

Croatia



Croatia

What a difference a decade makes. Only 10 years ago Croatia's principal visitors were peacekeepers and aid workers. Now it's become Europe's latest 'gotta go' destination. Yachts glide up the coast, movie stars discreetly arrange to buy an island or two and no Mediterranean cruise is complete without a stop in Dubrovnik. Trendy travellers are calling it the 'new Greece', the 'new Riviera', the 'new Tuscany', as though the country had recently sprouted from the Mediterranean.

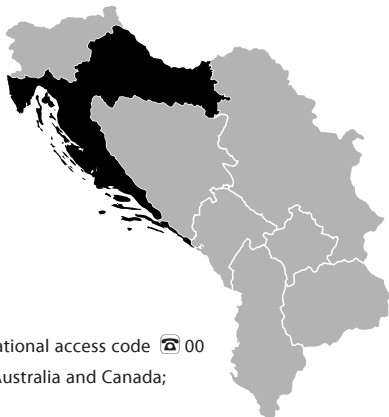
Despite the hype, Croatia's pleasures are more timeless than trendy. Crystalline water laps gently at a 1778km-long coast and no less than 1185 islands. Away from the coast, eight national parks protect pristine forests, karstic mountains, rivers, lakes and waterfalls in a landscape of primeval beauty.

The culture is as varied as the scenery. A parade of Roman, Venetian, Austro-Hungarian and Italian occupiers left Croatia with a unique and slightly schizoid identity. The interior has a strong central-European flavour, evident in the baroque architecture of Zagreb. With its pastel fishing ports and devotion to pasta the coast could be an extension of Italy. In fact it was an extension of Italy for a good part of the last millennium. Yet there's no mistaking Croatia's Slavic soul, especially apparent at festival time when centuries-old songs, dances and costumes animate villages and town squares around the country.

Croatians retain a strong attachment to the land and traditions that nourished the dream of independence for so long. Even as a tide of speculators and developers wash ashore, there is a real commitment to preserving the extraordinary beauty of the coast. Whether the country can hold out against the lure of easy money is an excruciating test of its character. But, so far the signs are promising.

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 56,538 sq km
- **Capital** Zagreb
- **Currency** kuna (KN); €1=7.38KN; US\$1=6.16KN; UK£1=10.75KN; A\$1=4.63KN; ¥100=5.46KN; NZ\$1=4.87KN
- **Famous for** neckties, war, Tito
- **Key phrases** *bog* (hello); *doviđenja* (goodbye); *hvala* (thanks); *pardon* (sorry)
- **Official language** Croatian
- **Population** 4.5 million
- **Telephone codes** country code ☎ 385; international access code ☎ 00
- **Visas** unnecessary for citizens of the EU, USA, Australia and Canada; see p389 for details



HIGHLIGHTS

- The walled Old Town of **Dubrovnik** (p209) that surrounds luminous marble streets and finely ornamented buildings
- The Venetian architecture and vibrant nightlife of **Hvar town** (p203)
- The colour and spectacle of a *moreška* sword dance in **Korčula** (p208)
- The lakes, coves and island monastery of **Mljet** (p208)
- The cobbled streets and unspoiled fishing port of **Rovinj** (p164)

ITINERARIES

- **One week** After a day in dynamic Zagreb head down to Split for a look at Diocletian's Palace. Then take ferries to Hvar and Korčula. End with three days in Dubrovnik, taking a day trip to Mljet.
- **Two weeks** After two days in Zagreb, head to Rovinj for a three-day stay, taking day trips to Pula and Poreč. Head south to Zadar for a night and then go on to Split for a night. Take ferries to Hvar and Korčula, spending two or three days on each island 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 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 Climate Charts p389 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. May and September are also good, especially if you're interested in hiking.

HISTORY

In 229 BC the Romans began their conquest of the indigenous Illyrians by establishing a colony at Solin (Salona), close to Split in Dalmatia. Emperor Augustus then extended the empire and created the provinces of Illyricum (Dalmatia and Bosnia) and Pannonia (Croatia). In AD 285 Emperor Diocletian decided to retire to his palace fortress in

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

Split, today the greatest Roman ruin in Eastern Europe. When the empire was divided in 395, what are now known as Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina stayed with the Western Roman Empire, while present-day Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia went to the Eastern Roman Empire, later known as the Byzantine Empire.

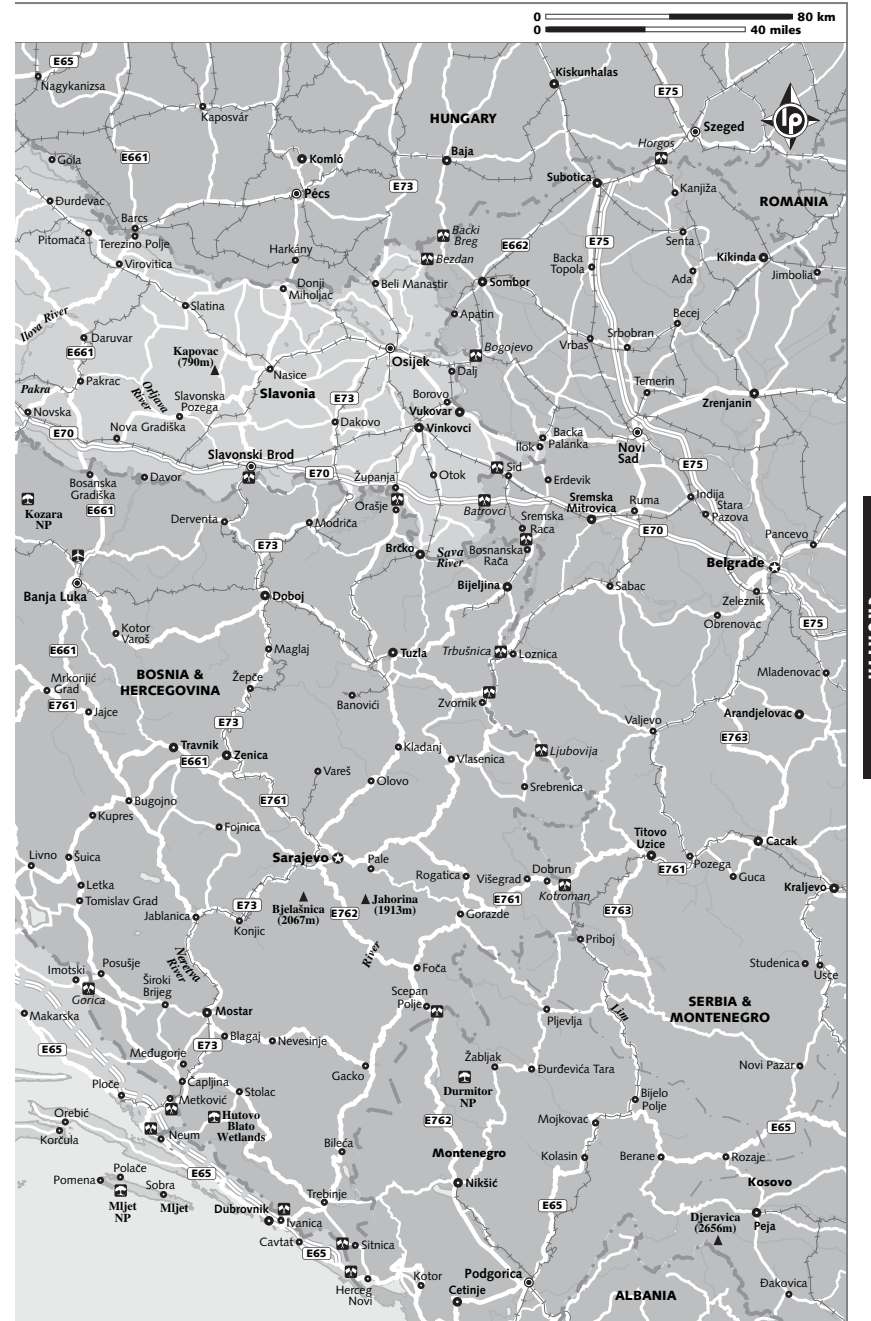
Around 625, Slavic tribes migrated from present-day Poland. The Serbian tribe settled in the region that is now southwestern Serbia. The Croatian tribe moved into what is now Croatia and occupied two former Roman provinces: Dalmatian Croatia along the Adriatic, and Pannonian Croatia to the north.

By the early part of the 9th century both settlements had accepted Christianity but the northern Croats fell under Frankish domination while Dalmatian Croats came under the nominal control of the Byzantine Empire. The Dalmatian duke Tomislav united the two groups in 925 in a single kingdom that prospered for nearly 200 years.

Late in the 11th century the throne fell vacant and a series of power struggles weakened central authority and split the kingdom. The northern Croats, unable to agree upon a ruler, united with Hungary in 1102 for protection against the Orthodox Byzantine Empire.

In the 14th century the Turks began pushing into the Balkans, defeating the Serbs in 1389 and the Hungarians in 1526. Northern Croatia turned to the Hapsburgs of Austria for protection against the Turks in 1527 and

CROATIA



remained part of their empire until 1918. To form a buffer against the Turks, in the 16th century the Austrians invited Serbs to settle the *Vojna Krajina* (Military Frontier) north of Zadar. The Serbs in the borderlands had an autonomous administration under Austrian control; these areas were reincorporated into Croatia in 1881.

The Adriatic coast fell under Venetian influence as early as the 12th century, although 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.

After Venice was shattered by Napoleonic France 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.

It wasn't long before Croatia began itching for more autonomy within the Austrian empire and for the unification of Dalmatia and Slavonia. When an uprising in Hungary threatened Austrian rule, Croatia seized the opportunity to intervene in return for greater autonomy. The Croatian commander Josip Jelačić set out to fight the rebels but his campaign was unsuccessful and Croatian hopes were crushed. Disillusionment spread after 1848, and was amplified by the birth of the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy in 1867. The monarchy placed Croatia and Slavonia within the Hungarian administration, while Dalmatia remained within Austria.

The river of discontent running through late-19th-century Croatia forked into two streams that dominated the political landscape for the next century. On the side of greater south-Slavic unity was the brilliant Bishop Josif Juraf Strossmayer, who believed that only through *Jugoslavenstvo* (south-Slavic unity) could the aspirations of Serbs and Croats be realised. While Strossmayer favoured a Yugoslav entity within the Austro-Hungarian empire, the militantly anti-Serb Ante Starčević envisioned an independent Croatia made up of Slavonia, Dalmatia, the *Krajina*, Slovenia, Istria

and part of Bosnia and Hercegovina. Partly as a result of Starčević's attacks, the sense of a separate Serbian Orthodox identity within Croatia developed.

South Slavic Unity

Under the theory of 'divide and rule', the Hungarian-appointed *Ban* (viceroy) of Croatia blatantly favoured the Serbs and the Orthodox Church, but his strategy backfired. The first organised resistance formed in Dalmatia. Croat representatives in Rijeka and Serb representatives in Zadar joined together in 1905 to demand the unification of Dalmatia and Slavonia with a formal guarantee of Serbian equality as a nation. The spirit of unity mushroomed, and by 1906 Croat-Serb coalitions had taken over local government in Dalmatia and Slavonia, forming a serious threat to the Hungarian power structure.

The outbreak of WWI cemented the idea that only Slavic unity could check Great Power ambitions in the region. After the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empire in 1918, regional delegations quickly negotiated the establishment of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, to be based in Belgrade. Although many Croatians were unsure about Serbian intentions, they were very sure about Italian intentions since Italy lost no time in seizing Pula, Rijeka and Zadar in November 1918.

Problems with the kingdom began almost immediately. Currency reforms benefited Serbs at the expense of the Croats. The new constitution abolished Croatia's Sabor and centralised power in Belgrade, while new electoral districts underrepresented the Croats. A treaty between the Belgrade government and Italy gave Istria, Zadar and a number of islands to Italy.

Opposition to the new regime was led by the Croat Stjepan Radić, who remained favourable to the idea of a united Slavic country but wished to transform it into a federal democracy. His alliance with the Serb Svetpazar Pribičević proved profoundly threatening to the regime and Radić was assassinated. Exploiting fears of civil war, on 6 January 1929 King Aleksandar in Belgrade proclaimed a royal dictatorship, abolished political parties and suspended parliamentary government, thus ending any hope of democratic change.

Ustaše, Chetnik & Partizans

One day after the proclamation, a Bosnian Croat, Ante Pavelić, set up the Ustaše Croatian Liberation Movement in Zagreb with the stated aim of establishing an independent state by force if necessary. Fearing arrest, he fled to Sofia in Bulgaria and made contact with anti-Serbian Macedonian revolutionaries before fleeing to Italy. There, he established training camps for his organisation under Mussolini's benevolent eye. After organising various disturbances, in 1934 he and the Macedonians succeeded in assassinating King Aleksandar in Marseilles while he was on a state visit. Italy responded by closing down the training camps and imprisoning Pavelić and many of his followers.

When Germany invaded Yugoslavia on 6 April 1941, the exiled Ustaše were quickly installed by the Germans, with the support of the Italians who hoped to see their own territorial aims in Dalmatia realised. They were not disappointed. Pavelić soon agreed to cede a good part of Dalmatia to Italy, which left him with the Lika region southwest of Zagreb and western Hercegovina as his political base.

Within days the Independent State of Croatia (NDH), headed by Pavelić, issued a range of decrees designed to persecute and eliminate the regime's 'enemies', who were mainly Jews, Roma and Serbs. The Ustaše programme called for 'one-third of Serbs killed, one-third expelled and one-third converted to Catholicism', a programme that was carried out with a brutality that appalled even the Nazis. Villages conducted their own personal pogroms against Serbs and extermination camps were set up, most notoriously at Jasenovac (south of Zagreb). The exact number of Serb victims is uncertain and controversial, with Croatian historians tending to minimise the figures and Serbian historians tending to maximise them. The number of Serb deaths range from 60,000 to 600,000, but the most reliable estimates settle somewhere between 80,000 to 120,000, including victims of village pogroms. Whatever the number, it's clear that the NDH and its supporters made a diligent effort to eliminate the entire Serb population.

The Serbs did not quietly accept their fate. Armed resistance to the regime took

the form of Serbian 'Chetnik' formations led by General Draza Mihailović, which began as an antifascist rebellion but soon degenerated into massacres of Croats in eastern Croatia and Bosnia.

Not all Croats supported Pavelić's policies. Josip Broz, known as Maršal Tito, was himself of Croat-Slovene parentage and tens of thousands of Croats fought bravely with his partisans. With their roots in the outlawed Yugoslavian Communist Party, the partisans attracted long-suffering Yugoslav intellectuals, Croats disgusted with Chetnik massacres, Serbs disgusted with Ustaše massacres, and antifascists of all kinds.

Although the Allies initially backed the Serbian Chetniks, it became apparent that the partisans were waging a far more focused and determined fight against the Nazis. With the diplomatic and military support of Churchill and other Allied powers, the partisans controlled much of Croatia by 1943. On 20 October 1944 Tito entered Belgrade with the Red Army and was made prime minister. When Germany surrendered in 1945, Pavelić and the Ustaše fled and the partisans entered Zagreb.

The remnants of the NDH army, desperate to avoid falling into the hands of the partisans, attempted to cross into Austria at Bleiburg. A small British contingent met the 50,000 troops and promised to intern them outside Yugoslavia in exchange for their surrender. It was a trick. The troops were forced into trains that headed back into Yugoslavia where the partisans awaited them. The ensuing massacre claimed the lives of at least 30,000 men (although the exact number is in doubt) and left a permanent stain on the Yugoslav government.

Recent History

Tito's attempt to retain control of the Italian city of Trieste and parts of southern Austria faltered in the face of Allied opposition, but Dalmatia and most of Istria were made a permanent part of postwar Yugoslavia. The good news was that Tito was determined to create a state in which no ethnic group dominated the political landscape. Croatia became one of six republics – Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Hercegovina and Slovenia – in a tightly configured federation. The bad news was that Tito effected this delicate balance

by creating a one-party state and rigorously stamping out all opposition, whether nationalist, royalist or religious. The government's hostility to organised religion, particularly the Catholic Church, stemmed from its perception that the Church was complicit in the murderous nationalism that surfaced during WWII.

During the 1960s, the concentration of power in Belgrade became an increasingly testy issue as it became apparent that money from the more prosperous republics of Slovenia and Croatia was being distributed to the poorer republics of Montenegro and Bosnia and Hercegovina. The problem seemed particularly blatant in Croatia, which saw money from its prosperous tourist business on the Adriatic coast flow into Belgrade. At the same time Serbs in Croatia were overrepresented in the government, armed forces and the police, partly because state service offered an opportunity for a chronically disadvantaged population.

In Croatia the unrest reached a crescendo in the 'Croatian Spring' of 1971. Led by reformers within the Communist Party of Croatia, intellectuals and students first called for greater economic autonomy and then constitutional reform to loosen Croatia's ties to Yugoslavia. Tito's eventual crackdown was ferocious. Leaders of the movement were 'purged' – either jailed or expelled from the party. Careers were abruptly terminated; some dissidents chose exile and emigrated to the USA. Serbs viewed the movement as the Ustaše reborn, and jailed reformers blamed the Serbs for their troubles. The stage was set for the later rise of nationalism and war that followed Tito's death in 1980, even though his 1974 constitution afforded the republics more autonomy.

Independence

Tito's habit of borrowing from abroad to flood the country with cheap consumer goods produced an economic crisis after his death. The country was unable to service the interest on its loans and inflation soared. The authority of the central government sank along with the economy, and long-suppressed mistrust among Yugoslavians' ethnic groups resurfaced.

In 1989 severe repression of the Albanian majority in Serbia's Kosovo province sparked renewed fears of Serbian hegemony

and heralded the end of the Yugoslav Federation. With political changes sweeping Eastern Europe, 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 Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ; Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica) secured 40% of the vote, to the 30% won by the Communist Party which retained the loyalty of the Serbian community as well as voters in Istria and Rijeka. On 22 December 1990 a new Croatian constitution was promulgated, changing the status of Serbs in Croatia from that of a 'constituent nation' to a national minority.

The constitution's failure to guarantee minority rights, and mass dismissals of Serbs from the public service, stimulated the 600,000-strong ethnic Serb community within Croatia to demand autonomy. In early 1991 Serb extremists within Croatia staged provocations designed to force federal military intervention. A May 1991 referendum (boycotted by the Serbs) produced a 93% vote in favour of independence, but when Croatia declared independence on 25 June 1991, the Serbian enclave of Krajina proclaimed its independence from Croatia.

War & Peace

Under pressure from the EC (now EU), Croatia declared a three-month moratorium on its independence, but heavy fighting broke out in Krajina, Baranja (the area north of the Drava River opposite Osijek) and Slavonia. 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.

When the Croatian government ordered a blockade of 32 federal military installations in the republic, the Yugoslav navy blockaded the Adriatic coast and laid siege to the strategic town of Vukovar on the Danube. During the summer of 1991, a quarter of Croatia fell to Serbian militias and the Serb-led Yugoslav People's Army.

In early October 1991 the federal army and Montenegrin militia moved against Dubrovnik to protest the blockade of their

garrisons in Croatia, and on 7 October the presidential palace in Zagreb was hit by rockets fired by Yugoslav air-force jets in an unsuccessful assassination attempt on President Tudjman. When the three-month moratorium on independence ended Croatia declared full independence.

On 19 November heroic Vukovar finally fell when the army culminated a bloody three-month siege by concentrating 600 tanks and 30,000 soldiers there. During six months of fighting in Croatia 10,000 people died, hundreds of thousands fled and tens of thousands of homes were destroyed.

To fulfil a condition for EC recognition, in December the Croatian Sabor (which was re-established under Tito) belatedly amended its constitution to protect minority groups and human rights.

A UN-brokered ceasefire from 3 January 1992, generally held. The federal army was allowed to withdraw from its bases inside Croatia and tensions diminished.

In January 1992 the EC, succumbing to strong pressure from Germany, recognised Croatia. This was followed three months later by US recognition and in May 1992 Croatia was admitted to the UN.

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 and 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. Meanwhile, continued 'ethnic cleansing' left only about 900 Croats in Krajina out of an original population of 44,000.

While world attention turned to the grim events unfolding in Bosnia and Hercegovina, the Croatian government quietly began procuring arms from abroad. On 1 May 1995 the Croatian army and police entered occupied western Slavonia, east of Zagreb, and seized control of the region within days. The Krajina Serbs responded by shelling Zagreb in an attack that left seven people dead and 130 wounded. As the Croatian military consolidated its hold in western Slavonia, some 15,000 Serbs fled

the region, despite assurances from the Croatian government that they were safe from retribution.

Belgrade's silence throughout this campaign showed that the Krajina Serbs had lost the support of their Serbian sponsors, encouraging Croats to forge ahead. On 4 August the military launched a massive assault on the rebel Serb capital of Knin, pummelling it with shells, mortars and bombs. Outnumbered by two to one, the Serb army fled towards northern Bosnia, along with 150,000 civilians whose roots in the Krajina stretched back centuries. The military operation ended in days, but was followed by months of terror. Widespread looting and burning of Serb villages, and attacks upon the few remaining elderly Serbs, seemed designed to ensure the permanence of this huge population shift. Allegations of atrocities caught the attention of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia at The Hague. Of the two Croatian generals charged with committing crimes against the Serb population, General Gotovina remains at large and General Norac has turned himself in for trial.

The Dayton Accord signed in Paris in December 1995 recognised Croatia's traditional borders and provided for the return of eastern Slavonia, which was effected in January 1998. The transition proceeded relatively smoothly with less violence than was expected, but the two populations still regard each other over a chasm of suspicion and hostility. The Serbs and Croats associate with each other as little as possible and clever political manoeuvring has largely barred Serbs from assuming a meaningful role in municipal government.

Although stability has returned to the country, a key provision of the agreement was the promise by the Croatian government to facilitate the return of Serbian refugees, a promise that is far from being fulfilled. Although the central government in Zagreb has made the return of refugees a priority in accordance with the demands of the international community, its efforts have often been subverted by local authorities intent on maintaining the ethnic purity of their regions. In many cases, Croat refugees from Hercegovina have occupied houses abandoned by their Serb

owners. Serbs intending to reclaim their property face a forbidding array of legal impediments in establishing a claim to their former dwellings.

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 populations are 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 and 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 Croats are increasingly open to questioning the conduct of the 'Homeland War'. Self-examining books and articles are a staple of the country's intellectual life but the extradition to The Hague of Croatian generals accused of war crimes remains highly controversial. Initial foot-dragging in cooperating with The Hague tribunal delayed Croatia's bid to join the EU but, as of 2005, Croatia's cooperation was deemed sufficient and the country is negotiating to enter the EU in 2007.

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 Sunday. The previous pope had 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

Visual Arts

Examples of Roman architecture are abundant in Dalmatia where it persisted long after the Gothic style had swept the rest of Europe. In the 13th century the earliest examples of Gothic style appeared, usually still mixed with Romanesque forms. The most stunning work from this period is the portal on Trogir's Cathedral of St Lovro, carved by the master-artisan Radovan. Depicting human figures performing everyday chores was a definite break with traditional Byzantine reliefs of saints and apostles. The Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (formerly St Stephen's) in Zagreb was the first venture into the Gothic style in northern Croatia.

In independent Ragusa (Dubrovnik) Renaissance art and sculpture flowered. By the second half of the 15th century, Renaissance influences were appearing on late-Gothic structures. The Sponza Palace, formerly the Customs House, is a fine example of this mixed style. By the mid-16th century, Renaissance features began to supplant the Gothic style in the palaces and summer residences built in and around Ragusa by the wealthy nobility. Unfortunately, much was destroyed in the 1667 earthquake and now Dubrovnik is more notable for the mixed Gothic-Romanesque Franciscan monastery, the 15th-century Orlando column and the Onofrio fountain, and the baroque St Blaise's Church and Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin.

Northern Croatia is well-known for the baroque style introduced by Jesuit monks in

the 17th century. The city of Varaždin was a regional capital in the 17th and 18th centuries and, because of its location, enjoyed a steady interchange of artists, artisans and architects with northern Europe. The combination of wealth and a creatively fertile environment led to it becoming Croatia's foremost city of baroque art.

In Zagreb good examples of the baroque style are found in the Upper Town (Gornji Grad), Kaptol and Gradec. Notice St Catherine's Church and the restored baroque mansions that are now the Croatian History Museum and the Croatian Naive Art Museum.

In the 19th century, Dalmatian art stagnated as the region fell prey to political problems, but Zagreb underwent a revival. Vlaho Bukovac (1855–1922) was the most notable painter in the late 19th century. After working in London and Paris, he came to Zagreb in 1892 and produced portraits and paintings on historical themes in a lively style. Early-20th-century painters of note include Miroslav Kraljević (1885–1913) and Josip Račić (1885–1908), but the most internationally recognised artist was the sculptor Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962), who created many masterpieces on Croatian themes. Antun Augustinčić (1900–79) was another internationally recognised sculptor whose *Monument to Peace* is outside New York's UN building.

Postwar artists experimented with abstract expressionism but this period is best remembered for the naive art that began with the 1931 *Zemlja* (Soil) exhibition in Zagreb, which introduced the public to works by Ivan Generalić (1914–92) and other peasant painters. Committed to producing art that could be easily understood and appreciated by ordinary people, Generalić was joined by painters Franjo Mrzaz and Mirko Virius and sculptor Petar Smajic in a campaign to gain acceptance and recognition for naive art.

The postwar trend to avant-garde art has evolved into installation art, minimalism, conceptualism and video art. On the video scene look for Sanja Ivekovic and Dalibor Martinis. The multimedia works of Andreja Kulunčić and the installations of Sandra Sterle are attracting international notice while the performances of Slaven Tolj could be called 'extreme art'.

Music & Dance

Although Croatia has produced many fine classical musicians and composers, its most original musical contribution lies in its rich tradition of folk music. Croatian folk music itself bears many influences, much of them dating back to the Middle Ages when the Hungarians and the Venetians vied for control of the country. Franz Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) was born near a Croat enclave in Austria and was strongly influenced by Croatian airs. Traditional Croatian music has also influenced modern musicians, most notably the Croatian-American jazz singer Helen Merrill, who recorded Croatian melodies on her album, *Jelena Ana Milcetic aka. Helen Merrill*.

The instrument most often used in Croatian folk music is the *tamburitza*, a three- or five-string mandolin that is plucked or strummed. Introduced by the Turks in the 17th century, the instrument rapidly gained a following in eastern Slavonia and came to be closely identified with Croatian national aspirations.

Tamburitza music survived the Yugoslav period, when it remained the dominant music played at weddings and local festivals. In the 1980s it modernised and many groups began to include electric bass and guitar. First was Zlatni Dukati, who became known for their patriotic music before and during the 1990s war. They were quickly followed by the rock-and-roll influenced Gazde, who are still turning out top-selling CDs.

Vocal music followed the *klapa* tradition. Translated as 'group of people', *klapa* is an outgrowth of church-choir singing. The form is most popular in rural Dalmatia and can involve up to 10 voices singing in harmony about love, tragedy and loss. Traditionally the choirs were all-male but now women have been getting into the act, although there are very few mixed choirs.

Not everyone is listening to folk music of course. Croatian pop is alive and well and you'll hear plenty of it on the radio. Ivo Robić was one of the few Croatian singer-songwriters to gain a following abroad. Doris Dragović has been on the scene for nearly 20 years, while younger stars Severina and Gibonni have wildly enthusiastic fans.

Like the music, Croatian traditional dances are kept alive at local and national festivals. Look for the *drmeš*, a kind of

accelerated polka danced by couples in small groups. The *kolo*, a lively Slavic round dance in which men and women alternate in the circle, is accompanied by Roma-style violinists. In Dalmatia, the *poskočica* is also danced by couples creating various patterns.

Literature

The first literary flowering in Croatia took place in Dalmatia and was strongly influenced by the Italian Renaissance. The works of the scholar and poet Marko Marulić (1450–1524), from Split, are still venerated in Croatia. Ivan Gundulić (1589–1638) from Ragusa (Dubrovnik) is widely considered to be the greatest Croatian poet. The plays of Marin Držić (1508–67), especially *Dundo Maroje*, express humanistic Renaissance ideals and are still performed, especially in Dubrovnik.

Croatia's towering literary figure is 20th-century novelist and playwright Miroslav Krleža. Depicting the concerns of a changing Yugoslavia, his most popular novels include *The Return of Philip Latinovicz* (1932), which has been translated into English, and *Banners* (1963–65), a multivolume saga about middle-class Croatian life at the turn of the 20th century.

In poetry, the most towering postwar figure was the lyrical and sometimes satirical Vesna Parun. Although often harassed by the government for her 'decadent and bourgeois' poetry, her *Collected Poems* have reached a new generation who find solace in her vision of wartime folly.

Contemporary writers have been strongly marked by the implications of Croatian independence. Alenka Mirković is a journalist who wrote a powerful memoir of the siege of Vukovar. Goran Tribuson uses the thriller genre to explore the changes in Croatian society after the war. In *O blivion* Pavao Pavličić uses a detective story to explore the problems of collective historical memory.

