

**You've booked your trip...Now what?**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What's the geographic position of Croatia?**

Croatia occupies the largest part of the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea, which, as a part of the Mediterranean Sea, penetrates deepest into European soil. Croatia's shoreline and numerous islands enjoy the majority of the Adriatic coastline. The narrow Dinara Mountain Range separates the country's Mediterranean region from its central European continental part, which spans from the easterly edges of the Alps in the northwest to the shores of the Danube in the east, encompassing the southern part of the fertile Pannonian lowlands.

### **What are the people of Croatia like?**

Croatia has a population of approximately 4,290,612, with the majority of the population being Croats. The largest minorities are Serbs, Bosnians, Slovenes, Hungarians, Czechs, Italians and Albanians. A multi-party parliamentary republic governs the people, with the capital being Zagreb.

### **How many islands, islets, solitary rocks and reefs are there?**

1,244 - the largest islands are Krk and Cres. There are 50 inhabited islands.

### **What's the climate like in Croatia?**

There are three climate zones in Croatia: in the country's continental interior the prevailing climate zone is moderately continental, while the mountain climate prevails at 1200m above the sea level. The areas along the Adriatic coast have a pleasantly mild Mediterranean climate with a large number of sunny days. Summers are hot and dry and winters are mild and wet. The average temperatures in the continental interior are: January -2 degrees Celsius to 0 degrees Celsius, with somewhat lower temperatures in the mountains; July temperatures reach 20 degrees Celsius to 22 degrees Celsius and around 13 degrees Celsius in the highlands. The average temperatures in the Littoral (Adriatic Coast) are: 5 degrees Celsius to 9 degrees Celsius and July 23 degrees Celsius to 26 degrees Celsius. Winter sea temperature is about 12 degrees Celsius and it reaches approximately 25 degrees Celsius in the summer.

### **What is the currency in Croatia and how do I pay for items while visiting?**

The official currency in Croatia is Euros. Foreign currency can be exchanged in banks, exchange offices, post offices and in the majority of tourist information offices, hotels and campsites. But beware of the service charges in some hotels, which can be as high as 3%. Credit cards (Eurocard / Mastercard, Visa, American Express and Diners) are accepted in almost all hotels, marinas, restaurants, shops and cash machines.

The easiest and best way to get cash in Croatia is from an ATM (automated teller machine, aka Bankomat in Croatia). The Cirrus (tel. 800/424-7787; [www.mastercard.com](http://www.mastercard.com)) and PLUS (tel. 800/843-7587; [www.visa.com](http://www.visa.com)) networks span the globe; look at the back of your bank card to see which network you're on, then call or check online for ATM

locations at your destination. Be sure you know your personal identification number (PIN) before you leave home, and be sure to find out your daily withdrawal limit before you depart.

Also keep in mind that many banks impose a fee every time a card is used at another bank's ATM, and that fee can be higher for international transactions (\$5 or more) than for domestic ones (where they're rarely more than \$3). On top of this, the bank from which you withdraw cash may charge its own fee. To compare banks' ATM fees within the U.S., use [www.bankrate.com](http://www.bankrate.com). For international withdrawal fees, ask your bank.

Also, be sure to call your credit card companies prior to departing for Croatia, letting them know the exact dates you will be visiting Croatia. If you do not call your credit card companies, they will likely flag your credit card and not allow you to use it during your travels.

Rates fluctuate, so before departing consult a currency exchange website such as [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) or [www.oanda.com/convert/classic](http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic) to check up-to-the-minute rates.

For additional tips on banking and payments while in Croatia, please visit our Banking Tips document at <http://adventurecroatia.com/croatia-money-tips/>

## **Do I need an electrical converter?**

Yes, you will need an electrical adapter/converter to use your American volt appliances. WalMart© or Target© feature affordable converters. Power supply: 220 V, frequency: 50 Hz

What language is spoken in Croatia?

Croatian language (hrvatski jezik) is a specific Croatian national standard form of the Serbo-Croatian dyasistem spoken by Croats, principally in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Serbian province of Vojvodina and other neighboring countries.

To learn some key phrases in the Croatian language, search "Croatia Language" on YouTube, as well as in the Apple App Store.

## **Am I able to access the Internet and Wi-Fi?**

Internet access is widely available in Croatia and broadband services are now very commonplace. Something that passes for an Internet cafe can be found pretty much anywhere - even if this consists of a PC in the corner of a bar. Usage tends to be pretty cheap. Wi-Fi in Croatia isn't perhaps as widespread as other major countries, although is certainly on the increase. Some towns (or parts of towns) are even setting up their own free-to-use hotspots. More and more accommodations are recognizing the demand for Wi-Fi and many offer the service (either free or paid) to their guests.

