **Croatian National Theatre** (Trg Maršala Tita 15) dates from 1895 and has Ivan Meštrović's sculpture *Fountain of Life* (1905) in front. The **Ethnographic Museum** (☎ 48 26 220; Trg Mažuranićev 14; adult/concession 15/10KN; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Thu, 10am-1pm Fri-Sun) has a large collection of Croatian folk costumes, accompanied by English captions. To the south is the Art Nouveau **National Library** (☎ 61 64 111; ul Hrvatske bratske zajednice 4) from 1907. The **Botanic Gardens** (Mihanovićeve; admission free; ☎ 9am-7pm Tue-Sun) is attractive for its plants and landscaping, as well as its restful corners that are perfect for a family picnic.

### Out of Town

A 20-minute ride north of the city centre (on bus 106 from the cathedral) takes you to **Mirogoj** (Medvednica; ☎ 6am-10pm), one of the most beautiful cemeteries in Europe. The sculptured and artfully designed tombs lie beyond a majestic arcade topped by a string of cupolas. Don't miss the flower-bedecked tomb of Croatia's last president-dictator, Franjo Tuđman. Some Croats were very sad at his death, some were slightly sad and some wondered if the international community would have paid Croatia as much for his extradition to the war-crimes tribunal at the Hague as they paid Serbia for Milošević.

## TOURS

The main tourist office sells tickets for two-hour walking tours (95KN) and three hour combination walking/bus tours (150KN), which operate daily. The walking tours leave from the front of the tourist office on Trg Jelačića and the combination tours leave from

the front of the hotel Arcotel Allegra. Tickets are on sale in tourist offices, travel agencies and most hotels and should be purchased at least one day in advance.

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

During odd-numbered years in April there's the **Zagreb Biennial of Contemporary Music**, Croatia's most important music event. Zagreb also hosts a **Festival of Animated Films** (www.animafest.hr) during even-numbered years in June and a **Film Festival** (www.zagrebfilmfestival.com) in October. Croatia's largest international fairs are the Zagreb spring (mid-April) and autumn (mid-September) grand trade fairs. In July and August the **Zagreb Summer Festival** presents a cycle of concerts and theatre performances on open stages in the upper town. For a complete listing of Zagreb events, see www.zagreb-convention.hr.

## SLEEPING

The slow progression of tourism in Zagreb has not resulted in a corresponding increase in budget accommodation. Nor is there much in the way of small, centrally located family hotels. An early arrival is recommended, since private room-finding agencies are an attractive alternative and usually refuse telephone bookings. Prices for doubles run from about 250KN to 280KN and apartments start at 380KN per night for a studio. There's usually a surcharge for staying only one night.

## Budget

**Omladinski Hotel** (☎ 48 41 261; zagreb@hfh.hr; Petrinjska 77; per person in 6-/3-bed dm 89/100KN, d 257.50KN) Some say it's a dump. We prefer to call it an auditory and visual challenge with maintenance issues. Checkout is at 9am, which makes sense because the only reason to stay here is if you have an extremely early train to catch.

**Ravnice Hostel** (☎ /fax 23 32 325; www.ravnice-youth-hostel.hr; Ravnice 38d; dm 125KN; ☎) This is really a delightful option, designed and run by an Australian woman. Comfortable, clean rooms have two, four or 10 beds. Solo female travellers would be most comfortable here. Trams 4, 7, 11 and 12 will bring you here.

**Krovovi Grada** (☎ 48 14 189; Opatovina 33; s/d/tr/q 200/300/450/600KN) If you yearn to stay in Zagreb's Upper Town, here's your chance. The restored older house is set back from the street and sleeps eight in two large apartments with



shared bathroom. The amenities may be one-star but it's a five-star location within spitting distance of the restaurants and nightlife of Tkalčićeva.

Also recommended:

**Di Prom** (☎ 65 50 039; fax 65 50 233; Trnsko 25a; ☹ Mon-Sat) is south of the town centre with rooms in Novi Zagreb.

**Evistas** (☎ 48 39 554; fax 48 39 543; evistas@zg.t-com.hr; Augusta Senoe 28; ☹ 9am-1.30pm & 3-8pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5pm Sat) is closest to the train station.

**NeverStop** (☎ 48 87 225; www.nest.hr; Boškovićeva 7; ☹ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) has good deals on apartment rentals for a minimum three-night stay.

## Midrange

**Hotel Ilica** (☎ 37 77 522; www.hotel-ilica.hr, in Croatian; Ilica 102; s/d/tw/apt 399/499/599/849KN; ☎ ☹) Zagreb is short on small hotels but this is a pretty good one for the price. Rooms are of various sizes but all are quiet and there's parking. Trams 6, 11 and 12 stop right outside the entrance.

**Hotel Fala** (☎/fax 61 94 498; www.hotel-fala-zg.hr; Trnajske ledine 18; s/d 400/541KN; ☎ ☹) The small rooms have no frills but the price is right and you're not terribly far from the town centre.

**Central Hotel** (☎ 48 41 122; www.hotel-central.hr; Branimirova 3; s/d 550/720KN; ☹) Entirely renovated with modern, plush rooms, this hotel represents good value for money, especially given its location across from the train station. The service is coldly efficient.

**Pansion Jägerhorn** (☎ 48 33 877; www.hotel-pansion-jaegerhorn.hr; Ilica 14; s/d/apt 580/680/950KN; ☹) The downstairs restaurant is known for serving wild game, but there's no wildness in the civilised rooms here. Everything is up-to-date and well maintained.

**Hotel Dubrovnik** (☎ 48 73 555; www.hotel-dubrovnik.t-com.hr; Gajeva 1; s/d from 875/1350KN; ☹) Business travellers love this modern hotel right in the centre of town. Services, rooms and facilities are all first-rate.

## Top End

**Arcotel Allegra** (☎ 46 96 000; www.arcotel.at/allegra; Branimirova 29; d 816-1634KN; ☎ ☹ ☹ ☹) Billing itself as Zagreb's first 'lifestyle hotel', it's clear that the style of life is quite high here. Your lifestyle, should you choose to accept it, will include ultra-contemporary Mediterranean-inspired décor, and a fitness centre, plus rooms and accoutrements for your business meetings. The hotel is gay-friendly.

**Hotel Esplanade** (☎ 45 66 666; www.regenthotels.com; Mihanovićeva 1; s/d 1660/2025KN; ☎ ☹ ☹ ☹) This six-storey, 215-room hotel, built in 1924, is an Art Nouveau masterpiece with marble-panelled halls and stately rooms equipped with every comfort. There's also an in-house restaurant, Zinfandels (opposite). It was built next to the train station for the Agatha Christie crowd when simply everyone took the Orient Express, darling.

## EATING

As features an up-and-coming international city, Zagreb presents a fairly wide array of culinary styles. Exotic spices are not part of the Croatian gastronomic vocabulary, but you can't go wrong with fish, pizza, pasta and roasted meats.

**Boban** (☎ 48 11 549; Gajeva 9; mains from 35KN) This Italian restaurant-bar-café offers superb pasta at good prices. It has an outdoor terrace and an indoor lounge with a bar and easy chairs that make it ground zero for after-work socialising. Relax over a drink upstairs and then head downstairs to try the gnocchi made from squid ink and topped with salmon sauce.

**Kaptolska Klet** (☎ 48 14 838; Kaptol 5; mains 55-70KN) This huge and inviting space is comfortable for everyone from solo diners to groups of noisy backpackers. Although famous for its Zagreb specialities such as grilled meats, spit-roasted lamb, duck, pork and veal as well as home-made sausages, it turns out a nice platter of grilled vegetables and a vegetable loaf.

**Makronova** (☎ 48 47 115; Ilica 72; mains 70KN; ☹ Mon-Sat) All very Zen, purely macrobiotic and more than welcome to those of the vegan persuasion. There's also shiatsu treatment, yoga classes and feng-shui courses.

**Ivica i Marica** (☎ 48 17 321; Tkalčićeva 70; mains from 40KN) Not exactly veggie, but with a good range of veggie and fish dishes plus meatier fare, this stylish restaurant also serves mouthwatering pastries in its adjoining café.

**Frankopan** (☎ 48 48 547; Frankopanska 8; mains 35-85KN) It's a gilt trip with chubby cherubs frolicking on the ceiling while you munch on relatively adventurous dishes. The prices are good because meals are prepared by a hostelry school.

**Konoba Čiho** (☎ 48 17 060; P Hatza 15; mains from 55KN; ☹ Mon-Sat) Tucked away downstairs, this cosy restaurant turns out a startling assortment of fish and seafood that's grilled, fried and combined in delicious stews.

**Baltazar** (☎ 46 66 824; Nova Ves 4; mains from 70KN; ☹ Mon-Sat) Duck, lamb, pork, beef and turkey are cooked to perfection here and served with a good choice of local wines.

**Zinfandels** (☎ 456 66 66; Mihanovićeva 1; mains 90-200KN; ☹ Mon-Sat) Here are the tastiest, most creative dishes in town served with polish in the dining room of the Hotel Esplanade, a world-class hotel.

For a simpler but still delicious dining experience, head to **Le Bistro** in the Esplanade. Don't miss the **fruit and vegetable market** (Britanski trg; ☹ 7am-3pm) and you can pick up yummy fresh produce at the Dolac vegetable market (p130), and local cheese, smoked meat and cold cuts at nearby **Gavrilović** (☹ Mon-Sat). Slurp up dessert at **Vincek** (☎ 45 50 834; Ilica 18), famous for its ice cream.

## DRINKING

The architecture may be sober but the nightlife definitely is not, especially as the weather warms up and Zagrebians take to the streets. In the upper town, there's the newly chic Tkalčićeva with a bevy of bars. In the lower town, there's bar-lined Bogovićeva, just south of Trg Jelačića, which turns into prime meet-and-greet territory each evening. Branimir Centre is a large shopping and entertainment complex that has a handful of shadowy bars with soft lighting, sleek furnishings and electronic music. The places listed below open around noon for café society and turn into bars around dinner time.

**Bulldog** (☎ 48 17 393; Bogovićeva 6) Belgian beer loosens up a crowd of young execs, sales reps, minor politicians and expats. As soon as the weather edges over the freezing mark, the overflow heads to the outdoor section where the tables and stools have commandeered the entire square.

**Tolkien's House** (☎ 48 51 776; Vranicanijeva 8) Get in touch with your inner Frodo at this cosy café-bar decorated in the style of JRR Tolkien's books. The hot chocolate is reputed to be the best in Zagreb.

**Brazil** (☎ 091 200 24 81; Veslačka bb) Parked on the Sava River, this bar on a boat refreshes a throng of thirsty revellers and offers occasional live music.

**Peperoncino** (☎ 48 51 343; Kamenita 5) After poking around the upper town, stop here to sample one of the excellent Croatian wines on offer.

**Hemingway** (☎ 48 34 956; Trg Maršala Tita) The main accoutrements you'll need here are black sunglasses and a mobile phone glued to your ear. Papa (the author, not the owner of this chain of bars) wouldn't be caught dead here but Zagreb's trendies couldn't care less.

## ENTERTAINMENT

Zagreb is a happening city. Its theatres and concert halls present a great variety of programmes throughout the year. Many (but not all) are listed in the monthly brochure *Zagreb Events & Performances*, which is available from the tourist office. Otherwise, drop in at Art Net Club (p127) and peruse the many flyers announcing breaking developments on the music scene.

## Discos & Clubs

The dress code is relaxed in most Zagreb clubs but neatness counts. The cover usually runs to 30KN and the action doesn't heat up until near midnight.

**Aquarius** (☎ 36 40 231; Ljubeka bb) On Lake Jarun, this is the night temple of choice for Zagrebians of all ages and styles. The design cleverly includes an open-air terrace on the lake and the sound is usually house. Take tram 17 to the Jarun stop.

**Purgeraj** (☎ 48 14 734; Park Ribnjak) A funky, relaxed space to listen to live rock, blues, rock-blues, blues-rock, country rock. You get the idea.

**Sokol klub** (☎ 48 28 510; Trg Maršala Tita 6) Across the street from the Ethnographic Museum, Sokol is fashionable without being snooty and the dance floor is always packed.

**BP Club** (☎ 48 14 444; Teslina 7; ☹ 5pm-1am) Famous for its high-quality musicians and occasional jam sessions, this is one of Zagreb's classic addresses.

**Kset** (☎ 61 29 999; Unska 3; ☹ 8pm-midnight Sun-Fri, 8pm-3am Sat) It's now practically certified as Zagreb's coolest club, running programs that range from cutting-edge jazz to the city's slickest DJs.

## Gay & Lesbian Venues

**David** (☎ 091-533 77 57; Marulićev trg 3) This new sauna, bar and video room is a popular spot on Zagreb's gay scene.

**Glob@l** (☎ 48 76 146; P Hatza 14) Internet café by day, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights it's transformed into a club with relaxed, friendly vibes.

## Sport

Basketball is popular in Zagreb, and from October to April games take place in a variety of venues around town, usually on the weekend. The tourist office can provide you with the schedule.

Football (soccer) games are held every Sunday afternoon at the **Maksimir Stadium** (Maksimirska 128), on the eastern side of Zagreb; catch tram 4, 7, 11 or 12 to Bukovačka. If you arrive too early for the game, Zagreb's zoo is just across the street.

## Theatre

Rather than going to the individual venue, go to a small office marked 'Kazalište Komedija' in the Oktogon for theatre tickets; it's in the passage connecting Trg Petra Preradovića to Ilica 3.

**Croatian National Theatre** (☎ 48 28 532; Trg Maršala Tita 15; ☎ box office 10am-1pm & 5-7.30pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat, 30 min before performances Sun) This neobaroque theatre was established in 1895. It stages opera and ballet performances.

**Komedija Theatre** (☎ 48 14 566; Kaptol 9) Near the cathedral, the Komedija Theatre stages operettas and musicals.

**Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall** (☎ ticket office 61 21 166; www.lisinski.hr; Trg Stjepana Radica 4; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) Just south of the train station, this concert hall is a prestigious venue where symphony concerts are held regularly.

Concerts also take place at the **Academy of Music** (☎ 48 30 822; Gundulićeva 6a) off Ilica. Another entertainment option is the **Puppet Theatre** (Baruna Trenka 3; ☎ performances 5pm Sat, noon Sun).

## SHOPPING

Ilica is Zagreb's main shopping street.

**Vartek's department store** (Trg Jelačića) You can get in touch with true Croatian consumerism at this department store.

**Kroata Cravata** (Oktogon) Croatia is the birthplace of the necktie (cravat); Kroata Cravata has locally made silk neckties at prices that run from 175KN to 380KN.

**Rokotvorine** (Trg Jelačića 7) This place sells traditional Croatian handicrafts, such as red-and-white embroidered tablecloths, dolls and pottery.

**Bornstein** (☎ 48 12 361; Kaptol 19) If Croatia's wine and spirits have gone to your head, get your fix at Bornstein, which presents an astonishing collection of brandy, wine and gourmet products.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

### Air

For information about the flights to and from Zagreb, see p172

### Bus

Zagreb's big, modern **bus station** (☎ 61 57 983; www.akz.hr, in Croatian) has a large, enclosed waiting room and a number of shops, including grocery stores.

The following domestic buses depart from Zagreb:

Destination	Cost	Duration	Frequency
Dubrovnik	170-196KN	11hr	7 daily
Korčula	195KN	12hr	1 daily
Krk	155KN	4-5hr	4 daily
Ljubljana	90KN	2½hr	2 daily
Osijek	104-144KN	4hr	8 daily
Plitvice	55KN	2½hr	19 daily
Poreč	133KN	5hr	6 daily
Pula	125-183KN	4-6hr	13 daily
Rab	140-166KN	4½-5hr	2 daily
Rijeka	97-144KN	2½-3hr	21 daily
Rovinj	141-206KN	5-8hr	8 daily
Split	90-140KN	5-9hr	27 daily
Varaždin	44KN	1¾hr	20 daily
Zadar	65-165KN	3½-5hr	20 daily

For international bus connections see p172

### Train

The following domestic trains depart from **Zagreb train station** (☎ 06 03 33 444):

Destination	Cost	Duration	Frequency
Osijek	102KN	4½hr	4 daily
Pula	119KN	5½hr	2 daily
Rijeka	86KN	3½hr	5 daily
Split	152KN	5½-9hr	6 daily
Varaždin	50KN	2½hr	13 daily
Zadar	143KN	8hr	4 daily

All daily train services to Zadar stop at Knin. Reservations are required on fast InterCity (IC) trains and there's a supplement of 5KN to 15KN for travelling on fast or express trains.

For international train connections see p173.

## GETTING AROUND To/From the Airport

The Croatia Airlines bus to Zagreb airport, 17km southeast of the city, leaves from the bus station every half-hour or hour from about 5.30am to 7.30pm, depending on flights, and returns from the airport on about the same schedule (30KN). A taxi costs about 300KN.

### Car

Of the major car-rental companies, you could try **Budget Rent-a-Car** (☎ 45 54 936) and **Avis** (☎ 46 73 603) in the Hotel Sheraton, and **Hertz** (☎ 48 46 777; Vukotinićeva 1). Prices are around 300KN per day. Zagreb is relatively easy to navigate by car but remember that the streets around Trg Jelačića and up through Kaptol and Gradec are pedestrian only. Watch out for trams sneaking up on you.

**Croatian Auto Club (HAK) Information Centre** (☎ 46 40 800; Derencinova 20) helps motorists in need.

### Public Transport

Public transport is based on an efficient but overcrowded network of trams, though the city centre is compact enough to make them unnecessary. Trams 3 and 8 don't run on weekends. Buy tickets at newspaper kiosks for 6.50KN or from the driver for 8KN. Each ticket must be stamped when you board. You can use your ticket for transfers within 90 minutes but only in one direction.

A *dnevna karta* (day ticket), valid on all public transport until 4am the following day, is 18KN at most Vjesnik or Tisak news outlets. (See Tourist Information on p127 for details of the Zagreb Card.) Controls are frequent on the tram system with fines for not having the proper ticket starting at €30.

### Taxi

Zagreb's taxis ring up 7KN per kilometre after a flag fall of 19KN. On Sunday and from 10pm to 5am there's a 20% surcharge.

## ISTRIA

Sometimes called the 'new Tuscany', Istria (Istra to Croatians) is the heart-shaped 3600 sq km peninsula located just south of Trieste, Italy, with a landscape of green rolling hills, drowned valleys and fertile plains. The rugged and indented coastline is enormously

popular with Italian tourists, who are comfortable with the excellent pasta and seafood on the menus of local restaurants and the fact that Italian is a second language for most Istrians.

The pronounced Italian influence dates from the days when the string of Istrian resorts was a part of Italy. Italy seized Istria from Austria-Hungary in 1918, was allowed to keep it in 1920, and then had to give it to Yugoslavia in 1947. Tito wanted Trieste (Trst) as part of Yugoslavia too, but in 1954 the Anglo-American occupiers returned the city to Italy so that it wouldn't fall into the hands of the 'communists'. Today the Koper-Piran strip belongs to Slovenia while the rest is held by Croatia. Visit Piran quickly, then move south to Pula, a perfect base from which to explore Poreč and Rovinj.

## POREČ

☎ 052 / pop 10,450

Sitting on a low, narrow peninsula on the western coast of Istria, Poreč ('Parento' in Italian) is the centre of a region dotted with sprawling tourist resorts. Even in the busy summer season, vestiges of the ancient Roman street plan make it well worth a stop. Don't miss the magnificent mosaics in the Euphrasian Basilica, a World Heritage site, before boating out to Sveti Nikola for a refreshing swim.

### History

The Romans called the town Parentium and made it an important administrative base, leaving their mark on the rectangular street plan, which is still evident. After the fall of Rome, Poreč came under the rule of the Byzantines and constructed the famous Euphrasian Basilica. It was later ruled by Venice, then Austria.

### Orientation

The compact old town is squeezed into the peninsula and packed with thousands of shops. The ancient Roman Dekumanus (a Roman longitudinal road) with its polished stones is still the main street, bisected by the latitudinal Cardo. Hotels, travel agencies and excursion boats are on the quay, Obala Maršala Tita, which runs from the small-boat harbour to the tip of the peninsula. The bus station is directly opposite the small-boat harbour just outside the old town.

**Information****INTERNET ACCESS**

**Internet Centre CyberMac** (☎ 427 075; Grahalića 1; per hr 42KN) A full-service internet and computer centre.

**LEFT LUGGAGE**

**Garderoba** (🕒 6am-8pm Mon-Sat, 6am-5pm Sun) At the bus station.

**MEDICAL SERVICES**

**Poreč Medical Centre** (☎ 451 611; Dr Mauro Gioseffi 2)

**MONEY**

You can change money at any of the town's travel agencies. **Istarska Banka** (A Negrija 6) has an ATM.

**POST**

**Main post office** (Trg Slobode 14) Has a telephone centre.

**TOURIST INFORMATION**

**Tourist office** (☎ 451 293; www.istra.com/porec; Zagrebačka 11; 🕒 8am-10pm Mon-Sat year-round, 9am-1pm & 6-10pm Sun Jul & Aug)

**TRAVEL AGENCIES**

**Atlas Travel Agency** (☎ 434 983; Eufrazijeva 63) Represents Amex.

**Di Tours** (☎ 432 100, 452 018; www.di-tours.hr; Prvomajska 2) Also finds private accommodation.

**Fiore Tours** (☎ /fax 431 397; fiore@pu.t-com.hr; Mate Vašića 6) Also handles private accommodation.

**Venezia Lines** (☎ 422 896; Boze Milanovica 20) Tickets and information for boats to Venice.

**Sights**

The main reason to visit Poreč is to visit the 6th-century **Euphrasian Basilica** (☎ 431 635; admission free; 🕒 7.30am-8pm Apr-Sep, to 7pm Oct-Mar), which features some wonderfully preserved Byzantine gold mosaics. The sculpture and architecture of the basilica are remarkable survivors of that distant period. For 10KN you may visit the 4th-century mosaic floor of the adjacent early-Christian basilica or visit the baptistry and climb the bell tower for a spectacular view of the region.