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 naturalists. 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 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.

Wildlife

Deer are plentiful in the dense forests of Risnjak, as well as brown bears, wild cats and *ris* (lynx), from which the national park gets its name. Occasionally a wolf or wild boar may appear but only rarely. Plitvice Lakes National Park, however, is an important refuge for wolves. A rare sea otter is also protected in Plitvice as well as in Krka National Park.

The griffon vulture, with a wing span of 2.6m, has a permanent colony on Cres Island, and Paklenica National Park is rich in peregrine falcons, goshawks, sparrow hawks, buzzards and owls. Krka National Park is an important migration route and winter habitat for marsh birds such as herons, wild duck, geese, cranes, rare golden eagles and short-toed eagles. Kopački Rit swamp near Osijek in eastern Croatia is an extremely important bird refuge, but its status as a visit-worthy place is vague – there are still mines there.

Two venomous snakes are endemic in Paklenica – the nose-horned viper and the European adder – and the nonvenomous leopard snake, four-lined snake, grass snake and snake lizard species can also be found in Krka National Park.

FOOD & DRINK

A restaurant (*restauracija*) or pub may also be called a *gostionica* and a café is known as a *kavana*. Self-service cafeterias are quick, easy and inexpensive, though the quality of the food tends to vary quite a lot. Better restaurants aren't that much more expensive if you choose carefully. The cheapest dishes are pasta and risotto, which can be filling meals. Fish dishes are often charged by weight (from 320KN to 360KN per

kilogram), which makes it difficult to know how much a certain dish will cost but an average portion is about 250g. Some restaurants tack on a 10% cover charge, which is *supposed* to be mentioned on the menu.

Breakfast is included in the price of the hotels in this chapter and usually includes a juice drink, bread, cheese, yogurt, cereal and cold cuts, as well as coffee and tea. No restaurants serve breakfast.

A load of fruit and vegetables from the local market makes a healthy, cheap picnic lunch. There are plenty of supermarkets in Croatia; cheese, cold cuts, bread, wine and milk are readily available and fairly cheap. The person behind the meat counter at supermarkets will make a big cheese or Bologna sandwich for you upon request and you only pay the price of the ingredients.

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 flavouring meat. The season is from October to January; any other time the chef is using preserved truffles. 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 are usually locally grown and 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

Zagreb is finally coming into its own as an intriguing combination of Eastern and Western Europe. The sober Austro-Hungarian architecture in the town centre houses newly opened boutiques with the latest fashions from France and Italy. Bohemian cafés and sleek cocktail bars enliven the medieval streets of the old Kaptol and Gradec neighbourhoods. The Croatian appreciation of food is divided between its traditional hearty meat and potatoes restaurants and a new smattering of more worldly flavours.

Spreading up from the Sava River, Zagreb sits on the southern slopes of Mt Medvednica and throbs with the energy you would expect from a capital city, but the bustle of business life is interrupted by the long, refreshing stretch of park that bisects the town centre. With simmering nightlife and a wealth of outdoor cafés, packed from the first hint of mild weather, there's no shortage of diversions. Plus, there's an assortment of museums and galleries to explore and a regular concert schedule for the culturally minded.

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 hill-top 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, hotels 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 Kaptol in the distance. Trg Jelačića, beyond the northern end of the parks, is the main city square of Lower Zagreb. There is a bus that runs from the airport to the bus station (see p158 for details). 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.

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** (p153) and then walk on to the town centre, Trg Jelačića. Avoid being hit by a tram as you cross the square, and 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** (p152). As long as you're 'uptown', pick up some fruit at the **Dolac** (p152) fruit and vegetable market or have lunch at **Kaptolska Klet** (p155) and head over to Gradec to check out some churches and museums. Don't miss the **Meštrović Studio** (p152). Try the nightlife along **Tkalčićeva** (p156) and sup at **Baltazar** (p155).

On the second day, make a tour of the Lower Town museums, reserving a good two hours for the **Museum Mimara** (p154), in the western part of the Lower Town. Take tea at **Kazališna Kavana** (p156) and an afternoon break in the **Botanical Gardens** (p154). Early evening is best at **Trg Petra Preradovića** (p156) before dining at one of the many scrumptious Lower Town restaurants and sampling some of Zagreb's nightlife.

INFORMATION

Bookshops

Algoritam (Hotel Dubrovnik, Gajeva) 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; Preradovićeveva 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 65KN.

Petecin (☎ 48 14 802; Kaptol 11; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Fri)

Predom (☎ 46 12 990; Draškovićeva 31; ☎ 7am-7pm Mon-Fri)

Left Luggage

Garderoba bus station (per hr 1.20KN; ☎ 5am-10pm Mon-Sat, 6am-10pm Sun); train station (per day 10KN; ☎ 24hr)

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 16 159; Trg Jelačića 2; ☎ 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 13 933; Zrinjevac 17) The Amex representative in Zagreb.

Post

Main post office (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.

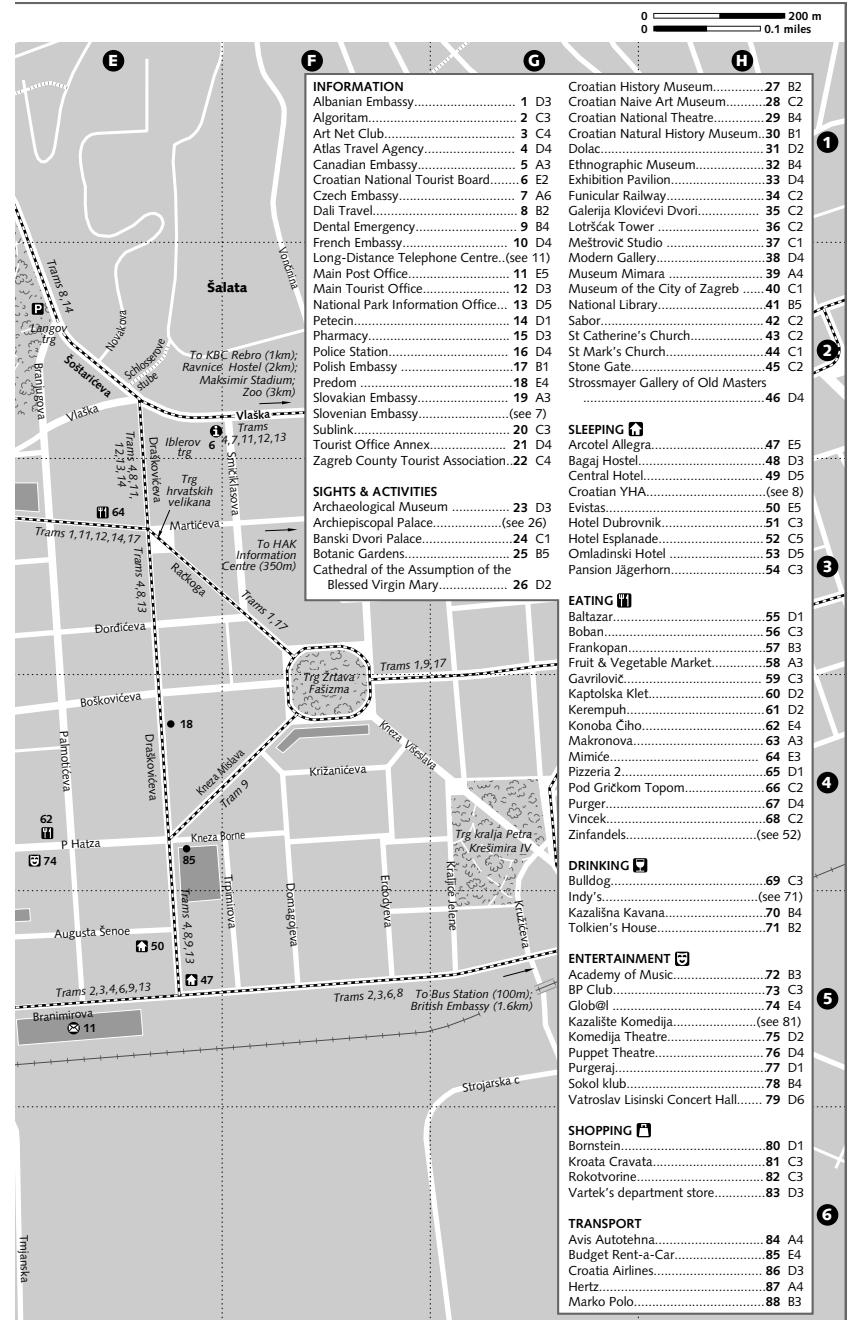
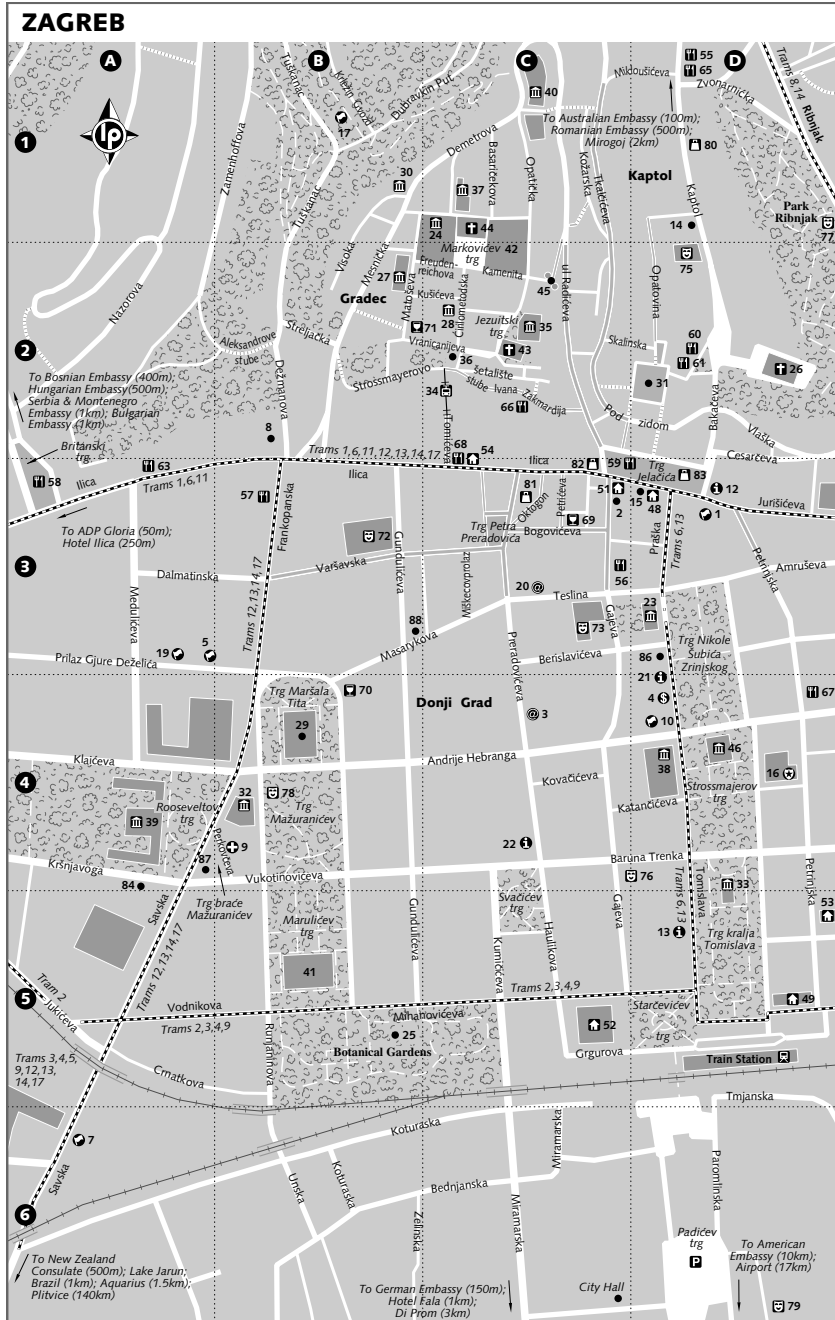
Tourist Information

Main tourist office (☎ 48 14 051; www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr; Trg Jelačića 11; ☎ 8.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat, 10am-4pm Sun) Distributes city maps and free leaflets. It also sells the Zagreb Card, which costs 90KN and includes 72 hours of free transport, a 50% discount on museums and a 10% to 15% discount on selected hotels. It can also be purchased online.

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

Tourist office annexe (☎ 49 21 645; Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinjskog 14; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri) Same services as the main tourist office, but stocks fewer publications.

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



INFORMATION	
Albanian Embassy.....	1 D3
Algorithm.....	2 C3
Art Net Club.....	3 C4
Atlas Travel Agency.....	4 D4
Canadian Embassy.....	5 A3
Croatian National Tourist Board.....	6 E2
Czech Embassy.....	7 A6
Dall Travel.....	8 B2
Dental Emergency.....	9 B4
French Embassy.....	10 D4
Long-Distance Telephone Centre.....	(see 11)
Main Post Office.....	11 E5
Main Tourist Office.....	12 D3
National Park Information Office.....	13 D5
Petecin.....	14 D1
Pharmacy.....	15 D3
Police Station.....	16 D4
Polish Embassy.....	17 B1
Predom.....	18 E4
Slovakian Embassy.....	19 A3
Slovenian Embassy.....	(see 7)
Sublink.....	20 C3
Tourist Office Annex.....	21 D4
Zagreb County Tourist Association.....	22 C4

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	
Archaeological Museum.....	23 D3
Archiepiscopal Palace.....	(see 26)
Banski Dvori Palace.....	24 C1
Botanic Gardens.....	25 B5
Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.....	26 D2

EATING	
Baltazar.....	55 D1
Boban.....	56 C3
Frankopan.....	57 B3
Fruit & Vegetable Market.....	58 A3
Gavrilović.....	59 C3
Kaptolska Klet.....	60 D2
Kerempuh.....	61 D2
Konoba Čiho.....	62 E4
Makronova.....	63 A3
Mimice.....	64 C3
Pizzeria 2.....	65 D1
Pod Gričkom Topom.....	66 C2
Purger.....	67 D4
Vincek.....	68 C2
Zinfandels.....	(see 52)

DRINKING	
Bulldog.....	69 C3
Indy's.....	(see 71)
Kazališna Kavana.....	70 B4
Tolkien's House.....	71 B2

ENTERTAINMENT	
Academy of Music.....	72 B3
BP Club.....	73 C3
Clob@.....	74 E4
Kazalište Komedija.....	(see 81)
Komedija Theatre.....	75 D2
Puppet Theatre.....	76 D4
Purgeraj.....	77 D1
Sokol klub.....	78 B4
Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall.....	79 D6

SHOPPING	
Bornstein.....	80 D1
Kroata Cravata.....	81 C3
Rokotvorine.....	82 C3
Vartek's department store.....	83 D3

TRANSPORT	
Avis Autotehna.....	84 A4
Budget Rent-a-Car.....	85 E4
Croatia Airlines.....	86 D3
Hertz.....	87 A4
Marko Polo.....	88 B3

STREET NAMES

In Zagreb, 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 (you'll see ulica abbreviated to ul in the text and maps in this chapter). The same principle applies to a square (*trg*) which can be rendered as Trg Petra Preradovića or Preradovićeve trg. Some of the more common names are: Trg svetog Marka (Markov trg), Trg Josipa Jurja Strossmayera (Strossmayerov trg), Ulica Andrije Hebranga (Hebrangova), Ulica Pavla Radića (Radićeva), Ulica Augusta Senoe (Senoina), Ulica Ivana Tkalčića (Tkalčićeva) and Ulica Nikole Tesle (Teslina). Be aware also that Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinjskog 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.

Travel Agencies

Dali Travel (☎ 48 47 472; travelsection@hffhs.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

As the oldest part of Zagreb, the Upper Town offers landmark buildings and churches from the earlier centuries of Zagreb's history. The Lower Town has the city's most interesting art museums and fine examples of 19th- and 20th-century architecture.

Kaptol

Zagreb's colourful **Dolac** (☎ 7am-2pm) fruit and vegetable market 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** (Katedrala Marijina Uznesenja; 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 Zagreb was threatened by the Turks.

Gradec

From ul Radićeva 5, off Trg Jelačića, a pedestrian walkway called *stube* Ivana Zakmardija leads to the **Lotrščak Tower** (Kula Lotrščak; ☎ 48 51 768; admission 5KN; ☎ 11am-7pm Tue-Sun) and a **funicular railway** (one way 3KN; ☎ 6.30am-9pm) built in 1888, which 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** (Crkva Svete Katarine), with Jesuitski trg beyond. The **Galerija Klovičevi Dvori** (☎ 48 51 926; Jesuitski trg 4; adult/student 20/10KN; ☎ 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 the devastating fire of 1731.

Gothic **St Mark's Church** (Crkva Svetog Marka; ☎ 48 51 611; Markovićeve 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 Croatia's 1908 **National Assembly** (Sabor).

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 changing of the guard ceremony at noon at the weekend.

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), now housing an excellent collection of some 100 sculptures, drawings, lithographs and furniture created by the artist. There are several other museums nearby. The best is the **Museum of the City of Zagreb** (Muzej Grada Zagreba; ☎ 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). There's also the lively and colourful **Croatian Naive Art Museum** (Hrvatski Muzej Naivne Umjetnosti; ☎ 48 51 911; Čirilometodska 3; adult/concession 10/5KN; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Fri, to 1pm Sat & Sun); the **Croatian Natural History Museum** (Hrvatski Prirodoslovni Muzej; ☎ 48 51 700; Demetrova 1; adult/concession 15/7KN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, to 1pm Sat & Sun), which has a collection of prehistoric tools and bones plus exhibits on the evolution of plant and animal life in Croatia; and the less-than-gripping **Croatian History Museum** (Hrvatski Povijesni Muzej; ☎ 48 51 900; Matoševa 9; temporary exhibitions adult/concession 10/5KN; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri, to 1pm Sat & Sun)

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 pavil-**

ion (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** (Strossmayerova Galerija Starih Majstora; ☎ 48 95 115; adult/concession 20/15KN; ☎ 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, one of the oldest inscriptions in the Croatian language.

The fascinating **Archaeological Museum** (Arheološki Muzej; ☎ 48 73 101; Trg Nikole Šubića Zrinjskog 19; adult/concession 30/10KN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, to 1pm Sat & Sun) has a wide-ranging display of artefacts from prehistoric times through to the medieval period. The ambient sounds and light 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.

The **Modern Gallery** (Galerija Moderna; ☎ 49 22 368; Andrije Hebranga 1; 10am-6pm Tue-Sat, to 1pm Sun) presents temporary exhibitions that offer

A CROATIAN BLOG *Adapted from Draxblog III (http://draxblog.typepad.com) by Dragan Antulov*

Today Zagreb for the fourth time had a Gay Pride parade. The event wasn't very different from the few previous occasions – around a hundred or so participants, four times more policemen and an unknown number of passers-by shouting all kinds of verbal abuse, mostly elderly people appalled at the prospects of taxpayers' money being spent on such abominations instead of increasing their pensions.

The only difference was in the peculiar absence of males in the parade. This year's event was almost exclusively lesbian-oriented and the organiser was a relatively unknown and obscure feminist group. The reason was because Iskorak, the NGO representing male homosexuals, decided against participation in the event. This created a rift between Iskorak and Kontra, the NGO representing lesbians.

The alliance between Croatian gays and Croatian lesbians – or, to be more precise, alliance between a handful of Zagreb activists claiming to represent Croatian gay and lesbians – is shattered, mostly due to Iskorak leaders finding a Gay Pride event counterproductive in the new social and political climate of today's Croatia. Three years ago gays and lesbians were supposed to give some leftist and liberal credentials to the 'left-centre' government of (Prime Minister) Ivica Račan and show Croatia to be tolerant, progressive and enlightened enough to join the EU, unlike Serbia where the 2001 Gay Pride parade was shattered by skinheads and soccer hooligans. This policy continued under (Prime Minister) Sanader. However, with the prospects of Croatian entry to EU getting dimmer and the rise of Euroscepticism, aggressive pushing or even public sympathies for a gay agenda is going to be counterproductive.

Lesbians, on the other hand, have less to worry about, because, for reasons well known to the makers of *Wild Thing* movies, their presence doesn't seem to annoy the average Croatian male as much as the presence of male homosexuals. And since this observation could be applied to a majority of skinheads, soccer hooligans and similar characters, lesbian-only parades are less likely to create as much of a security problem for the Croatian government and City of Zagreb authorities. For that reason alone Croatian lesbians can afford to be more militant in their demands than their male counterparts.

an excellent chance to catch up with the latest in Croatian painting.

West of the Centre

The **Museum Mimara** (Muzej Mimara; ☎ 48 28 100; Rooseveltov trg 5; adult/concession 20/15KN; 🕒 10am-5pm Tue, Wed, Fri & Sat, to 7pm Thu, to 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 neobaroque **Croatian National Theatre** (☎ 48 28 532; Trg Maršala Tita 15; box office 🕒 10am-1pm & 5-7.30pm Mon-Fri, to 1pm Sat, 30min before performances Sun) dates from 1895 and has Ivan Meštrović's sculpture *Fountain of Life* (1905) in front. The **Ethnographic Museum** (Etnografski Muzej; ☎ 48 26 220; Trg Mažuranićev 14; adult/concession 15/10KN; 🕒 10am-6pm Tue-Thu, to 1pm Fri-Sun) has a large collection of Croatian folk costumes, accompanied by English captions. To the south is the Art Nouveau **National Library** (1907). The **Botanical Gardens** (Mihanovićevo; admission free; 🕒 9am-7pm Tue-Sun) is attractive for its plants and landscaping, as well as its restful corners, 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) which operate Monday through Thursday leaving from Trg Jelačića, as well as three-hour bus and walking tours (150KN) that operate Friday through Sunday, leaving from the Arcotel Allegra hotel.

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

Budget accommodation is in short supply in Zagreb. An early arrival is recommended, since private room-finding agencies are an attractive alternative and usually refuse telephone bookings. Prices run from about 220KN to 275KN for a double with a shared bathroom and 300KN to 350KN with a private bathroom. Apartments cost at least 380KN per night. There's usually a surcharge for staying only one night. **Evistas** (☎ 48 39 554; fax 48 39 543; evistas@zg.t-com.hr; Augusta Šenoae 28; 🕒 9am-1.30pm & 3-8pm Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5pm Sat) is closest to the train station. **ADP Gloria** (☎ 48 23 567; www.adp-glorija.com in Croatian; Britanski trg 5; 🕒 closed Sun), just west of town, is another option for private rooms. **Di Prom** (☎ 65 50 039; fax 65 50 233; Trmsko 25a; 🕒 closed Sun) is south of the town centre with rooms in Novi Zagreb.

Lower Town

Arcotel Allegra (☎ 46 96 000; www.arcotel.at/allegra; Branimirova 29; r €136-270; 📞 🕒 📺 📺 📺) 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 ultracontemporary Mediterranean-inspired décor and a fitness centre, plus rooms and accoutrements for your business meetings. The hotel is gay friendly.

Hotel Dubrovnik (☎ 48 73 555; www.hotel-dubrovnik.t-com.hr; Gajeva 1; s/d from €105/162; 📞 🕒 📺 📺) Business travellers love this modern hotel right in the centre of town. Services, rooms and facilities are all first-rate.

Central Hotel (☎ 48 41 122; www.hotel-central.hr; Branimirova 3; s/d €76/100; 📞 🕒 📺) Entirely renovated with modern, plush rooms, this hotel

THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Hotel Esplanade (☎ 45 66 666; www.regent-hotels.com; Mihanovićevo 1; s/d 1875/2025KN; 📞 🕒 📺 📺) This six-storey, 215-room hotel was built next to the train station in 1924 to welcome the *Orient Express* crowd in grand style. It's an Art Deco masterpiece replete with walls of swirling marble, immensely wide staircases and wood-panelled elevators. Even if you're not staying at the hotel, take a peek at the magnificent Emerald Ballroom or eat at Zinfandels, the hotel restaurant and one of the finest dining experiences in Croatia.

Rooms vary greatly in size, but all are high-ceilinged and plushly decorated in period upholstery. The best rooms look out at the esplanade in front of the train station. The double-glazed windows mean that you won't be bothered by noise while you contemplate the street scene.

Throughout its history, the hotel has welcomed kings, journalists, artists and politicians, with a coolly professional attention to service. The slightly formal, courtly attitude of the staff blends perfectly with the hotel's style – traditional, classic, unswayed by fads, a bulwark of stability in a frivolous world.

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-panсион-jaegerhorn.hr; Illica 14; s/d/apt €76/104/125; 📞 🕒 📺) 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.

Bagaj Hostel (☎ 48 35 865; www.bagaj.hr; Trg Jelačića 1; dm from €14.60, d from €53; 📞 🕒) Open from mid-June to mid-September, this new hostel has a fantastic location right in the heart of Zagreb. Rooms are bright, showers are in the hall and Internet access is available for a small fee. You can even hire a bike and a mobile phone at a reasonable rate.

Omladinski Hostel (☎ 48 41 261; fax 48 41 269; Petrijska 77; per person in 6-/3-bed dm 73/83KN, d 211KN) Some say it's a dump. We prefer to call it an auditory and visual challenge with maintenance issues. Checkout is at 9am. At least it's near the train station.

West of the Centre

Hotel Ilica (☎ 37 77 522; www.hotel-ilica.hr in Croatian; Ilica 102; s/d/tw/apt €55/70/83/118; 📞 🕒 📺) For a small hotel, you can't do better than this stylish joint just west of town with comfortable rooms and friendly service. Trams 6, 11 and 12 stop right outside the entrance.

Out of Town

Hotel Fala (☎ /fax 61 94 498; www.hotel-fala-zg.hr; Trnjanske ledine 18; s/d €48/65; 📞 🕒 📺) The small rooms have no frills but the price is right and you're not too terribly far from the town centre.

Ravnice Hostel (☎ /fax 23 32 325; www.ravniceyouth-hostel.hr; Ravnice 38d; dm €15; 📞 🕒) 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 take you there.

EATING

As befits 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.

Kaptol

Baltazar (☎ 46 66 824; Nova Ves 4; meals from 100KN; 🕒 closed Sun) Duck, lamb, pork, beef and turkey are cooked to perfection here, served with a good choice of local wines.

Kaptolska Klet (☎ 48 14 838; Kaptol 5; meals 75-90KN) 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 homemade sausages, it turns out a nice platter of grilled vegetables and a vegetable loaf.

THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Boban (☎ 48 11 549; Gajeva 9; mains 30-50KN) This Italian restaurant/bar/café offers sophisticated food at good prices. It has an outdoor terrace and an indoor lounge and terrace that is popular with Zagreb yuppies. Try the gnocchi made from squid ink and topped with salmon sauce.

Pizzeria 2 (☎ 48 17 462; Nova Ves 2; pizzas 28-40KN) Between mouth-watering pizza and a savoury little array of pasta dishes, this place is ground zero for Italian food-lovers on a budget.

Kerempuh (☎ 48 19 000; Kaptol 3; meals from 70KN) Watch the action at the Dolac market below while munching on hearty Zagreb dishes like *sarma* (stuffed cabbage).

You can pick up yummy fresh produce at Dolac (p152)

Gradec

Pod Gričkom Topom (☎ 48 33 607; stube Ivana Zakmardija 5; meals from 90KN) Tucked away by a leafy path below the Upper Town, this restaurant has a somewhat self-conscious charm but it has an outdoor terrace and good Croatian meat-based specialities. Holding up here on a snowy winter evening is one of the great Zagrebian pleasures.

Lower Town

Zinfandels (☎ 45 66 666; Mihanovićeve 1; meals 110-250KN; ☹ closed Sun) The new Belgian chef here in the Esplanade dining room grafts Mediterranean flavours onto Croatian dishes and polishes the result with a light Asian touch.

Purger (☎ 48 73 394; Petrinjska 33; meals from 75KN) This restaurant serves up a good assortment of meat and fish dishes at reasonable prices. It has an open-air terrace at the back. Recent graduates are inclined to blow their first pay cheque here.

Konoba Čiho (☎ 48 17 060; P Hatza 15; meals from 75KN; ☹ closed Sun) Tucked away downstairs, this cosy restaurant turns out a startling assortment of fish and seafood, grilled, fried and combined in delicious stews.

Mimiće (Jurišićeva 21; meals 20-40KN; ☹ closed Sun) It's a local favourite and deservedly so. The fish is sure to be fresh because turnover is high, especially at noontime when workers in the offices around Trg Jelačića turn out in droves for their lunch.

Gavrilović (Trg Jelačića; ☹ closed Sun) Pick up local cheese, smoked meat and cold cuts.

Vincek (☎ 45 50 834; Ilica 18) Slurp up dessert at Vincek, famous for its ice cream.

West of the Centre

Makronova (☎ 48 47 115; Ilica 72; meals 90KN; ☹ closed Sun) All very Zen, purely macrobiotic and more than welcome for those

of the vegan persuasion. There's also shiatsu treatment, yoga classes and feng shui courses.

