Dubrovnik & Beyond: from the Adriatic to the Alps

LAND TOUR

Plus optional extensions in

Zagreb; Dubrovnik

CTA/CTP 2014

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1. PASSPORT, VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Passport required

U.S. citizens need a valid passport for this itinerary. Please take moment to check if your passport meets all of these requirements. If not, you could be refused entry into a country. And if that happens, you might be required by that country to return to the U.S. immediately, **which would be at your own expense**.

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary:

- It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- It should have the recommended number of blank pages (see below for details).
- The blank pages must be labeled "Visas" at the top. Pages labeled "Amendments and Endorsements" are not acceptable.

Recommended number of blank pages:

This recommendation is based on a "worst case" scenario. When you are on this adventure, you might use fewer pages, depending on the whims of the Immigration official on duty that day. Since the consequence of having too few pages can be severe—you could be denied entry into a country—we feel that it's better to be safe than sorry, and we strongly recommend that you follow these guidelines.

- Main trip only: 6 blank "Visa" pages.
- Optional pre-trip extension to Dubrovnik, Croatia: No additional pages.
- Optional post-trip extension to Zagreb, Croatia: 2 additional pages.
- **Both a pre- and a post-trip extension**: A total of 8 pages.

If you need to renew your passport or get extra pages:

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at www.travel.state.gov for information on obtaining a new passport, renewing your existing passport, or for additional pages. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

NOTE: When updating your passport, it is worthwhile to check the prices on all the different services that might apply to you. For example, it might be less expensive to renew your passport than to have pages added, depending on the number of pages you need.

Visas not Required

U.S. citizens do not need a visa for entry into any of the countries on this itinerary.

No U.S. Passport?

Non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. passport holders: If you are **not** a U.S. citizen or if you possess a passport from a country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate or embassy about possible visa requirements. Or, contact PVS international who can also assist non-U.S. citizens:

PVS International

Passport & Visa Services 1700 N Moore Street Rosslyn Center, suite 310 Arlington, VA 22209 Telephone: 1-800-556-9990

Backup Photocopies

The smartest security precaution you can take is to make photocopies of your passport's personal information pages, your air tickets, your traveler's check serial numbers (if you're using them), and your credit cards. Also, bring extra passport-sized photos. Make a list of the phone and fax numbers for reporting lost credit cards, your travel protection plan company (if you have an optional travel protection plan) and medical emergency network. Keep these documents separate from the originals, and they can save you immeasurable time, money, and trouble if your originals are lost or stolen as you travel. In addition, scan these photocopies and email them to your email address; you can then print out replacement copies if necessary.

2. YOUR HEALTH

Keep Your Abilities In Mind

We've worked closely with our local Program Directors and regional associates to identify the aspects of this adventure that you should be aware of, from physical requirements to cultural factors. **Please** carefully review the information below prior to departing on this trip.

Pacing

• 4 locations in 15 days

Physical Requirements

- Not accessible for travelers using wheelchairs or scooters
- Travelers using walkers, crutches, or other mobility aids must travel with a companion who can assist them throughout the trip
- You must be able to walk 1.5 miles unassisted and participate in 2 hours of physical activities each day, including stairs

Climate

- Daytime temperatures range from 39-82° during touring season
- June-August are the warmest months
- November-January weather can be unpredictable and change quickly within a short period of time

Terrain

• Travel over uneven walking surfaces, including ancient ruins, caves, unpaved paths, steep hills, stairs, and cobblestone, which can be slippery in cooler or wet conditions

Transportation

- Travel by 45-seat motorcoach and passenger train
- 2 days feature 6-9 hours of travel by motorcoach

Cuisine

Meals will be based on the local cuisine

Health Check and Inoculations

If you have any ongoing medical conditions or concerns about your health, we highly recommend that you schedule a checkup with your personal physician at least six weeks in advance of your departure date. Discuss with your doctor any aspects of your international itinerary that may affect your health and be guided by his or her advice. Feeling healthy and confident of your mobility is essential if you want to fully enjoy your trip abroad. A loose filling or developing cavity would be difficult to remedy while you are traveling. You may want to have a dental exam before your trip. If you have a condition that requires special equipment or treatment, you must bring and be responsible for all necessary items related to your condition.

Prescription Medications: If you take medications regularly, be sure to pack an ample supply that will last your entire trip, as obtaining refills of your medication can be difficult during your trip. Pack these medications in your carry-on bag, and keep them in their original, labeled containers. To be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications, you should also bring copies of the prescriptions, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name.

Vaccinations:

Check with the CDC: To ensure you receive any needed vaccinations we suggest that you check the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for your destination. You can contact them at:

- **On-line** if you have access to the Internet, we suggest you visit the CDC's Web site at **www.cdc.gov/travel**, where you will find comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.
- **By phone** at the CDC's Hotline toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day. Please note that automated information may be arranged topically by disease, rather than by country or region.

Consult your doctor: After checking the CDC's recommendations we strongly suggest that you consult your family physician (at least 6 weeks prior to departure) concerning any vaccinations or medications that you may need on this trip. At the time of printing there were no specific vaccinations required for entry into any of the countries on your itinerary.

3. LUGGAGE REGULATIONS

Size, Number and Weight Restrictions

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 50lbs for checked bags and 15 lbs for carry-on bags .	
Size restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (<i>length+width+depth</i>). 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 FYTENSION(S) I IMITS		

TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS

The extensions have the same luggage restrictions 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.

Note: Enforcement of published restrictions by countries and airlines is a matter of governmental and corporate policy. Enforcement may include spot checks and may be inconsistently applied. Expect penalties and fines to be imposed immediately, however, when and if enforced. Before you choose to ignore the published restrictions you should ask: *Do I feel lucky?* And, even if you answer yes, you should make sure that you have the ability to pay the fine.

Should I confirm luggage restrictions with my U.S./international airline(s) before departure?

Absolutely, confirm current restrictions about a week or so before your departure. You should take this step no matter if your vacation has a lower limit then the average international flight or not, because there may be recent changes, such as new security regulations, or an update to the standard weight/size allowances. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our webpage in the FAQ section.

You should also check with the airlines on luggage fees—many airlines charge to check luggage, even on international flights. Others may charge a fee if you bring a second carry-on item, like a purse or a laptop. These fees are not included in your trip price; they are payable directly to the airlines. If you are making a connecting flight, you should also confirm if your luggage can be checked through to your final destination. For more information about air travel, see the "Air Travel" section of your *Important Information* booklet.

Luggage Suggestions

Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase for your checked luggage. Due to space limitations on our motor coaches, 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.

Consider a daypack or small backpack as your carry-on bag. It will do double duty during excursions and walking trips. A daypack leaves your hands free and distributes its weight onto your back. Packed with daily travel needs (sweater, camera, rain/wind jacket, water bottle, etc.), it will compress to fit the storage space of foreign motorcoaches, and yet still have room for an impulse buy at a local street market.

Tip: Bring a second, empty lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home – but remember that you may incur extra luggage fees. If you're traveling with a companion we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.

