

Tour 1: Montenegro's History & Nature

The Historic Jewels of Montenegro



Old Town of Bar © alexeyknphotos

Note: The information in this brochure was compiled by our Montenegrin partners/local tour operators. In case of specific information requests, we can forward them to the local tour operators.

- Holiday type: Guided walking
 - Duration: 6 nights/7 days
 - Locations: Kotor, Perast, Budva, Bar, Virpazar, Skadar Lake, Cetinje, Lovcen
 - Group size: min 4 – max 18 persons
 - Difficulty grade: Easy
 - Departure dates 2024: 11 May – 17 May, 25 May – 31 May, 01 June – 07 June, 7 Sept. – 13 September, 14 Sept. – 20 September
 - Price from: On request
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Overview

The Bay of Kotor and the **Adriatic coast of Montenegro** are gorgeous without any doubt. But the hinterland is equally stunning! With its massive mountains, lovely lakes, and deep green forests, **the scenery of the hinterland of Montenegro will leave you spellbound.** As you'll be walking through some of the most beautiful landscapes of Montenegro such as the **Bay of Kotor, Lake Skadar** and **Lovcen National Park**, you can rest assured that your time outdoors will be time well spent.

Our walks in nature are combined with must-see visits to Kotor, a UNESCO listed Natural and Culturo-Historical city, **small baroque town Perast, Montenegrin metropolis of tourism Budva, Praskvica Monastery, Old town of Bar, Old Capital of Montenegro Cetinje.** The Old Town of Bar is one of the oldest inhabited places in Montenegro and a city with a long and turbulent history, around which many armies and invaders have been scattered. From **Virpazar** you can discover the **Skadar Lake National Park.** It is an important bird reserve and one of the last breeding grounds of Dalmatian pelicans. Visit the **Old Capital of Montenegro Cetinje** known as the "Museum Town of Montenegro", the best place to learn all **about Montenegrin history and get familiar with its culture.** Climb to the Lovcen mountain summit and **visit the Mausoleum of Petar II Petrovic Njegos**, so you can fully experience the spirit of the area and explore the **sacred secrets of Montenegro.**



Perast © Hotice Hsu

Trip Highlights

- Discover stunning Bay of Kotor and Old town of Kotor, the town of the Perast and artificial island "Our Lady of Rocks"
- Visit Budva, a Montenegrin metropolis of tourism and humble 600-year-old Praskvica Monastery
- Old Town of Bar - an unjustly neglected pearl of the cultural heritage of Montenegro
- Explore Lake Skadar National Park, enjoy a boat ride on the lake and visit a traditional winery
- Enjoy wonderful panoramas of Boka bay, mountains and the Adriatic Sea from the Lovcen National Park and visit Njegos Mausoleum, officially the highest mausoleum in the world

Day 1

Kotor, Perast & “Our Lady of Rocks” church

Transfer from Podgorica/Tivat/Dubrovnik Airport to the coastal town of Kotor, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Here you will see a unique natural fjord on the Mediterranean coast. Despite being a major tourist attraction, Kotor hasn't lost its authentic charm. The architecture is distinctly Venetian and it's one of the best-preserved medieval old towns on the Adriatic coast. After exploring the magic of The Old Town it's time to see those stunning streets from a different perspective. We will climb up to the top of St. John's hill; follow the stairs by the old ramparts and the Church of Our Lady of Remedy from the 15th century. On top of the hill, there is San Giovanni castle which dominates the bay, the fortification system and the town, from where you will admire the beautiful Boka Bay. Transfer from Kotor to the nearby small town of Perast. If you've already seen a postcard of Montenegro, it's very likely that it has been from Perast. Despite having only one main street, this tiny town boasts 16 churches and 17 impressive old palaces. Firstly we will visit St. Nikola church and admire a stunning view from the top, and then we will take a boat trip to the artificial island “Our Lady of Rocks” church and its museum.