Frankopan (☎ 48 48 547; Frankopanska 8; meals 65-110KN) 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 hostelery school.

There's also a **fruit and vegetable market** (Britanski trg; ☹ 7am-3pm).

DRINKING

The architecture may be sober but the nightlife definitely is not, especially as the weather warms up and Zagrebians take to the streets. Wander along **Tkalčićeva** in the Upper Town or around bar-lined Bogovićeve, just south of Trg Jelačića, which turns into prime meet-and-greet territory each evening. Tkalčićeva attracts a slightly funkier crowd. **Trg Petra Preradovića** is the most popular spot in the Lower Town, attracting street performers and occasional bands in mild weather. The places listed below open around noon for café society and turn into bars around dinner time.

Bulldog (☎ 48 17 393; Bogovićeve 6) Belgian beer loosens up a crowd of young execs, sales reps, minor politicians and expats.

Tolkien's House (☎ 48 51 776; Vranicanijeva 8) Decorated in the style of JRR Tolkien's books, it's very Frodo.

Indy's (☎ 48 52 053; Vranicanijeva 4) This friendly bar presents a dazzling assortment of juicy and fruity cocktails on an outdoor terrace.

Brazil (☎ 091 20 02 481; Veslačka bb) Parked on the Sava River, this bar on a boat refreshes a throng of thirsty revellers and offers occasional live music.

Kazališna Kavana (☎ 48 55 851; Trg Maršala Tita) Everyone seems to wind up at this café, known as Kav Kaz, at one time or another, even though it's beyond pretentious.

ENTERTAINMENT

Zagreb is definitely 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 (p149) and peruse the many flyers which announce

the latest breaking developments on the music scene.

Discos & Nightclubs

The dress code is relaxed in most Zagreb clubs but neatness counts. The cover charge usually runs to 40KN 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.

Glob@ (☎ 48 76 146; P Hatza 14) Gays and lesbians are more than welcome to take in the friendly, tolerant vibes.

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.

Sport

Basketball is popular in Zagreb, and from October to April games take place in a variety of venues around town, usually at 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

It's worth making the rounds of the theatres in person to check their programmes. Tickets are usually available for performances, even for the best shows. A small office marked 'Kazalište Komedija' (look out for the posters) also sells theatre tickets; it's in the Oktogon, a passage connecting Trg Petra Preradovića to Ilica 3.

The neobaroque Croatian National Theatre (p197) 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; Trg Stjepana Radica 4; ☹ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat) Just south of the train station, this concert hall is a prestigious venue where symphony concerts are held regularly.

Academy of Music (☎ 48 30 822; Gundulićeve 6a) Concerts also take place at the Academy of Music, off Ilica.

Puppet Theatre (Baruna Trenka 3; performances 5pm Sat, noon Sun) Another entertainment option.

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 new store.

Kroata Cravata (Oktogon) Croatia is the birthplace of the necktie (cravat); Kroata Cravata has locally made silk neckties at prices that run from 200KN to 400KN.

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

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

Air

For information about the flights to and from Zagreb, see p225 and p225.

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 eateries and grocery stores. You can buy most international tickets at windows 17 to 20.

Bus depart from Zagreb for most parts of Croatia, Slovenia and places beyond. Buy an advance ticket at the station if you're planning to travel far.

The following domestic buses depart from Zagreb:

Destination	Cost (KN)	Duration	Frequency
Dubrovnik	205-401	11hr	7 daily
Korčula	204	12hr	1 daily
Krk	148	4-5hr	4 daily
Ljubljana, Slovenija	203	2½hr	2 daily
Osijek	99-132	4hr	8 daily
Plitvice	48-70	2½hr	19 daily
Poreč	117-172	5hr	6 daily
Pula	120-174	4-6hr	17 daily
Rab	133-154	4½-5hr	2 daily
Rijeka	84-141	2½-3hr	21 daily
Rovinj	105-196	5-8hr	8 daily
Split	115-150	6-9hr	27 daily
Varaždin	53	1¾hr	20 daily
Zadar	102-165	4-5hr	20 daily

For international bus connections see p225.

Train

The following domestic trains depart from **Zagreb train station** (☎ 060 33 34 44):

Destination	Cost (KN)	Duration	Frequency
Osijek	102	4½hr	4 daily
Pula	14	5½hr	2 daily
Rijeka	91	5hr	5 daily
Split	152	6½-9hr	6 daily
Varaždin	55	3hr	13 daily
Zadar	148	8hr	4 daily

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

For international train connections see p225.

GETTING AROUND

Zagreb is a fairly easy city to navigate, whether by car or public transport. Traffic isn't bad, there's sufficient parking, and the efficient tram system should be a model for other polluted, traffic-clogged European capitals.

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 (25KN). A taxi would cost about 250KN.

Car

Of the major car-hire companies, you could try **Budget Rent-a-Car** (☎ 45 54 936; Kneza Borne 2) in the Hotel Sheraton, **Avis Autotehna** (☎ 48 36 006; Kršnavoga 1) at the Hotel Westin and **Hertz** (☎ 48 46 777; Vukotinovićeveva 4). Prices start at 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.

The **Croatian Auto Club (HAK) Information Centre** (☎ 46 40 800; Derencinova 20) helps motorists in need. It's just east of the centre.

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 at 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 next morning, is 18KN at most Vjesnik or Tisak news outlets. (See p149 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 8KN per kilometre after a whopping flag fall of 25KN. On Sunday and from 10pm to 5am there's a 20% surcharge.

AROUND ZAGREB

Samobor

pop 14,000

It's almost too little-village-cute, but after a week of crowded trams in Zagreb, Samobor provides a perfect breather for stressed-out Zagrebians. A shallow stream stocked with trout curves through a town centre that is composed of trim pastel houses and several old churches. The town has conserved its culture as well as its architecture. The small family businesses involved in handi-crafts, restaurants and the production of mustard and spirits have survived well, seemingly untouched by the political fads sweeping through the rest of the country.

The town's literary and musical traditions, which produced the poet Stanko Vraz and the composer Ferdo Livadić, are reflected in a number of annual festivals, most famously the Fašnik (Samobor Carnival) on the eve of Lent, which attracts some 300,000 visitors.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

The bus stop (no left-luggage office) is on Šmidheva, about 100m uphill from the town, which centres around Trg Kralja Tomislava.

In the town centre, the **tourist office** (☎ 33 60 044; www.samobor.hr in Croatian; Trg Kralja Tomislava 5; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Fri, 9am-7pm Sat, 10am-7pm Sun) has limited documentation but you can get hiking maps.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

The **Town Museum** (Gradski Muzej; ☎ 33 61 014; Livadićeveva 7; adult/student 8/5KN; ☎ 9am-3pm Tue-Sat, to 1pm Sun) has moderately interesting exhibits on regional culture. It's housed in Livadićev Dvor Villa, which once belonged to composer Ferdinand Livadić and was an important centre for the 19th-century nationalist cause.

Samobor is a good jumping-off point for **hikes** into the Samoborsko Gorje, a mountain system (part of the Žumberak Range) which links the high peaks of the alps with the karstic caves and abysses of the Dinaric Range. Carpeted with meadows and forests, the range is the most popular hiking destination in the region. Most of the hikes are easy and there are several mountain huts that make pleasant rest stops. Many are open weekends only except in the high season.

The range has three groups: the Oštrc group in the centre, the Japetić group to the west, and the Plešica group to the east. Both the Oštrc and the Japetić groups are accessible from Šoićeva Kuća, a mountain hut 10km west of Samobor only reachable by foot. From there, it's an easy 30-minute climb to the hill fort of Lipovac and an hour's climb to the peak of Oštrc (753m). Another popular hike is the 1½-hour climb from Šoićeva Kuća to Japetić (780m). You can also follow a path from Oštrc to Japetić which will take about two hours. If you want to explore the Plešica group, head east to the hunting cabin Srndač on Poljanice

(12km) from where it's a 40-minute climb to Plešivica peak (780m). The tourist office in town has maps and information on hikes in the region.

SLEEPING & EATING

Most people come to Samobor on a day trip from Zagreb but you can also stay here and commute into Zagreb. The one hotel in town offers better value for money than any of the Zagreb hotels.

Hotel Livadić (☎ 33 65 850; www.hotel-livadic.hr; Trg Kralja Tomislava 1; s/d 410/465KN) This atmospheric place is decorated in 19th-century style and provides spacious, comfortable rooms with TV and phone. Since cuisine is a major draw for Samobor, you can count on the quality of the restaurant and café. Prices stay the same year-round.

Meals tend to be more expensive than in Zagreb but are well worth it.

Pri Staroj Vuri (☎ 33 60 548; Giznik 2; 2-course meal 90-110KN) Sitting about 50m uphill from Trg Kralja Tomislava, this restaurant serves traditional dishes in a homy cottage, and sometimes hosts poetry readings. The specialities of the house are *hrvatska pisanica* (beef steak in a spicy mushroom, onion, tomato and red-wine sauce) and *struklova juha* (soup with *strukli*).

U Prolazu (☎ 33 66 420; Trg Kralja Tomislava 5) This eatery, on the main square, serves the best *kremšnita* (custard slice) in town.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Samobor is easy to reach by public transport. Local buses leave from the bus station in Zagreb every 30 minutes for the price of a local ride but it's quicker to take an express from the bus station (20KN, 30 minutes).

Varaždin

☎ 042 / pop 43,000

Varaždin, 81km north of Zagreb, is often ill-used as a mere transit point on the way to or from Hungary, but in fact it's well worth a visit in its own right. The town centre is a marvel of baroque architecture, scrupulously restored and well tended. It was once Croatia's capital and most prosperous city, which explains the extraordinary refinement of the architecture. In many ways, it's a mini-Prague without the crowds or the prices. Topping off the baroque symphony is the gleaming white and turreted

Stari Grad (Old City), which now contains a museum.

ORIENTATION

The bus and train stations are at opposite ends of town, about 2km apart, and are not linked by public transportation. The town centre lies between them and to the north. The main commercial street is Gundulića; it leads to the main square, Trg Kralja Tomislava, surrounded by Varaždin's famous baroque buildings.

INFORMATION

Atlas Travel Agency (☎ 313 618; B Radić 20) Represents American Express.

Garderoba bus station (per day 10KN; ☎ 6am-10pm); train station (per day 10KN; ☎ 24hr) Left luggage.

Post office (Trg Slobode 9)

T-Tours Agency (☎ 210 989; t-tours@vz.t-com.hr; Gundulićeva 2) Finds private accommodation and is a good source of information on town events.

Turistička Zajednica (☎ /fax 210 987; www.varazdin.hr; Padovčeva 3; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat Apr-Oct, 8am-4pm Mon-Fri Nov-Mar) The tourist office has plenty of colourful brochures and is a wealth of information.

Varaždinska Banka (Kapucinski trg 5) This branch is opposite the bus station, but all branches have ATMs.

SIGHTS

In addition to several excellent museums, Varaždin offers a fine ensemble of baroque buildings in its centre, a number of which have been turned into museums. Many of the aristocratic mansions and elegant churches are being restored as part of the town's bid to be included in Unesco's list of World Heritage sites. Conveniently, most buildings have plaques out the front with architectural and historical explanations in English.

The **Town Museum** (Gradski Muzej; ☎ 210 339; Strossmayera 7; adult/student 15/12KN; ☎ 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, to 1pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, to 1pm Sat & Sun Sep-May) is part of the **Stari Grad** (Old City), which is a beautifully preserved example of medieval defensive architecture. Construction of this fortress began in the 14th century, but it was the Earl of Celje who turned it into a strong fortress in the 15th century, adding the rounded towers that typify Gothic architecture in northern Croatia. By the early 16th century, it was the chief regional fortification against the encroaching Ottoman Turks, but the

two large courtyards and massive corridors made it look more like a castle. It remained in private hands until 1925 when it was turned into a museum. Today it houses furniture, paintings, decorative objects and weapons amassed during the course of Varaždin's history. The exhibits are divided into eight different rooms, each one reflecting a different historic period. The architecture alone is worth paying the admission; the exhibits are interesting enough.

Varaždin's other major museum is the fascinating **Entomological Collection** (Entomološka Zbirka; ☎ 210 474; Franjevački trg 6; adult/student 15/12KN; ☎ 10am-3pm Tue-Fri, to 1pm Sat & Sun). Housed in the baroque **Herczer Palace**, the collection comprises nearly 4500 exhibits of the bug world, including 1000 different insect species. The examples of insect nests, habitats and reproductive habits are informative and displayed with flair. The collection was amassed and mounted by a local entomologist, Franjo Košćec, who also created the tools to mount the tiny creatures.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Varaždin is famous for its baroque music festival, **Varaždin Baroque Evenings**, which takes place over three to four weeks each September. Local and international orchestras play baroque music in churches and theatres around the city for prices ranging from 30KN to 100KN, depending on the programme. Tickets are available about two hours before the beginning of the concert at travel agencies, the **Varaždin Concert Bureau** (☎ /fax 212 907) at the Croatian National Theatre, or at the cathedral. In July and August there's also a **Summer Cultural Festival** of music, dance and theatre; it's often held in the city's squares and parks.

SLEEPING

Accommodation is less expensive than in Zagreb and offers better value. Most hotels in Varaždin are clean, well maintained and offer good value for money. Their clientele is mostly visiting businesspeople from Zagreb and neighbouring countries; this means they are likely to be full on Monday to Friday and empty on weekends.

T-Tours Agency has single/double private rooms from about 95/180KN. There is generally no supplement for a single night's stay and prices stay the same year-round.

There aren't many rooms available, but then there aren't many people asking for them either.

Pansion Maltar (☎ 311 100; www.maltar.hr; F Prešerna 1; s/d 250/380KN) This cheerful little *pension*, not far from the bus station, is the cheapest place in town but has only 10 rooms. Booking in advance is advised. Rooms are in excellent condition and have satellite TV but no phones.

Gareštin Hotel (☎ /fax 214 314; Zagrebačka 34; s/d 310/445KN) This establishment has a glossy, modern décor that usually indicates high prices. Yet rooms with phone, TV and minibar are reasonably priced. The hotel is only a short walk from the bus station.

EATING & DRINKING

Pivnica Raj (☎ 213 146; Gundulića 11; meals from 65KN) The brew flows freely in this enormously popular local beer hall where the food is old-fashioned and hearty but with a nod to vegetarians. On weekends there's traditional *tamburitza* music but it's a good time here any time, whether on the terrace or in the cosy interior.

Zlatna Guska (☎ 213 393; Habledića 4; mains around 70KN) The interior is designed to resemble a knights' dining hall with plenty of armour and equipment, and dishes called 'the last meal of a victim of an execution' among other evocative names. It's fun and the dishes are cooked to perfection. The portions would make a knight burst his tin suit.

There is a daily **market** (Trg Bana Jelačića; ☎ 6am-2pm), and there are many bakeries that sell Varaždin's special finger-shaped bread, *kličići*.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Varaždin is a major transportation hub in northern Croatia, with bus and train lines running in all directions. For information on long-haul buses to Germany and northern Europe, see the Land section in the Transport chapter (p402). Remember that northbound buses originate in Zagreb, stop at Varaždin and cost the same whether you buy the ticket in Zagreb or Varaždin.

All buses to the coast go through Zagreb. There are buses to Zagreb every 30 minutes to an hour (53KN, two hours).

There's a daily train to Rijeka (134KN, seven hours) and Zadar (189KN, 11 hours)

in the summer. There's one direct train a day to Budapest (195KN, five hours) and three unreserved trains to Nagykanizsa, Hungary (42KN, 1½ hours).

ISTRIA

Istria (Istra to Croatians) is the heart-shaped 3600-sq-km peninsula just south of Trieste, Italy, that retains a pronounced Italian influence. Sometimes called the 'new Tuscany', the Istrian interior is a peaceful landscape of green rolling hills, drowned valleys and fertile plains. The rugged and indented coastline is enormously popular with Italian tourists, comfortable with the excellent pasta and seafood on the menus and the fact that Italian is a second language for most Istrians.

Perhaps they dream of 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, 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 to Piran strip belongs to Slovenia while the rest is held by Croatia. Visit Piran quickly, and then make stops in Poreč and Rovinj on your way to Pula.

POREČ

☎ 052 / pop 10,450

Poreč (Parenzo in Italian) sits on a low, narrow peninsula halfway down the western coast of Istria. The town is the centre of a region dotted with sprawling tourist resorts, but vestiges of earlier times and a quiet, small-town atmosphere (at least in the low season) make it well worth a stop. There are the magnificent mosaics in the Euphrasian Basilica, and places to swim off the rocks north of the Old Town.

History

The Romans called the town Parentium and made it an important administrative base, leaving their mark on the rectangular street plan, which still is evident. After the fall of Rome, Poreč came under the rule of the Byzantines who constructed the famous

a spicy sauce. There's a cosy interior and a covered terrace with wooden booths.

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 their soft, puffy crust and fresh toppings, these pizzas are actually memorable.

Barilla (☎ 452 742; Eufrazijana 26; meals 70-100KN) This authentic Italian restaurant serves delicious pasta and pizza as well as more sophisticated Italian dishes on two outdoor terraces.

Konoba Ulives (☎ 451 132; Dekumanus 2; meals 70-100KN) Truffles are one of Istria's most precious products and you can taste them here in pasta, with beef or fresh tuna. The other fish and shellfish are also excellent, and be sure to look for the special asparagus dishes when in season.

Peškera Self-Service Restaurant (☎ 432 890; Nikole Tesle bb; meals 40KN; ☎ 9am-10pm) Situated just outside the northeastern corner of the old city wall, this is one of the best of its kind in Croatia. You can get a cheap but good main course such as fried chicken, grilled calamari or rump steak and eat it on a terrace facing the sea.

A large supermarket and department store are situated next to Hotel Poreč, near the bus station.

Drinking

Caffe Lapidarium (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.

Entertainment

Most nightlife is out of town at Zelena Laguna, where the big hotels host discos and various party nights, but the Old Town has its attractions as well.

Capitol Discotheque (V Nazora 9) This is the oldest disco in town, playing a mix of commercial music.

Getting There & Away

From the **bus station** (☎ 432 153; Karla Hugesa 2), buses depart for Rovinj (29KN, one hour,

seven daily), Zagreb (117KN to 167KN, five hours, six daily) and Rijeka (56KN to 67KN, 5½ hours, eight daily), and Pula (39KN to 51KN, 1¼ hours, 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 (25KN, 12 daily).

For information about bus connections to Slovenia, see p225 and for information about boat connections to Italy, see p403.

ROVINJ

☎ 052 / pop 14,200

Yes, it is touristy and residents are developing a sharp eye for maximising their profits but Rovinj (Rovigno in Italian) is one of the last of the true Mediterranean fishing ports. Fishermen haul their catch into the harbour in the early morning, followed by a horde of 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, off-shore 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.

INTERNET ACCESS

Planet tourist agency (☎ 840 494; Sv Križ 1; per hr 30KN) The most convenient internet access in Rovinj has a couple of computers.

LAUNDRY

Galax (☎ 814 059; M Benussi; per 5kg 50KN) It may be pricey but at least you can get your clothes washed.

LEFT LUGGAGE

Garderoba (☎ 8am-9pm daily Jun-Sep, 8am-3pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat Oct-May) At the bus station.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Ambulanta Rovinj (☎ 813 004; Istarska ul bb)

POST

Main post office (M Benussi 4) Situated across from the bus station; you can make phone calls here.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist office (☎ 811 566; fax 816 007; www.tzgrovinj.hr; Obala Pina Budicina 12; ☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Sat, 9am-1pm Sun Jun-Sep, 8am-3pm Mon-Fri, to noon Sat Oct-May) Just off Trg Maršala Tita, this office is less than a fountain of information, more of a trickle.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

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

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

Planet tourist agency (☎ 840 494; www.planetrovinj.com; Sv Križ 1)

Sights

The **Cathedral of St Euphemia** (☎ 10am-noon & 2-5pm), which completely dominates the town from its hill-top 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.

The **Rovinj Regional Museum** (☎ 816 720; Trg Maršala Tita; adult/concession 10/8KN; ☎ 9am-noon & 7-10pm Tue-Sun mid-Jun-mid-Sep, 9am-1pm Tue-Sat rest of year) contains an interesting 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. In the off season, a collection of works by contemporary Rovinj artists is mounted. There are also some Etruscan artefacts in the archaeology collection.

When you've seen enough of the town, follow the waterfront south past Hotel Park to **Punta Corrente Forest Park**, which was es-

tablished 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 (Katarina Island) is easily arranged (see 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 Sveti Katarina (10KN return) from the same landing. Get tickets on the boat or at the nearby kiosk. These boats operate only from May to mid-October.

Festivals & Events

The city's annual events include the following. The tourist office has full details. **Rovinj-Pesaro Regatta** Early May **Rovinj Summer** Concert series in July and August. **Grisia Art Market** On the 2nd Sunday of August.

Sleeping

Private rooms with two beds cost €30 to €50 in high season with a small discount for single occupancy. The surcharge for a stay of less than three nights is 50% and 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. You can book directly from www.inforovinj.com or consult one of the travel agencies listed on left. There are almost no rooms at all available in the Old Town, however.

Hotel Villa Angelo D'Oro (☎ 840 502; www.rovinj.at; Via Svalba 38-42; s/d €113/200; 🏠) This new luxury hotel in a renovated Venetian building has plush, lavishly decorated rooms with satellite TV and minibar, and a free sauna and Jacuzzi room.

Aparthotel Villa Valdibora (☎ 845 040; www.valdibora.com; Chirca Silvana 8; s/d 180/200; 🏠) This is a boutique hotel of the highest calibre. The restored 17th-century building has been lavishly done up with mementos recalling Rovinj's history and the rooms are exceptionally comfortable.

Vila Lili (☎ 840 940; www.cel.hr/vilalili; Mohorovicica 16; s/d from €60/100; 🏠) 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 Monte Mulin (☎ 811 512; www.adriaresorts.hr; s/d from €35/60; 🏠) On the wooded hillside overlooking the bay just beyond Hotel Park, this hotel is about a 15-minute walk south of the bus station. Rooms are bland but perfectly serviceable.

Porton Biondi (☎ 813 557; per person/camp site €6.28/6) Less than a kilometre from the town (on the Monsena bus route).

Eating & Drinking

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

Amfora (☎ 815 525; Rismondo 23; meals from 70KN) One of the best restaurants in town, it's expensive and packed in high season but you will eat well.

Giannino (☎ 813 402; A Ferri 38; meals from 90KN) If you like Italian food, it doesn't get much better than this. Everything from the olive oil to the grilled seafood is first rate.

Canton (☎ 811 970; Alzo Rismondo 18; fish meals from 65KN) This welcoming restaurant is becoming touristy but locals still come here for the variety of well-prepared fresh fish.

Veli Jože (☎ 816 337; Sv Križ 1; meals 65-140KN) In an interior crammed with knick-knacks or at tables outside, you can feast on a wide assortment of Istrian delicacies.

Zanzibar (☎ 813 206; P Budicina bb) Indonesian wood, palms, subdued lighting and various imaginative decorative touches create a vaguely tropical and definitely upscale ambience in this cocktail bar.

Monvi Centre (☎ 545 117; Adamovića bb) Next to the Hotel Eden, this entertainment complex

harbours a bar, cabaret, disco and a variety of fast-food joints.

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

Getting There & Away

Eurostar Travel (☎ 813 144; Obala Pina Budicina 1) has schedules and tickets for boats to Italy.

From the **bus station** (☎ 811 453; Trg na Lokvi 6), there are frequent buses to Pula (27KN, 45 minutes), which sometimes continue on to Poreč (29KN to 40KN, one hour), eight buses daily to Rijeka (86KN, three hours), nine daily to Zagreb (105KN to 196KN, five to eight hours), one daily each to Koper (80KN, 2¼ hours) and Split (319KN, 11¼ hours), and one daily to Dubrovnik (455KN, 16 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 (the ancient Polensium) is a large regional centre with a wealth of Roman ruins to explore. Its star attraction is a remarkably well-preserved amphitheatre that dominates the town centre and is often the scene of concerts and shows. Despite its busy commercial life, Pula retains 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.

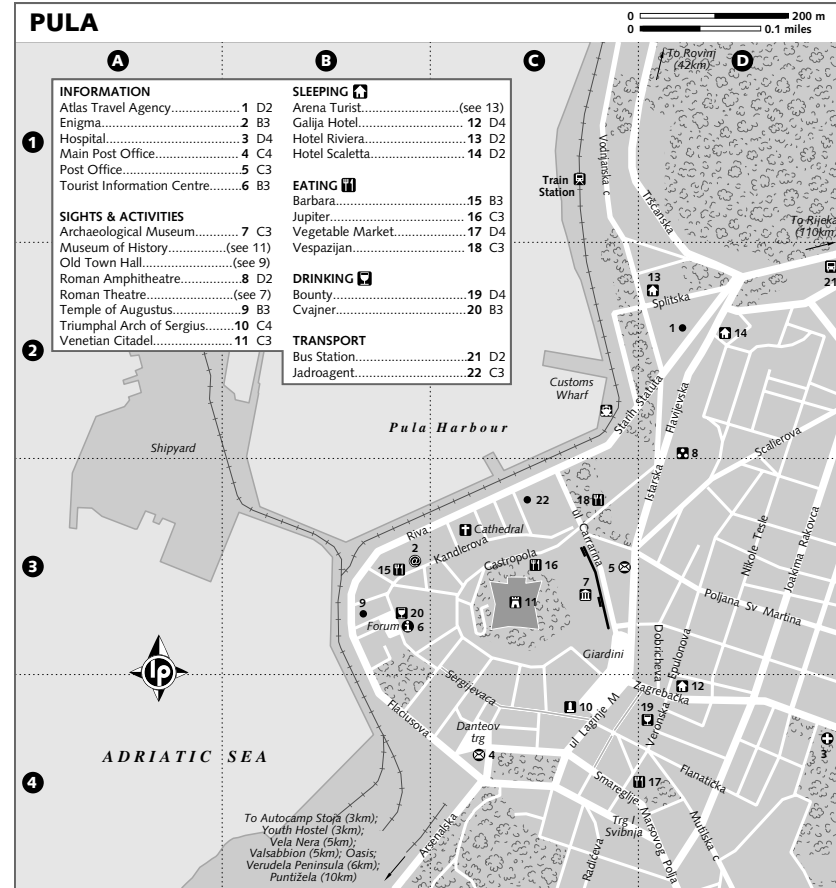
Orientation

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 is an ATM.

Atlas travel agency (☎ 393 040; atlas.pula@atlas.hr; Starih Statuta 1) Finds private accommodation and organises tours.



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

Hospital (☎ 214 433; Zagrebačka 34) Emergency services are available 24 hours.

Main post office (Danteov trg 4; ☎ 7am-8pm) You can make long distance calls. There's a branch post office to the northeast of the Archaeological Museum.

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 16/8KN; ☎ 8am-9pm Jun-Sep, 8.30am-4.30pm

Oct-May) overlooking the harbour and north-east 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; Carina 3; adult/concession 12/6KN; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Sat, 10am-3pm Sun Jun-Sep, 9am-3pm Mon-Fri Oct-May) 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 and Catarina are **Roman walls** that mark the eastern boundary of old Pula. Follow these walls south and continue down Giardini 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 daily 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. Puntizela is about 10km southwest of the centre.

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** (☎ 529 483; www.arenaturist.hr; Hotel Riviera, Splitska 1a). It also finds private accommodation, as does Atlas Travel Agency, although there is little available in the town centre itself. Count on paying from €18 per person for a double room and up to €62 for an apartment.

Hotel Scaletta (☎ 541 599; www.hotel-scaletta.com; Flavijeska 26; s/d €70/101; 📞 📺) This hotel offers beautifully decorated and thoughtfully arranged rooms with every comfort accounted for. The hotel restaurant is also first-rate.

Galija Hotel (☎ 383 802; www.hotel-galija-pula.com; Epolonova 2; s/d from €80/120; 📞 📺) This small family-owned hotel is another good bet if you want to stay in town. It feels more like staying in a private residence than a commercial establishment.

Hotel Riviera (☎/fax 211 166; Splitska 1; s/d €54/92) 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.

Autocamp Stoja (☎ 387 144; fax 387 748; per person/camp site & car €6/12.20; ☎ Apr-Oct) Three kilometres southwest of the city centre, Autocamp Stoja is on a shady promontory, with swimming possible off the rocks. Take city bus 1 to get here. There are more camping grounds at Medulin and Premantura, which are coastal resorts southeast of Pula (take the buses heading southeast from town).

Youth Hostel (☎ 391 133; pula@hffs.hr; camp sites/B&B/half board €8.70/13.35/17.35) 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 hire tents for €1.85, year round.

Eating

The best dining is out of town on and around the Verudela Peninsula. You'll have a number of inexpensive choices along Kandlerova leading to the Forum.

