

Overseas Adventure Travel®

THE LEADER IN CUSTOMIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide®



Allure of the Adriatic: Italy & Croatia

2026

Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will enjoy the thrill of off-the-beaten-path discovery coupled with the convenience of unpacking just once. Aboard our privately owned small ship, you will visit lesser-known ports that larger vessels cannot access—and enjoy intimate interactions with local people in your small group of no more than 25 travelers. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation.

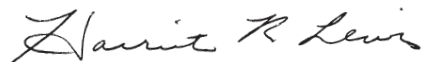
But your personal connections are not limited to your time on land—while onboard, you will enjoy the warm hospitality provided by our friendly, English-speaking crew, as well as the camaraderie of your fellow American travelers. Whether you travel with a partner, sister, friend, or independently, you will feel welcomed and included throughout your journey. And if you do choose to travel solo, you will enjoy an unmatched value, with our FREE or low-cost Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the, like the **87% of our travelers who customize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis

Chair

Overseas Adventure Travel

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Dolac market, Zagreb, Croatia

New! Allure of the Adriatic: Italy, Slovenia & Croatia Small Ship Adventure

Italy: Venice, Ravenna, Trieste | **Slovenia:** Piran | **Croatia:** Rovinj, Pula, Cres, Rijeka, Zagreb

Small groups of no more than 25 travelers, guaranteed

17 days starting from \$4,495

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE** or \$995

For departure dates & prices, visit www.oattravel.com/mve2026pricing

On this winter adventure, you'll cruise the Adriatic coastline for 10 nights aboard the privately owned, **50-passenger M/V Artemis**, uncovering the multifaceted gems of Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia when the season casts an enchanting spell on these legendary lands. Float along romantic canals in Venice, step back in time at the Roman ruins of Pula, uncover the charm of seaside Piran, experience Croatian culture in the Istrian peninsula and Zagreb, and more.

IT'S INCLUDED

- 15 nights accommodation, including 10 nights aboard our privately owned, 50-passenger M/V Artemis
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges, unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- 38 meals: 15 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 12 dinners—including 1 Home-Hosted Lunch—plus all onboard house beer & wine, as well as soft drinks
- 17 guided tours and cultural experiences
- Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- All port charges
- Baggage handling for 1 piece of luggage per person, including tips
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next trip

Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.

Allure of the Adriatic: Italy, Slovenia & Croatia



ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Depart U.S.
2-5	Venice • Embark Ship
6-7	Pesaro • Pula
8-9	Rovinj
10-11	Trieste
12	Cres
13-14	Rueka
15-16	Disembark Ship • Zagreb
17	Return to U.S.

WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderately Easy

Pacing: 16 days, with one 3-night hotel stay, one 2-night hotel stay (Zagreb) and 10 nights aboard the M/V Artemis

Physical requirements: Walk 3-5 miles unassisted and participate in 6-8 hours of physical activities each day, including stairs and travel on motorboats requiring good agility, balance, and strength

Flight time: Travel time will be 8-21 hours and will most likely have one connection

View all physical requirements at www.oattravel.com/mve

ITALY & CROATIA: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

Unbeatable Value: Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry. Plus, all port charges included.

People-to-People Experiences: Discover the intricacies behind the making of Italian *vino* when you visit a small, family-owned vineyard in Trieste, and have a conversation with two local Venetians on the MOSE Dam and its impact on the city of Venice. Plus, spend **A Day in the Life** of a rural Croatian farm where we'll meet one of two women entrepreneurs who will show us around their farm and share traditional family recipes.

O.A.T. Exclusives: Engage in a conversation about a **Controversial Topic** with a local expert in Venice about the construction of the MOSE dam, which was intended to save the city from flooding, but has been accompanied by a host of environmental and political concerns. We'll also see what everyday family life is like in Croatia when we join a local family in Rovinj for a **Home-Hosted Lunch**.

PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Romantic Landscapes of Verona & Lake Como

PRE-TRIP: 6 nights from **\$1,495**

Slovenia & Austria: Lake Bled to Salzburg

POST-TRIP: 7 nights from **\$2,095**

ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Como** before your Verona & Lake Como pre-trip extension from **\$230** per room, per night
- Arrive early in **Venice** before your main adventure from **\$290** per room, per night

Allure of the Adriatic: Italy, Slovenia & Croatia

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

6 nights in *Romantic Landscapes of Verona & Lake Como*

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Day 2 Milan, Italy • Lake Como

Day 3 Lake Como

Day 4 Lake Como • Explore Bellagio

Day 5 Explore Bergamo •
Overland to Verona

Day 6 Explore Verona

Day 7 Verona • Optional Sirmione tour

Day 8 Bassano del Grappa • Arrive Venice
• Join main trip

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart today on your overnight flight to Venice, Italy.

Day 2 Venice, Italy

- Destination: Venice
- Accommodations: Palazzo Barocci or similar

Afternoon: Arrive in the famed “Floating City,” a chain of 118 islands linked by a labyrinth of canals and bridges. You’ll be met at the airport and embark a motorboat, traveling across the lagoon to enter the small canals of Venice. Pass by historical palaces and gondolas, bound for your hotel. When you arrive, you may start exploring on your own, enjoy a Welcome Drink with your fellow travelers arriving from our *Romantic Landscapes of Verona & Lake Como* pre-trip extension, or relax in the comfort of your room.

Dinner: On your own this evening. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. Perhaps you’ll seek out fresh seafood, a Venetian staple.

Evening: Make your own discoveries in Venice this evening, or rest up at your hotel for tomorrow’s activities.

Day 3 Explore Venice

- Destination: Venice
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Palazzo Barocci or similar

Activity Note: If you would like to visit the Basilica di San Marco during your free time today, tickets should be reserved in advance on the Basilica’s website. We recommend reserving as early as possible, as tickets sell out quickly.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Join your Trip Experience Leader and fellow travelers for an orientation briefing in the lobby. You'll then take a short walk to the *vaporetto* water bus, the main method of transportation in Venice along its canals, and ride to a stop near Piazza San Marco. Set out on a walking tour to explore the cobbled streets lined with quaint glass workshops, Venetian mask stores, and enticing cafés woven among sprawling squares and magnificent piazzas. During your three days here, witness the ornate décor of Venetian Gothic architecture set against the enchanting background of the Grand Canal, behold the iconic Bridge of Sighs, or visit world-class museums.

Lunch: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations.

Afternoon: Free for your own discoveries—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. You could always stop into a *bacaro* (a typical Venetian tavern) to enjoy some *cicchetti* (appetizers) and a nice *ombra di vino* (glass of wine). Or, embrace Venice's Jewish heritage and join your Trip Experience Leader on a discovery walk to one of the world's oldest Jewish ghettos—established in the 16th century. Learn about its legacy and see how this area remains a thriving center of Judaism in Venice.

Dinner: Enjoy a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll take in the canals of Venice from the Ponte dell'Accademia bridge at sunset.

Day 4 Venice • Gondola craftsman visit

- Destination: Venice
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Palazzo Barocci or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Visit one of only two remaining traditional gondola-building businesses in the city where you'll get a true, behind-the-scenes look at this traditional art and learn about construction techniques from a local boat maker. Then, continue on to a workshop that specializes in handcrafted oars, where you'll meet the master *remier* (oar craftsman) who is responsible for keeping this craft alive. Afterwards, discover the fascination with these vessels firsthand when you embark a decorated gondola.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Explore the city at leisure for the remainder of the day. Perhaps you'll return to Piazza San Marco, once the epicenter of the Republic of Venice when it was in full glory as a seafaring empire. Ringed with outdoor cafés, this locale in the center of the city is an ideal place to sip cappuccino or indulge in hot chocolate while you immerse yourself in *la bella vita* (the beautiful life) in Venice.

Dinner: On your own—your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to share recommendations for local restaurants, such as where to indulge in the best regional delicacies, from salt-crusted *branzino* (sea bass) to decadent tiramisu.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 5 Venice • Controversial Topic: The impacts of the MOSE Dam with local experts • Embark ship • Captain's Welcome Dinner

- Destination: Venice
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Later today, we'll be stepping onboard our private small ship, but before we do, we'll learn about the **Controversial Topic** of the MOSE Dam project from local experts. Spearheaded in 2003, the construction of this highly controversial barrier has repeatedly been hindered by delays, budget overruns, and scandals, resulting in a series of missed completion deadlines. More than two decades later, it is still under construction and slated to be finished in 2025.

Lunch: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for restaurant recommendations.

Afternoon: We'll embark our ship this afternoon. Once onboard, the captain will conduct a safety briefing. At the conclusion, you'll have time to get acquainted with the ship's common areas.

Later, make your way to the lounge for the first in a series of nightly Port Talks, during which you'll be introduced to the ship's staff. These informative discussions, led by your Trip Experience Leader, will give you an overview of the following day's itinerary.

Dinner: Tonight, you and your fellow travelers will be invited to the dining room for your Captain's Welcome Dinner.

Evening: Tonight we set sail. Perhaps you'll watch the lights of Venice fade into the distance from your ship's top deck.

Day 6 Ravenna • *Balera* music performance

- Destination: Piran
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: Your ship will dock in the industrial port of Porto Corsini. Upon disembarking, we'll meet a local guide and transfer to Ravenna.

Throughout most of the Renaissance and Middle Ages, Ravenna was a papal city, and its architecture and expansive mosaic work still reflect that early Christian influence. During a tour with a local guide, you'll witness the highlights of this UNESCO-listed city, as well as the colorful mosaics adorning both the 1,400-year-old Basilica di San Vitale and the Mausoleo Galla Placida. Your tour continues in the bustling Piazza del Popolo, where we'll explore the narrow alleys of Ravenna, stopping to visit the San Fransesco Basilica and the tomb of the prolific writer, Dante.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: You may choose to return to the ship. Or, you might like to spend the afternoon exploring Ravenna at your own pace. Strolling along the unassuming city streets, you'll encounter open shops, intimate cafés tucked into alleyways, and locals zipping past on bicycles. If the morning has whetted your appetite for more mosaics, seek out the collection at Battistero degli Ariani.

Dinner: Onboard the ship.

Evening: You are invited to the lounge, where a local performance group will treat you to traditional *balera* music. Your ship sets sail for Trieste late tonight.

Day 7 Explore Trieste • Risiera di San Sabba • Conversation about the Foibe Massacre and its lasting effect on Trieste's identity

- Destination: Trieste
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: You'll have the chance to examine Trieste from many different angles today, starting with a visit to Risiera di San Sabba. This former rice-processing factory was used by the Nazis during World War II as a concentration camp and detainment center. Today, the site is a somber reminder of its brutal and tragic past.

Next, explore the heart of Trieste on an included walking tour. The city flourished under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and vestiges of this golden era can be found today, especially when strolling through the city's central square. Here, grand 18th- and 19th-century buildings stand as tall and lofty reminders of Trieste's elegant pedigree.

Lunch: Onboard the ship.

Afternoon: After lunch, the afternoon is free for your own discoveries.

Later, we'll gather in the ship's lounge to learn about the tension between Italy, Slovenia, and Croatia from a local expert. This friction is said to have worsened with the Foibe Massacre in 1943, during which an unconfirmed number of Italians were killed by Yugoslavian Communist partisans near the end of World War II. Although times have changed and this vitriol has cooled, today the tensions are more a matter of local identity, which is critically important to each nation that's a part of the Istrian Peninsula.

Dinner: Onboard the ship.

Evening: Relax onboard tonight. Perhaps you'll challenge your fellow travelers to one of the many board games available in the lounge.

Day 8 Piran, Slovenia • Tartini Memorial Room • Farm & vineyard visit

- Destination: Piran
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: Our ship will dock in Piran, Slovenia, this morning. We'll witness the city's highlights on a walking tour of the city that includes a visit to the Tartini Memorial Room, a museum dedicated to the violin virtuoso and composer who called Piran his home.

After exploring Piran, we'll drive to a local farm and vineyard for a tour of the grounds.

Lunch: Gather together for a farm-fresh lunch and wine tasting.

Afternoon: The afternoon is free for your own discoveries.

Dinner: Onboard the ship.

Evening: Free to enjoy the ship's amenities.

Day 9 Explore Rovinj • Home-Hosted Lunch • Bale village & olive oil tasting

- Destination: Rovinj
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Activity Note: Select departures will feature a Home-Hosted Dinner instead of a lunch.

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: Your ship docks in Rovinj, a popular Croatian resort town and the former playground of the Venetian Republic. Disembark and uncover the timeless appeal of Rovinj during a walking tour. This seaside town has been a popular getaway along the Adriatic for centuries, hosting glamorous celebrities and dignitaries alike, all while remaining true to its

roots as an authentic fishing port. Once your tour of this pastel-hued town concludes, relish in some free time to make your own discoveries. Perhaps you'll wander to the artisan shops and galleries outlining the pedestrian-only thoroughfare of Carrera Street.

Lunch: This afternoon, we'll split into smaller groups and drive to the home of a local family to partake in one of our travelers' favorite activities—a **Home-Hosted Lunch**. This shared meal offers us a rare opportunity to connect with local culture on a more intimate level. In our hosts' homes, we'll see the family go about their daily routine and get an authentic look into what life is really like in Rovinj.

Afternoon: We'll next visit an award-winning olive oil mill in Bale, where you'll learn about the process of making and purifying olive oil, as well as have the chance to sample their products. After, take a walking tour through the quiet and picturesque village of Bale before returning to your ship.

The remainder of the afternoon is yours to relax onboard or continue exploring Rovinj. Perhaps you'll walk along the coastline and gaze out at the sparkling Adriatic.

Dinner: Onboard the ship.

Evening: Relax in the lounge or gaze at the night sky from the Sun Deck.

Day 10 Rovinj • A Day in the Life of a Croatian farm

- Destination: Rovinj
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: Today we'll see what life is like on a rural Croatian farm during our **NEW A Day in the Life** experience. We'll break into smaller groups before heading to nearby farms to try our hands at some day-to-day activities.

Lunch: We'll gather around the table with members of our host family to enjoy a farm-fresh meal.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll wrap up our experiences on the farm before returning to the ship. The rest of the afternoon is free to do as you'd like.

Dinner: Onboard the ship.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll enjoy a nightcap at the bar or relax in the lounge.

Day 11 Explore Pula, Croatia • Croatia Yesterday and Today conversation

- Destination: Pula
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: Your ship will dock in the heart of Pula, Croatia. Get an intimate perspective on the country from a local guide, who will speak to Croatia's tumultuous history and candidly share firsthand experiences during a conversation about *Croatia Yesterday and Today*.

Then, step ashore in Pula to take a tour of the Roman Amphitheatre. This arena is unique, as it is not only well-preserved, but it offers tours of the subterranean hall that once housed the ferocious animals and fierce gladiators who competed in the savage games held there, two millennia ago. A local guide will provide insight into the rich history of the arena as you explore.

Lunch: Onboard the ship.

Afternoon: Free to make your own discoveries in Pula—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. Perhaps you'll seek out a shop selling two of the goods that Croatia is most famous for: chocolate and truffles.

Dinner: Onboard the ship.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish.

