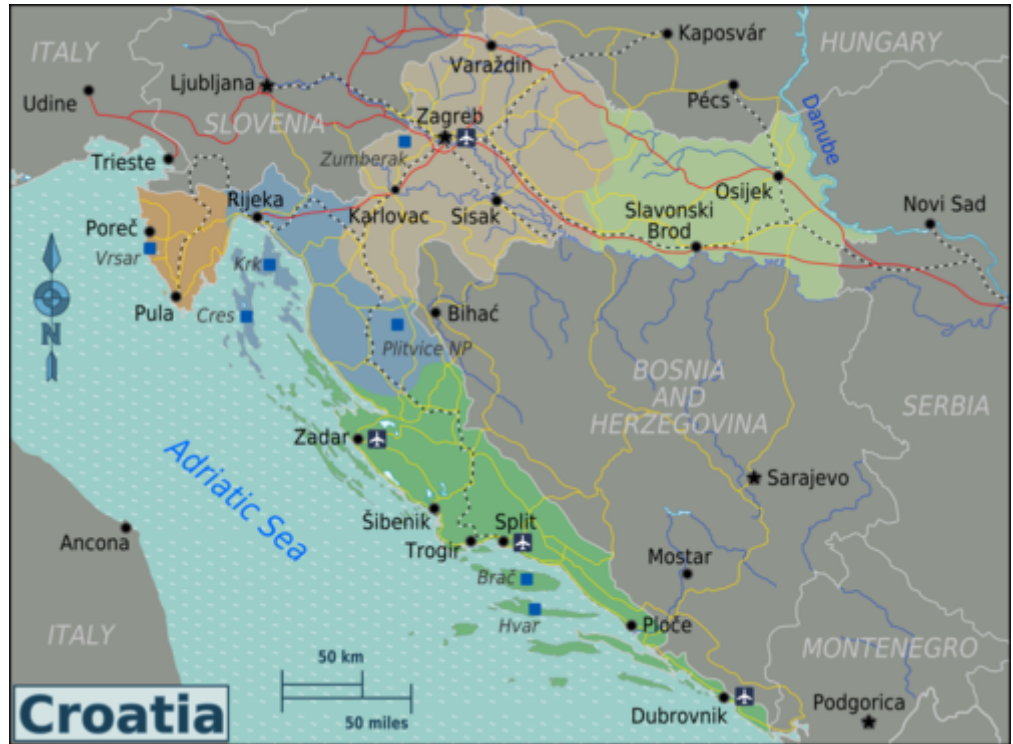


Croatia

Croatia (<https://croatia.hr/en-gb>) (Croatian: *Hrvatska*) is a Mediterranean country that bridges Central Europe and the Balkans.


Regions



There are three distinct areas of Croatia: Lowland Croatia (*Nizinska Hrvatska*), Littoral Croatia (*Primorska Hrvatska*), and Mountainous Croatia (*Gorska Hrvatska*), and these can be neatly split into five travel regions:

- Istria (*Istra*)**
A peninsula in the northwest, bordering Slovenia
- Kvarner**
Seashore and highlands north of Dalmatia, includes subregions: Bay of Kvarner and Highlands (Lika and Gorski Kotar)
- Dalmatia (*Dalmacija*)**
A strip of mainland and islands between the Mediterranean and Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Slavonia (*Slavonija*)**
Including subregions Slavonija and Baranja (north of river Drava) northeastern area of forests and fields, bordering Hungary, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Cities


- **1 Zagreb**, the capital, has a fine old city.
- **2 Dubrovnik** is a spectacular walled city and  UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **3 Osijek** to the east is the chief city of Slavonia, with many budget flights.
- **4 Pula** is the main town of Istria with a well-preserved Roman amphitheatre.
- **5 Rijeka** is Croatia's main port, with ferries across to Italy and to the Adriatic islands.
- **6 Split** has an entire ancient city shoehorned into a Roman Imperial palace.
- **7 Zadar** has a rich history and lies in a scenic area, yet is overlooked by most tourists.

Other destinations

The islands are some of the best of what Croatia has to offer. There are reckoned to be 1244, but the top handful are:

- **1 Cres**, large and well-developed. Nearby **Krk** is nowadays connected to the mainland.
- **2 Brač** is a long thin island, with Supetar its main port.
- **3 Hvar** has a charming old port.
- **4 Korčula** has an attractive old town and string of little villages.

Inland in the rugged mountains are many scenic areas:

- **5 Žumberak** is the mountainous region between Slovenia and Croatia.
- **6 Plitvice National Park** is a spectacular scenic area and  UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **7 Krka National Park** is a river valley near Šibenik.

Understand



Capital	<u>Zagreb</u>
Currency	euro (EUR)
Population	3.8 million (2021)
Electricity	230 volt / 50 hertz (Europlug, Schuko)
Country code	+385
Time zone	UTC+01:00
Emergencies	112, 192 (police), 93 (fire department), 94 (emergency medical services)
Driving side	right

Climate

The climate of Croatia is diverse. The continental part has a generally temperate continental climate, but with summers that are often very hot (average temperature: January -10°C to 5°C; August 19°C to 39°C), while mountainous areas at their highest elevation have a colder, alpine-like climate, and have the most precipitation. The coastal part has a Mediterranean climate which is on average warmer, but also more even throughout the year, and not normally marked by prolonged extreme heat (average temperature: January 6°C to 11°C; August 21°C to 39°C). This is because the temperature changes are moderated by the Adriatic sea. Still, the area is not immune to heatwaves which may cause wildfires to erupt; they are managed by firefighters and rarely cause significant damage to communities. Mediated by the local topography, specific seaside areas experience a dry and cool wind forcefully descending from the mountains, called *bura*; it can adequately be summed up as unpleasant (upon direct exposure), however it has a positive corollary in that it brings in high-quality mountain air. Dalmatia in particular has exceptionally high annual sun, especially on the islands, with 2700 hours of sunlight per year on the record.



Croatia has 1244 islands



Ban Jelačić Square in Zagreb

Terrain

Croatia's geography is diverse with flat agricultural plains along the Hungarian border (Central European area), low mountains and highlands near the Adriatic coastline, and islands. There are 1,246 islands; the largest ones are Krk and Cres. The highest point is Dinara at 1,830 m.

History

In ancient times, what is now Croatia was part of the regions of Illyria and Dalmatia. This region came under Roman control and became a province known as Illyricum from 27 BC. In the 5th century, Rome was declining and the Ostrogoths seized an opportunity to rule the area for a short period. The Avars arrived soon after, incorporating the land into the Avar Khaganate.

In the early 7th century the Croats came and defeated the Avars, and formed two duchies: Croatia and Pannonia. The establishment of the Trpimirović Dynasty ca 850 strengthened the Dalmatian Croat Duchy, which together with the Pannonian principality became a kingdom in 925 under King Tomislav. The independent Croatian kingdom lasted until 1102 when Croatia, after a series of dynastic struggles entered into a personal union with Hungary, with a Hungarian king ruling over both countries. In 1526, after the Battle of Mohács, in which Hungary suffered a catastrophic defeat against the Ottoman Turks, Croatia severed its relationship with Hungary and its parliament (Sabor) voted to form a new personal union with the Habsburg Monarchy. Croatia remained an autonomous kingdom within the Hapsburg state (and later Austria-Hungary) until the empire's dissolution following its defeat in World War I.