Valsabbion (☎/fax 218 033; Pješćana uvala IX/26; 2-course meals from 120KN; ☎ noon-midnight) Generally considered one of the best restaurants in Croatia, the menu has a variety of international dishes and the culinary style reflects the imaginative flavours of nouvelle cuisine. It's not cheap, but the quality is outstanding. It's about 5km south of town.

Vela Nera (☎ 219 209; Pješćana uvala bb; 2-course meals from 100KN) Nearby is this delightful place, a rival of Valsabbion for renowned dining, with a terrace overlooking the sea and excellent seafood specialities.

Jupiter (☎ 214 333; Castropola 38; meals from 25KN) This popular place serves up the best pizza in town and the pasta is good, too.

Barbara (☎ 219 317; Kandlerova 5; meals from 25KN) It's your basic calamari and *čevapčići* but well done and in a great people-watching location.

Vespazijan (☎ 210 016; Amfiteatarska 11; meals from 30KN) This unpretentious spot conjures up yummy risottos and a variety of seafood dishes.

Self-caterers can pick up vegetables, cold cuts and local cheese at the morning **vegetable market** (Smaregljije Masovog Polja).

(Continued from page 168)

Drinking

The streets of Flanatička, Kandlerova and Sergijeveca 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.

Bounty (☎ 218 088; Veronska 8) Irish beer and cheer are served up in liberal doses here.

Entertainment

Posters around Pula advertise live performances at the amphitheatre or details of rave parties at two venues in Verudela: Oasis and Fort Bourguignon.

Getting There & Away

BOAT

Jadroagent (☎ 210 431; jadroagent-pula@pu.t-com.hr; Riva 14) has schedules and tickets for boats connecting Istria with Italy and the islands. For more information about ferries to Italy, see p403.

BUS

The buses that travel to Rijeka (6KN, 2½ hours, 20 daily) are sometimes crowded, especially the eight that continue to Zagreb, so be sure to reserve a seat in advance. Going from Pula to Rijeka, be sure 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 (27KN, 40 minutes, 18 daily); Poreč (39KN to 51KN, one hour, 12 daily); Zagreb (88KN to 174KN, five hours, 11 daily); Zadar (194KN, seven hours, four daily); Split (300KN, 10 hours, two daily); and Dubrovnik (432KN, 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 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.

Around Pula

BRIJUNI ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK

The Brijuni (Brioni in Italian) consists of two main pine-covered islands and 12 islets just northwest of Pula. Notable as the summer residence of Maršal Tito, the Brijuni Islands are now a highly groomed and scrupulously maintained national park. Some 680 species of plants grow here, including many exotic subtropical species which were planted at Tito's request. Tito's former private hunting grounds are now a safari park where elephants, zebras and antelope roam.

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 €48 (400KN), you could take a public bus from Pula to Fažana (8km), then sign up for a tour (140KN) at the **Brijuni Tourist Service** (☎ 525 883) office near the wharf. You must book at least one day in advance.

PAZIN

☎ 052 / pop 5200

No fashionable foreigners are crowding Pazin's streets and that's part of its appeal. This workaday town in central Istria deserves a stop, not only for its famous chasm that so inspired Jules Verne or the stolid medieval castle that dominates the western portion of town, but also for its neighbourly small-town feel. The rolling Istrian countryside creeps right up to the town's outskirts while most of the centre is given over to pedestrian-only areas. Not only is Pazin the geographic heart of Istria, it's the county's administrative seat as well. As transport connections by road or rail put you within an hour's reach of virtually every other destination in Istria, Pazin makes an excellent, relaxed, inexpensive base to explore the region.

Orientation

From east to west, the town is relatively compact, stretching little more than a kilometre from the train station on the eastern end to the castle on the western end, which is at the edge of the Pazin Chasm. The bus station is 200m west of the train station and the old part of town comprises the 200m leading up to the castle.

(Continued on page 177)

Information

Futura Travel (☎ 621 045; Prolaz Ernesta Jelusica 2) Changes money, books excursions and provides regional information.

Hospital (☎ 624 021; Jurja Dobrile 1) Emergency services are available 24 hours. **Post office** (MB Rašana 7a)

Tourist office (☎ /fax 622 460; www.tzpazin.hr; Franine i Jurine 14; ☎ 8.30am-6pm daily Jul-Aug, 8am-3pm Mon-Fri Sep-Jun) Finds private accommodation.

Sights

Pazin's most renowned site is undoubtedly the **Pazin Chasm**, an abyss of about 100m through which the Pazinčica River sinks into subterranean passages forming three underground lakes. Its shadowy depths inspired the imagination of Jules Verne as well as numerous Croatian writers. There's a viewing point just outside the castle and a footbridge that spans the abyss about 30m further on.

Pazin's **Castle** (Kaštel; ☎ 625 040; Istarskog Razvoda 1; adult/concession 15/8KN; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun mid-Apr-mid-Oct, 10am-3pm Tue-Thu, noon-5pm Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Oct-mid-Apr) is the largest and best-preserved medieval structure in Istria. Overlooking the Pazin Chasm, it was first mentioned in 983 but the current structure dates from about 1537. Within the castle, there's an **Ethnographic Museum** with a collection of medieval Istrian church bells as well as Istrian implements, garments and musical instruments.

Near the tourist office is the **Church of St Nicholas** (Svetog Nikola; Muntriljska; ☎ Mass only), notable for its late-Gothic polygonal presbytery and 15th-century frescoes of the Creation in the vault.

Festivals & Events

Town Fair Day First Tuesday of the month; features products from all over Istria.

Days of Jules Verne In the third week of June; Pazin's way of honouring the writer that put Pazin on the cultural map. There are races, reenactments from his novel, and journeys retracing the footsteps of Verne's hero Mathias Sandorf.

Sleeping & Eating

The tourist office helps arrange private accommodation, which is generally reasonably priced. Count on spending about 125KN per person for a room.

Hotel Lovac (☎ 624 384; tisadoo@inet.hr; Kurelića bb; d €45; ☎) The only hotel in town is a

not-especially-characterful place on the western edge of town.

Poli Luce (☎ 687 081; www.konoba-marino-gracice.hr; Grašiče; per person €18; ☎) If you don't mind being out of town, try these beautifully restored rooms in an old farmhouse. It's at Grašiče, a sleepy, rustic village about 7km south of Pazin.

Konoba Marino (☎ 687 081; meals from 60KN; ☎ closed Wed) The same owners of Poli Luce run Konoba, which is a good place to sample homemade Istrian sausage and other home-smoked meat in copious portions.

Getting There & Away

From the **bus station** (☎ 624 437; Šetalište Pazinske Gimnazije) there are services to Poreč (25KN, 40 minutes, 10 daily), Pula (18KN to 30KN, 50 minutes, nine daily), Rijeka (41KN, one hour, five daily) and Rovinj (29KN, one hour, five daily). Service is reduced on weekends. Pazin **train station** (☎ 622 710; Stareh Kostanje 1) has services to Ljubljana (83KN, four hours, one daily), Pula (29KN, one hour, eight daily) and Zagreb (99KN, eight hours, seven daily). There is reduced service on weekends.

MOTOVUN

☎ 052 / pop 590

Motovun is a captivating little town perched on a hill in Mirna River Valley, about 20km northeast of Poreč. It was the Venetians who decided to fortify the town in the 14th century, building two sets of thick walls. A Venetian lion scowls down from the outer gate and a cheerier lion adorns the inner gate. Venetian coats of arms on many buildings recall the noble families that once lived here. Once crumbling into ruin, the town is attracting artists who have set up studios in the tumble of Romanesque and Gothic houses, while newer houses have sprung up on the slopes leading up to the Old Town.

Orientation & Information

If you come in a car, leave it at the foot of the village. There's a 10KN charge in season which includes a little 'tourist train' to take you up the steep hill through the city gates. It also makes a nice walk.

The **tourist office** (☎ 681 758; opcina-motovun@pu.t-com.hr; Zadruškarska 20b) has a limited amount of information. There's an ATM just after the entrance on the right.

Sights & Activities

The highlight of the town is the Renaissance church of **St Stephen** (Sveti Stjepan; Trg Andrea Antico; ☎ 10am-1pm & 4-8pm Apr-Oct), designed by Venetian artist Andrea Palladio. Venetian Francesco Bonazzo contributed the marble altar statues of St Stephen and St Laurence and an unknown 17th-century Venetian produced the painting of the Last Supper behind the altar.

Festivals & Events

Motovun's **International Film Festival** (www.motovunfilmfestival.com) takes place in the last week in July and presents independent and avant-garde films from the USA and Europe.

Sleeping & Eating

Hotel Kaštel (☎ 681 607; www.hotel-kastel-motovun.hr; Trg Andrea Antico 7; s/d €50/70; ☎) The town's only hotel is in a restored stone building with 28 simply furnished rooms. It has a good restaurant offering truffles and the local *teran* wine.

Restaurant Zigante (☎ 664 302; Livade 7, Livade; meals from 142KN) Just outside Motovun in Livade, this restaurant dominates the town centre. In fact, it is the town centre. The all-inclusive menu for 142KN is a truffle-taster's treat and the wine list is superb. There's no better place to sample the best of Istrian wine and cuisine in a refined, low-key atmosphere.

Getting There & Away

There are weekday bus connections from Pazin (19KN, 35 minutes, three daily).

GROŽNAN

☎ 052 / pop 193

Until the mid-1960s, Grožnjan, 26km north-east of Poreč, was slipping towards oblivion. For the 14th-century Venetians, this strategic hill-top town was an important fortress in their Istrian defensive system. They created a system of ramparts and gates, built a loggia, a granary and several fine churches. With the collapse of the Venetian empire in the 18th century, Grožnjan suffered a decline in its importance and population.

In 1965 sculptor Aleksandar Rukavina and a small group of other sculptors and painters 'discovered' the crumbling medieval appeal of Grožnjan and began setting up studios in the abandoned buildings. As

the town crawled back to life, it attracted the attention of the International Cultural Centre of Jeunesses Musicales Croatia, an international training programme for young musicians. In July, August and the start of September, concerts and musical events are held almost daily, and you can often overhear the musicians practising while you browse the many crafts shops and galleries.

Orientation & Information

The tiny town is a jumble of crooked lanes and leafy squares. Near the centre is the **Tourist Office** (Turistička Zajednica; ☎ /fax 776 131; www.groznan-grisignana.hr; Gorjan 3; ☎ 9am-noon & 5-8pm Mon-Sat May-Sep). Its staff can help find private accommodation in and around town and provide a small map with a list of galleries.

Sights & Activities

There are nearly 20 galleries and studios scattered around town and most are open daily from May to September. The Renaissance **loggia** is immediately to the right of the town gate and on top of the loggia is the **granary**. Keep going and on your right you'll see the baroque **Spinotti Morteani Palace** and then the **Castle** (Kaštel) where many concerts are held. The town is dominated by the bell tower of the **Church of St Vitus, St Modest & St Crescentius**, which was built in the late 18th century and contains striking baroque choir stalls.

Summer music concerts are organised by the **International Cultural Centre of Jeunesses Musicales Croatia** (ICJMC; ☎ 01-611 600; www.hgm.hr in Croatian; Trg Stjepana Radića 4, Zagreb). The concerts are free and no reservations are necessary. They are usually held in the church, main square, loggia or the castle at 9pm (8pm in September).

Sleeping & Eating

The tourist office can put you in touch with private rooms. Count on about €15 per person.

Getting There & Away

If you don't have your own wheels, you can take the morning bus that runs from Pula to Poreč and Trieste (24KN, 1½ hours), and get off at the town of Krasica, before Buje. It's a 3.5km-walk to Grožnjan, but the road winds along a scenic ridge with great views.

GULF OF KVARNER

The Gulf of Kvarner (Quarnero in Italian) covers 3300 sq km between Rijeka and Pag Island in the south. Protected by the Velebit Range in the northeast, the Gorski Kotar in the north and the Učka massif in the east, the climate is gentle and the range of vegetation wide.

The largest city is the busy commercial port of Rijeka, only a few kilometres from the aristocratic Opatija riviera. The 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

As Croatia's largest port, Rijeka (Fiume in Italian) is full of boats, cargo, fumes, cranes and the bustling sense of purpose that characterises most port cities. All of the buses, trains and ferries that form the network connecting Istria and Dalmatia with Zagreb and points beyond seem to pass through

Rijeka, making the town almost impossible to avoid. Since Rijeka is hardly one of the 'must-see' destinations, the café-lined boulevard Korzo is refreshingly tourist-free, and few visitors make the trek up to Trsat Castle for the views over the gulf. With stately 19th-century buildings, a tree-lined promenade along the harbour and a smattering of museums and restaurants, you won't regret spending a day here.

Orientation

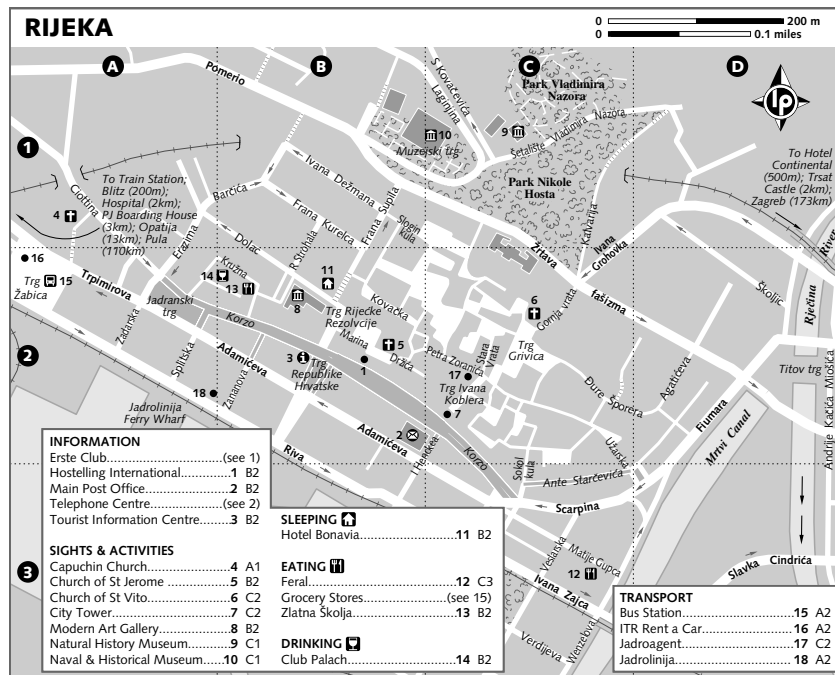
The **bus station** (☎ 060 333 444; Trg Žabica) is south of the Capuchin Church in the centre of town. The **train station** (ul Krešimirova) is a seven-minute walk west of the bus station.

The Jadrolinija ferry wharf (there's no left-luggage section) 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

Erste Club (☎ 320 072; Korzo 22; per hr 25KN; ☹ 8am-10pm Mon-Sat, 9am-4pm Sun)



LAUNDRY

Blitz (☎ 215 219; 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) bus station (☹ 5.30am-10.30pm); train station (☹ 24hr)

MEDICAL SERVICES

Hospital (☎ 333 333; Krešimirova 52) Emergency services are available 24 hours. It's past the train station.

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

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, but it doesn't direct to hostels in Rijeka.

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** (Galerija Moderna; ☎ 334 280; Dolac 1; adult/concession 10/5KN; ☹ 10am-1pm & 5-8pm) is in the upstairs scientific library opposite Hotel Bonavia. The **Naval & Historical Museum** (Pomorski I Povijesni Muzej; ☎ 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** (Pirodoslovni Muzej; ☎ 334 988; Lorenzov prolaz 1; adult/student 10/5KN; ☹ 9am-7pm Mon-Sat, to 3pm Sun) is devoted to regional geology and botany.

Also worth a visit is the 13th-century **Trsat Castle** (Trsatska Gradina; admission 15KN; ☹ 9am-11pm Tue-Sun Apr-Nov, to 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** (Crkva Sv. Vida; Trg Grivica 11), **Church of St Jerome** (Crkva Sv. Jeronima; Trg Riječke Rezulucije) or the ornate **Capuchin Church** (Crkva Gospe Lurdaska; Trg Žabica), all open for Mass only.

Festivals & Events

The **Rijeka Carnival** (www.ri-karnival.com) in February is the largest and most elaborate in Croatia with seven days of partying. Balls are by invitation only, but there are plenty of parades and street dances that are open to everyone.

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 p183).

Hotel Bonavia (☎ 333 744; www.bonavia.hr; Dolac 4; s/d from €125/150; ☎ ☹ ☹ ☹ ☹) The four-star Bonavia is the only hotel in the centre of town and it has all of the niceties that businesspeople on generous expense accounts find indispensable.

Hotel Continental (☎ 372 008; www.jadran-hoteli.hr; Andrije Kašića Miočica; s/d €47/55; ☎ ☹) This old building, northeast of the town centre, has spacious rooms that could use an overhaul. At least there's Internet access.

PJ Boarding House (☎ 551 246; Prvog Maja 34; per person with/without bathroom 225/135KN) The rooms are spartan but tidy and the boarding house is reachable by buses 4 and 5. Prices do not include breakfast.

Eating

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

Feral (☎ 212 274; Matije Gupca 5b; meals from 60KN) The marine theme runs strong here with slightly cheaper seafood than Zlatna Školja, but it's still beautifully prepared.

Zlatna Školja (☎ 213 782; Kružna 12; meals 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

Croatia's recent zero-tolerance approach to drink-driving has been good for Rijeka's nightlife. Everyone 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.

Club Palach (☎ 215 063; Kružna 6) In the back alley, accessible through a small passageway off Jadranski trg, Club Palach caters to students who find it a good low-key place to drink and dance.

Getting There & Away

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 p226. For information on all boats to Croatia contact **Jadroagent** (☎ 211 276; Trg Ivana Koblera 2).

BUS

There are 13 buses daily between Rijeka and Krk (41KN, 1½ hours) via the huge Krk Bridge. Buses to Krk are overcrowded and a ticket in no way guarantees a seat. Don't worry – the bus from Rijeka to Krk empties fast so you won't be standing for long. There's also a daily bus transfer to the Zagreb airport at 5am and at 3.30pm from the bus station. The cost is 135KN. Call ☎ 51-330 207 to reserve.

Other buses departing from Rijeka are headed for:

Destination	Cost (KN)	Duration	Frequency
Baška (Krk Island)	53	2hr	1 daily
Dubrovnik	300-372	13hr	2 daily
Poreč	60	4½hr	5 daily
Pula	68	2½hr	17 daily
Rab	99	3½hr	2 daily
Rovinj	86	3½hr	10 daily
Split	185-248	8½hr	11 daily
Trieste	48	2-3hr	3 daily
Zadar	138	5hr	12 daily
Zagreb	81-116	2½-3hr	21 daily

For international connections see p225.

CAR

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

TRAIN

Four trains run daily to Zagreb (120KN, five hours). There's also a daily direct train to Osijek (182KN, eight hours) and a daily train to Split that changes at Ogulin where you wait for two hours (154KN, 10 hours). Several of the seven daily services to Ljubljana (86KN, three hours) require a change of trains at the Slovenian border and again at Bifka or Bistrica in Slovenia, but there are also two direct trains. Reservations are compulsory on some *poslovni* (express) trains.

OPATIJA

☎ 051 / pop 12,719

Opatija, just a few kilometres due west of Rijeka, was where fashionable 19th-century aristocrats came to 'take the waters'. The Lungomare, a shady waterfront promenade that stretches for 12km along the Gulf of Kvarner, offers genteel exercise and a calming view of the mountainous coast. 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 **Opatija bus station** (Trg Vladimira Gortana), which is in the town centre, but Autotrans Agency at the station will usually watch luggage.

Atlas travel agency (☎ 271 032; Maršala Tita 116) 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. Along with the travel agencies listed earlier, **GIT travel agency** (☎ /fax 271 967; gi-trade@gi.t-com.hr; Maršala Tita 65) has rooms running from €22 to €45, 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).

Hotel Kvarner (☎ 271 233; www.liburnia.hr; P Tomašića 1-4; s/d from €75/120; ☎ ☎) This genteel 19th-century establishment has indoor and outdoor swimming pools as well as easy access to the sea. The charming hotel oozes old-world elegance. More expensive rooms have a sea view and a balcony and there are cheaper rooms in the annexe, Vila Amalia.

Hotel Millennium (☎ 202 000; www.ugohoteli.hr; Maršala Tita 9; s/d €89/132; ☎ ☎ ☎) This five-star wonder has plush air-con rooms with minibars, and all sorts of luxuries in its glistening bathrooms.

Hotel Residenz (☎ 271 399; www.liburnia.hr; Maršala Tita 133; s/d from €55/80KN) 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 a balcony are available.

Camping Opatija (☎ 704 387; fax 704 112; Liburnjska 46, Ičići; per person/camp site €4.20/6.80; ☎ May-Sep) Right on the sea and only 5km south of town.

Maršala Tita is lined with a number of decent restaurants offering pizza, grilled meat and fish.

Bevanda (☎ 712 769; Zert 8; meals from 90KN) For a special meal, the best choice is this place, located on the port, which has the freshest fish and a good wine list.

Entertainment

Open air-cinema (Park Angiolina) Screens films and presents occasional concerts nightly at 9.30pm from May to September.

There's a bar scene centred around the harbour, where you'll find the ever-popular Caffé Harbour or Hemingways, two of Opatija's liveliest cafe-bars.

Getting There & Away

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

The comparatively barren and rocky Krk (Veglia in Italian) is Croatia's largest island, connected to the mainland in 1980 by the enormous Krk Bridge. The northern part of the island is the site of Rijeka airport, which was a boon to the island economy at the cost of rapid overdevelopment. Real estate was quickly snapped up leaving few areas untouched. Still, the main town (also called Krk) is rather picturesque, and the popular resort of Baška at the island's southern end has a 2km-long pebbly beach set below a high ridge.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

About 14 buses a day travel between Rijeka and Krk town (41KN, 1½ hours), of which six continue on to Baška (12KN, up to one hour). One of the Rijeka buses is to/from Zagreb (144KN, four hours). To go from Krk to Zadar, take one of the many buses to Kraljevica and then change to a south-bound bus.

Krk Town

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. You can change money at any travel agency and there's an ATM in the shopping centre near the bus station.

The **hospital** (☎ 221 224) is at Vinogradska bb (emergency services are available 24 hours).

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

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 about €22 to €45 for a double room.

Hotel Marina (☎ 221 128; www.hotelikrk.hr; Obala Hrvatske Momarice 6; s/d €36/72) It's really nothing special, but this is the only hotel right in the town centre.

Autocamp Ježevac (☎ 221 081; jezevac@zlatni-otok.hr; per person/camp site €4.80/6KN; ☞ mid-Mar–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.hostel-krk.hr; Vitezića 32; dm €17.50) This hostel is located in a spruced-up older building and is open year-round. Rooms have three, four or six beds, and rates include breakfast.

EATING & DRINKING

There are a number of restaurants around the harbour.

Konobo Nono (Krkčih iseljenika 8; meals from 90KN) For something different, try this place, which offers *šurlice* (homemade noodles topped with goulash), as well as grilled fish and meat dishes.

Jungle (☎ 221 503) To relax over cocktails, the best local hang-out is this place, right in the centre of town.

Baška

At the southern end of Krk Island, Baška is popular for its 2km-long pebbly 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, continuing southwards past a big 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 just down the street from the 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).

RAB ISLAND

Rab (Arbe in Italian), near the centre of the Kvarner island group, is the most enticing island in the northern Adriatic. The more densely populated southwest is green with pine forests and dotted with sandy beaches and coves. High mountains protect Rab's interior from cold northeasterly winds, allowing olives, grapes and vegetables to be cultivated. The Lopar Peninsula in the north-eastern corner is a fertile oasis offering the island's best beaches along its two wide bays. The northwestern peninsula, which emerges from Supetarska Draga, is fringed with coves and lagoons that continue on to the Kalifront Peninsula and the Suha Punta resort.

The cultural and historical centre of the island is Rab town, characterised by four elegant bell towers rising from the ancient stone streets. The island has a strong tourist business, but outside of July and August you'll find it lively without being overrun.

Rab Town

☎ 051 / pop 592

Medieval Rab town has a unique and instantly recognisable look. Crowded onto a narrow peninsula, four bell towers rise like exclamation points over the red-roofed stone buildings. The steep streets that climb up from the harbour cross a series of richly endowed churches to reach lovely lookout points. Wandering the narrow old roads interspersed with shady parks is a pure joy and the churches often host concerts and art exhibitions. When you get 'churched out', there are excursion boats to whisk you off to beaches and coves around the island.

ORIENTATION

The Old Town lies directly across the bay from the marina. Narrow side streets climb

up from the main north-south streets: Donja, Srednja and Gornja ul, literally, lower, middle and upper roads.

A five-minute walk north of the Old Town is the new commercial centre. Despite a sign at the bus station advertising a left-luggage office, it's not operational because the station is only open limited hours. The northwestern portion of the peninsula is given over to the 100-year-old Komrčar Park, bordered by the town's beaches. There are also beaches around the Hotel and Autocamp Padova, but you'll find better swimming further from town.

INFORMATION

Internet Access

Digital X (☎ 777 010; Donja ul bb; per hr 20KN; ☞ 10am–2pm & 6pm–1am Mon–Fri, 6pm–1am Sat)

Medical Services

Hospital (☎ 724 109; Banjol 20) Emergency services are available 24 hours.

Money

Riječka Banka (Commercial Centre) Changes money and has an ATM.

Post

You can get cash advances on your MasterCard or Diners Club card at the Commercial Centre and Trg Municipium Arba branches of the post office.

Tourist Information

Turistička Zajednica (☎ 771 111; www.tzg-rab.hr; Palit bb; ☞ 8am–noon & 7–9pm Oct–May, 8am–10pm Jun–Sep) It's the head office of the tourist association and there's an annexe around the corner from the bus station, opposite Merkur department store.

Travel Agencies

Atlas travel agency (☎ 724 585; www.atlas-rab.com; Biskupa Draga 2; ☞ 8am–1pm Mon–Sat Oct–Apr, to 10pm Jun–Sep)

Kristofor (☎ 725 543; www.kristofor.hr; Palit bb) Next to the bus station, this friendly and efficient agency finds private accommodation, changes money, hires boats and scooters and is a good source of information.

Turist Biro Mila (☎ 725 499; www.mila.hr; Palit 68) At the southeastern corner of the bus station, this is a helpful agency.

SIGHTS

Most of Rab's famous churches and towers are along Gornja ul, the upper road that

continues on as Ivana Rabljanina in the Kaldanac section. Unless otherwise indicated the churches are open only for Mass but, even when churches are closed, most have metal grates over the front door, through which you can glimpse the interior.

Start your walk from Trg Svetog Kristofora near the harbour. In the centre of the square is a **fountain** with sculptures of the two legendary figures Kalifront and Draga. According to the story, the passionate Kalifront attempted to seduce the shepherdess Draga, who had taken a vow of chastity. The goddess to whom Draga had pledged chastity turned her into stone to save her from the seducer.

Go up Bobotine and pause at the corner of Srednja ul to admire the **Dominis Palace** on the left. Built at the end of the 15th century for a prominent patrician family, the building's façade has decorated Renaissance windows and a striking portal decorated with the family coat of arms. Continue to the top and the **St Christopher Church** (Crkva Sveti Kristofor; ☞ 7.30–9pm Jun & Sep, 9am–noon & 7.30–10pm Jul & Aug) was part of the highest tower of the ramparts. Next to it is a **lapidarium** (admission 5KN; ☞ 9am–1pm & 6–8pm). From the tower a passage leads to Komrčar Park.

Continuing south along Gornja ul, you'll come to the ruins of the **Church of St John** (Sveti Ivan), which probably dates to the beginning of the 7th century. Little survives but the 13th-century bell tower next to it, which can be climbed. The church was part of a monastery that was occupied by Benedictine nuns in the 11th century, Franciscans from 1298 to 1783, and was later converted into a bishop's residence. Next to the bell tower is the 16th-century **Holy Cross Church** (Sveti Krišar; ☞ 7.30–9pm Jun & Sep, 9am–noon & 7.30–10pm Jul & Aug), which was briefly called the Church of the Weeping Cross after a legend circulated that Christ wept on the church's cross because of the immorality of the town's residents.

Further along Gornja ul is **St Justine Church** (Sveti Justina; ☞ 7.30–9pm Jun & Sep, 9am–noon & 7.30–10pm Jul & Aug) with a bell tower dating from 1572. Today the church hosts a collection of religious artefacts, including a portable altar donated to the town by King Koloman, fragments of the evangelistary-passages from the Gospel from the 11th century and the silver-plated reliquary for

the head of St Christopher. There's also a polyptych by Paolo Veneziano and a Renaissance terracotta of the Madonna from the 15th century.

