



ADRIATIC ODYSSEY

A Cultural Journey from Venice to Dubrovnik

October 5-19, 2024

with Post-tour to Bosnia Herzegovina October 19-21, 2024

Explore the history, art and natural beauty of the northern Adriatic region at a comfortable pace in upscale accommodations. Feel the impressions of a mélange of civilizations over millennia - Greek, Roman, Venetian, Austrian and Islamic, to name a few, as they passed through this crossroads of cultures leaving tangible influences of their presence.

Experience iconic Venice in depth with a local guide. Discover sublime Lake Bled, surrounded by Slovenia's Julian Alps. And enjoy a remarkable 8 day cruise aboard a private chartered deluxe-superior yacht through the Dalmatian Islands to the fabled walled city of Dubrovnik.

Save the date and express your interest now to reserve your space on this extraordinary trip.

For information and reservations contact:
Steve Carr, Meximayan Tours LLC



steve@meximayan.com



630-878-8594



Saturday, October 5, 2024
YOUR DEPARTURE CITY / VENICE

Day 1

We depart independently from the US, eagerly anticipating the adventures that await us in Venice, Slovenia and Croatia.

Day 3

Enchanting Venice is a place of unmatched beauty and a feast of incomparable landmarks and iconic sites. Our morning walking tour is a journey through history, art, and architectural marvels. San Marco Square, the heart of Venice, has been the city's social and political center for centuries. The focal point is San Marco Basilica, an awe-inspiring masterpiece of Byzantine architecture. Its stunning façade blending Eastern and Western influences, reflects Venice's position as a cultural gateway through the centuries. Stepping inside, we find shimmering mosaics depicting biblical scenes and the treasures acquired from the Byzantine Empire during the Fourth Crusade in 1204.

The Doge's Palace, an imposing Gothic structure adjacent to San Marco's Basilica, was the residence of the Doge, the elected ruler of Venice, and the seat of the Venetian government. Inside, we'll discover lavishly decorated chambers, intricate stonework, and captivating artwork by renowned Venetian painters.

Crossing the iconic Bridge of Sighs, we're reminded of the palace's dark history. The bridge earned its name from the prisoners' sighs as they caught their final glimpse of Venice before being led to the nearby prisons, never again to see the light of day. Will we hear echoes of their long ago sighs, still resonating from the cold stone walls?

The Rialto Bridge spanning the Grand Canal is an architectural marvel, dating to the late 16th century. It was the first bridge to cross the canal and quickly became an essential commercial artery. It is adorned with shops and stalls, continuing the tradition of a bustling marketplace that has persisted for centuries.

A serene gondola ride through the winding canals will provide a unique perspective of Venice's enchanting waterways and will be the finale of our tour.

This evening we will gather for a typical dinner at a local restaurant recommended by friends who live in Venice and who will join us and share their special insight.

