

After a leisurely breakfast, we will start our trip with some context! We will meet with a local historian to learn the impressive history of the region.

Then it's time to get out and see it all! A city of red-tiled rooftops, pine- and cypress-shaded hills, and sparkling turquoise waters, the Old Town of Dubrovnik stuns with both its architecture and scenery. Let's move our bodies and take our 5 senses out into the city! We'll enjoy a historic **Walking City Tour** of Old Town Dubrovnik. We will experience the major churches and squares, and meander through the Dominican Monastery which features locally produced art that's just so gorgeous to see.

After-lunch meeting and exchange with the women's organization DESA—a humanitarian and peace-keeping organization committed to supporting women.

Tonight we'll organize dinners in small groups of 4 for those who want to go out! Otherwise, the evening is free for you to rest if you need an early evening in.

(Overnight Dubrovnik)

June 17 **Beaches and Oranges** (Breakfast and Lunch)

After breakfast we are off to enjoy our coastal beach day! We will have 4 hours to relax and swim. For those who wish, you can rent kayaks. We will let you know the rental rates.

After lunch we get hands-on experience making Bitter Orange preserves. As a common citrus fruit, there are a plethora of bitter, orange-based delicacies. We will appreciate all things bitter orange—from jams and marmalades to cakes, biscuits, and even liqueurs.

Evening is free for local dining and music. Or join us at the Jazz Cafe Troubadour, which is next to the cathedral and a great place to enjoy some good jazz while having a cold drink on a hot summer night.

(Overnight Dubrovnik)

Split

We then enjoy 4 nights in Split, which is the 2nd largest city in Croatia as it's one of the most vibrant and bustling port cities of the Adriatic. Located between the gorgeous mountains and the sea, it's the cultural center of the Dalmatian Coast.

June 18 **Exploring Split!** (Breakfast and Lunch)

After breakfast, we check out and drive to Split. It is about 3.5 hours, but we will stop along the way for sightseeing and lunch. Upon arrival in Split, we will check into the Heritage Hotel Santa Lucia.

This afternoon we soak up the sites with a guided city tour. Set beside Split's sparkling harbor, with the palm-lined Riva Promenade along its southern facade, Diocletian's Palace is one of the most impressive Roman ruins on the planet. We'll also take in the St. Domnius Cathedral—one of the oldest European cathedrals where they've been holding liturgies for over a millennium. Then we'll see the Ivan Mestrovic Gallery, a stunning display of one of Croatia's most famous sculptors.

Optional afternoon exchange: For those who like, let's conclude our day with tea or coffee as Mirjana Kucer from a local women's rights organization, Domine, joins us for an intimate conversation. Domine is a feminist nonprofit and non-governmental organization that promotes women's rights and encourages the development of a civil society. During the lockdown, home was not a safe place for many women in Croatia. Given the restrictions on movement on top of the limited economic options in some cases, victims of domestic violence didn't have anywhere to go. In response, Domine started functioning like a crisis center. Just a time for sisters to share.

Evening is free for dining and cultural activities.

(Overnight Split)

June 19 **Hiking, Waterfalls and Wine** (Breakfast and Lunch)

This morning, we journey to the beautiful Krka National Park—known for its series of 7 waterfalls. First, we explore the town of Skradin, where we grab a boat and sail to the extraordinary Skradinski Buk waterfalls. From here we have time to swim, hike, and explore the scenery filled with luscious greenery, lakes, and boardwalks.

We then will enjoy lunch and wine tasting at a local vineyard.

Optional afternoon exchange and shopping with local woman entrepreneur, Jelena Bikić and her Silvan Cosmetics—natural, handcrafted cosmetic products packed in growing packages with plant seeds in them. The design of the packaging was inspired by Croatian historical motifs, so everyone who buys a product gets a touch of Croatian history along with it. The brand name "Silvan" has a profound historical significance. The God Silvan was very important in the religion of the ancient Illyrians—especially for those Illyrians who lived in the region of Central Dalmatia.