Pass Trg Slobode bearing right and on your right you'll see the Romanesque **bell tower** of the **Church of St Andrew** (Sveti Andrije), which dates from 1181. The biggest tower is coming up on the right. The **Cathedral of St Mary the Great** (Sveta Marija Velika; ☎ 724 195; ☹ 10am-1pm & 7.30-10pm) and its bell tower were built in the 12th century. The 25m-tall tower stands on the remains of Roman buildings and is divided into four floors, terminating in an octagonal pyramid surrounded by a Romanesque balustrade. The pyramid is topped by a cross with five small globes, and reliquaries of several saints were placed in the highest globe. The symmetrical arrangement of windows and arches creates a wonderful sense of lightness and harmony that makes the tower one of the most beautiful on the Croatian coast. You can climb it for a small fee.

The extreme end of the cape accommodates a monastery of Franciscan nuns and the baroque **Church of St Anthony** (Sveti Antun; Gornja ul), built in 1675. The altar is decorated with 17th-century inlaid marble and a painting of St Anthony.

ACTIVITIES

From behind the Hotel Istra (the most visible landmark along the port), there's a marked hiking trail that leads northeast to the top of Sveti Ilija (100m). It only takes about 30 minutes and the view is great.

Kristofor travel agency hires motorboats, starting at about €51 a day depending on size. You can hire bicycles at the Hotel and Autocamp Padova or arrange to scuba dive for about €36 per dive from the **Mirko Diving information office** (☎ 721 154; www.mirkodivingcenter.com; Setalište Markatuma). There's an office in town but the company's boats leave from its **main office** (☎/fax 721 154; Barbat).

TOURS

Atlas and other travel agencies offer day tours of the island by boat, which include plenty of swim stops around the island and at nearby Sveti Grgur Island. In summer, tourist agencies offer day excursions to Lošinj or Pag Island once or twice a week.

SLEEPING

Everything from camping to expensive hotels can be found in and around Rab town. Many of the older hotels and all camping grounds are managed by **Imperial** (www.imperial.hr). Travel agencies find private accommodation at prices that range from €9 to €12 per person in a double room with a €5 single supplement.

Hotel Ros Maris (☎ 778 896; www.rosmaris.com; Obala Krešimira IV; d €214; P ☹ ☎ ☎ ☎) This brand-new address offers a spa, swimming pool, Internet access and fresh, bright rooms, some of which overlook the sea.

Hotel Imperial (☎ 724 522; imperial@imperial.hr; Palit bb; s/d €43/75; P) Set back from the town in a wooded park, the lush green surroundings do a lot to mitigate the white, charmless exterior.

Hotel & Autocamp Pavoda (☎ 724 355; Banjol; per person/camp site €4.80/5.60; ☹ Apr-Oct) To sleep cheap, carry your tent around the bay and walk south along the waterfront for about 25 minutes (about 2km) to this camping ground.

EATING

Pizzeria Mare (☎ 771 315; Srednja Ul 8; meals from 33KN) It's reputed to be the best pizza place in town, which would explain why it's often crowded.

Restoran Rio (☎ 725 645; Palit 57; meals from 65KN) There is a fish theme in the décor and the menu, but the meat is good and there's a pleasant terrace.

Santa Maria (☎ 724 196; Dinka Dakulo 6; meals from 70KN) The unusual interior of Santa Maria is decked out with wooden tables and benches and there's an upstairs terrace with a sea view. The speciality here is meat although there are also some fish dishes.

There's a good supermarket for picnic supplies in the basement of the Merkur department store, and a fruit and vegetable market in the Commercial Centre on Trg Municipium Arba.

ENTERTAINMENT

Disco San Antonio (☎ 724 145; Trg Municipium Arba) Situated behind Trg Municipium Arba, this is the most popular disco in town.

AROUND RAB TOWN

The **Franciscan Monastery of St Euphemia** (Samostan svete Fumije; ☎ 724 951; Kampor; admission 5KN;

☹ 9am-noon & 3-5pm Jun & Sep, 10am-noon & 4-6pm Jul & Aug) is about 3km southwest of town in Kampor. It's a peaceful spot, usually deserted, but worth the walk for the Gothic church of St Bernardin. The painted ceiling is ethereal, a stark contrast to the agony depicted on the late-Gothic wooden crucifix. Note also the 15th-century polyptych by the Vivarini brothers.

Lopar

The ferry from Baška lands at Lopar, but the ferry stop is the least attractive part of the peninsula, which is marked by beautiful coves, bays and hamlets. There are 22 sandy beaches bordered by pine groves around Lopar, and the shallow sea makes them perfect for small children. Lopar Bay is on one side of the peninsula and Crnika Bay is on the other. The northeastern part of the peninsula is steep and barren, with many naturist beaches.

ORIENTATION & INFORMATION

The 1500m-long **Paradise Beach** (Rajska Plaša) lies 3km south of the ferry landing on Crnika Bay. The road between the ferry landing and the San Marino Hotel and autocamp on Crnika Bay passes a small commercial centre and several restaurants.

In the commercial centre there is a **tourist office** (Turistička Zajednica; ☎ 775 508; www.lopar.com; Commercial Centre; ☹ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 1pm Sun Jul & Aug, 8am-5pm Mon-Fri Sep-Jun).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The ferry between Baška on Krk Island and Lopar (31KN, one hour) operates between June and September from two to five times daily, but between October and May there's no service. Novalja on Pag Island, and a daily car ferry from Jablanac on the coast to Mišnjak on Rab (10KN, 20 minutes).

The most reliable way to come and go is on one of the two daily buses between Rab and Rijeka (99KN, three hours). In the high season there are two direct buses from Zagreb to Rab (154KN, five hours). These services can fill up, so book ahead if possible. There's no direct bus from Rab to Zadar, but there are two daily buses that connect at Senj with Rijeka buses travelling to Zadar (114KN, five hours). In order to avoid backtracking from Senj to Jablanac, and also to save some kuna, you can take

the bus to the highway at Jablanac, wait for about 1½ hours and catch the Rijeka bus as it heads to Zadar (89KN, one hour). Another possibility is to take the daily catamaran to Novalja on Pag Island and then catch a bus to Zadar.

GETTING AROUND

From Lopar to Rab town (12km) there are nine buses daily in either direction (15KN, 20 minutes); some are timed to meet the Baška-Lopar ferry. There are eight daily buses from Rab town to Kampor (11KN, 15 minutes), eight to Barbat (11KN, 20 minutes) and five to Suha Punta (11KN, 25 minutes).

DALMATIA

Roman ruins, spectacular beaches, old fishing ports, medieval architecture and unspoiled offshore islands make a trip to Dalmatia (Dalmacija) unforgettable. 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 and dotted with historic cities.

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.

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 was 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.

ZADAR

☎ 023 / pop 72,700

The main city of northern Dalmatia, Zadar (ancient Zara) is one of Croatia's more underrated destinations. The marble, traffic-free streets of the Old Town are replete with Roman ruins, medieval churches and

several fascinating museums. Massive 16th-century fortifications still shield the city on the landward side, with high walls running along the harbour. The tree-lined promenade along Obala kralja Petra Krešimira IV is perfect for a lazy stroll or a picnic, and there are several small beaches east of the Old Town. More beaches lie to the northwest at Borik as well as on the islands of Ugljan and Dugi Otok, both within easy reach of the town.

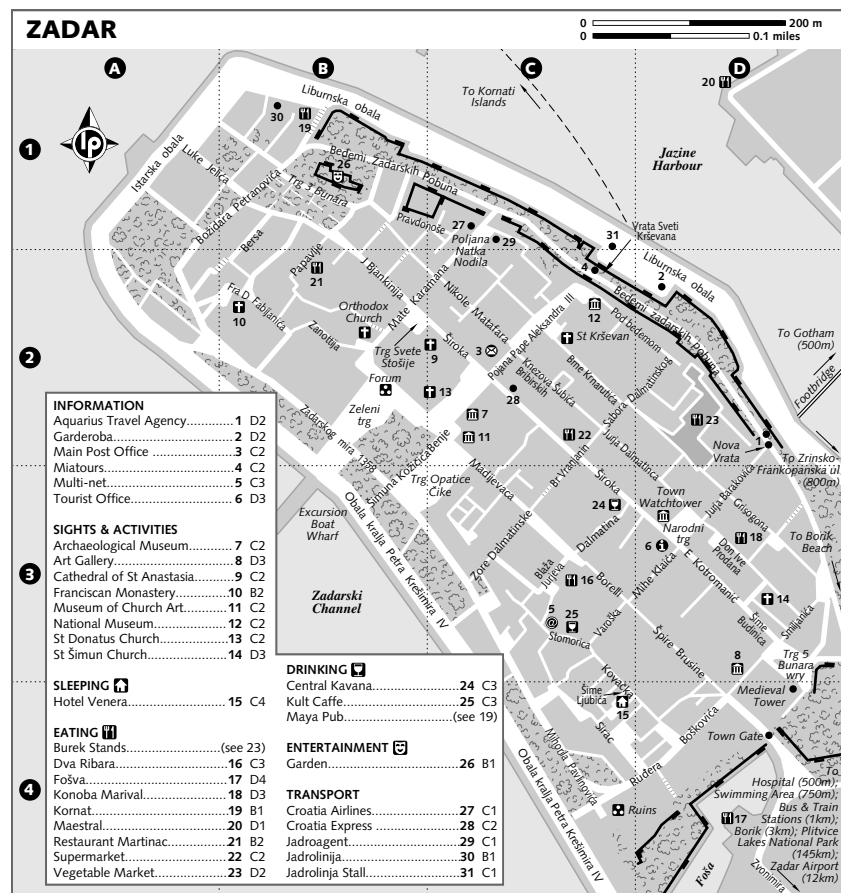
History

In the past 2000 years Zadar has escaped few wars. Its strategic position on the Adriatic coast made it a target for the Romans, the Byzantine, Venetian and Austro-Hungarian

empires and Italy. Although it was damaged by Allied bombing raids in 1943–44 and Yugoslav rockets in 1991, this resilient city has been rebuilt and restored, retaining much of its old flavour. Don't forget to sample Zadar's famous maraschino cherry liqueur.

Orientation

The train station and the **bus station** (☎ 211 035) are adjacent and are 1km southeast of the harbour and Old Town. From the stations, Zrinsko-Frankopanska ul leads northwest to the town and harbour. Buses marked 'Poluotok' run from the bus station to the harbour. Narodni trg is the heart of Zadar.



Information

Aquarius Travel Agency (☎ /fax 212 919; www.jur.eskoaquarius.hr; Nova Vrata bb) Books accommodation and excursions.

Garderoba (per day 15KN) bus station (🕒 7am-9pm Mon-Fri); Jadrolinija dock (🕒 7am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 3pm Sat); train station (🕒 24hr)

Hospital (☎ 315 677; Bože Peričića 5) Emergency services are available 24 hours.

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

Miatours (☎ /fax 212 788; www.miatours.hr; Vrata Sveti Krševana) Books accommodation and excursions. Vrata Sveti Krševana is an extremely tiny passage through the walls that contains little more than the travel agency.

Multi-net (☎ 302 207; Stomorica 8; per hr 30KN) Internet.

Tourist office (☎ 316 166; tgz-zadar@zd.t-com.hr; Mihe Klaića 5; 🕒 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 1pm Sun Jun-Sep, 8am-6pm Mon-Sat Oct-May)

Sights & Activities

Most attractions are near **St Donatus Church** (Sveti Donat; ☎ 250 516; 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 north-western 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, 6-8pm 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** (Katedrala Svete Stošije; Trg Svete Stošije; 🕒 Mass only) has some fine Venetian carvings in the 15th-century choir stalls. The **Franciscan Monastery** (Samostan Svetog Frane; Zadarscog mira 1358; admission free; 🕒 7.30am-noon & 4.30-6pm) is the oldest Gothic church in Dalmatia (consecrated in 1280), with lovely interior Renaissance features and a large Romanesque cross in the treasury, behind the sacristy.

The most interesting museum is the **Archaeological Museum** (Arheološki Muzej; Trg Opatice Čike 1; adult/student 10/5KN; 🕒 9am-1pm & 6-9pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat), across from St Donatus, with an extensive collection of artefacts, from the Neolithic period through the 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** (Narodni Muzej; Poljana Pape Aleksandra III; admission 5KN; 🕒 9am-1pm & 5-7pm Mon-Fri), just inside the sea gate, featuring photos of Zadar from different periods, and old paintings and engravings of many coastal cities. The same admission ticket will get you into the **Art Gallery** (Galerija; Smiljančića; 🕒 9am-noon & 5-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat). One church worth a visit is **St Simun Church** (Crkva Sveti Šime; Šime Budinića; 🕒 8am-1pm & 6-8pm Jun-Sep), which has a 14th-century gold chest.

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** (Kornati Islands National Park is an archipelago of 147 mostly uninhabited islands), river-rafting and half-day excursions to the Krka waterfalls.

Festivals & Events

Major annual events include:

Town fair July and August.

Dalmatian Song Festival July and August.

Musical evenings in St Donatus Church in August.

Choral Festival October.

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. Expect to pay from €22 to €50 for a room, depending on the facilities.

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 adequate 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.

Hotel President (☎ 333 464; www.hotel-president.hr; Vladana Desnice 16; s/d €105/160; (P) (♿) (♿)) Near the beach at Borik, this place will give you the full first-class treatment.

Borik Youth Hostel (☎ 331 145; zadar@hffs.hr; Obala Kneza Trpimira 76; B&B/half board €12.60/16.65) Friendly and well-kept, this hostel is also near the beach at Borik.

Autocamp Borik (☎ 332 074; per person/camp site €4.20/5.60) This large camping ground is just steps away from Borik beach.

Eating

Dva Ribara (Blaža Jurjeva 1; meals from 40KN) 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; meals from 65KN) 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 Martinac (Papavije 7; meals from 75KN) The secluded backyard terrace behind this restaurant provides a relaxed atmosphere in which to sample delicious risotto and fish.

Foša (☎ 314 421; Kralja Dmitra Zvonimira 2; meals from 60KN) If the funky '70s décor gets to you, concentrate on the view over the marina. An oldish crowd of regulars keeps coming back for the attentively prepared fish.

Maestral (☎ 430 455; Ivana Mažuranića 2; meals from 70KN) On the 1st floor of a waterfront building, Maestral's meat is tender, its variety of fish excellent and its panoramic view of the harbour most relaxing. There's no better place to view the sunset while you dine.

Kornat (☎ 254 501; Liburnska Obala 6; meals from 75KN) This place has an imaginative chef who's bringing a whiff of exoticism to traditional Croatian staples.

Local people usually head out to Borik to find something to eat. **Restaurant Albin** (☎ 331 137; meals 40-100KN), on the road to Borik, is one of the most popular establishments because its fish is extremely well prepared and it has a spacious outdoor terrace.

There's a **supermarket** (nr Široka & Sabora) that is open longer than usual hours, and you'll also find a number of *burek* stands around

the vegetable market, on the landward side of town.

Drinking

In summer the many cafés along Varoška and Klaića place their tables on the street; it's great for people-watching.

Central Kavana (Široka) A spacious café and hang-out that often has live music at the weekend.

Kult Caffè (Stomorica) Draws a young crowd who listens to rap music indoors or relax on the large shady terrace outside.

Maya Pub (☎ 251 716; Liburnska Obala 6) The Buddha Bar becomes the Shiva Bar in Zadar. The smooth electro sounds swirl around an imposing sculpture of Shiva and there are occasional live concerts. It's the latest place to go.

Bounty (Mate Gupca 2, Borik; ♿ closed Sun & Mon) Staying in Borik doesn't mean being out of the action. This new spot with a pirate theme is where Borikians hang out.

Entertainment

Garden (☎ 450 907; Bedemi Zadarskih Pobuna) The newest and hottest nightlife in Zadar enlivens this traditional walled garden. A top-of-the-line sound system and celebrated DJs have made this the primary spot to see and be seen.

Gotham (☎ 200 289; Marka Oreškovića 1; ♿ closed Mon) Go-go dancers, tropical fantasy nights and '70s nights liven up this club north of the Old Town.

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 (170KN to 350KN, 40 minutes). A Croatia Airlines bus meets all flights and costs 15KN; a taxi into town costs around 175KN.

BOAT

The Jadrolinija coastal ferry from Rijeka to Dubrovnik calls at Zadar twice weekly (126/151KN low/high season, six hours). It arrives around midnight. 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 (☎ 251 052; 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 p403.

BUS & TRAIN

Zadar is on the coastal route that goes from Rijeka down to Split and Dubrovnik. See the Getting There & Away sections of those towns for further details. There are four daily trains to Zagreb (134KN, 6½ hours) that change at Knin, but the bus to Zagreb is quicker and stops at the Plitvice Lakes National Park (32KN, three hours).

Croatia Express (☎ 211 660; croatae@zd.t-com.hr; Široka) sells bus tickets to many German cities. See Land p402 for more information about bus connections to Germany.

Around Zadar

PLITVICE LAKES NATIONAL PARK

☎ 053

Plitvice Lakes National Park (admission Oct-May/ Jun-Sep 75/95KN, students 45/55KN) lies midway between Zagreb and Zadar. The 19.5 hectares of wooded hills enclose 16 turquoise lakes, which are linked by a series of waterfalls and cascades. Wooden footbridges follow the lakes and streams over, under and across the rumbling water for an exhilaratingly damp 18km. In 1979 Unesco proclaimed the Plitvice Lakes a World Heritage site, and the lakes and forests are carefully regulated to ensure their continuing preservation.

The extraordinary natural beauty of the site merits at least a three-day visit but you can experience a lot simply on a day trip from Zadar or Zagreb. There's no bad time to visit: in the spring the falls are flush with water, in summer the surrounding hills are greener and in autumn there are fewer visitors and you'll be treated to the changing colours of leaves.

The lake system is divided into the upper and lower lakes. The upper lakes, lying in a dolomite valley, are the most impressive, surrounded by dense forests and interlinked by several gushing waterfalls. The lower lakes are smaller and shallower, surrounded only by sparse underbrush. Most of the water comes from the White and Black Rivers (Bijela and Crna Rijeka),

which join south of Prošćansko Lake, but the lakes are also fed by underground springs. In turn, water disappears into the porous limestone at some points only to reemerge in other places. All the water empties into the Korana River near Sastavci.

The upper lakes are separated by dolomite barriers, which expand with the mosses and algae that absorb calcium carbonate as river water rushes through the karst. The encrusted plants grow on top of each other, forming travertine barriers and creating waterfalls. The lower lakes were formed by cavities created by the water of the upper lakes. They undergo a similar process, as travertine is constantly forming and reforming itself into new combinations so that the landscape is ever changing. This unique interaction of water, rock and plant life has continued more or less undisturbed since the last ice age.

The colours of the lakes also change constantly. From azure to bright green, deep blue or grey, the colours depend upon the quantity of minerals or organisms in the water, whether rain has deposited mud, and the angle of sunlight.

The luxuriant vegetation of the national park is another delight. The northeastern section of the park is covered with beech forests while the rest of it is covered with beech, fir spruce and white pine dotted with patches of whitebeam, hornbeam and flowering ash, which change colour in autumn.

Wildlife

Animal life flourishes in the unspoiled conditions. The stars of the park are bears and wolves but there are also deer, boar, rabbits, foxes and badgers. There are over 120 different species of bird such as hawks, owls, cuckoos, thrushes, starlings, kingfishers, wild ducks and herons. You might occasionally see black storks and ospreys, and flocks of butterflies flutter throughout the park.

Orientation & Information

At the main entrance to the park, the **tourist office** (☎ 751 015; www.np-plitvicka-jezera.hr; ♿ 7am-8pm) has its main entrance on Plitvička jezera and a secondary entrance at Velika Poljana, near the hotels. At the main entrance you can pick up brochures and a map to walk you around the lakes.

There are well-marked trails throughout the park and a system of wooden walkways that allow you to appreciate the beauty of the landscape without disturbing the environment. The admission ticket includes the boats and buses you need to see the lakes.

The post office is near the hotels and there's an ATM near the Hotel Bellevue. Luggage can be left at the tourist office or at one of the hotels.

Sights

The lower lakes string out from the main entrance and are rich in forests, grottoes and steep cliffs. **Novakovića Falls** is nearest the entrance and is followed by **Kaluđerovac Lake**, near two caves: the Blue Cave and Šupljara. Next is **Gavanovac Lake**, with towering waterfalls, and last is **Milanovac Lake**, notable for colours that are variously sky blue, azure or emerald green.

Kozjak is the largest lake and forms a boundary between the upper and lower lakes. Three kilometres long, the lake is surrounded by steep, forested slopes and contains a small oval island, composed of travertine. Past the hotels, you'll see **Gradinsko Lake**, bordered by reeds that often harbour nesting wild ducks. A series of cascades links Gradinsko to **Galovac Lake**, considered the most beautiful lake of all. An abundance of water has formed a series of ponds and falls. A set of concrete stairs over the falls, constructed long ago, have eventually been covered by travertine, forming even more falls in a spectacular panorama. Several smaller lakes are topped by the larger **Okrugljak Lake**, supplied by two powerful waterfalls. Continuing upward you'll come to **Ciginovac Lake** and finally **Prošćansko Lake**, surrounded by thick forests.

Sleeping

The Zagreb buses drop you off just outside the camping ground while the hotels are clustered on Velika Poljana overlooking Kozjak Lake. There are many *sobe* signs along the road from Korana village to the national park. The tourist office in the park or its branch in Zagreb (see p149) can refer you to rooms in the neighbouring villages, the closest of which is about 400m from the entrance. Expect to pay about 225KN for a double room. Hotels can be booked through the tourist office website.

Hotel Jezero (☎ 751 400; jezero@np-plitvicka-jezera.hr; Velika Poljana; s/d €81/114; P) This is by far the most comfortable and best-appointed hotel in the park. There's even a sauna and swimming pool.

Hotel Plitvice (☎ 751 100; fax 751 165; Velika Poljana; s/d from €70/98KN; P) Completely renovated into a comfortable modern hotel, you'll find spacious, well-equipped rooms, each with TV, phone and minibar. There are more expensive rooms which are larger and have a view.

Korana (☎ 751 015; per person/camp site 35/50KN; ☎ May-Oct) This is a large, well-equipped autocamp about 6km north of the main entrance on the main road to Zagreb.

Hotel Bellevue (☎ 751 700; Velika Poljana; s/d €52/72) It's the cheapest hotel around but the rooms and atmosphere are dreary.

Eating

There's an inexpensive self-service cafeteria next to the tourist office, at the second entrance, as well as a café, which sells sandwiches, pastries and roast chicken, and a minimarket for picnic supplies.

Lička Kuća (☎ 751 024; meals from 70KN) Just across from the main entrance, this sprawling place is usually crowded with tourists who come for the local sausages and roasted-meat dishes. Vegetarians will appreciate the *djuveč*, a stew of rice, carrots, tomatoes, peppers and onions, as well as the fine local cheese.

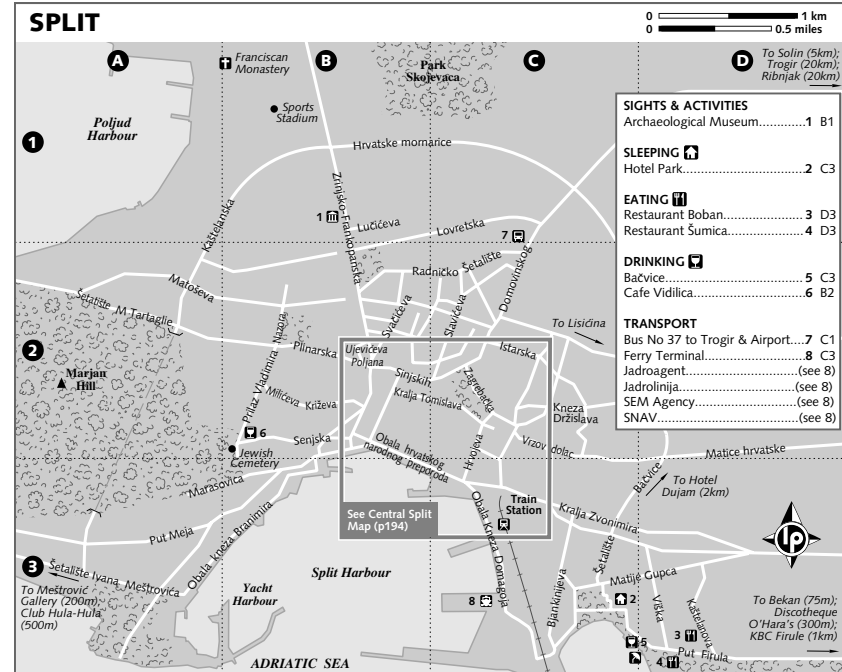
Getting There & Away

All the Zagreb–Zadar buses stop at Plitvice; it takes three hours from Zadar (75KN) and 2½ hours from Zagreb (62KN). It's possible to visit here for the day on the way to or from the coast, but be aware that bus drivers will not pick up passengers if their buses are full. On summer weekends you could spend a good part of the day stuck in traffic since the road to Plitvice is the main artery to the coast for holidaying city folk.

SPLIT

☎ 021 / pop 188,700

Split (Spalato in Italian), the largest Croatian city on the Adriatic coast, is a major industrial city ringed with apartment-block housing of stupefying ugliness, but the remarkable Diocletian's Palace (which



is now a World Heritage site) makes a visit to the city worthwhile – and a visit is indispensable if you'll be visiting one of the many islands within reach of Split. 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.

The town was hard-hit economically (although not militarily) when the former Yugoslavia split up, and is still struggling to regain its footing. It's clearly less prosperous than Zagreb or Dubrovnik, which helps explain why so many residents flock to the bus station and port to hawk their extra rooms to disembarking tourists.

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

Algoritam (Map p194; Bajamontijeva 2) A good English-language bookshop.

INTERNET ACCESS

Mriža (Map p194; ☎ 321 320; Kružićeva 3; per hr 20KN)

LEFT LUGGAGE

Garderoba (per hr/day 2.20/20KN) bus station (🕒 6am-10pm); train station (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; Spincičeva 1) Split's hospital. Emergency services are available 24 hours.

MONEY

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

POST

Main post office (Map p194; Kralja Tomislava 9; 🕒 7.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat) There's also a telephone centre (🕒 7am-9pm Mon-Sat) here.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Hostelling International (Map p194; ☎ 395 972; Domilijina 8) Sells HI cards and is a good source of information about Croatian hostels (however, there's no hostel in Split).

Internet Games & Books (Map p194; ☎ 338 548; Obala Kneza Domagoja 3) Luggage storage, information for backpackers, accommodation referrals, used books and an Internet connection for 30KN per hour.

Turist Biro (Map p194; ☎ /fax 342 142; turist-biro-split@st.t-com.hr; Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 12) This office arranges private accommodation and sells

guidebooks and the Split Card (€5, offers free and discounted admission to Split attractions).

Turistička Zajednica (Map p194; ☎ /fax 342 606; www.visitsplit.com; Peristyle; 🕒 9am-8.30pm Mon-Sat, 8am-1pm Sun) Has information on Split; sells the Split Card.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Atlas travel agency (Map p194; ☎ 343 055; Nepotova 4) The town's Amex representative.

Daluma Travel (Map p194; ☎ /fax 338 484; www.daluma.hr; Obala Kneza Domagoja 1) Finds private accommodation and has information on boat schedules.

Sights

DIOCLETIAN'S PALACE

The Old Town is a vast open-air museum and the new information signs at the important sights explain a great deal of Split's history. **Diocletian's Palace** (Map p194; entrance: 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, 181m wide at the southernmost point and 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** (Map p194; adult/concession 6/3KN; 🕒 10am-6pm), which are empty but still impressive. Go through the passage to the **peristyle** (Map p194), a picturesque colonnaded square, with a neo-Romanesque cathedral tower rising above. The **vestibule** (Map p194), 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** (Map p194), which is now a baptistry.

On the eastern side of the peristyle is the **cathedral** (Map p194), 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 which 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 Papalio Palace is now the **town museum** (Gradski Muzej; Map p194; ☎ 341 240; Papalićeva ul 5; adult/concession 10/5KN; 🕒 9am-noon & 5-8pm Tue-Fri, 10am-noon Sat & Sun Jun-Sep, 10am-5pm Tue-Fri, 10am-noon 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** (Map p194) leads to the market area. The **west palace gate** (Map p194) opens onto medieval Narodni trg, dominated by the 15th-century Venetian Gothic **old town hall** (Map p194). The **Ethnographic Museum** (Etnografski Muzej; Map p194; ☎ 344 164; Narodni trg; adult/student 10/5KN; 🕒 10am-1pm Tue-Fri 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.

