

Croatia Bike & Boat: Split & the Dalmatian Islands, Aboard the Jadranska Kraljica

Bike Vacation Only

Lose yourself amid the splendor of the Dalmatian Coast. On our Croatia bike tour, sail by private charter to a new and thrilling island every day, disembarking to cycle to charming fishing villages, medieval towns, breathtaking seaside vistas and hidden bays ideal for swimming. Along the way, stop to tour an organic olive farm on Korčula, witness the art of stonecutting at one of the last remaining schools, visit a fishing museum on Vis. Explore the beauty of Mljet National Park during an afternoon of kayaking, hiking or swimming. All while enjoying the convenience of your own ship, whose chef prepares island specialties and even shares his culinary skill during a hands-on cooking class.

Cultural Highlights

- Explore the medieval fortress and fascinating fishing museum in the tiny village of Komiža on the island of Vis.
- Cycle into historic cities central to the past and culture of the Dalmatian Islands: Korčula, Hvar, Jelsa, Stari Grad, Postira, Pučišća.
- Learn some Croatian cooking tips during a class with your onboard chef – and savor the results for dinner.
- Visit one of the last remaining stonecutters' schools on the island of Brač.
- Spend an afternoon amidst the lush beauty of Mljet National Park – kayaking, hiking scenic trails or swimming in turquoise waters.

What to Expect

This tour offers a combination of rolling terrain and moderate-to-challenging hills and is ideal for everyone from energetic beginners to experienced cyclists. Our VBT support vehicle is always available for those who would like a break from riding.

Average Daily Mileage: 6 - 27 miles

Average Cycling Time: 00:30 - 03:15

Climate Information

Average High/Low Temperature (°F)

May 71°/56°, Jun 79°/63°, Jul 85°/67°, Aug 84°/67°, Sep 78°/61°, Oct 69°/54°

Average Rainfall (in.)

May 2.4, Jun 1.9, Jul 1.1, Aug 1.7, Sep 2.6, Oct 3.4

DAY 1: VBT Bicycle Vacation begins / Warm-up ride / Welcome reception and dinner

Meet your VBT trip leaders at the ship at 12:00 p.m. The Jadranska Kraljica (phone +385 915 196814) will be moored at the St. Peter pier (gat. Sv. Petra), next to the Jadrolinija Ferry Port in Split. Please note that you cannot embark before this time, as the barge is being prepared for your arrival. If you prefer, you can meet your group at Cornaro Hotel in Split (6 Sinjska str. 21000 Split, phone +385 21 644 200) at 10:15 a.m., hand your luggage to your VBT trip leaders and join a guided walking tour of Split. Your trip leaders will be wearing VBT staff garments.

Once the walking tour is over you embark the ship with your fellow travelers and have lunch on board. Please contact the ship or the Hotel Cornaro in Split to advise of any travel delays or changes, and the staff will pass your message on to your VBT trip leaders.

After embarkation, you start sailing towards the island of Vis. Once you check into your cabin you can enjoy a lunch onboard. Upon arrival the trip leaders provide a safety and bike-fitting session, which will be followed by a warm-up ride in Vis. Later, gather for a welcome cocktail and dinner on board. After dinner you may go for a walk, discovering the small town of Vis, where your ship will be moored for the first night.

Today's Ride Choices

Afternoon Warm-Up — 7 km (4 miles)

What to Expect:

An easy out and back ride outside the town of Vis, following the coastline.

Cumulative Distance Range: 7 km (4 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 2: Cruise to Vis Island / Loop island ride / Lunch at Rokis / Visit Komiža

Lift anchor early this morning and enjoy your first breakfast on board during a scenic coastal cruise to Vis, the farthest island from Croatia's shore inhabited by locals. The fishing heritage is rich here as Vis has long been isolated from other sources of livelihood. Today, an active viniculture also thrives on this relaxed, low-key island. You arrive late this morning and pedal along on a beautiful seaside route to Milna, where you might dive into the Adriatic for a swim at one of the many long, sandy beaches for which Vis is celebrated. Later, ride to the island's famed restaurant, Rokis, a casual eatery set in a traditional stone house typical of the Dalmatian Islands.

Later, cycle to the old fishing village of Komiža, set between dramatic green hills and the shimmering ocean. You visit the imposing St. George Fortress and the fishing museum for a glimpse of the region's rich past and seafaring ways. After, ride back to your ship over scenic hills, taking in breathtaking Adriatic vistas. If you prefer, get a lift from the shuttle and explore the town of Vis, perhaps visiting the Notre Dame Church or strolling to admire Renaissance summer houses built by the nobility. This evening, enjoy dinner on board. You moor overnight in Vis.