Day 12 Cres • Griffon Vulture Rescue Center

- Destination: Cres
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Activity Note: The Griffon Vulture Rescue Center is closed to the public on Mondays. On select departures, the activities of Days 11 and 12 will be reversed to accommodate this closure.

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: Dock this morning on the island of Cres. You'll explore this charming island with a local guide, eventually making your way to the village of Beli.

Upon arrival, you'll visit the Griffon Vulture Rescue Center for an in-depth look at these endangered and remarkable predators. Cres is one of the last natural habitats of the griffon vulture; as such, the center focuses on both the education and preservation of these special birds.

Lunch: Onboard the ship.

Afternoon: Free to make your own discoveries in Cres—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Dinner: Onboard the ship.

Evening: Free to enjoy the ship's amenities.

Day 13 Rijeka • Istrian cooking class

- Destination: Rijeka
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: Today, you'll take a walking tour of the city center of Rijeka with a local guide and explore the central market of Rijeka. Then, half the group will depart for a hands-on Istrian cooking class, while the rest of the group enjoys free time to explore.

Lunch: Travelers who attended the cooking class this morning will dine on their creations for lunch. All other travelers will enjoy lunch onboard the ship.

Afternoon: Travelers who didn't attend the morning cooking class will attend it this afternoon prior to dinner. If you took part in the cooking class this morning, you're free to make your own discoveries in Rijeka—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Dinner: Those who attend the cooking class will savor the fruits of their labor. All other travelers will enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll explore more of the city, as your ship stays docked in Rijeka tonight.

Day 14 Rijeka • Optional tour to the hilltop towns of Istria

- Destination: Rijeka
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: M/V *Artemis*

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: You have a full day free to make your own discoveries in Rijeka. Or, you can choose to take an optional tour to the hilltop towns

of Istria, which offer panoramic views over the valleys, vineyards, and lakes of the region. Discover a rolling and enchanting land full of culture, charming architecture, and lyrical landscapes. Your explorations include a visit to Motovun forest, known for its truffles and oak trees; the quaint town of Motovun; and the village of Hum. You'll conclude your day with a visit to the Museum of Old Crafts, as well as a *rakija* (spirits) and jam tasting.

Lunch: Onboard the ship for those who don't join the optional tour. Those travelers on the optional tour will enjoy an included lunch at a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Free to make your own discoveries—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. Travelers on the optional tour will return to the hotel later this afternoon.

Dinner: Onboard the ship.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish. Perhaps you'll explore more of the city, as your ship stays docked in Rijeka tonight.

Day 15 Disembark ship • Explore Karlovac • Overland to Zagreb

- Destination: Zagreb
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Sheraton Zagreb Hotel

Activity Note: The Museum of the Homeland War is closed on Mondays and public holidays; in these instances, an alternative activity will be offered.

Breakfast: Onboard the ship.

Morning: Say goodbye to your captain and crew and travel overland to the city of Zagreb. Along the way, we'll stop in the city of Karlovac to visit the Museum of the Homeland War, a glass building that surrounds an open area filled

with military vehicles, weapons, photographs and other items from the Homeland War (also known as the Croatian War of Independence, in which Croatia fought for its independence from Yugoslavia).

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: After lunch, you'll transfer to Zagreb. On arrival, check into your hotel, receive your room assignment, and settle in. Later, embark on an orientation walk with your Trip Experience Leader to familiarize yourself with your surroundings.

Dinner: On your own—you might try one of the Dalmatian, Central European, or seafood restaurants near your hotel.

Evening: You may wish to retire after dinner tonight. Or enjoy a nightcap at the hotel or at a nearby club.

Day 16 Explore Zagreb

- Destination: Zagreb
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Sheraton Zagreb Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Embark on a city tour of Zagreb, beginning with a stroll through the Lower Town, whose well-designed street grid was laid out in the 19th century. Here, you'll be introduced to many of the city's civic and historic monuments, including the fortified Lotrščak Tower and the sprawling Ban Jelačić Square.

Then, take the funicular to discover Zagreb's medieval landmarks, such as St. Mark's Church and the neo-Gothic Cathedral of the Assumption, which you will have the opportunity to admire from the inside as well.

Next, you'll visit Dolac, Zagreb's most vibrant open-air market. Here, you'll find vendor stalls of colorful produce and a variety of local ingredients. Peruse the lively stalls as you stroll beneath a canopy of bright red umbrellas.

Lunch: On your own. Perhaps you'll sample some fresh, local produce you picked up at Dolac. Or you may seek out a popular local dish like *strukli*, which is a cottage cheese- and sour cream-stuffed pastry.

Afternoon: The afternoon is free for you to make your own discoveries. You might like to visit the Mimara Museum to view its artistic masterpieces and archaeological treasures.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own to explore at your own pace. Tkalciceva Street is a good place to enjoy the city's nightlife. Or, if you prefer the Lower Town, you might check out the bars set between Trg Petra Preradovića and Bogovićeve.

Day 17 Zagreb • Return to U.S.

• Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Transfer to the airport for your flight home. Or, join our post-trip extension to *Slovenia & Austria: Lake Bled to Salzburg*.

END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

7 nights in Slovenia & Austria: Lake Bled to Salzburg

Day 1 Zagreb • Explore Ljubljana • Transfer to Lake Bled

Day 2 Lake Bled • Pletna boat ride • Explore Bled Island

Day 3 Lake Bled • Explore Lake Bohinj Lake • Cheese and butter making experience

Day 4 Lake Bled • Explore Villach, Austria • Salzburg

Day 5 Explore Salzburg • Mozartkugel chocolate experience

Day 6 Salzburg • Optional Bad Dürrenberg Salt Mines & Keltendorf village tour

Day 7 Salzburg • Explore Hallstatt

Day 8 Salzburg • Return to U.S.

OPTIONAL TOURS

During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Experience Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards. We also accept Visa and MasterCard debit cards, but it must be a debit card that allows you to sign for purchases.

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2–3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2–3 months following your return.

Please note: *Optional tour prices are listed in U.S. dollar estimates determined at the time of publication and are subject to change. Optional tours may vary.*

Hilltop Towns of Istria

(Day 14 \$175 per person)

Explore the hilltop towns of Istria, which offer panoramic views over the valleys, vineyards, and lakes of the region. Your explorations include a visit to Motovun forest, known for its truffles and oak trees; the quaint town of Motovun; and the village of Hum. You'll conclude your day with a visit to the Museum of Old Crafts, as well as a *rakija* (spirits) and jam tasting.

PRE-TRIP

Romantic Landscapes of Verona & Lake Como

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » 6 nights accommodation
- » 9 meals: 6 breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 1 dinner
- » 5 guided tours and cultural experiences: Lake Como • Bellagio • Bergamo • Verona • Bassano del Grappa
- » Services of our local Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers
- » All transfers

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

On this extension, you'll uncover a glittering Alpine lake that has drawn artists, composers, and philosophers for centuries. See for yourself what has been heralded as the most picturesque lake in Europe as you cruise Lake Como by boat. Behold the whimsical towns that dot the placid waterway and you'll understand why Hungarian composer Franz Liszt said it was the perfect setting for a love story. Then, continue your Italian discoveries in Verona, a city immortalized by Shakespeare in Romeo and Juliet. Follow medieval streets, admire elegant Palladian architecture, and raise a glass to your discoveries during a grappa tasting.

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Afternoon/Evening: Depart today on your flight to Milan, Italy.

Day 2 Milan, Italy • Lake Como

- Destination: Lake Como
- Accommodations: Hotel Due Corti

Morning: Arrive in Milan this morning and transfer to Lake Como to check into your hotel. After settling in, gather for a orientation walk with your Trip Experience Leader followed by a Welcome Drink.

Lunch: On your own—your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to recommend a local spot.

Afternoon: Yours to explore Lake Como as you please.

Dinner: On your own this evening. Perhaps you'll ask your Trip Experience Leader where you can find fresh pasta, an Italian staple that is particularly enjoyed in this region.

Evening: Continue making independent discoveries this evening, or relax at your hotel.

Day 3 Lake Como

- Destination: Lake Como
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Due Corti

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Enjoy a walking tour of the city of Como with a local guide. You'll marvel at the impressive architecture of buildings like the Duomo and stroll through public gardens.

Lunch: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations.

Afternoon: The rest of the afternoon is yours to explore at your own pace—your Trip Experience Leader can offer suggestions.

Dinner: Join your fellow travelers for a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish.

Day 4 Lake Como • Explore Bellagio

- Destination: Lake Como
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Hotel Due Corti or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After some leisure time in Como, you'll head to Bellagio, justifiably called the "Pearl of the Lake," and the lakeside retreat for generations of well-to-do Italians and international jetsetters (such as George Clooney). Climb aboard a fast ferry to Lake Como's southwestern fork. Verdant, steep mountains plunge into the water on all sides, and many luxurious villas dot the lake shore. Upon arrival in Bellagio, take an orientation walk to get to know the laid-back atmosphere of this beautiful town with its numerous churches and lakeside walking paths.

Lunch: On your own—perhaps you'll seek out the popular dish, *polenta uncia* (cornmeal layered with butter and cheese).

Afternoon: Free for your own discoveries—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. Then take to the sparkling waters of Lake Como aboard the fast ferry again for your return to the town of Como.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can provide suggestions.

Evening: Make any last minute discoveries in this region, or rest at your hotel before your flight home.

Day 5 Explore Bergamo • Overland to Verona

- Destination: Verona
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Accademia Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Travel overland to the famed city of Verona. Along the way, we'll stop in Bergamo, a town in the Lombardy region rich with art and architecture, and home of the *Commedia dell'Arte* theatrical tradition as well as the famed artist Donizetti. Once the outpost of Venice in the Italian mainland, Bergamo is one of the most beautiful and better preserved towns in all of northern Italy. Set off on a walking tour through the upper part of the city, set high on a hillside.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Bergamo.

Afternoon: Continue on to Verona, arriving in time for a brief orientation walk. Then, check into your hotel and settle in.

Dinner: Dinner is on your own this evening. Perhaps you'll try a restaurant that your Trip Experience Leader pointed out during the orientation walk.

Evening: You're free to explore Verona on your own this evening, or rest at your hotel.

Day 6 Explore Verona

- Destination: Verona
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Accademia Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Discover the city Shakespeare immortalized in the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet*. During an included walking tour, explore Verona's Renaissance touches, behold Juliet's iconic balcony, and step even further back into history, witnessing the first-century amphitheater and visiting the sweeping, Roman-era Piazza delle Erbe.

Lunch: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for local restaurant recommendations.

Afternoon: Free for your own discoveries. Perhaps you'll stroll the arched, 14th-century Castelvechio Bridge to the medieval castle of the same name. Or take in the Gothic splendor of the Scaliger Tombs, a cluster of five family burial crypts.

Dinner: On your own this evening. Ask your Trip Experience Leader where you can enjoy handmade pasta.

Evening: Explore Verona as you please this evening. Perhaps you'll return to the Piazza delle Erbe, which is illuminated at night.

Day 7 Verona • Optional Sirmione tour

- Destination: Verona
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Accademia Hotel or similar

Activity Note: Grotte di Catullo and Castello Scaligero are closed to the public on Mondays.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Free for your own discoveries—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations. Or, join us on an optional tour to Sirmione, a picturesque resort town situated at the tip of a peninsula in Lake Garda. Sirmione is known not only for its breathtaking natural beauty, but also for its two prominent historical sites, Grotte di Catullo (the ruins of a

Roman village) and Castello Scaligero (Scaligero Castle). You'll have the opportunity to explore both before free time to explore on your own.

Lunch: On your own. If you opted to join the optional tour, you'll enjoy lunch at a local restaurant.

Afternoon: This afternoon is free for you to make your own discoveries in Verona.

Dinner: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader where you can find a good *risotto al tastasal* (risotto with sausage).

Evening: Continue to explore Verona this evening, or mingle with your fellow travelers at the hotel bar.

Day 8 Bassano del Grappa • Arrive Venice • Join main trip

- Destination: Venice
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Travel to Venice by way of Bassano del Grappa, a northern Italian city named for the creator of this region's famous after-dinner drink. Upon arrival, your Trip Experience Leader will lead you on a discovery walk, which includes crossing the Ponte Vecchio (Old Bridge). It was first built by architect Andrea Palladio in 1569 to span the Brenta River. You'll also learn about Alpine military life when you visit the museum of the elite Alpine Mountain Division, the world's oldest mountain infantry unit.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Head to a nearby grappa bar to sample the beverage for which the city is so well-known.

After, you'll continue on to Venice, arriving in time for a brief orientation walk. Then, check into your hotel and settle in.

Dinner: Dinner is on your own this evening. Perhaps you'll try a restaurant that your Trip Experience Leader pointed out during the orientation walk.

Evening: You're free to explore Venice on your own this evening, or rest at your hotel.

OPTIONAL TOUR

Sirmione

(Day 7 \$210 per person)

Sirmione is an idyllic resort town situated at the tip of a peninsula on the Southern bank of Lake Garda. However, when you gaze beyond its sparkling, transparent shoreline, you'll immediately see what sets it apart from other Italian vacation spots: a massive medieval castle overlooking the lake and a rich history to go with it.

Your tour begins on foot with a visit to the Grotte di Catullo, the ancient ruins of a Roman village. The well-preserved stone remains were erected at the beginning of the first-century AD and are set against the breathtaking backdrop of azure waters and towering mountain ranges in the distance. From there, you'll depart to explore the Castello Scaligero, the towering fortress from the Scaliger era. This site is one of Italy's most complete remaining castles.

After lunch in a local restaurant, you'll have free time for shopping or further exploring the historical center with your Trip Experience Leader before departing back to Verona.

POST-TRIP

Slovenia & Austria: Lake Bled to Salzburg

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- | | |
|---|--|
| » 7 nights accommodation | » Services of our local Trip Experience Leader |
| » 13 meals: 8 breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 2 dinner | » Gratuities for local guides and motorcoach drivers |
| » 9 guided tours and cultural experiences | » All transfers |

POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Day 1 Zagreb • Explore Ljubljana • Transfer to Lake Bled

- Destination: Lake Bled
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel in Lake Bled

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Set out for Lake Bled, Slovenia, stopping along the way in Ljubljana, the capital city of Slovenia. You'll tour Ljubljana with a local guide, and get an insider's perspective on what life is like in this Slovenian city.

Once a stronghold of the Habsburgs from the Middle Ages into the early 20th century, Ljubljana is steeped in historic architecture, such as the ornate and storied Dragon Bridge, depicted on the city's iconic coat of arms.

Lunch: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Afternoon: After lunch, you'll have time in Ljubljana to make your own discoveries. Then, we'll set out for the shores of Lake Bled, where we'll check in to our hotel and settle in. You

have the option to join your Trip Experience Leader on an orientation walk around the vicinity of the hotel.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: This evening, you're free to make your own discoveries. Perhaps you'll ask your Trip Experience Leader where you might find the local favorite, *kremšnita*, a vanilla and crème pastry.