In 1918, a short-lived State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs (carved out of south Slavic parts of Austria-Hungary) joined the Kingdom of Serbia to form the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later renamed Yugoslavia in 1929. The new state was unitarist in character, erasing all historical borders within its new territorial division, which resulted in a strong movement for more autonomy for Croatia. This was achieved in 1939, only days before the start of World War II, when Croatia was granted broad autonomy within Yugoslavia as Banovina of Croatia. When Axis powers Germany and Italy invaded Yugoslavia in 1941, the state was dissolved, parts of it annexed to Germany and Italy, and puppet governments installed in Croatia and Serbia. After the 1941 split between the Partisans and the Chetniks in Serbia, the Chetnik groups in central, eastern, and northwestern Bosnia found themselves caught between the German and Ustaše (NDH) forces on one side and the Partisans on the other. Almost immediately, a strong resistance movement was formed, led by communist leader Josip Broz "Tito" (whose father was a Croat), which gained broad popular support. The Ustasa-led Nazi puppet state, the Independent State of Croatia – which included most of present-day Croatia, all Bosnia and Herzegovina and a small part of Serbia – had a population of some six million people, including around 3.5 million Croats, 1.8 million Serbs and 700,000 Bosniaks. Modelled on Nazi Nuremberg laws, the NDH in April 1941 passed legislation against “non-Aryan” Jews and Roma. After Jasenovac concentration camp was founded in 1941, solely by the governing Ustaše regime rather than by Nazi Germany as in the rest of occupied Europe, in its vision of an ethnically pure state – with Bosniaks considered as Croats of the Muslim faith – the NDH started targeting Serbs and two minorities, Jews and Roma, and others were killed because they were anti-fascists, as well as real or suspected political enemies. In the 2000s, the Jasenovac Memorial Site started working on a list of all the inmates who were killed or died at the camp, using existing name-by-name lists, documents, confirmations of deaths and verifications by relatives. The Memorial site has put together the most comprehensive name-by-name list so far, which includes a total of 83,145 victims. Sorted by ethnicity, the list has 47,627 Serbs, 16,173 Roma and 13,116 Jews, while Croats, Bosniaks and others make up the total number. While the Memorial Site itself says that the number is not final, as well as admitting the possibility that there are isolated mistakes in its list, it believes that the total death toll is within its estimate of between 80,000 and 100,000 people. By early 1945, the NDH army withdrew towards Zagreb with German and Cossack troops. They were overpowered and the advance of Tito's Partisan forces, joined by the Soviet Red Army, caused a mass retreat of the Ustaše towards Austria. The British Army, however, refused them entry and turned them over to the Partisan forces, starting the Bleiburg repatriations. Although NDH (1941–1945) was part of Croatia's history, current Constitution of Croatia does not officially recognise the Independent State of Croatia as the historical or legitimate predecessor state of the current Croatian republic.

After the end of World War II, the Constitution of 1946 made the People's Republic of Croatia and the People's Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina two of the six constituent republics of the new Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Communist Yugoslavia was formed with Tito becoming "president for life". Tito ruled with a strong hand, using political repression and secret police to quell any separatist sentiments, with the official motto of the new country being "Brotherhood and Union". Still, Yugoslavia didn't belong to the Warsaw Pact, and broke off political ties with the USSR in 1948. It was by far the most open socialist country in Europe, and its citizens enjoyed more civil liberties and a higher living standard than the rest of the Communist bloc.

After Tito's death in 1980, the weakening of political repression led to a period of political instability. Faced with the rise of nationalist sentiment, a decade-long recession, and the weakening of communist grip on power on the eve of the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, the first free elections were held in Yugoslavia in almost 45 years. In January 1990, the Communist Party fragmented along national lines, with the Croatian and Slovenian delegations demanding a looser federation, while the Serbian side, headed by Slobodan Milošević, opposed this leading to a rise in inter-ethnic tensions. In late April and early May 1990, the first multi-party elections were held in Croatia, with Franjo Tuđman's win and constitutional changes in 1990 transforming the Socialist Republic of Croatia into the Republic of Croatia. Nationalist Serbs in Croatia boycotted the Croatian Sabor and seized control of Serb-inhabited territory, setting up road

blocks and voting for those areas to become autonomous. The Serb "autonomous oblasts" would soon become increasingly intent on achieving independence from Croatia. This led to open war in Croatia and later in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and by mid-1991, the Croatian War of Independence had already started.

Croatia was first recognised as an independent state on 26 June 1991 by Slovenia, which declared its own independence on the same day as Croatia. But by 29 June, the Croatian and Slovenian authorities agreed to a three-month moratorium on the independence declaration, in an effort to ease tensions. On 8 October 1991, the Croatian Parliament severed all remaining ties declaring their independence from Yugoslavia. Serb-controlled areas of Croatia were part of the three "Serb Autonomous Oblasts" later known as the Republic of Serbian Krajina, bulk of which would not be under Croatian control until 1995.

Finally, Croatian independence was internationally recognised in January 1992, when both the European Economic Community and the United Nations granted Croatia diplomatic recognition, and the country was accepted into the United Nations shortly thereafter. The war ended four years later, in 1995, with a decisive Croatian victory in Operation Storm. Present day borders of Croatia were established when the remaining Serb-held areas of eastern Slavonia were restored to Croatia pursuant to the Erdut Agreement of November 1995, with the process concluded in January 1998. The anniversary of Operation Storm is celebrated as Thanksgiving Day in Croatia every August 5.

After a period of accelerated economic growth in the late 1990s and 2000s Croatia joined NATO in 2009 and the European Union in 2013. Croatia today is a functioning liberal democracy, with a free market system and a robust welfare state.

Holidays

- **January 1:** New Year's Day
- **January 6:** Epiphany
- **Easter** (according to the Gregorian calendar)
- **Corpus Christi** (60 days after Easter)
- **May 1:** International Workers' Day
- **June 22:** Anti-Fascist Struggle Day
- **June 25:** Statehood Day
- **August 5:** Victory and Homeland Thanksgiving Day and the Day of Croatian defenders
- **August 15:** Assumption of Mary
- **October 8:** Independence Day
- **December 25:** Christmas

Talk

See also: [Croatian phrasebook](#)

The main language is [Croatian](#), a Slavic language similar to [Serbian](#) and [Bosnian](#).

Most younger Croatians who grew up after the 90s can speak English proficiently (especially in urban areas), but [German](#) and [Italian](#) are also very popular (largely because of historical reasons). Elderly people rarely speak English, although they may be able to converse in German or Italian. Some people might also

speak French or Russian. Many older people can speak Russian as it was taught as one of the foreign languages in some schools during the socialist era, but this has been almost completely supplanted by English after the Cold War.

Get in

Entry requirements

Croatia is a member of the Schengen Agreement.

- There are normally no border controls between countries that have signed and implemented the treaty. This includes most of the European Union and a few other countries.
- There are usually identity checks before boarding international flights or boats. Sometimes there are temporary border controls at land borders.
- A **visa** granted for any Schengen member is valid in all other countries that have signed *and* implemented the treaty.
- Please see Travelling around the Schengen Area for more information on how the scheme works, which countries are members and **what the requirements are for your nationality**.