Airport Security/TSA

Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage may change. To avoid inadvertently packing restricted items in your carry-on, we suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website at www.tsa.gov/public, which keeps a current list of restricted items. From the main website click on *Our Travelers*, then *Air Travel*, and then you will see a link for *Prohibited Items*.

Liquids and your carry on: Per the **TSA's 3-1-1 rule**: Liquids must be in a 3.4 ounce or less (100ml) bottle (by volume); all bottles must be in a 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin. One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3.4 ounce (100ml) container size is a security measure. Note that this rule is used increasingly in Europe, as well.

Locking your luggage:

To reduce the risk of damage to your luggage, *either* do not lock your bags when checking in for flights that originate in the U.S. *or* use TSA-approved locks. (These are locks that TSA screeners can open and relock with a special tool, avoiding damage to your luggage or lock if a physical inspection is required. Look for the words "TSA" or "TSA-approved" on the lock's packaging.) Outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend that you lock your luggage as a preventative measure against theft.

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4. WHEN YOU ARRIVE

Your GCT Program Director

During your Grand Circle Land Tour, your group of up to 42 travelers will have reliable assistance available at all times from an on-site Grand Circle Travel Program Director. Your Program Director is a resident of the region, is fluent in English, and can give you an inside perspective on your destinations. Your Program Director is supported along the way by local tour guides, who guide you expertly through particular sites and cities.

Many Grand Circle Program Directors are graduates of professional education programs for travel guides. In addition, they receive specialized training directly from Grand Circle, training that is based on what we've learned from thousands of past travelers about how to make the trip most enjoyable. Your Program Director offers both a deep knowledge of the region and a commitment to make this a very pleasant, informative, and rewarding travel experience for you.

Your Program Director will provide sightseeing trips, handle all travel details, reserve optional tours you choose to take, oversee your Discovery Series events, and provide any other assistance you may need. You will be in the company of the Program Director throughout your Land Tour.

If you choose to take the optional trip extension in Zagreb, you will also be accompanied by a Grand Circle Travel Program Director. During the optional Dubrovnik extension, you will have the services of a Hospitality Desk at your hotel. It is staffed by local Grand Circle representatives who know the region intimately and can provide sightseeing tips, suggest ideas for activities during your leisure time, and help make your time in Dubrovnik memorable.

GCT Air Travelers

U.S. Departure: If you are among a group of ten or more GCT travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, it is our goal to have a GCT Representative assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. Unless there are extenuating circumstances beyond our control, the Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time. If you are flying domestically before your international flight, the representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.

Arrival: At the beginning of your main trip or your optional pre-trip extension, a GCT Representative will meet you at the airport after you exit customs and assist you with your transfer to the hotel.

Important note on porters: Airport porters are NOT allowed in the customs hall area. On arrival, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and, if you wish, you may load it onto a cart (coins will be necessary) and move your cart through customs. When you exit customs, you'll handle your cart until reaching your motor coach. Your motor coach driver will load your luggage onto your motor coach.

U.S. Return: At the end of your base trip or optional post-trip extension, you'll be transferred by motor coach to the airport for your return flight to the U.S. If you are among a group of ten or more GCT travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, a GCT Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights. Again, it is our goal to have our GCT Representative waiting to assist your group. In rare instances, unforeseen circumstances may prevent this service.

Grand Circle Travel is not responsible for flight delays or cancellations. In the unfortunate circumstance that your flight is delayed or changed, please try to reach the GCT local contact in order to make new arrangements for your transfer. Due to airline regulations our staff are not notified of flight rerouting, and our airport representative won't necessarily be aware of your new arrival time. In these cases you will need to arrange your transfer by taxi to your hotel.

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.

Please note: If you plan on booking your own international flights or arranging with our air department to arrive/depart on an earlier/later date than standard for your program, airport transfers will NOT be included in your program price. Transfers must be purchased separately, as an optional add-on, and are subject to availability. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Traveler Support team at 1-800-321-2835. For more information, please see your Important Information booklet.

5. MONEY MATTERS

How to Carry Your Money

The European financial infrastructure is as developed and modern as America's – sometimes even better developed. Currencies vary and banks have different names, but most are allied with global institutions and offer the same services you use daily. You can expect to have ready access to ATMs (to get local currency from your account), to have major credit cards accepted at most popular tourist sites, restaurants, and major stores, and to exchange US dollars for local currencies. There will be localized exceptions and perhaps some limitations on availability and amounts, and don't forget the fees. However, a little forethought can make juggling currencies a fairly painless process.

While there is no need to obtain local currency before your trip, many travelers do exchange \$50 to \$100 or so into the currency of their first destination. This can smooth your arrival should you run into closed banks/exchanges or broken ATMs. Otherwise, rely on a mix of credit/debit cards and ATM use (for ready access to cash) as the best way to manage your money as you travel. U.S. cash should be mixed into the blend, but it's wise to minimize how much you carry. Just as at home, carrying large amounts of cash can be risky. It's generally wise to have spending money in the local currency rather than to rely on American dollars.

You can exchange money at banks, some hotels, and money exchange offices (to do so, you'll likely need your passport). Be aware, however, that torn, dirty, or taped U.S. bills will *not* be accepted for exchange. **New** (in terms of use *and* issue date – post 2004) and large bills (\$100) will *usually* be accepted by banks and onboard ships; **old** \$100 bills (again, in age and condition) will *not* be accepted. Money in smaller denominations is much more universally accepted, but even there, new bills are preferred. Note that U.S. currency is not an accepted form of currency in Europe.

Traveler's checks—not recommended: We urge you not to rely on traveler's checks for your personal expenses. They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. Most banks or exchange offices will want to see your passport at the time of exchange. It's most practical to view any traveler's checks you might bring as a last "cash" resort in the event of a special situation.

U.S. dollars have an advantage. Cash is more readily exchanged and accepted than traveler's checks, and sometimes commands a better exchange rate.

Credit Cards

Though major American credit cards (American Express, Visa, and MasterCard) are accepted abroad, always inquire if your type of credit card is accepted before deciding on your purchase. It is also wise to notify the credit card company that you will be using your cards abroad so that they may remove any security block. When using a major credit card you may receive a different exchange rate than if you pay with cash; inquire about the rate first.

Please be aware that credit cards might not be accepted for small purchases or in the markets. Note that the Discover credit card is not widely accepted outside the U.S. Keep your receipts in case you have questions about the conversion or exchange rate. Also, keep your receipts as proof of purchase for items to be shipped home.

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

<u>IMPORTANT NOTE</u>: European countries have been phasing in a new type of credit card technology, called a "smartcard" or a "chip-and-PIN" card. These cards have an embedded computer chip instead of a magnetized strip, and the card owner authorizes a purchase by entering a four digit numerical PIN (Personal Identification Number) instead of signing a slip. Some businesses in Europe have already switched to the new system completely; some can process both smartcards and regular cards; and some haven't switched at all.