B, D

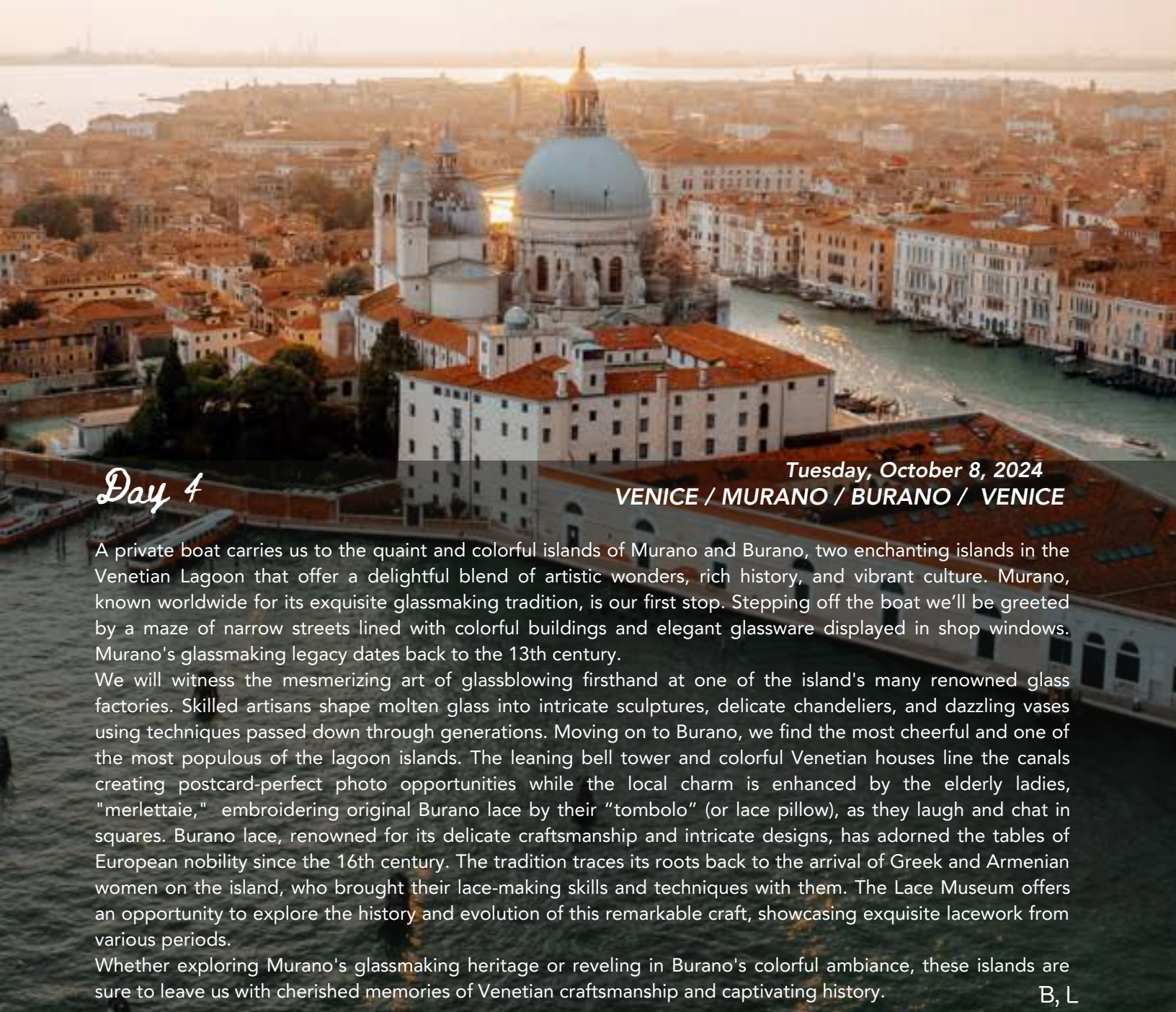
Day 2

Sunday, October 6, 2024
VENICE

Welcome to Venice! Please coordinate your flight arrival to be available for a group transfer from airport to the hotel in Venice. Private transfers at additional cost may be arranged for people arriving at different times. Check with Steve for the group transfer time before booking your flight. Welcome Dinner this evening to get to know each other and discuss our upcoming trip.

D

Monday, October 7, 2024
VENICE



Day 4

Tuesday, October 8, 2024
VENICE / MURANO / BURANO / VENICE

A private boat carries us to the quaint and colorful islands of Murano and Burano, two enchanting islands in the Venetian Lagoon that offer a delightful blend of artistic wonders, rich history, and vibrant culture. Murano, known worldwide for its exquisite glassmaking tradition, is our first stop. Stepping off the boat we'll be greeted by a maze of narrow streets lined with colorful buildings and elegant glassware displayed in shop windows. Murano's glassmaking legacy dates back to the 13th century.

