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Cruising the Eastern Adriatic

# 7 days in the Eastern Adriatic

From the history of Dubrovnik's Old Town to the beauty of Greece's Corfu, the eastern Adriatic has enough for both culture buffs and sun seekers.

BY ANNE L. SPYROPOULOS

## DAY 1: {DUBROVNIK, CROATIA}

Dubrovnik, with its ancient city walls and historic center, is a site to see. Most of what's going on in Dubrovnik happens in the Old Town, so arrange a guided tour for your guests to get a feel for its historical significance. The area is famous for its seafood dishes (called "peka" in Croatian), which are made with octopus and various types of meat prepared with potatoes, so make time for guests to have a meal ashore.

Every foreign yacht must clear in when arriving in Croatia; this should be done on the customs dock in the Port of Gruz. There are three options for mooring in Dubrovnik – right in front of Old Town, at Marina Gruz or at ACI Marina, about a 15-minute drive from the center of Dubrovnik. Both marinas are conveniently located to pick up guests arriving by car from the airport. If the yacht is anchored in front of the Old Town, guests will have a seven-minute walk to the old port where a tender can pick them up. The Dubrovnik Airport and heliport are located 25 kilometers from the city and five kilometers from Cavtat.

The Dubrovnik Port is open 24/7 for clearance in and out. While Marina Gruz and ACI Marina are usually accessible from 2 to 8 p.m., those times may vary based on occupancy. Each marina can accommodate yachts up to 60 meters. Make note that in Gruz, the max draft is four meters, while to access the ACI Marina you need to pass under a bridge with a 49-meter clearance.

Cavtat is the last international port before leaving Croatia for Montenegro and is the most convenient place to clear out.

## DAY 2: {ZELENIKA, MONTENEGRO}

From Croatia, Zelenika (30 nautical miles from Dubrovnik) is the first clearance port in Montenegro. It's located near the pilot station



at the entrance of the Bay of Boka. Either stay at anchor and authorities will come aboard via pilot boat, or you can moor alongside the police dock if there's enough room. Montenegro adopted a vignette system in 2008 and arrival must be announced by an agent 24 hours in advance. There is no VHF channel for port authorities and only pilots use VHF for yachts over 1000GT. If you have crew or guests requiring visas, be aware that visa applications must be made at least two weeks prior to arrival.

Due to work in progress in the Marina of Tivat, the area around it is restricted for cruising. Cruising speed inside the Bay of Boka is limited to 10 knots (eight knots in the narrow straights) and the whole bay is a no-wake zone.

Anchor in Morinj Bay and use tenders to visit the artificial island of Our Lady of the Rock. In Morinj, eat at Catovica Mlini, a great restaurant accessible by tender if there is enough water in the stream. Otherwise, it's a five-minute walk from the jetty. It's important to note that the use of tenders and water toys is allowed only if they are registered separately from the yacht.

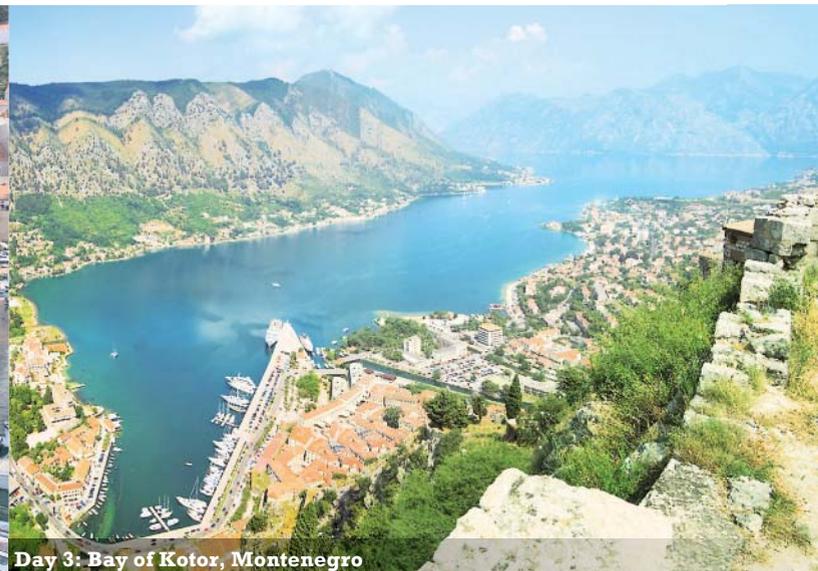
## DAY 3: {KOTOR, MONTENEGRO}

As you approach Kotor (approximately 12 nautical miles from Zelenika), there's a great view of the mountains surrounding the bay. If you want a little peace and quiet, stop in Ljuta, a perfect little anchorage spot. Visit the Stari Mlini, an old water mill that's been converted into a restaurant with some of the best local food in the area. You can dock the tender at the restaurant. Try the local Montenegrin wine – especially the red, which is very good.

