

**Crossroads of the  
Adriatic: Croatia,  
Montenegro, Bosnia &  
Herzegovina, and  
Slovenia**

Plus optional extensions:

*Tirana, Albania*  
and  
*Budapest, Hungary*

**2014**

**Overseas Adventure Travel**  
*Crossroads of the Adriatic*  
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# 1. Travel Documents & Entry Requirements

## Your Passport

**Please take a moment to confirm that your passport meets all of these requirements:**

- 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**

Know that 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 at OAT feel that in this case, safe is better than sorry, and we strongly recommend that you follow these guidelines.

- **Main trip only:** If you are taking only the main trip, you will require 5 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip to Tirana, Albania:** You will need 1 more page for a total of 6 blank passport pages. Albanian immigrations officials can be particularly strict about passport expiration dates. For this extension, your passport must be valid for at least 6 months after your date of departure.
- **Post-trip to Budapest, Hungary:** This extension does not require any additional pages beyond the 5 needed for the main trip.
- **Both pre- and a post-trip extension:** You will need a total of 6 blank 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](http://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 and passport service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

***TIP:** 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 get a new passport than to have pages added, depending on the number of pages you need.*

## No Visas Required

The following information applies to U.S. citizens only. *All visas and fees are subject to change.*

- **Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Slovenia—no visas needed:** U.S. citizens do not need visas for stays of less than 90 days in any of these countries
- **Albania (optional extension)—no visa needed:** U.S. citizens do not need visas for stays of less than 90 days.
- **Hungary (optional extension)— no visa needed:** U.S. citizens do not need visa for stays of less than 90 days.

If you are staying longer in any of these countries, you should check with their embassy for the applicable regulations:

Albania: (202) 223-4942	Bosnia-Herzegovina: (202) 337-1500	Croatia: (202) 588-5899
Hungary: (202) 362-6730	Montenegro: (202) 234-6108	Slovenia: (202) 386-6601

### Traveling without a U.S. passport?

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

## Emergency Photocopies

The smartest and easiest security precaution you can take is to carry photocopies of key documents: the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, your air itinerary, and credit card numbers. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals. This can save you time, money, and bother if your documents are lost during your trip.

If you don't feel like taking paper copies, consider going digital. Scan everything and email it to yourself. That way as long as you have access to email, you can access the info you need. Another option is to give copies to a trusted friend or relative at home as a backup that they can email or fax to you if you need it.

## 2. Health

### Is This Adventure Right For You?

We've worked closely with our local Trip Leaders 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 adventure.** *We reserve the right for our Trip Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.*

#### Pacing

- 6 locations in 15 days with one 1-night stay

#### Physical Requirements

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids
- You must be able to walk 3 miles unassisted and participate in 6-8 hours of physical activities each day

#### Climate

- Temperatures are mild and seasonable year round, with the hottest temperatures in July and August averaging at 80°F

#### Terrain

- Walk on rugged paths and cobblestoned streets, and travel by bus over rural roads that may be bumpy and narrow
- Agility and balance are required for boarding or disembarking boats on optional Lake Bled and Plitvice Lakes tours

#### Transportation

- Travel by air-conditioned minibus and funicular, as well as by boat on the optional Lake Bled and Plitvice Lakes tours

#### Accommodations & Facilities

- Hotel rooms are smaller than U.S. and offer basic amenities
- 1-night stay in Karanac village at a small family-run accommodation
- All accommodations feature private baths with showers

## Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on your adventure, there are at least four health-related things you should do. We'll outline some of these steps in more detail in the following pages, but for now, here's the short list:

- **Step 1:** Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel) or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- **Step 2:** Have a medical checkup with your doctor.
- **Step 3:** Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- **Step 4:** Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less important than steps 1-3.)

### Check with the CDC (Vaccinations)

To ensure you receive any needed vaccinations, or know about suggested medications, you should check the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the countries that you'll be visiting. You can contact them:

- **Online:** the CDC's website at [wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel) has detailed recommendations for each country and comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.
- **By phone:** toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day. Automated information may be arranged topically by disease, rather than by country or region.

### Medical Checkup

After checking the CDC's recommendations, we strongly recommend that you have a medical checkup with your doctor at least six weeks before your trip. (We suggest you check with the CDC first so that you can have an informed conversation with your doctor about vaccines and such.)

Topics to discuss during your checkup are:

- **The CDC recommendations.** The CDC makes suggestions based on the destination, but that doesn't mean the suggestions are right for you. Your doctor will be able to advise you on what is best considering your unique medical history.
- **Advice on what medicines (if any) to bring.** For our suggestions of what types of medications to ask your doctor about, see the section titled "Medications" that follows. Remember to get a copy of any prescriptions—written as a generic drug name—so you can replace your medications if they are lost during the trip.
- **Your fitness for this adventure. This is a must if you have any medical conditions or physical limitations.** Use the "Is This Adventure Right For You?" section on previous pages as a guideline. Make certain to review any medical condition you have, particularly cardiac or respiratory disease or diabetes, and discuss the details of the trip itinerary as it pertains to your health. Remember, your trip may take you into remote areas, with no nearby medical facilities.