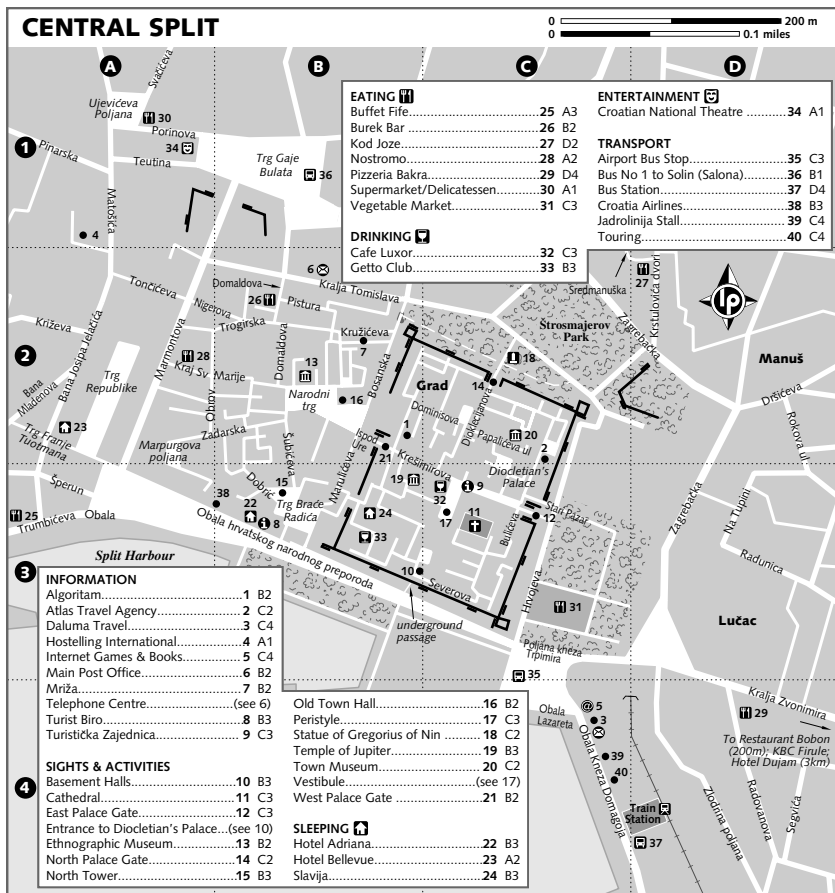
Trg Braće Radica, between Narodni trg and the harbour, contains the surviving **north tower** (Map p194) of the 15th-century Venetian garrison castle, which once extended to the water's edge.

Go through the **north palace gate** (Map p194) to see Ivan Meštrović's powerful 1929 **statue of Gregorius of Nin** (Map p194), 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** (Arheološki Muzej; Map p193; ☎ 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** (Galerija Meštrović; ☎ 358 450; 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 in 1931-39. Although Meštrović intended to retire here,



CROATIA

CROATIA

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** (Map p193). Go up ul 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.

Tours

Atlas travel agency runs excursions to Krka waterfalls (€37) as well as other excursions.

Festivals & Events

February Carnival This traditional carnival is presented in the Old Town.

Feast of St Dujo 7 May.

Flower show May.

Festival of Popular Music End of June.

Split Summer Festival Mid-July to mid-August. Features open-air opera, ballet, drama and musical concerts.

Sleeping

Private accommodation is the best bet for budget travellers, as hotels in Split are geared towards business travellers with deep pockets. You will usually find packs of women at the bus, train and ferry terminals ready to propose rooms to travellers. Find out exactly where the room is and the exact price before heading out or you could get stuck. Prices rarely exceed 110KN for a room but you'll be sharing the bathroom with the proprietor. The travel agencies listed earlier are a surer bet for private rooms. Expect to pay 180/255KN for a single/double room with a shared bathroom and 200/295 with private facilities.

DIOCLETIAN'S PALACE

Slavija (Map p194; ☎ 323 840; www.hotelslavija.com; Buvinova 3; €70/90) Has a great location in the Old Town and freshly renovated but somewhat noisy rooms.

OUTSIDE THE PALACE WALLS

Hotel Adriana (Map p194; ☎ 340 000; www.hotel-adriana.com; Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 9; s/d €77/105; 🚽) Rooms are beautifully decorated, soundproofed and graced with spacious bathrooms. They lie over the classiest café/

bar/restaurant on the waterfront. Prices stay the same all year.

Hotel Bellevue (Map p194; ☎ 345 644; www.hotel-bellevue-split.hr; bana Josipa Jelačića 2; s/d €69/96) The Bellevue is an old classic that has seen better days. Rooms on the street side can be noisy but the location is good and the rooms, though faded, are well tended. If you take a taxi from the port get ready for a long, meandering ride as the driver navigates the many one-way streets.

OUTSIDE CENTRAL SPLIT

Hotel Park (Map p193; ☎ 406 400; www.hotelpark-split.hr; Hatzeov perivoj 3; s/d €127/154; 🚽 🚿 📺) 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 comfortable, although not large.

Hotel Dujam (☎ 538 025; www.hoteldujam.com; Velebitska 27; s/d €55/74; dm €14) Although not particularly well-located, this combination hotel/hostel offers two floors of modern, fresh rooms. The hostel rooms are especially good value on the expensive Split accommodation scene. Rooms have two beds and the communal showers are well maintained. The hotel rooms are about the same except for they have an en-suite bathroom and satellite TV. To get here, take bus 9 from the port.

Eating

OUTSIDE THE PALACE WALLS

Kod Joze (Map p194; ☎ 347 397; Sredmanuška 4; meals from 60KN) 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.

Nostromo (Map p194; ☎ 091 40 56 666; Kraj Sv Marije 10; meals from 75KN) Marine creatures of all persuasions form a delightful menu in this sweetly decorated spot next to the fish market.

Buffet Fife (Map p194; ☎ 345 223; Obala Ante Trumbića 11; meals 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.

Pizzeria Bakra (Map p194; ☎ 488 488; Radovanova 2; pizzas from 35KN) Friendly and relaxed, this place offers the best pizza in town.

Burek Bar (Map p194; Domaldova 13) This spiffy place is near the main post office.

Supermarket/delicatessen

(Map p194; Svačićeva 1) This vast place has a wide selection of meat and cheese for sandwiches.

The **vegetable market** (Map p194; ☎ 6am-2pm), outside the east palace gate, has a wide array of fresh local produce.

OUTSIDE CENTRAL SPLIT

Restaurant Šumica (Map p193; ☎ 389 897; Put Firula 6; meals from 65KN) For a splurge, you couldn't do better than this place. The pasta is homemade and is combined with salmon or other fish in imaginative sauces. The grilled scampi is perfection, but you pay a steep 340KN per kilogram. Before your meal you'll be served a dish of homemade fish pâté with bread to whet your appetite. Meals are served on an open-air terrace under pine trees with a view of the sea.

Restaurant Boban (Map p193; ☎ 543 300; Hektorovićeve 49; meals 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.

Bekan (☎ 389 400; Ivana Zajca 1; meals from 80KN) Bekan serves an array of fish prepared Dalmatian style. It's not cheap (unless you order the spaghetti with seafood for 55KN) but you can sample a savoury shrimp *buzara* (a sauce of tomatoes, white wine, onions and breadcrumbs) on an airy terrace overlooking the sea.

Drinking

Getto Club (Map p194; ☎ 346 879; Dosud) This serene and secluded café is tucked into a tranquil little courtyard inside Diocletian's Palace. Relax in an overstuffed chair amid flower beds and a trickling fountain, sampling various exotic coffees – or join the party indoors.

Cafe Vidilica (Map p193; ☎ 394 480; Nazorov prilaz 1) Any time of the day, you can come here to sip a coffee or cocktail and admire the view of Split from an outdoor terrace in front of the Jewish cemetery. There's no vehicle access but it's a nice walk.

Cafe Luxor (Map p194; Kralja Sv Ivana 11) In the heart of the peristyle, this is everyone's favourite café, maybe because of the Hollywood references and posters or perhaps it's the magic of the sphinx, casting her spell over the terrace.

Entertainment

In summer everyone starts the evening at one of the cafés along Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda and then heads towards the Bačvice (Map p193) complex on the beach. These former public baths offer restaurants, cafés, discos and venues for live rock and salsa.

Discotheque O'Hara's (☎ 519 492; Uvala Zenta 3; ☎ Jun-Sep) This open-air disco takes over summer nightlife and presents live concerts on Friday. If you're planning on staying late your best bet is to drive or walk as buses don't run after 11.30pm

Club Hula-Hula (☎ 398 589; Uvala Zvončac; ☎ Jun-Sep) There's a never-ending string of events here, including live music on weekends with local groups. Again, you're best to drive or walk.

Croatian National Theatre (Map p194; Trg Gaje Butata; best seats about 60KN) During winter, opera and ballet are presented here. Tickets for the same night's performance are usually available. Erected in 1891, the theatre was fully restored in 1979 in its original style; it's worth attending a performance for the architecture alone.

Getting There & Away

AIR

The country's national air carrier, **Croatia Airlines** (Map p194; ☎ 062-777 777; Obala hrvatskog narodnog preporoda 8), operates flights between Zagreb and Split (170KN to 350KN, 45 minutes) up to four times every day. Rates are lower if you book in advance.

BOAT

You can buy tickets for passenger ferries at the **Jadrolinija stall** (Map p194; Obala Kneza Domagoja). There are also several agents in the large ferry terminal (Map p193) opposite the bus station that can assist with boat trips from Split: **Jadroagent** (Map p193; ☎ 338 335) represents Adriatica Navigazione for its connections between Split and Ancona; **Jadrolinija** (Map p193; ☎ 338 333) handles all car-ferry services that depart from the docks around the ferry terminal; **SEM agency** (Map p193; ☎ 060 325 523) handles tickets between Ancona, Split and Hvar. SEM also runs the daily fast boat from Split to Hvar (22KN, one to 1½ hours) and Korčula (55KN, one to 1½ hours). **SNV** (Map p193; ☎ 322 252) has a four-hour connection to Ancona and Pescara.

Walk west along the city wall for about 500m to **Kapljuć Basilica** on the right, another martyrs' burial place. At the western end of Salona you'll find the huge 2nd-century **amphitheatre**, which was 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 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 west-bound 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 (7KN, 10 daily) from Split's main bus station to take you to Solin.

TROGIR

☎ 021 / pop 600

Trogir (formerly Trau) occupies a tiny island in the narrow channel lying between Čiovo Island and the mainland, and is just off the coastal highway. 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 the town a World Heritage site. A day trip to Trogir from Split can easily be combined with a visit to the Roman ruins of Solin. If you're coming by car and in high season, try to get there early in the morning to find a place to park. Staying in Trogir is also a pleasant and affordable alternative to staying in Split.

Orientation & Information

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 travel agency (☎ 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-nave Venetian **Cathedral of St Lovro** (Trg Ivana Pavla II; ☎ 9.30am-noon year-round & 4.30-7pm daily 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 renovated **Church of St John the Baptist** with a magnificent carved portal and an interior showcasing a *Pietá* by Nicola Firentinac.

Getting There & Away

In Split, city bus 37 leaves from the bus station on Domovinskog. It runs between Trogir and Split every 20 minutes (19KN, one hour) throughout the day, with a short stop at Split airport en route. There's also a ferry (35KN, 2½ hours) once a week from Split to Trogir.

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

MAKARSKA

☎ 021 / pop 15,000

This attractive town and port is the centre-piece of the 'Makarska Riviera', a 50km stretch of coast at the foot of the Biokovo Range. The series of cliffs and ridges form an impressive backdrop to a string of beautiful pebble beaches. The foothills are protected from harsh winds and covered in lush Mediterranean greenery: pine forests, olive groves, figs and fruit trees.

Makarska is the largest town in the region and makes a good base for exploring both the coast and Mt Biokovo. Located on a large cove bordered by Cape Osejava in the southeast and the Sveti Petar Peninsula in the northwest, the landscape is dominated by Mt Biokovo looming over the town. The roads and trails that crisscross the limestone massif may be irresistible to hikers, but the less energetic can simply lie

on the beach and watch the day-long play of light and shadow on the mountain's cracks and crevices.

Orientation

The bus station on Ante Starčevića is about 300m uphill from the centre of the Old Town, which opens like an amphitheatre onto the sea. Take Kralja Zvonimira from the bus station downhill to Obala Kralja Tomislava and you'll be on the main promenade of the Old Town with travel agencies, shops and restaurants.

There's a long pebble beach that stretches from the Sveti Petar park at the beginning of Obala Kralja Tomislava northwest along the bay, which is where you'll find most of the large hotels. The southeastern side of town is rockier, but you can still find plenty of places to stretch out on the rocks and to take a swim.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Master (☎ 612 466; Jadranska 1; per hr 24KN; ☎ 8am-midnight Mon-Sat, to 4pm Sun) Behind Hotel Biokovo.

LEFT LUGGAGE

Garderoba (per day 15KN; ☎ 6am-10pm) At the bus station.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Hospital (☎ 612 033; Stjepana Ivčevića 2) Emergency services are available 24 hours.

MONEY

There are many banks and ATMs along Obala Kralja Tomislava and you can change money at the travel agencies on the same street.

Zagrebačka Banka (Trg Tina Ujevića 1) Has an ATM.

POST

Post office (Trg 4 Svibnja 533) You can change money, make phone calls or withdraw cash on MasterCard here.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Biokovo Active Holidays (☎ 098 225 852; www.biokovo.net; Obala Kralja Tomislava 2) A font of information on Mt Biokovo; it also organises hiking trips.

Turistička Zajednica (☎ /fax 612 002; www.makarska.com; Obala Kralja Tomislava 16; ☎ 7am-9pm daily Jun-Sep, 7am-2pm Mon-Fri Oct-May) It distributes the useful *Official City Guide*, which you can pick up here or at any travel agency.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Atlas travel agency (☎ 617 038; fax 616 343; Kačićev trg 8) It is at the far end of town and finds private accommodation.

Mariva Turist (☎ 616 010; www.marivatourist.hr; Obala Kralja Tomislava 15) In addition to money exchange and excursions, it books private accommodation along the whole Makarska coast, including Brela.

Turist Biro (☎ 611 688; www.turistbiro-makarska.com; Obala Kralja Tomislava 2) Finds private accommodation and books excursions.

Sights

Makarska is more renowned for its natural beauty than its cultural highlights, but on a rainy day you could check out the **Town Museum** (Gradski Muzej; ☎ 612 302; Obala Kralja Tomislava 17; adult/concession 5/3KN; ☎ 7am-3pm Mon-Fri, 9am-noon Sat), which traces the town's history in a less-than-gripping collection of photos and old stones.

More interesting is the **Franciscan monastery** (Franjevački Samostan; Franjevački Put 1; ☎ Mass only), built in 1400 and restored in 1540 and 1614. The monastery's single-nave church is worth visiting for the **shell collection** (☎ 611 256; admission 10KN; ☎ 11am-noon) in the cloister and a painting of the Assumption by the Flemish artist Pieter de Coster (1760). The 18th-century **St Mark's Church** (Crkva Svetog Marka; ☎ 611 365; Kačićev trg; ☎ Mass only) features a baroque silver altar from 1818 and a marble altar from 18th-century Venice.

Activities

Mt Biokovo, rising behind the city, offers wonderful **hiking** opportunities. The Vošac peak (142m) is the nearest target for hikers, only 2.5km from the city. From St Mark's Church in Kačićev trg, you can walk or drive up Put Makra, following signs to the village of Makar, where a trail leads to Vošac (one to two hours). From Vošac a good marked trail leads to Sveti Jure, the highest peak at 1762m (two hours). Take plenty of water.

Another popular destination is the Botanical Garden (near the village of Kotišina), which can be reached by a marked trail from Makar that passes under a series of towering peaks. Although once a major regional highlight, the garden has fallen into decay since the recent death of its caretaker.

Biokovo Active Holidays is an excellent source of hiking and other information about Mt Biokovo. For scuba diving, try:

More Sub (☎ 611 727, 098 265 241; Hotel Dalmacija, Kralja Krešimira bb).

Tours

Biokovo Active Holidays offers guided walks and drives on Mt Biokovo for all levels of physical exertion. You can go part way up the mountain by minibus and then take a short hike to Sveti Jure peak, take a 5½-hour hike through black pine forests and fields of chamois and sheep, or enjoy an early drive to watch the sun rise over Makarska.

Sleeping

All of the travel agencies listed earlier can find private rooms. Count on spending from €14 for a simple double with shared bathroom to €25 for better digs with private facilities. There are plenty available in the centre of town as well as the outskirts.

Hotel Porin (☎ 613 744; www.hotel-porin.hr; Marijeta 2; s/d €53/84; 🏠 📶 🚰) This new entry on the hotel scene is a solid choice if you're looking for maximum comfort in the town centre. The soundproofed rooms are shiny new with such welcome touches as hair dryers and satellite TV.

Hotel Makarska (☎ /fax 616 622; www.makarska-hotel.com; Potok 17; s/d €39/64; 🏠 📶 🚰) This small family-owned hotel in town is about 200m from the beach. The rooms are comfortable enough, with satellite TV and minibars, plus the service is attentive.

Hotel Biokovo (☎ 615 244; www.hotelbiokovo.hr; Obala Kralja Tomislava bb; s/d from €55/108; 🏠 📶 🚰) An attractive 50-room hotel right on the promenade, this place has double-glazed windows to keep out noise. There are a lot of business travellers, attracted by the well-outfitted rooms. Rooms facing the sea are slightly more expensive.

Meteor (☎ 602 600; www.hoteli-makarska.hr; Šatalište Donja Luka 1; s/d from €69/130; 🏠 📶 🚰) This three-star hotel 400m west of the town centre on a pebble beach is the most luxurious. Each of the 280 rooms is air-conditioned and has a balcony with a sea view. There are indoor and outdoor swimming pools, shops and tennis courts. Don't expect much of a discount in room rates outside the high season.

Baško Polje (☎ 612 329; per person/camp site €3.50/3.80; 🏠 May-Oct) Four kilometres south of Brela, this is the closest autocamp to town and is on the beach.

Eating

Riva (☎ 616 829; Obala Kralja Tomislava 6; meals around 80KN) On one of their rare nights dining out, local people usually head here for good quality at low prices. The menu is the usual range of dishes such as scampi, beef cutlet and squid, and you can sit under the trees on an outdoor terrace.

Ivo (☎ 611 257; Starčevića 41; meals around 70KN) Because it's not near the beach, few tourists know about this place. Fish and meat dishes are cooked to perfection and expertly seasoned.

Susvid (☎ 612 732; Kačićev trg; meals from 40KN) It claims to be a 'health food' restaurant, which may simply mean that pleasure is good for your health. There are excellent vegetarian and fish dishes.

Picnickers can pick up supplies at the fruit and vegetable market next to St Mark's Church or at the **supermarket** (Obala Kralja Tomislava 14).

Entertainment

Art Cafe (☎ 615 808; Don M Pavlinovića 1) A former disco, Art Cafe now holds a changing series of concerts, exhibits and events. It's one of the best hang-outs on the coast.

Twister is a casual beach bar at the eastern end of town. It's popular for cocktails with names like 'Sex on the beach'.

Opera (☎ 616 838; Šetalište Fra Jure Radića) There's also this place, which, despite the name, is the town disco.

Getting There & Away

In summer there are three to five ferries a day between Makarska and Sumartin on Brač (23KN, 30 minutes), reduced to two a day in winter.

There are 10 buses daily from the **bus station** (☎ 612 333; Ante Starčevića 30) to Dubrovnik (99KN, three hours), 11 buses daily to Split (38KN, 1½ hours), two buses daily to Rijeka (278KN, nine hours) and two buses daily to Zagreb (127KN to 150KN, six hours). The **Jadrolinija stall** (☎ 338 333; Obala Kralja Tomislava) is near the Hotel Biokovo.

There's also a daily bus to Sarajevo (127KN, six hours).

Around Makarska

BRELA

The town of Brela, 14km northwest of Makarska, is surrounded by the longest and

loveliest coastline in Dalmatia, perhaps in all of Europe. Six kilometres of pebble beaches curve around gentle coves thickly forested with pine trees. A shady paved promenade winds around the coves, the sea is crystal clear and there are convenient outdoor showers on some beaches. Although there are far too many hotels and residences along the shore near town, the pine trees take over if you walk a few kilometres.

Orientation & Information

The bus stop (no left-luggage office) is behind Hotel Soline. From here it's a short walk downhill to Obala Kneza Domagoja, the harbour street and town centre.

Turistička Zajednica (☎ 618 455, 618 337; www.brela.hr; Obala Kneza Domagoja bb; 🕒 8am-9pm mid-Jun-mid-Sep, 8am-2pm Mon-Fri mid-Sep-mid-Jun). It provides a town map and a cycling map for the region, and **Bonavia travel agency** (☎ 619 019; www.bonavia-agency.hr; Obala Kneza Domagoja 18) finds private accommodation, changes money and books excursions.

Sights

Beaches and coves are on both sides of the town but the longest stretch is the 4km coast west of the town centre. The best beach is **Punta Rata**, a stunning pebble beach about 300m southwest of the town centre where there are showers and changing rooms.

Sleeping

The closest camping is available at Baško Polje (see opposite). For private accommodation you'll pay from €13 to €16 per person per day.

There are no cheap hotels in Brela but much of the private accommodation on offer from the tourist office or travel agencies are really small *pensions*. The four large hotels are managed by **Brela Hotels** (☎ 603 190; www.brelahotels.com).

Hotel Marina (☎ 603 608; marina@hoteli-brela.t-com.hr; s/d €66/100; 🏠 📶 🚰) The Marina is the least expensive hotel in town and the newest. A wall of pine trees separates this rather standard-issue hotel from a luxurious beach.

Hotel Soline (☎ 603 207; soline@hoteli-brela.t-com.hr; Trg Gospe od Karmela 1s/d €72/119; 🏠 📶 🚰) This well-turned-out establishment is the closest to town, on a beach, and sports an indoor swimming pool.

Hotel Berulia (☎ 603 599; berulia@hoteli-brela.t-com.hr; Frankopanska bb; s/d from €71/122; 🏠 📶 🚰) About 300m east of the town centre, this hotel is a little more secluded than the others but also offers a full range of comforts.

Eating & Drinking

Konoba Feral (☎ 618 909; Obala Domagoja; meals from 70KN) This friendly place has wooden tables outside and a homely interior to enjoy superb grilled fish. Try the line-caught squid and finish with the sinful *palачinke Feral*, an amazing concoction of crepes, ice cream and chocolate.

Guliver (☎ 618 735; Obala Domagoja) This cocktail bar with live music manages to be both fun and romantic.

Getting There & Away

All buses between Makarska and Split stop at Brela, making it an easy day trip (1½ hours, 40KN) from either town.

HVAR ISLAND

☎ 021 / pop 12,600

Rapidly becoming the island of choice for a swanky international crowd, Hvar admittedly 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 slopes.

Hvar Town

Within the 13th-century walls of medieval Hvar lie beautifully ornamented Gothic palaces and traffic-free marble streets. A long seaside promenade, dotted with small rocky beaches, stretches from each end of the harbour. A few tasteful bars and cafés along the harbour are relaxing spots for people-watching. 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, across from Hotel Slavija.

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. Emergency services are available 24 hours.

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

Internet Leon (☎ 741 824; Riva; per hr 30KN;

☎ 8am-9pm Mon-Fri, to 10pm Sat, to 6pm Sun) Internet access next to the Hotel Palace.

Pelegrini Travel (☎ /fax 742 250; pelegrini@inet.hr) Also finds private accommodation.

Post office (Riva) You can 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 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** (☎ 10am-noon & 5-7pm Jun-Sep & Christmas week & Holy Week), with a wonderful collection of Venetian paintings in the church and adjacent **museum** (admission 15KN; ☎ 10am-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 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; admission for gallery & theatre 15KN; ☎ 10am-noon & 7-11pm Jun-Sep & Christmas week & Holy Week, 10am-noon rest of year).

On the hill high above Hvar town is a **Venetian fortress** (1551), and it's worth the climb up to appreciate the lovely, 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 Palmižana.

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 Pelegrini Travel (see Information). Expect to pay from 160/280KN per single/double with bathroom in the town centre.

Jagoda & Ante Bracanović Guesthouse (☎ 741 416, 091 520 37 96; virgilye@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, small refrigerator and kitchen access.

Aparthotel Pharia (☎ 778 080; www.orvas-hotels.com; Majerovica bb; s/d/apt from €55/78/116; ☎) This small 10-room hotel provides a more personal level of service than the giants crowding the town outskirts. Rooms are snug but well-appointed and the apartments are a great deal.

Hotel Slavija (☎ 741 820; fax 741 147; Riva; s/d from €66/94) The great thing here is that you step off the passenger boat from Split and into hotel reception. The location on the harbour is the main selling point and the rooms are more than acceptable. Reservations for this and the other large hotels in and around the Old Town are handled by **Sunčani Hvar** (☎ 741 026; www.suncanihvar.hr).

Mala Milna (☎ 745 027; per person/camp site 40/30KN) This restful camping ground is the closest, only 2km southeast of town.

EATING

The pizzerias along the harbour offer predictable but inexpensive eating.

Macondo (☎ 741 851; meals from 75KN) Head upstairs from the northern side of Trg Sv Stjepana for mouth-watering seafood.

Konoba Menego (☎ 742 036; meals 60KN) On the stairway over the Benedictine convent, this eatery is an excellent choice. The menu offers the best of the Hvar specialities, and vegetarians will appreciate the marinated vegetables.

Bounty (☎ 742 565; meals from 50KN) This place on the quay is a long-time favourite among the locals for its tasty fish, pasta and meat dishes at reasonable prices. There's a special soup, main course and salad deal for 50KN.

Paradise Garden (☎ 741 310; meals 65-85KN) This eatery, up some stairs on the northern side of the cathedral, serves up a memorable spaghetti with seafood, as well as the usual excellent assortment of grilled or fried fish. You will dine outdoors on an enclosed patio.

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 around the harbour.

Carpe Diem (☎ 742 369; 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 tall, juicy cocktails and nonstop 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 (22KN, 50 minutes) that goes on to Vela Luka on Korčula Island (22KN, one hour). Even more convenient are the daily passenger boats from Hvar to Split (33KN, 1½ hours) or Korčula (33KN, 1½ hours). See p403 for information on international connections. Buses meet most ferries that

dock at Stari Grad in July and August, but if you come in the 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. **Radio Taxi Tih** (☎ 098 338 824) is cheaper if there are a number of passengers to fill up the minivan. It's easy to recognise with the photo of Hvar painted on the side.

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

Rich in vineyards and olive trees, the island of Korčula was named Korkyra Melaina (Black Korčula) by the original Greek settlers because of its dense woods and plant life. As the largest island in an archipelago of 48, it provides plenty of opportunities for scenic drives, particularly along the southern coast.

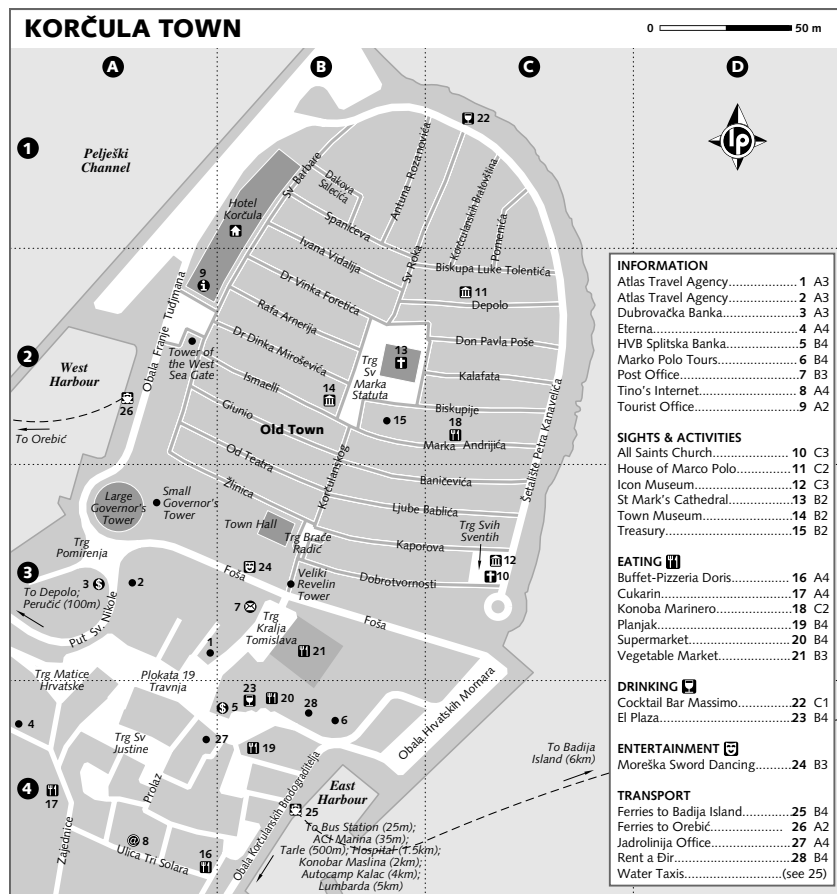
Swimming opportunities abound in the many quiet coves and secluded beaches, while the interior produces some of Croatia's finest wine, especially dessert wines made from the *grk* grape cultivated around Lumbarda. Local olive oil is another product worth seeking out.