This new technology is not common in the U.S., so occasionally there may be machines that can't read U.S. cards. Or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. Although it is not common for U.S. credit cards to have PINs (and some providers will not even be able to provide one at all), requesting one prior to your departure is recommended. In some shops you will still be able to sign a slip as usual if you inform the vendor at the point of sale. And if the shop in question requires a smartcard, you can always try a different form of payment, like a debit card or cash. (U.S. debit cards usually have a PIN, so sometimes they work when credit cards don't.) Since there is no way to predict in advance what each shop will do, we recommend that you bring more than one type of payment when you go shopping. For example, a mix of a couple different credit cards, a debit or ATM card, and some cash is ideal—you'll be prepared for anything.

Please note: Optional tour payments made by credit card may take up to 3 months to process. For this reason we ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months following your trip. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "**OPT Boston**" (depending on your credit card company).

ATMs and Debit Cards

Debit cards give you a reliable payment method and ready access to local currency. We recommend you use a debit card for withdrawals at ATM machines when you need cash, as it will allow you the flexibility of accessing money at your convenience without relying on bank hours for money exchanges. When traveling, typically PLUS, Cirrus, and other bank networks are available throughout large cities and small towns.

Always notify your bank before you leave home that you are going abroad so that they may remove any blocks on your account and also ask them about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad. For cash withdrawals, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's 4-digit PIN (Personal Identification Number), as many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their numeric keys, they only display digits.

Note on ATM use: Many banks have begun imposing a fee ranging from \$1 to \$5 every time you use an ATM in a foreign city. You may want to limit the number of withdrawals that you make. Your Program Director/Hospitality Desk Representative can advise you on locations, but when to exchange money is left to your discretion.

Currency

Currency exchange rates fluctuate daily. Your Program Director will advise you of the exchange rate upon your arrival. For current exchange rates, please refer to our website, or the financial section of your newspaper. On our website select the region and then click on the country you'll be visiting. A link to the currency converter is included in the menu on the page of each individual country.

Though exchange rates do change, here are some common items and their approximate cost in Croatia and Slovenia. This may help to give you an idea of how much money to plan on spending.

- Bottle of water in grocery shops—approximately \$1.50 U.S.
- Espresso Coffee in bars—approximately \$2-3 U.S.
- Ticket for local buses (one-way)—approximately \$2 U.S.
- Meal in restaurants—approximately \$30 U.S. (per person)
- Taxi rides—city rides are approximately \$15 U.S., transfers to the airport are approximately \$50 U.S.

Croatia

Croatia's monetary unit is the Kuna (Kn), which is divided into 100 Lipa. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 Kuna
- Coins: 5, 10, 20, and 50 Lipa; and 1, 2, and 5 Kuna

Banking hours: Banks in the larger cities are usually open Monday through Friday, 7 am to 7 pm, and on Saturdays 7 to 11 am. Banks in smaller towns have shorter hours.

Slovenia

The euro is the official currency of Slovenia. Euro banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Banknotes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500
- Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 cents; 1 and 2 euro

Banking hours: Banks are usually open Monday through Friday, 9 am to 12:30 pm and 2 to 4:30 pm, as well on Saturdays from 9 to 11 am. Banks are closed on Sundays.

Shopping

There is <u>no</u> requirement to make a purchase during stops at local shops or markets, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. **Grand Circle Travel cannot be responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.**

If you plan a major purchase, we strongly recommend that you research the prices and quality available at home before your trip. Just one visit to an import shop or gold dealer will put you way ahead when you go shopping. This is the only way to know if you are getting a good price.

U.S. Customs Restrictions: Note that U.S. Customs regulations allow the duty-free import of 200 cigarettes and 1 liter of alcoholic beverages per person. U.S. Customs regulations do not allow you to bring any homemade, non-sealed food products into the U.S.

Croatia

When you visit Dubrovnik, Opatija, and Split, you'll find locally made craft items are abundant in Croatia. Some shops specialize in these items, such as Dalmatian lace and embroidery from the Island of Pag and the Konavle area. Croatia was the birthplace of the necktie (the term "cravat" is derived from Croat), so you may want to buy one here. Souvenirs include red coral from the Adriatic Sea and sachets of lavender grown on Hvar Island. If you're interested in wines, *Postup* and *Dingač* are Croatian reds while *Žlahtina* and *Graševina* are whites. Some other typical souvenirs are Morčić jewelry in Rijeka, coral jewelry, vegetal spices, truffles from Istria, Maraschino, olive oil, and Zagrebački melem ointment. U.S. dollars are not widely accepted for payment; local currency is preferred.

Store hours: Shops in Croatia's coastal cities are generally open Monday through Friday, 8 am to 1 pm and 5 pm to 8 pm; Saturdays 8 am to 1 pm. Individual stores might vary these hours. On Sundays most shops are closed.

In Slovenia

In Ljubljana and Bled, handicraft shops feature locally made ceramics, woolens, wood carvings, embroidery, leather boxes, tapestries, filigree jewelry, pumpkin seed oil, hand painted beehives, honey brandy, and handmade carpets. Lace from Idrija and Rogaska crystal are Slovenian specialties. U.S. dollars are not widely accepted for payment; local currency is preferred.

Store hours: Shops are generally open from 8 am to 8 pm Monday through Friday; Saturdays from 8 am until 2 pm. Shops are closed on Sundays.

In Zagreb

Numerous shops, boutiques, and shopping centers offer a variety of good quality clothes. A distinctive Zagreb souvenir, surprisingly, is the ballpoint pen, invented by Slavoljub Penkala from Zagreb more than 80 years ago. In Zagreb you can also find good-quality crystal; china and ceramics; nice wicker or straw baskets; top-quality Croatian wines; and tasty gastronomic products. A typical souvenir of Zagreb is the heart-shaped gingerbread called Licitar heart.

U.S. Customs Regulations and 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 <u>always</u> 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.

Problem with a Purchase?

The best way to address a problem with a purchase is to not have one in the first place! So don't forget to examine merchandise before paying for it, check contracts or agreements before signing, and review your receipt before leaving the shop. For major purchases, don't hesitate to ask in advance about the return policy—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.

But what if you do discover an issue with an item later on? In that case, your best recourse is to contact the vendor directly. For this reason we recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. due to delays in communication, the complexities of international shipping/customs duties, and even cultural differences in how business is conducted.

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To Tip or Not to Tip

Sometimes *that* is the question. The good news is twofold: we're fresh out of Shakespearean soliloquies, so no thesauri will get hurt here; and the answer the question "**to tip or not to tip** (and how much to tip if you so choose)" is *always* a personal decision. Tipping is a common practice both at home and abroad and we offer these guidelines to answer requests for appropriate tipping amounts. It can be useful to have this information on site – when the question *must* be answered – and ahead of time for travel budgeting purposes. Tips below are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars (personal/traveler's checks should *never* be used for tips).

GCT Program Director: It is customary at the end of your trip to express a personal "Thank You" to the Grand Circle Program Director or Hospitality Desk Representative on the base program or the optional extensions, especially if he or she has provided you with individual assistance. We recommend \$4-\$6 per person, per day. Please note that tips for our Program Directors can only be in the form of cash, in either U.S. or local currency.