Day 2 Lake Bled • Pletna boat ride • Explore Bled Island

- Destination: Lake Bled
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Hotel in Lake Bled

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Set out with your Trip Experience Leader to explore the banks of Lake Bled, where you can take in the sight of Bled Castle, nestled high above the town on a cliff. You'll also be able to see Bled Island and its iconic church across the placid blue waters of the lake.

After taking in the view, you'll board a traditional *pletna* boat, and make your way across the lake to the island. Handcrafted by locals, these flat-bottomed, gondola-style boats have been traversing these waters since 1590. For many of the local boat captains, this job has been passed down through the family for generations.

We'll disembark the boat and explore the island, including the Church of the Assumption, before boarding the *pletna* once more to head back to shore.

Lunch: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Afternoon: You are free to make your own discoveries in the charming, picturesque town of Bled.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: Continue your own explorations of Bled, or perhaps retire to the hotel for a nightcap and some relaxation before tomorrow's discoveries.

Day 3 Lake Bled • Explore Lake Bohinj Lake • Cheese and butter making experience

- Destination: Lake Bled
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Lake Bled

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Drive to the biggest natural lake in Slovenia this morning, Lake Bohinj. Glacier-fed and situated high in the Julian Alps, Lake Bohinj is over two-and-a-half miles long and half a mile wide.

We'll take in the natural beauty of the area, a blend of glittering waters, dense forests, and rugged mountains, before walking to the bridge in the nearby town of Stara Fužina. There,

we'll board a cable car and head up into the mountains where, weather permitting, we'll be able to see the stunning landscape of the Julian Alps before us.

After we return to Stara Fužina, we'll drive to a local dairy farm for a hands-on cheese and butter making experience.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll return to our hotel in Lake Bled. The rest of the afternoon is yours to explore as you wish.

Dinner: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for suggestions.

Evening: You are free for the remainder of the evening to make your own discoveries.

Day 4 Lake Bled • Explore Villach, Austria • Salzburg

- Destination: Salzburg
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel in Lake Bled

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel and drive towards Salzburg, Austria, stopping along the way in the alpine city of Villach. Believed to have been settled in the Neolithic era, Villach was supposedly purchased by the Habsburg dynasty shortly after the Middle Ages. It was then occupied by French troops during the Napoleonic Wars, under the despotic regime of the Nazis during WWII. During our time here, we'll explore this historic city on a tour led by our Trip Experience Leader before having an opportunity to explore on our own.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Villach.

Afternoon: Drive to Salzburg, or “Salt Castle” as it’s known in German, the fourth largest city in Austria. We’ll have time to settle into our hotel before embarking on an orientation walk led by our Trip Experience Leader.

Dinner: On your own in Salzburg. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Evening: Free to explore. Salzburg is home to a lively bunch of pubs, each of which offer a unique selection of beer, wine, and spirits.

Day 5 Explore Salzburg • Mozartkugel chocolate experience

- Destination: Salzburg
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Sheraton Salzburg Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Set out with a local guide on a walking tour of Salzburg, a city reminiscent of a more romantic era. You’ll discover sights like one of the largest fortresses in Europe, Hohensalzburg, as well as the bustling and historic street of Getreidegasse. Film buffs will want to keep an eye out for locations used in *The Sound of Music*.

After working up an appetite, we’ll head to a local *mozartkugel*, a type of confectionary famous in the region. They specialize in chocolates, and we’ll get to sample some as we learn how these sweet treats are made.

Lunch: On your own. Ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Afternoon: The afternoon is yours to explore Salzburg as you wish.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: You are free for the remainder of the evening to make your own discoveries.

Day 6 Salzburg • Optional Bad Dürrenberg Salt Mines & Keltendorf village tour

- Destination: Salzburg
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Sheraton Salzburg Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today is yours to make your own discoveries. Or, you can choose to take an optional Bad Dürrenberg Salt Mines tour to discover how Salzburg got the name, “Salt Castle.” Four thousand years ago, the Celtic tribes that inhabited the region dug into the earth to excavate salt, and since then, salt mines have been a cornerstone of the economy here.

On the optional tour, we’ll drive to the village of Bad Dürrenberg to explore the salt mines, hopping aboard mine trains to discover the source of this “white gold.”

Then, we’ll head to the recreation of a Celtic village, called Keltendorf, to see how people lived in ancient times.

Lunch: On your own for those travelers who do not join the optional tour. Those on the optional tour will sit down for lunch at a local restaurant in Keltendorf.

Afternoon: Upon returning to Salzburg, the afternoon is yours to explore independently. Those on the optional tour will return before dinner.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: You are free for the remainder of the evening to make your own discoveries.

Day 7 Salzburg • Explore Hallstatt

- Destination: Salzburg
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Sheraton Salzburg Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Set out for the small, alpine village of Hallstatt. Home to fewer than 800 people and nestled within a snowcapped mountain range, Hallstatt is quintessentially Austrian, and it's no surprise that it was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We'll explore Hallstatt on a walking tour led by our Trip Experience Leader, including a stop at the world-famous "bone house" inside St. Michael's Chapel. This unique display houses over 600 human skulls, artistically painted according to regional custom.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Hallstatt.

Afternoon: The afternoon is yours to do with as you wish. Perhaps you'll head out into Salzburg for one last shopping trip.

Dinner: Tonight, gather with your fellow travelers for a Farewell Dinner, and toast to the memories of your many adventures in Slovenia and Austria.

Evening: Join your fellow travelers to toast one last time during a Farewell Drink.

Day 8 Salzburg • Return to U.S.

- Destination: Salzburg
- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Transfer to the airport in Salzburg this morning for your flight home.

OPTIONAL TOUR

Bad Dürrnberg Salt Mines & Keltendorf village tour

(Day 6 \$200 per person)

Set out on an optional Bad Dürrnberg Salt Mines tour to discover how Salzburg got the name "Salt Castle." 4,000 years ago, the Celtic tribes that inhabited the region dug into the earth to excavate salt, and since then salt mines have been a cornerstone of the economy here. On the optional tour, we'll drive to the village of Bad Dürrnberg to explore the salt mines there, hopping aboard mine trains to discover the source of this "white gold." Then, we'll head to the recreation of a Celtic village, called Keltendorf, to see how people lived in ancient times.

YOUR MEDITERRANEAN SMALL SHIP

Small Ship Adventures aboard our privately owned, award-winning, 50-passenger small ships

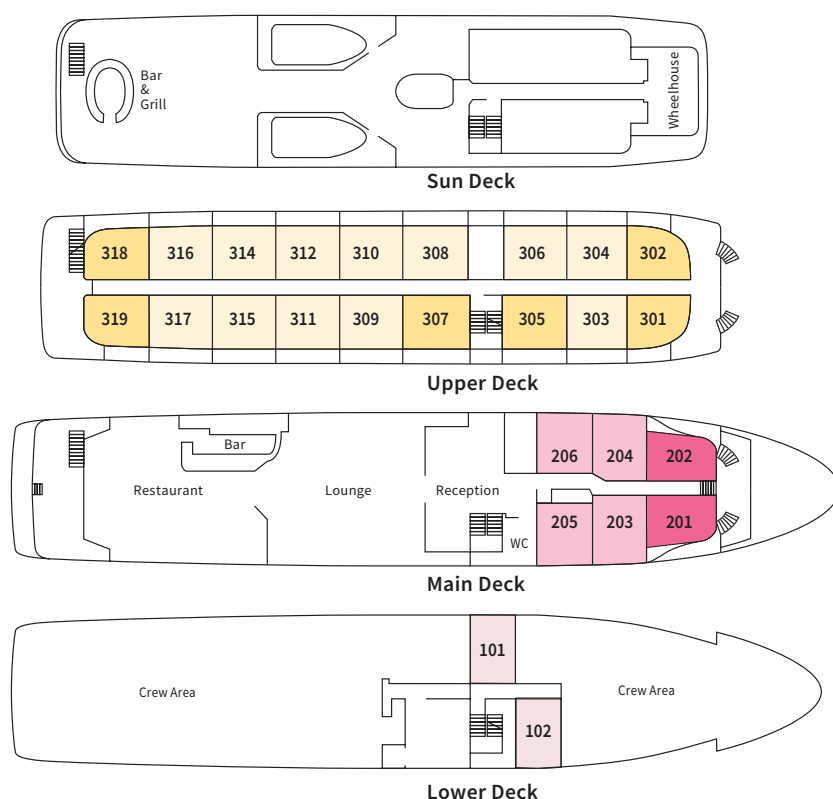
During your travels in the Mediterranean—including the Aegean and Adriatic seas and French and Italian Rivas—you'll be cruising aboard one of our 50-passenger small ships, rated excellent by 96% of travelers. The M/V *Athena*, M/V *Artemis*, and M/V *Arethusa* were designed and built to carry just two groups of 20–25 (average of 22) travelers, each with its own local Trip Experience Leader. These ships are the perfect size to navigate the islands and shores of the Mediterranean—and then slip into the smaller ports and harbors for the night, well away from the larger cruise ships.



SHIPBOARD FEATURES

- **Restaurant with single, open seating:** Savor regionally-inspired dishes or American favorites during all meals.
- **Comfortable lounge:** Relax with old friends and new, and participate in onboard discussions and lectures.
- **Complimentary beverages:** Enjoy house beer and house wine—as well as soft drinks—at any time of day while onboard.
- **Wireless Internet access:** Connect online in cabins and common areas. **Please note:** Connectivity may be limited at certain points throughout your cruise.
- **Outdoor common areas:** Relish coastal views from your seat on the Sun Deck—perhaps with a cocktail from the outdoor bar.
- **English-speaking crew:** Enjoy dedicated attention from our international staff throughout your voyage. Plus, all shipboard announcements are made in English for your convenience.

MEDITERRANEAN SMALL SHIPS



CABIN CATEGORIES

	A	Cabin with private balcony – 150-170 sq. ft.
	B	Cabin with private balcony – 150-170 sq. ft.
	C	Cabin with portholes – 160 sq. ft.
	D	Cabin with portholes – 160 sq. ft.
	S	Single cabin with portholes – 140 sq. ft.

Registry: Malta

Length: 193 ft.

Beam: 35 ft.

Draft: 10 ft.

Cabin Size: 150-170 sq. ft., with 2 single cabins of 140 sq. ft.

Number of Cabins: 26

Passenger Capacity: 50

Built: 2007

International crew: 21

Passenger Decks: 3

Group Size: 25 travelers, maximum, with 1 Trip Experience Leader

Stairs, no elevator

This ship complies with the latest international and U.S. Coast Guard safety regulations and is outfitted with the most current navigational and communications technology. It has retractable fin stabilizers to help reduce discomfort during rough seas.

CABIN FEATURES

- 24 double-occupancy cabins from 150–170 sq. ft.; 2 single-occupancy cabins at 140 sq. ft.
- All outside-facing with either portholes or a balcony
- Two single beds (convertible to one full); one single bed in single-occupancy cabins
- Wireless Internet access, closet, bed-side tables with lamps, desk with mirror, flat-screen TV, telephone, safe, mini-refrigerator, individually controlled air-conditioning, and dual electrical outlets
- Private bath with shower, hair dryer, and toiletries



Cabin on the Upper Deck of the M/V Athena

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** You will need 4 blank passport pages.
- **Optional extension to Verona:** No additional blank pages are needed.
- **Optional extension to Slovenia and Austria:** No additional blank pages are needed.

Visa Required

We’ll be sending you information with detailed instructions, application forms, and fees about 100 days prior to your departure. In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. This info is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.

- **Europe (Italy, Croatia, Slovenia, Austria):** Starting in 2025, U.S. citizens will be required to fill out an online European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) visa-waiver to enter countries in the European Union. There is no confirmed start date for the ETIAS at the time of printing. The ETIAS will be valid for 3 years.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency).

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

GROUP SIZE

- This adventure has a maximum group size of 25 travelers with a local Trip Experience Leader exclusive to O.A.T.

PACING

- 16 days, with one 3-night hotel stay, one 2-night hotel stay (Zagreb) and 10 nights aboard the *M/V Artemis*

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Walk 3–5 miles unassisted and participate in 6–8 hours of physical activities each day, including stairs
- Good agility, balance, and strength needed for boarding motorboats and possible rough seas
- Not accessible for travelers using wheelchairs or scooters
- Travelers using walkers, crutches, or other mobility aids will not be able to board the *Artemis*
- The *Artemis* does not have an elevator onboard
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe, however animals may behave unpredictably or dangerously at times. Please use caution when interacting with animals on this trip: Keep a safe distance, stay alert, and respect the animals

TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Uneven walking surfaces, including unpaved paths, hills, stairs, and cobblestones, which can be slick in wet or colder conditions
- Travel by 50-passenger small ship, 30-seat coach, 12-passenger motorboat, and 80- to 120-passenger public ferry

CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures range from 32–68°F during cruising season
- Winter weather can be unpredictable and change quickly within a short period of time
- You may encounter high water levels in Venice and sharp winds in the Adriatic
- Bora winds may occur and can reach gale-force speed

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at **www.cdc.gov/travel** or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

No Vaccines Required

Recommended Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

Medications for This Trip

When you visit your doctor, we suggest that you get a prescription for an antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness. Our local staff do not carry prescription medications of any kind, and a written prescription is required to obtain an antibiotic in Europe.

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to “Find International Travel Information”, select “Country Information”, then enter the country into the search bar; if you don't see any medications specifically mentioned under the “Health” section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

- Tap water aboard ship and in the countries you visit is perfectly safe for drinking.
- Bottled water is usually for sale in hotels, cafés, food shops, and restaurants.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's more practical to view them as a last resort in the event of a special situation.
- **You will not be able to pay with U.S. dollars on this trip.**

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Euro Countries: European Euro (€)

How to Exchange Money

If you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets. Or you can wait and change money on the trip instead—but it might be helpful to arrive with some local currency in case you run into a bank holiday or an “out of order” ATM.

On your trip, the easiest way is to withdraw funds from a local ATM. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars.

You can also exchange cash at some hotels, large post offices, and money exchange offices. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2014) are best.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card. Many banks will charge a set fee or a percentage fee each time you use a foreign ATM. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart. Don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM. If you are visiting a country that has different expectation for ATMs, they will be listed below.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. We suggest that you bring one or two, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, as not all are accepted around the world. If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Italy: Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Italy. Occasionally a small “Mom and Pop” restaurant will be cash only, and street vendors or taxis usually are cash only, but most other businesses will take cards.

Austria: Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Austria. For small purchases or markets, you may need cash instead.

ilb

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don’t assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don’t work outside of the U.S.!

On Board Ship: Two Separate Bills Will be Issued

- **Shipboard account:** This bill is for any on board purchases (drinks, souvenirs, etc.) and is calculated in Euros. This bill is payable at the front desk by cash or credit/debit card only. For cash, we accept only Euros. For credit/debit cards, we accept MasterCard and Visa. Other forms of payment, such as checks, Discover, and American Express are not accepted.
- **Optional tour account:** This bill is for any optional tours taken during the trip and is calculated in U.S. dollars. This bill is paid with your Trip Experience Leader (they will have you fill out a form) by credit/debit card only; other forms of payments such as cash and checks are not accepted. For more information on optional tours—including which cards we accept for payment—see the “Preparing for Your Trip” chapter.