The numerous historic sites in the old town include the ruins of two **Roman temples**, between Trg Marafor and the western end of the peninsula. Archaeology and history are featured in the **Regional Museum** (☎ 431 585; Dekumanus 9; adult/concession 10/5KN; 🕒 10am-noon & 6-8pm Jul & Aug, 10am-1pm rest of year) in an old

baroque palace. The captions are in German and Italian but there's an explanatory leaflet in English.

From May to mid-October there are passenger boats (20KN return) every half-hour to **Sveti Nikola**, the small island opposite Poreč Harbour that has wonderful swimming. The boats depart from the wharf on Obala Maršala Tita.

**Festivals & Events**

Annual events in Poreč include the day-long **Folk Festival** (June) and the **Musical Summer** (May to September). Ask about these at the tourist office.

**Sleeping**

All of the travel agencies listed on left find private accommodation. Expect to pay from 215/250KN for a room with shared/private bathroom in the high season, plus a 30% surcharge for stays less than three nights. There are a limited number of rooms available in the old town and it's wise to reserve far in advance for the July to August period.

**BUDGET**

Camping grounds are large, well-organised little cities with plenty of activities. Take the 'Zelena Laguna' resort tourist train (20KN), which runs half-hourly or hourly from the town centre between April and October, or the boat shuttle. Prices in high season are about 55KN per person and 80KN for a camp site.

**Autocamp Zelena Laguna** (☎ 410 541) Well-equipped for sports, this autocamp can house up to 2700 people.

**Autocamp Bijela Uvala** (☎ 410 551) Housing up to 6000 people, the camping ground can be crowded.

**MIDRANGE**

**Hotel Poreč** (☎ 451 811; www.hotelporec.com; s/d 535/816KN; 🕒) Near the bus station and an easy walk from the old town, you'll find freshly renovated and comfortable rooms in this hotel.

**Hotel Neptun** (☎ 400 800; fax 431 531; Obala Maršala Tita 15; s/d 425/665KN; 🕒) This is the best hotel in the town centre, which is an advantage if you want to be in the centre of the action, but it also means being in the centre of a traffic snarl in peak season. The front rooms cost more, but they have an unbeatable harbour view.

**Hotel Hostin** (☎ 432 112; www.hostin.hr; Rade Končara 4; s/d 710/1015KN; 🕒) One of the newer entries on the hotel scene, this sparkling place is in verdant parkland just behind the bus station. An indoor swimming pool, fitness room and sauna are nice little extras, plus the hotel is only 70m from a pebble beach.

**Eating**

**Nono** (☎ 435 088; Zagrebačka 4; pizzas 28-35KN) You can tell that Nono serves the best pizzas in town because it's always crowded. With soft, puffly crusts and fresh toppings, these pizzas are actually memorable.

**Konoba Ulives** (☎ 451 132; Dekumanus 2; mains 40-100KN) Truffles are one of Istria's most precious products and you can taste them here in pasta, with beef or fresh tuna.

**Istra** (☎ 434 636; Milanovića 30; meals from 80KN) This is where locals go for a special meal. In addition to the usual offerings of grilled fish, spaghetti and calamari there are delicious local specialities such as a mixed seafood starter and *mučkalica*, stewed chicken and vegetables in a spicy sauce. There's a cosy interior and a covered terrace with wooden booths.

There is a large supermarket and department store next to Hotel Poreč, near the bus station.

**Drinking & Entertainment**

**Caffe Lipadarium** (Svetog Mauro 10) The sound of Croatian crooners sails forth from the sound system while you relax in a large courtyard or antique-filled inner rooms. Wednesday night is jazz night in the summer when all sorts of groups turn up to play.

**Caffe Bar Torre Rotonda** (Narodni trg 3a) In the historic Round Tower, this upstairs café is a good spot to watch the action on the quays in a soft, jazzy atmosphere.

Most nightlife is out of town at Zelena Laguna where the big hotels host discos and various party nights. The closest party scene is 1km south of town at Gradsko Kupalište where the action centres on **Colonia Iulia Parentium**, an outdoor disco that spins house, ska, pop, rock, acid jazz and any other style that captures the DJ's fancy.

**Getting There & Away**

From the **bus station** (☎ 432 153; Karla Hugesa 2), buses depart for Rovinj (30KN, one hour, seven daily), Zagreb (175, 4½ hours, six daily), Rijeka (63KN, 1½ hours, eight daily) and Pula

(41KN, one hour, 12 daily). Between Poreč and Rovinj the bus runs along the Lim Channel, a drowned valley. To see it clearly, sit on the right-hand side if you're southbound, or the left if you're northbound.

The nearest train station is at Pazin, 30km east, which is connected by bus (26KN, 35 minutes, 12 daily).

For information about bus and boat connections to Italy and Slovenia see p172.

**ROVINJ**

☎ 052 / pop 14,200

Despite the tsunami of tourism that threatens to engulf the town, Rovinj ('Rovigno' in Italian) retains shreds of its heritage as a Mediterranean fishing port. You can still watch fishermen haul their catch into the harbour in the early morning, followed by squawking gulls, and mend their nets before lunch. Prayers for a good catch are sent forth at the massive Cathedral of St Euphemia, whose 60m tower punctuates the peninsula. Wooded hills and low-rise luxury hotels surround a town webbed by steep, cobbled streets. The 13 green, offshore islands of the Rovinj archipelago make for pleasant, varied views and you can swim from the rocks in the sparkling water below Hotel Rovinj.

**Orientation & Information**

The bus station is in the southeastern corner of the old town and there's an ATM next to the entrance, as well as the Autotrans Travel Agency, which will change money. Boats to Venice leave from the harbour northeast of the old town.

**INTERNET ACCESS**

**@-mar** (☎ 841 211; Carera 26; per hr 20KN) Conveniently located and modern.

**LAUNDRY**

**Galax** (☎ 814 059; M Benussi; per 5kg 60KN) It may be pricey but at least you can get your clothes washed.

**LEFT LUGGAGE**

**Garderoba** (🕒 8am-9pm daily Jun-Sep, 8am-4pm Mon-Fri, 8am-2pm Sat Oct-May) At the bus station.

**MEDICAL SERVICES**

**Ambulanta Rovinj** (☎ 813-004; Istarska ul bb)

**POST**

**Main post office** (M Benussi 4) Across from the bus station, you can also make phone calls here.

**TOURIST INFORMATION**

**Tourist office** (☎ 811 566; www.tzgrovinj.hr; Obala Pina Budicina 12; ☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Sat, 9am-1pm Sun Jun-Sep, 8am-3pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat Oct-May) Just off Trg Maršala Tita, this office is less than a fount of information, and more of a trickle.

**TRAVEL AGENCIES**

**Eurostar Travel** (☎ 813 144; Obala Pina Budicina 1)

Has schedules and tickets for boats to Italy.

**Futura Travel** (☎ 817 281; futura-travel@pu.t-com.hr; M Benussi 2)

**Marco Polo** (☎ 816 616; www.marcopolo.hr; Istarska 2)

**Sights**

The **Cathedral of St Euphemia** (☎ 10am-noon & 2-5pm), which completely dominates the town from its hilltop location, was built in 1736 and is the largest baroque building in Istria. It reflects the period during the 18th century when Rovinj was the most populous town in Istria, an important fishing centre and the bulwark of the Venetian fleet.

Inside the cathedral, don't miss the tomb of St Euphemia (martyred in AD 304) behind the right-hand altar. The saint's remains were brought from Constantinople in 800. On the anniversary of her martyrdom (16 September) devotees congregate here. A copper statue of her tops the cathedral's mighty tower.

Take a wander along the winding narrow backstreets below the cathedral, such as **Ul Grisia**, where local artists sell their work. Each year in August Rovinj's painters stage a big open-air art show in town.

Rovinj's **Regional Museum** (☎ 816 720; Trg Maršala Tita; adult/concession 15/10KN; ☎ 9am-noon & 7-10pm Tue-Sun mid-Jun-mid-Sep, 9am-1pm Tue-Sat rest of year) contains a collection of Italian painters from the 15th to 19th centuries. Unfortunately, the small size of the museum means that only a small percentage of its collection is on display at any given time.

When you've seen enough of the town, follow the waterfront south past Hotel Park to **Punta Corrente Forest Park**, which was established in 1890 by Baron Hütterodt, an Austrian admiral who kept a villa on Crveni Otok (Red Island). Here you can swim off the rocks, climb a cliff or just sit and admire the offshore islands.

**Activities**

Most people hop aboard a boat for serious swimming, snorkelling and sunbathing. A

trip to Crveni Otok or Sveti Katarina is easily arranged (see Tours, below). **Divers Sport Center** (☎ 816 648; www.diver.hr; Villas Rubin) is 3km south of Rovinj and specialises in wreck diving, especially the wreck of the *Baron Gautsch*, an Austrian passenger-steamer sunk in 1914 by an Austrian mine, causing 177 fatalities. The wreck lies in up to 40m of water and offers plenty of marine life.

**Tours**

**Delfin Agency** (☎ 813 383), near the ferry dock for Crveni Otok, runs half-day scenic cruises to the Lim Channel for 130KN per person, or you can go with one of the independent operators at the end of Alzo Rismondo that run half-day and full-day boat trips around the region. There's an hourly ferry to the lovely and wooded Crveni Otok (20KN return) and a frequent ferry to nearby Katarina Island (10KN return) from the same landing. Get tickets on the boat or at the nearby kiosk. These boats only operate from May to mid-October.

**Festivals & Events**

The city's annual events include the **Rovinj-Pesaro Regatta** (early May), **Rovinj Summer concert series** (July and August) and the **Grisia Art Market** on the 2nd Sunday of August. The tourist office has full details.

**Sleeping**

All of the travel agencies listed on left can find private accommodation or you can book directly on www.inforovinj.com. Expect to pay from 215/250KN for a room with shared/private bathroom in the high season, plus a 50% surcharge for stays less than three nights. Guests who stay only one night are punished with a 100% surcharge, but you should be able to bargain the surcharge away outside of July and August. There are few rooms available in the old town however.

**Polari Camping** (☎ 800 376; per person/camp site 55/80KN) This spot is about 5km southeast of town and is much larger than Porton Biondi, but it also has more facilities.

**Porton Biondi** (☎ 813 557; per person 42.50KN) Less than a 1km from the town (on the Monsena bus route).

**Hotel Adriatic** (☎ 815 088; www.maistra.hr; s/d 500/935KN) Rovinj's only hotel right in the town centre is traditional on the outside and hyper-modern inside. The contrast can be jarring but the rooms are certainly comfortable.

**Vila Lili** (☎ 840 940; www.cel.hr/vilalili; Mohorovičića 16; per person 390KN; ☎) The comfort level at this small hotel is excellent, and includes satellite TV, a sauna and bright, modern rooms. It's just a short walk out of town past the marina.

**Hotel Villa Angelo D'Oro** (☎ 840 502; hotel.angelo@vip.hr; Via Svalba 38-42; s/d 823/1455KN; ☎) This luxury hotel in a renovated Venetian building has plush, lavishly decorated rooms with satellite TV, minibar, and a free sauna and Jacuzzi room.

**Eating**

Most of the fish and spaghetti places along the harbour cater to tourists.

**Kantonon** (☎ 811 970; Alzo Rismondo 18; fish mains from 40KN) The lack of an outdoor terrace has kept this local restaurant relatively tourist-free. The interior is enormous and furnished canteen-style, but the fish and seafood are always fresh.

**Veli Jože** (☎ 816 337; Sv Križ 1; mains 40-140KN) You can feast on a wide assortment of Istrian delicacies in an interior crammed with knick-knacks or at tables outside.

Picnickers can buy supplies at the supermarket about 25m downhill from the bus station or in one of the kiosks selling *burek* near the vegetable market.

**Getting There & Away**

From the **bus station** (☎ 811 453; Trg na Lokvi 6), there are buses to Poreč (30KN, one hour, five daily), Pula (28KN, 40 minutes, 13 daily), Rijeka (90KN, 3½ hours, two daily), Zagreb and Split (295KN, 11¼ hours), and one daily each to Dubrovnik (379KN, 17½ hours) and Ljubljana (155KN, 5½ hours, July and August). Prices and durations vary between different companies and routes.

The closest train station is Kanfanar, 19km away on the Pula-Divača line.

**PULA**

☎ 052 / pop 62,400

Pula's star attraction is a remarkably well-preserved amphitheatre, but there is also a wealth of other Roman ruins to explore. Unlike other Istrian destinations, Pula (the ancient Polensium) has an economic life apart from tourism that lends the town an easy-going, small-town appeal. Nearby are some rocky, wooded peninsulas overlooking the clear Adriatic waters, which explain the many

resort hotels and camping grounds circling the city. Most residents head out to Verudela Peninsula for the nightlife and swimming coves, but stay in town for one of the many events at the amphitheatre.

**Orientation**

The bus station is 500m northeast of the town centre. The centre of town is Giardini, while the harbour is west of the bus station. The train station is near the water, about 500m north of town.

**Information**

You can exchange money in travel agencies or at either of the post offices where there are ATMs.

**Atlas Travel Agency** (☎ 393 040; atlas.pula@atlas.hr; Starh Statuta 1) Finds private accommodation and organises tours.

**Enigma** (☎ 381 615; Kandlerova 19; per hr 20KN) Internet.

**Hospital** (☎ 214 433; Zagrebačka 30)

**Jadroagent** (☎ 210 431; jadroagent-pula@pu.t-com.hr; Riva 14) Has schedules and tickets for boats connecting Istria with Italy.

**Left luggage** (bus station; per hr 1.30KN)

**Main post office** (Danteov trg 4; ☎ 7am-8pm) You can also make long distance calls.

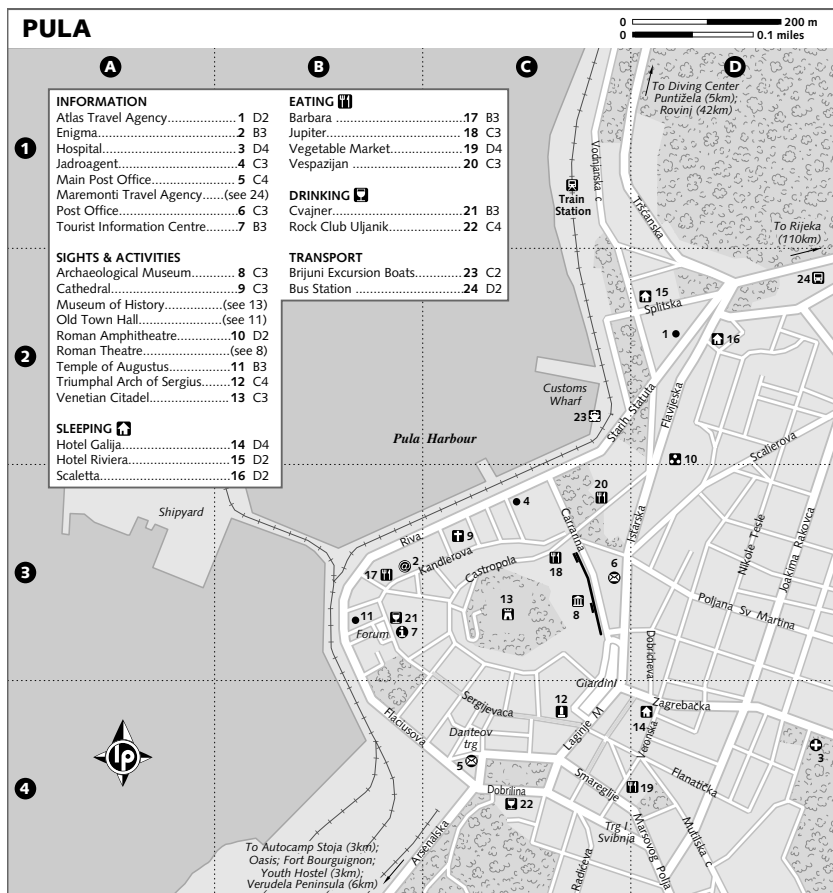
**Maremonti Travel Agency** (☎ 384 000; www.maremonti-istra.hr; bus station) Changes money, finds accommodation and rents cars.

**Tourist Information Centre** (☎ 219 197; www.pulainfo.hr; Forum 2; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Sat, 10am-6pm Sun) With knowledgeable and friendly staff, this centre provides maps, brochures and schedules of upcoming events in Pula and around Istria.

**Sights**

Pula's most imposing sight is the 1st-century **Roman amphitheatre** (☎ 219 028; Flavijevska; adult/concession 20/10KN; ☎ 8am-9pm May-Sep, 8.30am-4.30pm Oct-Apr) overlooking the harbour and northeast of the old town. Built entirely from local limestone, the amphitheatre was designed to host gladiatorial contests and could accommodate up to 20,000 spectators. The 30m-high outer wall is almost intact and contains two rows of 72 arches. Around the end of July a Croatian film festival is held in the amphitheatre, and there are pop, jazz and classical events, often with major international stars, throughout summer.

The **Archaeological Museum** (☎ 218 603; Cararina 3; adult/concession 12/6KN; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Sat, 10am-3pm Sun May-Sep; 9am-3pm Mon-Fri Oct-Apr) is uphill



from the town centre. Even if you don't visit the museum be sure to visit the large sculpture garden around it, and the **Roman theatre** behind the museum. The garden is entered through 2nd-century twin gates.

Along Istarska are Roman walls that mark the eastern boundary of old Pula. Follow these walls south and continue down Gardini to the **Triumphal Arch of Sergius** (27 BC). The street beyond the arch winds right around old Pula, changing names several times. Follow it to the ancient **Temple of Augustus** and the **old town hall** (1296).

The 17th-century **Venetian Citadel**, on a high hill in the centre of the old town, is worth the climb for the view if not for the meagre exhibits in the tiny **Museum of History** (Kaštel;

admission 7KN; ☎ 8am-7pm Jun-Sep, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri Oct-May) inside.

### Activities

**Diving Center Puntizela** (☎ 517 517; www.wreckdiving-croatia.com; Puntizela) offers wreck diving, diving around Brijuni National Park and a variety of other watery adventures.

### Tours

From the Pula waterfront, a number of excursion boats leave for the Brijuni ('Brioni' in Italian) islands, Tito's former summer residence. The islands are highly groomed habitats for exotic animals that Tito received as gifts. Zebras, gazelles and antelope wander through a park planted with some 680

species of plants. You may only visit Brijuni National Park with a group. Instead of booking an excursion with one of the travel agencies in Pula, Rovinj or Poreč, which costs 400KN, you could take a public bus from Pula to Fažana (8km), then sign up for a tour (140KN) at the **Brijuni Tourist Service office** (☎ 525 883) near the wharf. It's best to book in advance, especially in summer.

Also check along the Pula waterfront for excursion boats to Brijuni. The two-hour boat trips from Pula to Brijuni (150KN) do not actually visit the islands but only sail around them. Still, it makes a nice excursion.

### Sleeping

The tip of the Verudela Peninsula, about 6km southwest of the city centre, is a vast tourist complex with plenty of sprawling hotels that you can book through **Arena Turist** (www.arenaturist.hr).

The travel agencies listed under Information can find private accommodation, although there is little available in the town centre itself. Count on paying from 110KN per person for a double room and up to 430KN for an apartment.

**Autocamp Stoja** (☎ 387 144; fax 387 748; per person/camp site & car 50/105KN; ☎ Apr-Oct) Three kilometres southwest of the city centre, Autocamp Stoja is on a shady promontory, with swimming possible off the rocks. There are more camping grounds at Medulin and Premantura, which are coastal resorts southeast from town.

**Youth Hostel** (☎ 391 133; pula@hfhs.hr; camp sites/B&B/half-board 72/118/154KN) Only 3km south of central Pula, this hostel overlooks a beach and is near one of the region's largest discos. Take the Verudela bus 2 or 7 to the 'Piramida' stop, walk back to the first street, then turn left and look for the sign. The rate for camping includes breakfast. You can rent tents for 11.25KN, year-round.

**Scaletta** (☎ 541 599; www.hotel-scaletta.com; Flavijeska 26; s/d 498/718KN; ☎) This hotel offers beautifully decorated and thoughtfully arranged rooms with every comfort accounted for. The hotel restaurant is also first rate.

**Hotel Galija** (☎ 383 802; www.hotel-galija-pula.com; Epulonova 3; s/d 555/732KN; ☎) This new and centrally located hotel is comfortably outfitted with modern rooms and facilities that include a sauna, internet access, satellite TV and minibars.

**Hotel Riviera** (☎ /fax 211 166; Splitska 1; d 685KN) Neither the service nor the comfort quite justifies the price (which eases in the low season) in this one-star hotel, but there is an undeniably appealing old-world elegance and the rooms are spacious. The front rooms have a view of the water and the wide shady hotel terrace is a relaxing place for a drink.

### Eating

The best local restaurants are out of town but the cheapest places are in the centre and the eating isn't bad. You'll have a number of choices along Kandlerova.

**Jupiter** (☎ 214 333; Castropola 38; mains from 28KN) This popular place serves up the best pizza in town and the pasta is good too.

**Vespažijan** (☎ 210 016; Amfiteatarska 11; mains from 35KN) This unpretentious spot conjures up yummy risottos and a variety of seafood dishes.

**Barbara** (☎ 219 317; Kandlerova 5; fixed-price menu from 40KN) It's your basic calamari and *čevapčići*, but well done and in a great people-watching location.