We will witness the mesmerizing art of glassblowing firsthand at one of the island's many renowned glass factories. Skilled artisans shape molten glass into intricate sculptures, delicate chandeliers, and dazzling vases using techniques passed down through generations. Moving on to Burano, we find the most cheerful and one of the most populous of the lagoon islands. The leaning bell tower and colorful Venetian houses line the canals creating postcard-perfect photo opportunities while the local charm is enhanced by the elderly ladies, "merlettaie," embroidering original Burano lace by their "tombolo" (or lace pillow), as they laugh and chat in squares. Burano lace, renowned for its delicate craftsmanship and intricate designs, has adorned the tables of European nobility since the 16th century. The tradition traces its roots back to the arrival of Greek and Armenian women on the island, who brought their lace-making skills and techniques with them. The Lace Museum offers an opportunity to explore the history and evolution of this remarkable craft, showcasing exquisite lacework from various periods.

Whether exploring Murano's glassmaking heritage or reveling in Burano's colorful ambiance, these islands are sure to leave us with cherished memories of Venetian craftsmanship and captivating history.

B, L





Day 5

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

VENICE / TRIESTE / LAKE BLEED

Leaving Venice behind, a scenic overland route takes us through Trieste to Lake Bled. We pause to visit Trieste, a city with a rich historical and cultural heritage, that showcases a unique blend of Italian, Austrian, and Slovenian influences. Strolling through the old town, one of the first sights that catches the eye is the Piazza Unità d'Italia, one of Europe's largest seafront squares. This magnificent square offers breathtaking views of the Adriatic Sea and is adorned with impressive buildings, including the Municipality Palace and the historic coffeehouses. Next we encounter a remarkable ancient Roman amphitheater dating back to the 1st century AD. Let us savor a local lunch here before driving on to Bled. Upon arriving at Lake Bled, we are greeted by a breathtaking sight: an emerald-green lake encircled by towering mountains. The centerpiece of this idyllic setting is Bled Island, on which stands the beautiful iconic Church of the Assumption. Our hotel with spa facilities is on the shore of the lake and our rooms offer a gorgeous view of the lake and mountains behind.

B, L

Day 6

Thursday, October 10, 2024

LAKE BLEED

If Lake Bled, one of the most picturesque locations in the world, is the jeweled crown of Slovenia, then surely the Church of Assumption, perched on a tiny island, is the crowning diamond. Our private "pletna" (traditional wooden fishing boat) will carry us to the island where we climb the 99 stone steps to reach the church which boasts a beautiful Baroque interior and a wishing bell. Let's not leave anything to chance, so be sure to prepare your fondest wish ahead of time.

Perched atop a rocky cliff overlooking the lake, Bled Castle is a medieval fortress dating back to the 11th century. We'll explore the castle's interior, and marvel at the stunning panoramic views of the lake and the surrounding Julian Alps. Later this afternoon, you may want to take an independent leisurely stroll along the 6-kilometer path encircling Lake Bled. The path passes charming lakeside villas, cafes, and plenty of spots to relax or have a picnic. Or perhaps stop by a local café to savor a slice of Bled Cream Cake, a traditional dessert that originated in the region. Alternatively, a relaxing and rejuvenating spa session at the hotel might be the perfect afternoon indulgence. We will dine together this evening at a local restaurant in town.

B, D

Day 7

Friday, October 11, 2024
BLED / LJUBLJANA / OPATIJA

We leave early today for Ljubljana, capital city of Slovenia, our first stop. In the historical city center we will visit the Triple Bridge and river Ljubljanica, the University Building, Old Town Road, Prešeren and Congress Square. But let us not tarry, for much beauty awaits as we make our way through the Istrian Peninsula to Opatija, Croatia where we will overnight before our cruise begins tomorrow. Istria is well known in culinary elite for its exceptional white truffles, its wines among the best in Croatia and its olive oil considered today by some as "the best in the world". Our Istrian journey features charming medieval coastal villages and hilltop villages in the countryside steeped in lore of giants and dwarves surrounded by picturesque vineyards and olive orchards. We will lunch in charming Rovinj, an historic seaport, and stroll the cobblestone streets to the top of the hill where Church of St Euphemia has stood watch as both a place of worship and lighthouse for over 600 hundred years. We continue on to Opatija for our overnight.