Korčula Town

On a hilly peninsula jutting into the Adriatic sits Korčula Town, a striking walled town of round defensive towers and red-roofed houses. Resembling a miniature Dubrovnik, the gated, walled Old Town is crisscrossed by 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



INFORMATION	
Atlas Travel Agency.....	1 A3
Atlas Travel Agency.....	2 A3
Dubrovačka Banka.....	3 A3
Eterna.....	4 A4
HVB Splitska Banka.....	5 B4
Marko Polo Tours.....	6 B4
Post Office.....	7 B3
Tino's Internet.....	8 A4
Tourist Office.....	9 A2
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	
All Saints Church.....	10 C3
House of Marco Polo.....	11 C2
Icon Museum.....	12 C3
St Mark's Cathedral.....	13 B2
Town Museum.....	14 B2
Treasury.....	15 B2
EATING	
Buffet-Pizzeria Doris.....	16 A4
Cukarin.....	17 A4
Konoba Marinero.....	18 C2
Planjak.....	19 B4
Supermarket.....	20 B4
Vegetable Market.....	21 B3
DRINKING	
Cocktail Bar Massimo.....	22 C1
El Plaza.....	23 B4
ENTERTAINMENT	
Moreška Sword Dancing.....	24 B3
TRANSPORT	
Ferries to Badija Island.....	25 B4
Ferries to Orebić.....	26 A2
Jadrolinija Office.....	27 A4
Rent a Biri.....	28 B4
Water Taxis.....	(see 25)

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 the town centre at HVB Splitska Banka and Dubrovačka Banka. You can change money there, at the post office, or at any of the travel agencies. The post office is hidden next to the stairway up to the Old Town. The post office also has telephones.

Atlas travel agency (☎ 711 231; Trg Kralja Tomislava) Represents Amex, runs excursions and finds private accommodation. There's another office nearby.

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

Eterna (☎ 716 538; eterno.doo@du.t-com.hr; Put Sv. Nikola bb) Finds private accommodation and offers Internet access (per hr 25KN).

Hospital (☎ 711 137; Ul 59, Kalac) It's south of the Old Town, about 1km past the Hotel Marko Polo. Emergency services are available 24 hours.

Tino's Internet (☎ 091 50 91 182; 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 Tujdmana 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 Trg Sv Marka Statuta. The Gothic **St Mark's Cathedral** (Katedrala Svetog Marka; ☎ 10am-noon, 5-7pm Jul & Aug, Mass only rest of year) features two paintings by Tintoretto (*Three Saints* on the altar and *Annunciation* to one side).

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 cathedral has exhibits of Greek pottery, Roman ceramics and home furnishings, all with English captions. 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 also worth a look. It's said that Marco Polo was born in Korčula in 1254; you can visit what is believed to have been his **house** (Depolo; 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 to **Badija Island**, which features an historic 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 and Marko Polo Tours offer a variety of boat tours and island excursions.

SLEEPING

The big hotels in Korčula are overpriced, but there are a wealth of guesthouses that offer clean, attractive rooms and friendly service. Atlas and Marko Polo Tours arrange private rooms, charging from 200KN to 220KN for a room with a bathroom, and starting at about 400KN for an apartment. Or you could try one of the following options.

Depolo (☎ /fax 711 621; tereza.depolo@du.t-com.hr; d with/without sea view €35/32; ☎) In the residential neighbourhood close to the Old Town

of Sveti Nikola and 100m west of the bus station, this guesthouse has spiffy and modern rooms equipped with satellite TV.

Tarle (☎ 711 712; fax 711 243; Stalište Frana Kršinića; d with/without kitchen €37/29) Next to the Hotel Marko Polo, about 500m southeast of the bus station, this place has a pretty enclosed garden and attractive rooms, each with a balcony.

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 has a water taxi and a lot of experience with fishing trips around the island. He's also available for private boat transfers and excursions.

Autocamp Kalac (☎ 711 182; fax 711 146; per person/camp site €5.40/8.20) This attractive camping ground is behind Hotel Bon Repos, about 4km from the west harbour, in a dense pine grove near the beach.

EATING & DRINKING

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

Konoba Maslina (☎ 711 720; Lumarajska cesta bb; meals from 70KN) It's well worth the walk out here for the authentic Korčulan home cooking. The multibeansoup 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.

Konoba Marinero (☎ 711 170; Marka Andrijića 13; meals from 65KN) Friendly and efficient, this place serves up outstanding fish prepared in true Dalmatian style.

Buffet-Pizzeria Doris (☎ 711 596; ul Tri Sulara; meals 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.

Cukarin (☎ 711 055; Zajednice) The Cukarin serves up scrumptious local pastries such as *cukarini*, which is a sweet biscuit, *klajun*, a pastry stuffed with walnuts, and *amarreta*, a round, rich cake with almonds.

Cocktail Bar Massimo (Šetalište Petra Karnevelića) It's original, you have to grant them that. Lodged in a turret and accessible only by

ladder, the drinks are brought up by pulley. You also get lovely views.

El Plaza (Plokata 19 Travnja) It's a large, smoky hang-out for locals who watch sports on the TV and check their email on one of the computers.

Pick up fresh fruit and veggies at the **vegetable market** (Trg Kralja Tomislava) or grab other supplies at the **supermarket** (Plokata 19 Travnja).

ENTERTAINMENT

Between June and October there's **moreška sword dancing** (tickets 80KN; 🎫 show 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 dancers/fighters make an exciting show. Atlas, the tourist office and Marko Polo Tours sell tickets.

GETTING THERE & AROUND

Transport connections to Korčula are good. There's one bus every day to Dubrovnik (77KN, three hours), one to Zagreb (195KN, 12 hours), and one a week to Sarajevo (152KN, eight hours).

There's a **Jadrolinija office** (☎ 715 410) about 25m up from the west harbour.

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.

The daily fast boat running from Split to Hvar and Korčula is great for locals working in Split but not so great for tourists who find themselves leaving Korčula at 6am. Nevertheless, you can go quickly from Korčula to Hvar (33KN, 1½ hours) and to Split (55KN, 2¾ hours). Get tickets at Marko Polo.

From Orebić, look for the passenger launch (15KN, 15 minutes, at least five times daily on weekdays), which will drop you off near Hotel Korčula below the Old Town's towers. There's also a car ferry to Dominče (10KN, 15 minutes) which stops near the Hotel Bon Repos, where you can pick up the bus from Lumbarda (10KN) a few times a day or a water taxi to Korčula town. For international connections see p403.

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

MLJET ISLAND

☎ 020 / pop 1111

Of all the Adriatic islands, Mljet (Meleda in Italian) may be the most seductive. Over 72% of the island is covered by forests and the rest is dotted by fields, vineyards and small villages. Created in 1960, **Mljet National Park** occupies the western third of the island and surrounds two saltwater lakes, Malo Jezero and Veliko Jezero. Most people visit the island on excursions from Korčula or Dubrovnik, but it is now possible to take a passenger boat from Dubrovnik or come on the regular ferry from Dubrovnik and stay a few days for hiking, cycling and boating.

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 little town of Polače, about 5km from Pomena. The *Nona Ana* passenger boat from Dubrovnik docks at Sobra and then Polače. You can enter the national park from either Pomena or Polače. The **tourist office** (☎ 744 125; np-mljet@np-mljet.hr; 🕒 8am-1pm & 5-8pm Mon-Fri Oct-May, 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 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 which includes a bus and boat transfer to the Benedictine Monastery; 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.

Those who don't want to spend the rest of the afternoon swimming and sunbathing on the monastery island can catch an early boat back to the main island and spend a couple of hours walking along the lakeshore before taking the late-afternoon excursion boat back to Korčula or Dubrovnik. 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 hire bicycles (90KN per half day). If you plan to cycle between Pomena and Polače be aware that the two towns are separated by a steep mountain. The bike path along Veliko Jezero is an easier pedal but it doesn't link the two towns.

Tours

See p206 and p211 in Korčula and Dubrovnik respectively for agencies offering excursions to Mljet. The tour lasts from 8.30am to 6pm and includes the park entry fee. The boat trip from Korčula to Pomena takes at least two hours, less by hydrofoil; from Dubrovnik it takes longer. Lunch isn't included in the tour price and the opportunities for self-catering are limited.

Sleeping & Eating

The Polače tourist office arranges private accommodation at 200KN per double room in summer but it is essential to make arrangements before arrival in peak season. There are more *sobe* signs around Pomena than Polače, but practically none at all in Sobra.

Odisej (☎ 744 022; Pomena; s/d from €62/88; 🕒) Rooms are pleasant enough here, plus you are right on the port, and you can hire bicycles, snorkelling equipment etc.

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

Camping Mungos (☎ 745 060; fax 745 125; Babino Poje; per person/camp site €8/7.50; 🕒 May-Sep) Not very shady, but well located, this camping ground is not far from the beach and the lovely grotto of Odysseus.

Marina (☎ 745 071; fax 745 224; per person/camp site €4/4; 🕒 Jun-Sep) This is a small camping ground in Ropa, about 1km from the park.

Nine (☎ 744 037; Pomena; meals from 100KN) The Nine, opposite Odisej hotel, is by the sea and, though touristy in high season, turns out succulent seafood.

Getting There & Away

It's possible to make a quick visit to Mljet by a regular morning ferry (26KN to 32KN, 2½ hours) from Dubrovnik in July and August.

The rest of the year the ferry leaves from Dubrovnik in the mid-afternoon Monday to Saturday, or Sunday evening. The ferry docks in Sobra where it is met by a bus. The big Jadrolinija coastal ferries also stop at Mljet twice a week in summer and once a week during the rest of the year.

The *Nona Ana* is a small boat that makes a 2¾-hour run between Dubrovnik and Polače three times a week, leaving in the morning and returning in the late afternoon (45KN).

Tickets are sold in the **Turistička Zajednica** (Map pp210-11; ☎ 417 983; Obala Papa Ivana Pavla II) in Gruž, at **Atlantagent** (Map pp210-11; ☎ 419 044; obala Stjepana Radića 26; 🕒 10am-4pm) in Dubrovnik, or on board, but it's wise to buy in advance as the boat fills up quickly.

DUBROVNIK

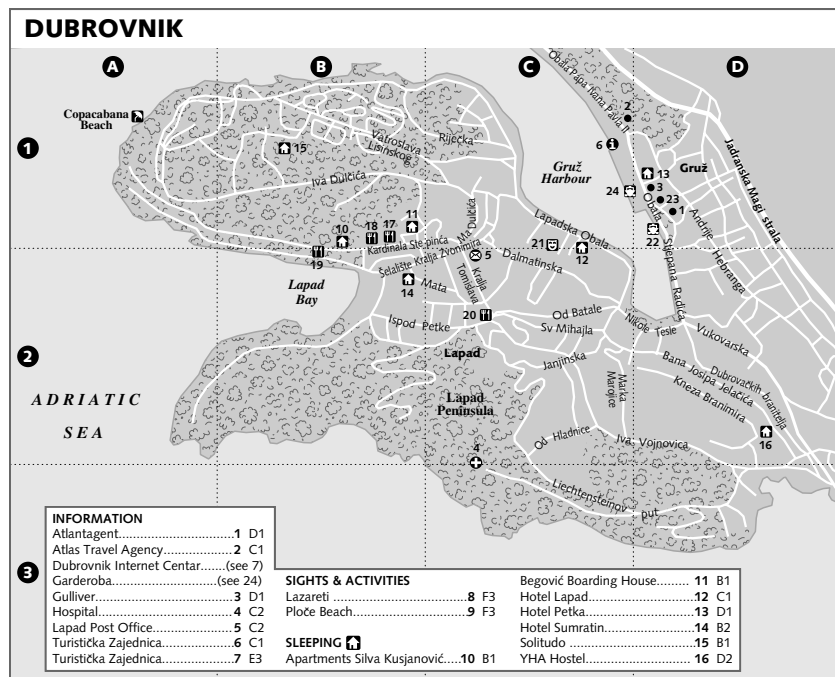
☎ 020 / pop 43,770

Whether you call it 'paradise on earth' (George Bernard Shaw) or merely 'the pearl of the Adriatic' (Lord Byron), Dubrovnik is clearly special. Enclosed in a curtain of stone walls, the town centre is radiant with the light reflected from its white marble paving stones. 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 the vibrant artistic tradition is continued with regular concerts and plays. Beyond the walls stretch the crystal blue waters of the southern Adriatic, sprinkled with tiny islands for the hedonistically inclined.

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 double blow of an earthquake in 1667 and the opening of new trade routes to the east sent Ragusa into a slow decline, ending with Napoleon's conquest of the town in 1806.

The deliberate and militarily pointless shelling of Dubrovnik by the Yugoslav army in 1991 sent shockwaves through the



international community but, when the smoke cleared in 1992, traumatised residents cleared the rubble and set about repairing the damage. With substantial international aid, the famous monuments were rebuilt and resculpted, the streets sealed and the clay roofs retiled. Reconstruction has been extraordinarily skilful but you will notice different shades of rose-tiled roofs as you walk around the city walls.

After a steep postwar decline in tourism, visitors are once again flocking to Dubrovnik. It has become a main port of call for Mediterranean cruise ships, whose passengers are sometimes elbow-to-elbow in peak season. Come in June or September if you can but, whatever the time of year, the interlay of light and stone is enchanting. Don't miss it.

Orientation

The Jadrolinija ferry terminal and the bus station are next to each other at Gruž, several kilometres northwest of the Old Town, which is closed to cars. The main street in the Old Town is Placa (also called Stradun).

Most accommodation is on the leafy Lapad Peninsula, west of the bus station.

Information

BOOKSHOPS

Algoritam (Map p212; Placa) Has a good selection of English-language books, including guidebooks.

INTERNET ACCESS

Dubrovnik Internet Centar (Map pp210-11; ☎ 311 017; Dubrovačkih branitelja 7; ☎ 9am-9pm; per hr 20KN)

LEFT LUGGAGE

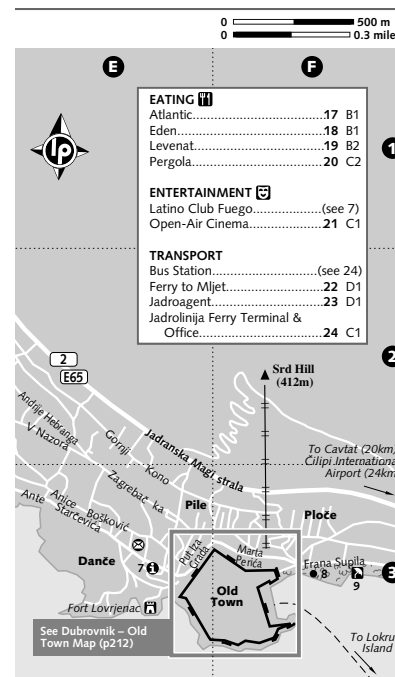
Garderoba (Map pp210-11; ☎ 5.30am-9pm) At the bus station.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Hospital (Map pp210-11; ☎ 431 777; Dr. Roka Mišetića bb) Emergency services are available 24 hours.

MONEY

You can change money at any travel agency or post office. There are numerous ATMs in town, near the bus station and near the ferry terminal.



POST

Main post office (Map p212; cnr Široka & Od Puča)

Lapad post office (Map pp210-11; Šetalište Kralja Zvonimira 21)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist Information Centar (Map p212; ☎ 323 350; tic-stradun@du.t-com.hr; Placa 1) Across from the Franciscan monastery in the Old Town, this private agency finds accommodation, changes money and books excursions.

Turistička Zajednica (www.tzdubrovnik.hr; ☎ 8am-8pm daily Jun-Sep, 9am-7pm Mon-Fri, to 1pm Sat Oct-May) Dubrovačkih branitelja (Map pp210-11; ☎ 427 591; Dubrovačkih branitelja 7); Obala Papa Ivana Pavla II (Map pp210-11; ☎ 417 983; Obala Papa Ivana Pavla II 44a); Placa (Map p212; ☎ 321 561; Placa bb) Offers maps and the indispensable *Dubrovnik Riviera* guide. The Dubrovačkih branitelja branch is outside Pile Gate, the Placa branch is in the Old Town. The harbour branch at Obala Papa Ivana Pavla II has limited information.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Atlas travel agency Obala Papa Ivana Pavla II (Map pp210-11; ☎ 418 001; Obala Papa Ivana Pavla II 1); Sv Đurđa (Map p212; ☎ 442 574; Sv Đurđa 1) In convenient locations (the Sv Đurđa branch is outside Pile Gate and the Obala

Papa Ivana Pavla II branch is at the harbour), this agency is extremely helpful for general information as well as finding private accommodation. All excursions are run by Atlas.

Gulliver (Map pp210-11; ☎ 313 300; www.gulliver.hr; Obala Stjepana Radića 32) Near the Jadrolinija dock, Gulliver finds private accommodation, changes money and hires cars and scooters.

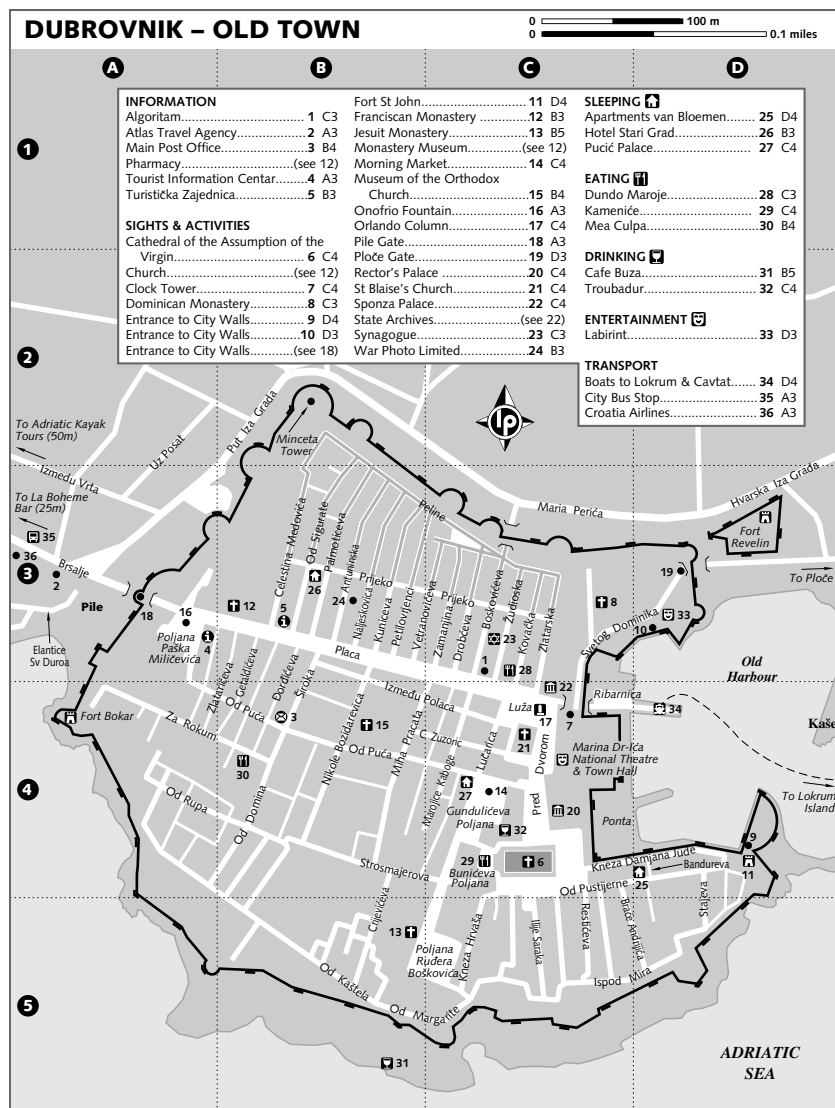
Sights

OLD TOWN

You will probably begin your visit of Dubrovnik's World Heritage-listed Old Town at the city bus stop outside **Pile Gate** (Map p212). As you enter the city Dubrovnik's wonderful pedestrian promenade, Placa, extends before you all the way to the **clock tower** (Map p212) at the other end of town.

Just inside Pile Gate is the huge 1438 **Onofrio Fountain** (Map p212) and **Franciscan Monastery** (Muzej Franjevačkog Samostana; Map p212; ☎ 426 345; ☎ 9am-5pm) with a splendid cloister and the third-oldest functioning **pharmacy** (Map p212; ☎ 9am-5pm) in Europe; it's been operating since 1391. The **church** (Map p212; ☎ 7am-7pm) has recently undergone a long and expensive restoration to startling effect. The **monastery museum** (Map p212; adult/concession 15/7.50KN; ☎ 9am-5pm) has a collection of liturgical objects, paintings and pharmacy equipment.

In front of the clock tower at the eastern end of Placa (on the square called Luža) is the 1419 **Orlando Column** (Map p212) – a favourite meeting place. On opposite sides of the column are the 16th-century **Sponza Palace** (Map p212) – originally a customs house, later a bank, and which now houses the **State Archives** (Državni Arhiv u Dubrovniku; Map p212; ☎ 321 032; admission free; ☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) – and **St Blaise's Church** (Map p212), 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 p212). Located between the two churches, the 1441 Gothic **Rector's Palace** (Map p212; Knežev Dvor; ☎ 426 469; 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** (Map p212). Up the stairs south of the square is the 1725 **Jesuit Monastery** (Map p212; Poljana Rudera Bošovića).

As you proceed up Placa, make a detour to the **Museum of the Orthodox Church** (Muzej Pravoslavne Crkva; Map p212; ☎ 426 260; Nikole Bozidaverica; adult/concession 10/5KN; 🕒 9am-1pm 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 p212; adult/concession 30/10KN; 🕒 9am-7pm), 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** (Muzej Dominikanskog Samostana; Map p212; ☎ 426 472; adult/concession 10/5KN; 🕒 9am-6pm) in the northeastern 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** (Sinagoga; Map p212; ☎ 412 219; ul Ziduska 5; admission free; 🕒 10am-1pm 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.

For a change from the ancient and the artsy, try the excellent **War Photo Limited** (Map p212; ☎ 326 166; Antuninska 6; admission 25KN; 🕒 9am-9pm May-Sep, 10am-4pm Tue-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun Oct, Mar & Apr), managed by former photojournalist Wade Goddard. The award-winning photos on display here concentrate on the subtleties of human violence rather than on its carnage. The permanent exhibition focuses on the Balkan wars but temporary exhibits will include other wars.

BEACHES

Ploče (Map pp210-11), the closest beach to the old city, is just beyond the 17th-century **Lazareti** (Map pp210-11; a former quarantine station) outside **Ploče Gate** (Map p212). There are also hotel beaches along the **Lapad Peninsula** (Map pp210-11), 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 35KN), a national park with a rocky nudist beach (marked FKK), a botanical garden and the ruins of a medieval Benedictine monastery.

Activities

Adriatic Kayak Tours (☎ 312 770; www.kayakcroatia.com; Frankopanska 6) offers a great series of kayak

tours for experienced and beginning kayakers. Guided tours to and around Lokrum and other islands start at €47.

Tours

Atlas travel agency offers full-day tours to Mostar (€43), Medugorje (€37.50), the Elafiti Islands (€40) and Mtjet (€53.50), among other destinations. Its tour to Montenegro (€45.50) is a good alternative to taking the morning bus to Montenegro, since the bus schedules make a day trip there impractical.

Festivals & Events

Fest of St Blaise 3 February.

Carnival February.

Dubrovnik Summer Festival Mid-July to mid-August.

A major cultural event, with over 100 performances at different venues in the Old Town.

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, others are rip-off artists. Be aware that most accommodation in the Old Town involves sharing the flat with the owner's family. The owners listed below 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 €28 to €50 a room in high season.

OLD TOWN

Midrange

Apartments van Bloemen (Map p212; ☎ 323 433, 091 33 24 106; www.karmenduk.tj; Bandureva 1; apt €75-110; 🛏) 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.

Hotel Stari Grad (Map p212; ☎ 322 244; www.hotelstarigrad.com; Palmoticeva; s/d €91/130; 🛏) Staying in the heart of the Old Town in a lovingly restored stone building is an unmatched experience. There are only eight rooms, each one 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.

Top End

Pučić Palace (Map p212; ☎ 324 111; www.thepucicpalace.com; Od Puća 1; s/d €370/584; 📍) 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.

OUTSIDE THE OLD TOWN

Budget

Begović Boarding House (Map pp210-11; ☎ 435 191; bega@beg-board.com; Primorska 17; per person 110KN) A long-time favourite with our readers, this friendly place in Lapad has three rooms with shared bathroom and three apartments. There's a terrace out the back with a good view. Breakfast is an additional 30KN.

Apartments Silva Kusijanović (Map pp210-11; ☎ 435 071, 098 244 639; silva_dubrovnik@yahoo.com; Kardinala Stepinca 62; per person 100KN) Sweet Silva has four large apartments that can hold four to eight beds. All have terraces with gorgeous views and barbecues.

Solitude (Map pp210-11; ☎ 448 200; Iva Dulčića 39; per person/camp site €5.40/10.20) This pretty and renovated camping ground is within walking distance of the beach.

YHA hostel (Map pp210-11; ☎ 423 241; dubrovnik@hfhhs.hr; Vinka Sagrestana 3; B&B/half board €14.65/18.65) It's not exactly restful here, but there are plenty of bars and cafés in the vicinity.

Midrange

Hotel Lapad (Map pp210-11; ☎ 432 922; www.hotel-lapad.hr; Lapadska Obala 37; s/d €87/112; 📍) This hotel is a solid, old limestone structure with simple but cheerful rooms and an outdoor swimming pool.

Hotel Sumratin (Map pp210-11; ☎ 436 333; hot-sumratin@du.t-com.hr; Šetaliste Kralja Zvonimira 31; s/d €64/111; 📍) About 200m from the water, this calm hotel offers good value for money.

Hotel Petka (Map pp210-11; ☎ 410 500; www.hotel-petka.com; Obala Stjepana Radića 38; s/d from €80/114; 📍) 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.

Eating

OLD TOWN

There are dozens of places to chow down in the Old Town but there's not a great deal of variety. Pizza, pasta, pasta, pizza. Yawn.

Dundo Maroje (Map p212; ☎ 321 445; Kovačka; meals from 75KN) Nothing adventurous here, but everything is cooked exactly as it should be. The menu is wide ranging with an accent on seafood.

Kamenice (Map p212; ☎ 421 499; Gundulićeva poljana 8; meals from 50KN) Portions are huge at this convivial hang-out known for its mussels. Plus, its outdoor terrace is on one of Dubrovnik's more scenic squares.

Mea Culpa (Map p212; ☎ 323 430; Za Rokom 3; pizzas from 30KN) Everyone agrees that the best pizza in town is served here beneath the Tiffany lights. The crowd is young and relaxed.

LAPAD

The better dining is in Lapad.

Atlantic (Map pp210-11; ☎ 098 435 89 11; Kardinala Stepinca 42; meals from 60KN) The homemade pasta and vegetarian lasagne are outstanding here, even if the ambience is not terribly atmospheric.

Levenat (Map pp210-11; ☎ 435 352; Šetaliste Nika i Meda Pučića 15; meals 65-180KN) The interior of 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 pp210-11; ☎ 436 848; Kralja Tomislava 1; meals from 60KN) This is another consistently satisfying place with an outdoor terrace and good seafood.

Eden (Map pp210-11; ☎ 435 133; Kardinala Stepinca 54; meals 75-110KN) The leafy terrace upstairs is an agreeable spot to enjoy meat, pasta or fish dishes.

Drinking

Bars sprang up like mushrooms on Bana Josipa Jelačića near the YHA hostel but these days thirsty young singles fill the cafés and terraces on Bunićeva in the Old Town.

The ineffably romantic Cafe Buza (Map p212) offers nothing but drinks served on outdoor tables overlooking the sea. It's just outside the city walls and you can find it by looking for the 'Cold Drinks' sign and going through a hole in the walls. Get there for the sunset.

Troubadur (Map p212; ☎ 412 154; Gundulićeva Poljana) It's a long-time favourite for jazz; the ambience is joyous, especially when the owner, Marko, plays.

La Boheme (☎ 312 688; Dubrovačkih branitelja 29) Located in the midst of gardens, this trendy

cocktail bar is a relaxing spot to while away the evening hours.

Entertainment

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

Open-air folklore shows are conducted in front of St Blaise's Church (p211) at 11am on Sunday through May, June and September.

Latino Club Fuego (Map pp210-11; 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 pp210-11; Kumičića) In Lapad, this spot allows you to watch movies, in their original language, by starlight.

Labirint (Map p212; ☎ 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 p212; ☎ 413 777; Brsalje 9). The fare runs about 400KN one way, higher in peak season; the trip takes about an hour.

There are also nonstop flights to Rome, London and Manchester between April and October.

BOAT

In addition to the **Jadrolinija** (Map pp210-11; ☎ 418 000; Gruž) coastal ferry north to Hvar, Split and Rijeka (Rijeka–Split 12½ hours, Split–Hvar 1¾ hours, Hvar–Korčula 3¾ hours, Korčula–Dubrovnik 3¾ hours; deck passage from Rijeka to Dubrovnik low/high season is €26/31 – these prices can change by season and there are many different prices according to the comfort level), there's a local ferry that leaves from Dubrovnik for Sobra on Mljet Island (26KN to 32KN, 2½ hours) throughout the year. In summer there are two ferries a day. There are several ferries a day year-round to the outlying islands of Šipanska, Suguraj, Lopud and Koločep. See also the Central Dalmatia Ferry Routes Map (p198).