Self-caterers can pick up vegetables, cold cuts and local cheese at the morning vegetable market.

### Drinking & Entertainment

The streets of Flanatička, Kandlerova and Sergijevaca are lively people-watching spots, and the Forum has several outdoor cafés that fill up in the early evening.

**Cvajner** (Forum) The trendiest café-gallery in town, with a stunning, art-filled interior.

**Rock Club Uljanik** (☎ 217 218; Dobriliina 2) It's been around for a while, but is still attracting rockers with its mix of live and recorded music.

Posters around Pula advertise live performances at the amphitheatre or details of rave parties at two venues in Verudela: Oasis and Fort Bourguignon. Take bus 2 or 5 to the Piramida stop for these venues.

### Getting There & Away

#### BOAT

For information about ferries to Italy, see Getting There & Away (p172).

#### BUS

The buses that travel to Rijeka (61KN to 71KN, 2½ hours, 20 daily) are sometimes crowded, so be sure to reserve a seat in advance. Going from Pula to Rijeka, try to sit on

the right-hand side of the bus for a stunning view of the Gulf of Kvarner.

Other destinations you can reach from the **bus station** (☎ 502 997; Istarske Brigade bb) include Rovinj (28KN, 40 minutes, nine daily), Poreč (40KN, one hour, 12 daily), Zagreb (152KN to 183KN, five hours, five daily), Zadar (204KN, seven hours, one daily), Split (315KN, 10 hours, one daily) and Dubrovnik (454KN, 15 hours, one daily).

## TRAIN

There are two daily trains to Ljubljana (125KN, four hours) and two to Zagreb (134KN, 6½ hours), but you must board a bus for part of the trip.

## Getting Around

The only city buses of use to visitors are bus 1, which runs to the camping ground at Stoja, and buses 2 and 7 to Verudela, which pass the youth hostel. Frequency varies from every 15 minutes to every 30 minutes, with service from 5am to 11.30pm daily. Tickets are sold at newsstands for 10KN and are good for two trips.

# GULF OF KVARNER

From big cities to islands to forested mountains, the Gulf of Kvarner ('Quarnero' in Italian) offers an incredible range of holiday experiences. Covering 3300 sq km between Rijeka and Pag Island in the south, the region is known for its mild climate and wide range of vegetation as well as a healthy sampling of seaside resorts.

The largest city is the busy commercial port of Rijeka, only a few kilometres from the aristocratic Opatija riviera. The large islands of Krk, Cres, Lošinj and Rab also have their share of admirers, who come for the luxuriant slopes dipping down to the sea.

## RIJEKA

☎ 051 / pop 144,000

Full of boats, cargo, fumes, cranes and the bustling sense of purpose that characterises most port cities, Rijeka ('Fiume' in Italian) has never been on anyone's 'must see' list. Yet, as a hub for the bus, train and ferry network that connects Istria and Dalmatia with

Zagreb, Rijeka is nearly impossible to avoid. So enjoy the inevitable. With stately 19th-century buildings, a tree-lined promenade along the harbour and a smattering of museums and restaurants, there's plenty to do during the day and Rijeka's nightlife is about the best on the Croatian coast.

## Orientation

The bus station is south of the Capuchin Church in the centre of town. The Jadrolinija ferry wharf is just a few minutes east of the bus station. Korzo runs in an easterly direction through the city centre towards the fast-moving Rječina River.

## Information

### INTERNET ACCESS

There's free wireless access along Korzo.

**Erste Internet Café** (☎ 320 072; Korzo 22; per hr 20KN)

**Hotel Continental** (Andrije Kašića Miočica; per hr 10-15KN) This hotel east of town has a full bank of modern computers.

### LAUNDRY

**Blitz** (Krešimirova 3a; ☎ 7am-8pm Mon-Fri, 7am-1pm Sat) Situated between the bus and train stations, Blitz will do a small load of laundry for 60KN.

### LEFT LUGGAGE

**Garderoba** (per day 15KN; ☎ 5.30am-10.30pm) In the bus station.

**Garderoba** (per day 15KN; ☎ 24hr) In the train station.

### MEDICAL SERVICES

**Hospital** (☎ 333 333; Krešimirova 52)

### MONEY

There's an ATM at the train station, and the exchange offices adjacent to the train and bus stations keep long hours. There are a number of ATMs dotted along Korzo, as well as an exchange counter in the main post office.

### POST & TELEPHONE

**Main post office** (Korzo) Opposite the old City Tower, the post office also houses a telephone centre.

### TOURIST INFORMATION

**Hostelling International** (☎ 264 176; Korzo 22) Sells HI cards and is a good source of information about Croatian hostels.

**Tourist Information Centre** (☎ 335 882; www.tz-rijeka.hr; Korzo 33) Distributes *Rijeka Tourist Route*, a

walking-tour guide that is so well produced it makes you actually want to stay and look around.

## Sights

Rijeka's main orientation point is the **City Tower** (Korzo), which was originally one of the main gates to the city, and is one of the few monuments to have survived the earthquake of 1750.

The **Modern Art Gallery** (☎ 334 280; Dolac 1; adult/concession 10/5KN; ☎ 10am-1pm & 5-9pm Tue-Sun) is in the upstairs scientific library opposite Hotel Bonavia. The **Naval & Historical Museum** (☎ 213 578; Muzejski trg 1; adult/student 10/1KN; ☎ 9am-1pm Tue-Sat) traces the development of sailing, with models and paintings of ships and portraits of the captains. The **Natural History Museum** (☎ 334 988; Lorenzov prolaz 1; adult/student 10/5KN; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat) is devoted to regional geology and botany.

Also worth a visit is the 13th-century **Trsat Castle** (admission 15KN; ☎ 9am-11pm Tue-Sun Apr-Nov, 9am-3pm Tue-Sun Dec-Mar), which is on a high ridge overlooking Rijeka and the canyon of the Rječina River. If you have some more time to kill, stroll into some of Rijeka's churches, such as **Church of St Vito** (Trg Grivica 11), **Church of St Jerome** (Trg Riječke Rezolucije) or the ornate **Capuchin Church** (Trg Zabica), all open for Mass only.

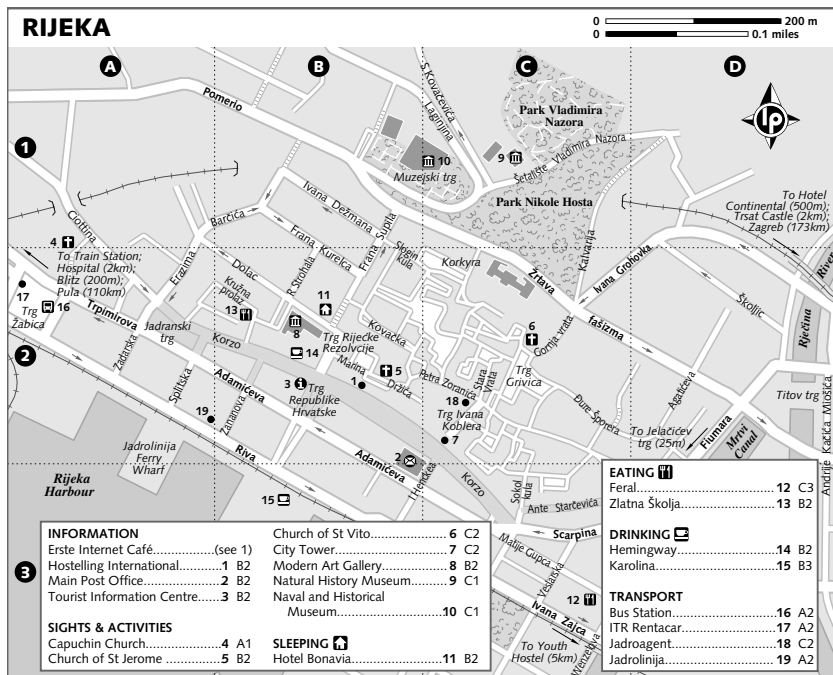
## Sleeping

The tourist office can direct you to the few options for private accommodation, most of which are a few kilometres out of town on the road to Opatija. It's just as easy to go on to Opatija, where there are more and better choices for hotels and private accommodation (for details on getting to/from Opatija see p144).

**Youth Hostel** (☎ 406 420; rijeka@hffs.hr; Šetalište XIII divizije 23; s/d/dm 260/342/142KN) Only four bus stops east of the town centre, this new hostel is comfortable and classy. It's in a renovated 19th-century villa and only has 60 beds. Reservations are advisable in the summer.

**Hotel Continental** (☎ 372 008; www.jadran-hoteli.hr, in Croatian; Andrije Kašića Miočica; s/d 390/455KN; ☎) This old building, north/east of the town centre, has spacious rooms that could use an overhaul.

**Hotel Bonavia** (☎ 333 744; www.bonavia.hr; Dolac 4; s/d from 775/965KN; ☎) The Bonavia is about the best four-star hotel in Croatia. It's in the centre of town and has all of the niceties that businesspeople on generous expense





accounts find indispensable. Try to get a front room with a view over Rijeka's port.

## Eating

If you get hungry on Sunday, you'll have to head to one of the hotel restaurants, since nearly every restaurant in town will be closed.

**Feral** (☎ 212 274; Matije Gupca 5B; mains from 80KN) The marine theme runs strong here with slightly cheaper seafood than Zlatna Školja, but it's still beautifully prepared.

**Zlatna Školja** (☎ 213 782; Kružna prolaz 12; mains 100KN) The fetching maritime décor puts you in the mood to savour the astonishingly creative seafood dishes here. The wine list is also notable.

There are several 24-hour grocery stores in and around the bus station.

## Drinking

Ever since Croatia implemented a zero-tolerance approach to drink driving, Rijeka's nightlife has boomed. Young Rijekans used to go to Opatija to drink, but now no-one wants to take the chance of getting stopped on the route back. Bar-hoppers cruise along Riva or Korzo for the liveliest bars and cafés.

**Hemingway** (☎ 211 613; Korzo 28) With its wrought-iron chairs outside, this cocktail bar is hard to miss. The comfortable interior is a homage to its namesake, with large photos of The Bearded One on the wall and drinks named 'Hemingway's Tears'.

**Karolina** (☎ 330 909; Gar Karoline Riječke) During the day, it's a relaxed place to read a newspaper and have coffee. At night the crowds spill out onto the wharf in a huge outdoor party.

## Getting There & Away TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Rijeka's airport is on Krk Island, 30km from town. For information on international flights to Rijeka see p172. Croatia Airlines' buses meet all flights and leave two hours before flight time from Jelačićev trg. The ticket is 18KN and you can buy it on the bus. A taxi costs about 250KN.

## BOAT

Croatia's national boat carrier **Jadrolinija** (☎ 211 444; www.jadrolinija.hr; Riva 16) has tickets for the large coastal ferries that run all year between Rijeka and Dubrovnik. For fares, see p173. For information on all boats to Croatia contact **Jadroagent** (☎ 211 276; Trg Ivana Kloblera 2).

## BUS

If you fly into Zagreb, note that there is a bus connection directly from Zagreb airport to Rijeka. The bus leaves Zagreb daily at 3.30pm (145KN, two hours) and from Rijeka at 5am.

Other buses departing from Rijeka **bus station** (☎ 060 333 444; Trg Žabica) head for the following destinations:

Destination	Cost	Duration	Frequency
Baška (Krk Island)	56KN	2hr	2 daily
Dubrovnik	391KN	13hr	2 daily
Krk	43KN	1½hr	16 daily
Poreč	59-94KN	4½hr	7 daily
Pula	61-71KN	2½hr	7 daily
Rab	103KN	3hr	2 daily
Rovinj	90KN	3hr	2 daily
Split	245-259KN	8hr	6 daily
Trieste	50KN	1½hr	3 daily
Zadar	145KN	5hr	6 daily
Zagreb	87-144KN	2½-3hr	14 daily

For international connections see p172

## CAR

Close to the bus station, **ITR Rent a Car** (☎ 337 544; Riva 20) has rental cars for about 300KN per day.

## TRAIN

The **train station** (Ul Krešimirova) is a seven-minute walk west of the bus station. Five trains run daily to Zagreb (86KN, five hours). There's also daily train to Split that changes at Ogulin where you wait for two hours (152KN, 10 hours). Two of the three daily services to Ljubljana (94KN, three hours) require a change of trains at the Slovenian border and again at Bifka or Bistrica in Slovenia, but there is also one direct train. Reservations are compulsory on some *poslovni* (express) trains.

## OPATIJA

☎ 051 / pop 12,719

Fashionable 19th-century aristocrats came to 'take the waters' at Opatija, just a few kilometres due west of Rijeka. Although there are plenty of places to stretch out a towel and take a dip in the sea, Opatija is most famous for its Lungomare, a shady waterfront promenade that stretches for 12km along the

Gulf of Kvarner. And to rest your weary head, there's a wide choice of hotels with baroque exteriors and high-ceilinged plush interiors that offer good value for money.

## Information

There's no left-luggage facility at the bus station, which is in the town centre, but Autotrans Agency at the station will usually watch luggage.

**Atlas Travel Agency** (☎ 271 032; Maršala Tita 116) Arranges accommodation and excursions.

**Da Riva** (☎ 272 482; www.da-riva.hr; Maršala Tita 162) Finds private accommodation and organises group transfers to regional airports.

**Main post office** (Eugena Kumičića 2; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Sat) Behind the market.

**Tourist office** (☎ 271 310; www.opatija-tourism.hr; Maršala Tita 101; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Sat, 2-6pm Sun Jun-Sep, 9am-noon & 2-4.30pm Mon-Sat Oct-May) Has some information on local events.

## Activities

Opatija is not a museum-gallery kind of place. Come for the swimming in the coves along the Lungomare or just stroll the great seaside promenade. There's also hiking up Mt Učka. Head to the tourist office for details.

## Sleeping & Eating

Private rooms are abundant and reasonably priced. The travel agencies listed under Information have rooms starting at 150KN to 210KN, depending on the amenities.

The hotel scene is competitive and offers good value for money, especially outside of July and August. Most hotels are handled by **Liburnia Hotels** (☎ 710 300; www.liburnia.hr).

**Camping Opatija** (☎ 704 387; fax 704 112; Liburnjska 46, Ičić; per person/camp site 35/57KN; ☎ May-Sep) Right on the sea and only 5km south of town.

**Hotel Residenz** (☎ 271 399; www.liburnia.hr; Maršala Tita 133; s/d from 425/685KN) This place has stodgy but decent rooms in a classic building. You can use the swimming pool at the neighbouring Hotel Kristol and the Residenz is right on the sea. More expensive rooms with balconies are available.

**Hotel Kvarner** (☎ 271 233; www.liburnia.hr; s/d from 420/685KN; ☎) This genteel 19th-century establishment has an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, and easy access to the sea. The hotel oozes old-fashioned elegance and has more expensive rooms that have sea views and balconies.

Maršala Tita is lined with a number of decent restaurants offering pizza, grilled meat and fish. For a special meal, the best choice is **Bevanda** (☎ 712 769; Zert 8; mains from 70KN), located on the port, which has the freshest fish and a good wine list.

## Entertainment

An **open air-cinema** (Park Angiolina) screens films nightly and presents occasional concerts at 9.30pm from May to September. There are some bars around the harbour but Rijeka has a much more dynamic scene.

## Getting There & Away

The **Opatija bus station** (Trg Vladimira Gortana) is in the town centre. Bus 32 stops in front of the train station in Rijeka (11KN, 30 minutes) and runs right along the Opatija Riviera, west of Rijeka, every 20 minutes until late in the evening. If you're looking for accommodation, it's easiest to get off at the first stop and walk downhill, passing hotels and other agencies on the way to the bus station.

## KRK ISLAND

☎ 051 / pop 18,000

Croatia's largest island, Krk ('Veglia' in Italian) has two major attractions: the walled medieval town of Krk and Baška at the island's southern end, which has a 2km-long pebble beach. Krk is somewhat barren and rocky compared with other Croatian islands, but that hasn't stopped tourists from coming in droves. Many Zagreb residents have second homes on Krk and, as host to Rijeka's airport, the island attracts plenty of foreign visitors. Access is easy from the Rijeka airport, lying at the island's northern end.

Tiny Krk town has a compact medieval centre on a scenic port. From the 12th to 15th centuries, Krk town and the surrounding region remained semi-independent under the Frankopan Dukes of Krk, an indigenous Croatian dynasty, at a time when much of the Adriatic was controlled by Venice. This history explains the various medieval sights in Krk town, the ducal seat.

The bus from Baška and Rijeka stops by the harbour, a few minutes' walk from the old town of Krk. There's no left-luggage facility at Krk bus station. The **Turistička Zajednica** (☎ /fax 221 414; www.tz-krk.hr, in Croatian; Velika Placa 1; ☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Fri) is in the city wall's Guard Tower and there's a convenient **Tourist**

**Information Centre** (☎ 220 226; Obala Hrvatske Momarice bb; ☎ 9am-8pm Apr-Oct) in the centre of town. You can change money at any travel agency and there's an ATM in the shopping centre near the bus station. For internet surfing, head to **Sistemi** (☎ 222 999) at the bus station. The **hospital** (☎ 221-224) is at Vinogradska bb.

The lovely 14th-century **Frankopan Castle** and 12th-century Romanesque **cathedral** are in the lower town near the harbour. In the upper part of Krk town are three old **monastic churches**. The narrow streets of Krk are worth exploring.

### Sleeping & Eating

There is a range of accommodation in and around Krk, but many places only open during summertime. Private rooms can be organised through **Autotrans** (☎ 222 661; www.autotrans.hr) at the bus station. You can expect to pay from about 140/160KN for a single/double.

**Autocamp Ježevac** (☎ 221 081; per person/camp site 44/53KN; ☎ mid-Apr-mid-Oct) On the coast, a 10-minute walk southwest of Krk town, is this camping ground with easy sea access and merciful shade.

**Veli Jože** (☎ /fax 220 212; www.hfts.hr; Vitezića 32; dm incl breakfast 145KN) There's nothing shabby at this hostel, located in a spruced-up older building and open year-round. Rooms have three, four or six beds.

**Hotel Dražica** (☎ 655 755; www.hotelikrk.hr; Ružmarinska 6; s/d 585/900KN; ☎) A short walk from town along the coastal promenade, this hotel is modern, friendly and well run.

There are a number of restaurants around the harbour, but for something different try **Konobo Nono** (Krkčih iseljenika 8; mains from 45KN), which offers *šurlice* (homemade noodles topped with goulash), as well as grilled fish and meat dishes.

### Baška

At the southern end of Krk Island, Baška is popular for its 2km-long pebble beach set below a dramatic, barren range of mountains. Although crowded in summer, the old town and harbour make a pleasant stroll and there's always that splendid beach. The bus from Krk stops at the top of a hill on the edge of the old town, between the beach and the harbour.

The main street of Baška is Zvonimirova, which overlooks the harbour, while the beach begins at the western end of the harbour, and

continues southwards past a large sprawling hotel complex. The town's **tourist office** (☎ 856 544; www.tz-baska.hr; Zvonimirova 114; ☎ 8am-8pm daily mid-Jun-Sep, 8am-3pm Mon-Fri Oct-mid-Jun) is conveniently located just down the street from Baška's bus stop. To arrange hotels or camping, contact **Hoteli Baška** (☎ 656 801; www.hotelibaska.hr). For private accommodation, there's **Guliver** (☎ 856 004; www.pdm-guliver.hr; Zvonimirova 98).

### Getting There & Away

About five buses a day travel between Rijeka and Krk town (43KN, 1½ hours), and there are seven buses from Krk town to Baška (22KN, up to one hour). To go from Krk to Zadar, take one of the many buses to Kraljevica and then change to a southbound bus.

## DALMATIA

Occupying the central 375km of Croatia's Adriatic coast, Dalmatia offers a matchless combination of hedonism and historical discovery. The jagged coast is speckled with lush offshore islands that are making Dalmatia one of the world's hottest tourist destinations. Roman ruins, spectacular beaches, old fishing ports, medieval architecture and historic cities make a trip to Dalmatia (Dalmacija) unforgettable.

The dramatic coastal scenery is due to the rugged Dinaric Alps, which form a 1500m-long barrier that separates Dalmatia from Bosnia and Hercegovina. After the last Ice Age part of the coastal mountains were flooded, creating the sort of long, high islands seen in the Gulf of Kvarner. The deep, protected passages between these islands are a paradise for sailors and cruisers.

Split is the largest city in the region and a hub for bus and boat connections along the Adriatic, as well as home to the late Roman Diocletian's Palace. Nearby are the early Roman ruins in Solin. Zadar has yet more Roman ruins and a wealth of churches. The architecture of Hvar and Korčula recalls the days when these places were outposts of the Venetian empire. None can rival majestic Dubrovnik, a cultural and aesthetic jewel.

### ZADAR

☎ 023 / pop 72,700

The main city of northern Dalmatia, Zadar (ancient Zara) is a booming regional centre with

an ancient walled town at its core. Outside the massive 16th-century fortifications that shield its marble streets, a busy port receives shipping from Italy. Inside are Roman ruins, medieval churches and several fascinating museums. The town centre is usually crowded with shoppers dashing in and out of stores or relaxing in a café, but the tree-lined promenade along Obala kralja Petra Krešimira IV is perfect for a lazy stroll or a picnic. There are several small beaches east of the old town and a vast over-developed tourist complex crowding around the small beach of Borik, northwest of town.