You will also find Wi-Fi in other typical places - bars, cafes and so on. These days, many people travel with smartphones, tablets and the like so it's pretty easy to search for open Wi-Fi networks. If you need a reliable Internet connection, we highly recommend a USB wireless personal hot spot for your computer and phone.

## **What is the food like in Croatia?**

With such a diverse spectrum of flavors, Croatian cuisine originates from the proto-Slavic era, and also brings together flavors from neighboring countries, including Greece, Italy, France, and Turkey.

The various regions of Croatia utilize different cooking methods and ingredients, which are apparent when visiting the restaurants and cafes found throughout the country. For example, you'll notice that much of the continental cuisine is comprised of meats, freshwater fish, and lots of tasty vegetables.

Whereas the coastal areas were influenced more by Mediterranean cuisine and typically include lots of freshly prepared seafood, olive oil, and vegetables.

It's not surprising to visit a coastal restaurant and watch as chefs pick up the local catch from fishermen who just arrived back into port. We encourage you to explore the harbor areas of the various fishing villages you visit before eating at a local restaurant or café to get the full from-sea-to-table experience!

It's also important to note that tap water is safe to drink in all of Croatia.

## **Will my cell phone work while in Croatia?**

Yes. A mobile phone in Croatia is called a "mobitel". The three mobile phone networks in Croatia are T-Mobile, VIP and Tele2.

If you think you'll be using your mobile phone a reasonable amount to either make phone calls within Croatia, or text and call home, you should consider purchasing a pre-paid SIM card. The three mobile network operators all have details of these on their websites and you can buy SIMs at some news kiosks and other stores.

It's also important for you to call your cell phone service provider to see if an international plan will fit your needs. During this phone call, you also want to check what the calling and texting rates are while abroad and how to turn data roaming off.

If you leave data roaming enabled during your trip it can be extremely costly. Check with your provider to ensure that you know how to turn your data roaming off and ask for additional tips to reduce any unexpected charges.

For additional tips on traveling with your mobile phone, visit our webpage: <http://adventurescroatia.com/internet-wifi-and-cell-phones-in-croatia/>

## **What types of travel documents and identification do I need for a trip to Croatia?**

A valid passport or some other identification document recognized by international agreement is necessary. For certain countries, a personal identity card is sufficient (a document which testifies to the identity and citizenship of the bearer).

We recommend leaving a photocopy of your passport with a close friend or family member back home while you are away. Further information can be found at [www.mvpei.hr](http://www.mvpei.hr)

## **Does Croatia have any dining customs I should know about?**

Croatia's old dining tradition is still strong, but it is changing as citizens change their work hours, eating habits, and culinary awareness.

Breakfast & Gablec - Western-style breakfast (dorucak; eggs, pastries, meats, cereals) is served at larger hotels and restaurants throughout Croatia. In smaller towns and in homes, a glass of rakija (fruit brandy), a cup of coffee, and bread or a roll hot from the local bakery comprise the usual early-morning meal.

Around 10am, Croatians who farm or start work early often stop for gablec (marenda on the coast), literally "breakfast eaten with cutlery." This meal is a smaller version of lunch, Croatia's main meal, but it sometimes substitutes.

Gablec was common in the former Yugoslavia because back then, people started work and school around 6 or 7am, which didn't allow time for breakfast. They were hungry around midmorning and a meal of home-style food like sarma

(stuffed sour cabbage), goulash, or fis paprikas customarily was offered in factories, schools, and local restaurants.

Lunch - Lunch (rucak) generally is Croatia's main meal. It often begins with a bowl of soup followed by an entree of roasted meat, vegetable or salad, potatoes or noodles, and dessert. Croatians eat lunch anywhere from 10am to late afternoon, and if they eat dinner at all, it usually is a light meal.

Dinner - Dinner (vecera) for Croatians often consists of a very thin-crust pizza or a shared plate of snacks, such as cevapi (spicy grilled sausage), prsut (smoked ham) and cheese, or grilled sardines, usually served well after 8pm. If they aren't eating at home, Croatians most frequently dine at restorans or konobas, both of which serve a wide range of dishes but differ in levels of formality, with restorans being the fancier of the two.

Coffee & Ice Cream - Drinking coffee is a social event in Croatia. People sipping espresso are a common sight on almost every street in every town at any time of day. Sometimes Croatian coffee shops are cafes attached to restaurants or pastry shops, and sometimes they are free-standing shops that serve only drinks (alcoholic or nonalcoholic).