Late afternoon is free in Split for shopping, sightseeing, and dining. However, tonight, our host Svetlana will bring us to the Riva Promenade for an evening stroll along the seafront and the narrow streets of Diocletian's Palace. Then you can peel off to enjoy one of a plethora of local bars and cafes... and some of you may want to join Malia as she goes off to Marvlvs Library Jazz Bar!

(Overnight Split)

June 20 **Blue Lagoon Cruising and Grazing** (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

This morning we start with a ½-day boating cruise on the exquisite Dalmatian coast. We visit small islands and of course have time to swim.

We return to port at 2 pm. You will have a few free hours to rest or wander. (There will be an optional sharing circle with an important LGBT non-governmental organization, RIŠPET.)

Then it is "foodie tour time." We will enjoy grabbing bites at multiple cafes, shops, and restaurants.

(Overnight Split)

June 21 **A Day Trip to Hvar Island** (Breakfast and Lunch)

This morning we leave for our full-day excursion to experience the nature, beauty, and agriculture of Hvar Island. This island is famous for hosting celebrities on their holidays as it's one of the most beautiful towns with cobbled streets, clear blue waters, deserted lagoons, and lavish life! Today we will enjoy touring a lavender farm, then after lunch we will hike through an olive oil farm to take in as much of the beauty as possible!

Evening is free for dining and cultural activities. This evening we will see if there are optional cultural offerings at the Croatian National Theatre in Split.

(Overnight Split)

Zagreb

We end our time in Croatia with 3 nights in Zagreb, which is the cultural, scientific, economic, political, and administrative center of the Republic of Croatia, and is home to the Croatian Parliament, Government, and President. With a population of nearly one million, this city contains almost a quarter of the entire population of Croatia.

June 22 Plitvice Lakes and Rastoke (Breakfast and Dinner)

After breakfast we check out and transfer to Zagreb via Plitvice Lakes and Rastoke. This national park, argued by many to be the most beautiful in Europe, is Croatia's oldest and largest national park, famous for its sequence of turquoise lakes, rushing rapids, and emerald hills. It's so stunning that it was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site simply for its "outstanding natural beauty."

Arriving at Plitvice, we will walk through the beautiful waterfalls and lakes, explore the quaint village, take photos of the little waterfalls along the Slunjčica River, and admire the well-preserved mills and houses which represent the unique style of this region. Today is a long one, but gorgeous! It is about 3.5 hours to get to the lakes, then we'll have about 6 hours to explore, take photos, hike, or relax, before a 2-hour transfer to Zagreb for an expected check-in to our hotel by 7 pm.

Evening is free if you just want to relax, but we have a group reservation for dinner for those who want at 8 pm at the Mali Bar, a relaxed and intimate bistro and bar. Yellow-painted walls and a teal wooden bar highlight the restaurant created by Ana Ugarkovic, a famous Croatian TV chef. Ugarkovic discovered her passion for the culinary arts in London and later wrote three successful cookbooks.

(Overnight Zagreb)

June 23 **Rooting and Cooking** (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)

This morning we are off to visit the Zagreb City Museum, set in the cavernous former 17th-century Convent of the Clares in the Upper Town. It explores the city's history from prehistory onwards.

Next, we have lunch with our friends Marina Skrabalo and Vesna Tereselic from the Center for Peace Studies to share with us about life after the Balkanization of the 80s.

Then we spend four hours in a hands-on cooking class!

(Overnight Zagreb)

June 24 **Hearts and Honey** (Breakfast and Dinner)

This morning is yours to hike, shop, relax, or soak up café culture!

We meet up at 2 pm to wander through the Museum of Broken Relationships. This special place displays painful, sweet and humorous items donated following failed romances.

Then we will enjoy a licitar class! Licitar is a colorfully decorated cake made of honey dough. Zagreb is known as the city of a million hearts, and its tradition is outlined in a very specific souvenir—the licitar heart.

After a break at the hotel, we will have a wrap-up circle with Shasta followed by our celebratory farewell dinner.