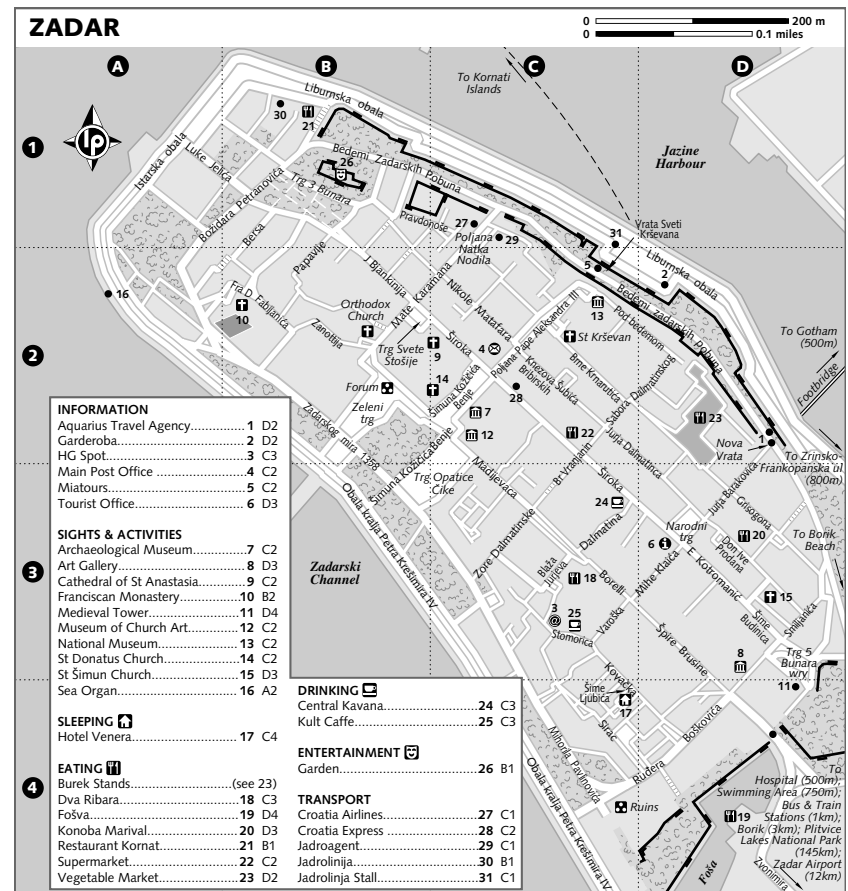
### History

In the past 2000 years Zadar has escaped few wars; its strategic Adriatic coast position

made it a target for the Romans, Byzantines, Venetians, Austro-Hungarians and Italians. Although damaged by Allied bombing in 1943 and 1944, and Yugoslav rockets in 1991, this resilient city has been rebuilt and restored many times. Some old flavour peeks out amid the modern buildings. Don't forget to sample Zadar's famous maraschino cherry liqueur.

### Orientation

The train station and the bus station are adjacent and are 1km southeast of the harbour and old town. From the stations, Zrinsko-Frankopanska ul leads northwest past the main post office to the harbour. Buses marked 'Poluotok' run from the bus station



to the harbour. Narodni trg is the heart of Zadar.

## Information

### INTERNET ACCESS

**HG Spot** (☎ 302 207; Stomorica 8; per hr 30KN)

### LEFT LUGGAGE

**Garderoba** (per day 15KN; ☎ 24hr) At the train station.

**Garderoba** (per day 15KN; ☎ 7am-9pm Mon-Fri) At the bus station.

**Garderoba** (per day 15KN; ☎ 7am-8pm Mon-Fri, 7am-3pm Sat) At the Jadrolinija dock.

### MEDICAL SERVICES

**Hospital** (☎ 315 677; Bože Peričića 5)

### POST & TELEPHONE

**Main post office** (Poljana Pape Aleksandra III) You can also make phone calls here.

### TOURIST INFORMATION

**Tourist office** (☎ 316 166; www.tzzadar.hr; Mihe Klaića 5; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, 8am-1pm Sun Jun-Sep, 8am-6pm Mon-Sat Oct-May)

### TRAVEL AGENCIES

**Aquarius Travel Agency** (☎ /fax 212 919; www.jureskoaquarius.hr; Nova Vrata bb) Arranges accommodation and excursions.

**Miatours** (☎ /fax 212 788; www.miatours.hr; Vrata Sveti Krševana) Arranges accommodation and excursions.

## Sights & Activities

Most attractions are near **St Donatus Church** (Šimuna Kožičića Benje; admission 6KN; ☎ 9.30am-1pm & 4-6pm Mar-Oct), a circular 9th-century Byzantine structure built over the Roman forum. Slabs for the ancient forum are visible in the church and there is a pillar from the Roman era on the northwestern side. In summer ask about the musical evenings here (featuring Renaissance and early baroque music). The outstanding **Museum of Church Art** (Trg Opatice Čike bb; adult/student 20/10KN; ☎ 10am-12.30pm daily, 5-8.30pm Mon-Sat), in the Benedictine monastery opposite St Donatus, offers three floors of elaborate gold and silver reliquaries, religious paintings, icons and local lacework.

The 13th-century Romanesque **Cathedral of St Anastasia** (Trg Svete Stošije) is only open for Mass, and has some fine Venetian carvings in the 15th-century choir stalls. The **Franciscan Monastery** (Zadarscog mira 1358; admission free; ☎ 7.30am-noon & 4.30-6pm) is the oldest Gothic church in Dalmatia (consecrated in 1280), with lovely interior Ren-

aissance features and a large Romanesque cross in the treasury (behind the sacristy).

The most interesting museum is the **Archaeological Museum** (Trg Opatice Čike 1; adult/student 10/5KN; ☎ 9am-1pm & 5-7 Mon-Sat), across from St Donatus, with an extensive collection of artefacts from the Neolithic period and Roman occupation to the development of Croatian culture under the Byzantines. Some captions are in English and you are handed a leaflet in English when you buy your ticket.

Less interesting is the **National Museum** (Poljana Pape Aleksandra III; admission 5KN; ☎ 9am-1pm Mon-Fri, plus 5-7pm Wed), just inside the sea gate, which features photos of Zadar from different periods and old paintings and engravings of many coastal cities. One church worth a visit is **St Šimun Church** (Šime Budinica; ☎ 8am-noon & 6-8pm Jun-Sep), which has a 14th-century gold chest.

As a delightful supplement to the church-museum-ruin diet, Zadar recently installed a **Sea Organ** on its northwestern tip. Within the perforated stone stairs that descend into the sea is a system of pipes and whistles. When the movement of the sea pushes air through pipes, strange, mournful tunes emerge from the holes. The effect is utterly unique and hypnotic.

There's a swimming area with diving boards, a small park and a café on the coastal promenade off Zvonimira. Bordered by pine trees and parks, the promenade takes you to a beach in front of Hotel Kolovare and then winds on for about a kilometre up the coast.

## Tours

Any of the many travel agencies around town can supply information on tourist cruises to the beautiful Kornati Islands, river-rafting and half-day excursions to the Krka waterfalls.

## Sleeping

Most visitors head out to the 'tourist settlement' at Borik, 3km northwest of Zadar, on the Puntamika bus (6KN, every 20 minutes from the bus station). Here there are hotels, a hostel, a camping ground, big swimming pools, sporting opportunities and numerous *sobe* (rooms) signs; you can arrange a private room through a travel agency in town (see left). Expect to pay about 185KN per person for a nice room with a bathroom.

**Autocamp Borik** (☎ 332 074; per person/camp site 35/47KN) This large camping ground is just steps away from Borik beach.

**Borik Youth Hostel** (☎ 331 145; zadar@hfhs.hr; Obala Kneza Trpimira 76; B&B/half-board 115/150KN) Friendly and well kept, this hostel is near the beach at Borik.

**Hotel Venera** (☎ 214 098, 098 330 958; Šime Ljubića 4a; d 300KN) If you want to stay in town, the only choice is this 12-room guesthouse in the heart of town, with small but tidy rooms with bathroom. The price does not include breakfast but there are plenty of cafés around where you can have your morning meal. If you can't reach the owner, the rooms can be reserved through Aquarius Travel Agency (opposite).

You can also try the **Hotel President** (☎ 333 464; www.hotel-president.hr; Vladana Desnice 16; s/d 1385/1616KN; ☎ ☎ ☎ ) for four-star treatment near Borik beach.

## Eating

**Dva Ribara** (Blaža Jurjeva 1; mains from 45KN) With a wide range of food and an outdoor terrace, Dva Ribara is justifiably popular with the local crowd.

**Konoba Marival** (☎ 213 239; Don Ive Prodana 3; mains from 50KN) If your mama married a fisherman, she'd probably dream up the kinds of dishes that are served here. The ambience is also homy and intimate.

**Restaurant Kornat** (☎ 254 501; Liburnska obala 6; mains from 60KN) The polished wood floors and spiffy furnishings hint at the sophistication of the menu, which includes truffles from Istria, cheese from Pag and a full range of local and international specialties.

There's a **supermarket** (cnr Široka & Sabora) that is open long hours, and you'll also find a number of *burek* stands around the vegetable market.

## Drinking

In summer the many cafés along Varoška and Klaića place their tables on the street; it's great for people-watching. Elsewhere, **Central Kavana** (Široka) is a spacious café and hang-out with live music at the weekend, while **Kult Caffè** (Stomorica) draws a young crowd that listens to rap music indoors or relaxes on the large shady terrace outside.

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

Zadar's airport, 12km east of the city, receives charter flights and **Croatia Airlines** (☎ 250 101; Poljana Natka Nodila 7) flights from Zagreb daily.

A Croatia Airlines bus meets all flights and costs 20KN; a taxi into town costs around 175KN.

### BOAT

The **Jadrolinija** (☎ 254 800; Liburnska obala 7) office is on the harbour and has tickets for all local ferries, or you can buy ferry tickets from the Jadrolinija stall on Liburnska obala.

**Jadroagent** (☎ 211 447; jadroagent-zadar@zd.t-com.hr; Poljana Natka Nodila 4) is just inside the city walls and has tickets and information for all boats.

For information on boat connections to Italy see p174.

### BUS & TRAIN

Zadar is on the coastal route that goes from Rijeka down to Split and Dubrovnik. There are two fast trains to Zagreb (184KN, seven hours) and three slower trains (134KN, 9½ hours) that change at Knin. The bus to Zagreb is quicker and many of them stop at Plitvice Lakes National Park (50KN to 70KN, three hours).

**Croatia Express** (☎ 250 502; Široka) sells bus tickets to many German cities.

## Around Zadar

### PLITVICE LAKES

**Plitvice Lakes National Park** (adult 55-100KN, student 30-60KN) lies midway between Zagreb and Zadar. The 19.5 hectares of wooded hills enclose 16 turquoise lakes, which are connected by a series of waterfalls and cascades. The mineral-rich waters carve new paths through the rock, depositing tufa (new porous rock) in continually changing formations. Wooden footbridges follow the lakes and streams over, under and across the rumbling water for an exhilaratingly damp 18km. Swimming is not allowed. Your park admission (prices vary by season) is valid for the entire stay and also includes the boats and buses you need to use to see the lakes. There is hotel accommodation only on site, and private accommodation just outside the park. Check the options with the National Parks information office in Zagreb (see p127).

Most buses from Zadar to Zagreb stop at Plitvice (50KN to 70KN, three hours). It is possible to visit Plitvice for the day on the way to or from the coast, but be aware that if they are full buses will not pick up passengers at Plitvice. Luggage can be left at the **tourist information**

**centres** (☎ 053-751 015; www.np-plitvice.com; 🕒 7am-8pm), located at each entrance to the park.

## SPLIT

☎ 021 / pop 188,700

As the largest Croatian city on the Adriatic coast and a major transport hub, Split ('Spalato' in Italian) is more exciting than relaxing. With a massive port sending ferries out to the Dalmatian islands and beyond, Split is a nearly obligatory stop on a Dalmatian visit. Although ringed with apartment-block housing of stupefying ugliness, the remarkable Diocletian's Palace (a World Heritage site) makes a visit to the city more than worthwhile. In the centre of town, within the ancient walls of Diocletian's Palace, rises the majestic cathedral surrounded by a tangle of marble streets containing shops and businesses. The entire western end of town is a vast, wooded mountain park with beaches below and pathways above. A refurbished harbourside promenade lined with cafés makes for a pleasant stroll, and the high coastal mountains set against the blue Adriatic provide a striking frame, best appreciated as your ferry heads into or out of the port.

## History

Split achieved fame when Roman emperor Diocletian (AD 245–313), who was noted for his persecution of the early Christians, had his retirement palace built here from 295 to 305. After his death the great stone palace continued to be used as a retreat by Roman rulers. When the neighbouring colony of Salona was abandoned in the 7th century, many of the Romanised inhabitants fled to Split and barricaded themselves behind the high palace walls, where their descendants continue to live to this day.

## Orientation

The bus, train and ferry terminals are adjacent on the eastern side of the harbour, a short walk from the old town. Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda, the waterfront promenade, is your best central reference point in Split.

## Information

### BOOKSHOPS

**Algorithm** (Map p152; Bajamontijeva 2) A good English-language bookshop.

## INTERNET ACCESS

**Mriža** (Map p152; ☎ 321 320; Kružičeva 3; per hr 20KN)

## LEFT LUGGAGE

**Garderoba** (🕒 6am–10pm) At the bus station.

**Garderoba** (Obala Kneza Domagoja 6; 🕒 7am–9pm)

The train station's left-luggage office is about 50m north of the station.

## MEDICAL SERVICES

**KBC Firule** (☎ 556 111; Spinčićeva 1) Split's hospital.

## MONEY

Change money at travel agencies or the post office. You'll find ATMs around the bus and train stations.

## POST & TELEPHONE

**Main post office** (Map p152; Kralja Tomislava 9; 🕒 7am–9pm Mon–Sat) There's also a telephone centre here.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

**Hostelling International** (Map p152; ☎ 321 614; Domilijina 8) Sells HI cards and is a good source of information about Croatian hostels.

**Internet Games & Books** (Map p152; ☎ 338 548; Obala Kneza Domagoja 3) Luggage storage, information for backpackers, used books and an internet connection for 35KN per hour.

**Turist Biro** (Map p152; ☎ /fax 347 271; turist-biro-split@st.t-com.hr; Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 12) Arranges private accommodation and sells guidebooks and the Split Card.

**Turistička Zajednica** (Map p152; ☎ /fax 345 606; www.visitsplit.com; Peristyle; 🕒 9am–8.30pm Mon–Sat, 8am–1pm Sun) Has information on Split; sells the Split Card for 60KN, which offers free and discounted admission to Split attractions plus discounts on some car rentals, restaurants and hotels. It's valid for 72 hours.

## TRAVEL AGENCIES

**Atlas Travel Agency** (Map p152; ☎ 343 055; Trg Braće Radića 6) The town's Amex representative.

**Daluma Travel** (Map p152; ☎ /fax 338 484; www.daluma.hr; Obala Kneza Domagoja 1) Finds private accommodation.

## Sights & Activities

### DIOCLETIAN'S PALACE

The old town is a vast open-air museum and the information signs at the important sights explain a great deal of Split's history. **Diocletian's Palace** (Map p152; Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 22), facing the harbour, is one of the most imposing Roman ruins in existence. It

was built as a strong rectangular fortress, with walls measuring 215m from east to west and 181m wide at the southernmost point, reinforced by square corner towers. The imperial residence, mausoleum and temples were south of the main street, now called Krešimirova, connecting the east and west palace gates.

Enter through the central ground floor of the palace. On the left are the excavated **basement halls** (adult/concession 6/3KN; 🕒 10am–6pm), which are empty but still impressive. Go through the passage to the **peristyle**, a picturesque colonnaded square, with a neo-Romanesque cathedral tower rising above. The **vestibule**, an open dome above the ground-floor passageway at the southern end of the peristyle, is overpoweringly grand and cavernous. A lane off the peristyle opposite the cathedral leads to the **Temple of Jupiter**, which is now a baptistry.

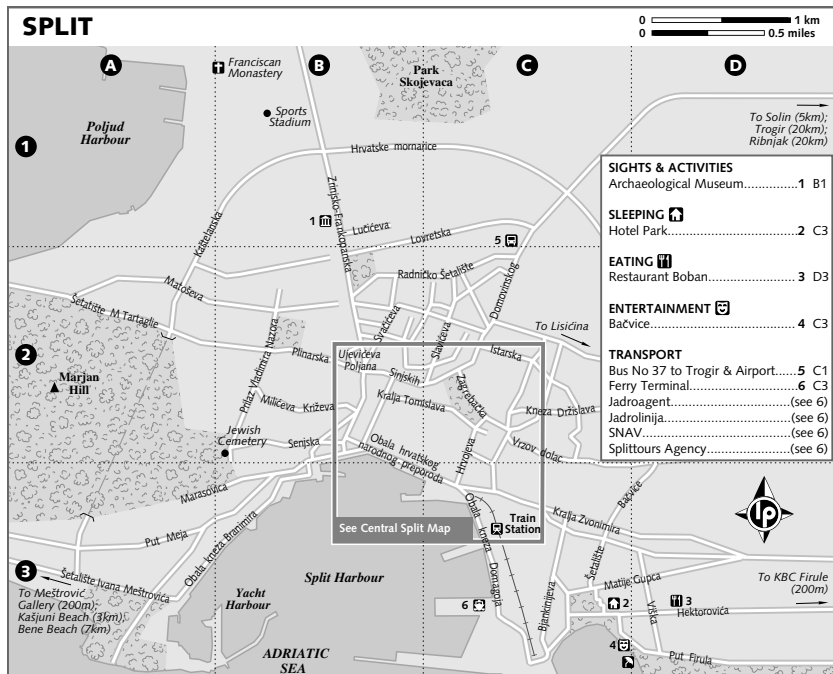
On the eastern side of the peristyle is the **cathedral**, originally Diocletian's mausoleum. The only reminder of Diocletian in the cathedral is a sculpture of his head in a circular stone wreath, below the dome that is directly above the baroque white-marble altar. The Romanesque wooden doors (1214) and stone pulpit are notable. For a small fee you can climb the tower.

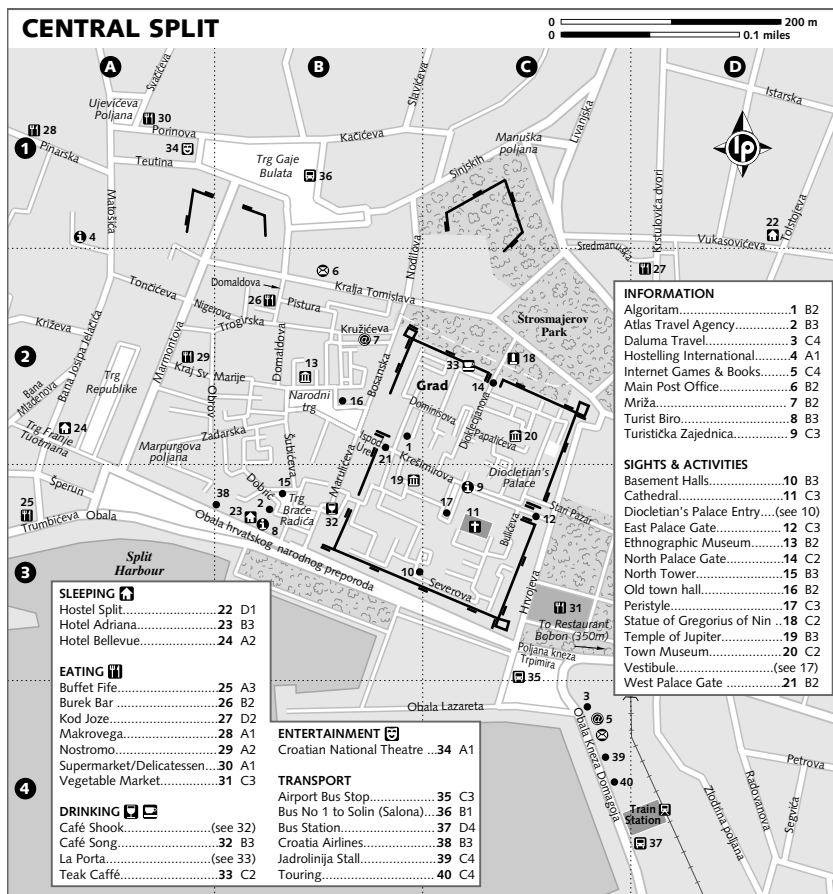
In the Middle Ages the nobility and rich merchants built their residences within the old palace walls; the Papalic Palace is now the **town museum** (☎ 344 917; Papalićeva ul 5; adult/concession 10/5KN; 🕒 9am–9pm Tue–Fri, 10am–1pm Sat & Sun Jun–Sep, 10am–5pm Tue–Fri, 10am–1pm Sat & Sun Oct–May). It has a tidy collection of artefacts, paintings, furniture and clothes from Split; captions are in Croatian.

## OUTSIDE THE PALACE WALLS

The east palace gate leads to the market area. The west palace gate opens onto medieval Narodni trg, dominated by the 15th-century Venetian Gothic **old town hall**. The **Ethnographic Museum** (Map p152; ☎ 344 164; Narodni trg; adult/student 10/5KN; 🕒 10am–1pm Tue–Sun Jun–Sep, 10am–4pm Tue–Fri, 10am–1pm Sat & Sun Oct–May) has a mildly interesting collection of photos of old Split, traditional costumes and memorabilia of important citizens; captions are in Croatian.

Trg Braće Radića, between Narodni trg and the harbour, contains the surviving **north tower** of the 15th-century Venetian garrison castle, which once extended to the water's edge.





Go through the north palace gate to see Ivan Meštrović's powerful 1929 **statue of Gregorius of Nin**, a 10th-century Slavic religious leader who fought for the right to perform Mass in Croatian. Notice that his big toe has been polished to a shine; it's said that touching it brings good luck.