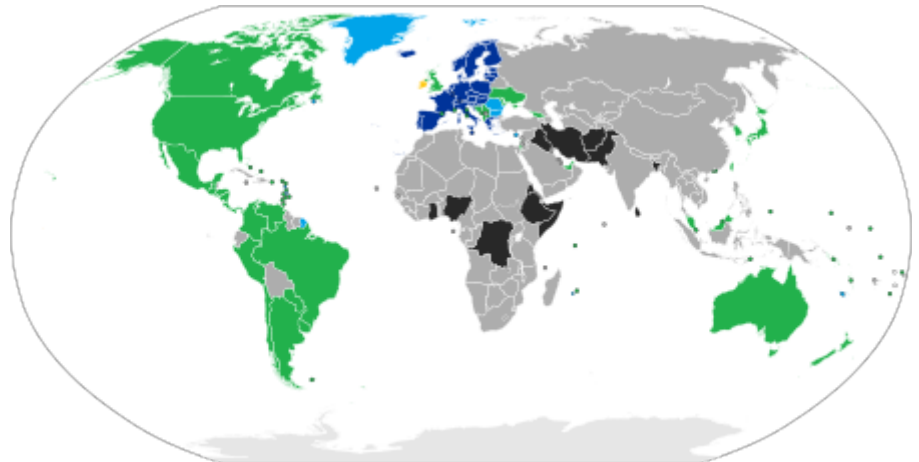
Any person not covered by a visa exemption will need to apply for a visa at a Croatian embassy or consulate in advance. The application fee for a short stay Croatian visa is €35. However, it may be possible for multiple-entry Schengen visa holders to use their Schengen visa to enter Croatia provided that it remains valid during their stay.

More information about visa exemptions and the visa application procedure is available at the website of the Croatian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs [1] (<http://www.mvep.hr/en/consular-information/visas/visa-requirements-overview/>).

By plane

Croatia has international airports in Zagreb, Osijek, Pula, Rijeka, Zadar, Split and Dubrovnik.

- **Zagreb** (<http://www.zagreb-airport.hr/>) (**ZAG**^{IATA}) as the capital city is the hub for Croatia Airlines (<http://www.croatiaairlines.com/>), with conventional-carrier flights to the other major cities of Europe, plus Istanbul, Tel Aviv, Dubai and Doha. There are domestic flights to Osijek, Pula, Zadar, Split and Dubrovnik.



Visa policy of Schengen states

Croatia in Schengen

Croatia entered the Schengen Area on 1 January 2023. Land & sea borders from fellow Schengen member countries are abolished, meanwhile air traffic border will be abolished on 26 March 2023. Croatian embassies & consulate is also issuing Schengen visas as of 1 January 2023.

- **Osijek (<http://www.osijek-airport.hr/>) (OSI^{IATA})** in the east of the country has flights to Cologne, Zagreb and Dubrovnik, and that's about all. It used to have budget flights serving travellers heading into nearby Serbia, but nowadays they can fly to Belgrade so this traffic has dried up.
- **Pula (<https://airport-pula.hr/>) (PUY^{IATA}), Rijeka (<http://www.rijeka-airport.hr>) (RJK^{IATA}), Zadar (<https://www.zadar-airport.hr>) (ZAD^{IATA}), Split (<http://www.split-airport.hr>) (SPU^{IATA}) and Dubrovnik (<https://www.airport-dubrovnik.hr>) (DBV^{IATA})** largely serve the tourist trade, with many seasonal flights across Europe. They're rather quiet in winter after the daily flight to Zagreb has departed. See also individual city pages "Get in".

Europe is well-served, but from North America, you'll need to change at a continental hub such as London or Frankfurt.

Airports in neighbouring countries are sometimes a better option. These include Ljubljana, Graz, Trieste and Venice Marco Polo.

Conversely, Dubrovnik is sometimes used as the airport for Montenegro, though less often nowadays as flights to Tivat have expanded.

By train

The rail network passenger lines are operated by Hrvatske Željeznice (HŽ) Putnički Prijevoz (PP) (<https://prodaja.hzpp.hr/en>). They connect all major Croatian cities, except Dubrovnik (you can take a train to Split then take one of the frequent buses or the more scenic ferry to Dubrovnik, the train station is at the pier). There are direct lines from Austria, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, Slovenia. There are indirect lines from almost all other European countries.



The main railway station in Zagreb

From neighbouring countries, there are EuroCity, InterCity and EuroNight rail services:

- From Germany: One night train per day: Munich – Salzburg – Ljubljana – Zagreb (tickets & timetable online at <https://tickets.oebb.at/en>)
- From Austria: One daily EC train from Vienna, additional seasonal overnight trains (tickets & timetable online at <https://tickets.oebb.at/en>)
- From Hungary: Two daily EC trains and additional seasonal overnight trains (tickets & timetable online at <https://jegy.mav.hu/>)
- From Switzerland: One night train per day: Zurich – Zagreb (tickets & timetable online at <https://tickets.oebb.at/en>)
- From Slovakia and Czech Republic: Seasonal overnight trains from RegioJet and ZSSK

No direct trains operate between Zagreb, Beograd and Sarajevo.

While Croatia is covered on some Eurail passes, staff at domestic ticket windows tend to have no idea about validating the pass on the first day of use. There are recorded instances of staff saying that the conductor would validate the pass, and the conductor simply treating it as a regular ticket. Fortunately, the international ticket staff (particularly in Zagreb) are aware of how to validate the pass, and have been known to validate it retroactively where necessary. They even ask for the details of the domestic ticket seller who gave the wrong information.

The traveller is therefore recommended to have already validated their Eurail pass on arrival in Croatia, or to have it validated at an international window even if the first trip on it will be domestic.

By car

To enter Croatia, a driver's license, an automobile registration card and vehicle insurance documents are required. If you need roadside assistance, you should dial 1987. The following speeds are permitted:

- 50 km/h – within built-up areas
- 90 km/h – outside built-up areas
- 110 km/h – on major motor routes
- 130 km/h – on motorways
- 80 km/h – for motor vehicles with a caravan trailer
- 80 km/h – for buses and buses with a light trailer

When driving in the rain, you should adjust speed to conditions on wet roads. Driving with headlights is not obligatory during the day (during Daylight Savings Time; it is obligatory during winter months). Use of mobile phones while driving is not permitted. Maximum permitted amount of alcohol in blood is 0.05% (matching neighbouring Slovenia and Bosnia-Herzegovina) although this has varied and was down to 0% until that was found to not be tenable in the country. Use of seat belts is obligatory.

Hrvatski Auto Klub (<http://www.hak.hr>) is the Croatian Automobile Club dedicated to assisting drivers and promoting greater traffic security. Its site offers minute-by-minute updates, status of national traffic, weather, numerous maps and webcams all over Croatia. Content is available in Croatian, English, German and Italian.

By bus

Once you're in the country, Croatia has a reliable and cheap bus network.

If you are coming from Italy there are two buses daily from Venice leaving at 11:00 and 13:45 going to Istria, with a final stop in Pula. These are operated by different bus companies, but you can buy tickets for both buses at the ATVO bus office at the Venice bus station. The office is in the bus station, but located outside on the ground level across from where all the buses park. Both buses pick up at spot b15. It is roughly a 5-hour bus ride, with stops in Trieste and Rovinj. You can also pick up the bus at the bus station in Mestre, 15 minutes after the scheduled bus leaves Venice. Coming in from Trieste, Italy is popular among Europeans, for Trieste is a Ryanair destination. There are multiple daily bus lines from Trieste to Croatian cities operated by the Arriva Croatia (<https://www.arriva.com.hr>) bus company. You cross the Italian-Slovenian border first, and then the Slovenian-Croatian border, but they are very close to one another.