Airport/Hotel/Pier Porterage & Transfers: If you are using GCT transfer services, tips to hotel, airport, and pier porters are included in the cost of your trip. GCT also pays tips to the motor coach driver for your airport/hotel/pier transfers.

Included Group Meals: Your Program Director will tip waiters for the included meals when the group dines together.

Local tour guides and drivers: \$2 per person for each half-day tour; \$3 per person for each full-day tour.

Time at Leisure: During the times that you explore independently, you may dine in a local restaurant, take a taxi, or avail yourself of some other service where tipping is customary. In Slovenia and Croatia, a tip for a waiter or taxi driver is normally 10% - 15% of the bill or fare.

6. PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP

In General

Travel light: A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. Eliminate all but the essentials and start packing a few days before you leave. That way, you'll have time to think—not fret—about what you might be forgetting. 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.

Pack casual clothes. Comfortable, informal apparel is perfectly acceptable at each of your destinations. Basic pants, shirts, walking shorts, sportswear, everyday dresses/skirts, supportive shoes, and functional outdoor clothes that are fairly easy to care for are recommended. Men do not need ties or jackets, and women do not require fancy dresses or high-heeled shoes. You may want one "smart casual" outfit for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it's completely up to you. You would only need nicer dress if you plan to dine at a deluxe city restaurant on your own.

Winter: For travel during winter months, include clothes for moderate temperatures, but also take some cold weather gear—warm pants, warm boots or shoes, socks, turtlenecks, fleece top or wool sweater, rainproof jacket (ideally with a zip-out insulation layer), gloves, scarf, and hat. Lake Bled can be very cold. The most practical travel wardrobe consists of items that you can wear in layers. Then you can easily add or remove a layer according to any fluctuations in temperatures. Your outer jacket should be roomy enough to comfortably fit over your sweater or fleece top.

Summer: For travel during the summer months, pack an assortment of seasonal garments: short-sleeve shirts and comfortable slacks or shorts for daytime; the evenings, however, can be chilly, so bring along a cotton sweater and a fleece jacket.

Spring: For travel during the spring, pack an assortment of seasonal garments: light pieces and cotton sweaters for daytime; and slacks, long-sleeve shirts, warmer dresses, and a heavy sweater or fleece jacket for evenings. Spring arrives later in mountainous areas like the Julian Alps around Lake Bled.

Rain gear: Regardless of your month of travel, rainfall is certainly a possibility. While it may not rain on your trip, we suggest you bring a folding umbrella and waterproof shell, preferably with a hood. Water-resistant walking shoes are advantageous in case a heavy downpour passes through.

Good walking shoes are essential. The region's magnificent churches, museums, markets, and shops truly invite exploration by foot. But negotiating the cobblestone streets and rather uneven sidewalks can be a challenge—even for the most surefooted traveler. For your comfort and safety, you'll need supportive walking shoes that offer good traction.

Proper attire in churches: Clothing that covers the arms and legs is the most appropriate for touring churches. Your courtesy is appreciated if you wear a long-sleeved shirt or blouse; women wearing sleeveless or short-sleeved blouses can cover their bare arms with a scarf. Men should wear long pants and women a skirt, dress, or pantsuit that covers the knees.

Packing Your Carry-On

Using a daypack as a carry-on bag for your flights is a smart solution. We **strongly urge** you to pack your carry-on with at least one full change of clothes, your camera gear, medications, changes of socks and underwear, your important travel documents, and other irreplaceable items, in case your checked bags go astray. Store camera gear and important papers in plastic bags to protect them from dirt and moisture. With a daypack you can then remove these items on arrival and load your bag with the gear you'll need on walking tours and excursions.

What not to pack: do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Avoid packing glass bottles; use plastic containers instead. Leave at home checkbooks and any credit cards not essential for your trip, valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose.

Clothing Options

We've included information below on the weather you can expect for the regions you'll be visiting on your travels. Taking into account the climate you'll encounter and the general suggestions we offer above will enable you to create a flexible wardrobe that's light enough for sophisticated travel and will guarantee comfort in all the conditions you can expect to encounter. The luggage weight and size restrictions imposed by travel realities today have made traveling light an absolute necessity. With modern fabrics – Gore-Tex, Polarfleece, polypropylene, etc. – lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy. A visit to any on-line or local sporting goods/outdoor stores (L.L. Bean, REI, EMS, etc.) will yield a treasure trove of lightweight, specialized, and fashionable clothing and gear that is readily adaptable to your itinerary.

Travel Gear Suggestions

Though it's often fun to do things as the locals do, it can be frustrating when daily necessities or conveniences from home aren't available. To travel wisely these days you must juggle your personal needs and preferences against the physical constraints of your transportation—whether it's an international airplane, a transfer motorcoach, a small ship or a day-long trek on a camel. You'll have to distinguish between what you **must** have, what you'd *like* to have, whether you can zip your suitcase closed, and what you can reasonably expect to wrestle through airport hallways and security checkpoints. Consult the following items to create your personal checklist – ignoring what you don't need and making the tough decisions over borderline cases. Remember that many airlines today will charge you extra for added luggage.

Medicines

☐ Your own prescription medicines	☐ Upset stomach (Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta)
☐ Vitamins	Anti-diarrheal (Imodium)
Cold remedies (Sudafed/Dristan)	☐ Band-Aids
Pain relief (Ibuprofen/aspirin/naproxen)	☐ Moleskin foot pads
☐ Laxatives (Senokot, Ex-Lax)	☐ Antibiotics (Neosporin/Bacitracin)

Consider	
 □ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, shower cap, body soap, etc. □ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription □ Sunglasses with a neck strap □ Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger (seasonal) □ Insect repellent with DEET □ Travel money bag or money belt, to be worn under your shirt/jacket if possible □ Moisturizer, lip balm 	 ☐ Swimsuit if your hotel has a pool ☐ Compact umbrella ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor (seasonal) ☐ Pocket-size tissues ☐ Moist towelettes (packets) and/or antibacterial "waterless" hand cleanser ☐ Flashlight, extra batteries/bulb ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards ☐ Extra passport-sized photos (to replace your passport if lost)
Other Gear Travel alarm (or request wake-up calls) Compact binoculars Hanging toiletry bag with pockets Hair dryer (available in all hotels) Washcloth (not a standard amenity in hotels) Handkerchiefs Basic sewing kit Reading materials Travel journal/note pad	□ Electrical transformer & plug adapters—see "Regional Electricity" below □ Hand-wash laundry soap (Woolite), clothespins/travel clothesline/stopper □ Home address book □ Photos, small gift for home-hosted visit □ Phrase book □ Collapsible walking staff □ Pocket calculator for exchange rates □

7. REGIONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION

We can't predict what the weather will be during your travels, but you'll find historical averages and general information on the climate of your destinations below. As your departure nears it's a good idea to visit the *My Account* feature of **www.gct.com**, where you'll find monthly temperature averages for the countries you'll visit as well as a current 10-day forecast of local temperatures and conditions. Or check Internet weather sites (www.wunderground.com is very comprehensive) for those forecasts.