B, L

Day 8

Saturday, October 12, 2024
OPATIJA / BOARD OUR PRIVATE YACHT / RAB

This morning we enjoy a walking tour the of the old town and charming seafront before boarding our private yacht at 1 pm and begin our magical 8 day voyage along the coast of Croatia through the Dalmatian Islands to legendary Dubrovnik. Lunch and afternoon tea will be served as we cruise to our overnight destination, Rab, known as the "island of love". Here we explore the medieval walls and the famous four towers together with palaces, churches and squares. There's a slight Montmartre feel with many artists painting and exhibiting out on the streets. Legend has it that local nuns created a special Rab cake for a visiting Pope and we will sample it after the tour. The recipe remains forever secret. Dinner is on our own tonight and we can choose from the many local restaurants in the charming harbor and old town.

Overnight aboard ship in Rab.

B, L, T



B, L

Day 9

Sunday, October 13, 2024
RAB / ZADAR

After breakfast, head for Zadar, the oldest university town in Croatia with an ancient heritage where history comes alive. Our guided city tour includes the Roman Forum from the 1st century, the 9th century St Donat church - Croatia's most famous medieval Basilica which is the city's symbol and the mighty city walls. Zadar boasts over 30 churches, museums and former noble families' palaces and villas in the old town. In recent years Zadar has added a touch of cool with the famous Sea Organs and "Greeting to the Sun" light installations, both located on the city's waterfront the perfect place to watch the fabulous sunset. Dinner is on our own tonight and we can choose from the many local restaurants in the charming harbor and old town.

Overnight aboard ship in Zadar.

B, L

Day 10

Monday, October 14, 2024

ZADAR / KRKA WATERFALLS / ŠIBENIK

Today's highlights - wine and waterfalls! We cruise towards Skradin, where we disembark and board a bus whose first stop is the local winery for wine tasting and light tapas lunch. Back in Skradin, stroll through the Krka Waterfalls National Park where the Krka river tumbles 45.7 meters creating 17 waterfalls, with cascades up to 100 m wide including "Skradinski Buk" the jaw-droppingly beautiful, most popular of the Krka waterfalls. Our afternoon destination is Šibenik, a town situated on the central Croatian Adriatic coast where the UNESCO listed Cathedral of St James is located. Wander and discover the historic core and waterfront, exploring the glorious old town and cultural monuments. A sumptuous dinner is served on board tonight.

Overnight aboard ship in Šibenik.

B, T, D



Day 11

Tuesday, October 15, 2024

ŠIBENIK / SPLIT

The beautiful Adriatic captivates us as we cruise south to Split, Croatia's second-largest city, where Roman Emperor Diocletian built his impressive retirement villa in 305BC. now a UNESCO WHS. We join a local guide for a walk through the heart of the bustling old town and the market. Time permitting, we may arrange a side trip to nearby Salona a Roman archaeological site dating to the 3rd century BC, or the quaint and artsy town of Trogir, a favorite place of mine.

Dinner is on our own tonight and we can choose from the many local restaurants on the Promenade or in town proper.

Overnight aboard ship in Split.

