

**Interreg
Danube Region**



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#RomansWineDanube

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A green itinerary that is part of the Roman Emperors and Danube Wine Route

Dinaric Impressions

Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina –
Doclea/Podgorica, Montenegro

Partners of the project:



Bosna i Hercegovina
Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine
ŽUPANIJA ZAPADNOHERCEGOVAČKA
URED VLADE ZA EUROPSKE INTEGRACIJE

Partner Tour Operator:





Dinaric Impressions 1/2026 Format: 205 x 180

Mostar – Doclea / Podgorica

This itinerary connects the cities of Ljubljana, Mostar, and Podgorica and combines sustainable mobility, regional wine, Roman heritage, and nature-oriented activities. The trip is aimed at culturally interested, active guests who value conscious travel, regional cuisine, and authentic encounters.

Legend for icons:



Sustainable Activities



Roman Heritage



Wine Theme



Sustainable Transport



Regional Produce

Wine Focus



Vinograd Wine Festival in Podgorica:

Held outdoors in Podgorica, this festival highlights Montenegrin wines, especially Vranac. Visitors can enjoy tastings, local food pairings, and live music, usually in September.



Herzegovina Wine Route Festival in Mostar:

A summer festival celebrating wines from the Herzegovina region, including Žilavka and Blatina. Features tastings, local dishes, cultural performances, and workshops with winemakers.



Dani otvorenih podruma (Open Cellar Days) in Podgorica:

A multiweek event in November where wineries open their cellars for tours and tastings. Travelers can explore several towns, meet winemakers, and sample a wide range of regional wines directly from producers.



Podgorica Wine Salon:

An indoor wine festival in Podgorica showcasing wines from across Montenegro. Offers structured tastings, opportunities to speak with winemakers, and education on local grape varieties like Vranac and Kratošija.

Your itinerary.

Provided you arrive **by plane to Sarajevo**, you can connect easily onward to Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. Arriving by train or long-distance bus is the eco-friendlier option and therefore recommended. From these hubs, Sarajevo and Mostar are well connected by rail and road and form the ideal starting point for your journey towards Podgorica.

Day 1: Travel Option 1: Sarajevo → Mostar



Arrival in the city and onward travel to Mostar:

The distance from **Sarajevo Airport (SJJ) to Mostar is approximately 120-125 km**. Travelling by car or organized transfer takes around two hours, depending on traffic and the chosen route. The drive along the scenic **M17 motorway** follows the Neretva River through narrow gorges, dramatic rock formations and lush river landscapes – it is already a first highlight of the trip.

Three-hour walking tour of Sarajevo: A guided city walks through Baščaršija (the Ottoman old town), the Austro-Hungarian quarter and selected modern neighborhoods gives guests a compact overview of Sarajevo's complex history, religious diversity and everyday life.

Obala Maka Dizdara & Festina Lente Bridge: A relaxed walk along the picturesque riverbank (Obala Maka Dizdara) leads past cafés, historic buildings and pleasant green spaces. From here you can enjoy attractive views of the Miljacka River and the modern Festina Lente Bridge.

Scenic Drive from Sarajevo to Mostar



Source: Herzegovina Bike

The fastest and most atmospheric way to get **from Sarajevo to Mostar is by train**. The railway line runs directly along the Neretva River and is considered one of the most beautiful train routes in Europe. The journey

takes about two hours and offers continuous views of mountains, canyons and emerald-green water. Buses also operate between Sarajevo and Mostar; they are slightly slower than the train but provide additional flexibility in terms of departure times.

Roman archaeological site of Aquae Sulphurae in Ilidža: On the way out of Sarajevo towards Mostar lies Ilidža, once the Roman town of Aquae Sulphurae. The area is known for its thermal springs and historic spa tradition. Archaeological remains of a Roman villa, a necropolis and other structures provide insight into Roman life and bathing culture in the region and can be visited as part of a short stop.

Day 1: Travel Option 2: Directly to Mostar

Arrival in the city and onward travel:

Depending on flight connections, **guests may also arrive directly via Mostar airport** and continue overland to Mostar. Public transport on these routes is limited and sometimes irregular, so organized transfer or shuttle is recommended, especially for groups.

Day 2: Mostar

What to expect in Mostar:

- Unesco listen Old Bridge (Stari most) and the historic Old Town
- Multicultural Ottoman and Mediterranean heritage
- River landscapes along the Neretva with iconic viewpoints
- Proximity to Blagaj Tekija and the Buna Spring
- All relevant information is here: <https://exploremostar.ba/en/>



Activities in Mostar:

Festival culture in Mostar can be integrated depending on the travel season. Two events are particularly suitable: the **Stari Most Diving Festival**, where local divers and professionals jump from the Old Bridge into the Neretva River, and the Mostar Food & Wine Festival, which presents regional wines, cheeses, olive oil and other products from Herzegovina. Both festivals add a lively, experiential dimension to the themes of culture, wine and local identity.