Please notify us in writing about any medical condition that may require special attention. If your report is normal, you don't need to send it to us. If you send us a medical report, we don't use it to determine if you should take this trip, or if you are likely to enjoy it. Those decisions are up to you and your doctor.

## Medications

### Prescription medication suggestions

Of course, you'll need to bring an ample supply of any prescription medications you happen to be taking. You'll also want to talk to your doctor about any medications suggested by the CDC. In addition, we suggest you ask about prescriptions for:

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- A pain medication. You might need this in the unlikely event of an injury in a location where medical attention would be delayed.

### Over-the-counter medication suggestions

When traveling, keep in mind that not every country has approved every medication. Most major brands are OK, but some medications we take for granted are not allowed in other countries. Fortunately, the U.S. State Department offers advice on restricted medications online at [www.travel.state.gov/travel](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel). (Look under the "Criminal Penalties" and "Special Circumstances" sections of each country you'll be visiting. If you don't see anything mentioned, then major U.S. brands should be fine.)

*TIP: At time of writing, the State Department did not have any special warnings about American over-the-counter medications for the countries we visit on this itinerary.*

### Traveling with medications

To avoid loss and to have them handy, pack medications in your carry-on bag. For quicker security screening at the airport—and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas—keep medicines 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.

## Jet Lag Precautions

You will feel better on the first days of your trip if, shortly before you leave home, you start to adjust to the different time zone of your destination. Since you will cross several time zones to reach your destination, you may lose many hours of regular sleep. On arrival, your body then will have to suddenly adjust to new sleeping and eating patterns. The result is jet lag. Its symptoms are fatigue—often compounded by insomnia and general restlessness—irritability, and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag; but you can minimize it. Here's how:

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

## Staying Healthy on Your Trip

### Safe Water

Tap water in the region is safe to drink, but is processed differently than in the U.S. so it can still upset your stomach or feel “heavy”. Therefore, we suggest drinking bottle water instead. Bottled water is readily available and inexpensive. (Bottled water is not included in the price of your tour.) Inspect each bottle before you buy it to make sure the cap is sealed properly. When in doubt about the water, salads, or ice, just ask the restaurant or your Trip Leader. It is OK to brush your teeth with tap water.

### Safe Food

We've carefully chosen the restaurants for your group meals. Your Trip Leader can suggest restaurants for the meal you take on your own. Be very careful with food sold from vendors on the street, and with uncooked foods.

## 3. Money Matters

### How to Carry Your Money

Generally speaking, you'll want to bring a mixture of different payment methods—some cash to exchange and a couple of cards—so that you'll be prepared for any situation. In this chapter, we offer some tips on each type of payment method.

One note: **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They can be difficult to exchange and are rarely accepted in shops and restaurants.

#### Cash

**We recommend that you bring some cash with you on this adventure.** Cash has a few advantages over other forms of payment. It is more widely accepted than any other form of payment, and sometimes commands a better exchange rate. Cash is also a better choice for rural or undeveloped areas where ATMs and credit card machines are scarce.

So we know that bringing cash is a good idea—does that mean U.S. dollars or local currency?

**There is no need to obtain local currency before your trip.** In fact, your U.S. bank may not carry it. You can change money when you arrive at the airport, or at banks, and money exchange offices. In some countries you do not even need to exchange money at all—you can use U.S. dollars. For more information on what type of currency can be used on this trip, see the “Currency” section. **Torn, dirty, or taped U.S. bills will not be accepted for exchange.** Bills that pre-date 2000 may not be accepted either.

#### ATMs

PLUS, Cirrus, and other international ATM networks are widely available throughout the region, so ATMs shouldn't be too hard to find on this adventure. Plus your Trip Leader can advise you on ATM locations as well.

Using a local ATM on an international network will allow you to withdraw money from your U.S. account in local currency; your bank at home will calculate the conversion rate and charge you in U.S. dollars. However, many banks charge a fee ranging from \$1 to \$5 for every time you use a foreign ATM. Others will charge you a percentage of what you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart. You'll also want to notify your bank that you'll be out of the country—that way when they see foreign ATM withdrawals, they won't put a fraud alert on your account. Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

## Credit Cards

Credit cards are widely accepted in Croatia, Hungary, Montenegro, and Slovenia, and are becoming more popular in Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina. However, some types of businesses—street vendors, local restaurants, or “Mom and Pop” stores—are still largely cash only. Cash only establishments are more common in the countryside than in cities, and are more common in Albania or Bosnia-Herzegovina. If you don’t see a credit card logo on the door or the cash register, then check with the cashier or server.

Please note that many European credit cards are moving to a new technology called “smartcards” or “chip-and-pin”. These cards have an embedded computer chip instead of a magnetized strip, and the card owner authorizes a purchase by entering a PIN (personal identification number) instead of signing a slip. This new technology is not common in the U.S., so occasionally there are machines in Europe that can’t read U.S. cards. Or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. This doesn’t happen often, and is nothing to worry about. You can usually resolve the situation by asking the cashier to let you sign. (If you don’t speak the language, just mime signing on your hand.) Or you can use another form of payment. For example, a debit card can sometimes be useful in place of a credit card because debit cards use PINs.