Dubrovnik and Split are the main destinations of international buses from Bosnia and Hercegovina or Montenegro, with daily buses travelling to cities such as Sarajevo, Mostar and Kotor (some lines such as Split-Mostar operate every few hours). Seasonal lines also extend through to Skopje from Dubrovnik. Border formalities on the buses are extremely efficient, and do not involve leaving the bus (previous services from Dubrovnik to Kotor involved changing buses at the Croatian border).

Osijek is a large bus hub for international travel to Hungary, Serbia and Bosnia in addition to its local buses, and the station is located conveniently next to the railway station. Many buses heading from Zagreb north into Hungary or Austria will pass through Varaždin.

- From Germany you can travel to most Croatian larger cities with Arriva Croatia (<https://www.arriva.com.hr>) and Čazmatrans (<https://cazmatrans.hr/en>).

By boat

Ferries are cheap and go regularly between various places by the coast. Although not the fastest, they are probably the best way to see the beautiful Croatian islands of the Adriatic Sea.

Jadrolinija (<http://www.jadrolinija.hr/default.aspx?lang=2>) is the main Croatian passenger shipping line that maintains the largest number of regular international and domestic ferry and shipping lines. The following international lines are serviced by car ferries:



Split harbour

- Rijeka – Zadar – Split – Hvar – Korčula – Dubrovnik – Bari
- Split – Ancona – Split
- Korčula – Hvar – Split – Ancona
- Zadar – Ancona – Zadar
- Zadar – Dugi otok – Ancona
- Dubrovnik – Bari – Dubrovnik

Blue Line International (<http://www.blueline-ferries.com>) also covers the international line Split – Ancona – Split



Dubrovnik is a city in Southern Dalmatia. Croatia has 20 UNESCO heritage sites and treasures of tradition.

Venezia Lines (<http://venezialines.com>) has regular catamaran lines between Venice and the Croatian cities of Poreč, Pula, Rovinj and Rabac.

Get around

By plane

National airline company **Croatia Airlines** (<http://www.croatiaairlines.hr/>) connects major cities in Croatia to each other and foreign destinations. Due to the comparatively short distances and relatively high hassle of air travel – especially when you travel with luggage – domestic air travel is used mostly for getting to end points – e.g., Zagreb to Dubrovnik (see map) and vice-versa.

Another popular flight (available in the summer months only) is between Split and Osijek, saving a long trip back through Croatia, or alternatively through the middle of Bosnia.

By train

Train travel is definitely improving in Croatia, with money being spent on updating the aging infrastructure and vehicles. Trains are clean and mostly on time.

Croatia's rail network connects all major Croatian cities, except Dubrovnik. If you want to visit Dubrovnik, you will have to travel by train to Split, and then go on the bus for Dubrovnik. Trains to Pula are actually connected via Slovenia due to historical accident, though there are designated connecting buses from Rijeka.

Rail is still the cheapest connection between inland and coast, though not the most frequent. 160 km/h "tilting trains" that connect Zagreb with Split and other major cities in Croatia such as Rijeka and Osijek provide more comfort and fast journeys between cities (Zagreb-Split is 5.5 hr, Osijek is 3 hr, when other trains take around 4.5 hr). If you make a reservation early enough you can get a substantial discount, or if you are a holder of an ISIC card.

Information for the trains can be found on the Hrvatske željeznice – Croatian Railways (<http://www.hzpp.hr/en>) site in Croatian and English has timetable and prices.

Tickets are not usually sold on board, except if you happen to get on the train on one of the few stations/stops without ticket sales. However, only local trains stop on such stations. In all other cases, a ticket bought on the train will cost considerably more than the one bought outside the train.

By bus

A very comprehensive coach network connects all parts of the country. Bus service between major cities (intercity lines) is quite frequent, as are regional services. The most frequent bus terminal in Croatia is Bus Terminal Zagreb (in Croatian "Autobusni kolodvor Zagreb"). Buses are faster than trains for inter-city travel. See Bus travel in the former Yugoslavia for more information.



Bus station in Šibenik. As elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia, bus is a practical way for getting around

- Autobusni kolodvor Zagreb (<http://www.akz.hr>) – Zagreb Bus Station (timetable information, content in Croatian and English)
- CroatiaBus (<http://www.croatiabus.hr/>) – bus company (timetable information, prices, content in Croatian and English)
- Arriva Croatia (<http://www.arriva.com.hr>) – bus company (timetable information, prices, content in Croatian, English, German, and Italian)
- Autobusni promet Varaždin (<http://www.ap.hr/>) – bus company (timetable information, prices, content in Croatian, English, and German)
- Libertas Dubrovnik (<http://www.libertasdubrovnik.hr/>) – bus terminal and company (international and domestic information; content mostly in Croatian)

By boat

Croatia is endowed with a beautiful coastline which is best explored by ferry to access the hundreds of islands.

In many instances, the only way to get to the islands is by ferry or catamaran. If you plan on using either you should check these web sites because they have the regular ferry and catamaran information.

- Jadrolinija [2] (<http://www.jadrolinija.hr>) – the national ferry company. In addition to the routes operating from the major cities to the islands, it operates a ferry along the Adriatic Coast from Rijeka to Dubrovnik (and then across to Bari, Italy) calling at Split, Hvar, Mljet, and Korčula.

Check the timetables [3] (http://www.croatiatraveller.com/ferries/coastal_ferries.htm) as the schedules are seasonal. The boats are large and have sleeping facilities as the Rijeka-Split leg goes overnight.

- [SNAV \(https://www.snav.it/hr/\)](https://www.snav.it/hr/) – an Italian company connecting Split with Ancona and Pescara. Check timetables [4] (<https://www.snav.it/en/>) as the schedules are seasonal.
- [Split Taxi Boat \(http://www.speedtaxiboat.com\)](http://www.speedtaxiboat.com) – speed taxi boat transfers from Split Town or Split Airport to nearby islands.
- [Azzura lines \(http://www.azzuralines.com/\)](http://www.azzuralines.com/) – an Italian operator connecting Dubrovnik with Bari Check timetables [5] (<http://azzuralines.com/>) as the schedules are seasonal.

Outside the summer months it is often difficult or impossible to make a day trip to the more remote islands. This is because ferry schedules are made to suit commuters who live on islands and travel to the mainland, not vice versa.

For a more bespoke experience, there are literally dozens of yacht charter and other boat hire companies at virtually every significant port along the Adriatic coast.

By car

Roads in Croatia are usually well maintained, but can be very narrow and full of curves. Some local roads in Istria have been worn down to a smooth surface from regular wear and tear, and can be extremely slippery when wet. Highways with more than one lane per direction (motorways) tend to connect major cities and can be well out of the way even for some longer routes such as to Plitvice. Speed limits outside motorways are thus low (60–90 km/h), and it's not recommended to drive faster (although most locals do), especially at night. Beware of animals crossing the road.

In case you want to overtake a slow vehicle on a narrow road, often the drivers in front of you will flash their right yellow turning lights and drive all the way on the right to signal the drivers behind that it is okay to overtake. But this is at your own risk.