#### OUTSIDE CENTRAL SPLIT

The **archaeological museum** (Map p150; ☎ 318 720; Zrinjsko-Frankopanska 25; adult/student 10/5KN; ☎ 9am-2pm Tue-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat & Sun), north of town, is a fascinating supplement to your walk around Diocletian's Palace and to the site of ancient Salona. The history of Split is traced from Illyrian times to the Middle Ages, in chronological order, with explanations in English.

The finest art museum in Split is **Meštrović Gallery** (Map p150; ☎ 310 800; Šetalište Ivana Meštrovića 46; adult/student 15/10KN; ☎ 9am-9pm Tue-Sun Jun-Sep, 9am-4pm Tue-Sat, 10am-3pm Sun Oct-May). You'll see a comprehensive, well-arranged collection of works by Ivan Meštrović, Croatia's premier modern sculptor, who built the gallery as his home from 1931 to 1939. Although Meštrović intended to retire here, he emigrated to the USA soon after WWII. Bus 12 runs to the gallery from Trg Republike every 40 minutes.

From the Meštrović Gallery it's possible to hike straight up **Marjan Hill**. Go up U1 Tonča Petrasova Marovića on the western side of the gallery and continue straight up the stairway to Put Meja ul. Turn left and walk west to Put Meja 76. The trail begins on the western side of

this building. Marjan Hill offers trails through the forest to lookouts and old chapels.

#### BEACHES

It's easy to hop on a bus to Omiš or a ferry to Brač, but there are a few bathing opportunities just outside the town centre. Try **Bačvice beach** (Map p150) in front of the entertainment complex (see p154). For less people and concrete, take bus 12 to **Kasjuni beach** at the foot of Marjan hill or go a little further to **Bene beach**, which is surrounded by pines.

#### Tours

Atlas Travel Agency (p151) runs excursions to Krka waterfalls and Zlatni Rat beach on the island of Brač, as well as other excursions.

#### Festivals & Events

The **Split Summer Festival** (mid-July to mid-August) features open-air opera, ballet, drama and musical concerts. There's also the **Feast of St Dujo** (7 May), a **flower show** (May) and the **Festival of Popular Music** (end of June).

#### Sleeping

Private accommodation is the best bet for budget travellers, as hotels in Split are geared towards business travellers with deep pockets. You could go to one of the travel agencies listed on p151, but there are usually packs of women at the bus, train and ferry terminals ready to propose rooms to travellers. Prices rarely exceed 140KN for a room but you'll be sharing the bathroom with the proprietor.

**Hostel Split** (Map p152; ☎ 098 987 13 12; www.hostel-split.com; Vukasovićeve 21; dm 117KN ☎) Only a short walk from Diocletian's Palace, this friendly, family-run hostel is in an appealing stone building. Check-in is between 2pm and 8pm.

**Hotel Bellevue** (Map p152; ☎ 347 499; www.hotel-bellevue-split.hr; Bana Josipa Jelačića 2; s/d 490/670KN) The Bellevue is an old classic that has been better days. Rooms on the street side can be noisy, but the location is good and the somewhat faded rooms retain a certain charm. If you take a taxi from the port get ready for a long, meandering ride as the driver navigates the many one-way streets.

**Hotel Adriana** (Map p152; ☎ 340 000; www.hotel-adriane.com; Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 9; s/d 650/850KN; ☎) This recent entry on the hotel scene has eight fresh rooms, some of which have a sea view. All are soundproofed.

**Hotel Park** (Map p150; ☎ 406 400; www.hotelpark-split.hr; Hatzeov perivoj 3; s/d 1060/1285KN; ☎ ☎ ☎) Close to the centre, this hotel nonetheless provides a resort experience with a large shady terrace and an easy walk to the beach. Rooms are nicely decorated and quite comfortable, although not large.

#### Eating

**Buffet Fife** (Map p152; ☎ 345 223; Obala Ante Trumbića 11; mains from 45KN) Dragomir presides over a motley crew of sailors and misfits who drop in for the simple, savoury home cooking and his own brand of hospitality.

**Kod Joze** (Map p152; ☎ 347 397; Srednauška 4; mains from 40KN) A die-hard faction of locals keeps this informal *konoba* (a small, family-owned bistro) alive and kicking. It's Dalmatian all the way – ham, cheese and green tagliatelle with seafood.

**Restaurant Boban** (Map p150; ☎ 543 300; Hektorovićeve 49; mains from 60KN) The décor may be sober and traditional but this family-owned restaurant devotes considerable effort to keeping its menu up-to-date. The risotto is perfection and the angler wrapped in bacon, mouth-watering.

**Nostromo** (Map p152; ☎ 091 405 66 66; Kraj Sv Marije 10; mains from 65KN) Marine creatures of all persuasions form a delightful menu in this sweetly decorated spot next to the fish market.

**Makrovega** (Map p152; ☎ 394 440; Plinarska 12; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat) Finally veggies and vegans have a place to call their own, at least for lunches and early dinners.

There's a spiffy **Burek Bar** (Map p152; Domaldova 13) near the main post office, and the vast **supermarket/delicatessen** (Map p152; Svačićeva 1) has a wide selection of meat and cheese for sandwiches. The vegetable market has a wide array of fresh local produce.

#### Drinking

The bars, cafés and restaurants of the Bačvice complex (Map p150) are perennially popular food and watering holes for Split clubbers but there are also a few spots in the town centre. Try **Teak Caffé** (Map p152; Majstora Jurja 11) for a drink on the terrace during the day or more intense socialising at night. Le Porta, next door is renowned for its cocktails. Café Song and **Café Shook** (Map p152; Mihovilova Širina) are shoulder to shoulder with young Splitsters at night.

**Entertainment**

In summer everyone starts the evening at one of the cafés along Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda and finishes up at one of the discos or clubs at Bačvice (Map p150). During winter, see some opera and ballet at the **Croatian National Theatre** (Map p152; Trg Gaje Bulata; best seats about 60KN); tickets for the same night are usually available. Erected in 1891, the theatre was fully restored in 1979 in the original style, and it's worth attending a performance for the architecture alone.

**Getting There & Away**

**AIR**

**Croatia Airlines** (Map p152; ☎ 362 997; Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 8), runs flights between Zagreb and Split up to four times daily (475KN, one hour). For international flights to Split see p172.

**BOAT**

You can buy tickets for passenger ferries at the **Jadrolinija stall** (Map p152; Obala Kneza Domagoja). There are also several agents in the large ferry terminal opposite the bus station that can assist with boat trips from Split: **Jadroagent** (Map p150; ☎ 460 999) represents companies with connec-

tions between Split and Ancona; **Jadrolinija** (Map p150; ☎ 338 333) handles all domestic car ferry services that depart from the docks around the ferry terminal; **Splittours Agency** (Map p150; ☎ 352 553) handles tickets between Ancona, Split and Hvar; and **SNAV** (Map p150; ☎ 322 252) has a four-hour connection to Ancona and Pescara.

For more details on connections to/from Italy see p173.

**BUS**

Pre-booked tickets with seat reservations are recommended. Buses run from the main **bus station** (Map p152; ☎ 060 327 327; www.ak-split.hr, in Croatian) to the following destinations:

Destination	Cost	Duration	Frequency
Dubrovnik	118-123KN	4½hr	12 daily
Međugorje	66-89KN	3hr	4 daily
Mostar	65-95KN	2-4hr	8 daily
Pula	315KN	10hr	3 daily
Rijeka	245-259KN	8hr	14 daily
Sarajevo	112-133KN	6½hr	5 daily
Zadar	75-89KN	3hr	26 daily
Zagreb	90-140KN	5-9hr	27 daily

**Touring** (Map p152; ☎ 338 503; Obala Kneza Domagojeva 10), located just near the bus station, represents Deutsche Touring and sells tickets to German cities.

Bus 37 to Solin, Split airport and Trogir leaves from a local bus station on Domovinskog, about 1km northeast of the city centre (see Map p150).

**TRAIN**

There are train connections from Split to Zagreb (152KN, 5½ to nine hours, six daily) and Zadar (78KN, six hours, four daily) through Šibenik.

**Getting Around**

There's an airport bus stop on Obala Lazareta 3 (Map p152). The bus (30KN, 30 minutes) leaves about 90 minutes before flight times, or you can take bus 37 from the bus station on Domovinskog (11KN for a two-zone ticket).

A one-zone ticket costs 9KN for one trip in Central Split and bus services run approximately every 15 minutes from 5.30am to 11.30pm.

**SOLIN (SALONA)**

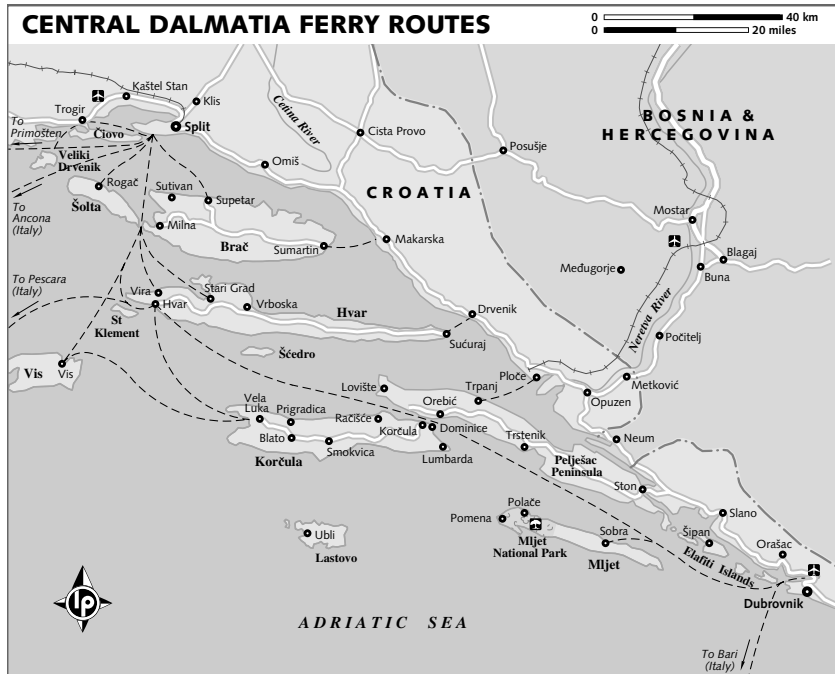
The ruins of the ancient city of Solin (known as 'Salona' to the Romans), among the vineyards at the foot of mountains 5km northeast of Split, are the most interesting archaeological site in Croatia. Today surrounded by noisy highways and industry, Solina was the capital of the Roman province of Dalmatia from the time Julius Caesar elevated it to the status of colony. Solin held out against the barbarians and was evacuated only in AD 614 when the inhabitants fled to Split and neighbouring islands in the face of Avar and Slav attacks.

**Sights**

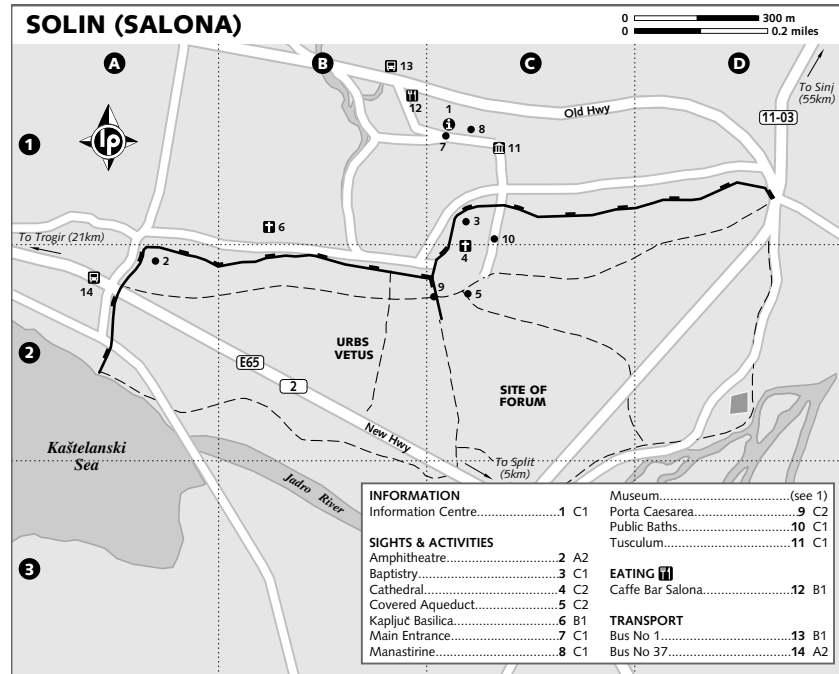
A good place to begin your visit is at the main entrance, near Caffè Bar Salona. There's a small **museum and information centre** (admission 10KN; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat Jun-Sep, 9am-1pm Mon-Sat Oct-May) at the entrance, which also provides a helpful map and some literature about the complex.

**Manastirine**, the fenced area behind the car park, was a burial place for early Christian martyrs before the legalisation of Christianity.

CROATIA



CROATIA





Excavated remains of the cemetery and the 5th-century basilica are highlights, although this area was outside the ancient city itself. Overlooking Manastirine is **Tusculum** with interesting sculptures embedded in the walls and in the garden.

The Manastirine-Tusculum complex is part of an archaeological reserve that can be freely entered. A path bordered by cypress trees runs south towards the northern city wall of Solin. Note the **covered aqueduct** along the inside base of the wall. The ruins in front of you as you stand on the wall were the early-Christian cult centre, which include the three-aisled, 5th-century **cathedral** and a small **baptistry** with inner columns. **Public baths** adjoin the cathedral on the eastern side.

Southwest of the cathedral is the 1st-century east city gate, **Porta Caesarea**, later engulfed by the growth of Solin in all directions. Grooves in the stone road left by ancient chariots can still be seen at this gate.

Walk west along the city wall for about 500m to **Kapljuč Basilica** on the right, another martyrs' burial place. At the western end of Solin is the huge 2nd-century **amphitheatre**, destroyed in the 17th century by the Venetians to prevent it from being used as a refuge by Turkish raiders.

### Getting There & Away

The ruins are easily accessible on Split city bus 1 that runs direct to Solin every half hour from the city bus stop at Trg Gaje Bulata.

From the amphitheatre at Solin it's easy to continue to Trogir by catching a westbound bus 37 from the nearby stop on the adjacent new highway. If, on the other hand, you want to return to Split, use the underpass to cross the highway and catch an eastbound bus 37 (buy a four-zone ticket in Split if you plan to do this).

Alternatively, you can catch most Sinj-bound buses (10KN, 10 daily) from Split's main bus station to take you to Solin.

### TROGIR

☎ 021 / pop 600

The profusion of Romanesque and Renaissance architectural styles within 15th-century walls, as well as the magnificent cathedral at the town centre, inspired Unesco to name Trogir a World Heritage site. It's a more manageable town than Split and makes a good

alternative place to stay given its proximity to Split airport.

### Orientation & Information

Trogir occupies a tiny island in the narrow channel lying between Čiovo Island and the mainland, and is just off the coastal highway. The heart of the old town is a few minutes' walk from the bus station. After crossing the small bridge near the station, go through the north gate. Trogir's finest sights are around Narodni trg to the southeast.

**Atlas** (☎ 881 374; www.atlas-trogir.com; Zvonimira 10) finds private accommodation, books hotels and runs excursions. There's a **left luggage office** (per day 13KN) in the bus station.

### Sights

The glory of the three-naved Venetian **Cathedral of St Lovro** (Trg Ivana Pavla II; ☎ 9.30am-noon year-round, plus 4.30-7pm during summer) is the Romanesque portal of *Adam and Eve* (1240) by Master Radovan, the earliest example of the nude in Dalmatian sculpture. Enter the building via an obscure back door to see the perfect Renaissance Chapel of St Ivan and the choir stalls, pulpit, ciborium (vessel used to hold consecrated wafers) and treasury. You can even climb the cathedral tower, if it's open, for a great view. Also located on the square is the **Church of St John the Baptist** with a magnificent carved portal and an interior showcasing a *Pietà* by Nicola Fiorentinac.

### Getting There & Away

In Split, city bus 37 leaves from the bus station on Domovinskog. It runs between Trogir and Split every 20 minutes (15KN, one hour) throughout the day, with a short stop at Split airport en route. There's also a ferry (35KN, 1½ hours) once a week from Split to Trogir (but not vice versa).

Southbound buses from Zadar (130km) will drop you off in Trogir, as will most northbound buses from Split going to Zadar and beyond. Getting northbound buses from Trogir can be more difficult, as they often arrive from Split already full.

### HVAR ISLAND

☎ 021 / pop 12,600

First it was yachts – now it's mega-yachts. Beautiful Hvar Island is now a required stop for restless international trend-spotters always alert to the latest island paradise. Hvar

deserves the honour, for it is the sunniest and greenest of the Croatian islands. Called the 'Croatian Madeira', Hvar receives 2724 hours of sunshine each year. The stunning interior is a panorama of lavender fields, peaceful villages and pine-covered hills.

Between protective pine-covered slopes and the azure Adriatic, medieval Hvar town exudes more than a whiff of Venice. It was under Venetian rule that Hvar's citizens developed the fine stone-carving skills that resulted in a profusion of beautifully ornamented buildings. Hvar's wide harbour extends its open arms to the sea while a long seaside promenade, dotted with small rocky beaches, stretches from end to end. For more activity, hop on a launch to the Pakleni islands, famous for nude sunbathing.

### Orientation

Car ferries from Split deposit you in Stari Grad but local buses meet most ferries in summer for the trip to Hvar town. The town centre is Trg Sv Stjepana, 100m west of the bus station. Passenger ferries tie up on Riva, the eastern quay, in front of Pelegrini Travel.

### Information

**Atlas Travel Agency** (☎ 741 670) On the western side of the harbour.

**Clinic** (☎ 741 300; Sv Katarina) About 200m from the town centre, it's past the Hotel Pharos.

**Garderoba** (☎ 7am-midnight; 15KN) The left-luggage office is in the bathroom next to the bus station.

**Internet Leon** (☎ 741 824; Riva; per hr 30KN) Internet access next to the Hotel Palace.

**Pelegrini Travel** (☎ /fax 742 250; www.pelegrini-hvar.hr) Also finds private accommodation.

**Post office** (Riva) You can also make phone calls here.

**Tourist office** (☎ /fax 742 977; www.tzhvar.hr;

☎ 8am-1pm & 5-9pm Mon-Sat, 9am-noon Sun Jun-Sep, 8am-2pm Mon-Sat Oct-May) In the arsenal building on the corner of Trg Sv Stjepana.

### Sights & Activities

The full flavour of medieval Hvar is best savoured on the backstreets of the old town. At each end of Hvar is a monastery with a prominent tower. The Dominican **Church of St Marko** at the head of the bay was largely destroyed by Turks in the 16th century, but you can visit the local **archaeological museum** (admission 10KN; ☎ 10am-noon & 8-11pm Jun-Sep) in the ruins. If it is closed you'll still get a good view of the ruins from the road just above, which

leads up to a stone cross on a hill top offering a picture-postcard view of Hvar.

At the southeastern end of Hvar you'll find the 15th-century Renaissance **Franciscan Monastery** (☎ 9am-noon & 5-7pm Jun-Sep, Christmas week & Holy Week), with a wonderful collection of Venetian paintings in the church and adjacent **museum** (admission 15KN; ☎ 9am-noon & 5-7pm Mon-Sat Jun-Sep), including *The Last Supper* by Matteo Ingoli.

Smack in the middle of Hvar is the imposing Gothic **Arsenal**, its great arch visible from afar. The local commune's war galley was once kept here. Upstairs off the arsenal terrace is Hvar's prize: the first **municipal theatre** (admission incl entry to art gallery 15KN; ☎ 10am-noon & 5-7pm) in Europe (1612), rebuilt in the 19th century. Hours can vary and you enter through the adjoining **Gallery of Contemporary Croatian Art** (Arsenal; ☎ 10am-noon & 7-11pm Jun-Sep, Christmas week & Holy Week, 10am-noon Oct-May).

On the hill high above Hvar town is a **Venetian fortress** (1551), and it's worth the climb up to appreciate the sweeping panoramic views. The fort was built to defend Hvar from the Turks, who sacked the town in 1539 and 1571.

There is a small town beach next to the Franciscan Monastery, but the best beach is in front of the Hotel Amphora, around the western corner of the cove. Most people take a launch to the offshore islands that include the naturist Pakleni islands of Jerolim and Stipanska and lovely Palmizana.

In front of the Hotel Amphora, **Diving Centar Viking** (☎ 742 529; www.viking-diving.com) is a large operation in Podstine that offers a certification course, dives (€30) and hotel packages.

### Sleeping

Accommodation in Hvar is extremely tight in July and August: a reservation is highly recommended. For private accommodation, try Atlas or Pelegrini (left). Expect to pay from 200KN to 375KN per double with private bathroom. At the time of writing, several Hvar hotels were in the process of renovation. See www.suncanihvar.hr for the latest information.

**Jagoda & Ante Bracanović Guesthouse** (☎ 741 416, 091 520 37 96; virgilje@yahoo.com; Poviše Skole; s 100-120KN, d 190-220KN) This friendly place is close to the town centre and offers six spacious rooms, each with a bathroom, balcony and kitchen access.

**Hotel Croatia** (☎ 742 400; www.hotelcroatia.net; Majerovica bb; s/d from 700/1000KN; (P) 📶) The bright, white rooms are summery and cooled by fans, and the grounds surrounding the hotel are filled with greenery. More expensive rooms have views of the sea.

**Hotel Podstine** (☎ 740 000; www.podstine.com; s/d from 410/930KN; (P) 📶) Just 2km southwest of the town centre on the secluded Podstine cove lies this restored hotel with modern and comfortable facilities. If you opt out of one of the pricier rooms with a sea view, you can still enjoy the hotel's private beach.