Walking duration: 2-3 hours, 4 km ↑ 280 m ↓ 280 m

Day 2

Budva, Monasteries Praskvica and Rustovo

Visit Budva, a Montenegrin metropolis of tourism famous for its long beaches, beautiful Old Town and many festivals and cultural events that attract a large number of tourists every year. You will have a tour through the Old Town of Budva, where you will have the opportunity to admire stone buildings from the Venetian era, small squares and narrow streets, as well as to enjoy amazing sea views. From Budva, we will continue to Praskvica Monastery, just off the highway in the hills, slightly north of Sveti Stefan. This humble 600-year-old monastery, named after the peach-scented water of a brook that flows

nearby, rests among an ancient olive grove. After the visit to the monastery Praskvica, we are climbing on the so-called Jegor's path. This path reveals the story of one-armed Russian friar Jegor Stroganov. In 10 years he managed to build a 3 km long footpath to the village Celobrdo. From that place, you can enjoy the stunning view on Sveti Stefan, the most photographed place on the Montenegrin coast, as well as numerous beaches of Budva's Riviera. We continue to the monastery Rustovo, where we will visit the female monastery dedicated to the Assumption of Mary. After a visit accompanied by a nun, you can refresh yourself at the stone fountain and enjoy the peacefulness of the monastery's courtyard.

Walking duration: 3-4 hours, 6 km ↑ 350 m ↓ 350 m

Day 3

Bar, Old town of Bar, Old Olive Tree, Virpazar

At the southern edge of Montenegro lies the picturesque city of Bar. Hidden under the mountain Rumija, it surprises us every second with its historical heritage, variety of cultures, nations, cuisines, customs and idyllic quiet villages. Bar also treasures an Old Olive Tree that is more than 2000 years old. The Old Town of Bar, also known as Montenegrin Pompeii, is the largest urban agglomeration among the ruins in Montenegro. It is one of those magical places where modern meets the shadow of ancient, like Roman aqueducts, old Turkish baths, and orthodox and catholic churches. Climb up to the Citadel, which offers you a great view of the valley with olive trees and Rumija Mountain behind the town. Visit the little fishermen's town Virpazar (situated on the bank of Skadar Lake). The town is tiny and very picturesque with lots of flower boxes and restaurants with outdoor tables. Virpazar has three bridges with a medieval fortress Besac above it, which we will visit.

Walking duration: 3 hours, 4 km ↑ 100 m ↓ 100 m

Day 4

Skadar Lake boat trip & visit to a winery

Lake Skadar is a national park, the largest lake in the Balkans and one of the biggest bird reserves in Europe. Our task is to introduce you to the wild beauty of Lake Skadar. The best way to explore the lake is to rent a boat and take a ride at the lake. While cruising, you can enjoy the untouched nature of Lake Skadar, inhabited by many fish and bird species, also recognized as the last breeding ground of the endangered Dalmatian Pelican. After cruising, there is an organized sightseeing walking tour through the village Godinje with wine & food tasting in the small-scale traditional production winery situated in the heart of the most famous Montenegrin wine region.

Walking duration: 1 hour, 1-2 km ↑ 50 m ↓ 50 m

Day 5

Rijeka Crnojevica, Old capital Cetinje and Lovcen National Park

Transfer from Virpazar to Rijeka Crnojevica, place where the first Cyrillic book amongst the South Slavic nations was printed in 1494 - "Oktoih prvoglasnik". In the 19th and the 20th century, Rijeka Crnojevica was the biggest Montenegrin port and a leading trade center. At the entrance to Rijeka Crnojevica, there is the stone Bridge of Danilo, built-in 1853 by Prince Danilo. The focus of the day is Cetinje, a lovely old town that was the Capital of Montenegro from the 15th century until 1918. This city is known as the 'Museum Town of Montenegro'. This is the best place to learn all about the turbulent Montenegrin history and get familiar with its culture. Orthodox white-stone Cetinje monastery is one of the most famous and important spiritual relics in Montenegro. Here are the main relics of the monastery: the relics of St. Peter of Cetinje, the imperishable right hand of St. John the Baptist (Forerunner), as well as part of the Life-giving Cross of the Lord. Discover museums, the royal theater, historic foreign embassies and Vlaska Church, built-in 1450, with its fence made out of barrels of captured enemy rifles. After exploring Cetinje, we continue our trip to Lovcen National Park, where we make a short walking tour to the village of Dolovi. We

will take a photo of one authentic Montenegrin mountain place built in the past and go to the viewpoint of the Adriatic Sea and the Bay of Boka, which will delight every hiker and nature lover.