Dubrovnik, Croatia: Located in the southern region of Croatia's Adriatic coast, where lush vegetation slopes down to the clear turquoise of the Adriatic Sea, Dubrovnik also boasts a pleasant Mediterranean climate characterized by wet and cold winters and very hot, dry summers. The balmy nights of summer frequently bring cool winds that freshen the city's air. The *maestral* is a gentle wind that blows landward from the sea during spring, summer, and early fall, moderating Dubrovnik's already agreeable climate. Winters (November to March) can have very rainy periods and the cold *bura* wind can make it feel colder than the thermometer shows. The weather at this time of year is very unpredictable.

Opatija and Split, Croatia: These cities on the Adriatic seacoast have a Mediterranean climate, with very hot, dry summers and very rainy, windy winters (November-March). Be prepared when the north wind, the *bura*, blows in during the winter it can be quite cold. Split is one of the sunniest places in Europe, receiving an average of seven hours of sunshine per day in winter and twelve hours in summer.

Lake Bled, Slovenia: The town of Bled and its lake lie northwest of Ljubljana at an altitude of over 1,600 feet. Situated over 600 feet higher than Ljubljana, the Lake Bled area is noticeably cooler than the capital city. The mild, sub-alpine weather pattern that dominates the area is considered by many to be restorative, and the Julian Alps and the Karavanke ridges offer the city shelter from cold northern winds. Be prepared for snow, heavy rain and cold weather during the winter period (November through March).

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

Here is the data from the weather observation stations closest to our destinations.

WHAT'S THE TEMPERATURE? Average highs (taken at 2 pm) and lows (taken just before sunrise) in °F. (Bled temperatures are daily minimum lows, maximum highs)												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Dubrovnik, Croatia (base, pre-trip extension)												
High	52	53	57	62	70	77	82	82	76	69	59	54
Low	41	41	45	50	57	64	69	69	64	56	48	43
Bled,	Slovenia	ı										
High	30	41	48	57	66	72	75	75	68	57	45	37
Low	23	24	30	37	45	52	55	54	48	39	30	24
Zagreb, Croatia (post-trip extension)												
High	37	42	52	61	69	75	79	77	70	59	48	39
Low	28	32	38	46	53	58	61	61	55	47	38	31

Please note: The data cited here reflect *climate* as opposed to *weather* conditions, and serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. A 60 degree *average* high temperature means that days may be as warm as 80 or as cool as 40 – but it's most likely you'll encounter temperatures in the 50 to 70 degree range.

8. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY

In General

Smartphone, tablet, digital camera/camcorder, MP3 player: travel today can involve technology that didn't exist even five years ago. The usefulness of digital devices is enormous: smartphones can keep you connected and offer up-to-the-minute information via your cell plan or a local Wi-Fi connection. With a tablet (or smartphone) you can store multiple country guidebooks, access maps and connect to the internet in a small, lightweight device. (*Tip: you can download this document from the Grand Circle Travel website and import it into your tablet or e-reader, many of which can display PDF files.*)

Compact and lightweight, digital camcorders and cameras take high definition movies and still images of the people you meet and places you visit. For robust use a laptop may be effective; for occasional use it's wiser to rely on Internet cafes or a tablet and hotel Internet access rather than shoulder the heft and size of a laptop.

To use these devices you should first consider the services available at your destinations. You'll encounter a range of electrical standards, varied plug configurations to access the local current, erratic availability (electricity and internet access), and differing technological standards.

You'll need to assess your power and data storage needs, and the accessories required to recharge/connect/use these devices. Finally, it's smart to read the owner's manual *before* you depart. Pay particular attention to electrical, power and storage requirements to ensure that you understand exactly what you need. Thorough preparation is the best guarantee that your devices will work up to their potential.

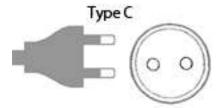
Regional Electricity

The standard U.S. electrical system — 110V 60Hz current and flat two- or three-pronged polarized plug system — is rare elsewhere. The overwhelming choice for the rest of the world is 220-240V and 50/60Hz current with a variety of plug shapes, sizes, and configurations. Some plugs will work with multiple receptacles, while others won't. Europe is largely standardized to the Type C "Europlug."

Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V 50/60Hz service will ruin the motor. We suggest that you bring *dual* voltage appliances (widely available) that work on both 110 and 220/240 voltage. Dual voltage appliances are inexpensive and need only plug adapters.

If you bring 110V appliances, such as a hair dryer (note that hotels often supply hairdryers and coffee makers) or shaver, you'll need a transformer (to halve the 220/240V current) in addition to plug adapters. Regional transformer/adapter kits can often be found at hardware or online stores but transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave those larger items at home.

Croatia and Slovenia use the Type C "Europlug" and receptacles that accommodate it and 230 V/50 Hz current.



Even though you'll only need a Type C plug adapter on this trip, it may be a good idea to invest in an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, this item will ensure that you are prepared for your current trip as well as future vacations. If you use multiple digital devices—cell phone, digital camera, and MP3 player for instance – it's also handy to have a travel power strip, perhaps with a surge suppressor and USB-style port for charging cell phones, MP3 players or e-readers without the use of device-specific plugs.

Smartphones

It will require some effort to get the most out of your smartphone when you travel. Even with an international roaming plan, costs can add up quickly – those handy apps often pile up download fees. The simplest solution is to shut down all cell phone functions, automatic data feeds and roaming options, and take advantage of the apps via available Wi-Fi. With an Internet VOIP app (like Skype) you can make inexpensive calls. If necessary, turn international roaming back on and your phone will work as usual – albeit at some cost. If your phone doesn't support international roaming (most smartphones do), some carriers offer loaners.

Cell Phones

If you want to use a standard cell phone while traveling overseas, be sure to check with your service provider (www.verizon.com, www.t-mobile.com etc.) to see if your phone will work outside the U.S. or whether you're better off renting an international phone. The websites www.travelcell.com and www.globalcellularrental.com have good information on rentals. Or, consider buying an inexpensive local phone for your stay.

Phone Calling Cards

If you don't carry a phone, you can use a prepaid calling card to call the U.S. with minimal additional charges. Besides the prepaid long distance charges, you might have a local fee of a few cents and possibly a connection fee if you are using your card at a hotel. Check with the reception desk prior to using it to avoid unexpected charges.

Calling cards purchased locally are usually less expensive than those purchased in the U.S. and are more likely to work with the local system. Note that dialing a U.S. 1-800 number outside the continental United States will incur costly long distance fees, since 1-800 does not work outside the U.S.

Photo Gear

For many people, capturing the highlights of their travel experiences in photographs or movies and sharing them is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the journey. Remember, however: some individuals and cultures and are less tolerant of photography than others. It's always best to respect local customs. And in some places you may be charged for photography at specific sites, or restricted from any photography at all.

Digital cameras and camcorders are excellent travel companions—and many do dual duty by recording movies *and* still images. Fist sized camcorders can capture HD movies and high quality still photos; cameras the size of a deck of cards are great for snapshots and casual movie clips. With an ample supply of high-capacity memory cards you can record your whole trip with a small, lightweight package.