Couvert - Adding a couvert to the bill is a relatively new practice in Croatian restaurants and it is not uniformly imposed. The couvert is a "cover charge" that is a prima facie charge for bread, which is brought to the table automatically in most places. Menus usually list the couvert and its cost, which can range from 5kn to 70kn or more. You can refuse the bread and escape the couvert, but once the bread basket lands on your table, you have to pay the charge.

## **What is customary when it comes to tipping?**

Tipping in Croatia is becoming more commonplace, especially in upscale restaurants. In the past, tipping was welcome but not expected. Today, an extra 10% or 15% is the norm in upscale establishments and in big cities. Tipping is rare and not expected in informal restaurants and in smaller towns, but most people leave any coins they receive in change for the waiter. Croatian waiters do not depend on tips for living wages.

## **Is there anything I should know about the tours and excursions I'll be taking part in during my trip?**

If you have a lunch or dinner stop during your tour or excursion, quite often our travelers will invite their guide or driver to join them. It is a Croatian custom that travelers buy lunch or dinner for their guide/driver. Many of our clients enjoy interacting with locals but if you would prefer to eat alone, please let us know in advance or mention to your guide/driver during your tour.

At the conclusion of your tour, it is customary to offer your guide and driver a gratuity. We recommend tipping in local currency (Kuna), the equivalency of \$4 USD per person per day for your driver and \$6 USD to \$10 USD per person per day for your guide. Perhaps a little more when it's a long day or long tour.

Tips can only be paid in cash. Please keep current local currency exchange rates in mind when tipping.

## **What should I pack for a Croatia holiday?**

In order to ensure you are well prepared for your trip, we have created a packing guide, specific to Croatia, which will ensure you pack efficiently and bring all of your necessities. You can view and print our packing suggestions guide at <http://adventurescroatia.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/What-To-Pack-Checklist.pdf>

## **A few tips to keep in mind while packing:**

Don't over pack. Nothing is worse than dragging heavy suitcases up the ferry ramp and getting your bags into the storage compartment. For our clients who are touring with private car and drivers, you have more leeway but it's still wise not to overdo it.

Blending into the local scene can be a challenge when you are on the go but here are a few thoughts on how to NOT stand out as a foreigner: Each region of Croatia has its own "style" and there are plenty of scruffy tourists around but in places like Zagreb, Split and Dubrovnik, you may notice that the women dress well. Not to mention, Croatians invented the tie! So plan on a few nice "going out" outfits. Remember the proximity to Italy—you will also see Italian fashion on the eastern side of the Adriatic.

No trip to Croatia is complete without enjoying the fabulous beaches! Bikinis and sarongs fit in nicely on the islands, where casual chic tends to be the look. Don't forget the pebbly shores create a footwear challenge. Flip-flops aren't enough and you'll probably want a water shoe with rubber soles.

If you are visiting any of the major parks, such as Plitvice or Krka, good walking shoes are essential. Paths are well marked, kept clean and tidy, but they consist mainly of gravel or wooden paths above lakes and waterfalls. These paths often get wet and slippery. During winter months the snow is cleared but the walkways can get icy! Consider bringing comfortable walking/hiking boots or athletic trainers.

If you are traveling into areas such as Bosnia and Sarajevo, please be aware of the fashion differences between east and west. Although there is much cultural and religious diversity in these regions, if you are going into a mosque or church please wear appropriate attire. No shorts or short skirts. Covered bodice and arms are appreciated too.

Be prepared to do a good deal of walking throughout the trip – it truly is the only way to explore Croatia and its many corners – so comfortable shoes are in order!

## **Are there any safety issues I should be concerned about?**

Security is always a key factor when traveling abroad, but especially so in a post-9/11 world. Everyone in your group should be conscious of the need for safety. Whether you are flying or traveling on the ground, do whatever you can to deflect attention away from yourself.

Dress in clothes that do not scream "I am an American!" T-shirts and ball caps emblazoned with American logos are not recommended. White sneakers and Hawaiian shirts are also a bad idea. You want to be comfortable, but think European or Continental as much as possible.

## **Who do you use for guides?**

One of the great features of an Adventures Croatia Tour is the wealth of knowledge and experience you will get from your local tour guides, who work with us to make sure you have a great experience. These are people who live in the area and make their living by showing you around their city and country. They may even give you hints or tips about great places to eat or shop on your downtime.

While all base tips are included in your tour, you may wish to go beyond that to show your individual appreciation.