Even if you do not plan on using them, we suggest you bring one or two credit or debit cards as a “backup” or for optional tours. We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although the Discover card is now accepted in some countries outside the U.S., it is not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

***TIP:** Many credit card companies 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 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 could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don’t assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1-800 numbers don’t work outside of the U.S.!*

And speaking of credit cards, please keep in mind that optional tours with OAT can only be purchased with a credit or debit card (if it has a credit card logo and allows you to sign for purchases). 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).

## Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to our website [www.oattravel.com](http://www.oattravel.com), your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

### In Albania

The lek is the official currency of Albania. It is subdivided into 100 qindarka, although qindarka are no longer issued. The banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Bills come in denominations of 100, 200, 500, 1,000, and 5,000 Lek
- Coins come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, and 100 Lek

U.S. dollars are not widely accepted for payment in Albania; local currency is preferred. (Note: Leks are a restricted currency and cannot generally be exchanged outside of Albania.)

### In Bosnia-Herzegovina

The basic unit of currency in Bosnia is the konvertibilna marka (KM), which is divisible into 100 feninga. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Bills come in denominations of 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 Marka
- Coins come in denominations of 10, 20, and 50 Feninga; 1, 2, and 5 Marka

U.S. dollars are not widely accepted for payment; local currency is preferred.

### In Croatia

The basic unit of currency in Croatia is the kuna (Kn), which is subdivided into lipa. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Bills come in denominations of 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, and 1,000 Kuna
- Coins come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, and 50 Lipa; 1, 2, 5, and 25 Kuna

U.S. dollars are not widely accepted for payment in Croatia; local currency is preferred.

### In Hungary

The official currency of Hungary is the forint (ft), which is made up of 100 fillers. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Bills come in denominations of 500, 1000, 5000, 10,000, and 20,000 Forints
- Coins come in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, and 200 Forints

U.S. dollars are not widely accepted for payment; local currency is preferred.

### In Montenegro and Slovenia

The euro is the monetary unit of Montenegro and Slovenia. Euro banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Bills come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 Euro
- Coins come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, and 50 cents; 1 and 2 Euro

U.S. dollars are not widely accepted for payment in these countries; euros are preferred.

## Tipping

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. For those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines. All tips below are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency (this is usually preferred) or in U.S. dollars. Do not use personal or traveler's check for tips.

- **OAT Trip Leader:** It is customary to express a personal "thank you" to your OAT Trip Leader at the end of your trip, especially if he or she has provided you with individual service. As a guideline, many travelers give \$7-\$10 per person per day.
- **Drivers:** \$3-\$4 per person, per day
- **Local guides:** \$3-\$4 per person, per day
- **Housekeeping staff at hotels:** \$1-2 per room, per night
- **Waiters:** When dining as a group, your tip is included—there is no need for you to leave an additional tip. When dining on your own, you can simply round up the bill. Or if you want to leave a really nice tip for excellent service 5-10% of the check is enough.
- **Taxi drivers:** Tipping is not customary, but many locals will round up the fare and let the driver keep the change.

## Shopping

It is Overseas Adventure Travel's goal to identify and provide you with shopping opportunities that highlight unique, locally-produced products with good value from reliable vendors. For this reason there may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. **Overseas Adventure Travel cannot be responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.**

### Crafts & Souvenirs

Each country or region has its own specialties; here are a few that you might not be aware of.

- **Croatia:** On the Dalmatian coast, shop for Dalmatian lace, woodcarvings, ceramics, woolens, wines, art, tapestries, embroidery, leather boxes, filigree jewelry, handmade carpets, and other locally-made items. You can find good deals on handicrafts at the central market in Zagreb. Typical Croatian souvenirs include gingerbread hearts (Licitar), lavender oil, olive oil, red corals, neckties, vegetable spices, Zagrebački melem ointment, and ballpoint pens.
- **Slovenia:** Handicraft shops in Slovenia feature locally made ceramics, woolens, wood carvings, embroidery, leather boxes, tapestries, filigree jewelry, pumpkin seed oil, hand painted beehive panels, honey brandy, and handmade carpets. Idrija lace and Rogaska crystal are Slovenian specialties.
- **Hungary:** In Budapest, you will find Hungary's exquisite Herend porcelain, cut glass, fine peasant embroidery and needlework, homespun cloth, carpets, charming carved wood objects and, of course, dolls in national dress. Other excellent buys are recordings of classical and folk music.

## 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](http://www.cbp.gov) has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the *export* duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the *import* duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need 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.