As you turn past Sveti Illija, Kotor will appear. It's small, but has a lot to offer – all visitors should do the short walk up the hill above town (about 30 to 40 minutes) for the views. On the way,



Day 1: Old Town Dubrovnik, Croatia



Day 3: Bay of Kotor, Montenegro

suggest a stop at Forza for coffee and a piece of local cake called “krempita.”

There is an open market across the street from the dock. Buy your local produce from the girl wearing roller blades; she and her mother have the best selection. Arrange an afternoon trip for your guests to the old royal capital of Cetinje (about an hour-and-a-half drive). On the way back, stop in the village of Njegusi for a taste of the local prosciutto ham, homemade cheese and bread. For dinner, take a short walk to the Galion restaurant (turn right facing the town). For some late-night evening entertainment, the best nightclub in the region, Maximus, is located in Kotor.

#### DAY 4: {BUDVA, MONTENEGRO}

Leave early for Budva and stop on the way at the “blue cave” just outside the bay, close to the point of Arza. In Budva, you can either stay at anchor or tie up at the small marina. There is only one marina in Budva and usually anchoring is more convenient.

Budva offers a lot of shopping opportunities for guests: souvenir shops, boutiques and lots of good restaurants and cafés. Suggest the Demizana just outside the walls of the old town for lunch and the Astoria for dessert. The Sveti Stefan island/hotel is an elegant way to round out the evening – a restoration is currently under way, but it should be open by the '09 cruising season.

#### DAY 5: {BAR, MONTENEGRO}

Travel the 20 nautical miles to Bar where you can refuel (until 7 p.m.) with duty-free bunkers before clearing out in the evening. There are two marinas in Bar; the first is inside the commercial port and can take yachts up to 75 meters. It's also a shipyard, so is not the most elegant option. The second marina is just outside the port and can accommodate yachts up to 45 meters (the maximum draft is a bit more than three meters at the entrance).

While fueling, send guests to the old town of Stari Bar, which is an open-air museum only four kilometers from the port. If your guests are nature lovers, arrange a visit to Skadar Lake, which has the largest bird reserve in the Balkans. Knjazeva Basta, or the King's Garden, next to the museum of King Nikola's summer house, is a great option for either lunch or dinner.

The distance from Bar to Saranda, Albania, is approximately 160 nautical miles, so leave Bar in the evening for a morning arrival in Saranda.

#### DAY 6: {SARANDA, ALBANIA}

Saranda is the gateway to southern Albania and is a small town located between the high mountains and the Ionian Sea. From here, you're located right in front of the Greek island of Corfu. Due to its location and the warm weather, Saranda is one of the most attractive tourist towns on the Albanian Riviera, typically where local honeymooners go on holiday.

Yachts need to be announced 48 hours in advance of their arrival and a pilot is required to enter all ports in Albania (VHF 11 or 16). The best option is to stay at anchor in Saranda.

The city of Butrint, nestled in the highlands in the far south of the country, was one of the most important maritime and commercial centers of the ancient world. A visit to the ruins, discovered in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is a must for your guests. Today, it's part of UNESCO's World Heritage List. Before leaving, don't forget to suggest an aperitif at the Likursi castle on the top of the dominant hill over Saranda, only two kilometers from the town.

#### DAY 7: {CORFU, GREECE}

The Greek island of Corfu is 12 nautical miles from Saranda. Customs, immigration and port police are located in the commercial port, Corfu Town. While staff is available 24 hours a day, they prefer to do yacht clearance during office hours. All non-EU yachts must first visit the authorities in the Corfu Commercial Harbor. Yachts with EU flags, or ones arriving from within Greek waters, can clear at the Port Police Office in the Gouvia Marina (open 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.). The Naok Yacht Club is located on the south side of the Old Fortress right in the center of Corfu Town. Naok can be reached on VHF channel 72.

The water here is crystal clear, with a draft of four to 4.2 meters all the way to the dock. The airport is less than a five-minute drive away. ☆

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#### Airports

##### Dubrovnik Airport, Croatia

Airport code: DBV  
Tel: + 385 2077 3377 or 2077 3233

##### Kapodistrias Airport, Corfu

Airport code: CFU  
Tel: +30 (0)26610 39040

#### Distances

Dubrovnik – Zelenika: 30nm  
Zelenika – Kotor: 12nm  
Kotor – Budva: 25nm  
Budva – Bar: 20nm  
Bar – Saranda: 160nm  
Saranda – Corfu: 12nm

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ANNE SPYROPOULOS



Day 7: Old Fortress in Corfu



Day 5: Stari Bar, Montenegro



Day 7: Corfu