## Eating

The pizzerias along the harbour offer predictable but inexpensive eating.

**Konoba Menego** (☎ 742 036; mains 80KN) Located on the stairway over the Benedictine convent, this eatery is a good choice.

**Bounty** (☎ 742 565; fixed-price menu 55KN) This place is a long-time favourite for its succulent fish, pasta and meat dishes at prices geared more to modest local incomes than freespending tourists.

**Macondo** (☎ 742 850; mains from 80KN) Head upstairs from the northern side of Trg Sv Stjepana for mouthwatering seafood.

The **grocery store** (Trg Sv Stjepana) is a viable restaurant alternative and there's a morning market next to the bus station.

## Drinking

Hvar has some of the best nightlife on the Adriatic coast, mostly centred on the harbour.

**Carpe Diem** (☎ 717 234; Riva) From a groggy breakfast to late-night cocktails, there is no time of day when this swanky place is dull. The music is smooth, the drinks fruity and expensive, and the sofas more than welcoming.

**Nautika** (fabrika) Offering cocktails and non-stop dance music, from techno to hip-hop, this place is ground zero for Hvar's explosive nightlife. Just up the street is Kiva Bar, where you can chill out and talk between dance numbers.

## Getting There & Away

The Jadrolinija ferries between Rijeka and Dubrovnik stop in Stari Grad before continuing to Korčula. The **Jadrolinija agency** (☎ 741 132; Riva) sells boat tickets.

Car ferries from Split call at Stari Grad (32KN, one hour) three times daily (five daily

in July and August) and there's an afternoon passenger boat from Split to Hvar town (23KN, 50 minutes) that goes on to Vela Luka on Korčula Island (22KN, one hour). Even more convenient is the daily passenger boat *Krilo* from Hvar to Split (33KN, 1½ hour) and Korčula (33KN, 1½ hours). See p172 for information on international connections. Buses meet most ferries that dock at Stari Grad in July and August, but if you come off-season it's best to check at the tourist office or at Pelegrini to make sure the bus is running. A taxi costs from 150KN to 200KN.

There are also between four and 12 car ferries per day making the 30-minute run between Drvenik on the mainland and Sućuraj on Hvar's southeastern tip. No reservations are possible (80KN for car and driver) so show up early, especially in the summer.

It's possible to visit Hvar on a (hectic) day trip from Split by catching the morning Jadrolinija ferry to Stari Grad, a bus to Hvar town, then the last ferry from Stari Grad directly back to Split.

## KORČULA ISLAND

☎ 020 / pop 16,200

Besides the dense woods that led the original Greek settlers to call the island Korkyra Melaina (Black Korčula), Korčula is graced with indented coves, rolling hills and a walled old town that resembles a miniature Dubrovnik. As the largest island in an archipelago of 48, it provides plenty of opportunities for scenic drives, particularly along the southern coast.

Swimming opportunities abound in the many quiet coves and secluded beaches, while the interior produces some of Croatia's finest wine, especially dessert wines made from the *grk* grape cultivated around Lumbarda. Local olive oil is another product worth seeking out.

At the northeastern tip of the island, Korčula town is tucked onto a small hilly peninsula. Within its round defensive towers are red-roofed houses along narrow stone streets designed to protect its inhabitants from the winds swirling around the peninsula. Korčula Island was controlled by Venice from the 14th to the 18th centuries, as is evident from the Venetian coats of arms adorning the official buildings. If you don't stop in Korčula, one look at this unique town from the Jadrolinija ferry will make you regret it.

## Orientation

The big Jadrolinija car ferry drops you off either in the west harbour next to the Hotel Korčula or the east harbour next to Marko Polo Tours. The Old Town lies between the two harbours. The large hotels and main beach lie south of the east harbour, and the residential neighbourhood Sveti Nikola (with a smaller beach) is southwest of the west harbour. The town bus station is 100m south of the Old Town centre.

## Information

There are ATMs in town at HVB Splitska Banka, for one. You can change money there, at the post office or at any of the travel agencies.

**Atlas Travel Agency** (☎ 711 060; Plokata 19 travnja 1914 bb) Represents Amex, runs excursions and finds private accommodation.

**Hospital** (☎ 711 137; Ul 59, Kalac) It's about 1km past the Hotel Marko Polo.

**Jadrolinija Office** (☎ 715 410) About 25m up from the west harbour.

**Marko Polo Tours** (☎ 715 400; marko-polo-tours@du.t-com.hr; Biline 5) Finds private accommodation, changes money and organises excursions.

**Post office** Hidden next to the stairway up to the Old Town, the post office also has telephones.

**Rent a Dir** (☎ 711 908; www.korcula-rent.com) Next to Marko Polo Tours, it rents autos, scooters and small boats.

**Tino's Internet** (☎ 091 509 11 82; Ul Tri Sulara; per hr 25KN) Tino's other outlet is at the ACI Marina; both are open long hours.

**Tourist Office** (☎ 715 701; tgz-korcule@du.t-com.hr; Obala Franje Tudjmana bb; ☎ 8am-3pm & 5-9pm Mon-Sat, 8am-3pm Sun Jun-Sep, 8am-1pm & 5-9pm Mon-Sat Oct-May) An excellent source of information, located on the west harbour.

## Sights

Other than following the circuit of the former city walls or walking along the shore, sightseeing in Korčula centres on Cathedral Square. The Gothic **St Mark's Cathedral** (Katedrala Svetog Marka; ☎ 10am-noon & 5-7pm Jul & Aug, Mass only during off-season) features two paintings by Tintoretto (*Three Saints* on the altar and *Annunciation* to one side).

The **treasury** (☎ 711 049; Trg Sv Marka Statuta; admission 15KN; ☎ 9am-2pm & 5-8pm May-Oct) in the 14th-century Abbey Palace next to the cathedral is worth a look; even better is the **Town Museum** (Gradski Muzej; ☎ 711 420; Trg Sv Marka Statuta; admission 10KN; ☎ 10am-1pm Nov-Mar, 10am-2pm Apr-May,

10am-2pm & 7-9pm Jun & Oct, 10am-9pm Jul & Aug) in the 15th-century Gabriellis Palace opposite. The exhibits of Greek pottery, Roman ceramics and home furnishings have English captions. It's said that Marco Polo was born in Korčula in 1254; you can visit what is believed to have been his **house** (admission 10KN; ☎ 10am-1pm & 5-7pm Mon-Sat Jul & Aug) and climb the tower.

There's also an **Icon Museum** (Trg Svih Svetih; admission 7.50KN; ☎ 9am-2pm & 5-8pm May-Oct) in the Old Town. It isn't much of a museum, but visitors are let into the beautiful old **All Saints Church**.

In the high-summer season water taxis at the east harbour collect passengers to visit various points on the island, as well as **Badija Island**, which features a 15th-century Franciscan monastery in the process of reconstruction, plus **Orebić** and the nearby village of **Lumbarda**, which both have sandy beaches.

## Tours

Both **Atlas Travel Agency** (☎ 711 060) and **Marko Polo Tours** (☎ 715 400; marko-polo-tours@du.t-com.hr) offer a variety of boat tours and island excursions.

## Sleeping

The big hotels in Korčula could use a makeover, but there are a wealth of guesthouses that offer clean, attractive rooms and friendly service. Atlas Travel Agency and Marko Polo Tours arrange private rooms, charging from 200KN to 375KN per double with private bathroom. Apartments start at about 450KN. Or you could try one of the following options:

**Autocamp Kalac** (☎ 711 182; fax 711 146; per person/camp site 45/68KN) This attractive camping ground is behind Hotel Bon Repos in a dense pine grove near the beach.

**Depolo** (☎ /fax 711 621; tereza.depolo@du.t-com.hr; d with/without sea view 240/200KN; 📶) In the residential neighbourhood close to the Old Town of Sveti Nikola and 100m west of the bus station, this guesthouse has spiffy, modern rooms.

**Pansion Hajduk** (☎ 711 267; olga.zec@du.t-com.hr; d with/without breakfast 383/315KN 📶) It's a couple of kilometres from town on the road to Lumbarda, but you get a warm welcome, air-conditioned rooms with TVs, and even a swimming pool.

Other guesthouses nearby for about the same price include **Peručić** (☎ /fax 711 458), with great balconies, and the homy **Ojđanić** (☎ /fax 711 708; roko-taxi@du.t-com.hr). Local Ratko Ojđanić

also has a water taxi and a lot of experience with fishing trips around the island.

### Eating

**Buffet-Pizzeria Doris** (☎ 711 596; Ul Tri Solara; mains from 35KN) Simple but tasty dishes are served up indoors or outdoors on a shaded terrace. The grilled vegetable platter is a welcome vegetarian treat.

**Planjak** (☎ 711 015; Plokata 19 Travnja; mains from 50KN) This restaurant-grill, between the supermarket and the Jadrolinija office in town, is popular with a local crowd who appreciate the fresh, Dalmatian dishes as much as the low prices.

**Konoba Maslina** (☎ 711 720; Lumbarska cesta bb; mains from 50KN) It's well worth the walk out here for the authentic Korčulan home cooking. The multi-bean soup is a standout, but all is scrumptious. It's about a kilometre past the Hotel Marko Polo on the road to Lumbarda, but you can often arrange to be picked up or dropped off in town.

There's a supermarket next to Marko Polo Tours.

### Entertainment

Between May and September there's **moreška sword dancing** (tickets 80KN; ☎ 9pm Thu) by the Old Town gate; performances are more frequent during July and August. The clash of swords and the graceful movements of the dancer-fighters make an exciting show. You can purchase tickets from the tourist office and travel agencies.

### Getting There & Away

Transport connections to Korčula are good. There's one bus every day from Dubrovnik (87KN, three hours), one from Zagreb (195KN, 12 hours) and one a week from Sarajevo (152KN, eight hours).

By car from the mainland, take the car ferry from Ploče to Trpanj (103KN, 30 minutes, three or four daily), then drive across the Pelješac peninsula to the car ferry from Orebić to Dominče (58KN, 15 minutes). Prices are for a car and driver.

There's a regular afternoon car ferry between Split and Vela Luka (35KN, three hours), on the island's western end, that stops at Hvar most days. Six daily buses link Korčula town to Vela Luka (28KN, one hour), but services from Vela Luka are reduced at the weekend.

From Orebić, look for the passenger launch (15KN, 15 minutes, at least four times daily year-round), which will drop you off near Hotel Korčula right below the Old Town's towers. There's also a car ferry to Dominče (10KN, 15 minutes) that stops near the Hotel Bon Repos, where you can pick up the bus from Lumbarda or take a water taxi to Korčula town. For international connections see p172.

### OREBIĆ

Orebić, on the southern coast of the Pelješac Peninsula between Korčula and Ploče, offers better beaches than those found at Korčula, 2.5km across the water. The easy access by ferry from Korčula makes it the perfect place to go for the day. The best beach in Orebić is Trstenica cove, a 15-minute walk east along the shore from the port.

### Getting There & Away

In Orebić the ferry terminal and the bus station are adjacent to each other. Korčula buses to Dubrovnik, Zagreb and Sarajevo stop at Orebić. See the Korčula section (left) for additional bus and ferry information.

### MLJET ISLAND

☎ 020 / pop 1111

Magical Mljet ('Meleda' in Italian) would be anyone's idea of an Adriatic island paradise. With 72% of the island covered by forests and the rest dotted by fields, vineyards and small villages, Mljet casts a spell that can be difficult to break. Created in 1960, Mljet National Park occupies the western third of the island and surrounds two saltwater lakes, Malo Jezero and Veliko Jezero.

### Orientation & Information

Tour boats arrive at Pomena wharf at Mljet's western end. Jadrolinija ferries arrive at Sobra on the eastern end and they are met by a local bus for the 1½-hour ride to Pomena and Polače. The *Nona Ana* passenger boat from Dubrovnik docks at Sobra and then the little town of Polače, about 5km from Pomena. You can enter the National Park from either Pomena or Polače. The **tourist office** (☎ 744 186; np-mljet@np-mljet.hr; ☎ 8am-1pm & 5-8pm Mon-Fri Oct-May; 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, 8am-1pm Sun Jun-Sep) is in Polače, and the only ATM on the island is at the Odisej hotel in Pomena. The admission price for the national park is 90/30KN adult/concession. The price includes a bus and boat

transfer to the Benedictine monastery and there is no park admission price if you stay overnight on the island.

### Sights & Activities

From Pomena it's a 15-minute walk to a jetty on **Veliko Jezero**, the larger of the two lakes. Here you can board a boat to a small lake islet and have lunch at a 12th-century **Benedictine monastery**, which now houses a restaurant.

There's a small landing on the main island opposite the monastery where the boat operator drops off passengers upon request. It's not possible to walk right around Veliko Jezero because there's no bridge over the channel that connects the lakes to the sea.

Mljet is good for cycling; several restaurants along the dock in Polače and the Odisej hotel in Pomena rent bicycles (90KN per half day). If you plan to cycle between Pomena and Polače be aware that a steep mountain separates the two towns. The bike path along Veliko Jezero is an easier pedal, but it doesn't link the two towns.

### Tours

See p159 and p163 in Korčula and Dubrovnik respectively for agencies offering excursions to Mljet. The tours last from 8.30am to 6pm and include the park entry fee. The boat trip from Korčula to Pomena takes at least two hours (less by hydrofoil); from Dubrovnik it takes longer.

### Sleeping

The Polače tourist office (opposite) arranges private accommodation at 220KN per double room in summer, but it is essential to make arrangements before arrival in peak season. There are more *sobe* (private rooms) signs around Pomena than Polače, but practically none at all in Sobra.

There's no camping permitted inside the national park, but there are two grounds outside it.

**Marina** (☎ 745 071; per person/camp site 35/35KN; ☎ Jun-Sep) This small camping ground is in Ropa, about 1km from the park.

**Camping Mungos** (☎ 745 060; fax 745 125; Babino Poje; per person/camp site 55/35KN; ☎ Jun-Sep) Not very shady, but well located, this camping ground is not far from the beach and the lovely grotto of Odysseus.

The **Hotel Odisej** (☎ 744 022; www.hotelodisej.hr; d from 740KN; 🍷) in Pomena has decent enough

rooms and offers a range of activities, but the new, ecofriendly **Soline 6** (☎ 744 024; www.soline6.com; s/d330/580KN) in Soline is a more interesting choice. It's the only accommodation in the national park and has waterless toilets, solar heating and organic waste composting. You'll have to do without electricity though.

### Eating

**Nine** (☎ 744 037; Pomena; mains from 80KN) The Nine, opposite hotel Odisej, is by the sea and, though touristy in high season, turns out succulent seafood.

### Getting There & Away

Most people visit the island on excursions from Korčula or Dubrovnik, but it's possible to take a passenger boat from Dubrovnik or come on the regular car ferry from Dubrovnik (32KN, two hours) or Korčula and stay a few days for hiking, cycling and boating.

The *Nona Ana* is a small boat that makes a run to and from Dubrovnik to Polače daily, leaving in the morning and returning in late afternoon (55KN, 1¾ to 2¾ hours).

Tickets are sold in the **Turistička Zajednica** (Map p162; ☎ 417 983; Obala Papa Ivana Pavla II) in Gruž (Dubrovnik) or on board, but it's wise to buy in advance as the boat fills up quickly.

### DUBROVNIK

☎ 020 / pop 43,770

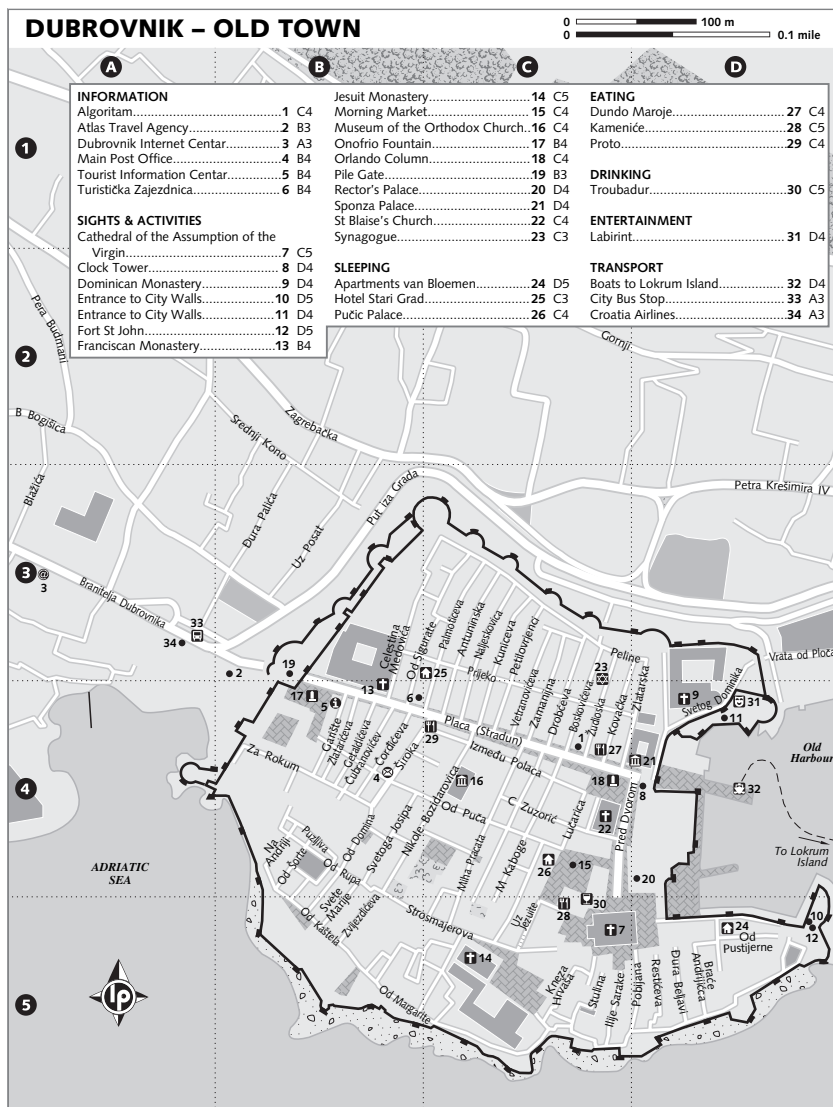
Lord Byron was not overstating the matter when he proclaimed Dubrovnik 'the pearl of the Adriatic'. Dubrovnik is clearly special. A magnificent curtain of walls surrounds marble streets and baroque buildings that exude a pearly light in the Adriatic sun. The main pedestrian thoroughfare, Placa, is a melange of cafés and shops with outstanding monuments at either end. Churches, monasteries and museums ornamented with finely carved stone recall an eventful history and a vibrant artistic tradition. Beyond the city is a heavenly landscape of beaches, wooded peninsulas and a sea strewn with lush islands.

### History

Founded 1300 years ago by refugees from Epidaurus in Greece, medieval Dubrovnik (Ragusa until 1918) shook off Venetian control in the 14th century, becoming an independent republic and one of Venice's more important maritime rivals, trading with Egypt, Syria, Sicily, Spain, France and later Turkey. The







has a collection of liturgical objects, paintings and pharmacy equipment.

In front of the clock tower at the eastern end of Placa, is the **Orlando Column** (Map p164; 1419) – a favourite meeting place. On opposite sides of Orlando are the 16th-century **Sponza Palace** (Map p164; ☎ 321 032; admission free; ☹ 8am–3pm Mon–Fri, 8am–1pm Sat), which now houses the State

Archives, and **St Blaise's Church** (Map p164), a lovely Italian baroque building built in 1715 to replace an earlier church destroyed in the 1667 earthquake. At the end of Pred Dvorom, the wide street beside St Blaise, is the baroque **Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin** (Map p164). Located between the two churches, the 1441 Gothic **Rector's Palace** (Map p164; adult/

concession 20/7KN; ☹ 9am–2pm Mon–Sat Oct–May, 9am–6pm daily Jun–Sep) houses a museum with furnished rooms, baroque paintings and historical exhibits. The elected rector was not permitted to leave the building during his one-month term without the permission of the senate. The narrow street opposite opens onto Gundulićeva Poljana, a bustling **morning market**. Up the stairs at the southern end of the square is the **Jesuit monastery** (Map p164; 1725).

As you proceed up Placa, make a detour to the **Museum of the Orthodox Church** (Map p164; adult/concession 10/5KN; ☹ 9am–2pm Mon–Fri) for a look at a fascinating collection of 15th- to 19th-century icons.

By now you'll be ready for a leisurely walk around the **city walls** (Map p164; adult/concession 50/20KN; ☹ 10am–3.30pm Oct–Mar, 9am–6.30pm Apr–Sep), which has entrances just inside Pile Gate, across from the Dominican monastery and near **Fort St John**. Built between the 13th and 16th centuries, these powerful walls are the finest in the world and Dubrovnik's main claim to fame. They enclose the entire city in a protective veil over 2km long and up to 25m high, with two round and 14 square towers, two corner fortifications and a large fortress. The views over the town and sea are great – this walk could be the high point of your visit.

Whichever way you go, you'll notice the 14th-century **Dominican monastery** (Map p164; adult/concession 15/7.50KN; ☹ 9am–5pm) in the north-eastern corner of the city, whose forbidding fortress-like exterior shelters a rich trove of paintings from Dubrovnik's finest 15th- and 16th-century artists.

Dubrovnik has many other sights, such as the unmarked **synagogue** (Map p164; Ul Žudioska 5; admission 10KN; ☹ 10am–3pm Mon–Fri) near the clock tower, which is the second oldest synagogue in Europe. The uppermost streets of the Old Town below the north and south walls are pleasant to wander along.