Please note: *Payments made by credit card may take up to three months to process. We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, the charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as “OPT Boston” (depending on your credit card company).*

Exchange Services

Due to international banking laws, we are not able to exchange money onboard the ship. If you need to obtain local currency, please see the “How to Exchange Money” section for helpful tips and information.

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Shipboard Crew:** We recommend a flat tip of \$16–\$18 U.S. per traveler, per day. You’ll give this tip once—at the end of your cruise—and it will be pooled among the entire crew. **Policy Update:** *Due to international banking laws, we are no longer able to process crew tips on a credit card; crew tips can only be in the form of cash.*
- **Housekeeping Staff at Hotels:** We recommend \$1–\$2 per traveler, per day. (This is for hotels only; on the ship Housekeeping are part of crew, so you don’t need to tip them separately.)
- **Included in Your Trip Price:** Gratuities are included for local guides, motorcoach drivers, hotel porters, and restaurant staff (during included meals) on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours

Time at Leisure

When you are exploring on your own, it’s useful to know when to tip and how much, because local customs often differ from the U.S. Here are a few helpful guidelines for the most common services a traveler might use:

- **Taxis:** Tipping is not customary, but many locals will round up the fare and let the driver keep the change. If the driver helps you with heavy luggage, then 10% is a nice gesture.
- **Restaurants, cafes, and bars:** In Croatia, the tip for the waiter or bartender is usually included in the prices or added on as a service fee. Look for a statement on the menu that service is included, or for a service charge on the bill. If you would like to leave a tip on top of the service fee (or in the cases when the service is not included) then 10% would be considered generous. In Italy you may see servizio incluso and coperto on the bill which refers to a cover charge for use of the table, not an included tip for the server. It is customary to leave a tip of 5% to 10% for the server, depending on the quality of service. A tip of 5% can be appropriate in a café or a family-run trattoria, while 10% is more suitable at a restaurant.

- **Public Restrooms:** Most public restrooms in Europe have attendants that take care of cleaning and supplies. It is customary to leave a small tip for them in local currency—so hold on to those coins! Some restrooms are pay-toilets; you pay the staff at the entrance to the restroom or drop the appropriate coin into the slot on the stall door. Many restaurants, cafes, and shops offer only pay-toilets or reserve their restrooms for patrons only. Public restrooms in Venice can be expensive so be prepared to pay 1.50 euros per person or more.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Customized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Customization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Customization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our customization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Customization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45-30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

Arrival in Italy: On the base tour, please keep in mind that you will take a short shuttle ride to a motorboat which will bring you to your hotel in Venice. In cases of high water, the motorboat may not be able to stop directly in front of the hotel, in which case it will land as close as possible and porters will come to meet the boat to assist with luggage.

Departure in Italy or Zagreb, Croatia: Upon disembarkation, you will travel by land directly to the airport for your return flights to the U.S.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Communicating with Home from Abroad

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone can accept one.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype, FaceTime, or WhatsApp. We recommend you use WhatsApp to communicate with home while abroad and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as Skype or FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan's data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.).

One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

Italy: +39

Slovenia: +386

Croatia: +385

Austria: +43

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person.
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The current standard is 50 lbs for checked bags and 15 lbs for carry-on bags.
Size Restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (length+width+depth). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches.
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
Same as the main trip.	
REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS	
One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person: Due to the space limitations on bus transfers, you'll be restricted to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional airlines luggage fees (which are your responsibility). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person for flights to Europe and other international flights. Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.	

Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.

- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.

Checked Luggage

Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Due to space limitations on our motorcoaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Porterage at airports and hotels is provided for **one** bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags.

Carry-on Bag

You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.

Locks

For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

- **Travel light:** A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. To have a varied travel wardrobe, yet keep your luggage light, we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated clothing items that can be mixed to create different outfits. For more packing and luggage tips, you might want to visit www.travelite.org.
- **Consider clothing designed for travel, sports, or camping:** With modern fabrics, lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy.
- **Plan to dress in layers on shore excursions.** Be prepared for a variety of weather conditions.
- **Bring rain gear:** Regardless of your month of travel, rainfall is certainly a possibility. We suggest you bring a folding umbrella and waterproof shell. Water-resistant walking shoes are advantageous in case heavy downpours pass through.
- **Good walking shoes are critical.** This program features many included tours that follow steep, unpaved or cobbled routes; and even an average day of light sightseeing or shopping can put great demands on your feet. If you prefer more ankle support, take light hiking boots. In case you get caught in the rain, we suggest you bring an extra pair of walking shoes, and rain boots or galoshes. Aboard ship, you'll want non-slip shoes with rubber soles.

Style Hints

- **Pack casual clothes:** Comfortable, informal apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations. At dinner, you will not need to wear “dressy” clothing; men do not need jackets or ties and women do not need fancy dresses. You may want one or two “smart casual” outfits for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it’s completely up to you.
- **Dress modestly in churches or synagogues in Italy and Croatia:** Although casual clothing is acceptable in most situations, when we visit churches or synagogues we ask that you dress according to local traditions—with clothing that covers the knees and arms. During those visits, we recommend that men wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts. Women will feel comfortable in moderate-length loose skirts or loose fitting or flowing pants with long-sleeved tops, to cover their knees and arms. If women do wear short sleeves, they can cover their arms with a scarf.

Recommended Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. Each travelers packing list may be different depending on the climate you are used to. We recommend using www.weather.com and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don’t forget a reusable water bottle—you’ll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

Recommended Clothing

- ☐ Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- ☐ Trousers, jeans, or skirts
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes and/or water resistant shoes
- ☐ Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Socks and undergarments

Seasonal Clothing Recommendations

This trip does not run in the spring or summer.

For winter (December–February)

- ☐ For 95% of the trip, you’ll want long, warm jeans or trousers, and not shorts.

- ☐ You'll mostly want long-sleeved shirts, but might want a couple short sleeves for days on the coast.
- ☐ Snow is common this time of year, so factor that into your footwear choice.
- ☐ Warm outer gear is a must. This means a winter coat, hat, and gloves.
- ☐ Bring clothing you can layer (sweater, fleece, jacket, etc.); thermal or long underwear adds warmth without bulk and doesn't take up much room in your luggage.
- ☐ Waterproof footwear: Venice can experience high water during the winter months. You may also have an opportunity to purchase appropriate footwear on-site with the help of your Trip Experience Leader.

For fall (October–November)

- ☐ As the season progresses, you'll want to lean more towards long sleeves and long trousers, but still keep a few lighter things for the coastal part, where it could still be warm.
- ☐ Snow can occur as early as late October in the central part of Croatia, so factor that into your footwear choice.
- ☐ Layers (sweater, fleece, jacket, etc.) are key for this season, so you can adjust to the varied weather. As the season progresses, the more warm layers become useful.
- ☐ November is a transitional month into winter.

Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription
- ☐ Sunglasses with a neck strap
- ☐ Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger
- ☐ Travel money bag or money belt
- ☐ Moisturizer, lip balm
- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor
- ☐ Pocket-size tissues
- ☐ Moist towelettes (packets) and/or anti-bacterial hand lotion

- ☐ Light folding umbrella
- ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards
- ☐ Camera, spare batteries, and memory cards
- ☐ Hand sanitizer: Sanitizer is available onboard, but you may want to bring your own for excursions

Medicines

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Vitamins
- ☐ Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan
- ☐ Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin
- ☐ Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax
- ☐ Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta
- ☐ Anti-diarrheal: Imodium
- ☐ Band-Aids, Moleskin foot pads
- ☐ Antibiotics: Neosporin/Bacitracin

Home-Hosted Visits

It is customary, though not necessary, to return your hosts' generosity with a small gift. If you do bring a gift, we recommend that you bring something the whole family can enjoy, or something that represents your region, state, or hometown. Get creative and keep it small—peach jelly from Georgia, maple sugar candy from New England, orange blossom soap from California; something that can be used or used up is best. When choosing a gift, be certain to consider the local culture as well. For example, we do not recommend alcohol in Muslim countries because it is forbidden in Islam, and your hosts may be religious. Not all of our adventures include a home-hosted visit; please check your final itinerary before you depart.

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

Electricity at hotels in Italy and Croatia is 220–240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V 50/60Hz service will ruin the motor. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Aboard the ship, cabins are equipped with both 110-volt and 220-volt outlets.

Plugs

Aboard ship, there are both standard American plugs and Western European Type C plugs.

In hotels, the shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you’ll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because you’ll be visiting multiple countries on this trip, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

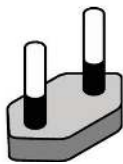
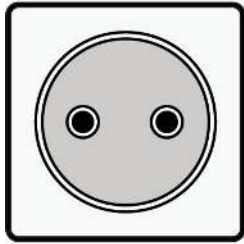
Italy: C, L, or F

Croatia: C and/or F

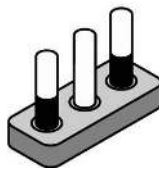
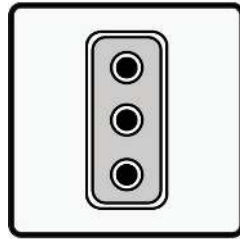
Slovenia: C and/or F

Austria: C and/or F

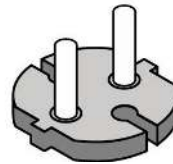
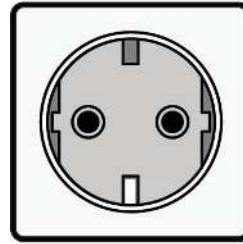
Type C



Type L



Type F



CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

Venice, Italy: Venice is situated in the flat, low-lying plains of northern Italy, where the climate features year-round rain and sunshine, hot summers, and surprisingly cold temperatures during the three winter months. Fog, frost, and snow are frequent in midwinter. Thunderstorms can pass through in autumn and spring, though they are the exception and not the rule. While “off-season” travel may involve stints of inclement weather, it rewards you with the chance to explore Venice’s museums, piazzas, and canals at a time when they are wonderfully free of the summer tourist crowds.

Zagreb, Croatia: Because it is located further north and inland, Zagreb has a continental climate. Winters can be cold, sometimes snowy, autumn can be rainy and changeable, and spring can be very unpredictable. In late fall, winter, and early spring, it will get noticeably cooler in Zagreb than it does along the Adriatic seacoast.

Lake Como, Italy: Lake Como has a relatively mild climate with tropical and sub-tropical plants growing all year round. Some people even compare its climate to that of the Mediterranean region. In January the average daily temperature is about 36° and in July the average is 90°. This region tends to experience unpredictable snowfall, but it is most common in the areas of higher elevation.

Slovenia: Slovenia has a Mediterranean climate. However, it can be quite cold in winter. Rain can come at any time and with it the temperature can drop dramatically. Water temperatures are warm enough for swimming June–September, but are too cold the rest of the year.

Salzburg, Austria: The climate in Salzburg is subtropical. Autumn and winter typically exhibit fog but not too many thunderstorms. In summer the temperatures are moderate and in winter they are mild, though the winter winds tend to be quite strong. On average, the warmest month of the year is July (66°) and the coolest month is January (31°).

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **www.weather.com** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	VENICE, ITALY			TRIESTE, ITALY		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity	Average # of Days with Rainfall	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	60 to 32	81	6	45 to 38	70 to 66	7.8
FEB	65 to 33	77	5	48 to 39	67 to 60	7.2
MAR	70 to 40	75	6	54 to 44	68 to 60	7.8
APR	81 to 48	75	8	62 to 50	69 to 59	8.5
MAY	95 to 63	73	6	71 to 57	71 to 59	8.7
JUN	100 to 75	74	9	78 to 64	71 to 59	9.3
JUL	108 to 80	71	6	83 to 68	68 to 57	6.5
AUG	108 to 80	72	6	81 to 67	66 to 57	7.3
SEP	100 to 75	75	6	75 to 62	71 to 60	7.1
OCT	81 to 51	77	7	65 to 55	72 to 63	7.9
NOV	65 to 42	79	6	54 to 46	69 to 64	9.1
DEC	60 to 33	81	6	47 to 40	70 to 66	8.4

MONTH	ROVINJ, CROATIA			ZAGREB, CROATIA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Average # of Days with Rainfall	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	50 to 41	77	6	37 to 27	--	2.0
FEB	50 to 41	76	4	46 to 30	--	1.9
MAR	54 to 45	76	4	56 to 36	--	2.2
APR	59 to 50	77	7	58 to 39	--	2.7
MAY	68 to 59	76	5	67 to 50	--	3.2
JUN	77 to 66	72	4	73 to 56	--	3.7
JUL	81 to 70	70	2	81 to 60	--	3.1
AUG	81 to 70	71	3	81 to 59	--	3.1
SEP	73 to 63	72	4	71 to 51	--	3.1
OCT	68 to 57	77	5	59 to 44	--	3.7
NOV	59 to 50	75	8	46 to 35	--	3.4
DEC	52 to 45	77	7	39 to 30	--	2.6

MONTH	LAKE COMO, ITALY			BLED, SLOVENIA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	46 to 30	--	2.6	39 to 27	--	15
FEB	50 to 31	--	1.8	48 to 27	--	7
MAR	58 to 37	--	2.4	52 to 34	--	17
APR	62 to 43	--	5.8	61 to 39	--	18
MAY	71 to 52	--	6.5	70 to 46	--	17
JUN	78 to 58	--	7.1	75 to 54	--	14
JUL	108 to 80	--	5.9	79 to 55	--	12
AUG	108 to 80	--	5.9	79 to 55	--	13
SEP	72 to 54	--	6.7	68 to 48	--	14
OCT	63 to 47	--	5.7	59 to 45	--	14
NOV	53 to 37	--	5.6	46 to 34	--	11
DEC	46 to 31	--	2.9	37 to 28	--	14

MONTH	SALZBURG, AUSTRIA		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	38 to 25	86 to 74	2.8
FEB	42 to 27	86 to 66	2.5
MAR	51 to 33	84 to 58	2.6
APR	58 to 39	82 to 55	3.7
MAY	68 to 47	79 to 53	5.1
JUN	72 to 53	80 to 56	6.8
JUL	76 to 56	81 to 55	7.9
AUG	76 to 56	84 to 56	6.9
SEP	68 to 50	87 to 59	5.2
OCT	59 to 42	87 to 63	3.5
NOV	46 to 33	87 to 71	2.9
DEC	39 to 28	86 to 75	2.8

ABOARD YOUR SHIP: CABIN FEATURES, DINING & SERVICES ON BOARD

M/V Athena, M/V Artemis & M/V Arethusa

Owned, operated, and staffed by us, these ships were designed exclusively for our travelers, and each features a similar layout. On the main deck, you'll find our reception area and the ship's library. For relaxation, the lounge/bar features inviting leather couches and soft chairs. Topside, a sun deck has classic wooden deck chairs for admiring the scenery. When it's time for meals, our large dining area at the stern features a single seating policy. While cruising, we'll enjoy daily breakfast and lunch buffets; sit-down dinners feature international and local specialties paired with regional wines.