Stari Most (Old Bridge)



Source: MehmetO/Shutterstock.com

Mostar's old town is the core of the visit. The **UNESCO-listed Old Bridge (Stari most)** is the focal point and symbol of the city's reconciliation and rebuilding. A guided city tour leads through cobbled streets, former bazaar areas, mosques and historic houses. The Museum of the Old Bridge in the **Tara Tower** explains the bridge's construction, destruction and reconstruction and provides archaeological context. A short walk to the smaller **Kriva ćuprija** (Crooked Bridge), often

considered the “little sister” of the Old Bridge, illustrates the longer tradition of bridge-building in Mostar.

Herzegovina Museum – includes Roman finds such as coins and steles from the region.

Heritage Cycling Trail



Source: Herzegovina Bike

UNESCO Heritage Cycling Trail - From Mostar to Dubrovnik:

The long-distance itinerary connects four major UNESCO sites in Herzegovina and Dalmatia over roughly 172 kilometers. For this trip, selected sections can be

chosen that are suitable for day tours. They combine scenic routes through karst landscapes and river valleys with visits to monasteries, villages and cultural sites.

Cemetery of Peace and Wild Horses on the Bili plateau: This route leads to panoramic viewpoints with wide views over Herzegovina and into areas where semi-wild horses roam. It offers both a contemplative component (Cemetery of Peace) and a nature-oriented experience. The tour can be organized as a guided hike or a full-day excursion.

Wild horses at the Bili plateau



Source: Herzegovina Bike

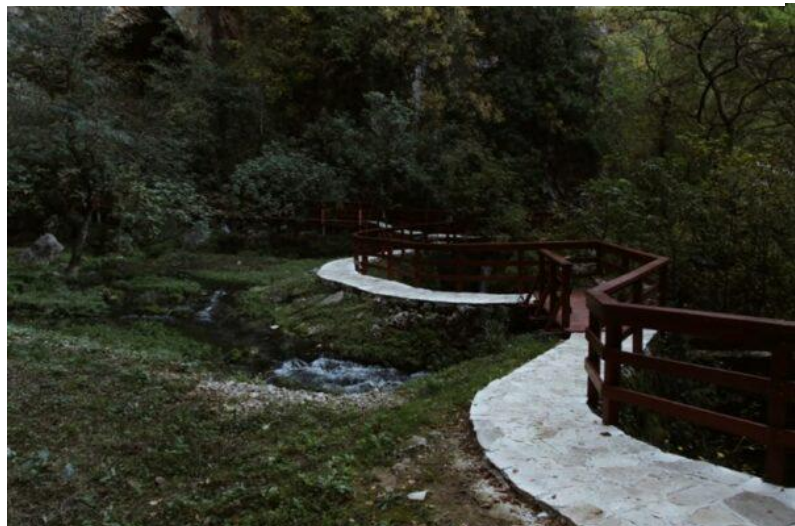
Cycling routes from

Mostar: Shorter cycling tours can start directly at the Old Bridge and follow the Neretva or the Buna River. A popular option is a ride to the Buna spring (Vrelo Bune) and the Dervish monastery at Blagaj. This

combines flat, accessible cycling with impressive scenery: steep rock faces, clear blue-green water and historic religious architecture.

A scenic route **from Mostar to Blagaj Tekke**, to the famous **Dervish monastery** site directly at the headwaters of the Buna River, ideal for photo stops and sightseeing.

Heritage Cycling Trail



Source: Herzegovina Bike

Full-day hiking on Čabulja: For guests with good fitness, a full-day hike to the Čabulja mountain and the surrounding pastures can be included. The route traverses open, rugged landscapes with far-reaching views and gives an insight into the more remote, pastoral side of Herzegovina.



Activities around Mostar:

A short excursion to **Široki Brijeg** offers the opportunity to experience

some of Herzegovina's most renowned family-run wineries. At estates such as Vinarija Škegro or Matoš, guests can take part in guided tastings featuring the region's characteristic grape varieties: the crisp, mineral-driven white Žilavka and the full-bodied red Blatina. These wines reflect the distinctive terroir of Herzegovina and form an ideal introduction to the area's viticultural traditions. A light lunch can be arranged in the form of a traditional meze platter. It typically includes regional cheeses, cured meats, olives, and homemade bread, providing an authentic and relaxed culinary experience.