## If You Have a 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.

## 4. Climate: A Word about the Weather

### Climate by Location

#### Main Trip

- **Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina:** Sarajevo has a continental climate, lying between the climate zones of central Europe to the North and the Mediterranean to the South. Sarajevo experiences warm summers, with temperatures of 95°F not being uncommon, and cold winters, when snow is guaranteed due to the city's high altitude. The average year-round temperature is 45 °F. Sarajevo receives about 36 inches of precipitation a year. The rainiest month is October when the city receives 3.5 inches of rainfall. The driest is February when the city gets only 2.4 inches of precipitation.
- **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 boasts a pleasant Mediterranean climate characterized by wet winters and hot, dry summers. A winter wind, the *bura*, is the strongest wind along the Adriatic coast. In Croatia during June and August, temperatures can hit peaks as high as 100. Rain can come at any time and with it the temperature can drop dramatically. Water temperatures are warm enough for swimming June-September, but are too cold the rest of the year.
- **Zagreb, Croatia:** Because it is located further north and inland, Zagreb has a continental climate. Winters can be cold, sometimes snowy, autumn can be rainy and changeable, and spring can be very unpredictable. In late fall, winter, and early spring, it will get noticeably cooler in Zagreb than it does along the Adriatic seacoast.
- **Opatija, Croatia:** Located on the Adriatic seacoast, Opatija has a Mediterranean climate, with hot, dry summers and rainy, windy winters. Be prepared when the north wind *bura* blows in during the winter—it can be quite cold.
- **Ljubljana, Slovenia:** Ljubljana, capital of Slovenia, is situated between the Alps and the Adriatic Sea; both the warmth of the sea and the cool air of the mountains influence its climate. Although coastal regions of the country have a Mediterranean climate with hot summers and mild winters, Ljubljana's weather reflects a continental climate. The city's summer days from June to September are moderately warm and dry, with comfortably cool evenings, while autumn brings mornings of sunshine occasionally interspersed with some showers or haze. Winter months, beginning in January, can be quite cold with temperatures dropping below freezing, while the warmth of spring brings refreshing breezes. This continental climate is changeable, and a day with some passing showers is to be expected during any two-week interval.

**Optional Extensions**

- **Albania:** Albania’s location in a transition zone means its climate is a cross between the typical warm Mediterranean climate and a cooler continental climate. Rainy winters and dry, hot summers are typical of the coastal plain. Away from the coast, summer rainfall is more frequent and the winters are colder, especially in the mountainous. In Tirana, summers are hot and humid while the winters tend to be mild.
- **Hungary:** Hungary is completely landlocked, and its inland position cut it off from the moderating influence of the Atlantic Ocean. Consequently, seasonal weather is more prone to extremes. Summers can be very hot and winters absolutely frigid. If you’re traveling during the peak of summer, be prepared for some high temperatures, though it could also be comfortable and pleasant. As fall approaches, some days may be on the cool side, but stints of warm weather still occur. By late October, the air is usually brisk and evenings are chilly.

**Climate Charts**

The following charts reflect the average *climate* as opposed to *weather* conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. As your departure approaches you may wish to monitor current weather conditions online. Here is the official data from the weather observation stations closest to our destinations:

**Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity, & Precipitation**

MONTH	SARAJVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina			DUBROVNIK, Croatia		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Avg. number of days with Rainfall	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Avg. number of days with Rainfall
JAN	36-23	92-79	14	52-41	66-62	14
FEB	42-26	91-68	15	53-41	65-60	13
MAR	52-33	90-55	15	57-45	68-60	14
APR	58-39	88-54	17	62-50	66-58	14
MAY	68-47	88-53	15	70-57	66-58	12
JUN	73-53	88-54	13	77-64	60-55	9
JUL	78-56	89-50	10	82-69	52-49	6
AUG	78-55	91-52	11	82-69	55-51	6
SEP	72-49	94-54	10	76-64	62-56	8
OCT	61-42	94-62	12	69-56	69-62	12
NOV	46-33	93-76	13	59-48	70-64	14
DEC	37-26	92-83	15	54-43	68-65	14

MONTH	ZAGREB, Croatia			LJUBLJANA, Slovenia		
	Temp. (avg)	% Relative Humidity (avg)*	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Avg. number of days with Rainfall
JAN	32	--	2.0	36-23	91-77	14
FEB	35	--	1.9	40-25	90-65	14
MAR	44	--	2.2	50-31	91-57	15
APR	51	--	2.7	57-37	88-52	17
MAY	60	--	3.2	67-45	86-52	18
JUN	66	--	3.7	73-52	87-55	19
JUL	69	--	3.1	77-55	87-53	16
AUG	68	--	3.1	77-55	90-53	14
SEP	62	--	3.1	69-49	95-60	13
OCT	51	--	3.7	58-41	95-68	15
NOV	42	--	3.4	44-31	93-78	15
DEC	35	--	2.6	37-26	92-84	16

\*data not available

MONTH	TIRANA, Albania (optional extension)			BUDAPEST, Hungary (optional extension)		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)*	Monthly Precip. (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Precip. (# of days)
JAN	53-36	--	5.1	36-25	86-77	19
FEB	55-37	--	5.8	40-27	85-68	17
MAR	57-38	--	4.2	51-35	81-57	20
APR	65-46	--	5.8	60-41	75-51	22
MAY	73-54	--	5.7	70-51	73-51	25
JUN	82-60	--	3.1	75-56	72-51	24
JUL	88-63	--	1.5	79-59	72-49	23
AUG	90-63	--	0.5	79-59	76-48	20
SEP	82-57	--	1.6	71-52	82-52	15
OCT	73-50	--	4.9	59-43	86-60	17
NOV	62-46	--	6.0	45-34	87-75	19
DEC	56-38	--	5.3	38-28	86-79	21

\*data not available

## Online Forecast

Monthly temperature averages for the countries you will be visiting, plus a current 10-day forecast, are available online through the My Account feature of our website [www.oattravel.com](http://www.oattravel.com).

