



48 HOURS IN

Dubrovnik

SUN · STONE · SEA

WELCOME

Welcome to Dubrovnik.

Dubrovnik is the most dramatic small city on the Adriatic — a walled medieval city perched on a limestone promontory where the Croatian coast drops into the clearest water in Europe. The Old Town walls, intact since the 14th century and enclosing barely half a square kilometre, run above the sea on one side and above the rooftops on the other. Walking the full circuit at dawn or dusk, with the terracotta city below and the open Adriatic beyond, is one of the great experiences available to any traveler in Europe.

The city is tiny by any measure — the Old Town has fewer than 1,500 permanent residents — and was consequently overwhelmed by tourism in the years following Game of Thrones filming here. The crowds are real: July and August bring 10,000 day-trippers from cruise ships alone. But Dubrovnik rewards travelers who arrive early and stay late. Before 8am, the Stradun — the marble-paved main street — belongs to the street cleaners and the swallows. After 6pm, when the day-tripper boats leave, the city exhales.

Beyond the walls, the Dalmatian coast offers some of the most beautiful water in the world — the island of Lokrum fifteen minutes by ferry, the Elaphiti Islands an hour north. Solo travelers who are willing to move between the architectural grandeur of the Old Town and the physical pleasure of the Adriatic will find Dubrovnik as close to perfect as anywhere in this series.

DAY ONE

Day One

City Walls · Old Town · Lokrum Island · Sunset at Buža Bar

The first day is built around the walls and the water. Walk the full circuit of the city walls in the early morning before the heat and the crowds, spend the afternoon on Lokrum island, and return for dinner in the Old Town and a sunset drink at one of Dubrovnik's cliff bars.

MORNING · 7:30 AM - 1:00 PM

7:30 AM

City Walls (Gradske Zidine)

The defining experience of Dubrovnik: 1,940 metres of medieval walls encircling the Old Town, built and rebuilt between the 13th and 17th centuries, rising up to 25 metres above the sea on the south face. The full circuit takes 1.5–2 hours at a comfortable pace. The views — south over the Adriatic, north over the terracotta rooftops, east toward the mountains of Bosnia and Herzegovina — are extraordinary in morning light. Open from 8am; arrive as close to opening as possible. Tickets at the Pile or Ploče gates (€35); available online at tickets.dubrovnik.hr.

***Insider Tip** Walk the walls clockwise — the sea is on your right for the southern stretch, giving you the best light in the morning. The highest point, Fort Minčeta at the northwest corner, has the best panorama. Stop at the café inside Fort St. John for a coffee halfway round.*

10:00 AM

Stradun & Old Town

The Stradun (Placa) — Dubrovnik's marble-paved main street, worn smooth by seven centuries of foot traffic — runs 300 metres from the Pile Gate to the Clocktower. The side streets of the Old Town rise steeply on both sides; the ones heading south toward the sea wall are quieter and less visited. The Rector's Palace (14th–15th century), the Dominican Monastery with its Gothic-Renaissance cloister, and the Franciscan Monastery with the third-oldest pharmacy in Europe (1317, still operating) are all within five minutes of each other.

***Insider Tip** The Franciscan Monastery pharmacy (Ljekarna Male Braće) has been dispensing medicines continuously since 1317. The current dispensary looks much as it did in the 18th century and sells cosmetics made from original historical recipes. The monastery cloister — Romanesque with carved capitals — is one of the most beautiful enclosed spaces in Dalmatia.*

12:00 PM

Lunch: Proto Restaurant

Široka 1, Old Town: one of the oldest restaurants in Dubrovnik, established 1886. The first-floor terrace looks out over the Old Town rooftops. The menu is Dalmatian seafood — black risotto, grilled fish, seafood pasta — cooked without tourist shortcuts. Lunch for one: €30–40.

AFTERNOON · 1:30 PM - 7:00 PM

1:30 PM

Lokrum Island Ferry

Take the ferry from the Old Harbour (Stara Luka) to Lokrum: 15 minutes, €15 return, ferries run every 30–45 minutes in season. Lokrum is a forested island nature reserve — no cars, no permanent residents, Benedictine monastery ruins, a botanical garden, a saltwater lake (the Dead Sea) connected to the Adriatic, and rocky swimming platforms around the island. The water off the eastern rocks is gin-clear and 25–28°C in June. Spend two hours minimum.