Walking duration: 2-3 hours, 6 km ↑ 150 m ↓ 150 m

Day 6

Visit to Njegos Mausoleum, Krstac pass & village Njegusi

The biggest and most important monument of Lovcen national park is the Mausoleum of Petar Petrovic Njegos (famous poet and philosopher). The mausoleum is officially the highest mausoleum in the world because it is situated at the top of the second-highest peak of Lovcen mountain, Jezerski Vrh (1657 m). Getting there takes a bit of effort, because you need to climb 461 steps up to the entry where two granite giants guard the tomb of Montenegro's greatest writer. When you arrive at the top, take a deep breath of fresh air and keep your eyes wide open. As you slowly turn all around, you will be amazed by the view of the Bay of Kotor, Skadar Lake, the high mountains of the northern part of Montenegro, even Albania. After visiting the mausoleum, we continue to Krstac pass where you can experience wonderful views on Boka bay, Orjen Mountain and many serpentines of Kotor-Cetinje road. Downhill by the road we find a picturesque mountain village Njegusi. Njegusi is known as the birthplace of the Petrovic-Njegos dynasty, which ruled Montenegro from 1696 until 1918. With its altitude of around 1000 m and proximity to the sea, Njegusi is a true air spa where the two climates intersect. It is an area of almost untouched nature without any industry.

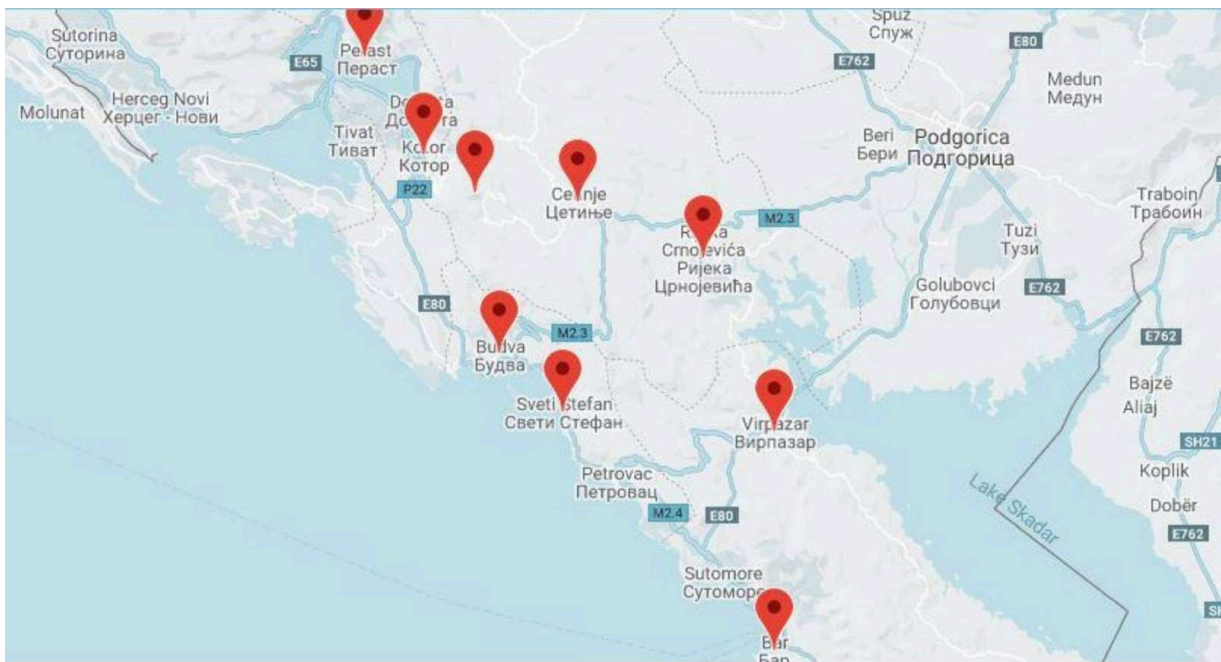
Walking duration: 2 hours, 3 km ↑ 150 m ↓ 150 m

Day 7

Departure or extensions

Transfer to Podgorica/Tivat/Dubrovnik Airport.

Note: In case you are arriving/leaving one or two days before/after the group departure do not hesitate to contact us for organizing your stay, activities and/or transfers.