Renting a car is around the same price as in the EU (from around €40). Almost all cars have a manual transmission. Most rental agencies in the Balkans allow you to rent a car in one country and drive in the neighbouring countries however try to avoid a renting a car in Serbia and driving it into Croatia (or vice versa) in order to avoid negative attention from nationalists.

On Croatian Motorways [6] (<http://www.croatia-expert.com/2009/03/toll-croatian-highway/>) toll fees apply (and may be paid in either kuna or euros). The A6 motorway runs between Zagreb and Rijeka, and the main motorway A1 from Zagreb to Dubrovnik is still under construction (the current ending point is in Vrgorac, which is 70 km from Dubrovnik). To reach southern Dalmatia including Dubrovnik, you must cross a short portion of Bosnia-Herzegovina (the Neum strip), so check if you need a visa or other special requirements for entry into Bosnia (EU and US citizens don't need a visa). A bridge to Pelješac peninsula is in construction and will soon allow travel to Dubrovnik without passing through Bosnia-Herzegovina.



Sisak is a city in Central Croatia, 55 km from Zagreb.

Another major motorway is the A3, linking the Slovenian border (not far from Zagreb) with eastern Croatia and the Serbian border (120 km from Belgrade). The general speed limit on motorways is 130 km/h (81 mph). You will probably encounter cars driving much faster, but following their example is of course highly unsafe. Check your mirrors before pulling into the left (passing) lane, cars may approach from behind at higher speeds than on typical Western European motorways.

When exiting a toll motorway, ask the receipt at toll booth if it is not given to you to be sure you do not get overcharged (you could receive along with the receipt some unexpected change compared with the price you were given verbally).

If an unknown person flashes their car lights at you it may be a sign that they've recently passed a police unit doing speed limit checks. Ensure you comply with all the traffic rules and regulations to avoid being stopped and fined.

Trying to find a parking space near Croatia's coastal old towns in the summer can be an exercise in futility. Even though prices range from the merely expensive in Split to the extortionate in Dubrovnik, the spaces fill up very quickly. However, away from the old towns, parking is convenient and often free at shopping malls and large supermarkets, sports venues, near residential tower blocks and at restaurants (free for guests).

Motorways and border crossings can experience congestion at high-traffic weekends during the tourist season.

By taxi

You can use a taxi service by calling 970, or sometimes another number for a private company – check individual city articles. The taxi usually comes within 10 to 15 minutes from the call except in the busy summer season where it depends on how much business they have. Croatian taxis are generally rather expensive. In major cities prices are around €1/km, more in Split but less in Zagreb. Uber and other rideshare services exist but have about the same prices except during surges.

You can also book the transportation in advance which is great when you are in a hurry or have a larger number of people in need of transportation, or you just want everything organised in advance.

You can also arrange a taxi service by e-mail in advance to have even more comfort and to save money since these taxi operators are cheaper than the regular taxi service. (<http://www.taxisplit.net>)

Ride-hailing is available in Croatia and the following are the most anticipated providers:

- **Bolt** (<https://bolt.eu>). Includes many towns. (updated Jul 2020)
- **Uber** (<https://www.uber.com/global/en/cities/zagreb/>). Works in Zagreb. (updated Jul 2020)

By thumb

Hitchhiking is generally good, but on some roads, it is not permitted. Roads on which you cannot hitchhike are usually denoted by a sign with the word 'autostop' crossed out ('autostop' is Croatian for 'hitchhiking'). These are generally motorways: Hitchhiking directly on a motorway (i.e. while standing on the stopping lane) could easily result in a fine if a police car passes by. If you can get to a highway toll stop simply ask people to take you with them as they open their windows to pay the toll. The toll collectors usually won't mind. The tricky part, of course, is to get to the toll stop. If you are in Zagreb and you are,

like most people, heading south, take the bus 111 from the Savski most station in Zagreb and ask the bus driver where to get off to get to the toll stop. The next best place to ask people to pick you up are gas stations. And finally, using the good old thumb will work too if everything else fails.

See

Croatia is dense with places that are well worthy of a visit, owing to its diverse regions, each with its own layered past. Towns and cities generally have a historical urban core that exhibits the architectural heritage of a specific era. To get a sense of Croatia as a whole—how it was shaped by different influences, and the resulting contrasts—it is important to visit both the coastal and the inland part of the country. Dubrovnik being such a world renowned destination, it is often taken as the exemplar of the former style. However it is more of an enclosed world with its admirably individual aesthetic (having been an independent city-state for the most of its history). Other similarly gratifying places, like Šibenik, carry the true spirit of Dalmatia, but going further north along the coast, there is Rijeka, which again has quite a different kind of charm.



Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb

Dominating continental Croatia lies its capital of Zagreb, a home to nearly 1 million. It is a modern city with all the modern features, yet it mostly has an easy-going atmosphere. In the east, in the region of Slavonia with its regional capital Osijek and the war torn Vukovar are awe inspiring. Scattered throughout the region are vineyards and wine cellars, most of which give tours and tastings.

Throughout the country there are numerous cultural venues that are worth seeing. Croatia has 10 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 8 national parks and 10 nature parks. In total, the country has 444 protected areas. Beautiful Adriatic sea stretches along 1,777 km (1,104 mi) of coastline, there are 1,246 islands to be seen making Croatia an attractive nautical destination.

Do

Sailing

Sailing is a good way to see the coastal islands and networks of small archipelagos, and it gives you a chance to see some incredible bays that are simply inaccessible by anything other than a boat. Most charters leave from Split or the surrounding area on the North or the South circuit, each offering its own pros and cons, although Dubrovnik is becoming increasingly popular. A good way is to book a package with a company at home (and let them worry about speaking in Croatian!), although many Croatian companies do offer both bareboat and crewed charters.



City of Hvar has average of 2726 hours of sunshine per year, as do many other Croatian towns on Adriatic coast. Croatia is a land of urban culture which numbers more cities than any other part of the Mediterranean

Booking a charter vessel is basically done in two payments – 50 percent of the charter price is paid as a deposit, after which the booking is confirmed. The other 50 percent of the charter fee is usually paid six weeks before the charter date. Before paying the first charter fee you should request to see the charter contract from the agency where you chartered a boat – pay close attention to the cancellation fees because many times if you cancel your charter vacation you could lose the initial fifty percent you have already paid. After that you are all set to go sailing.

Most yachts are only available on a Saturday – Saturday basis in peak season (May – September) but there may be more flexibility from yacht companies in April and October if you can't do the full week. When you arrive at the 'home marina' (where your chartered yacht is situated), you need to do the check in (usually Saturday around 16:00) and you have to do the shopping for the charter vacation – there is usually a mini-market in the marina, but it will be expensive compared to a normal supermarket. Typically you will be nearest a big supermarket on the first day, so it's the best time to stock up. Buy everything that you possibly can (that won't go off) – the sea and winds can be unpredictable and you don't want to get stuck on the boat without anything to eat or drink! Top up your shopping with fresh bread, meat, fruit and vegetables in local marinas.

You can also order from yacht provisioning services who can deliver your shopping straight to your yacht. This is convenient because it takes the load off you and the things you must do when you arrive at the marina for your sailing holiday, but also (obviously) works out more expensive.