Insider Tip *The FKK (naturist) beach on Lokrum's western side is the island's best swimming — flat rock platforms, deep water, and complete privacy from the main tourist path. It is also clothing-optional but entirely comfortable for any solo traveler. Follow the signs from the monastery ruins.*

5:00 PM

Return & Sunset: Buža Bar

Return to the Old Town and make your way to Buža Bar — literally a hole in the wall (buža means hole in Croatian), a bar cut into the sea cliff on the southern face of the walls. There are two: Buža I (quieter) and Buža II (larger, with a platform for cliff jumping). Both serve cold beer and wine above the open Adriatic; the sunset view — sun dropping toward the Elaphiti Islands, the water turning copper below — is one of the signature images of the Dalmatian coast.

EVENING · 7:30 PM - LATE

7:30 PM

Dinner: Nautika

Brsalje 3, just outside the Pile Gate: Dubrovnik's most celebrated fine dining restaurant, with a terrace perched on the cliffs above the sea at the western tip of the city walls. The menu is classic Dalmatian seafood elevated — Adriatic lobster, sea bass in a salt crust, oysters from the Pelješac peninsula. Dinner for one with wine: €80–100. Reserve well ahead (+385 20 442 526). The alternative at lower price: 360° restaurant inside the walls (Sv. Dominika bb) — same quality, different views.

10:00 PM

Night: Cold Drinks on the Stradun

After dinner, walk the Stradun one more time. At 10pm, after the cruise day-trippers are long gone, the marble street belongs to the people staying the night. The bars along the side streets of Gunduličeva Poljana square open onto a café square where locals and long-stay visitors mix without rush. Bard cocktail bar (Between the Gates, inside the walls) is the best late option.

DAY TWO

Day Two

Elaphiti Islands · Konavle Valley · Mount Srđ

The second day moves beyond the walls. A morning ferry to the Elaphiti Islands for swimming and lunch, returning to Dubrovnik for a late afternoon cable car up Mount Srđ, and a final dinner in the neighbourhood of Lapad — where locals eat.

MORNING · 8:00 AM - 1:30 PM

8:00 AM

Elaphiti Islands: Šipan or Lopud

Take the morning ferry from Gruž Harbour (outside the Old Town, 20 min by bus or taxi) to the Elaphiti Islands — a chain of three inhabited islands northwest of Dubrovnik. Lopud (45 min) has Šunj Beach, one of the few sandy beaches in the Dubrovnik area — an unusually calm, shallow bay with no motor boats permitted. Šipan (1.5 hrs) is the largest and least touristed — an island of olive groves, Renaissance summer villas, and two small villages connected by a lane. Both are worth a morning; Lopud for the beach, Šipan for the quiet.

***Insider Tip** Šunj Beach on Lopud is shallow enough to wade 100 metres and warm — ideal for extended swimming. The café-restaurant at the back of the bay (Obala Iva Kuljevana) serves cold beer and grilled fish under pine trees. No beach chairs needed; bring a towel and nothing else.*

12:00 PM

Lunch on the Island

Both Lopud and Šipan have small konobas (traditional restaurants) that serve the same menu: grilled fish caught that morning, octopus salad, local wine. Konoba Peggy on Lopud and Konoba Šipan on Šipan are both reliable. Lunch for one: €20–30.

AFTERNOON · 2:30 PM - 7:30 PM

2:30 PM

Return to Dubrovnik & Cable Car (Mount Srđ)

Return to Dubrovnik and take the cable car from above the Pile Gate to the summit of Mount Srđ (405m) — a 4-minute ride to a panorama that shows the full extent of the Old Town, the coastline north and south, the Elaphiti Islands you visited this morning, and on clear days the mountains of Bosnia. The Fort Imperial at the summit houses a war museum documenting the 1991–92 Siege of Dubrovnik. The views at late afternoon, with the walls of the Old Town catching low light below, are the best photographic opportunity in the city. Cable car: €20 return.

5:00 PM

Old Town: Final Walk

Take one final walk through the Old Town in late afternoon — the Stradun in the low light, the side streets south toward the sea wall, the view from the south ramparts over the water. The Old Town is at its most beautiful between 5 and 7pm in June, when the cruise passengers are gone and the light is long and golden from the west. Walk to the Old Harbour and watch the Lokrum ferry making its last runs.

7:30 PM

Dinner: Lapad Neighbourhood

Take a taxi or bus 6 to Lapad — Dubrovnik's residential peninsula west of the Old Town, where locals actually eat. Konoba Kolona (Masarykov put 6) serves Dalmatian home cooking — lamb from the Dalmatian hinterland, grilled vegetables, local wine — at prices 40% lower than the Old Town. The promenade along Lapad Bay is pleasant after dinner: a flat, tree-lined walk with water views and zero tourists.