Jadroagent (Map pp210-11; ☎ 419 009; fax 419 029; Radića 32) handles ticketing for most international boats from Croatia.

For information on international connections see p403.

BUS

Buses from Dubrovnik include:

Destination	Cost (KN)	Duration	Frequency
Korčula	77	3hr	1 daily
Mostar	77	3hr	2 daily
Orebić	77	2½hr	1 daily
Rijeka	372	12hr	4 daily
Sarajevo	160	5hr	1 daily
Split	82-111	4½hr	14 daily
Zadar	168-210	8hr	7 daily
Zagreb	205-401	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 (25KN, 45 minutes) leave from the main **bus station** (Map pp210-11; ☎ 357 088) 1½ hours before flight times. Buses meet Croatia Airlines flights but not all others. A taxi costs around 200KN.

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.

Around Dubrovnik

Cavtat is a small town that curves around an attractive harbour bordered by nice beaches. Although it does not have as many interesting sights as Dubrovnik, Cavtat does make a good alternative place to stay if Dubrovnik is fully booked out or the summer crowds become overwhelming. Don't miss the memorial chapel to the Račić family designed by Ivan Meštrović.

A day trip can be made from Dubrovnik to this resort town, just to the southeast. Bus 10 to Cavtat runs often from Dubrovnik's bus station and there are three daily boats (see Map p212) during the summer (40KN).

SLAVONIA

For a visitor, Slavonia provides a landscape nearly untouched by tourism yet with some unique wonders. The region's largest town is Osijek, well worth a visit for its remarkable fortress and secession architecture. Throughout the region are peaceful farming villages and an extraordinarily tasty cuisine.

Slavonia is Croatia's breadbasket, a fertile region that yields wheat, corn, sugar beets, sunflowers, alfalfa and clover, in addition to some of Croatia's finest wines. In contrast to the rugged Croatian coastline, the terrain is pancake-flat; as locals say, 'the highest mountain is a cabbage'. Stretching from the Ilova River in the west, over the Sava and Drava basins to the Hungarian border in the north, to the border of Bosnia and Hercegovina in the south and the Serbia and Montenegro border in the east, it's a region of cultural, if not geographic, diversity.

There is a small Hungarian minority in Slavonia, recalling the days when its powerful neighbour to the north ruled the region. Other traces of Hungarian influence include a scattering of baroque architecture in the cities. Few Serbs remain after the bitter war of the early 1990s, but their presence is a powerful and tragic reminder of the ethnic diversity that once characterised Slavonia.

Dangers & Annoyances

Osijek and the surrounding region was heavily laid with land mines during the 1990s war. Although the city and its outskirts along the main road have been de-mined and are completely safe, it would be unwise to wander through the swampland north of the Drava River which leads to Kopački Rit Nature Park.

In summer, the mosquitoes are blood-thirsty little devils, chewing through every bit of flesh they can find. Wear long sleeves and trousers or slather on a lot of insect repellent after dark.

OSIJEK

☎ 031 / pop 114,600

Photographs of Osijek before the 1990s reveal a relaxed river city of wide avenues, leafy parks and stately 19th-century Viennese architecture. The avenues and parks are still there, but the fine old mansions were badly

scarred by the shells that fell on the town as part of the 1991 Yugoslav offensive.

Although many major buildings along the avenues were patched up and restored to their former lustre, the pits and pockmarks on other buildings are grim reminders of the war that ravaged eastern Slavonia in the early 1990s.

Nevertheless, through the general aura of decay you can still perceive the resilient spirit of the city. A shortage of decent accommodation makes a visit here problematic and expensive, but if you're willing to put up with the hassle there's a pleasant waterfront promenade and an imposing 18th-century fortress on the hill, and you can swim in the Drava River.

Orientation

Stretching along the southern bank of the Drava River, Osijek is composed of three settlements: the Gornji Grad (Upper Town) the Donji Grad (Lower Town) and the 18th-century fortress, Tvrđa. The bus station and train station are adjacent in the southern part of the Gornji Grad, and you'll find most of the sights, hotels, cafés and shopping between the river and the train and bus stations.

The main shopping street is Kapucinska, which becomes Europska Avenija in the east, bordered by three parks planted with chestnut and linden trees. A promenade stretches along the riverbanks until the city's outskirts.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

Internet Caffe (☎ 204 250; Sunčana 18; per hr 20KN; ☹ 7am-7pm)

LEFT LUGGAGE

Garderoba (bus station; ☹ 7am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 4pm Sun)

MONEY

Croatia Express (train station) Changes money.

Privredna Banka (Kapucinska 25) Has an ATM.

Zagrebačka Banka (Strossmayera 1) In town; you can change money here.

POST

Main post office (Kardinala Alojzija Stepinca 17) Here you can change money, make phone calls and get cash advances on MasterCard.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist office (☎ /fax 203 755; www.tzosijek.hr; Županijska 2) Has brochures and maps. Ask for the helpful *Gradski Vodič*, which lists each month's events and has dozens of useful phone numbers.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

Generalturist (☎ 211 500; Kapucinska 39) Sells air tickets and package tours to European destinations.

OK Tours (☎ 212 815; www.ok-tours.hr; Slobode trg 8) Good local information and some private accommodation.

Panturist (☎ 214 388; www.panturist.hr; Kapucinska 19) The largest travel agency in Slavonia; runs buses to the coast as well as Germany, Switzerland and Bosnia and Hercegovina. It sells bus and air tickets and arranges accommodation along the Adriatic coast.

Sights

TVRĐA

Built under Habsburg rule as a defence against Turkish attacks, the 18th-century fortress was relatively undamaged during the recent war, leaving its baroque architecture intact. Because most of it was designed solely by the Austrian architect Maximilian de Goseau between 1712 and 1721, the buildings present a remarkable architectural unity.

The main square, Trg Svetog Trojstva, is marked by the elaborate **Holy Trinity Monument**, erected in 1729 to commemorate the victims of the 15th-century plague that swept through the city.

The **Museum of Slavonia** (Muzej Slavonije Osijek; ☎ 208 501; Trg Svetog Trojstva 6; adult/student 12/6KN; ☹ 10am-1pm), on the eastern side of the square, is housed in the former 1702 Magistrate Building. It traces Slavonia's long history, beginning with implements from the Bronze Age and displays of coins, pottery, sculpture and utensils from the Roman occupation.

GORNJI GRAD

The towering **Church of St Peter & St Paul** (☎ 369 626; ☹ 7am-noon & 3-8pm) looms over Trg Ante Starčevića. The 90m-high tower is the second highest in Croatia, surpassed only by the cathedral in Zagreb. Although often referred to as the 'Cathedral' because of its size and majesty, in fact this brick neo-Gothic structure is a parish church which was built at the end of the 19th century. The style is Viennese, from the overall design to the 40 stained-glass windows inside, as well as the stonework from the Viennese

sculptor Eduard Hauser. The wall paintings have long been attributed to Croatian painter Mirko Rački, but recent scholarship indicates that they were in fact executed by one of his disciples.

The **Gallery of Fine Arts** (☎ 213 587; Europska Avenija 9; adult/student 10/5KN; ☹ 9am-1pm & 5-8pm Tue-Fri) is housed in an elegant 19th-century mansion and contains a collection of paintings by Slavonian artists and some contemporary Croatian works.

Sleeping

There are no camping grounds or hostels and only limited private accommodation in Osijek. Ask at OK Tours.

Hotel Central (☎ 283 399; www.hotel-central-os.hr; Trg Ante Starčevića 6; s/d €47.50/73) This has the most character of any of the hotels, with its stunning Art Deco lobby and café. Rooms are comfortable but could use a face-lift.

Waldinger (☎ 250 450; www.waldinger.hr; Županijska 8; s/d €100/126) Osijek's most elegant tearoom-art gallery (where the pastries are outstanding) has recently expanded into a smart little guesthouse. The rooms don't quite equal the lavishness of the tearoom (or the assertive prices) but they'll do nicely.

Hotel Osijek (☎ 201 333; Šamačka 4; s/d from 400/500KN) This hotel could use a makeover but at least some rooms overlook the Drava. Other than that, there's nothing that special here.

Hotel Ritam (☎ 310 310; www.hotel-ritam.hr; Kozjačka 76; s/d €48/62) This new place offers large, bright rooms with modern furnishings and satellite TV. Some rooms have a balcony.

Eating

Food is the strong point of Osijek and it offers much better value for money than the accommodation available here. The cuisine is spicy and strongly influenced by neighbouring Hungary, although Slavonia does produce its own brand of hot paprika. As elsewhere in Croatia, there is a strong emphasis on meat but you can also find freshwater fish, which is often served in a delicious stew called *riblji paprikaš*, with noodles.

Confucius (☎ 210 104; Kapucinska 34; meals from 65KN) The people of Osijek are probably the only Croats with enough of a taste for spicy food to support a Szechuan Chinese restaurant. The décor is Chinese-red and the dishes are authentic.

Bijelo Plavi (☎ 571 000; Divaltova 8; meals from 90KN) Visiting businesspeople come here for a meaty meal in a slightly formal atmosphere. It's about 2km southeast of the train station.

Slavonska Kuća (☎ 208 277; Kamila Firingera 26, Tvrdá; meals from 90KN) One of the best places to try *riblji paprikaš* as well as other regional specialities, it is in an appealingly rustic old house with wooden booths and lace curtains. Wash your meal down with Krauthaker, a fruity white *graševina* wine.

Restaurant Muller (☎ 204 270; Trg Križanića 9; meals from 70KN) The culinary concept is 'international', with good old standards like roast turkey plus a smattering of local specialities.

There's a daily **vegetable market** (Trg LJ Gaja) open until mid-afternoon.

Getting There & Away

Osijek is a major transport centre, with buses and trains arriving and departing in all directions.

BUS

Following are some of the international buses that depart from Osijek. Many more buses leave for Germany than can be listed here. To get to Sarajevo, take the bus to Tuzla and get a connecting bus (€7, 3½ hours); from Vukovar you can catch another bus to Belgrade.

Destination	Cost (KN)	Duration	Frequency
Belgrade	92	3¼hr	daily
Mostar	220	10hr	daily
Tuzla	85	3½hr	daily
Vienna	418	10hr	twice weekly
Zürich	665	19½hr	Sat & Sun

The following domestic buses depart from Osijek.

Destination	Cost (KN)	Duration	Frequency
Bizovačke Toplice	21	25min	19 daily
Đakovo	27	40min	17 daily
Požega	52	2hr	5 daily
Rijeka	175	8¾hr	1 daily
Slavonski Brod	50	1¾hr	20 daily
Split	295	11hr	1 daily
Vukovar	26	40min	14 daily
Zagreb	99-132	4hr	8 daily

TRAIN

There are two trains per day in either direction between Pečs (Hungary) and Osijek (454KN, three hours). The trains from Osijek connect to Budapest (162KN, 7½ hours).

The following domestic trains depart from Osijek.

Destination	Cost (KN)	Duration	Frequency
Bizovačke Toplice	11	15min	13 daily
Đakovo	19	40min	6 daily
Požega	44	2½hr	3 daily
Rijeka	162	8hr	2 daily
Šibenik	199	12hr	1 daily
Slavonski Brod	53	1½hr	15 daily
Zagreb	117	4hr	5 daily

Getting Around

Osijek has a tram line that dates from 1884 and makes transportation within the city easy. The fare is 7KN each way if you buy from the driver, or you can buy a *karnet* of 10 tickets for 55KN at a Tisak news outlet.

For visitors, the most useful tram lines are the No 2, which connects the train and bus station with Trg Ante Starčevića in the town centre and the No 1, which connects the town centre with Tvrdá.

CROATIA DIRECTORY

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation listings in this guide have been arranged in order of preference. Many hotels, rooms and camping grounds issue their prices in euros but some places to stay have stuck with the kuna. Although you can usually pay with either currency, we have listed the primary currency the establishment uses in setting its prices.

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. Deduct about 25% if

PRACTICALITIES

- Electrical supply is 220V to 240V/50Hz to 60Hz. Croatia uses the standard European round-pronged plugs.
- Widely read newspapers include *Vecernji List*, *Vjesnik*, *Jutarnji list*, *Slobodna Dalmacija* and the *Feral Tribune*. The most popular weeklies are *Nacional* and *Globus*.
- The radio station HR2 broadcasts traffic reports in English every hour on the hour from July to mid-September; Croatian Radio broadcasts news in English on 88.9, 91.3 and 99.3FM.
- Croatia uses the metric system.
- Mobile phones are GSM 900/1800, which is compatible with the rest of Europe and Australia, but not with the North American GSM 1900.
- The video system is PAL.

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.

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.

Camping

Nearly 100 camping grounds are scattered along the Croatian coast. Opening times of camping grounds 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 a camp site

at some of the larger establishments but half that at most other camping grounds, in addition to 38KN to 48KN per person.

Nudist 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 is www.camping.hr.

Hostels

The **Croatian YHA** (☎ 01-48 47 472; www.hfhs.hr; Dežmanova 9, Zagreb) operates youth hostels in Dubrovnik, Zadar, Zagreb and Pula. Non-members pay an additional 10KN per person daily for a stamp on a welcome card; six stamps entitles you to a membership. Prices in this chapter are for high season during July and August; prices fall the rest of the year. The Croatian YHA can also provide information about private youth hostels in Krk, Zadar, Dubrovnik and Zagreb.

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, high-tech bathrooms, minibars and air-con, are standard in four- and five-star hotels, and one-star hotels have at least a bathroom in the room. Many two- and three-star hotels offer satellite TV but you'll find better décor in the higher categories. Unfortunately the country is saddled with too many 1970s concrete-block hotels, built to warehouse package tourists, but there are more and more options for those looking for smaller and more personal establishments. Prices for hotels in this chapter are for the pricey six-week period that begins in mid-July and lasts until the end of August. During this period 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. In Zagreb prices are the same all year.

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 and have private bathrooms, in establishments resembling 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 usually 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 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 in 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) 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.

Rock Climbing

The karstic stone of Croatia's coast provides excellent climbing opportunities. Paklenica National Park has the widest range of routes – nearly 400 – for all levels of experience. Spring, summer and autumn are good seasons to climb, but in winter you'll be fighting the fierce *bura* (cold northeasterly wind). Other popular climbing spots include the rocks surrounding Baška on Krk Island, which can be climbed year-round (although if you come in summer, you can combine climbing with a beach holiday). Brela on the Makarska Riviera also allows climbing and beach-bumming, but in winter there's a strong *bura*. Also on the Makarska Riviera is the wall from Baška Voda to Makarska on Mt Biokovo, with 200m to 400m routes. For more information, contact the **Croatian Mountaineering Association** (☎/fax 01-48 24 142; <http://hps.inet.hr>; Kozaričeva 22, 10000 Zagreb).

Yachting

There's no better way to appreciate the Croatian Adriatic than by boat. The long, rugged islands off Croatia's mountainous coast all the way from Istria to Dubrovnik make this a yachting paradise. Fine, deep channels with abundant anchorage and steady winds attract yachties from around the world. Throughout the region there are quaint little ports where you can get provisions, and yachts can tie up right in the middle of everything.

There are 40 marinas along the coast, some with more facilities than others. Every

coastal town mentioned in this chapter has a marina, from little Sali on Dugi Otok to the large marinas in Opatija, Zadar, Split and Dubrovnik. Most marinas are open throughout the year but it's best to check first. A good source of information is **Udruženje Nautičkog Turizma** (Association of Nautical Tourism; ☎ 051-209 147; fax 051-216 033; Bulevar Oslobođenja 23, 51000 Rijeka), which represents all Croatian marinas. You could also try the **Adriatic Croatia International** (ACI; ☎ 051-271 288; www.aci-club.hr; M Tita 51, Opatija), which represents about half the marinas.

Although you can row, motor or sail any vessel up to 3m long without authorisation, for larger boats you'll need to get authorisation from the harbour master at your port of entry, which will be at any harbour open to international traffic. Come equipped with a boat certificate, documents proving your sailing qualifications, insurance documents and money.

Yachting enthusiasts may wish to charter their own boat. Experienced sailors can charter a yacht on a 'bareboat' basis or you can pay for the services of a local captain for a 'skippered' boat. **Sunsail** (☎ 0870 777 0313 in UK, ☎ 888 350 3568 in USA; www.sunsail.com) is an international operator with offices in the UK and the USA. It offers bareboat and skippered charters from Pula and Rogoznica near Trogir. In the UK, you could also try **Cosmos Yachting** (☎ 0800 376 9070; www.cosmosyachting.com), which offers charters out of Dubrovnik, Pula, Rovinj, Split, Trogir and Zadar, or **Nautilus Yachting** (☎ 01732-867 445; www.nautilus-yachting.com), which offers rentals from Pula and Split. The price depends upon the size of the boat, the number of berths and the season.

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 €370 to €490 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.

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 folks in a new Croatia. *Café Europa* is a series of essays by a Croatian journalist, Slavenka Drakulić, which provides an inside look at life in the country since independence. 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:

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

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

France Paris (☎ 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 Dublin (☎ 1 4767 181; Adelaide Chambers, Peter St, Dublin)

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

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

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

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

USA Washington DC (☎ 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 (Map pp150-1; ☎ 48 10 679; Jurišićeva 2a)

Australia (☎ 48 91 200; www.auembassy.hr; Kaptol Centar, Nova Ves 11) North of the centre.

Bosnia & Hercegovina (☎ 46 83 761; Torbarova 9) Northwest of the centre.

Bulgaria (☎ 48 23 336; Novi Goljak 25) Northwest of the centre.

Canada (Map pp150-1; ☎ 48 81 200; zagreb@dfait-maeci.gc.ca; Prilaz Gjуре Deželica 10)

Czech Republic (Map pp150-1; ☎ 61 77 239; Savska 41)

France (Map pp150-1; 48 93 680; consulat@ambafrance.hr; Hebrangova 2)

Germany (☎ 61 58 105; www.deutschebotschaft-zagreb.hr in German; ul grada Vukovara 64) South of the centre.

Hungary (☎ 48 22 051; Pantovčak 128/I) Northwest of the centre.

Ireland (Map pp150-1 ☎ 66 74 455; Turinina 3)

Netherlands (Map pp150-1; ☎ 46 84 880; nlgovzag@zg.t-com.hr; Medveščak 56)

New Zealand (☎ 61 51 382; Trg Stejepana Radića 3) Southwest of the centre.

Poland (Map pp150-1; ☎ 48 99 444; Krležin Gvozđ 3)

Romania (☎ 45 77 550; roamb@zg.t-com.hr; Mlinarska ul 43) North of the centre.

Serbia & Montenegro (☎ 45 79 067; Pantovčak 245) Northwest of the centre.

Slovakia (Map pp150-1; ☎ 48 48 941; Prilaz Gjуре Deželica 10)

Slovenia (Map pp150-1; ☎ 63 11 000; Savska 41)

UK (☎ 60 09 100; I Lučica 4) East of the centre.

USA (☎ 66 12 200; www.usembassy.hr; Ul Thomasa Jeffersona 2) South of the centre.

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.

GAY & LESBIAN TRAVELLERS

Homosexuality has been legal in Croatia since 1977 and is tolerated, but not welcomed with open arms. Public displays of affection between members of the same sex may be met with hostility, especially outside major cities. Exclusively gay clubs are a rarity outside Zagreb, but many of the large discos attract a mixed crowd. Raves are also a good way for gays to meet.

On the coast, gays gravitate to Rovinj, Hvar, Split and Dubrovnik and tend to frequent naturist beaches. In Zagreb, the last Saturday in June is Gay Pride Zagreb day, an excellent opportunity to connect with the local gay scene.

Most Croatian websites devoted to the gay scene are in Croatian only, but a good starting point is the English-language www.touristinfo.gay.hr which has articles on the gay scene and links to other relevant websites.

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

Victory Day and National Thanksgiving Day 5 August

Feast of the Assumption 15 August

Independence Day 8 October

All Saints' Day 1 November

Christmas 25 & 26 December

INTERNET ACCESS

Internet cafés are springing up everywhere. The going rate is about 25KN per hour, and connections are usually good. They can be busy, especially with kids playing online games.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Croatia Homepage (www.hr.hr) Hundreds of links to everything you want to know about Croatia.

Croatia Traveller (www.croatiatraveler.com) All ferry schedules, flights, forums, accommodation, sightseeing and travel planning.

Dalmatia Travel Guide (www.dalmacija.net) All about Dalmatia, including reservations for private accommodation.

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

MONEY

Credit Cards

Amex, MasterCard, Visa and Diners Club cards are widely accepted in large hotels, stores 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.

Moneychangers

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.

Tax

A 22% VAT is usually 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.

Tippling

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/o 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 cost about 400KN.

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

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- Ambulance ☎ 94
- Fire Service ☎ 93
- Police ☎ 92
- Roadside Assistance ☎ 987

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; Iblerov trg 10, Importanne Galerija, 10000 Zagreb) is a good source of information with an excellent website. There are regional tourist offices that supervise tourist development, and municipal tourist offices which 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** (www.atlas-croatia.com), Croatia Express, Generaltourist and Kompas, which also arrange private rooms, sightseeing tours and so on. Ask for the schedule for coastal ferries.

Croatian tourist offices abroad include:

UK (☎ 020-8563 7979; info@cnto.freeserve.co.uk;

Croatian National Tourist Office, 2 Lanchesters, 162-64 Fulham Palace Rd, London W6 9ER)

USA (☎ 212-279 8672; antony@earthlink.net; Croatian National Tourist Office, Suite 4003, 350 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10118)

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

Connections into Croatia are in a constant state of flux with new air and boat routes opening every season. Following is an overview of the major connections into Croatia

but you should refer to the Transport in Western Balkans chapter (p399) for more detail.

Air

The major airports in the country are as follows:

Dubrovnik (code DBV; ☎ 020-773 377; www.airport-dubrovnik.hr)

Pula (code PUV; ☎ 052-530 105; www.airport-pula.com)

Rijeka (code RJK; ☎ 051-842 132)

Split (code SPV; ☎ 021-203 506; www.split-airport.hr)

Zadar (code ZAD; ☎ 023-313 311; www.zadar-airport.hr)

Zagreb (Code ZAG; ☎ 01-62 65 222; www.zagreb-airport.hr)

In addition to domestic connections to Zagreb, Pula has direct flights to London (Gatwick) and Manchester while Split has direct flights to Amsterdam, Frankfurt, Manchester, London (Gatwick and Heathrow), Lyon, Munich, Paris, Prague, Rome (Fiumicino) and Vienna.

Dubrovnik has direct flights to Manchester, London (Gatwick), Glasgow, Nottingham, Paris, Frankfurt, Rome, Tel Aviv and Vienna, as well as flights to Zagreb and Split. Many of the international connections to the coast are available only from April or May to September or October.

Zagreb is connected domestically to Dubrovnik, Split, Pula, Rijeka and Zadar and internationally to all European capitals plus Milan, Munich, Frankfurt, Istanbul and Sarajevo.

Zadar receives domestic flights from Zagreb only.

The following are the major airlines flying into the country:

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) Hub Zagreb.

Croatia's national carrier has recently stepped up its service to serve many more routes.

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.

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.

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

Land

BUS

Bosnia & Herzegovina

There are daily connections from Sarajevo (160KN, five hours, daily) and Mostar (105KN, three hours) to Dubrovnik; from Sarajevo to Split (110KN, seven hours, five daily), which stop at Mostar; and from Sarajevo to Zagreb (199KN, eight hours) and Rijeka (255KN, 10 hours).

Serbia & Montenegro

There's one bus each morning from Zagreb to Belgrade (151KN, six hours). At Bajakovina on the border, a Serbian bus takes you on to Belgrade. The border between Serbia and Montenegro and Croatia is open to visitors, allowing Americans, Australians, Canadians and Brits to enter visa-free. There's a daily bus from Kotor to Dubrovnik (105KN, 2½ hours, daily) that starts at Bar and stops at Herceg Novi.

Slovenia

Slovenia is also well connected with the Istrian coast. There is one weekday bus between Rovinj and Koper (80KN, three hours) and Poreč and Portorož (38KN, 1½ hours), as well as a daily bus in summer from Rovinj to Ljubljana (84KN, 5½ hours) and Piran (73.50KN, 2½ hours).

There are also buses from Ljubljana to Zagreb (112KN, three hours, two daily), Rijeka (83KN, 2½ hours, one daily) and Split (299KN, 10½ hours, one daily).

CAR & MOTORCYCLE

The main highway entry/exit points between Croatia and Hungary are Goričan

(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 to Belgrade highway. Major destinations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, such as 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 hire a car in Italy, many insurance companies will not insure you 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-hire companies in Trieste and Venice are familiar with this requirement and will furnish you with the stamp. Otherwise, you must make specific inquiries.

See p227 for road rules and further information.

TRAIN

Serbia & Montenegro

There are five daily trains which connect Zagreb with Belgrade (€17.50, six hours).

Slovenia

There are up to 11 trains daily between Zagreb and Ljubljana (€12.50, 2¼ hours) and four between Rijeka and Ljubljana (€12, three hours). A new service runs daily from Ljubljana to Pula from late June to August (€19, four hours).

Sea

Regular boats from several companies connect Croatia with Italy and Slovenia. See p403 for information about ferries back and forth to Italy. All of the boat-company offices in Split are located inside the ferry terminal.

Lošinska Plovidba (☎ 051-352 200 in Rijeka; www.losinjska-plovidba.hr) runs boats connecting Koper, Slovenia, with Pula (€9, 4½ hours) and Zadar (€23, 13½ hours).

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 (256KN, one hour), Pula (185KN, 45 minutes), Split (170KN to 350KN, 45 minutes) and Zadar (170KN to 350KN, 40 minutes).

Bicycle

Cycling is a great way to see the islands and bikes are fairly easy to hire 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 Zadar, 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 €26/31 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 €6 extra and four-berth cabins (if available) begin at €48.50/58 low/high season from (Rijeka to Dubrovnik). You must buy tickets in advance at an agency or the Jadrolinija office as they are not sold on board. Cabins can be arranged at the reservation counter aboard the ship, but advance bookings are recommended if you want to be sure of a place. Bringing a car means checking in at least two hours in advance, more in the summer.

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 can vary substantially, but the prices in this book should give you an idea of costs (and unless otherwise noted, all bus prices are for one-way fares). Generally, the cheaper fares are on overnight buses. Following are some prices for the most popular routes:

Destination	Cost (KN)	Duration	Frequency
Dubrovnik-Rijeka	372	12hr	4 daily
Dubrovnik-Split	82-111	4½hr	14 daily
Dubrovnik-Zadar	168-210	8hr	7 daily
Zagreb-Dubrovnik	205-401	11hr	7 daily
Zagreb-Korčula	204	12hr	1 daily
Zagreb-Pula	120-174	4-6hr	17 daily
Zagreb-Split	115-150	6-9hr	27 daily

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 (☎ 051-660 360; www.autotrans.hr) Based in Rijeka with connections to Istria, Zagreb, Varaždin and Kvarner.

Brioni Pula (☎ 052-502 997; www.brioni.hr in Croatian) 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. 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. Luggage stowed in the baggage compartment under the bus costs extra (10KN a piece, including insurance).

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 Croatian) for information on schedules and fares to and from Zagreb.

Car & Motorcycle

You have to pay tolls on the motorways around Zagreb, to use the Učka tunnel between Rijeka and Istria, the bridge to Krk Island, as well as the road from Rijeka to Delnice and from Zagreb to Split. Tolls can be paid in foreign currencies. The long-awaited motorway connecting Zagreb and Split opened in 2005 cutting travel time to the coast to around four hours. Tolls add up to about 160KN. Over the next few years, look for completion of the final leg running from Split to Dubrovnik. For general news on Croatia's motorways and tolls, see www.hac.hr.

DRIVING LICENCE

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

FUEL

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.

HIRE

The large car-hire chains represented in Croatia are Avis, Budget, Europcar and Hertz. Throughout Croatia, Avis is allied with the Autotehna company, while Hertz is often represented by Kompas.

Independent local companies are often much cheaper than the international chains, but Avis, Budget, Europcar and Hertz 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 €40 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 50KN 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-hire rate by booking the car from abroad. Tour companies in Western Europe often have fly-drive packages that include a flight to Croatia and a car (two-person minimum).

ROAD RULES

Unless otherwise posted, the speed limits for cars and motorcycles are 50km/h in the urban zones, 90km outside urban zones, 110km/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. Drive defensively, as some local drivers lack discipline, to put it mildly.

Hitching

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

Local Transport

Zagreb and Osijek have well-developed tram systems as well as local buses, but in the rest of the country you'll only find buses. In major cities such as Rijeka, Split, Zadar and Dubrovnik buses run about every 20 minutes, and 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).