Široki Brijeg



Source: West-Herzegovina Adventures

After the tasting, a short walk through the **centre of Široki Brijeg** offers insight into the town's cultural and religious heritage. A visit to the prominent **Franciscan Monastery and the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary** can be included. The monastery complex, with

its gallery and educational role, is one of the most influential religious institutions in Herzegovina and contributes significantly to the region's cultural identity.

The **Lištica River**, which rises near Široki Brijeg, has carved a **dramatic canyon landscape** that counts among the most impressive natural attractions of western Herzegovina. The surrounding area is ideal for outdoor activities such as hiking, cycling, speleological explorations, and rock climbing. Clear water, steep rock formations, and a variety of flora and fauna create a setting well-suited for nature-oriented excursions and active tourism.

Posušje is a scenic destination known for its **unspoilt natural landscapes**, historic significance, and cultural richness. One of the

region's highlights is **Blidinje Nature Park**, home to the Dinaric Čvrsnica Mountain (2,228 m), the high-altitude **Blidinje Lake** (approx. 1,200 m), and the protected **Masna Luka** reserve. This area is highly suitable for hiking, nature walks, winter activities (depending on the season), and thematic excursions focusing on geomorphology or biodiversity.

Grude offers several possibilities for short cultural and nature visits. Among them is **St. Catherine's Church**, an important local religious landmark. For more adventurous activities, the wider area contains numerous caves that can be explored with appropriate guidance, showcasing the region's extensive karst formations.

Ljubuški



Source: West-Herzegovina Adventures

The **Old Town of Ljubuški**, with its hilltop fortress, is one of Herzegovina's most prominent historical sites. The remains of the fortification offer panoramic views of the surrounding countryside and provide insights into medieval defensive architecture.

Mogorjelo – An archaeological site about 10 km from Mostar, featuring the remains of a large Roman villa from the 4th century. Visitors can see the foundations, fragments of mosaics, and remnants of walls and outbuildings, all set in countryside with views of the Neretva valley. It's a compact, easily walkable site, ideal for a short cultural stop.



Local transportation in Mostar:

In Mostar a public transport system is available with several bus lines operating in the city. Many people in Mostar use local taxis to get around

the city but renting a bike is also possible in the city and a fun way to explore.



Where to Eat in Mostar:

Ćevabdžinica Tima-Irma: A small, family-run restaurant in the old town, known for its traditional grilled dishes such as ćevapi and other classics of Bosnian cuisine. The atmosphere is informal and authentic – ideal for a down-to-earth, regional meal.

Food House Mostar: A centrally located yet quiet restaurant, offering a wide range of vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free dishes alongside Bosnian-Mediterranean specialties. It is particularly suitable for mixed groups with different dietary preferences and for guests who value a modern, conscious cuisine.

Hindin Han: A restaurant with a charming terrace directly above the river, in the heart of the old town. The menu combines fresh fish, local meat dishes and Mediterranean elements. The combination of historic buildings, water views and regional food makes this a very atmospheric dinner location.

Where to Stay in Mostar:

Camping Žitomislić, Buna and Blagaj: Several camping and small accommodation options are located in these villages around 20 minutes from Mostar. They are suitable for guests who prefer a close-to-nature atmosphere, for cycling groups or for program parts focusing on rivers, springs and rural life.

Villa Meydan: A modern hotel in or near the centre of Mostar, with comfortably furnished rooms and a design that combines contemporary elements with references to local stone architecture. Many rooms offer views of the city or the green inner courtyard, providing a quiet base within walking distance of the main sights.

Day 3: Travel Option 1: Mostar → Trebinje → Nikšić →

Podgorica



Onward travel to Podgorica:

Travelling from Mostar to Podgorica by public transport is possible but not particularly convenient. Bus connections are limited, and some services only run once per week. For international guests and organized groups, a dedicated shuttle or private transfer service is strongly recommended. A stop in the second largest city of Montenegro Nikšić is another interesting stopover on the onward travel to Podgorica.

Since a change of bus is usually required in Trebinje, including a planned stopover there makes logistical and thematic sense. The total distance from Mostar to Podgorica via Trebinje is approximately 245 km, with a driving time of around four hours under normal conditions. Since

There are two main border crossings into Montenegro on this route: via Bileća or via the Trebinje/Klobuk crossing.

Break at Tvrdoš Monastery: Just outside Trebinje lies Tvrdoš Monastery, an important Orthodox monastery with a long tradition of wine production. A stop here can include a guided visit to the church and cellars, followed by a tasting of monastic wines. In this way, religious heritage, landscape and wine culture are closely interwoven.