B, L

Day 12

Wednesday, October 16, 2024

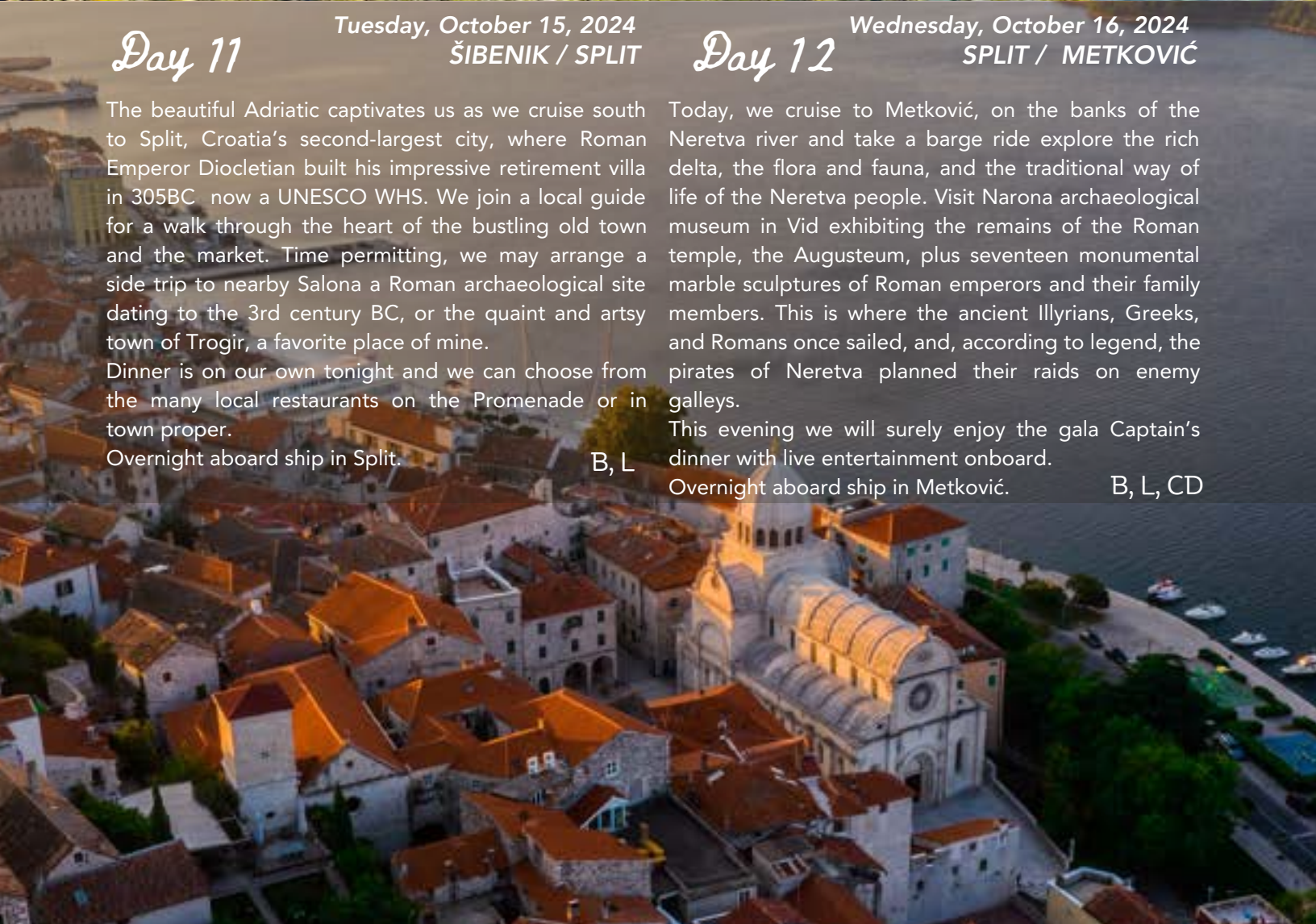
SPLIT / METKOVIĆ

Today, we cruise to Metković, on the banks of the Neretva river and take a barge ride explore the rich delta, the flora and fauna, and the traditional way of life of the Neretva people. Visit Naron archaeological museum in Vid exhibiting the remains of the Roman temple, the Augusteum, plus seventeen monumental marble sculptures of Roman emperors and their family members. This is where the ancient Illyrians, Greeks, and Romans once sailed, and, according to legend, the pirates of Neretva planned their raids on enemy galleys.