Naturist resorts

Croatia was the first country in Europe to introduce the concept of commercial naturist resorts. According to some estimates about 15% of all tourists that visit the country are naturists or nudists (more than one million each year). There are more than 20 official naturist resorts as well as a very large number of the so-called free beaches which are unofficial naturist beaches, sometimes controlled and maintained by local tourist authorities. In fact, you are likely to find nudists on any beach outside of town centres. Naturist beaches in Croatia are marked as "FKK".

The most popular nudist destinations are Pula, Hvar and island Rab.

Medical tourism

Increasingly Croatia is becoming a popular place for health tourism. A number of dental surgeries have experience in treating short term visitors to Croatia. Croatian dentists study for 5 years in Zagreb, Split or Rijeka. Harmonization of training with EU standards has begun, in preparation for Croatia's accession.

Croatia for the disabled

Facilities for the disabled are not as developed as elsewhere, but there are exceptions to this and certain hotels, camp sites and beaches have facilities for the disabled and wheelchair access.

Lighthouses

One of Croatia's more "wild" holiday offers are the lighthouses. Most of them are situated on a deserted coastline or in the open sea. The speciality of this is that you are able to cut yourself off from the rest of the world and take the time to "smell the roses". Sometimes the best way to relax is to take part in a Robinson Crusoe style holiday.

Croatia has 11 rent-a-lighthouses along the Adriatic coast: Savudrija, Sv. Ivan, Rt Zub, Porer, Veli Rat, Prisnjak, Sv. Petar, Pločica, Sušac, Struga and Palagruža.

Buy

Money

Croatia uses the **euro**, like several other European countries. One euro is divided into 100 cents. The official symbol for the euro is €, and its ISO code is EUR. There is no official symbol for the cent.

All banknotes and coins of this common currency are legal tender within all the countries, except that low-denomination coins (one and two cent) are phased out in some of them. The banknotes look the same across countries, while coins have a standard common design on the reverse, expressing the value, and a national country-specific design on the obverse. The obverse is also used for different designs of commemorative coins. The design of the obverse does not affect the coin's acceptability.

Prices are around 10% to 20% lower than most other EU countries. Tourist destinations and articles are much more expensive.

Exchange rates for euros

As of January 2023:

- US\$1 ≈ €0.9
- UK£1 ≈ €1.1
- AU\$1 ≈ €0.6
- CA\$1 ≈ €0.7
- Japanese ¥100 ≈ €0.7

Exchange rates fluctuate. Current rates for these and other currencies are available from XE.com (<https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/>)

Kuna

Croatia's former currency, the **kuna**, denoted by the symbol "**kn**" (ISO code: **HRK**) was retired on 1 January 2023. Any amount of kuna you have left can be converted to euros at any Croatian post office until June 30, and at any Croatian bank until the end of 2023. Exchanging at a bank is free of charge until July 1. Croatia's national central bank will exchange kuna banknotes free of charge until further notice, and coins until December 2025.

ATMs

ATMs (in Croatian *bankomat*) are readily available throughout Croatia. They will accept various European bank cards, credit cards (Diners Club, Eurocard/MasterCard, Visa, American Express, etc.) and debit cards (Cirrus, Maestro, Visa electron, etc.) Read the labels and notices on the machine before using.

Tipping

Discrete service charges are not included in the bill, so voluntary tipping is customary. However, as in the rest of Europe, waiters and bartenders are paid (at least) a statutory living wage, so tip amounts tend to be on the small side—if you're paying for a drink, a nominal tip by rounding up or leaving just any eurocent coin on the table is normal, but if you're paying for dinner, it's more normal to tip 5-10%, with a bias toward

rounding up (say, the bill could be €18.5 or €28.5, and in both cases an equally normal tip would be €1.5). Tipping 10% is a sign that you are satisfied with the service; more than that is unusual. If generally paying with a credit card it's a good idea to carry some small-denomination currency, to be able to tip in cash.

It's also somewhat customary to tip certain other service personell (small amounts only, in the manner of "keep the change"), such as taxi drivers and hairdressers.

Tax-free shopping

If you buy goods worth more than a threshold, you are entitled to a PDV (VAT) tax return when leaving the country. This applies to all goods except petroleum products. At point of purchase ask the sales person for a PDV-P form. Fill it out and have it stamped on the spot. On leaving Croatia the receipt will be verified by the Croatian Customs service. A PDV refund in kunas can be obtained within six months, either at the same shop where you bought the goods (in that case the tax will be refunded to you immediately), or by posting the verified receipt back to the shop, together with the account number into which the refund should be paid. In this case the refund is dealt with within 15 days of receipt of the claim. There is another, much easier way to receive the refund. Buy your goods in shops with a "Croatia Tax-free Shopping" label. This label is displayed on the shop's entrance, usually next to the labels of credit and debit cards this particular shop accepts. Using an international coupon, refund is possible in all countries-members of the Tax-free international chain. In this case the service charge is deducted from the tax refund amount.

Croatia now uses the Global Blue system. They will do the refund and take a commission. You can do this at the airport or post it once you get home.

Natural cosmetics

The ingredients used (herbs, olive oil, etc.) are grown in Croatia. In comparison to some world famous beauty products, Croatian natural cosmetics present real value for money.

Ulola (<http://www.ulola.com/>) makes soaps, bath salts, body butters and more. It's all natural and comes in combinations like orange and cinnamon, and goats milk and almond oil.

S-Atea (<http://www.atea.hr/>) produces soaps, shower gels, body butter and more. Seaweed, olive oil, rosemary and lavender are some of the ingredients they use.

Brac fini sapuni (<http://www.bracfinisapuni.com/>) (Brac quality soaps) makes a wide range of natural soaps. Their bath line includes Aurum Croaticum made from virgin olive oil and thin leafs of 23 carat gold.

Local designers

There are many Croatian designers and clothing specialists.

Etnobutik "Mara" (<http://etnobutik-mara.com/>) (designs by Vesna Milković) offers a range of really unique clothing and accessories inscribed with "glagoljica" (glagolitic script; old Slavic alphabet). Some of her designs are protected as Authentic Croatian produce.

I-gle Fashion Studio by two female designers Nataša Mihaljčičin i Martina Vrdoljak-Ranilović. Their clothing is sold in Harvey Nichols in Knightsbridge (London).

Nebo ("Sky") is a fashion house that makes really nice, funky clothes and shoes.

Nit ("Thread") is definitely not widely known even among Croats but is definitely worth visiting as they have some "funky and arty but serious" clothing items that are "value for money".

Borovo is a well-priced and stylish shoe company which makes everything from flip-flops to desert boots and high heels.

Eat

Croatian cuisine is quite diverse so it is hard to say what meal is most typically Croatian. In the eastern continental regions (Slavonija and Baranja) spicy sausage such as *kulen* or *kulenova seka* is a must try. *Čobanac* ("shepherd's stew") is a mixture of several kinds of meat with a lot of red spicy paprika. In Hrvatsko Zagorje and Central Croatia pasta filled with cheese called *štrukli* is a famous delicacy (it is said that the best *štrukli* in Croatia is served in the Esplanade Hotel restaurant in Zagreb), as is *purica s mlincima*, which is baked turkey cooked in a special kind of pastry. *Sir i vrhnje* (sour cream with cottage cheese) can be bought fresh on the Zagreb main market Dolac. Croats love a bit of oil and you will find plenty of it in *piroška*. In the mountainous regions of Lika and Gorski Kotar meals containing mushrooms, wild berries and game meat are very popular. One of typical dishes in Lika is *police* (oven-baked potatoes covered with bacon) and several kinds of cheese (smoked cheese and *škipavac*).