But you must remember the batteries. Recharging batteries is sometimes impossible, cameras can drain batteries *very* quickly, and replacements may be unavailable. Whether you need standard or proprietary batteries, it's good to have spares. Be sure your charger will work with the local electrical system, and bring more than enough memory cards—they may be hard or impossible to find. Memory cards are small, thin and light: you can never have too much storage.

Compact cameras are impractical for distant subjects. Some models have a zoom lens of up to 120mm, which is good for middle distances. For distant subjects a *megazoom* (with a zoom lens of at least 300mm) or a single lens reflex (DSLR) camera with up to a 300mm telephoto lens are good choices. With a DSLR you can use multiple lenses, though your gear can quickly get complex, weighty and cumbersome. Cameras or lenses that need a tripod are impractical for travel photography. A single midrange telephoto lens coupled with a small, fast prime lens (for low light/no flash situations) is an effective, flexible and compact kit. Consider mirrorless interchangeable lens cameras (MILC), which combine small bodies and multiple, small lenses with high quality for both still and HD movie images.

If you use a DSLR or MILC camera, protect the lenses with a UV filter and bring lens caps, covers, cleaning paper and a waterproof bag (a heavy duty Ziploc-style bag is good) to protect your gear. Be sure your camera has a flash that you can turn off, and if it's detachable, remember to pack it. (At many sites and museums, flashes are *not* permitted.)

Consider disposable cameras, as well. They are inexpensive and capable of acceptable photos as long as the light is not too dim *or* bright. X-rays do not damage the data of digital cameras (in any media format), and so pose no problems for travelers using digital cameras.

9. ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS

We're including some handy practical details and a brief introduction to the places you'll visit on your Land Tour. If you expect to explore in depth on your own, we recommend that you consult one of the many available book-length guides to your destinations. If you have one or two specific sites, museums or features that you're interested in, an Internet search is the ideal way to get-up-to-date information and details. And of course your Grand Circle Travel Program Director or Hospitality Desk Representative will be able to assist you with suggestions and arrangements of activities you wish to participate in during your stay.

Accommodations

The hotels featured on this itinerary offer air conditioning on a seasonal basis only. Also, please note that most European hotel rooms are smaller than what you may be used to in the U.S.

Drinking Water

The tap water in all parts of Slovenia and Croatia is considered safe, but as an added safety precaution against possible stomach upsets, we recommend you drink bottled water as much as possible. Bottled spring water, mineral water, and mineral soda (carbonated mineral water) are readily available. If you're out of bottled water, hotel tap water is okay to drink, but it may taste unpleasant because of heavy chlorination.

Laundry Service

Your hotel reception staff can assist you with making arrangements for this service.

Dubrovnik in Brief—Base and Optional Extension

City Layout and Details

Dubrovnik is situated on an archipelago along the shore of the Adriatic. The rim of its medieval Old Town, known as Stari Grad, begins along the shore and circles around to the north, and is protected by fairly massive walls and stone fortifications. A jetty and small harbor offer views of the coastal area.

Stradun, many centuries old, is the Old Town's main street and the popular promenade of residents and visitors alike, narrowing as it extends away from the sea. You'll find an assortment of cafés, boutiques, and intriguing little shops along this ancient city lane. Most of the alleys of the Old Town are outlined by high walls and their pattern may seem complicated, but this historic walled section covers a fairly small area, making it easy to become familiar with the few main roads. Automobiles are not allowed, so you can thoroughly enjoy your strolls here and take your time browsing. You can even walk along the wall for an unparalleled perspective of the area's layout and architecture. You can gain entrance to this walkway at either end of the Stradun, at the Pile Gate on the western wall and beneath the City Bell Tower. Inside the Old Town you will find the historic old cathedral dating back to the 13th century, the graceful Sponza palace, and a Franciscan monastery that includes a museum. Beyond the walls of the Old Town is the New Town section of Dubrovnik. Walking these streets you will find more modern shops and more restaurants with fresh local cuisine.

There are many historic sites in Dubrovnik, and part of the intrigue of this city is happening upon some of the lesser-known ancient structures as you walk the city lanes. One of the more renowned sites is the Franciscan Monastery, one of the oldest functioning pharmacies in the world. Its apothecary shop dates back to 1317, and the building also holds very old musical scores and manuscripts, along with the works of local painters and jewelers.

The artistic life of Dubrovnik is celebrated at various festivals throughout the year, and many buildings house examples of the creative spirit of the residents. A small museum at the Dominican Monastery displays a good collection of 16th-century religious art done by local artisans. The Luza Art Center is one of many art galleries worth browsing, and the courtyard of the Sponza Palace often holds exhibits of contemporary art. The Sponza Palace is certainly worth visiting for its own merits. This graceful and ornate building combines both Venetian Gothic and Renaissance styles of design, and was once a customs house and mint.

One of the symbols of Dubrovnik is the impressive Minceta Fortress. This circular bastion along the city's walls was completed in 1464 according to plans detailed by the Renaissance architects Dalmatinac (of Croatia) and Michelozzi (of Italy). Another structure that draws much interest is the Onofrio Fountain, created in 1444 just inside the Pile Gate.

Near Luza Square, once the center of medieval Dubrovnik, stands the 18th-century baroque Church of St. Blaise. A statue of an armored knight stands on guard nearby, known as Orlando's Column. It was erected in the 1400s as a tribute to freedom. Government rulings were proclaimed here, and the right arm of Orlando became the state's standard of measure for length (the Ragusan cubit).

If you're seeking a museum to visit, Dubrovnik has several to offer. In addition to the museum of the Dominican Monastery mentioned above, there is also the gothic Rector's Palace, also known as Duke Palace, exhibiting baroque artwork, historical items of the region, and furnished rooms depicting medieval trappings and décor, housing more than 15,000 exhibits of cultural and historical significance. The Rupe Ethnographical Museum displays traditional occupations, architecture, and costumes of the nation. The museum itself is carved out of rock, the structure formerly used as underground storage units for grain, to protect food supplies during periods of siege. In addition, the Maritime Museum is situated in the fortress Sveti Ivan (Fort of St. John), along with the Aquarium of the Institute of Biology for those interested in the marine species of the region.

Attractions

With a little planning, there are sites of interest just outside of the city's environs if you wish to venture further afield. The Isle of Mljet, nicknamed the Green Island because of the richness of its vegetation, contains a national park of protected land and waters (according to lore, Odysseus washed ashore at this lush island). Korcula is nearby, known to be Marco Polo's birthplace. As mentioned earlier, a short boat ride from Dubrovnik brings you to the lovely Island of Lokrum, said to be where Richard the Lionhearted was shipwrecked. Boat lines can also take you offshore to Sipan, Kolocep, or Lopud.

Cuisine

In Croatia, you can sample fresh seafood, including oysters, accompanied by local wines. 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. In Dalmatia, local dishes include *pasticada* (stuffed beef cooked in wine), a black risotto, and *prsut*, a distinctively flavored smoked ham. For a sweet treat in Dubrovnik, order the caramel cream called *rozata*.