## 5. Packing Just What You Need

### Your Luggage & Locks

#### Luggage Suggestions

##### Checked luggage

One duffle bag or suitcase. Due to space limitations on our motor coaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy-duty lockable zipper. Please do not bring a rigid (plastic shell) suitcase.

##### Carry-on bag

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

*TIP: Consider bringing a second, empty, lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home. Also, when 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.*

#### Locks

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.

## LUGGAGE LIMITATIONS

	Number of Pieces	Type of Luggage	Weight Restrictions	Special Size Restrictions?
<b>Main trip only</b>	One checked bag and one carry-on per person	Duffle bag or soft-sided suitcase. Please do not bring a hard-sided (clamshell) suitcase.	<b>Varies by international airline.</b> The current industry standard is 50lbs for checked luggage and 15lbs for carry-ons.	Standard airline size: checked luggage should not exceed 62 linear inches (length+ width + depth) and carry-on should not exceed 45 linear inches
<b>Pre- and post-trip extensions</b>	Same	Same	Same	Same
<b>Remarks and Suggestions</b>				
<p><b>The “Dirty Harry” luggage rule:</b> The limits in the chart above are based on the airlines’ published restrictions. The enforcement of luggage limits is a matter of airline corporate policy. It may not be consistent in all situations and may include random spot checks, especially for carry-on luggage. Airline penalties and fines, however, will probably be immediate when and if enforcement occurs. Before you choose to go above the airline’s published restrictions, you should first ask: <i>Do I feel lucky?</i> (And if the answer is yes, then you should accept that you might be charged a fee by the airlines.)</p>				

Remember, these limits can change. If the airline(s) notifies us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet. **You should also confirm both luggage restrictions and luggage fees directly with your U.S./international airline a week or so before your departure.** Doing so will keep you up-to-date on any last-minute changes, new security measures, or new fees. **Most airlines are now charging fees for checked luggage, even on some international flights.** These fees are not included in your trip price; they are payable directly to the airlines. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website under the FAQ section.

## Clothing Suggestions

### Functional Tips

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, we suggest several layers of clothing. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, look for fabrics that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel, with features like wrinkle-resistant fabric or built-in sun protection.

- **Footwear:** You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip, hiking and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. The soles of your shoes should offer good traction. Sturdy and comfortable hiking shoes with arch support are suggested.
- **Light rain gear is recommended.** Regardless of when you travel, rainfall is a possibility. While it may not rain on your trip, we suggest you bring a waterproof shell or coat, preferably with a hood. This might be a better choice than a folding umbrella, which is usually less effective in wind. (Plus it can be tricky to try to hold onto an umbrella and take photos at the same time.)
- **Layers are key.** We suggest wearing layers, so you can adjust to warmer and cooler conditions as needed.

### Style Hints

Dress on our trip is functional and casual. Comfortable, informal apparel is perfectly acceptable in the countries on this adventure. Basic pants, shirts, sportswear, everyday dresses/skirts, supportive shoes, and functional outdoor clothes that are relatively easy to care for are recommended. You might want to bring one slightly dressier outfit for dining on your own at nicer restaurants or for the Farewell Dinner, but that is completely up to you.

While casual clothing will be OK everywhere we visit, we do have one note about religious sites. The region's mix of Catholic, Orthodox, and Muslim populations means that there are many religious buildings of different faiths. Some religious sites, like Orthodox churches and Muslim mosques, strongly prefer that visitors of both genders dress modestly. In this context, "modestly dressed" usually means covered from shoulders to below the knees—no shorts, no sleeveless shirts, and no low or revealing necklines. In many Orthodox churches or Muslim mosques, local women will cover their hair with a scarf; as a visitor you are usually not required to do the same, but doing so would be a nice way to show respect.

## Traveler's Checklists

Did you know that the top two comments travelers have about packing are “I wish I had brought less” and “I wish I had thought to double-check the weather”? In an effort to help you bring less, we offer these lists, which have been compiled from suggestions by Trip Leaders and former travelers. The lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. You might also want to refer to the climate charts in this handbook or online weather forecasts before you pack. And finally, remember the Golden Rule of Packing Light—whatever you think you need at first—take half the clothes and twice the money.

### Recommended Clothing Checklist

- Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts in a breathable fabric, like cotton or cotton-blend. Polo shirts are more versatile than T-shirts.
- Trousers and/or jeans.
- Shoes and socks: Shoes should be comfortable walking/ running shoes or low-cut hiking shoes, with arch support. Bring at least a couple pairs of medium- to heavy-weight socks for hiking.
- Underwear and sleepwear
- Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- Wide-brim sun hat
- Swimsuit for hotel pools or saunas

### Seasonal Clothing Checklist

- For summer departures:** Although high temperatures tend to be in the 80s, temperatures can easily spike into the 90s or higher in this region, especially in Croatia. A few shorts and some lightweight tops will help you cope with an unexpected heat wave. Despite the potential for higher temperatures, you'll also want at least one piece to layer—a light sweater, a vest, or jacket—in case it gets cool at night or in case you are somewhere where the air conditioning is chilly.
- For spring and fall departures:** Light sweater and/or a warm jacket, gloves, and a scarf
- For winter departures:** Winter coat, hat, warm gloves, scarf, and long underwear