Return to the Old Town for a final Stradun walk and a nightcap at Bard or at one of the wine bars in the streets behind the Franciscan Monastery. The last ferry back to wherever you're staying departs around midnight.

WHERE TO EAT

Dubrovnik's Table

SEAFOOD & DALMATIAN

Proto Restaurant · Old Town · €€€

Dubrovnik institution since 1886. Rooftop terrace, classic Dalmatian seafood. The black risotto is the standard. Široka 1.

Nautika · Pile Gate · €€€€

The best fine dining in Dubrovnik — terrace above the sea cliffs. Adriatic lobster, sea bass in salt. Reserve. Brsalje 3.

Konoba Kolona · Lapad · €€

Where locals eat: Dalmatian home cooking at honest prices. Lamb, grilled fish, local wine. Masarykov put 6.

Oyster Bar Bota Šare · Old Town · €€

The Pelješac oysters served here are among the best in the Adriatic — harvested daily from Mali Ston Bay. Kneza Damjana Jude 4.

CASUAL & WINE BARS

Buža Bar I & II · Sea Wall · €

Bars cut into the sea cliff — the signature Dubrovnik drink experience. Cold beer above the open Adriatic. Sunset non-negotiable.

Bard Cocktail Bar · Old Town · €€

Best cocktail bar inside the walls. Between the Gates — the alley connecting Stradun to the sea-wall side. Open until 2am.

Wine Bar Dva Fratara · Old Town · €€

Good Croatian wine list — Plavac Mali from Pelješac, Pošip from Korčula. Small plates of local cheese and prosciutto. Od Sigurate 1.

Konoba Peggy · Lopud Island · €€

Simple fish restaurant at Šunj Beach — the move after a morning swim. Grilled catch, cold local wine, pine tree shade.

GETTING AROUND

Navigating Dubrovnik

MODE	COST	NOTES
Walking	Free	The Old Town is entirely pedestrian and compact — end to end in 8 minutes. The city outside the walls requires transport.
City Bus	€2/ride	Bus 6 connects the Old Town (Pile Gate) to Lapad and Gruž Harbour. Buy tickets from the driver or at kiosks. Exact change preferred.
Taxi / Bolt	Varies	Taxis are metered and available outside the Pile Gate. Bolt app works in Dubrovnik and is cheaper than street taxis for longer journeys.
Ferry (Old Harbour)	€15 return	Lokrum Island ferry from Stara Luka — runs every 30–45 min in season. Day pass includes island entry.
Ferry (Gruž)	€6–12	Public Jadrolinija ferries to the Elaphiti Islands from Gruž Harbour. Book at jadrolinija.hr. Also ferries to Korčula, Hvar, and Split.
Cable Car	€20 return	Dubrovnik Cable Car from above the Pile Gate to Mount Srđ summit. Runs until 11pm in summer. Book at dubrovnikcablecar.com.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Before You Go

TOPIC	DETAILS
Getting There	Dubrovnik Airport (DBV) is 22km from the city. Atlas bus to Pile Gate: €10, 30–45 min. Taxi: €35–45. No direct train or rail.
Crowds	July–August: 10,000+ day-trippers from cruise ships daily. The Old Town is genuinely difficult 9am–6pm in peak season. Arrive early, stay late.
Currency	Croatian Kuna replaced by Euro (€) in January 2023. Cards widely accepted; small cash useful for buses and island konobas.
Getting Around	No car needed for the Old Town. Bus 6 for Lapad and Gruž. Bolt app for taxis. Ferry passes for islands.
Best Time	May–June and September–October: warm water, manageable crowds. July–August: very hot (35°C+), extremely crowded. April still cool.
Solo Dining	Konobas are welcoming to solo travelers — bar seating is common. The Old Harbour terrace bars are good for solo evening meals with water views.
Useful Apps	Bolt (taxis), jadrolinija.hr (island ferries), dubrovnikcablecar.com, tickets.dubrovnik.hr (walls), Google Maps offline.

Dubrovnik awaits.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE: FINAL CHECKLIST

- ☐ Book City Walls tickets: tickets.dubrovnik.hr
- ☐ Reserve Nautika for dinner: +385 20 442 526
- ☐ Check Elaphiti ferry schedule: jadrolinija.hr
- ☐ Book cable car if peak season: dubrovnikcablecar.com
- ☐ Download offline map — Old Town alleys not always on GPS
- ☐ Check cruise ship schedule to avoid peak crowds: dubrovnikportauthority.hr

Your interactive map is one scan away.

All locations from this guide, colour-coded by day, open on your phone.

goingsolo.life/maps/dubrovnik

GoingSolo.Life

TRAVEL ALONE. LIVE FULLY.