Tour locations

INCLUDED

- 6 nights / 7 days
- All accommodations
- All breakfasts & farewell dinner
- Packed lunches during hikes and homemade traditional Montenegrin lunch on the 5th day
- Prosciutto & wine tasting on the 4th day
- All transfers – minivan and driver from and back to the airport, as well as local transfers, in accordance with the program
- English-speaking licensed tour guide

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- Parks entrance fees
 - Local tourist tax

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights tickets
- Travel insurance (obligatory)
- Lunch outside of the program
- Your own trekking/hiking gear
- Personal expenses such as phone calls, alcoholic beverages, souvenirs, extra transfers, tips, etc.
- Optional gratuities to your guide(s)
- Any items not explicitly mentioned in the program

Additional Information

Accommodation

You will mostly stay in 3* hotels or in private lodgings (apartments & guesthouses) that are especially appealing or the only choice in a remote location. We have selected small family-run hotels and cozy guesthouses whenever possible for their intimate atmospheres, as well as for their ability to share with you the history and culture of their specific Montenegrin region. Generally, rooms in Montenegro are double or triple rooms (we will assign you a roommate of the same gender, if possible) and you may find that some are small apartments with a kitchen. If you request single accommodations, you will be required to pay the single supplement fee. Please be advised there are a limited number of single accommodations available, and single accommodations may not be available for the village stay.

Meals

Breakfast is included. When no restaurant location is available on the route, packed lunches will be pre-ordered. Dinner is available either in the restaurant in your hotel or restaurants and taverns in the village near your accommodation. Vegetarian, vegan, and gluten free meals are available upon request.

Transfers

All transfers from and back to the airport, as well as local transfers, in accordance with the programme, are included. Luggage transfer also is included, and your bags will be transferred by private transfer to your next accommodation. Baggage limit 25 kg per person.

Difficulty Grade: EASY

Relaxed and mild walks are suitable for walkers with average levels of fitness and who are generally in good health. These walks are typically on maintained trails and have marked trails with signage. Gradients are mild with no steep uphill or downhill section. No previous hiking experience is required and they are suitable for novices and different age groups. Walking is typically limited to 3-5 hours per day (up to 10 km of walking).

Each evening your guides will inform you about the next day's activities and answer any questions you may have.

Documents & Credits Cards

- Valid passport and ID card
- Money, and/or credit card (currency in Montenegro is the Euro - €)
- Travel health insurance certificate

We recommend taking sufficient cash for your daily requirements. Banks and ATMs are available, and credit/debit card payments are widely accepted in towns but might be limited in some of the villages we visit.

Medication

If you require any medication, please take adequate supplies for the duration of your holiday. It's advisable to carry your medication in your hand luggage instead of packing it in your suitcase (backpack).

Climate & Country Information

Montenegro's coastline has a Mediterranean climate with hot dry summers and mild winters, whereas the more mountainous inland areas have a sub-alpine climate with warm summers and cold winters with snowfall. There is a chance of sporadic rain in spring and autumn in the coastal areas, though generally, this is in the form of short showers. In the mountains, rainfall tends to be more frequent, including around the Bay of Kotor. Average temperatures from May to October are generally in the mid 20's (in °C) but can reach into the 30's (in °C) in July and August.

Typically, you can expect excellent weather in Montenegro from April to November.

- Time difference to GMT +1
- Currency - Euro (€)
- Religion - Christian (mainly Orthodox)
- Language - Montenegrin, English is widely spoken
- Electric supply and plugs - 220V, 50Hz, two-pin round plugs

Clothing Tips

The right equipment for walking tours is important for a convenient holiday. Take care that you wear comfortable clothes to meet the climate of the region and season.

The key to staying comfortable while on an active trip is layering. To get maximum comfort with minimum weight, you need versatile layers that mix and match to create the right amount of insulation, ventilation and weather protection.

Luggage

Bring one main piece of luggage and a 20-30 liter day backpack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a rain jacket, fleece, t-shirts,

camera, sun-cream, water and picnic lunch. On hot days you will carry fewer clothes but more drinking water.

What to pack?

This gear list has been created to help you in choosing your equipment for the trip. Try to bring only what is necessary, this will help you and the field staff.

- Backpack (20 – 30 l) with raincover
- Hiking shoes
- Hiking Socks (Synthetic or Wool)
- Hiking Pants (Convertible, Quick-Dry, Lightweight)
- Long Sleeve Shirts (Synthetic, Lightweight)
- Jacket (Hooded, Lightweight, Waterproof, Breathable)
- Fleece/Wool Jacket or Sweater
- T-Shirts (Synthetic)
- Shorts
- Hat or cap – Sun protection is important!
- Swimwear and towel
- Hiking poles (if you usually use them)
- Reusable water bottle(s) 1.5 – 2 L per person
- Small backpack pharmacy
- Casual clothing and shoes for travel and town wear
- Camera and accessories
- Mobile phone and charger
- Sunglasses, sunscreen/sunblock and lip balm
- Insect repellent
- Travel pillow
- Toiletries