Local Transportation

Dubrovnik is a compact city and it is a delight to explore on foot, especially since Stari Grad (the Old Town) does not allow motor vehicles. If you want to roam further, there are many regular buses that can take you throughout the New Town and to destinations outside of Dubrovnik. You can buy bus tickets from the bus driver (exact change please) or from a local newspaper kiosk.

You can also take advantage of the marine mode of transportation and relax on a boat for a short ride to Lokrum Island. This isle is a nature park complete with the medieval ruins of a Benedictine Monastery, a botanical garden, and rocky beaches where you can walk or just find a quiet spot to sit and take in the ocean vistas.

You enter the old town through Pile Gate, where you can obtain tourist information (open Mon-Sat 8 am to 8 pm and Sundays from 8 am to 3 pm). Here you can buy maps of the city and get information on local buses.

Slovenia in Brief

Cuisine

If you care to sample typical foods of Slovenia, head for a local *gostilna* (inn or tavern). Soups include *jota* (sauerkraut and beans with pork) and *goveja juha* (beef broth with egg noodles). *Struklji* are dumplings stuffed with fillings that come in many varieties, some sweet and some savory. A variety of fillings are also used in preparing the festive dessert called *potica*. Other dishes served in Slovenia show the influences of neighboring countries: *rizota* (like Italian risotto), *zavitek* (like Austrian strudel), and *golaz* (like Hungarian goulash).

Zagreb in Brief—Optional Extension

City Layout and 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 *Tkalčićeva*. 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 it 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 onboard; be sure to get your ticket time-stamped when you first board at 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.

10. DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Croatia (*Hrvatska*)

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 Alps and the Adriatic Sea in southeastern Europe. The 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 (2014 estimate): 4,470,534

Ethnic groups: Croat 89.6%, Serb 4.5%, other 5.9% (including Bosniak, Hungarian, Slovene, Czech, and Roma)

Religion: Catholic Roman Catholic 87.8%, Orthodox 4.4%, other Christian 0.4%, Muslim 1.3%, other and unspecified 0.9%, none 5.2%

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.

Holidays:

01/01	New Year's Day
01/06	Epiphany
04/21	Easter Monday
05/01	Labor Day / May Day
06/19	Corpus Christi
06/22	Day of Antifascist Struggle
06/25	Statehood Day
08/05	Homeland Thanksgiving Day
08/15	Assumption of Mary
10/08	Independence Day
11/01	All Saints
12/25	Christmas Day
12/26	St Stephen's Day

History

The Croats are believed to be a purely Slavic people who migrated from present day Poland and settled in present-day Croatia during the 6th century. After a period of self-rule, Croatians agreed to the Pacta Conventa in 1091, submitting themselves to Hungarian authority. By the mid-1400s, concerns over Ottoman expansion led the Croatian Assembly to invite the Habsburgs, under Archduke Ferdinand, to assume control over Croatia. Habsburg rule proved successful in thwarting the Ottomans, and by the 18th century, much of Croatia was free of Turkish control.

In 1868, Croatia gained domestic autonomy while remaining under Hungarian authority. Following World War I and the demise of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Croatia joined the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes became Yugoslavia in 1929). Yugoslavia changed its name once again after World War II. The new state became the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia and united Croatia and several other states together under the communistic leadership of Marshal Tito.

After the death of Tito and the fall of communism throughout Eastern Europe, the Yugoslav federation began to crumble. Croatia held its first multi-party elections since World War II in 1990. Long-time Croatian nationalist Franjo Tudjman was elected President, and one year later, Croatians declared independence from Yugoslavia. Conflict between Serbs and Croats in Croatia escalated, and one month after Croatia declared independence, war erupted.

The United Nations mediated a cease-fire in January 1992, but hostilities resumed the next year when Croatia fought to regain one-third of the territory lost the previous year. A second cease-fire was enacted in May 1993, followed by a joint declaration the next January between Croatia and Yugoslavia. However, in September 1993, the Croatian Army led an offensive against the Serb-held Republic of Krajina. A third cease-fire was called in March 1994, but it, too, was broken in May and August 1995 after Croatian forces regained large portions of Krajina, prompting an exodus of Serbs from this area. In November 1995, Croatia agreed to peacefully reintegrate Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Dirmium under terms of the Erdut Agreement. In December 1995, the Croatian, Serbian and Bosnian governments signed the Dayton peace agreement, making a commitment to a permanent cease-fire and the return of all refugees.

The death of President Tudjman in December 1999, followed by the election of a coalition government and president in early 2000, brought significant changes to Croatia. The government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Ivica Racan, progressed in implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords, regional cooperation, refugee returns, national reconciliation, and democratization.

Theses changes, along with the November 23, 2003 national elections, which ushered in Prime Minister Ivo Sanader, lead the European Commission to report favorably on the country's development, and to encourage Croatia to apply for EU (European Union) membership. Negotiations began in 2004 but were slowed down by resistance from Slovenia, due to concerns about the designation of their border with Croatia. In September 2009, when Jadranka Kosor took over as Croatia's Prime Minister, she reached an agreement with the Slovenians that ended the blockade, allowing negotiations to continue. Croatia officially became a member of the EU in July 2013.

Slovenija)

Area: 7,828 square miles **Capital**: Ljubljana

Government: Parliamentary democratic republic

Languages: Slovenian, with English often spoken by those who work with foreign visitors.

Location: Slovenia lies in central Europe along the eastern Alps, bordering Italy to the west, Austria to the north, Hungary to the northeast, Croatia to the south and east, and the Adriatic Sea along the southwest

Geography: Slovenia occupies a locale dominated by high mountains and several fast-flowing rivers. The ridges and mountains of Italy and Austria rise up on one side of the country, creating a region of alpine peaks, valleys carved by glaciers, turbulent waterfalls, and calm lakes. The scenery changes as the plains of Hungary stretch out along another border, while the coast in the southwest offers the stunning scenery and allure of the Adriatic. There are major transportation routes traversing the country north-to-south and east-to-west. The country's major port on the Adriatic Sea is Koper.

Population (2014 estimate): 1,988,292

Religion: Roman Catholic 58%, Orthodox 2%, Muslim 2%, none 10%, other 28%

Time zone: Slovenia is on Central European Time, one hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (six hours ahead of Eastern Time). Summer hours operate from the last Sunday in March until the last weekend in October.

Holidays:

01/01	New Year's Day
02/08	Prešeren Day
04/20	Easter Day
04/21	Easter Monday
04/27	Day of Uprising Against Occupation
05/01	Labor Day/May Day
05/02	Labor Day
06/08	Whit Sunday
06/25	Statehood Day
08/15	Assumption
10/31	Reformation Day
12/25	Christmas Day
12/26	Independence and Unity Day

History

In ancient times the region was inhabited by the Illyrian and Celtic tribes. In the 1st century B.C. they fell under the Roman provinces of Pannonia and Noricum. The region was settled in the 6th cent. A.D. by the South Slavs, who set up the early Slav state of Samo, which in 788 passed to the Franks. At the division of Charlemagne's empire (843) the region passed to the dukes of Bavaria. In 1335, Carinthia and Carniola passed to the Hapsburgs. From that time until 1918 Slovenia was part of Austria and the region was largely comprised in the Austrian crownlands of Carinthia, Carniola, and Styria.