Croatian cheese

The coastal region is well known for its truffle delicacies and soup *maneštra od bobić* (Istria), Dalmatian *pršut* and *paški sir* (Pag-island cheese). Dishes made of fresh fish and other products of the sea (calamari, octopus, crabs, scampi) shouldn't be given a miss! Many places serve fish delivered from the local fisherman the night before – find out which ones!

Croatian cuisine has yet to come up with a fast food representative. The market is dominated by globally ubiquitous hamburgers and pizzas but you will also find "burek" and "ćevapčići" imported from the Ottoman Empire, which stretched from the Middle East to neighbouring Bosnia. The latter two dishes are widely popular throughout Southeastern Europe. Burek is a type of meat or cheese pastry whereas *ćevapčići* are seasoned minced meat shaped in finger-size portions served in bread and often covered with onions. Although definitely not a fast meal (takes several hours to prepare), also foreign in origin is the so-called *sarma* or sauerkraut rolls filled with minced meat and rice. For those coming back from nightclubs at 04:00 or 05:00 as is common in Croatia, it is popular to go to the local bakery and get fresh bread, burek or krafne (Croatian chocolate filled donuts) straight out of the oven. As far as fast food goes, who needs it when you can buy delicious *pršut* during the day and warm bread at night to compliment it. Most Croatians generally look down at fast food.



Ćevapi

Desserts: What it lacks in the fast food department Croatia makes up with a myriad of desserts. Probably the most famous is its delicious creamy cake called *kremšnite* but different kinds of *gibanica*, *štrudla* and *pita* (similar to strudel and pie) such as *orehnjača* (walnut), *makovnjača* (poppy) or *bučnica* (pumpkin and cheese) are also highly recommended. *Dubrovačka torta od skorupa* is delicious but hard to find. *Paprenjaci* (pepper cookies) are said to reflect Croatia's tumultuous history because they combine the harshness of the war periods (pepper) with the natural beauties (honey). They can be bought in most

souvenir shops though the freshly made ones are always a better choice. *Rapska torta* (The Rab island cake) is made with almonds and locally famous cherry liquor *Maraschino*. This is hardly an exhaustive list and to dive further into the regionalities of Croatian cuisine, one can read the city and region articles.

Chocolate candy *Bajadera* is available throughout shops in the country and along with *Griotte*, is one of the most famous products of the Croatian chocolate industry.

An unavoidable ingredient in many meals prepared in Croatia is "Vegeta". It is a spice produced by Podravka.

Olives: a lot of people claim that Croatian olives and their olive oil are the best in the world. Many brands exist and some of them have several world awards. Try to buy olive oil from Istra (although oil from Dalmatia is also excellent) and choose only Croatian brands for olives. Try to read the label before buying to ensure you are buying Croatian olives and oil, since there are many cheaper imports, usually from Greece. All of this can be found in most supermarkets, but you should be really aware of the imports. Most Croatians aren't experts and prefer cheaper products, so the cheaper oils dominate the shelves.

The olive oil is an irreplaceable ingredient in coastal Croatian cuisine, but be aware of the use of cheaper, non-Croatian oil in restaurants. Most tourists don't notice the difference so the restaurants don't find it profitable to use excellent oil; they rather use cheaper Spanish or Greek. Usually, asking the waiter for a better oil (and looking like an expert) helps, and soon the waiter will get you a first-class oil hidden away at the back of the restaurant.

Drink

Alcoholic: **Rakija**, a type of brandy which can be made of plum (*šljivovica*), grapes (*loza*), figs (*smokovača*), honey (*medica*) and many other types of fruit and aromatic herbs, is the main distilled beverage served in Croatia. **Pelinkovac** is a bitter herbal liquor popular in Central Croatia, but is said to resemble cough-medicine in flavor. Famous **Maraschino**, a liqueur flavored with Marasca cherries, which are grown around Zadar, Dalmatia.

Croatia also produces a broad palette of high quality wines (up to 700 wines with protected geographic origin), beers and mineral water. On the coast people usually serve "bevanda" with meals. Bevanda is heavy, richly flavored red wine mixed with plain water. Its counterpart in northern parts of Croatia is "gemišt". This term designates dry, flavored white wines mixed with mineral water.

Two popular domestic beers are "Karlovačko" and "Ožujsko", but "Velebtsko" and "Tomislav pivo" have a semi-cult status. It is served only in some places in Zagreb and Croatia. Many well-known European brands (Stella Artois, Beck's, Carling, Heineken and others) are made under license in Croatia.

Non-alcoholic: Mineral water, fruit juices, coffee (espresso, Turkish or instant), tea, Cedevita (instant multivitamin drink), and drinkable yogurt. Sometimes although very rarely you may find "sok od bazge" (elderflower juice) in the continental region. Worth trying! Also, in Istria there is a drink called "pašareta" and it is a sparkling red drink with herbal extracts. Very sweet and refreshing!



Bottles of medica

In some parts of Istria (especially south) in local basements, you can try 'smrikva' – a non-alcoholic refreshing drink made out of berries which grow on one sort of pine tree. The taste is a bit sour but very refreshing.

Alcoholic drinks can't be sold or served to anyone under 18, though this rule isn't strictly enforced.

Sleep

Accommodation in Croatia is increasingly geared towards well-furnished, self-declared four- and five-star hotels. Prices are at their most expensive during the warmer months from June to September, especially July and August. Many coastal hotels are closed during the winter but there is at least one place to stay which is open in the off-season in all major towns.

Private rooms and apartments are quite common, targeting the mass tourism market as visits to the country surged in the 2010s. Apartments tend to be self-containing, with a kitchen, bathroom, small lounge, and often a terrace outside.

B&Bs haven't really taken off in Croatia because of the bureaucratic rules in place. In the countryside, rural homestays have become more visible, particularly in the inland regions. These homestays are slightly pricier than the private rooms and apartments, but include breakfast and home-cooked meals.

Learn

European Union citizens have the same status as Croatian citizens when applying to Croatian universities. Full English-language courses in computer science and medicine are available in Zagreb and Split.

Work

Volunteering

Croatia is the destination of many worldwide volunteer organizations that send groups of volunteers throughout the year to help with agriculture, community development, education, animal welfare, and more. These programs are put together by nonprofits, community groups and volunteers to help locals improve their economy and way of life. With rich cultural history and stunning coastline, Croatia is truly is the jewel of eastern Europe. If you would like to travel to Croatia as a volunteer, visit these websites for volunteer programs, accommodations, travel dates, and tours.

- [Essential Croatia \(http://www.essentialcroatia.com\)](http://www.essentialcroatia.com)
- [ISV Croatia \(http://www.isvonline.com/croatia.html\)](http://www.isvonline.com/croatia.html)
- [Volunteers Centre Zagreb \(http://www.vcz.hr\)](http://www.vcz.hr)

Stay safe

In case of an emergency, dial **112** for fire brigade, police, ambulance or mountain rescue.

During summer make sure you use adequate SPF to protect yourself from **sunburn**. There are no ozone holes over Croatia but it's fairly easy to burn in the sun. If this happens make sure you get out of the sun, drink plenty of fluids and rehydrate your skin. The locals will often advise covering the burnt spot with cold yoghurt bought from the supermarket.