### Other Essential Items

- Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. Our hotels will provide the basics like soap and shampoo, but if you are sensitive to fragrances or new products, you may wish to bring your preferred brands. Most hotels do not provide a washcloth, so you may wish to pack one.
- Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses/ Sunglasses, 100% UV block
- Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger
- Cold-water hand-wash laundry soap such as Woolite and plastic hang-up clothespins
- Light folding umbrella
- Moisturizer and sun-blocking lip balm
- Packets of pocket-size tissues or small roll of toilet paper
- Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial "water-free" hand cleanser
- Electrical converter & plug adapter: see "A Word about Electricity" for details
- Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger

## Medicines & First Aid Gear

- Your own prescription medicines
- Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach. Maybe a cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, antibiotic cream, or allergy medication.
- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes

## Optional Gear

(These are items that other travelers have suggested *might* be useful—not requirements. The extra spaces at the end are for you to add whatever you don't want to forget.)

- Travel alarm or travel watch with alarm
- Folding walking staff or trekking pole, sold in most camping stores (preferably rubber-tipped)
- Hanging toiletry bag (with hook to hang on doorknob and pockets to organize items)
- Basic sewing kit
- Reading materials
- Travel journal/note pad and pens
- Phrase book
- Pocket-size calculator for exchange rates
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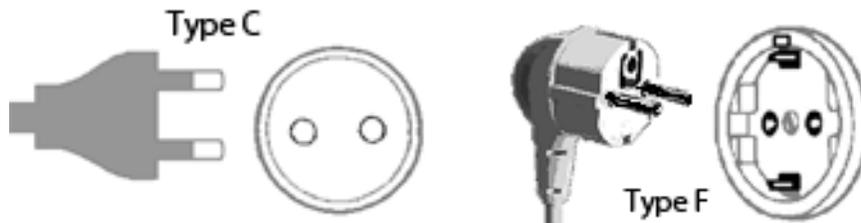
## A Word about Electricity

When traveling overseas, there are a few differences to keep in mind about electricity. First, the voltage is usually different. Second, the plugs might not be the same shape. Lastly, the availability of power can vary.

**Voltage:** Electricity in this region is generally 220 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, MP3 players, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

**Plugs:** The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet—Type A, Type B, and so on. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B.

**Overall, C and F plugs are by far the most common plugs in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Hungary, Montenegro, and Solvenia. Type C plugs will fit into a F sockets.**



To plug something from the U.S. into a C or F socket you’ll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because there are multiple plug types in this region, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you *might* also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

**Availability:** Barring the occasional and unpredictable power outage, electricity is as readily available on this adventure as it is in the U.S.

## 6. Learn about Your Destinations

We encourage you to start learning about your destinations before your trip. Even a small amount of background reading can help you make sense of the kaleidoscope of facts and impressions that will come your way. Having some knowledge in advance can complement and enrich what you can learn from your resident Trip Leader.

### Croatia at a Glance

#### Facts & Figures

**Area:** 21,831 square miles

**Capital:** Zagreb

**Languages:** Croatian is the official language

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

**Location:** Croatia is located in Southeastern Europe, bordering the Adriatic Sea, between Bosnia-Herzegovina and Slovenia.

**Geography:** The terrain of Croatia is geographically diverse; flat plains along Hungarian border, low mountains and highlands near Adriatic coast, coastline, and islands. 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.

**Population:** 4,489,409

**Religions:** 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 six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Zagreb.

#### Historical Overview

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, Croats agreed to the Pacta Conventa in 1102, 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 (which became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in 1929). The country changed its name once again after World War II to the Federal Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia. Known simply as “Yugoslavia”, the new state united Croatia and several other nations 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, Croats 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 1995 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.

These 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. Negotiations moved forward from there and Croatia officially become a member of the EU in July 2013.

## Slovenia at a Glance

### Facts & Figures

**Area:** 7,827 square miles

**Capital:** Ljubljana

**Languages:** Slovenian is the official language.

**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:** 2,005,692

**Religion:** Catholic 57.8%, Muslim 2.4%, Orthodox 2.3%, other Christian 0.9%, unaffiliated 3.5%, other or unspecified 23%, none 10.1%

**Time Zone:** Slovenia is six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Ljubljana.

### Historical Overview

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.

## Bosnia-Herzegovina at a Glance

### Facts & figures

**Area:** 19,741 square miles

**Capital:** Sarajevo

**Languages:** Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian

**Ethnicities:** Bosniak 48%, Serb 37.1%, Croat 14.3%, other 0.6%

**Location:** Southeastern Europe, bordering Croatia and Serbia and Montenegro.

**Geography:** Bosnia is located in the western Balkans, bordering Croatia to the north and south-west, and Serbia and Montenegro to the east. The country is mostly mountainous, encompassing the central Dinaric Alps. The northeastern parts reach into the Pannonian basin, while in the south it almost borders the Adriatic. The country has only 12 miles of coastline, around the town of Neum in the Herzegovina-Neretva Canton, although it's enclosed within Croatian territory.