Included features of your Small Ship

The Ship:

- Restaurant with single open seating
- Open Sun Deck for prime viewing
- Shipboard activities
- Smoke-free environment
- All shipboard announcements made in English
- Ice machine in the lobby
- Water fountains in the lobby

All Cabins:

- All outside cabins
- Layout of 150-163 square feet (24 doubles) and 120-135 square feet (2 singles)
- Private bath with shower, hair dryer
- Color TV with movies, and a bow camera for ship-front views
- Ample closet and dresser space
- Direct-dial telephone

An important word: While our ship features larger-than-usual cabins, please keep in mind that this ship is a coastal vessel, not large ocean cruise ships. Coastal cabins, in comparison, are relatively small, and ship amenities, in general, are comfortable but not lavish.

Cabin Assignments

You will receive confirmation of your deck and/or cabin category upfront in writing; it will be on your invoice and online in My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner. However, your cabin number may not be assigned until you arrive on board the ship. (This is normal procedure for ships in many parts of the world, including Europe.) If there's no cabin number on your invoice or online, you can presume it will be assigned later and communicated to you when you board.

Dining

You'll enjoy fine cuisine and excellent views in your ship's dining room, featuring a warm decor of dark woods, rich carpeting, and white-linen and china table settings. Your ship's daily service includes breakfast and lunch buffets, and a more formal dinner. Our professional chefs will create unique menus for you that feature regional specialties. Included with both lunch and dinner are complimentary drinks; you'll be able to choose from house wine, draft beer, or a selection of soft drinks. In addition, a selection of other fine wines and beer is available for purchase, starting at approximately \$20–30 per wine bottle (prices vary according to vintage). Travelers may also bring a bottle of their own favorite wine to dinner to enjoy at their table. Should you care to avail yourself of this service, there will be a corkage fee of approximately \$10 per bottle, charged to your cabin account.

Please note that if you bring your own alcohol aboard, it can only be consumed in the dining room as described above, or in your cabin. Consumption of alcohol purchased outside the ship is not permitted in the lounge or public areas. We also offer complimentary coffee and tea throughout the day, available in the lounge.

Open-table, single seating for all meals: Each meal is open seating—reservations of any kind are not accepted. Dinner has only one designated time for its open seating, announced each day aboard ship.

Dining times: Dining times for all meals may vary depending on the day's sightseeing and sailing schedule, but in general, meal times are as follows:

- Early riser breakfast: 7:00 –7:30 am
- Breakfast: 7:30–8:30 am
- Lunch: 1:00–2:00 pm
- Dinner: 7:00 pm

Special diets & celebrations: Special diets, such as low-cholesterol, vegetarian, or gluten-free, can be accommodated, as well as the recognition of an anniversary or birthday. Please call us to submit your request no later than 45 days prior to departure. Religious dietary regimens, such as kosher or halal meals, cannot be prepared aboard ship.

Dress code: The dining-room dress code is casual, though most travelers dress nicely for the Captain's Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner.

Non-smoking policy: The entire dining room is non-smoking at all times.

Embarkation/Disembarkation

On the day of disembarkation, your cabin will no longer be available after breakfast. You may sit in the ship's lounge or on the Sun Deck until disembarkation.

Headsets

During your trip, complimentary headsets (often called “whisper receivers”) will be provided on all of your included and optional tours, so that you can hear better over ambient noise. If you use a hearing aid or have a strong preference for a particular type of headphones, we highly encourage you to bring your own headphones/ear buds with you. The plug size is usually the same as that used by smartphones, computer jacks, etc. Headsets will also be available during the pre- and post-trip extensions, but not on the transfer day to/from the main trip.

Wireless Internet Access

Limited complimentary Wireless Internet service is available on board the ship. If you want to use the Wireless Internet connection you'll need to bring your own device (laptop/tablet/netbook) — ships do not rent or loan these devices. Shipboard access is subject to the challenges of travel: ship location, signal availability, and usage volume on board will affect connectivity and speed. The ship's Internet connection demands a strong cell phone signal, which is unavailable in many of the areas we visit, and connectivity can be limited. You can expect disruptions of both long and short duration. You may be able to take advantage of available shoreside Internet cafes, or hotel access if available.

Laundry and Linen Service

Laundry service is available for a fee. Please note that neither self-service laundry facilities nor dry cleaning services are available. Towels are changed daily, but only at your request. (We use the international signal that most green hotels have adopted — if you want a towel changed, leave it on the floor or in the shower. A towel on the rack or hung up indicates you'll reuse it.) Bed linens are not changed daily. Fresh bed linens are supplied at the start of every cruise, and if the cruise is longer than two weeks they will be changed every 14 days. For cruises less than two weeks long, you'll keep the same bed linens for the duration.

Medical Care

Our entire fleet adheres to stringent European safety standards. Ships feature fully staffed reception desks for most of the day (from 7:00 AM to 10 PM) and each cabin is equipped with an emergency call button available to alert the Captain.

On Board Activities

During your cruise you'll enjoy exclusive Discovery Series events, including group activities that relate to the region, theme dinners, organized discussions, and talks on upcoming ports of call.

Recreational Facilities

These include a sun deck, lounge, library, bar and dance floor. The bar is open from 9:30 am to 11 pm, and features both complimentary drinks (soft drinks, house beer, house wine, and non-alcoholic cocktails/beer) and drinks for purchase (spirits, alcoholic cocktails, bottled beers, and a selection of wines). Prices are in Euros.

Bicycles

We're pleased to offer complimentary bicycle rentals onboard your ship for use during free time, including all of the necessary safety gear, such as a helmet, brightly-colored safety vest, and a lock. Because there is a limited supply of bicycles available, they will be offered on a first-come first-served basis. For more information or if you are interested in using one of the bicycles, please speak to the Front Desk staff or Hotel Manager onboard your ship.

Telephone Services

To make telephone calls from the ship, you will be charged on your shipboard account on the last day of the cruise. Phone calls are directly from your cabin and through satellite, and are charged per minute without regard to whether or not it is a local, international or Calling Card based call. We advise you to use it only for an emergency, as this is a satellite connection and a very expensive service (for example, calls will cost about \$10.00 per minute).

Smoking/Non-Smoking Policy

All cabins are non-smoking. Smoking is permitted only outside on the sun deck. Smoking is not allowed anywhere else on the ship.

Shore Excursions

Included during your cruise are many sightseeing tours. Other optional tours are available for purchase. We will provide information on these optional excursions on your arrival. Please note that optional tours can only be purchased with a credit card or a debit card that doesn't require a pin.

Lost & Found

Any lost or forgotten items found on board the ship will be held for 90 days from disembarkation. After 90 days, all unclaimed items will be discarded or donated.

Ship Specifications

M/V Artemis

- **History:** Built in 2008
- **Size:** 193x35 ft
- **Capacity:** 50 passengers, 21 crew members

- **Layout:** 26 cabins, 3 decks; Elevator-no

M/V *Athena*

- **History:** Built in 2007
- **Size:** 193x35 ft
- **Capacity:** 50 passengers, 21 crew members
- **Layout:** 26 cabins, 3 decks; Elevator-no

M/V *Arethusa*

- **History:** Built in 2008
- **Size:** 193x35 ft
- **Capacity:** 50 passengers, 21 crew members
- **Layout:** 26 cabins, 3 decks; Elevator-no

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

Cultures of the Adriatic

Italian Culture

Encompassing landscapes as varied as the snow-capped Alps to the sunbaked vineyards of Sicily, it stands to reason that Italian culture varies widely by region. But there are certainly two cultural influences that Italians everywhere hold dearest to their hearts—food and family. Italians place a great importance on *la famiglia*, and extended family members gather regularly for meals and celebrations. Lots of businesses in Italy are both family owned and family run, especially the numerous trattorias and enotecas (wine bars). And never underestimate an Italian's love of food. Many recipes are passed down through generations and they are deeply proud of their cuisine. They take their time eating and several courses are served multi courses.

Religion also figures prominently in Italian culture. While officially a secular state, Italy is deeply rooted in Roman Catholic traditions. About 80% of Italians are practicing Catholics, and Roman Catholic traditions are also reflected in numerous national holidays based on religious feast days, along with regional festivals dedicated to local saints.

Italian culture also places much more importance on an individual's reputation, and the impression they leave on others—something they call *la bella figura*, or “good image.” Almost indefinable, it's not just a person's dress and physical appearance, but the overall aura one projects from their manners, confidence, style, and social skills. Maintaining dignity and a sense of honor is very important in Italian culture, even to those of modest means.

As one would expect, life is slower paced in rural Italy. In many of the smaller towns and villages dotting the countryside, residents gather to chat or shop for locally grown produce at weekly markets. And in the early afternoon, many shops and businesses still close for a few hours for *riposo*, a longstanding tradition similar to a Spanish siesta.

Visitors to Italy should avoid jokes about the Mafia, the Catholic Church, and the pope, especially in the presence of elderly Italians. And while you often hear Italians openly complain about their country or their politicians, they are still very proud of their patria (homeland) and Italy's cultural contributions to the world.

Croatian Culture

In a region of the world marked by chaotic history, with intertwining religions, languages, and ethnicities, Croatia has emerged with a vibrant and dynamic culture, with influences drawn from the Mediterranean, Europe, and even Asia.

Similar in some ways to their Italian neighbor across the Adriatic, family life and religion figure prominently in Croatian culture. Croatia has no official religion, but like Italy, it's primarily a Roman Catholic country, the religion of choice for almost 90% of Croatians. Family is also of utmost importance to Croatians, who form close relationships with members of their extended families and gladly take in = elderly parents if they are unable to live independently.

The many cultural influences that shaped Croatian culture is also reflected in the cuisine, which, because it varies so much between the interior and along the coast, is known as "the cuisine of regions." In central Croatia, the cuisine reveals Hungarian, Viennese, or Turkish influences, while the cuisine along coastal Croatia has Greek, Italian and even French influences.

Croats are extremely proud of their heritage and culture, referring to their country as "*Lijepa naša*," Our Beautiful Homeland. If Croatians place a surprisingly large importance on independence, it's because few nations fought so long and so hard for it as they did. Croatia's protests and demands for more autonomy went on for hundreds of years when they were part of the Habsburg Empire. They continued with the establishment of Yugoslavia after the First World War, and Croatia would be the first republic to formally declare independence from Yugoslavia in June 1991.

In general, discussions about the various ethnicities and nationalities of the former Yugoslavia states should be undertaken with caution. The conflict between Croatia and Serbia is an especially sensitive topic for most Croatians.

Religious Festivals in Italy

As a deeply Catholic country, Italy celebrates many religious festivals. But the two biggest are Christmas and Easter. Christmas is celebrated much as in the U.S. but with some key differences. For example, the unofficial start of the Christmas season is the Day of the Immaculate Conception (December 8) and the end is Epiphany (January 6); the focal point of decoration is usually an elaborate nativity scene rather than a Christmas tree; and the festive meal often features fish and seafood rather than a turkey, ham, or other meat. Special foods like panettone cake or certain pastas may also be served at this time of year. Also different from the U.S. is when presents are opened—depending on what part of Italy you are from, it could be on Saint Lucia's Day (December 13), Christmas Day (December 25), or Epiphany, when a good witch called *la befana* brings candy to children—but only if you were good last year.

The other big festival is Easter, which is on a lunar schedule, and thus changes dates each year (usually in March or April). The kick off for the Easter season is Lent, a six-week period of penitence when practicing Catholics "give up" something they enjoy as a way of showing devotion. Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, when many Italians will go to church to receive a cross made of ashes on their forehead, which they will then wear for the rest of the day.

Note that Carnival—which is meant to blow off steam before the seriousness—comes before Lent, but is not considered a religious festival. Instead it usually involves street parties, costumes, music, masks, eating, drinking, and crowds. (Venice in particular gets very crowded.)

Hotel Courtesy in Italy

Italian hotels do not allow food and beverages to be taken from their breakfast rooms, nor is it courteous to eat or drink food or beverages purchased elsewhere in hotel common rooms. In conformity with municipal laws to promote urban decorum, hotels do not allow hanging laundry on room balconies. Travel clotheslines, used in your bathroom, are a more private and effective solution.

Taking Photographs

When taking photos of people in most countries, be polite and ask permission to take a close-up. In many countries, you should not be taking photos of children or older women without permission. Do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

Please obey any signs regarding photos at museum or sites; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room – use a room safe as needed. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt.

Italian Cuisine

Italy may have been unified as a nation in 1861, but its cuisine is another story—and a glorious one at that. Here, gastronomy has always been a matter of regionalism and seasonality. The country is divided up into 20 distinct regions, each with its own specialties. The good news is that there is certainly culinary overlap, and since Italians are famously passionate about food, you can enjoy many beloved regional dishes all over Italy.

The structure of a typical Italian meal is designed to stimulate your appetite, and promote moderation—along with variety. So it will begin with dishes like the following:

- **Aperitivo:** A glass of sparkling prosecco or spumante white wine.
- **Antipasto all'Italiana:** Raw vegetables served with various cheeses and salami
- **Fritto Misto:** A lightly fried seafood mix, usually with calamari, shrimp, and fish such as sardines or anchovies.
- **Crostini:** Chicken liver pate or fresh cut tomatoes served on a thin piece of toasted bread

- **Caprese Salad:** Thick slices of tomato and mozzarella flavored with fresh basil leaves, olive oil.

The first course, called Primo, comes next. Here is where you may enjoy your carbohydrates with a small dish such as:

- **Tagliatelle al Tartufo:** Long ribbons of delicate tagliatelle pasta, swirled with warm melted butter, garlic, and decadently topped with black truffle shavings and parmesan cheese
- **Ribollita:** A bean and kale soup served with toasted bread. On the second day, the soup is cooked again in a pan with olive oil, hence the meaning “boiled twice”.
- **Gnocchi alla Sorrentina:** Potato gnocchi baked in a rich and delicious tomato sauce with bubbling mozzarella cheese and fresh basil.

The main course is called Il secondo. This is usually a small, simply prepared dish of chicken, meat, or fish including:

- **Bistecca alla Fiorentina:** A T-Bone steak from a local breed of cow, the Chianina cattle
- **Lampredotto:** A panino stuffed with the fourth stomach of a cow and soaked in broth, with salsa Verde and black pepper from Florence
- **Polpette:** Savory and seasoned Italian meatballs.

Your meal will conclude with a Dolce (sweet) such as:

- **Tiramisu:** A layered confection of sponge cake, mascarpone cheese, coffee and liqueur.
- **Delizia al Limone:** Sponge cakes filled and coated with lemon custard from Amalfi Coast
- **Buccellato:** A dessert made of a sweet and soft pasty with lots of raisins and aniseed. It can be shaped like a donut or oval, per the original recipe from Lucca

Dolci may be served with coffee or an alcoholic digestivo such as herbal amaro or limoncello. It is meant to aid your digestion of a memorable meal, one that will certainly have been toast-worthy

Croatian Cuisine

Are Croatia’s **Ston oysters** the best in the world? You can decide when you are exploring the Dalmatian coast, which is also famous for mussels, prawns, and all manner of fish and shellfish. The Zinfandel grape originated here, so you may want to try a local wine made from it. Croatia also has a stronger alcoholic beverage, **rakija**, in several differently flavored or spiced varieties, such as **travarica**, which has added herbs is one regional specialty. Pair it with some well known dishes like:

- **Crni rizot:** A black risotto made with squid.
- **Brudet:** A flavorful fish and tomato stew.
- **Pasticada:** A dish loved by carnivores, is this stuffed beef cooked in wine.