Trebinje invites visitors to unwind at **Bazen Bregovi**, a natural swimming pool set along the river, before strolling across the iconic **Arslanagić Bridge**, the city's most famous Ottoman-era monument. The experience is completed with a visit to **Hercegovačka Gračanica**, a striking hilltop monastery inspired by Kosovo's Gračanica, and a relaxing pause at the shaded **Platani summer patio**, one of the town's most charming squares.

Ostrog Monastery



Source: NTO Montenegro

Nikšić blends history and nature, from the **Gradska tvrđava** (Bedem) fortress in the city center and the lively **Freedom Square** (Trg Slobode) to the impressive **Orthodox Temple of St. Vasilije of Ostrog**, a modern landmark of the city. Just outside the city,

the peaceful **Krupac** and **Slano Lakes** offer scenic escapes, while the dramatic **Ostrog Monastery**, carved high into a vertical cliff, stands as one of Montenegro's most extraordinary spiritual sites.

Day 3: Travel Option 2: Mostar → Trebinje → Kotor → Podgorica

Coming from the North, the first city is **Herceg Novi**, which offers good tourism infrastructure that makes it interesting as an intermediate stop year-round located at **Kotor Bay**, Europe's most southern fjord and one of Montenegro's outstanding landscapes. Founded 600 years ago, its facades, roadways, and fortresses reflect different epochs in history, with the influence from Turkish, Venetian, Spanish, and Austrian periods still visible today.

Herceg Novi is connected to other towns around bay of Kotor by local bus connections.

Farther south, **Risan**, the oldest city in all of Montenegro is home to the Villa Rustica that features an intricate **Roman mosaic** dating back to the 2nd century AD, displaying geometric ornaments and flower motives.

Continuing towards Podgorica, the next town is **Perast**. The small town invites visitors to stroll along the waterfront and enjoy the ancient

architecture and beautiful views of Kotor Bay. From here it is very easy to visit two enticing little islands in the heart of **Kotor Bay, Our Lady of the Rock and St. George**.

Not far away is **Kotor** that charms visitors with its ancient walls, Baroque palaces, and grand churches. Situated between the Bay of Kotor and mountains, Kotor invites people to stay but is also an ideal place to explore the surroundings. With its carefully restored historic Old Town, Kotor has been declared a **UNESCO World Heritage site** and offers many cultural activities throughout the year.

The nearby **Lovcen National Park** is ideal for soft adventure activities. One of the newest additions is Kotor **Cable Car** offering breathtaking views. Small villages nearby allow to get a taste of Montenegro, with **Njeguši** figuring prominently as a place to try authentic **prosciutto**.

Onward from Kotor Bay and continuing to Podgorica, Montenegro's cozy former capital **Cetinje** is an inviting stop that encapsulates much of Montenegro's culture and history. Several museums and former embassy buildings can be appreciated here. It is fascinating to learn how this small town of just 14,000 inhabitants was once interwoven with European politics.

Relevant links for the southern route:

www.hercegnovi.travel/en

<https://muzejikotor.me/en/home/roman-mosaics/>

<https://kotor.travel/>

<https://visitcetinje.com/en/>

Day 4: Podgorica

What to expect in Podgorica:

- Roman archaeological site of Doclea
- Podgorica Festivals:
- Access to Lake Skadar National Park and surrounding nature
- Significant wine region with boutique wineries
- Compact capital with historic Stara Varos and river landscapes
- All relevant information is here:

<https://podgorica.travel/en/homepage/>



Activities in the city:

Podgorica serves as a compact, manageable capital and as a hub for day trips into nature and wine-growing areas. The city center is relatively small and can be explored easily on foot or by bicycle.

A short city walk might include the old quarter of **Stara Varoš**, the **Ribnica Bridge** and the confluence of the **Ribnica and Morača rivers**. In the city center of Podgorica, you can find the **church of St. George** as one of the oldest churches in the Balkans.

Roman site of Doclea



Source: NTO Montenegro

This offers a good sense of the historical layers of the city and its topography.

Roman heritage is represented by the **archaeological site of Doclea** (Duklja), about 4 km from the city center. Here, remains of the forum, thermal baths, basilicas, residential

quarters, a necropolis and parts of an aqueduct can be seen. Information boards help visitors understand the former Roman town.

Doclea is easily accessible by bicycle or car and can be combined with a short walk through the surrounding landscape.

North-east of Podgorica, the **fortified settlement of Medun** offers insight into the area's Illyrian and medieval past. The remains of walls, towers and viewpoints above the Zeta plain illustrate the strategic importance of the site, while short walking paths allow visitors to explore the ruins and surrounding landscape.