(Overnight Zagreb)

June 25 **Farewell** (Breakfast)

After breakfast we all check out and depart. Some of you will fly from Zagreb Airport (ZAG) to return home. You may stay longer, or join us on a 3-night optional excursion to Slovenia.

OPTIONAL ADD-ON: Slovenia Excursion

Want to explore another country while nearby? Slovenia is a small country in Central Europe but contains within its borders Alpine mountains, thick forests, historic cities, and a short Adriatic coastline. Slovenia was the first former Yugoslav republic to join the European Union, in May 2004—shortly after joining NATO.

In this add-on, we'll spend two nights in Ljubljana in order to experience one of Europe's hidden gems. This green city is beautiful! We will soak up its unique architecture and its exquisite food scene. Malia shares that the best gelato she ever had was here! As we walk the rivers and bridges, we will also learn about the legend of Ljubljana's dragon. This legend has it, that centuries ago, a fearsome dragon lived and fed in the marshes that surround the Ljubljana... You will find dragons all over the city! Next, we will make our way to Bled for two nights. At the base of the Julian Alps sits Bled, one of the most gorgeous towns you will ever come across. It is perhaps most recognizable by its lake and the Pilgrimage Church of the Assumption of Maria, sitting on its own island on the western part of the lake. Bled was heavily developed by Swiss naturopath Arnold Rikli as a health and wellness resort town. You will see why this is a restorative place to be for our senses.

June 25 _____ (Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner)

Transfer to the gorgeous city of Ljubljana. After our two-hour drive, we will enjoy a guided walking tour of the city, cross the iconic Dragon Bridge, and ride the funicular up to Ljubljana Castle for amazing views. We will have an afternoon check-in at our hotel.

Tonight we have a group dinner together.

(Overnight Ljubljana)

June 26 _____ **Yugoslavia Nostalgia and Pottery** _____ (Breakfast and Lunch)

This morning we are off to learn about the former Yugoslavia at the National Museum of Contemporary History. Then we will meander the central market to shop, talk with local vendors, and have lunch.

Our afternoon has us making our own souvenir cups at a pottery class.

Evening is free to explore local restaurants and music venues.

(Overnight Ljubljana)

June 27 **Bohinj Lakes** (Breakfast and Lunch)

After breakfast, we check out of the hotel and are off to Bohinj where we will hike around the Bohinj lakes and to the Savica Waterfall. About 8 kilometers (5 miles) long, the valley beneath Mount Triglav has been praised as one of the most beautiful parts of the Julian Alps since the beginning of mountaineering. With its little lakes and ponds, this karstified valley is a photographer's paradise. Lake Bohinj is the largest natural lake in Slovenia.

In the afternoon, we check into our hotel in Bled.

Evening is free to explore local restaurants and music venues.

(Overnight at Bled)

June 28 **Lake Bled** (Breakfast and Dinner)

A Lake Bled excursion is on our agenda for the day! This is a stunning glacial lake fed by hot springs. We visit the town of Bled, which contains a church-topped islet and a cliffside medieval castle. Take a Pletna boat ride, or visit Bled castle and its numerous rooms and corners.

After free time for lunch, we are off to explore the Vintgar Gorge (6 km) for some sightseeing. We'll then continue to Radovljica, the Slovenian capital of honey and chocolate. Radovljica's Old Town is one of the best-preserved town structures in Slovenia with houses dating from the 15th and 16th centuries. The charming old town entralls with its position atop a natural promontory, with a varied selection of authentically preserved architecture, as well as museums, galleries, and other attractions.

Back in Bled, we have time to freshen up and rest. Then we enjoy our Farewell Dinner!

(Overnight at Bled)

June 29 **Farewell** (Breakfast)

Breakfast at the hotel is at 7 am. Then we'll all transfer together back to the airport in Ljubljana at 8:30 am. We will be at the airport by 9:30. Please book your flight home after 12 noon or feel free to stay on in either city!