Today's Ride Choices

Morning Vis to Komiža — 28 km (17 miles)

Afternoon Komiža to Vis — 11 km (7 miles)

What to Expect:

Ride quiet and fully paved country roads. The route features a couple of hills, especially during the afternoon ride. The support vehicle is available back to the ship if you prefer to pass on the afternoon ride.

Cumulative Distance Range: 28 - 39 km (17 - 24 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3: Cycle Korčula Island / Visit olive farm

A three-hour sailing this morning delivers you to Vela Luka (meaning "big harbor") on the splendid island of Korčula. Not only is this one of the most beautiful Dalmatian islands; it is also beloved for the golden-

hued Grk wine produced at its vineyards. Your morning ride leads you into a stunning landscape of karst hills to one side and glittering Adriatic waters to the other. Some hill climbing brings you to spectacular lookout points. Your destination is a working olive farm, lush with gnarly olive trees that have grown here in the Adriatic sun for generations. Pause to visit with the owners and enjoy a tour of its ethnographic collection of olive presses, learning about the island's long tradition of harvesting. Later, you stop for a traditional Croatian lunch at the family-owned Konopica restaurant. Sample the homemade Uštipci bread, sip a local Pošip wine and enjoy a local peka, a traditional dish slow-cooked under a cast-iron dome-shaped baking lid.

After lunch, continue cycling to Grad Korčula, the island's cultural center and alleged birthplace of Marco Polo. This fascinating town was laid out in a herringbone configuration on a scenic promontory. The resulting grid allows for easy air flow and protects its citizens from strong mistral winds in the warm summers. All its narrow streets are stepped, except the Street of Thoughts, so called because there's no need to watch your footing as you stroll.

This evening, enjoy a wine- and olive-tasting on board, followed by a dinner on your own in town. You're sure to find the ideal spot in Grad Korčula, affectionately called "mini Dubrovnik" for its authentic medieval atmosphere. Later, you may attend a Moreška performance, an exciting sword dance depicting a battle between Croats and Moors. Your ship docks in Grad Korčula tonight.

Today's Ride Choices

Morning Vela Luka to Lunch — 24 km (15 miles)

Afternoon Lunch to Korčula — 20 km (12 miles)

What to Expect:

Today's ride features all paved country roads with limited traffic. The VBT support vehicle is available.

Cumulative Distance Range: 20 – 44 km (12 – 27 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4: Cycle the Pelješac Peninsula / Sail to Mljet Island / Explore Mljet National Park

Sail this morning to the mainland and the scenic Pelješac Peninsula. This finger of land pointing into the

Adriatic has been compared to Tuscany for its wine production. Upon arrival, you join a shuttle to Donja Banda to begin a magnificent morning of cycling amid dramatic landscapes. You first stop in the village of Kuna at a donkey farm, the Antunović Family Farm. Meet the proprietors during your visit and learn about their breeding program and their surrounding vineyards – and of course, meet the long-eared residents!

Continue to the Matuško winery in the tiny village of Potomje. Tour this scenic spot overlooking the sea and perhaps sample some of its smooth olive oil and its renowned Dingac wine, made from Plavac mali grapes. After, you return to the ship and set out for Mljet Island, enjoying lunch on board.

Your focus this afternoon is the spectacular Mljet National Park, comprising all of the island's northwestern region. Surrounded by turquoise waters and cloaked in forest and shrub, it is deserving of a closer look. You leave the bicycles on board and have the afternoon at leisure to swim, kayak or hike along its pristine shores. This evening, join a cooking class on board to learn from the chef how to prepare a favorite Croatian dish that you savor for dinner. You moor tonight at Mljet.

Today's Ride Choices

Morning Donja Banda to Trstenik – 20 km (12 miles)

What to Expect:

Upon docking on the mainland, take a short van shuttle to skip the busy traffic and uphill climbs. The remainder of the ride follows mainly flat or downhill routes on quiet and paved country roads. There is no biking on Mljet Island in the afternoon.

Cumulative Distance Range: 20 km (12 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5: Ride the coast of Korčula / Sail to Hvar

Depart Mljet this morning and sail toward the end of Korčula Island to Lumbarda. Back on this spectacular island, you disembark for a scenic ride along the breathtaking coastline. Your ride will finish in Račišće, a pretty fishing village, where there is time for a swim, before you return to the ship. Back on board, you cruise to Hvar. Celebrated as the most beautiful island in the world, it is a wonderland of lavender fields, fruit orchards, fragrant pine forests, and superb beaches. You'll have the chance to take

it all in when you cycle among its pristine vistas tomorrow. For now, you moor in one of the scenic bays outside Hvar Town and enjoy dinner onboard.

Today's Ride Choices

Afternoon Lumbarda to Račišće — 24 km (15 miles)

What to Expect:

Ride along well-paved country roads today. The area around Grad Korčula can be busy with traffic during the main tourist season, but most of your ride follows quiet and scenic roads along the seacoast. The support vehicle is available should you need assistance throughout the day.