## BEACHES

**Ploče** (Map p162), the closest beach to the old city, is just beyond the 17th-century **Lazareti** (Map p162; a former quarantine station) outside Ploče Gate. There are also hotel beaches along the Lapad Peninsula, which you are able to use without a problem. The largest is outside the Hotel Kompas.

An even better option is to take the ferry that shuttles half-hourly in summer to lush **Lokrum Island** (return 80KN), a national park

with a rocky nudist beach (marked 'FKK'), a botanical garden and the ruins of a medieval Benedictine monastery.

## ACTIVITIES

Whether you're just dipping into the sport or are an experienced kayaker, **Adriatic Sea Kayaking** (Map p162; ☎ 098-438 888; www.adriatic-sea-kayak.com; Masarykov put 9) has a kayak tour for you.

Get certified or explore the 1943 wreck of the **Taranto** off nearby Grebeni Island with **Navis Underwater Explorers** (Map p162; ☎ 099-350 27 73; www.navisdubrovnik.com; Copacabana beach).

## Tours

Atlas Travel Agency (p163) offers full-day tours to Mostar (€48.50), Medugorje (€43), the Elafiti Islands (€38) and Mljet (€58), among other destinations. Its tour to Montenegro (€51.50) is a good alternative to taking the morning bus to Montenegro, since the bus schedules make a day trip there impractical.

## Festivals & Events

The **Dubrovnik Summer Festival** (mid-July to mid-August) is a major cultural event, with over 100 performances at different venues in the Old Town. The **Feast of St Blaise** (3 February) and **carnival** (February) are also celebrated.

## Sleeping

Private accommodation is generally the best option in Dubrovnik, but beware of the scramble of private owners at the bus station or Jadrolinija wharf. Some offer what they say they offer, but others are rip-off artists. If you book online most owners will meet you at the station if you call in advance. Otherwise head to any of the travel agencies or the Turistička Zajednica. Expect to pay about 200KN to 220KN a room in high season.

## BUDGET

### Old Town

**Apartments van Bloemen** (Map p164; ☎ 323 433, 091-33 24 106; www.karmenduu.tk; Bandureva 1; apts 625-1000KN; ☹) This is Dubrovnik's most personal and original accommodation, with a great location in the Old Town. All four apartments are beautifully decorated with original art; three of them sleep three people comfortably.

### Outside the Old Town

**Solitudo** (Map p162; ☎ 448 200; Iva Dulčića 39; site per person 50KN) This pretty, renovated camping

ground is within walking distance of the beach.

**YHA Hostel** (Map p162; ☎ 423 241; dubrovnik@hfh.hr; Vinka Sagrestana 3; B&B/half-board 129/160KN) It's not exactly restful here, but you'll have a lot of fun as there are a fair number of bars and cafés nearby.

**Vila Mica** (☎ 437 332; www.vilamicika.hr; Mata Vodopica; s/d 215/430KN; 📍) This is a simple, well-run establishment. The rooms are equipped with TVs and modern baths, there's a pleasant outdoor terrace and it's only 200m to the Lapad beaches. Prices do not include breakfast.

## MIDRANGE

### Old Town

**Hotel Stari Grad** (Map p164; ☎ 322 244; www.hotelstari.grad.com; Od Sigurate 4; s/d 980/1400KN) Staying in the heart of the old town in a lovingly restored stone building is a delightful experience. There are only eight rooms; each one is furnished with taste and a sense of comfort. From the rooftop terrace, you have a marvellous view over the town. Prices stay the same all year.

### Outside the Old Town

**Hotel Sumratin** (Map p162; ☎ 436 333; www.hotels-sumratin.com; Šetalište Kralja Zvonimira 31; s/d 460/760KN; 📍) About 200m from the water, this calm hotel offers fresh, comfortable rooms.

**Hotel Petka** (Map p162; ☎ 410 500; www.hotelpetka.com; Obala Stjepana Radića 38; s/d from 800/1130KN; 📍 🚰) Situated opposite the Jadrolinija ferry landing, Hotel Petka won't bowl you over with charm, but the location is great for getting back and forth to the ferry.

**Hotel Lapad** (Map p162; ☎ 432 922; www.hotel-lapad.hr; Lapadska Obala 37; s/d from 830/1080KN; 📍 🚰) This hotel is a solid, old limestone structure with simple but cheerful rooms and an outdoor swimming pool.

## TOP END

**Pučić Palace** (Map p164; ☎ 326 222; www.thepucicpalace.com; Od Puća 1; s/d 2530/4000KN; 📍 🚰) Right in the heart of the Old Town, these palatial digs have been designed and decorated to the cutting edge of fashion. Warm and cosy it's not, but the countesses and moguls that stay here probably don't care.

## Eating

### OLD TOWN

There are dozens of places to chow down in the Old Town but the menus tend to focus

on pizza, pasta, fish and seafood. Restaurants with more exotic flavours are beginning to make inroads, but locals tend to stick with the tried and true.

**Kamenice** (Map p164; ☎ 323 682; Gundulićeva Poljana 8; mains from 40KN) Portions are huge at this convivial hang-out known for its mussels. Its outdoor terrace is on one of Dubrovnik's more scenic squares.

**Dundo Maroje** (Map p164; ☎ 321 021; Kovačka; mains from 55KN) Nothing adventurous here, but everything is cooked exactly as it should be. The menu is varied with an accent on seafood.

**Proto** (Map p164; ☎ 323 234; www.esculap-teo.hr; Široka 1; mains from 80KN) This place has become a blockbuster success largely because the fish and seafood are chosen with care and expertly prepared. There's not a lot of fuss in the preparation, allowing the natural flavours to shine. Vegetarians will enjoy the wonderful Župa Dubrovačka potatoes prepared with rosemary.

## LAPAD

The better dining is in Lapad.

**Atlantic** (Map p162; ☎ 435 726; Kardinala Štepinca 42; mains from 45KN) The homemade pasta and vegetarian lasagne are outstanding here, even if the ambience is not terribly atmospheric.

**Levenat** (Map p162; ☎ 435 352; Šetalište Nika i Meda Pučića 15; mains 55-120KN) The interior at this eatery is classic and the outdoor terrace has a smashing view. The food is superb and there's even a vegetarian plate.

**Pergola** (Map p162; ☎ 436 848; Kralja Tomislava 1; mains from 50KN) This is another consistently satisfying place with an outdoor terrace and good seafood.

**Eden** (Map p162; ☎ 435 133; Kardinala Štepinca 54; mains 55-90KN) The leafy terrace upstairs is an agreeable spot to enjoy meat, pasta or fish dishes.

## Drinking

Bars have sprung up like mushrooms on Bana Josipa Jelačića near the youth hostel, but these days thirsty young singles fill the cafés and terraces on Bunićeva in the Old Town. **Troubadur** (Map p164; ☎ 412 154; Gundulićeva Poljana) is a long-time favourite for jazz; the ambience is joyous, especially when the owner, Marko, plays.

## Entertainment

The summer months are chock-full of concerts and folk dancing. The tourist office has the full schedule.

**Latino Club Fuego** (Map p162; Dubrovačkih Branitelja 2) Despite the name, at this disco you'll find a gamut of dance music that includes techno and pop.

**Open-air cinema** (Map p162; Kumičića) In Lapad, this spot allows you to watch movies, shown in their original language, by starlight.

**Labirint** (Map p164; ☎ 322 222; Svetog Dominika 2) A vast restaurant, nightclub, disco and cabaret complex that caters to high rollers. It can chew through your wallet pretty quickly unless you just come for a romantic cocktail on the roof terrace.

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

Daily flights to/from Zagreb are operated by **Croatia Airlines** (Map p164; ☎ 413 777; Dubrovačkih Branitelja 9). The fare starts at about 400KN one way (higher in peak season) and the trip takes about an hour.

There are also nonstop flights to Rome, London and Manchester that operate from April to October.

### BOAT

In addition to the **Jadrolinija** (Map p162; ☎ 418 000; Gruž) coastal ferry north to Hvar, Split, Zadar and Rijeka, there's a local ferry that leaves Dubrovnik for Sobra on Mljet Island (26KN to 32KN, 2½ hours) throughout the year. See also the Central Dalmatia Ferry Routes map on p154.

**Jadroagent** (Map p162; ☎ 419 009; fax 419 029; Obala Pape Ivana Pavla 32) handles ticketing for most international boats from Croatia.

For information on international connections see p173.

### BUS

Buses from Dubrovnik include the following:

Destination	Cost	Duration	Frequency
Korčula	87KN	3hr	1 daily
Mostar	87KN	3hr	2 daily
Orebić	87KN	2½hr	1 daily
Rijeka	391KN	12hr	3 daily
Sarajevo	160KN	5hr	1 daily
Split	118-123KN	4½hr	14 daily
Zadar	170-210KN	8hr	7 daily
Zagreb	170-196KN	11hr	7 daily

There's a daily 11am bus to the Montenegrin border, from where a Montenegro bus takes

you to Herceg Novi (60KN, two hours) and on to Kotor (100KN, 2½ hours) and Bar (130KN, three hours). In a busy summer season and at weekends buses out of Dubrovnik can be crowded, so book a ticket well before the scheduled departure time.

## Getting Around

Čilipi international airport is 24km south-east of Dubrovnik. The Croatia Airlines airport buses (30KN, 45 minutes) leave from the main **bus station** (Map p162; ☎ 357 088) 1½ hours before flight times. A taxi costs around 220KN.

Dubrovnik's buses run frequently and generally on time. The fare is 10KN if you buy from the driver but only 8KN if you buy a ticket at a kiosk.

# CROATIA DIRECTORY

## ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation listings in this guide have been ordered by pricing from cheapest to most expensive (ie budget to top end).

Along the Croatian coast accommodation is priced according to three seasons, which tend to vary from place to place. Generally October to May are the cheapest months, June and September are mid-priced, but count on paying top price for the peak season, which runs for a six-week period in July and August. Prices quoted in this chapter are for the peak period and do not include 'residence tax', which runs from about 4KN to 7.50KN depending on the location and season. Prices also assume a three-night stay; count on a 30% surcharge for shorter stays. Deduct about 25% if you come in June, the beginning of July and September; about 35% for May and October; and about 50% for all other times. Note that prices for rooms in Zagreb are pretty much constant all year and that many hotels on the coast close in winter. Some places offer half-board, which is bed and two meals a day: usually breakfast and one other meal. It can be good value if you're not too fussy about what you eat.

## Camping

Nearly 100 camping grounds are scattered along the Croatian coast. Opening times generally run from mid-April to September, give or take a few weeks. The exact times change



from year to year so it's wise to call in advance if you're arriving at either end of the season.

Many camping grounds, especially in Istria, are gigantic 'autocamps' with restaurants, shops and row upon row of caravans. Expect to pay up to 100KN for the camp site at some of the larger establishments but half that at most other camping grounds, in addition to 40KN to 50KN per person.

Nude camping grounds (marked 'FKK') are among the best because their secluded locations ensure peace and quiet. However, bear in mind that freelance camping is officially prohibited. A good site for camping information and links is [www.camping.hr](http://www.camping.hr).

### Hostels

The **Croatian YHA** (☎ 01-48 47 472; [www.hfhs.hr](http://www.hfhs.hr); Dežmanova 9, Zagreb) operates youth hostels in Dubrovnik, Rijeka, Zadar, Zagreb and Pula. Nonmembers pay an additional 10KN per person daily for a stamp on a welcome card; six stamps entitle you to a membership. The Croatian YHA can also provide information about private youth hostels in Krk.

### Hotels

Hotels are ranked from one to five stars with the most in the two- and three-star range. Features such as satellite TV, direct-dial phones, hi-tech bathrooms, minibars and air-con are standard in four- and five-star hotels. Many two- and three-star hotels offer satellite TV but you'll find better décor in the higher categories. Gradually, the 1970s concrete-block hotels built to warehouse package tourists are being transformed into four-star establishments. During peak season some hotels may demand a surcharge for stays of less than four nights but this surcharge is usually waived during the rest of the year, when prices drop steeply.

Breakfast is included in the prices quoted for hotels in this chapter, unless stated otherwise.

### Private Rooms

Private rooms or apartments are the best accommodation in Croatia. Service is excellent and the rooms are usually extremely well kept. You may very well be greeted by offers of *sobe* as you step off your bus and boat, but rooms are most often arranged by travel agencies or the local tourist office. Booking through an agency is somewhat more expensive but

at least you'll know who to complain to if things go wrong.

The most expensive rooms are three-star establishments with private bathrooms in places that resemble small guesthouses. Some of the better ones are listed in this chapter. It's best to call in advance as the owners will often meet you at the bus station or ferry dock. In a two-star room, the bathroom is shared with one other room; in a one-star room, the bathroom is shared with two other rooms or with the owner, who is often an elderly widow. Breakfast is usually not included but can sometimes be arranged for an additional 30KN; be sure to clarify whether the price agreed upon is per person or per room. If you're travelling in a small group it may be worthwhile to get a small apartment with cooking facilities, which are quite widely available along the coast.

It makes little sense to price-shop from agency to agency since prices are fixed by the local tourist association. Whether you deal with the owner directly or book through an agency, you'll pay a 30% surcharge for stays of less than four nights and sometimes 50% or even 100% more for a one-night stay, although you may be able to get them to waive the surcharge if you arrive during the low season. Prices for private rooms in this chapter are for a four-night stay in peak season.

### ACTIVITIES

#### Diving

The clear waters and varied underwater life of the Adriatic have led to a flourishing dive industry along the coast. Cave diving is the real speciality in Croatia; night diving and wreck diving are also offered and there are coral reefs in some places, but they are in rather deep water. You must get a permit for a boat dive: go to the harbour captain in any port with your passport, certification card and 100KN. Permission is valid for a year. If you dive with a dive centre, they will take care of the paperwork. Most of the coastal resorts mentioned in this chapter have dive shops. See **Diving Croatia** ([www.diving-hrs.hr](http://www.diving-hrs.hr)) for contact information.

#### Hiking

Risnjak National Park at Crni Lug, 12km west of Delnice between Zagreb and Rijeka, is a good hiking area in summer. Hiking is

advisable only from late spring to early autumn. The steep gorges and beech forests of Paklenica National Park, 40km northeast of Zadar, also offer excellent hiking.

### Kayaking

There are countless possibilities for anyone carrying a folding sea kayak, especially among the Elafiti and Kornati Islands. Lopud makes a good launch point from which to explore the Elafiti Islands – there's a daily ferry from Dubrovnik. Sali on Dugi Otok is close to the Kornati Islands and is connected by daily ferry to Zadar.

### BOOKS

Lonely Planet's *Croatia* is a comprehensive guide to the country. There's also Zoë Brán's *After Yugoslavia*, part of the Lonely Planet *Journeys* series, which recounts the author's return to a troubled region.

As Croatia emerges from the shadow of the former Yugoslavia, several writers of Croatian origin have taken the opportunity to rediscover their roots. *Plum Brandy: Croatian Journeys* by Josip Novakovich is a sensitive exploration of his family's Croatian background. *Croatia: Travels in Undiscovered Country* by Tony Fabijancic recounts the life of rural people in a new Croatia.

For a comprehensive account of the personalities and events surrounding the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, it would be hard to go past *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* by Laura Silber and Allan Little, based on the 1995 BBC TV series of the same name. Richard Holbrooke's *To End a War* is a riveting look at the people and events surrounding the Dayton Agreement. *Café Europa* is a series of essays by a Croatian journalist, Slavenka Drakulić, that provides an inside look at life in the country since independence. Her most recent book, *They Would Never Hurt a Fly*, examines the deeds of war criminals prosecuted at The Hague. Rebecca West's travel classic, *Black Lamb & Grey Falcon*, contains a long section on Croatia as part of her trip through Yugoslavia in 1937. Tony White, a British writer, recently retraced her journey and wrote *Another Fool in the Balkans* that manages to ignore nearly all of Croatia's trauma during the 1990s. Marcus Tanner's *Croatia: A Nation Forged in War* provides an excellent overview of Croatia's history.

### BUSINESS HOURS

Banking and post office hours are 7.30am to 7pm on weekdays and 8am to noon on Saturday. Many shops are open 8am to 7pm on weekdays and until 2pm on Saturday. Along the coast life is more relaxed; shops and offices frequently close around noon for an afternoon break and reopen around 4pm. Restaurants are open long hours, often noon to midnight, with Sunday closings outside of peak season. Cafés are generally open from 10am to midnight; bars from 9pm to 2am. Internet cafés are also open long hours, usually seven days a week.

### CUSTOMS

Travellers can bring their personal effects into the country, along with 1L of liquor, 1L of wine, 500g of coffee, 200 cigarettes and 50mL of perfume. The import or export of kuna is limited to 15,000KN per person.

### DISABLED TRAVELLERS

Because of the number of wounded war veterans, more attention is being paid to the needs of disabled travellers. Public toilets at bus stations, train stations, airports and large public venues are usually wheelchair accessible. Large hotels are wheelchair accessible but very little private accommodation is. The bus and train stations in Zagreb, Zadar, Rijeka, Split and Dubrovnik are wheelchair accessible but the local Jadrolinija ferries are not. For further information, get in touch with **Savez Organizacija Invalida Hrvatske** (☎ /fax 01-48 29 394; Savska cesta 3, 10000 Zagreb).

### EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

#### Croatian Embassies & Consulates

Croatian embassies and consulates abroad include the following:

**Australia** (☎ 02-6286 6988; 14 Jindalee Cres, O'Malley, ACT 2601)

**Canada** (☎ 613-562 7820; 229 Chapel St, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7Y6)

**France** (☎ 01 5370 0287; 2 Rue de Lubeck, Paris)

**Germany** Berlin (☎ 030-219 15 514; Ahornstrasse 4, Berlin 10787); Bonn (☎ 022-895 29 20; Rolandstrasse 52, Bonn 53179)

**Ireland** (☎ 1 4767 181; Adelaide Chambers, Peter St, Dublin)

**Netherlands** (☎ 70 362 36 38; Amaliastraat 16, The Hague)

**New Zealand** (☎ 09-836 5581; 131 Lincoln Rd, Henderson, Box 83200, Edmonton, Auckland)

**South Africa** (☎ 012-342 1206; 1160 Church St, 0083 Colbyn, Pretoria)

**UK** (☎ 020-7387 2022; 21 Conway St, London W1P 5HL)

**USA** (☎ 202-588 5899; www.croatiaemb.org; 2343 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington, DC 20008)

## Embassies & Consulates in Croatia

The following addresses are in Zagreb (area code ☎ 01):

**Albania** (☎ 48 10 679; Jurišićeva 2a)

**Australia** (☎ 48 91 200; www.auembassy.hr; Kaptol Centar, Nova Ves 11)

**Bosnia and Hercegovina** (☎ 48 19 420; Hatzova 3)

**Bulgaria** (☎ 46 46 609; Gornje Pekrižje 28)

**Canada** (☎ 48 81 200; zagreb@dfait-maeci.gc.ca; Prilaz Gjüre Deželića 4)

**Czech Republic** (☎ 61 77 239; Savska 41)

**France** (☎ 48 93 680; consulat@ambafrance.hr; Hebrangova 2)

**Germany** (☎ 61 58 105; www.deutschebotschaft-zagreb.hr, in German; avenija grada Vukovara 64)

**Hungary** (☎ 48 90 900; Pantovčak 255-257)

**Ireland** (☎ 63 10 025; Miramarska 23)

**Netherlands** (☎ 46 84 880; nlgovzag@zg.t-com.hr; Medveščak 56)

**New Zealand** (☎ 65 20 888; avenija Dubrovnik 15)

**Poland** (☎ 48 99 444; Krlježin Gvozđ 3)

**Romania** (☎ 45 77 550; roamb@zg.t-com.hr; Mlinarska ul 43)

**Serbia and Montenegro** (☎ 45 79 067; Pantovčak 245)

**Slovakia** (☎ 48 48 941; Prilaz Gjüre Deželića 10)

**Slovenia** (☎ 63 11 000; Savska 41)

**UK** (☎ 60 09 100; I Lučića 4)

**USA** (☎ 66 12 200; www.usembassy.hr; Ul Thomasa Jeffersona 2)

## FESTIVALS & EVENTS

In July and August there are **summer festivals** in Dubrovnik, Split, Pula and Zagreb. Dubrovnik's summer **music festival** emphasises classical music with concerts in churches around town, while Pula hosts a variety of pop and classical stars in the Roman amphitheatre and also hosts a **film festival**. **Mardi Gras** celebrations have recently been revived in many towns with attendant parades and festivities, but nowhere is it celebrated with more verve than in Rijeka.

## HOLIDAYS

**New Year's Day** 1 January

**Epiphany** 6 January

**Easter Monday** March/April

**Labour Day** 1 May

**Corpus Christi** 10 June

**Day of Antifascist Resistance** 22 June (marks the outbreak of resistance in 1941)

**Statehood Day** 25 June

**Homeland Thanksgiving Day** 5 August

**Feast of the Assumption** 15 August

**Independence Day** 8 October

**All Saints' Day** 1 November

**Christmas** 25 and 26 December

## INTERNET RESOURCES

**Adriatica.net** (www.adriatica.net) Cumbersome navigation but books rooms, apartments, hotels and lighthouses all along the coast. **Croatia Homepage** (www.hr) Hundreds of links to everything you want to know about Croatia.

**Croatia Traveller** (www.croatiatraveller.com) Practical advice, suggested itineraries, accommodation and up-to-date ferry and flight information.

**Find Croatia** (www.findcroatia.com) More Croatia links, with an emphasis on tourism and outdoor activities.

## MEDIA

### Newspapers & Magazines

After the dark days of the 1990s when Croatian strongman Franje Tuđman leaned heavily on the media to repress negative coverage, Croatian newspapers and magazines have discovered that fighting for advertisers is not much easier than fighting a dictator. The most respected daily in Croatia is the state-owned *Vjesnik*, which has a loyal but relatively small readership. The two largest private dailies, *Večernji List* and *Jutarnji List*, are trying to lure advertisers with a mix of politics, show biz and scandal, while the glossy newsmagazines *Globus* and *Nacional* struggle for readers. It will be interesting to see how the Croatian edition of *Metro* fares after its launch. American, British and French newspapers and magazines are available in most destinations in this chapter.