Since the hostilities ended in 1995, **landmines** remain buried in Croatian soil. If you plan to hike consult locals before you go. The suspected areas are marked with mine warning signs. Although mines are still a problem for Croatia, it is highly unlikely you will spot any minefields in Croatia today. However, it is still better not to leave paved roads, *even for a pee-break*, in areas you are not familiar with. If you find yourself in area that can be potential contaminated with mines, do not stray from marked roads or known safe areas. As of 2020, very few minefields remain in some rural areas. For further advice refer to Wikivoyage's [war zone safety](#) section.



A mine warning sign

Watch out for **bura wind danger** signs. The bura can be particularly strong in the Velebit area, where it can blow up to 200 km/h and overturn lorries. However, if the wind is strong enough to pose a significant danger to all traffic on a road section, that section will be closed. During strong bura wind, avoid any activity on the sea. Accidents caused by wind occur every year and claim adventurous tourists' lives in Croatia. From sailing accidents to drownings due to high water.

Avoid strip clubs at all costs. They are often run by very shady characters, and often overcharge their guests. Foreigners have been charged ~~€2000~~ for a bottle of champagne. These clubs overcharge their customers to the extreme, and their bouncers will not have any mercy if you tell them you can't pay. You will soon find yourself in a local hospital. Using common sense is essential, but due to the nature of the clubs this may be in short supply, and you may be better advised simply to steer well clear of these clubs.

Abuse of **LGBT people** is possible in Croatia, so travellers should avoid public displays of same-sex affection. People in urban centres are usually more tolerant than those in rural areas.

Far-right and **Neo-Nazi** activism is visible throughout Croatia, mostly targeting minorities like Serbs. While they are somewhat successful in distorting the country's history in World War II (such as by infiltrating the Croatian Wikipedia and filling it with neo-Nazi propaganda), there is no information that these activists target normal tourists.

Bribery and corruption are still common in Croatia, but unless you get involved in criminal activities, you won't be affected.

Stay healthy

No vaccinations are required when going to Croatia.

If you're going camping or hiking in continental Croatia during summer, you should be aware of ticks and tick-carrying diseases such as *encephalitis* and *lyme disease*. Approximately 3 ticks in 1000 carry the virus.

In Eastern Slavonia (particularly around the Kopački Rit near Osijek) wear long sleeves and take insect repellent.

Tap water in Croatia is perfectly safe, and in some areas considered the best in the world. However, you can still choose from several brands of excellent bottled water (Jamnica being the most popular, and Jana, several times awarded as the world's best bottled water.)

Though the water may be some of the best in the world, avoid drinking the home-made wine sold in refilled plastic jugs in many local farmer's markets as it may cause intestinal distress.

Respect

Croatia gained independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, and the 1990s were marked by ethnic conflict and the bloody and brutal war in Croatia is still a painful subject, but generally there should be no problem if you approach that topic with respect. Croatia has seen a heap of invaders through history; Greek, Roman, Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, Yugoslav, etc. Proudly independent today, calling Croatia Yugoslavia or calling Croats Yugoslav, would almost be considered an insult. Also don't call the Croatian language Serbo-Croatian, as you could easily come across a person sensitive about the issue.

Visitors will find that domestic politics and European affairs are everyday conversation subjects in Croatia.

Visitors should avoid describing Croatia as a Balkan country, as Croats prefer to think of their country as Mediterranean and Central European, and some will take offence at the word "Balkan". Geographically, southern and coastal Croatia is part of the Balkans, while areas north of the Sava and Kupa rivers are not.

Socially, displays of affection among the younger generation are the same as Western European standards, but the older generation (over 65) are still quite conservative.

When driving on rural roads, particularly when a driver has to pull in to allow you to pass, it is customary to wave a thanks to the other driver by raising your hand from the steering wheel.

Most Croats will respond to "thank you" with something along the lines of "It was nothing" or "not at all" which is equivalent to the English "Don't mention it".

Connect

Telephone

Croatia uses the GSM 900/1800 system for mobile phones. There are three providers, Hrvatski Telekom (formerly T-Mobile; also operates the Bonbon prepaid brand), A1 (formerly Vipnet; also operates the Tomato prepaid brand) and Telemach. Over 98% of the country's area is covered. Since 2006 UMTS (3G) is available as well, and as of 2013 also HSDPA and LTE. 5G is has also been available since 2022 with A1, Telemach, and Hrvatski Telekom deploying 5G networks in the country. If you have an unlocked phone, you can buy a prepaid SIM card. There have been promotions in which SIM cards were given away for free with newspapers, and sometimes even literally handed out on the street. GSM phones bundled with Hrvatski Telekom or A1 prepaid SIM cards can be found in post offices, grocery stores and kiosks at varying prices.

An alternative to using a mobile phone is calling cards which can be found in postal offices and kiosks, there are two providers, Dencall and Hitme. You can buy cards from 25 kn.

Area codes: When calling between cities (actually between counties) or from a mobile phone, you must dial specific area codes: (area code)+(phone number)

Zagreb (01) Split (021) Rijeka (051) Dubrovnik (020) Šibenik/Knin (022) Zadar (023) Osijek (031) Vukovar (032) Virovitica (033) Požega (034) Slavonski Brod (035) Čakovec (040) Varaždin (042) Bjelovar (043) Sisak (044) Karlovac (047) Koprivnica (048) Krapina (049) Istria (052) Lika/Senj (053) Mobile phones (091) (092) (095) (097) (098) or (099)

Internet

ADSL is common in Croatia. A 4 Mbit connection with unlimited downloads is available from T-Com and some other providers like Metronet or Iskon. Cable internet is available from B.net with a wide range of speeds and prices.

Internet cafés are available in all major cities. They are relatively cheap and reliable. A free Wi-Fi signal can be found virtually in every city (cafés, restaurants, hotels, some libraries, schools, colleges). Private unsecured networks have become uncommon.

Postal service

Croatia's postal service is generally reliable, even if sometimes a bit slow. Every city and town has a post office. [Here \(http://www.posta.hr/default.aspx?pretpum&id=3417\)](http://www.posta.hr/default.aspx?pretpum&id=3417) you can find their exact locations, and [here \(http://www.posta.hr/default.aspx?izracun&id=3417\)](http://www.posta.hr/default.aspx?izracun&id=3417) is the price list (the prices change often).



A Croatian mail box

Television, radio and printed media

[HRT \(http://www.hrt.hr\)](http://www.hrt.hr), the public television broadcaster, operates four channels, while the commercial networks RTL and Nova TV have two channels each. Foreign films and series are shown with sound in the original language (English, Turkish, German, Italian...) and Croatian subtitles. Only children's programming is dubbed. Many hotels and private apartments have some channels from other European countries (mostly from Germany).

Radio stations that feature English-language pop/rock music are HRT-HR 2, Otvoreni and Totalni. They all have occasional traffic reports, but only HR 2 translates them into English, German and Italian during the summer. Other nationwide stations are HRT-HR 1 (news/features), HRT-HR 3 (mostly classical music), Narodni (Croatian pop) and HKR (Catholic radio).

Newspapers and magazines from Germany, Austria, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, Russia, Slovenia, Serbia and other countries are available in Croatia. In Zagreb and the northern coastal areas some foreign newspapers arrive on the cover date, elsewhere they are late.

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