- **Rozata:** This sweet caramel cream is a Dubrovnik specialty.
- **Gregada:** A fish stew often made with fresh scorpion fish or grouper chopped into large chunks with sliced potatoes and lashings of olive oil.
- **Štrukli:** Delicious pillows of dough filled with cottage cheese and slathered in cream that are enjoyed as a dessert or a mid-morning snack.
- **Burek:** Flaky pastries layered with cheese, spinach, apple or meat that are enjoyed any time of day.

Slovenian Cuisine

Slovenia may only be the size of Massachusetts, but it still boasts 24 distinct gastronomic regions, and many dishes with EU protected status. Here are some dishes to try:

- **Idrijski zlikrofi:** Heavenly pasta pockets filled with potato, bacon and herbs.
- **Kremšnita:** This Bled Cream Cake is a confection of flaky crust, vanilla custard, icing sugar and whipped cream.
- **Kraški pršut:** (prosciutto from the karst lands) and Istrian olive oil give their Italian cousins a run for the money.
- **Štruklji:** Slovenia's version of strudel, filled with either savory or sweet ingredients like cheese, walnuts, apples and poppy seeds. In spring and summer, try it with fresh tarragon.

Austrian Cuisine

Austria has quite a bit of culinary overlap with neighboring Germany. But you have only to consider the scope of the Hapsburg Empire to understand the many influences that have also shaped the national cuisine: the empire once ruled over Switzerland, Holland, Alsace, Burgundy, Spain, Bohemia, Moravia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia and Italy, and happily appropriated many of their ingredients and cooking techniques. This is to say nothing of the Turkish influence that wafted westwards across the Austro-Hungarian empire.

- One constant on Austrian menus is the national dish, **wiener schnitzel**, the classic Viennese veal cutlet which is pounded till thin, breaded, fried and served with wedges of lemon and greens. It can also be made with chicken or pork.
- **Tafelspitz:** A filet of beef (or veal) that is gently simmered with vegetables, and served with applesauce and horseradish. Late spring brings spargel, or asparagus, which are particularly tender and flavorful here. It'll appear as a special on many menus, often served with a delicate hollandaise or just butter, lemon, and toasted bread crumbs.
- **Kasspätzln:** A Tyrolean casserole of chewy, hand-made egg noodles that are mixed with sauteed onions, covered with *bergkäse*, a strong local cheese, and baked till browned. Before serving, it is topped with crispy fried onions and parsley.

- **Speckknödeln:** A bacon dumpling that is often served as an appetizer or in stews or clear soups. It is just one of the dozens of different dumplings that grace the Austrian table.
- **Frittatensuppe:** Or “pancake soup” is a Styrian specialty that is popular all over Austria. It’s a bowl of clear beef consommé with strips of cooked crepes or pancakes.
- **Würstelstande:** Or sausage booths. These street stalls are the go-tos for snackers on the go, and the sausage of choice will usually be a wiener sausage, which Austrians will only ever call a “*Frankfurter*.” You can also ask for a *bratwurst*, a *Käsekrainer* (which is studded with cheese), or a *Debreziner*, which is a lightly-smoked, reddish sausage spiced with paprika.
- **Sachertorte:** A classic chocolate sponge cake layered with apricot jam, and covered in chocolate ganache. It’s available all over, but for the quintessential Viennese experience, try it where it originated, at the Sacher Hotel, or at the famed Demel bakery.
- **Mozartkugel:** Small, round candies are balls of pistachio marzipan and nougat, covered with dark chocolate.

One thing Austria can thank the Turks for is coffee. Legend has it that when Hapsburg troops chased the Turks out in 1683, the retreating invaders left behind bags of coffee beans. Within two years the first Viennese coffee house opened, and the rest is history. In 2011, UNESCO designated Viennese coffee house culture as part of humanity’s intangible cultural heritage, saying that the coffee houses have a “very specific atmosphere” and are places “where time and space are consumed, but only the coffee is found on the bill.”

Venice in Brief

City Layout and Details

Venice is about two and a half miles from the Italian mainland and one and one quarter miles from the Adriatic Sea. The city is built on and around 118 islands and islets, separated by approximately 150 small canals. These small land clusters are joined together by some 400 bridges. The three largest and most historically significant bridges are the Rialto, Accademia, and degli Scalzi, each of which crosses the Grand Canal. The city has only one main piazza—San Marco—and it bustles all day long. Most visitors are primarily interested in seeing San Marco, with its St. Mark’s Basilica and Doge’s Palace, but there’s much to see elsewhere if you are game for walking. Shoppers will want to explore along the Mercerie, which leads out of the piazza San Marco and serves as the city’s major shopping artery. It eventually leads to the Rialto, site of the market area.

The city is divided into six quarters, called *sestieri*, and these include San Marco, Santa Croce, San Polo, Castello, Cannaregio, and Dorsoduro. Each has its own mood and appeal. The Dorsoduro, for example, has been compared to New York’s Greenwich Village. Don’t expect to find any order to the tiny streets and winding canals that comprise each *sestiere*. Street numbers do not follow a logical sequence, and finding a specific address can be baffling. Looking for certain cross streets

and posted signs can be more helpful than trying to pinpoint an address by its street number. Regardless of your orientation skills, however, expect to get at least a little lost at some point while exploring on your own. Everybody does—that's part of the charm of Venice.

Across the lagoon from Venice proper is the shoestring island of Lido. This long, narrow sandbar protects Venice from the force of the Adriatic Sea; it is also one of Italy's most fashionable beach resort areas. Venice is connected to mainland Italy via a three-mile bridge that runs from the city across the Venetian Lagoon to the town of Mestre.

Evening Entertainment

Compared to Rome, Venice is a quiet city that shuts down pretty much by midnight. Typical nighttime entertainment includes classical concerts (often featured in various churches), opera performances, art exhibitions, leisurely visits at cafés and bars, and sunset strolls. The tourist office and some hotels distribute the free weekly pamphlet *Un Ospite a Venezia* ("A Guest in Venice"). It is a useful multilingual booklet that lists up-to-date museum schedules, special events, entertainment programs, and other activities, as well as the current rates for gondolas and motorboat taxis.

Local Transportation

There are no cars in Venice, except on the Lido. To get around, you can walk, or take a vaporetto or gondola. Remember, Venice has 460 pedestrian bridges.

Vaporetti: These motorboats operate as public waterbuses. An *accelerato* boat makes every stop; a *diretto* makes only express stops. They operate from designated piers and run about every 15 minutes. Service is frequent from about 7 am to midnight, then hourly between midnight and 7 am.

Gondola: If you opt for a gondola ride, first agree on the price and the length of the trip. Two major stations at which you can hire gondolas include piazza San Marco and Ponte Rialto. *TIP: In 2019, the official price for a 30 minute gondola ride was set as 80 euros, but may cost more during the evening or if music is included.*

On foot: By far, the easiest way to explore Venice is on foot. All the locals walk, too. Because the city has 400 bridges with stairs, bicycles are impractical.

Motorboat Taxis: A ride as short as 10 minutes can cost upwards of \$60. Given the small distances of Venice, use of water taxis is a very expensive proposition that can be easily avoided with a little forethought or scheduling.

Zagreb in Brief

City Layout & Details

Zagreb's historic central area consists of two sections: the Upper Town (Gornji Grad), which as the name implies is on a hilltop, and the Lower Town (Donji Grad). Ban Jelacic Square, the city's central public space, is on the border between the Upper and Lower Towns. It's called Trg Bana

Jelačića in Croatian; Trg means “city square.” In the upper town, winding streets lead to the Croatian Parliament building. The city’s central open-air market (Dolac) is here, as well as the charming, pedestrian-only street Tkalciceva. On the hill named Kaptol what was once a religious town merged in 1850 with secular Gradec to create the core of modern Zagreb. You can explore Gradec by following the major street Ilica from Ban Jelacic Square, then turning up Tomiceva where a funicular takes you up the hill.

The streets of the Lower Town were laid out in a neat grid in the late 19th century. In broad outline they form a “U” shape known as “the Green Horseshoe” that encompasses many of the city’s main cultural institutions and public buildings. These include the Croatian National Theater, the Arts and Crafts Museum (featuring crafts from the Baroque period to the 20th century), and the Mimara Museum—highly recommended for its outstanding collections of textiles, paintings, sculpture, and ceramics. Here there are also a Technical Museum, the city’s Botanical Garden, and the Strossmayer Gallery of Old Masters with works by famous Italian and Dutch painters.

Local Transportation

Zagreb has an extensive bus and tram system that can get you around at minimal expense. You can purchase tickets from street kiosks (slightly cheaper) or on board; be sure to get your ticket time-stamped when you first board a tram. Regular tickets are good for one and a half hours; all-day tickets are also available. The tram system can get you as far as Sljeme on the outskirts of town for a popular excursion to the heights of Mt. Medvednica. Taxis are also readily available in central Zagreb and are metered at a regulated rate.

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor’s terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop’s contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don’t assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

Italy

Popular souvenirs include leather goods, silk ties, knitwear, gold jewelry, ceramics, straw goods and other handicrafts, small cabinets, and jewelry boxes. Each region in Italy has its specialties. You’ll also see many different items made from olive wood or Carrara marble; just remember

that any marble items you purchase should be put into your checked luggage for the flight home. (If you put them in your carry-on, they may be confiscated by security as “weapons”.) In Italy, a Value Added Tax is levied on most articles, services, and meals, and ranges from 4% to 22%. Depending on how much you spend on certain goods in specially marked Tax Free Shopping stores, you may be eligible for a partial refund of this tax. Ask the shopkeeper, salesperson, or our local staff for details. Be sure to save all receipts and the special Global Tax Refund forms for Customs, as receipts alone are not enough.

Croatia

Typical Croatian souvenirs include gingerbread hearts (*licitar*), lavender oil, olive oil, and red coral jewelry (note that red coral is illegal import into the U.S. but allowed if in jewelry). Dry skin? Locals swear by the lanolin-based *Zagrebacki melem* ointment. Remember that the cravat was invented here, so be on the lookout for unusual and beautifully made neckties.

Slovenia

Handicraft shops in Slovenia feature locally made ceramics, woolens, wood carvings, embroidery, tapestries, filigree jewelry, pumpkin seed oil, hand-painted beehive panels, honey brandy and handmade carpets. The fashion brands Sens and Akultura are popular, and for something more traditional, consider Idrija lace and Rogaska crystal.

Austria

Popular buys include glassware, crystal, porcelain, petit point, musical instruments and scores, fur hats, ski wear, and, of course, lederhosen (leather pants), loden-cloth coats, and sachertorte (chocolate cake). But be forewarned: the quality of Austrian wares is exceptionally high, and so are the prices!

Value Added Tax: In Austria, a Value Added Tax is levied on most articles, services, and meals, and ranges from 10% to 30%. Depending on how much you spend on certain goods in specially marked Tax Free Shopping stores, you may be eligible for a partial refund of this tax. Ask the shopkeeper or salesperson for details. Be sure to save all receipts and the special Global Tax Refund forms for Customs, as receipts alone are not enough.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.

- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Italy

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 116,348 square miles
- **Capital:** Rome
- **Languages:** Italian is the official language; German, French, and Slovene are also spoken in towns near the borders of Austria, France, and Slovenia.
- **Ethnicity:** Italian, with small clusters of German-, French-, and Slovene-Italians in the north and Albanian- and Greek-Italians in the south
- **Location:** Italy is bordered by France, Slovenia, Austria, Switzerland, the Ligurian Sea, the Tyrrhenian Sea, the Ionian Sea, the Adriatic Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea.
- **Geography:** Italy lies in southern Europe and includes the Mediterranean islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and several other small islands. The region of Tuscany is a blend of rugged hills, fertile valleys, and long stretches of sandy beaches that curve along the west coast of central Italy and fringe the pine-forested coastal plain of the Maremma. Sicily enjoys mountains in the north and east, a vast central plateau, and a fertile coastline dotted with sea-level resort towns.
- **Population:** 58,853,482 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Christian 80% (overwhelming Roman Catholic), Atheists and Agnostics 20%, Muslims estimated at less than 2%
- **Time Zone:** Italy is on Central European Time, six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Rome. Daylight Saving Time begins the last weekend in March and ends the last weekend in October.

National Holidays: Italy

In addition to the holidays listed below, Italy celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/06 Epiphany

04/25 Liberation Day

05/01 Labor Day

06/02 Republic Day

08/15 Assumption of Mary

11/01 All Saints' Day

12/08 Feast of the Immaculate Conception

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 St. Stephen's Day

Italy: A Brief History

Italy proudly wears the mantle of Rome, the polity from which so much of Italy's historical, cultural, and religious heritage has derived. But even though the Romans were the first to unify the peninsula, they were not the first to dominate it. That honor goes to the Etruscans, whose empire, Etruria, reached its zenith in the 7th century BC. It was centered between the Arno and Tiber rivers, mostly in Tuscany. The Etruscans were farmers, miners, seafarers and warriors, but they were riven by factionalism and in 509 BC, their last king was tossed out by Ligurian-Latin nobles in the small town of Rome. Tired of monarchs, they created the first Roman Republic.

Etruscan culture disappeared by the 2nd century AD, but the Romans were quick to appropriate many aspects of the Greek culture that had taken root in southern Italy and Sicily, where there were Hellenic colonies called "Magna Graecia." As the colonies were absorbed, so were Greek religion, architecture, and the basic tenets of democracy. During the 1st century BC, Julius Caesar defeated Gaul, making Rome the ruler of the entire Mediterranean world. After Caesar's assassination in 44 B.C., his nephew Octavian, later called Augustus, became Rome's first official emperor. The capital became an architectural showcase, and new territories stretched across Europe into Asia Minor, existing under a "Pax Romana" that brought prosperity and stability.

Pax Romana declined in the 3rd century A.D. thanks to inept and corrupt emperors, and attacks by outside barbarians. Rome eventually embraced Christianity in 313 under Constantine I, who established an eastern capital in Constantinople. But splitting the Rome into western (Roman) and eastern (Byzantine) halves did not halt the empire's demise. The eastern Roman empire fell in 476, and though the Byzantine half survived, it never regained the full might of Rome. In 800, Italy was briefly reunited under Charlemagne, but soon disintegrated into squabbling kingdoms.

Italian culture peaked during the 15th and 16th-century Renaissance. The independent city-states formed a delicate balance of power, with ruling families (such as the Sforzas, Borgias, and the Medicis) funding a golden age of art, invention, and intellectual activity that produced some of the greatest figures of Western civilization—Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Dante Alighieri, Brunelleschi, Galileo, and others. It did not, however, stop the rival families from fighting.