This evening we will surely enjoy the gala Captain's dinner with live entertainment onboard.

Overnight aboard ship in Metković.

B, L, CD



Day 13

Thursday, October 17, 2024
METKOVIĆ / KORČULA

Engines rev signaling an early departure towards Korčula, an island best known as the birthplace of Marco Polo, the famous explorer. Swim stop (if you dare to brave the chilly autumn water) and lunch on board. Korčula town is commonly referred to be a "miniature Dubrovnik", as it is encased by medieval stone ramparts and towers. A local guide leads us through the old town and tiny, narrow streets, built in a fishbone pattern for a reason we will learn about on the tour! Lots of simple "konobas", restaurants and cool cocktail bars for chill-out time, and perfect for dinner is on our own tonight.

Overnight aboard ship in Korčula.

B, L

Day 14

Friday, October 18, 2024
KORČULA / DUBROVNIK

There is simply no better way to catch the first sight of our final destination, the famous walled city of Dubrovnik, than approaching from the sea. Writer George Bernard Shaw described it as "heaven on earth". More recently, the popular television series, Game of Thrones was filmed here adding to its mystique and making Dubrovnik a must visit destination. Cruising alongside the old city walls for a true perspective of the majesty of this town whets our appetite to experience it and learn more. Lunch is served on deck as we head for the Gruž harbor to dock. Once moored, we transfer to the old town for a guided walking tour, then take the cable car from the Old Town to the Srđ mountain for fabulous views of the city itself and the Elaphiti Islands.

One of my absolute favorite things in Dubrovnik is to walk the famous 1.2 mile long ramparts encircling the city! This walk gives you 360 degree views of the old town and gives a sense of historical presence, of mediaeval power, dominance and impregnability, of the importance of superior strategic location. Maybe you will want to explore some of the museums in more detail, such as Sponza or Rectors, or just stroll the cobblestone streets and alleyways and absorb the wonderful ambiance

We will share personal favorite experiences of the trip tonight over a Farewell dinner.

Overnight aboard the ship in Dubrovnik.

B, L, D

Day 15

Saturday, October 19, 2024
DUBROVNIK / HOME - OR JOIN THE POST-TOUR EXTENSION

We gather for our final breakfast on the vessel, followed by goodbyes with the crew and new friends, before they see us off in Dubrovnik. Transfer to the airport for your flight home, or join us on the 2 day post-tour extension in Dubrovnik with a daytrip to Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

B



Optional Post-Tour DUBROVNIK / BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / DUBROVNIK

Day 15

Saturday, October 19, 2024

DUBROVNIK / BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA / DUBROVNIK

We gather for our final breakfast on the vessel, followed by goodbyes with the crew and new friends, before they see us off in Dubrovnik. Our bus is waiting to carry us to Mostar in neighboring Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mostar, where "east meets west", is a city of contrasts, culture, color and cuisine. The city is divided not only by the Neretva River that flows through it but also by religion and culture from one bank to the other. Our journey there is just a short drive up the Adriatic coast and then inland following the breathtaking Neretva Valley which offers stunning views of the local countryside. We will experience Bosnia and Herzegovina's most beautiful town, walk across the iconic 'Stari Most'/Old Bridge and discover Ottoman and Turkish history. A typical Bosnian lunch awaits and there is plenty of time to explore the cultures on both sides of the river to get a feeling of Mostar's invigoratingly captivating contrasts. In the afternoon we return to Dubrovnik and check into our resort style hotel.

B, L

Sunday, October 20, 2024
DUBROVNIK

Day 16

Today is a free day in Dubrovnik. There is so much to see and do here. This may be the day you walk the ramparts around the city or visit some of the museums.

B

Monday, October 21, 2024
DUBROVNIK / HOME

Day 17


We bid fond farewell to Croatia as we transfer to the airport for our flights home.

B



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