A visit to Medun can be combined with the Roman archaeological site of

Doclea. The excursion can be rounded off with a stop at **Vinarija Rajković**, a small local winery, where visitors can sample regional wines and enjoy a calm rural setting before returning to the city.

Additional historic bridges, such as the **Adži-paša bridge**, underline the importance of river crossings and trade routes in the city's development and can be included as short stops in a thematic city tour on "water, bridges and movement".

Vineyard



Source: NTO Montenegro

Podgorica Wine Road

Tour: Approximately 5.5 hours including transport, visits to traditional wineries, and a tasting in the Ćemovsko field near Šipčanik with wine and bruschetta – local delights in beautiful surroundings!

Skadar Lake National

Park lies south of Podgorica and is one of the most accessible and varied day trips from the capital. The lake and its wetlands can be explored by boat from small harbors, offering close views of water lilies, birdlife and historic monasteries on islands. For more active visitors, the area is also suitable for hiking and cycling, with routes leading through villages, vineyards and along the lakeshore. A popular option is to **cycle from Podgorica towards the lake**, gradually leaving the urban area behind and entering a landscape shaped by agriculture and water. Along the way, stops can be made at local wineries such as **Winery Bogojević**, **Winery Rakčević** and **Marković winery** for short tastings and insight into regional wine production. The day trip can continue towards **Rijeka Crnojevića**, a small historic settlement with stone bridges and riverside viewpoints, which serves as a scenic and relaxed destination before returning to Podgorica.

Plantaže 13. Jul is one of the largest contiguous vineyards in Europe and dominates the wine landscape around Podgorica. A visit can include a tour of the vineyards, the impressive **Šipčanik cellar** in a former military tunnel, and a tasting of several wines accompanied by small regional snacks such as bruschetta, cured meats and cheeses.

Vineyard



Source: NTO Montenegro



Local transportation in Podgorica:

In Podgorica a public transport system is available with several bus lines operating in the city.



Where to Stay in Podgorica:

Ramada Podgorica: According to the Staze platform, the Ramada has the lowest average CO₂ emissions per overnight stay in the Montenegrin capital, effectively making it the “greenest hotel in Podgorica”. It is a modern business hotel with convenient access to the city centre and public transport, ideal for groups seeking a documented sustainable option.

Hilton Podgorica Crna Gora: Among the five-star hotels in Podgorica, the Hilton stands out for

particularly efficient energy use per guest night. It combines a high comfort level with a reduced ecological footprint and offers various facilities such as a spa, rooftop bar and conference spaces.

Voco Podgorica: As part of a network of hotels such as Iberostar Herceg Novi, Regent Porto Montenegro and The Chedi Luštica Bay, Voco Podgorica follows a clear sustainability approach. This includes efficient use of resources, measures to reduce waste and an emphasis on local products, often in the spirit of Slow Food and regional added value.

Vineyard



Source: NTO Montenegro



Where to Eat in Podgorica:

Vegetable-Basket



Source: NTO Montenegro

Restoran Đedovina

- A popular stop near Podgorica for travelers seeking authentic Montenegrin food. The menu features grilled meats, stews, seafood, and other local dishes made from fresh ingredients. Guests can enjoy their meals

on a terrace overlooking the Zeta River or inside a rustic, stone-and-wood interior. The restaurant also offers local wines.

Konoba Lanterna: A mid-range, traditionally oriented tavern in the city, known for generous portions, regional recipes and a cozy atmosphere. It is well suited for group dinners with classic Montenegrin cuisine.

Wine Bar Bucca: A stylish wine bar with a carefully curated wine list and high-quality small dishes. The kitchen focuses on seasonal, local produce, and sustainability has been central to the concept from the beginning. The bar is ideal for an evening program for wine enthusiasts.

Restaurant Vagan: A restaurant specializing in traditional Montenegrin dishes prepared over an open fire. Specialties include baby lamb and mangalitza pork from organic farming. The emphasis on local, carefully sourced ingredients makes Vagan a strong example of authentic and sustainable regional cuisine.

Day 5: Way home:

Departure from Podgorica is usually via **Podgorica Airport**, with transfers organized from the hotel to the terminal. Within the city, **public transportation, taxis or pre-booked shuttles** are available to reach the airport or the main bus and train stations. From here, onward travel within Montenegro and to neighboring countries is possible, closing a journey that has linked Mostar, Trebinje and Podgorica through sustainable mobility, wine culture, Roman heritage and active outdoor experiences.