By the 19th century, many Italians believed that they could function as a single nation, a belief spearheaded by the general Giuseppe Garibaldi. Independence was declared in 1861, and by 1870, the nation was consolidated under King Victor Emmanuel II. Italy was ruled as a monarchy and joined the Allies in World War I. But the 1920s ushered in a dark era as Benito Mussolini organized discontented Italians into the Fascist Party to “rescue Italy from Bolshevism.” What he delivered was a totalitarian state. Mussolini joined with Hitler and fought the Allies during World War II, during which 400,000 people were killed, hundreds of thousands were left homeless, and the economy was ruined. In 1945, Mussolini was captured and killed by partisans.

Italy was again declared a republic in 1946, but remained seriously divided during the postwar era by political extremes. Governments rose and fell, and in the 1970s, a series of terrorist acts by the left-wing Red Brigades threatened stability. By the early 1980s, the terrorists had been suppressed, but public discontent spilled into the 1990s as inflation and ongoing scandals involving public officials and the Mafia altered Italian politics. Parties dissolved, new ones formed, and new alliances emerged. This led to the election of media mogul Silvio Berlusconi as Prime Minister in 1994. But within a year, Berlusconi was forced to resign. He ran again in 2001 and was reelected, setting up a pattern that repeated for more than a decade: Berlusconi has been Prime Minister three separate times between 1994–2011, and continues to remain a political force despite having been convicted of tax fraud.

The previous Prime Minister, independent Giuseppe Conte, was elected in 2018 and heads up a populist coalition. Among his accomplishments have been the introduction of a national guaranteed minimum income, the nationalization of several companies, stricter immigration policies, and the western world’s first national lockdown in response to COVID-19. The current Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Italy’s first female Prime Minister, was sworn in on October 22nd, 2022. Meloni is a member of the right-wing, national-conservative party, Brothers of Italy, a party that is considered to be the most right-wing party in power in Italy since World War II.

Croatia

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 21,851 square miles
- **Capital:** Zagreb
- **Government:** Presidential/parliamentary democracy
- **Language:** Croatian (Hrvatski), with Italian, German, and English also spoken by some.
- **Location:** Croatia is situated between the Pannonian Plain and the Adriatic Sea in southeastern Europe. Irregularities of its Adriatic coastline have created over 1,000 islands. The region in the north of Croatia is a highland area with a mountainous climate.
- **Geography:** Croatia is located in Southeastern Europe, bordering the Adriatic Sea, between Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia. The terrain of Croatia is geographically diverse; flat plains along Hungarian border, low mountains and highlands near Adriatic coast, coastline, and islands.

- **Population:** 3,878,981 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 79%, Orthodox 3.3%, other Christian 4.5%, Muslim 1.3%, other 1.8%, unspecified 3.8%, none 6.3%
- **Time Zone:** Croatia is on Central European Time, which is six hours ahead of U.S. EST. Daylight Saving Time is in effect from the last Sunday of March until the last Sunday of October.

National Holidays: Croatia

In addition to the holidays listed below, Croatia celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Corpus Christi. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/06 Epiphany

03/20 Bajram

04/05 Easter

05/01 Labor Day/May Day

05/30 Statehood Day

08/05 Homeland Thanksgiving Day

08/15 Assumption of Mary

10/08 Independence Day

11/01 All Saints' Day

11/18 Remembrance Day

12/25 Christmas

12/26 St Stephen's Day

Croatia: A Brief History

Though Croatia defines itself along ethno-nationalist lines, the first Croat tribes did not arrive here until the 6th century. Little is known about them, but they were likely Slavic people from the marshlands of Ukraine who migrated to the Pannonian plains and Dalmatian coast.

The Croats came after the Illyrians, Greeks, Celts and Romans, who arrived in 11 BC and ruled for 500 years, expanding their colony from the Adriatic to the Danube. In the decades after the Western Roman Empire fell in 476 AD, the Croats began to move in, banding with other groups in a series of shifting allegiances, and organizing around powerful clans. When Charlemagne came in 800 AD, he Christianized the Dalmatian Croats. Though the Byzantine Empire held political power, the Christian Croats still looked to Rome for cultural and spiritual leadership—a connection that endures today, with most Croats identifying as devout Roman Catholics.

In 925 AD, Tomislav united the Dalmatian and Pannonian Croats, establishing a unified kingdom that included modern-day Croatia, Bosnia and Montenegro. Venice invaded Dalmatia, but the Croat kingdom lasted until 1102, when it merged with the kingdom of Hungary. By the mid-1400s, under widespread Ottoman occupation, the Croatian Assembly invited the Hapsburgs to assume control. The Hapsburgs ousted the Turks by the 18th century. But the dream of an independent Croatia reawakened during the mid 1800s, as Europe was swept by a wave of romantic nationalism. This brought a flowering of Croatian language and art.

Following World War I and the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, in 1918 the Kingdom of Serbia and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes united as the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The Axis takeover of Yugoslavia during World War II gave power to Croatia's far-right Ustase party, which built eight concentration camps to exterminate hundreds of thousands of Jews, Roma, and Serbs. Antifascist resisters rose up, but many, the Serbian Chetniks among them, enacted massacres against the Croats, exacerbating political and ethnic tensions.

The most effective partisans were led by the communist Josip Broz (aka "Tito"), who forced the Nazi retreat and became the architect of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, established in 1944. Though initially aligned with Moscow, Tito openly critiqued Stalin and continually asserted Yugoslavia's independence. In 1961, he founded the Non-Aligned Movement, positioning its members as serious bargaining partners between the Soviet and western blocs.

Tito was determined to create a state in which no ethnic group dominated, and where church and state were separated. It was a fragile balance he maintained through a one-party system that suppressed all opposition. When he died in 1980, old tensions among the six Yugoslav republics resumed. In 1989, with the fall of communism, Yugoslavia fell apart. In 1990, Croatian nationalist Franjo Tudjman was elected President, and a year later, Croatia seceded from Yugoslavia. Conflicts between Serbs and Croats escalated, and within a month, war broke out.

The United Nations mediated a cease-fire in 1992, but hostilities resumed the next year when Croatia tried to regain lost territories. Multiple offensives and cease-fires ensued until 1995, when Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian governments signed the Dayton Peace Agreement, committing to a permanent cease-fire, regional cooperation and further democratization. When President Tudjman died in 1999, the subsequent coalition government brought major changes. Since then, Serbs and Croats have maintained a stable, albeit wary peace. Croatia joined NATO in 2009, and since joining the EU in 2014, its economy, powered by tourism, has grown.

Slovenia

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 7,827 square miles
- **Capital:** Ljubljana
- **Population:** 1,983,412 (estimate)
- **Languages:** Slovenian is the official language.
- **Religions:** Catholic 57.8%, Muslim 2.4%, Orthodox 2.3%, other Christian 0.9%, unaffiliated 3.5%, other or unspecified 23%, none 10.1%
- **Time Zone:** Slovenia is on Central European Time, six hours ahead of Eastern Time. Summer hours operate from the last Sunday in March until the last weekend in October.

National Holidays: Slovenia

In addition to the holidays listed below, Slovenia celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and Whit Sunday. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

02/08 Preseren Day

03/20 Bajram

04/05 Easter

04/27 Day of Uprising Against Occupation

05/01 Labor Day/May Day

06/25 Statehood Day

08/15 Assumption of Mary

10/31 Reformation Day

11/01 Remembrance Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Independence and Unity Day

Slovenia: A Brief History

While Slovenia experienced many of the same historical events as its neighbors, its development diverged in several important ways. For one thing, we know a little more about the Bronze Age inhabitants who predated the Illyrians here: they were marsh dwellers who lived in huts on stilts south of present-day Ljubljana, trading along the Amber Route that linked the Balkans with the rest of Europe. By 400 BC, the Celts established the first political entity on Slovenian soil, the Noric kingdom. The Romans annexed this and brought Slovenia into its larger province, Illyrium.

As Rome declined, Slavs arrived and eventually joined with the Frankish kingdom to form the Duchy of Carantania. Charlemagne sealed the deal when he made Carantania a vassal state called Carinthia, and established Roman Catholicism as the state religion. This brought Slovenia into the fold of the Holy Roman Empire, and far from the sway of eastern Orthodoxy. By the 10th century, control of the Holy Roman Empire fell to German nobility. They replaced local Slovenian lords with German ones, reduced the peasants to serfs, and divided Slovenia into six provinces that remained intact until 1918: Carniola, Carinthia, Styria, Gorica and the White March.

Between the late 13th and early 16th century, almost all of Slovenia passed to the Hapsburgs, who improved the infrastructure, opened mines, and lifted the economy. But soon, Germanic domination of the political and cultural scene faced a challenge. Slovenia was never occupied by the Ottomans, but under the Hapsburgs, it had to fight many battles against the Turks. Slovenian peasants were required to pay for their own defenses, and also pay tribute to their feudal lords. Between the 14th and 19th centuries there were more than 100 Slovenian peasant revolts.

Another turning point came when the Protestant Reformation reached Slovenia at the end of the 16th century. Many Protestant reformers wrote their treatises in the vernacular, elevating the status of Slovenian language. An awakening of Slovenian identity had begun.

When the Hapsburg dynasty was dismantled after World War I, Slovenia joined the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. But much of Slovenia's land was ceded to Italy, Austria, and Hungary, and there was dissatisfaction with the government, which was dominated by Serbs. But when the Nazis invaded in 1941, a larger threat had to be dealt with. Communists and other left-wing

groups formed a Liberation Front. The people took up arms, and fought in the best-organized anti-Nazi resistance in Europe. The communist partisan leader, Josip Broz Tito, became the leader of the new Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

When Tito died in 1980, Slovenian dissatisfaction with the Serb-dominated government deepened. In 1987, a Slovenian magazine published an article calling for political pluralism, democracy, a market economy and more Slovenian independence, but stopped short of calling for secession. But Yugoslavia's new de facto leader, Serbia's Slobodan Milošević, resolved to put an end to it. Slovenia doubled down and in 1990, it voted to become an independent republic. The Yugoslav army marched on Slovenia, but after meeting with unexpected resistance, units of the federal army began disintegrating.

Since no territorial or ethnic issues were involved, the Yugoslav government agreed to a truce and finally withdrew in October 1991. Slovenia enacted its own constitution in December, and was recognized by the European Community in January, 1992. In May, 1992, it became the 176th member state of the United Nations, and in 2004, it joined the European Union.

Austria

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 32,382 square miles
- **Capital:** Vienna
- **Languages:** German is the official language. English is also spoken, particularly in all tourist areas and major cities.
- **Location:** Austria is bordered by Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Italy, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein.
- **Geography:** Landlocked in Central Europe, Austria features the mountainous Alps in the south and west, but also is home to flat plains and gentle slopes in the north and east.
- **Population:** 8,665,550 (estimate)
- **Religion:** Roman Catholic 73.8%, Protestant 4.9%, Muslim 4.2%, Orthodox 2.2%, other 0.8%, none 12%, unspecified 2%
- **Time Zone:** Austria is on Central European Time, six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Vienna.

National Holidays: Austria

In addition to the holidays listed below, Austria celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/06 Epiphany

05/01 Labor Day/May Day

08/15 Assumption of Mary

10/26 National Day

11/01 All Saints' Day

12/08 Feast of the Immaculate Conception

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 St. Stephen's Day

Austria: A Brief History

Austria has been populated since Neanderthal times, but its most significant early culture was the Hallstatt, which arose around 400 BC when Celtic people settled along the shores of the Hallstatter See. The Celts formed a confederation called Noricum, established a prosperous salt trade, and forged iron implements. When Romans arrived in 15 BC, they made the area a province. In exchange for their excellent Noric steel (which the Romans used for swords), the Celts received protection—and they needed it, as Germanic Teutons and other tribes invaded.

When Charlemagne arrived in the 8th century and created a zone in the Danube Valley called the East March. In 976, the Babenburg dynasty became the margraves of this “eastern realm” or Österreich, German for “Austria.” The Babenburgs extended the territory and made Vienna their capital. When they died, Rudolf I took over in 1278, ushering in the dynastic powerhouse that dominated Europe for 500 years. Consolidating power through strategic marriages, they built a network from Spain to the Netherlands to Germany. The Hapsburgs were all prince-electors of the Holy Roman Empire, and from 1452 they elected their kinsmen as its Emperors. But holding power was not easy. In 1618 Europe erupted into a Thirty Years War that caused nearly eight million deaths. It was largely a contest between Bourbon and Austro-Spanish Hapsburgs. Things further destabilized when the Turks advanced to Vienna. They remained a threat until 1699.

Austria bloomed during the Enlightenment reigns of Maria Theresa and her son, Joseph II. They instituted reforms, and were patrons of the arts (with Mozart as their court composer). Decades later, a result of the Napoleonic wars was that the Holy Roman Empire was dissolved in 1806. But the Hapsburgs survived, creating a German Alliance of hundreds of small states. In 1867, Austria and Hungary united as a dual monarchy—and reveled in the Austro-Hungarian Empire's cultural flowering. Vienna, newly magnificent after a flurry of building, was its epicenter. The Empire prospered until Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in 1914, sparking World War I. The 1919 defeat of the Central Powers (Austria-Hungary, Germany, Turkey, and Bulgaria) ended the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which split into several nations per the Treaty of Versailles.

Austria became a republic, but suffered inflation, unemployment, and the loss of a national identity. Political tensions erupted into violent street fights, and in 1934, a Conservative government took legislative powers from the parliament, making Austria a fascist country.

Though the Treaty of Versailles had expressly forbidden the reunification of Germany and Austria, Hitler (himself an Austrian) had other ideas about this Anschluss. When the Nazis goose-stepped into Austria in 1938, they were welcomed by cheering crowds. Austria's military, economy, and political infrastructure were integrated into Germany's war efforts; the execution of Jews and resisters stepped up; and many Austrians participated in the Nazi's crimes.

Austria was liberated by Allied and Soviet troops in 1945, a second republic was established, and Austria remained under occupation. In 1955, Russia demanded that Austria declare its neutrality as a condition for ending Soviet occupation. This status enabled Austria to be a bridge between East and West during the Cold War. But the nation never came to terms with its war history. That started in 1986, when former U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim ran for president. He won and served until 1992, and investigations into his wartime activities were inconclusive.

Austria joined the EU in 1995, adopted the euro in 1999, and is one of Europe's most prosperous nations. It is considered a liberal democracy, and consistently ranks high for its quality of life.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

Venice

History of Venice by John J. Norwich (1982, History) The author skillfully manages to compress 1,000 years of Venetian history into one book.

The World of Venice by Jan Morris (1960, Travel Account) A new edition of a classic that blends history, social commentary, and personal travel experience.

A Venetian Affair: A True Tale of Forbidden Love in the 18th Century by Andrea di Robilant (2003, Historical Memoir) A captivating tale of star-crossed lovers, forbidden to marry due to their status in society.

Venice The City of Falling Angels by John Berendt (2006, Memoir/Travel Narrative) The city of Venice as seen by the author of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*.