### Radio & TV

The two national and two private TV stations fill a lot of their air time with foreign programming, generally American, and always in the original language. The rest of the programming schedule is devoted to sports, quiz shows and soaps. The most popular radio station is Narodni radio, which airs only Croatian music. Croatian Radio broadcasts news in English four times daily (8am, 10am, 2pm and 11pm) on FM frequencies 88.9, 91.3 and 99.3 between June and September.

## MONEY

### Changing Money

Exchange offices may deduct a commission of 1% to change cash or travellers cheques, but some banks do not. Hungarian currency is difficult to change in Croatia and Croatian currency can be difficult to exchange in some neighbouring countries.

### Costs

Accommodation takes the largest chunk of a travel budget, and costs vary widely depending on the season. If you travel in March you'll quite easily find a private room for 100KN per person, but prices climb upward to double that in July and August. Count on 45KN for a meal at a self-service restaurant and 45KN to 60KN for an average intercity bus fare.

### Credit Cards

Amex, MasterCard, Visa and Diners Club cards are widely accepted in large hotels, shops and many restaurants, but don't count on cards to pay for private accommodation or meals in small restaurants. ATMs accepting MasterCard, Maestro, Cirrus, Plus and Visa are available in most bus and train stations, airports, all major cities and most small towns. Many branches of Privredna Banka have ATMs that allow cash withdrawals on an Amex card.

### Currency

The currency is the kuna. Banknotes are in denominations of 500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Each kuna is divided into 100 lipa in coins of 50, 20 and 10. Many places exchange money, all with similar rates.

### Tax

A 22% VAT is imposed upon most purchases and services, and is included in the price. If your purchases exceed 500KN in one shop you can claim a refund upon leaving the country. Ask the merchant for the paperwork, but don't be surprised if they don't have it.

### Tipping

If you're served well at a restaurant, you should round up the bill, but a service charge is always included. (Don't leave money on the table.) Bar bills and taxi fares can also be rounded up. Tour guides on day excursions expect to be tipped.

## POST

Mail sent to Poste Restante, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia, is held at the **main post office** (Branimirova 4; ☎ 24hr Mon-Sat, 1pm-midnight Sun) next to the Zagreb train station. A good coastal address to use is c/- Poste Restante, Main Post Office, 21000 Split, Croatia. If you have an Amex card, most Atlas travel agencies will hold your mail.

## TELEPHONE

### Mobile Phones

Croatia uses GSM 900/1800 and the two mobile networks are T-Mobile and VIP. If your mobile is compatible, SIM cards are widely available and start at 120KN for a basic package.

### Phone Codes

To call Croatia from abroad, dial your international access code, ☎ 385 (Croatia's country code), the area code (without the initial zero) and the local number. When calling from one region to another within Croatia, use the initial zero. Phone numbers with the prefix 060 are free and numbers that begin with 09 are mobile numbers, which are billed at a much higher rate – figure on about 6KN a minute. When in Croatia, dial ☎ 00 to speak to the international operator.

### Phonecards

To make a phone call from Croatia, go to the town's main post office. You'll need a phonecard to use public telephones, but calls using a phonecard are about 50% more expensive. Phonecards are sold according to *impulsa* (units), and you can buy cards of 25 (15KN), 50 (30KN), 100 (50KN) and 200 (100KN) units. These can be purchased at any post office and most tobacco shops and newspaper kiosks.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

The **Croatian National Tourist Board** (☎ 45 56 455; www.htz.hr; Iblorov trg 10, Importanne Galerija, 10000 Zagreb) is a good source of information. There are regional tourist offices that supervise tourist development, and municipal tourist offices that have free brochures and good information on local events. Some arrange private accommodation.

Tourist information is also dispensed by commercial travel agencies such as **Atlas** (http://atlas-croatia.com), Croatia Express, Generalturist

and Kompas, which also arrange private rooms, sightseeing tours and so on. Ask for the schedule for coastal ferries.

Croatian National Tourist Offices abroad include the following:

**UK** (☎ 020-8563 7979; info@cnto.freesevice.co.uk; 2 Lanchesters, 162-64 Fulham Palace Rd, London W6 9ER)  
**USA** (☎ 212-279 8672; cntony@earthlink.net; Suite 4003, 350 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10118)

## TOURS

An interesting option for sailing enthusiasts is **Katarina Line** (☎ 051-272 110; www.katarina-line.hr; Tita 75, Opatija), which offers week-long cruises from Opatija to Krk, Rab, Dugi Otok, Lošinj and Cres, or cruises from Split to Dubrovnik that pass the Kornati Islands. Prices run from €270 to €580 a week per person depending on the season and cabin class, and include half-board. For specific tours in individual regions, see Tours in the destination sections.

## VISAS

Visitors from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the EU and the USA do not require a visa for stays of less than 90 days. For other nationalities, visas are issued free of charge at Croatian consulates. Croatian authorities require all foreigners to register with the local police when they first arrive in a new area of the country, but this is a routine matter that is normally handled by your hotel, hostel or camping ground, or the agency that organises your private accommodation.

# TRANSPORT IN CROATIA

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

### Air

The major airports in the country are as follows:

**Dubrovnik** (☎ 020-773 377; www.airport-dubrovnik.hr)  
**Pula** (☎ 052-530 105; www.airport-pula.com)  
**Rijeka** (☎ 051-842 132; www.rijeka-airport.hr)  
**Split** (☎ 021-203 506; www.split-airport.hr)  
**Zadar** (☎ 023-313 311; www.zadar-airport.hr)  
**Zagreb** (☎ 01-62 65 222; www.zagreb-airport.hr)

Split has direct connections to Prague and Rome as well as Zagreb.

**Adria Airways** (code JD; www.adria-airways.com;

☎ 01-48 10 011) Hub Ljubljana.

**Aeroflot** (code SU; www.aeroflot.ru; ☎ 01-48 72 055)

Hub Moscow.

**Air Canada** (code AC; www.aircanada.ca; ☎ 01-48 22 033) Hub Toronto.

**Air France** (code AF; www.airfrance.com; ☎ 01-48 37 100) Hub Paris.

**Alitalia** (code AZ; www.alitalia.it; ☎ 01-48 10 413) Hub Milan.

**Austrian Airlines** (code OS; www.aua.com; ☎ 062 65 900) Hub Vienna.

**British Airways** (code BA; www.british-airways.com) Hub London.

**Croatia Airlines** (code OU; ☎ 01-48 19 633; www.croatiaairlines.hr; Zrinjevac 17, Zagreb) Croatia's national carrier; hub Zagreb.

**ČSA** (code OK; www.csa.cz; ☎ 01-48 73 301) Hub Prague.

**Delta Airlines** (code DL; www.delta.com; ☎ 01-48 78 760) Hub Atlanta.

**Easyjet** (code EZY; www.easyjet.com) Hub Luton.

**Germanwings** (code GWL; www.germanwings.com) Hub Cologne.

**Hapag Lloyd Express** (code HLX; www.hlx.com) Hub Cologne.

**KLM-Northwest** (code KL; www.klm.com; ☎ 01-48 78 601) Hub Amsterdam.

**LOT Polish Airlines** (code LO; www.lot.com; ☎ 01 48 37 500) Hub Warsaw.

**Lufthansa** (code LH; www.lufthansa.com; ☎ 01-48 73 121) Hub Frankfurt.

**Malév Hungarian Airlines** (code MA; www.malev.hu; ☎ 01-48 36 935) Hub Budapest.

**SNBrussels** (code SN; www.flysn.com) Hub Brussels.

**Turkish Airlines** (code TK; www.turkishairlines.com; ☎ 01-49 21 854) Hub Istanbul.

**Wizzair** (code W6; www.wizzair.com) Hub Luton.

## Land

### BUS

#### Austria

Eurolines runs buses from Vienna to Zagreb (€29, six hours, two daily), Rijeka (€47, 8½ hours), Split (€51, 15 hours) and Zadar (€43, 13 hours).

#### Bosnia & Herzegovina

There are daily connections from Sarajevo (€22, five hours, daily), Međugorje (€10, three hours) and Mostar (€10, three hours, twice daily) to Dubrovnik; from Sarajevo to Split (€14 to €16, seven hours, five daily), which stop at Mostar; and from Sarajevo to Zagreb (€13, eight hours) and Rijeka (€32, 10 hours).

#### Italy

Trieste is well connected with the Istrian coast. There are around three buses a day to Rijeka (€7.50, two to three hours), plus buses

to Rovinj (€10.50, 3½ hours, one daily), Poreč (€8.50, 2¼ hours, one daily) and Pula (€14, 3¼ hours, four daily). There are fewer buses on Sunday. To Dalmatia there's a daily bus that leaves at 5.30pm and stops at Rijeka (€7.50, two to three hours), Zadar (€32, 7½ hours), Split (€35.60, 10½ hours) and Dubrovnik (€64, 15 hours).

There's also a bus from Padua that passes Venice and Trieste, Monday to Saturday, and then goes on to in Poreč (€19, 2½ hours), Rovinj (€21, three hours) and Pula (€24, 3¼ hours). For schedules, see www.saf.ud.it.

#### Montenegro

Between Croatia and Montenegro there's a daily bus from Kotor to Dubrovnik (100KN, 2½ hours) that starts at Bar and stops at Herceg Novi. Visitors can cross at the Croatia-Montenegro border, and Americans, Australians, Canadians and Brits can enter visa-free.

#### Serbia

There are six daily bus services from Zagreb to Belgrade (€19, six hours). At Bajakovo on the border, a Serbian bus takes you on to Belgrade. The Croatia-Serbia border is open to visitors, allowing Americans, Australians, Canadians and Brits to enter the country visa-free.

#### Slovenia

Slovenia is also well connected with the Istrian coast. There is one weekday bus between Rovinj and Koper (80KN, three hours) stopping at Piran, Poreč and Portorož (38KN, 1½ hours), as well as a daily bus from Rovinj to Ljubljana (94KN, 5½ hours).

There are also buses from Ljubljana to Zagreb (90KN, three hours, two daily), Rijeka (84KN, 2½ hours, one daily) and Split (299KN, 10½ hours, one daily).

#### CAR & MOTORCYCLE

The main highway entry/exit points between Croatia and Hungary are Gorican (between Nagykanizsa and Varaždin), Gola (23km east of Koprivnica), Terezino Polje (opposite Barcs) and Donji Miholjac (7km south of Harkány). There are dozens of crossing points to/from Slovenia: too many to list here. There are 23 border crossings into Bosnia and Herzegovina and 10 into Serbia and Montenegro, including the main Zagreb-Belgrade highway. Major destinations in Bos-

nia and Herzegovina, like Sarajevo, Mostar and Međugorje, are accessible from Zagreb, Split and Dubrovnik.

Motorists require vehicle registration papers and the green insurance card to enter Croatia. Bear in mind that if you rent a car in Italy, many insurance companies will not cover your insurance for a trip into Croatia. Border officials know this and may refuse you entry unless permission to drive into Croatia is clearly marked on the insurance documents. Most car-rental companies in Trieste and Venice are familiar with this requirement and will furnish you with the correct stamp. Otherwise, you must make specific inquiries. See p888 for road rules and further information.

#### TRAIN

##### Austria

There are two daily and two overnight trains between Vienna and Zagreb (€64, 6½ to 13 hours) and three go on to Rijeka (€74, 11½ to 16½ hours).

##### Hungary

There are four daily trains from Zagreb to Budapest (€33, 5½ to 7½ hours).

##### Italy

Between Venice and Zagreb (€44, 6½ to 7½ hours) there are two daily direct connections and several more that run through Ljubljana.

##### Serbia

There are five daily trains which connect Zagreb with Belgrade (€18, seven hours).

##### Slovenia

There are up to eleven trains daily between Zagreb and Ljubljana (€13, 2¼ hours) and four between Rijeka and Ljubljana (€12, three hours).

#### Sea

Regular boats from several companies connect Croatia with Italy and Slovenia. Companies and routes arise, change or disappear from season to season; it's important to check information carefully. Many routes are available only in summer and the schedules are usually not available until late spring. All of the boat-company offices in Split are located inside the ferry terminal.

**Jadrolinija** (www.jadrolinija.hr); Rijeka (☎ 051-211 444; Riva 16); Ancona (☎ 071-20 71 465); Bari (☎ 080-52 75 439), Croatia's national boat line, runs car ferries from Ancona to Split (€44, 10 hours) and Zadar (€41, seven hours); a line from Bari to Dubrovnik (€44, eight hours); a year-round ferry from Pescara to Split (€44, 10 hours, twice weekly); and a summer ferry from Pescara to Hvar (€44, nine hours, once weekly). Prices are for deck passage; bringing a car costs an extra €57.50 and a basic couchette is €61.

**SEM** (www.sem-marina.hr); Split (☎ 021-338 292; Gat Sv Duje); Ancona (☎ 071-20 40 90) connects Ancona with Zadar and Split, continuing on to Stari Grad (Hvar).

**SNAV** (www.snav.com); Ancona (☎ 071-20 76 116); Naples (☎ 081-76 12 348); Split (☎ 021-322 252) has a fast car ferry that links Split with Pescara (€69, 4¾ hours) and Ancona (€63, 4½ hours), and Pescara with Hvar (€80, 3¼ hours). **Sanmar** (www.sanmar.it) handles the same route for a similar price.

**Venezia Lines** (☎ 041-52 22 568; www.venezialines.com; Santa Croce 518/A, Venice 30135) runs passenger boats from Venice to the following destinations once, twice or three times weekly, depending on the destination and the month: Pula (€54, three hours), Opatija (€57, four hours), Rovinj (€52, 3¼ hours) and Poreč (€52 2½ hours). The company also covers other Istrian destinations and runs some routes from Rimini and Ravenna.

**Emilia Romagna Lines** (www.emiliaromagnalines.it) is another company that has recently started running summer passenger boats from Italy to the Croatian coast for similar prices. Routes run from Ravenna, Cesenatico, Rimini and Pesaro to Rovinj, Poreč, Pula and Hvar.

In Croatia, contact **Jadroagent** (☎ 052-210 431; jadroagent-pula@pu.t-com.hr; Riva 14) in Pula and **Istra Line** (☎ 052-451 067; Partizansko 2) in Poreč for information and tickets on boats between Italy and Croatia.

## GETTING AROUND

### Air

Croatia Airlines is the one and only carrier for flights within Croatia. The price of flights depends on the season and you get better deals if you book ahead. Seniors and people aged under 26 get discounts. There are daily flights between Zagreb and Dubrovnik (549KN, one hour), Pula (170KN, 45 minutes), Split (207KN, 45 minutes) and Zadar (341KN, 40 minutes).

## Bicycle

Cycling is a great way to see the islands and bikes are fairly easy to rent in most tourist spots. Many tourist offices have helpful maps of cycling routes. Bike lanes are nearly unknown in Croatia, however; you'll need to exercise extreme caution on the many narrow two-lane roads.

## Boat

Year-round Jadrolinija car ferries operate along the Bari–Rijeka–Dubrovnik coastal route, stopping at Split and the islands of Hvar, Korčula and Mljet. Services are less frequent in winter. The most scenic section is Split to Dubrovnik, which all Jadrolinija ferries cover during the day. Ferries are a lot more comfortable than buses, though somewhat more expensive. From Rijeka to Dubrovnik the deck fare is €21/25 in low/high season, with high season running from about the end of June to the end of August; there's a 20% reduction on the return portion of a return ticket. With a through ticket, deck passengers can stop at any port for up to a week, provided they notify the purser beforehand and have their ticket validated. This is much cheaper than buying individual sector tickets but is only good for one stopover. Cabins should be booked a week ahead, but deck space is usually available on all sailings.

Deck passage on Jadrolinija is just that: *poltrone* (reclining seats) are about €4 extra and four-berth cabins (if available) begin at €38.50/46 in low/high season (Rijeka to Dubrovnik). Cabins can be arranged at the reservation counter aboard ship, but advance bookings are recommended if you want to be sure of a place. You must buy tickets in advance at an agency or Jadrolinija office since they are not sold on board. Bringing a car means checking-in two hours in advance.

Local ferries connect the bigger offshore islands with each other and the mainland. Some of the ferries operate only a couple of times a day, and once the vehicular capacity is reached, the remaining motorists must wait for the next available service. During summer the lines of waiting cars can be long, so it's important to arrive early.

Foot passengers and cyclists should have no problem getting on, but you must buy your tickets at an agency before boarding since they are not sold on board. You should bear in mind that taking a bicycle on these services

will incur an extra charge, which depends on the distance.

## Bus

Bus services are excellent and relatively inexpensive. There are often a number of different companies handling each route so prices and trip duration can vary substantially, but the information in this book should give you an idea of what to expect (and unless otherwise noted, all bus prices are for one-way fares). Note that you pay a supplement of 6KN or 7KN for luggage placed under the bus, but not for luggage you take on board with you.

It's generally best to call or visit the bus station to get the complete schedule, but the following companies are among the largest: **Autotrans** (☎ 051-66 03 60; www.autotrans.hr) Based in Rijeka with connections to Istria, Zagreb, Varaždin and Kvarner.

**Briioni Pula** (☎ 052-502 997; www.briioni.hr, in Croatia) Based in Pula with connections to Istria, Trieste, Padua, Split and Zagreb.

**Contus** (☎ 023-315 315; www.contus.hr) Based in Zadar with connections to Split and Zagreb.

At large stations bus tickets must be purchased at the office; book ahead to be sure of a seat. You must visit the bus station to book as there is no online ticketing available. Tickets for buses that arrive from somewhere else are usually purchased from the conductor. Buy a one-way ticket only or you'll be locked into one company's schedule for the return. Most intercity buses are air-conditioned and make rest stops every two hours or so. Some of the more expensive companies charge extra for a video system that allows you to watch Croatian soap operas during your trip. If you plan to catch a nap, bring earplugs since there's bound to be music playing.

On schedules, *vozi svaki dan* means 'every day' and *ne vozi nedjeljom ni praznikom* means 'not Sunday and public holidays'. Check www.akz.hr, in Croatia, for information on schedules and fares to and from Zagreb.

## Car & Motorcycle

Any valid driving licence is sufficient to legally drive and rent a car; an international driving licence is not necessary. **Hrvatski Autoklub** (HAK; Croatian Auto Club) offers help and advice, plus there's the nationwide **HAK road assistance** (vučna služba; ☎ 987).

Petrol stations are generally open 7am to 7pm and often until 10pm in summer. Petrol is Eurosuper 95, Super 98, normal or diesel. See www.ina.hr for up-to-date fuel prices.

You have to pay tolls on the motorways linking Zagreb with the coast, and to use the Učka tunnel between Rijeka and Istria, the bridge to Krk Island and the road from Rijeka to Delnice. For general news on Croatia's motorways and tolls, see www.hac.hr.

## ROAD RULES

Unless otherwise posted, the speed limits for cars and motorcycles are 50km/h in the built-up areas, 80km/h on main highways and 130km/h on motorways. On any of Croatia's winding two-lane highways, it's illegal to pass long military convoys or a line of cars caught behind a slow-moving truck. The maximum permitted amount of alcohol in the blood is – none at all! It is also forbidden to use a mobile phone while driving and seatbelts are mandatory.

## CAR-RENTAL COMPANIES

The large car-rental chains represented in Croatia are Avis, Budget, Europcar and Hertz. Independent local companies are often much cheaper than the international chains, but the chains have the big advantage of offering one-way rentals that allow you to drop the car off at any one of their many stations in Croatia free of charge.

Prices at local companies begin at around 300KN a day with unlimited kilometres. Shop around as deals vary widely and 'special' discounts and weekend rates are often available. Third-party public liability insurance is included by law, but make sure your quoted price includes full collision insurance, called collision damage waiver (CDW); otherwise your responsibility for damage done to the vehicle is usually determined as a percentage of the car's value. Full CDW begins at 40KN a day extra (compulsory for those aged under 25), theft insurance is 15KN a day and personal accident insurance another 40KN a day.

Sometimes you can get a lower car-rental rate by booking the car from abroad or online. **Economy Car Rentals** (www.economycarrentals.com) often has the best deals. Tour companies in Western Europe often have fly-drive packages that include a flight to Croatia and a car (two-person minimum).

### Hitching

Hitching is never entirely safe, and we don't recommend it. Hitchhiking in Croatia is particularly unreliable. You'll have better luck on the islands, but in the interior cars are small and usually full.

### Local Transport

Zagreb has a well-developed tram system as well as local buses, but in the rest of the country you'll find only buses. In major cities such as Rijeka, Split, Zadar and Dubrovnik, buses run about every 20 minutes, though less often on Sunday. Small medieval towns along the coast are generally closed to traffic and have infrequent links to outlying suburbs.

Taxis are available in all cities and towns, but they must be called or boarded at a taxi

stand. Prices are rather high (meters start at 25KN).

### Train

Train travel is about 15% cheaper than bus travel and often more comfortable, although slower. The main lines run from Zagreb to Rijeka, Zadar and Split and east to Osijek. There are no trains along the coast. Local trains usually have only unreserved 2nd-class seats. Reservations may be required on express trains. 'Executive' trains have only 1st-class seats and are 40% more expensive than local trains.

On posted timetables in Croatia, the word for arrivals is *dolazak* and for departures it's *odlazak* or *polazak*. For train information check out **Croatian Railway** ([www.hznet.hr](http://www.hznet.hr), in Croatian).