**Population:** 4,613,414

**Religions:** Muslim 40%, Orthodox 31%, Roman Catholic 15%, other 14%

**Time Zone:** Bosnia is six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Sarajevo.

## Montenegro at a Glance

### Facts & Figures

**Area:** 5,333 square miles

**Capital:** Podgorica

**Languages:** Serbian 63.6%, Montenegrin (official) 22%, Bosnian 5.5%, Albanian 5.3%, unspecified 3.7%

**Ethnicities:** Montenegrin 43%, Serbian 32%, Bosniak 8%, Albanian 5%, other (Muslims, Croats, Roma (Gypsy)) 12%

**Location:** Montenegro is in Southeastern Europe, between the Adriatic Sea and Serbia

**Geography:** The country is only 13,812 sq km, which means it is roughly the same size as Connecticut, yet it borders on five countries: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, and Serbia. The country is mostly rugged high limestone mountains and plateaus that dip down to coastal plains.

**Population:** 672,180

**Religions:** Orthodox 74.2%, Muslim 17.7%, Catholic 3.5%, other 0.6%, unspecified 4%

**Time Zone:** Montenegro is six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Podgorica.

## Albania at a Glance (optional extension)

### Facts & Figures

**Area:** 11,100 square miles

**Capital:** Tirana

**Languages:** Albanian is the official language

**Location:** Albania is in Southeastern Europe, bordering the Adriatic Sea and Ionian Sea

**Geography:** Occupying an area slightly smaller than Maryland, Albania lies between Greece to the south and Montenegro and Kosovo to the north. The geography is mostly mountains and hills, small plains along the coast, with farmland in between the two.

**Population:** 3,639,453

**Religion:** Muslim 70%, Albanian Orthodox 20%, Roman Catholic 10%. (These figures are government estimates.)

**Time Zone:** Albania is six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Tirana.

## Hungary at a Glance (optional extension)

### Facts & Figures

**Area:** 35,919 square miles

**Capital:** Budapest

**Languages:** Hungarian (Magyar) is the official language.

**Location:** Hungary is located in central Europe

**Geography:** Hungary is a landlocked country that has borders with seven countries: Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia to the east; Serbia-Montenegro and Romania to the south; Ukraine to the northeast; and Slovakia directly to the north. Most of Hungary is a fertile, rolling plain lying east of the Danube River, and drained by the Danube and Tisza Rivers.

**Population:** 9,956,108

**Religion:** Roman Catholic 52%, Calvinist 16%, Lutheran 3%, other 14%, unaffiliated 15%

**Time Zone:** Hungary is six hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is noon in Budapest.

## **Culture & Points to Know**

### **Language Barrier**

You can have some great “conversations” with local people who do not speak English, even if you don’t speak a word of the local language. Indeed, this non-verbal communication can be a highly rewarding part of travel. To break the ice, bring along some family photographs, or a few postcards of your hometown. If you want to meet kids, bring a puppet or other interactive toy. Your Trip Leader can help get the ball rolling.

### **Taking Photographs**

The etiquette of photographing most people in the countries on your itinerary is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject, try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK. Your Trip Leader can help.

## **Safety & Security**

### **Common Sense and Awareness**

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don’t be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash in your pocket. Carry most of your money, and your passport, in a travel pouch or money belt under your shirt. Replenish your pocket supply when you are in a safe and quiet place, or in our vehicle. Don’t leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Every hotel will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe.

### **Pickpockets**

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful. Con artists sometimes target travelers.

## **Communications**

To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

### **How to Dial**

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. The country codes on this trip are: +355 for Albania, +387 for Bosnia-Herzegovina, +385 for Croatia, +36 for Hungary, +382 for Montenegro, and +386 for Slovenia. Phone numbers abroad may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even numbers within a country can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

### **Cell Phones**

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

### **Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers**

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

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

### **Internet**

Most hotels in the Balkans will have Internet services available, some for free, some for an hourly charge. WiFi service is fairly common, but may be limited to a public area, like the lobby. If you'd like to use WiFi when and where it is available, you'll need to bring your own device. Or you could choose to rely on hotel computers instead—many hotels will also offer a limited number of computers in the lobby or business center for guests to use.

## 7. Additional Resources

### Suggested Readings

We've listed a few of our favorite books about the region you'll be traveling. Most of these are available in large bookshops (especially those that specialize in travel or international books), by mail order, and from the Internet.

#### **General:**

***Black Lamb and Gray Falcon: A Journey Through Yugoslavia*** by Rebecca West (History) This description of a journey through Serbia and 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. Stands out from other history books about the region because the author compares the underlying similarities between the different countries instead of just dividing them into East (Soviet Bloc) and West.

***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.

***The Impossible Country: A Journey through the Last Days of Yugoslavia*** by Brian Hall (Travel Narrative) As Yugoslavia was deteriorating in the mid-1990s, the author was touring the region by bicycle, allowing him a unique chance to document the people, politics, and mood of the times.

***Yugoslavia, Death of a Nation*** by Laura Silber and Allan Little (History) A well-presented account of the breakup of Yugoslavia and its consequences.