In 1918, Slovenia was included in the kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (called Yugoslavia after 1929), and in 1919 Austria formally ceded the region by the Treaty of Saint-Germain. In World War II Slovenia was divided (1941) among Germany, Italy, and Hungary. After the war, Slovenia was made (1945) a constituent republic of Yugoslavia and received part of the former Italian region of Venezia Giulia. In early 1990, Slovenia elected a non-Communist government and stepped up its demands for greater autonomy with the threat of possible secession. In February 1991, the Slovenian parliament ruled that Slovenian law took precedence over federal law. Slovenia declared independence on June 25, and federal troops moved in, but after some fighting withdrew by July.

The European Community and the United Nations recognized Slovenia, along with Croatia, as an independent country in 1992. Milan Kučan was elected president of Slovenia in 1990 and continued as president of the independent republic; he was reelected in November 1997. Slovenia became a member of NATO and the European Union in 2004, and adopted the Euro in 2007. In 2008 and 2009, Slovenia actively blocked the EU membership bid of Croatia due to disputes about its borders, but a compromise was reached by the end of 2009.

11. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books, Maps, Movies & Websites

Books

After Yugoslavia by Zoe Bran (Travel Writing)

An account by a Welsh novelist comparing two journeys through Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia, before and after the breakup of Yugoslavia. She paints a vivid picture of both the land's beauty and the consequences of civil war.

The Balkans, a Short History by Mark Mazower (History)

Published in 2002, this book provides a concise survey of the region's complex history and modern nation building.

Black Lamb and Gray Falcon by Rebecca West (History)

First published in two volumes in 1941 (in the U.S.), this description of a journey through Serbia-Montenegro (then Yugoslavia) in 1937 is widely recognized as a masterpiece. The landscape and people of Yugoslavia, its history, cultures, religions, and politics are brilliantly observed.

Central Europe: Enemies, Neighbors, Friends by Lonnie R. Johnson (History)

A panoramic history of Central Europe that provides a comparative analysis of the key events that have shaped Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, and Croatia. The author abandons the Cold War convention of defining Central Europe in the bipolar terms of East and West, and emphasizes the underlying continuities in the region's history.

Croatia, a History by Ivo Goldstein (History)

Focuses on the history of Croatia from the Middle Ages to the present.

Yugoslavia, *Death of a Nation* by Laura Silber and Allan Little (History)

A well-presented account of the breakup of Yugoslavia and its consequences.

Guidebooks:

Your Program Director will be happy to provide recommendations and suggestions during the trip, so a guidebook is not a necessity. But a good one can be invaluable as a one-stop reference, so for those travelers who have asked for suggestions, we offer these guidelines. Since different guidebook series each have their own target audience and structure, it is well worth your time to browse your local library or bookstore to find the one(s) you like best. To get you started, here is some general information on the most popular series:

Culture Smart! – Focuses on local customs and etiquette instead of sights, dining, etc.

DK Eyewitness – Innovative visuals make these books easy to use and a nice souvenir once the trip is over. The focus is primarily on the sights and activities.

Fodor's – A classic guidebook with strong information on activities, shopping, and dining. Good mix of upscale recommendations and budget suggestions.

Frommer's – A comprehensive guide series that is known for its restaurant recommendations.

Insight – Offers more information on history and culture than usual, nice visuals, good maps.

Lonely Planet – Practical guides geared towards a more adventurous traveler on a budget.

National Geographic – From the same company that publishes the magazine. Excellent photographs, good information on history, nature, and culture.

Rough Guides - For the independent traveler on a budget. Particularly known for their maps.

Maps:

Most hotels will provide maps free of charge at the reception desk or in your room. These maps are usually sufficient for our travelers, but if you plan on any independent exploration, you may wish to consider purchasing a map before your departure. This can be especially useful in a country that doesn't use the Roman alphabet as the hotel maps may only be printed in the local language.

Some recommended map series include: Rand McNally international maps (especially the StreetWise series), Insight's FlexiMaps, and Rough Guide's destination maps. We suggest that you visit your local bookstore or library to get a better sense of which type of map is best for your needs before making a purchase.

Suggested Movies

Here are few of our favorite movies that are about, or set in, or from the region you'll be traveling. Most are available at movie rental stores and websites—or even your public library. Sometimes films produced outside of the US may be harder to find, but they are usually available online.

Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia/Herzegovina, Czech Republic

What is a Man Without a Mustache? starring Leon Lucev and Zrinka Cvitesic (2005, color) A Croatian comedy about a young widow who falls for the village priest and his tough decision between her and the church. In Croatian with subtitles.

The Duel (also found under the title Anton Chekhov's "**The Duel**") starring Andrew Scott and Fiona Glascott (2010, color) An American production of a Russian novella starring Irish actors in Croatia turns out to be a complex and interesting period piece. Beautifully shot.

Witness starring Leon Lucev and Alma Prica (2005, color) In the 1990s a Serbian villager is killed by Croatian soldiers. Is it an act of ethnic hatred, a crime of opportunity, or something more? This story unfolds as each villager adds their own information and perspective. This film won several international awards for its unusual use of viewpoint (which moves from character to character) and its unflinching look at violence. In Croatian with subtitles.

Josip Broz Tito (1987, color) and Slobodan Milosevic (2005, color) Part of A&E's noted "Biography" TV series.

The Fireman's Ball (1968, color), starring Jan Vostrcil and Josef Sebanek; directed by Milos Forman: Milos Forman's first color film and an iconic Czech New Wave movement movie (*Horí, má panenko*) is comedy and political satire. As a commentary on Czech leadership at the time, the film was "banned forever" in Czechoslovakia and prompted Forman's move to America.

Grand Circle Community & Useful Websites

If you have access to the Internet, the following sites offer a wealth of information:

Visit the Grand Circle Community website for a world of travel news and information:

www.gct.com/community

Government websites:

International health information: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information

www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): agency responsible for screening luggage in U.S.

www.tsa.gov/public

National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport information

www.travel.state.gov

General travel information websites:

Travel books

www.amazon.com

www.barnesandnoble.com

World weather

www.intellicast.com

www.weather.com

Foreign languages for travelers: basic terms in more than 80 languages

www.travlang.com/languages

Travel tips: packing light, choosing luggage, etc.

www.travelite.org

Net café guide: 100s of locations around the globe

www.cybercafes.com

Electric current and plug types

www.kropla.com/electric2.htm

Foreign exchange rates

www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM locators

www.mastercard.com/atm for Cirrus ATMs

www.visa.com/pd/atm for PLUS ATMs

Country information:

www.croatia.hr Croatia

www.slovenia-tourism.si Slovenia

www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr/ Zagreb