Cumulative Distance Range: 24 km (15 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6: Explore Hvar Town / Cycle to Stari Grad / Overnight in Jelsa

Disembark after breakfast for a short walk in Hvar Town, a medieval Croatian settlement with a strong Venetian influence dating back to the 16th century. Take in the expanse of Saint Stephen's Square, the largest Adriatic square after Saint Mark's in Venice. And see the Arsenal, built in 1612 as Europe's oldest and perhaps smallest municipal theater.

After, ride past Hvar's stunning panoramas of fertile fields filled with flowers and herbs and dramatic, sparsely inhabited landscape crisscrossed by stone walls. You can admire views across the sea to neighboring islands and the mainland. The road into Stari Grad, a charming Dalmatian town situated at the end of a narrow bay, is a glorious four-mile (6.5 km) downhill coast. Originally founded in the fourth century BC, Stari Grad (literally "old town") features a main square which offers a number of options for lunch on your own. Get acquainted with this gem of a town during an orientation walk. There'll be free time to explore on your own.

Continue biking a pleasant road into Jelsa, passing vineyards and olive groves. Your ship meets you in Jelsa at day's end and will remain moored here tonight. After dinner onboard, you may want to take a stroll in this charming, little town.

Today's Ride Choices

Morning Hvar to Stari Grad — 22 km (14 miles)

Afternoon Stari Grad to Jelsa — 13 km (8 miles)

What to Expect:

Today's ride starts with a steady climb of about four miles out of Hvar Town. Follow coastal roads to Stari Grad, where trip leaders escort you on a short orientation walk and point out choices for lunch on your own. In the afternoon, continue riding to Jelsa on mostly quieter country roads. Two moderate hills reward you with splendid views. The support vehicle is available should you need assistance throughout the day.

Cumulative Distance Range: 22 — 35 km (14 — 22 miles)

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7: Cycle Brač Island / Visit stonecutter's school / Sail to Split / Captain's Farewell dinner

This morning, cruise into the beautiful bay of Pučišća. This tiny enclave on the island of Brač is considered one of the prettiest villages in Europe. Disembark here and visit one of the world's few remaining stonecutting schools. The stone that is carved here, quarried from nearby Skrip, has been used to build some of the world's most famous buildings, including Diocletian's Palace in Split and the White House in Washington, D.C. This is a unique opportunity to see students' work and learn about a near-forgotten craft.

After an enlightening visit, cycle the northern coast of the island to the 14th-century village of Postira, nestled between the ocean and hillsides. On the way, you pass centuries-old olive and pine groves. Continue to Supetar, the island's main port, where you meet your ship for lunch on board. After lunch, you sail back to Split, where your trip began. This evening, join the captain and your VBT trip leaders for a special farewell dinner, recounting your favorite moments from your cycling adventure among the magnificent Dalmatian Islands.

Today's Ride Choices

Morning Pučišća to Supetar — 24 km (15 miles)

What to Expect:

Today's ride starts in Pučišća and follows the north coast of Brač to Postira and Supetar, passing ancient groves of olive and pine trees. Meet your ship in Supetar for lunch, before you sail further towards Split.

Cumulative Distance Range: 24 km (15 miles)

DAY 8: VBT Bicycle Vacation ends

After breakfast, your biking tour ends in Split. Our trip leaders will help you to arrange a taxi to the nearby airport or to continue with your own travel plans.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodations

May vary depending on departure date.

Jadranska Kraljica (Days: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7)

With generous deck space and modern comforts, the Jadranska Kraljica, which means "Adriatic Queen" in English, is ideally suited to take in the beauty of the stunning Dalmatian Islands. With a length of just 130 feet (40 meters) and a width of 27 feet (8 meters), this small ship was one of the first steel boats built in Croatia and can deliver you to small, intimate ports rich in island character, ideal starting points for exploring the islands by bike. Aboard this private VBT charter, enjoy meals prepared by your chef in the intimate dining area, and relax in the ship's bar. Each of the air-conditioned cabins provides a private bathroom with a shower. Note that on some islands, the ship will proceed to meet you at your cycling destination, and you will rejoin it at the ride's end.

Hotel Dubrovnik Palace (Day: 8)

The Hotel Dubrovnik Palace enjoys a dramatic perch right on the Adriatic Sea. With its exclusive private beach, lavish amenities, chic 5-star style, and world-class service, it is the ideal complement to your adventure. Dine on exquisite cuisine and savor locally produced wines while taking in the sunset over the Elaphiti Islands from al fresco venues. And savor massages or facials in the award-winning tenth-floor spa. From your air-conditioned room, you'll enjoy sweeping views of the Dalmatian Coast from a private balcony. Enjoy the best of both worlds here: luxury amenities away from the crowds and easy, convenient bus service to the Old Town when the spirit of exploration moves you.