***On the Road to Babadag*** by Andrzej Stasiuk (Travel Narrative) Follow the author as he travels from his native Poland through Central Europe—Hungary, Slovenia, Albania, Moldova, and Ukraine.

#### **Bosnia & Herzegovina:**

***Death and the Dervish*** by Mesa Selimovic (Literature) The sad tale set during the Ottoman rule in 18th-century Bosnia. Selimovic was a bestselling Bosnian Muslim author in the 1960s, this is considered a classic in Bosnia.

***How the Soldier Repairs the Gramophone*** by Sasa Stanisic (Literature) Powerful and funny, Stanisic's devastating tale shows the calamity of war through the eyes of a young Bosnian refugee.

***People of the Book*** by Geraldine Brooks (Literature) Offered a coveted job to conserve a priceless book known as the Sarajevo Haggadah, rare-book expert Hanna Heath discovers a series of tiny artifacts in the volume's ancient binding that reveal its historically significant origins. By a Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

**Croatia:**

*A Taste of Croatia* by Karen Evenden (Food) This engaging memoir of a three-year sailing odyssey includes 100 easy-to-use recipes.

*April Fool's Day* by Josip Novakovich (Literature) The razor-sharp and darkly humorous story of Ivan, a Croatian born on April Fool's Day in 1948 who must survive Tito, a labor camp, and a civil war.

*Croatia, a History* by Ivo Goldstein (History) Focuses on the history of Croatia from the Middle Ages to the present day.

*Croatia, Travels in Undiscovered Country* by Tony Fabijancic (Travel Narrative) The author, who left Croatia when it was still part of Yugoslavia, writes with insight on his return. Organized geographically, he focuses on the coastal regions with chapters on Dalmatia, Dubrovnik, and Istria.

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

**Montenegro:**

*Montenegro, A Novel* by Starling Lawrence (Literature) Romance, intrigue, and the adventures of a reluctant British spy set in turn-of-the-century Montenegro.

**Slovenia:**

*After Yugoslavia* by Zoe Bran/Zoe Schramm-Evans (Travel Narrative) An account by a Welsh novelist comparing two journeys through Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia, before and after the breakup of Yugoslavia, that paints a vivid picture of both the land's beauty and the consequences of war.

*Flavors of Slovenia, Food and Wine from Central Europe's Hidden Gem* by Heike Milhench (Food) An overview of the country's cuisine, folklore and legends. Recipes range from traditional favorites to Milhench's own savory creations.

**Albania:**

*Chronicle in Stone* by Ismail Kadare (Literature) A fictionalized account of the author's own experiences during World War II, this novel follows a sensitive boy struggling to grow up in an occupied town near the Albanian-Greek border. The author is considered one of Albania's most famous writers.

*Bury Me Standing: The Gypsies and Their Journey* by Isabel Fonseca (Culture) Author Isabel Fonseca draws on her time living with a Roma (gypsy) family from Albania in the 1990s to illuminate gypsy heritage in general.

**Hungary:**

*A Concise History of Hungary* by Miklós Molnár (History) The title says it all—this book delivers a readable and compact overview of Hungarian history.

*Budapest 1900: A Historical Portrait of a City and Its Culture* by John Lukacs (Culture/History) Focusing on an era when Budapest was booming, this book is equal parts history and culture.

***Budapest Noir*** by Vilmos Kondor (Mystery) The death of a call girl in a seedy neighborhood a few days after the death of Hungary's Prime Minister doesn't seem to be of interest to anyone, except a dogged reporter. A classic noir-style mystery that unravels in 1930s Budapest.

***The Bridge at Andau*** by James Michener (History) For a brief time in 1956 the bridge at Andau became an escape route for Hungarians fleeing the Soviet suppression of a revolt in Budapest. Historian Michener captures the dramatic nature of the true-life events surrounding the revolt and escape attempts.

### **Guidebooks:**

Your Trip Leader 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 a 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 U.S. may be harder to find, but they are usually available online.

***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.

## **Useful Websites**

### **Tourist information**

<http://www.croatia.hr> **Croatia**

<http://www.visit-montenegro.com/> **Montenegro**

<http://www.bhtourism.ba/eng/> **Bosnia-Herzegovina**

<http://www.slovenia-tourism.si/intro/> **Slovenia**

### **Overseas Adventure Travel Store**

<http://www.oatshop.com>

### **International health information: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)**

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

### **Electric current and plug types**

<http://www.kropla.com/electric2.htm>

### **Foreign exchange rates**

<http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic>

### **ATM locators**

<http://www.mastercard.com/atm> **for Cirrus ATMs**

<http://www.visa.com/atmlocator> **for PLUS ATMs**

### **World weather**

<http://www.intellicast.com>

<http://www.weather.com>

<http://www.wunderground.com>

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

<http://www.travlang.com/languages>

### **Travel tips: packing light, choosing luggage, etc.**

<http://www.travelite.org>

### **Net café guide: 100s of locations around the globe**

<http://www.cybercafes.com>

### **U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information**

<http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel>

### **Transportation Security Administration (TSA): agency that screens luggage in U.S.**

<http://www.tsa.gov>

### **National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport information**

<http://www.travel.state.gov>