Coastal Italy

Trieste And The Meaning of Nowhere by Jan Morris (2001, Travel Account) A fascinating account of Trieste incorporating both history and personal stories from her life as a soldier (formerly James Morris) during WWII.

Nationalists Who Feared the Nation: Adriatic Multi-Nationalism in Habsburg, Dalmatia, Trieste, and Venice by Dominique Reill (2012, History) The author examines the struggles of the nationalist movement under the Habsburg Empire to create a common identity while holding onto valuable cultural differences.

Beautiful Ruins by Jess Walter (2012, Literature) A charming story of an innkeeper living in coastal Italy who meets an beautiful actress in his youth. The story unfolds when the innkeeper is an elderly man and he finds himself in Hollywood searching for the woman he had met fifty years previously.

Italy

Princes of the Renaissance by Mary Hollingsworth (2021, History) An exploration of the lives and times of the aristocratic elite whose patronage sparked the art and architecture of the Renaissance in fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy.

Absolute Monarchs: A History of the Papacy by John Julius Norwich (2011, History) A deeper look into the most significant popes in history and what they meant politically, culturally, and socially to Rome and the rest of the world.

La Bella Figura: A Field Guide to the Italian Mind by Beppe Severgnini (2007, Nonfiction/Humor) An Italian columnist and best-selling author journeys through his homeland while providing hilarious observations at the beautiful face Italy shows to the world, and the chaotic, garrulous, and often contradictory impulses that lie behind it.

The Monster of Florence by Douglas Preston and Mario Spezi (2008, Non Fiction) A remarkable true story by best-selling author Douglas Preston who, with Italian investigative journalist Mario Spezi, try to track down the identity of a serial killer known as the Monster of Florence.

History by Elsa Morante (1974, Fiction) A half-Jewish, Roman mother tries to survive in WWII Rome with her two sons. Though the main characters are fictional, each chapter opens with an factual account of real events that happened when the action takes place.

Croatia

Girl at War by Sara Novic (2016, Fiction) Ana, a New York college student, flashes back to her childhood in the former Yugoslavia in 1991. As civil war descends, ten-year old Ana's carefree existence dissolves in tragedy and she must become a child soldier. Later, even as she builds a seemingly normal new life in America, her war never ends. A moving meditation on family, identity, memory and redemption.

Chasing a Croatian Girl by Cody McClain Brown (2015, Memoir) An incisive and often hilarious journey into everyday Croatian culture. The author, an ex-pat American and professor of political science, marries a Croatian woman and struggles to understand his indomitable mother-in-law, endless coffees with friends and neighbors, and a vast catalog of quirky customs.

The Walnut Mansion by Miljenko Jergovic (2015, Fiction) A 97-year-old matriarch recalls five generations of her Yugoslav family—vividly drawn characters whose lives play out against the fall of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires, two world wars, the rise of communism, and the dangers of war-torn Dubrovnik as one nation dissolves, and another emerges.

The Hired Man by Aminatta Forna (2014, Fiction) Well reviewed novel about a family of newcomers from England who renovate a farmhouse in the Croatian village of Gost, befriend a local handyman, and unwittingly dredge up secrets of the village's dark past.

Dubrovnik, A History by Robin Harris (2003, History) A scholarly but readable history of Dubrovnik from its origins in the 7th century, until the collapse of the Republic in 1808. Recommended for the history buff.

Slovenia

Slovenology: Living and Traveling in the World's Best Country by Noah Charney (2017, Memoir/Travel) A witty and wise guidebook from an American art historian. The title tells you something about his love for Slovenia's history, food and drink, sights, music and people.

I Saw Her That Night by Drago Jancar (2010, Fiction) Explores the disappearance of a young woman from Ljubljana during a turbulent period in that city's history, as told by five different people.

Forbidden Bread: A Memoir (2009, Memoir) A New York financial analyst leaves her home and job to marry her Slovenian poet-lover. As she struggles to understand her new family and Slovenia's complex history, language, traditions and old-fashioned sexism, Slovenia itself is being transformed. A love story with witty and worldly observations on the birth of a new nation.

Austria

The Habsburgs: The History of a Dynasty by Benjamin Curtis (2013, History) Discover how this Austrian family gained power—and held it—for more than 500 years, shaping all the nations featured on this adventure.

When Nietzsche Wept: A Novel of Obsession by Irvin D. Yalom (2013, Fiction) Set in 19th-century Vienna, this novel is built upon a clever conceit: the psychoanalytic sessions between the impoverished and suicidal philosopher, Frederic Nietzsche; and distinguished physician Josef Breuer, who is undergoing his own existential crisis. The twist is that Nietzsche, too proud to seek help, does not know that he is Breuer's "patient." As the two meet in Vienna's salons and coffeehouses, we encounter the personalities of the day, including Sigmund Freud, and gain a sense of the healing power of connection.

The Age of Insight by Eric Kandel (2012, Art) This book takes us to Vienna in 1900, where leaders in science, medicine, and art began a revolution that changed forever how we think about the human mind—our conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions—and how mind and brain relate to art. Kandel traces the ideas and advances of Vienna, in rich and rewarding detail, and their enduring influence today.

The Painted Kiss by Elizabeth Hickey (2005, Historical Fiction) The author, an art historian, imagines the relationship between the artist Gustav Klimt, and his younger model-mistress, the couturier Emilie Flöge. She was the inspiration for his famous work, *The Kiss*, and it was her name that he uttered as his dying words.

The Austrians: A Thousand-Year Odyssey by Gordon Brook-Shepard (1996, History) A noted historian, draws upon his long-standing associations with Austrian leaders and his special access to the private Hapsburg family archives to trace the identity of Austria as it developed over a millennium.

Suggested Films & Videos

Italy

The Life Ahead (2020, Drama) At 86, Sophia Loren makes her first screen appearance in ten years in this Netflix original, filmed in Puglia. And it's a stunner. She plays Madame Rosa, a Holocaust survivor who takes in the children of local sex workers. A neighbor asks her to care for Momo, a Senegalese refugee whose delinquency may be too much for Rosa, whose own tormented past is catching up to her.

The Tourist (2010, Thriller) Beautiful Elise (Angelina Jolie) has a mysterious off-screen lover, Pearce, who has fled England and is wanted by both Scotland Yard and the mob. He tells Elise to entrap an unwitting tourist (Johnny Depp), who will be mistaken for Pearce (who is rumored to have altered his appearance), and arrested in his place. This convoluted caper plays out beautifully in Venice's mysterious alleys, romantic canals, and opulent palaces.

Rome (2005-07, Television Series) This multiple Emmy-winner from HBO deftly weaves the stories of fictional and real characters (Julius Caesar, Octavian, Marc Antony, Cleopatra, etc.) during Rome's 1st century BC transition from a republic to an empire. Outstanding production values and a stellar cast.

The Merchant of Venice (2004, Drama) Al Pacino gives us one of the most masterful portrayals on stage or screen of Shakespeare's tragic moneylender, Shylock. He receives strong support from Jeremy Irons and Joseph Fiennes, and Venice itself, where much of the production was filmed. The city looks so enticing, it's a wonder that Pacino did not chew up the scenery.

Life Is Beautiful (1997) Roberto Benigni is the lead actor and director of this heart-wrenching comedy/drama about a Jewish Italian bookshop owner in Mussolini's Italy who tries to shield his son from the horrors of a Nazi concentration camp. Italian with English subtitles.

Croatia

The Diary of Diana B. (2019, Drama) This film follows the unique and heartbreaking story of humanitarian Diana Budisavljevic, who rescues thousands of children from the Utasha camps in Nazi-occupied Croatia during World War II. This historical piece combines dramatized reenactments with archival material and interviews with survivors to create a harrowing retelling of Diana's perilous efforts.

The Eighth Commissioner (2018, Comedy) Filmed on the Dalmatian coast islands of Brač, Hvar and Zlarin, this endearing film follows an arrogant politician whose career is derailed by scandal. Banished to a remote island with no telephone or internet, he is given the impossible task of organizing a local government. The islanders are as quirky as their incomprehensible dialect, and other residents include Italian smugglers, a Ukrainian porn star, and the previous Commissioner.

What is a Man Without a Mustache? (2005, Romantic Comedy) A Croatian guest worker suffers a fatal fall in Germany, and his widow Tatjana uses her settlement to purchase a hillside in an idyllic Dalmatian Coast village. Magical things happen, including Tatjana falling madly but inexplicably in love with the hapless village priest. A sunny romance with an even sunnier setting.

Harrison's Flowers (2000, Drama) This French film is about a *Newsweek* photojournalist who travels on his last assignment to Yugoslavia in 1991, during the Croatian War of Independence. He is presumed to be killed, but his wife (played by Andie MacDowell) searches for him through the war-torn landscapes and witnesses some of the horrors of the period. French with English subtitles.

Slovenia

Good to Go (2012, Comedy/Drama) A weary, disillusioned music teacher in his late 70s decides to retire—not just from his job, but from living. He buys a cemetery plot and moves into a retirement home. But once there, surprising turns make him rethink his decision, and his life.

Cheese and Jam (2004, Comedy) Lovely Slovenian Spela decides to leave her beer-drinking, jobless Bosnian husband, Bozo. Desperate to keep her, Bozo takes a job smuggling illegal immigrants, and things go wildly wrong. A black comedy about stereotypes, village life, and love.

No Man's Land (2002, Comedy/Drama) Filmed in Slovenia, this allegorical look at the Balkan War won the 2002 Golden Globes and the Oscar for Best Foreign Film. Two soldiers, one Bosnian, one Serb, find themselves facing off in a trench in no man's land. Insults and concessions ensue until a third soldier awakens nearby, but cannot move as he is sitting above a bouncing mine. The men forge a truce as they try to get help, and to find common ground.

Austria

The Woman in Gold (2015, Drama) Helen Mirren stars as Maria Altmann, an Austrian-Jewish Holocaust refugee who successfully sued the Austrian government for the return of a major artwork that was stolen from her family by the Nazis: Gustav Klimt's *Portrait of Adele Bauer-Bloch*, who was her aunt. Based on a true story.

Museum Hours (2012, Drama) A lonely guard at Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Art Museum befriends an enigmatic American visitor, who has been called here due to a family emergency. Through conversations sparked by the art they both admire, the two begin sharing their lives, and the life of Vienna.

Before Sunrise (1995, Comedy/Drama) Two strangers meet on a rain and decide to get off in Vienna for just one evening. As they explore some of the city's most evocative landmarks, their conversations go from wryly philosophical to deeply personal, before they must decide to go their separate ways. Stars Julie Delpy and Ethan Hawke collaborated on writing the sparkling dialogue.

Amadeus (1984, Drama) The pious Italian composer Antonio Salieri is obsessed with his rival, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, whom God has favored with divine talent and worldly success—despite Mozart's immaturity and vulgarity. The Oscar winner for Best Picture, this epic from director Milos Forman is gorgeously filmed, and lifted by its pitch-perfect performances by F. Murray Abraham (as Salieri) and Tom Hulce (as Mozart.)

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

[www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/
plugs-and-sockets](http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets)

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security

Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps or Maps.me

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber or Bolt or Grab

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App or Skype or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo or FLuentU or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

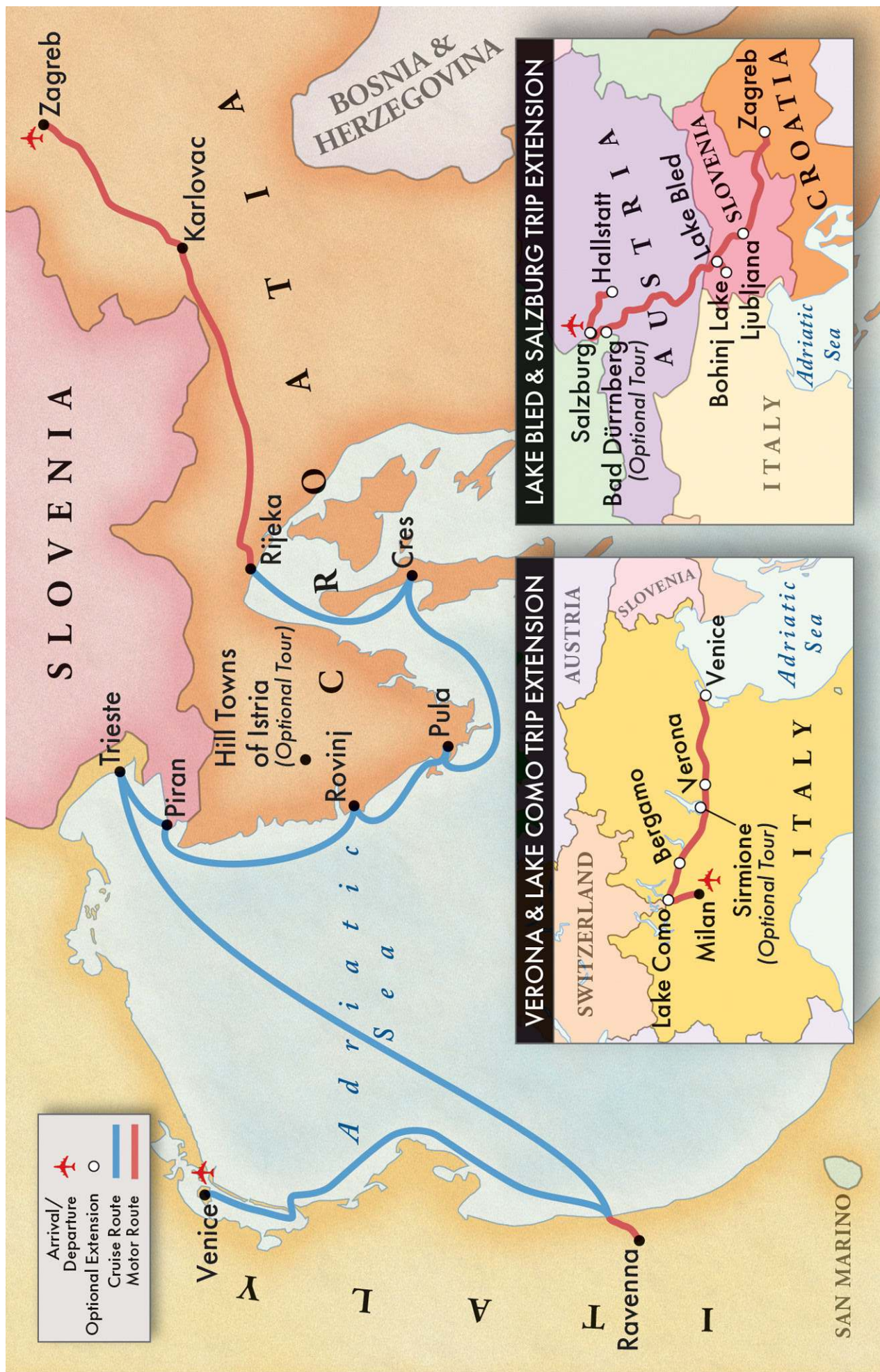
Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

GeoSure

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

Chirpey

For women only, connect with other women, find out what's safe, meet up, and more



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