



saddletravel.com
trail riding worldwide

Istria Mountain & Beach Trail

Weight limit: 85kg / 13.3 stone

Nearest airport: Pula

8 days / 7 nights / 6 days riding

Experience the glorious charm of Istria, Croatia where olive groves gradually give way to wooded hills and fertile valleys. Varied terrain on this trail offers excellent riding with some exhilarating gallops combined with mountain climbs where you'll journey across high peaks and lush meadows to reach the cobbled fishing villages and crystalline waters of the Adriatic sea. Spectacular scenery and forward-going horses for intermediate riders onwards.



The Riding

This trail covers diverse terrain from flat river banks with fast gallops, to rolling, rocky scrub land, to forested mountain peaks and valleys. You'll be riding across grassland pasture, dirt pathways, gravel roads, and narrow tracks through dense woods. Riders may be asked to dismount and lead their horses up and down steep and difficult terrain. Your efforts will be rewarded with magnificent views over the lush, pine-covered mountains and valleys.

Level of Riding and Fitness

This trail is suitable for intermediate and advanced riders only. Riders must be able to tack up their horses and mount and dismount from the ground unaided. All participants must be competent, confident and in control at all paces over rough terrain and on a forward going horse. Good level of current riding fitness is required as you'll be spending 4-6 hours in the saddle each day covering a distance of 160km over the course of the week.

Riders are expected to help take care of their own horse during the trail. This includes tacking up and untacking each day, as well as, helping with feeding and watering the horses during overnight stops.



Guides & Group sizes

Your guides, Zeljko & Vanja, are experienced local horse-people with a herd of around fifteen horses to offer guests. This destination specialises in small groups for a personal, laid back trail experience.

Maximum number of riders in a group is 6.

Horses & Tack

The horses on this trail are well-trained, forward going, sure footed and very fit. Mainly Arabs and Arab-crosses, draft crosses and some local breeds. Heights range from around 4.3hh to 16.1hh. They live out in a herd all year round in big pastures on your hosts ranch.

Tack is a mixture of endurance and English saddles ideally suited for trail riding. Saddlebags are fitted for each horse to carry items such as water bottles, sun cream and a camera.



Accommodation & Dining

The first two and the last two nights accommodation are in the village of Hrboki, apartments are built around a courtyard garden, with a traditional style tavern with built-in fireplace, and a roofed patio with BBQ facilities. Apartments are clean and spacious with private bathrooms and heating for chilly mornings and nights in early spring and autumn. During the trail your accommodation varies from villas with pools and apartments in small, traditional hamlets surrounded by verdant pine forests.

Ever since the Romans arrived in Istria the area has been famous for its food – oils, salami, cheeses and truffles. All food served during the holiday is freshly made using local ingredients and many products are grown on local farms, or supplied by the neighbours. Home-reared chickens provide fresh eggs and there are many traditional Istrian dishes to try. The local food is wholesome and often consists of home-made thick soups (based on a variety of beans, herbs and potatoes), meat stews (wild boar, beef, venison, rabbit, chicken) served with local varieties of pasta. Barbecues are also very popular and locally made prsut (prosciutto) and cheese are very common. Local drinks include red and white wine, and a variety of stronger drinks such as grappa, walnut brandy and biska (mistletoe liquor).

Allergies and special dietary requirements can be catered for with advance notice.

Itinerary

Day 1

Arrive at the airport where you will be met and transferred to the village of Hrboki, 25km from Pula. Settle into your room before enjoying your first evening meal and meeting your fellow riders. Meals are freshly made using local ingredients, many of which are produced locally, and showcase the best of Croatian cuisine.

Day 2

After a traditional breakfast of fresh bread/rolls, ham, cheese and home-made preserves, you'll meet the horses. Today is an easy riding day through the open countryside with lunch in a picnic area where you can glimpse the sea. In the afternoon, stop at the fascinating caves of Feštinsko Kraljevstvo, before continuing to meander along the rural back roads until reaching the village of Karnevali where the horses will rest for the night. Drive back to dinner and accommodation in Hrboki village.

Day 3

Today you will be crossing central Istra. Country roads lead to the ruins of the ancient town of Dvigrad situated in a deep valley. The town is enclosed with double defence walls within which more than 200 buildings have been preserved. After a rest, a walk through the ruins of this medieval town and a picnic lunch you'll continue through the wide fields of the Draga valley where you can canter and gallop. Today's ride finishes at Karojba, once horses are settled for the night, you'll head to a local tavern for a traditional dinner with high quality truffles picked from the Motovun woods. After dinner we shall head to your accommodation for the night.

Day 4

Saddle up after breakfast and head out to explore the Mirna river valley where the trail offers magnificent views of the captivating walled town of Motovun. You'll also ride part of the Parenzana, the old Istrian railroad which connected the ports of Trieste and Poreč with villages and towns. The railroad attracts hikers, cyclists and horse riders to travel its narrow winding paths, tunnels and bridges. You'll ride in the foothills of Motovun crossing vineyards and fields to reach the Mirna river that leads upstream to the Butoniga lake. Here you'll stop for a picnic lunch before starting the uphill climb through woods and small villages to reach the peak where a small waterfall and paddocks for the horses await. A short drive to dinner and overnight accommodation.

Day 5

Saddle up the horses after breakfast and head towards the town of Gracisce, crossing streams, and passing many churches and chapels. From Gračišće, you can glimpse the Dolomites in the distance. The town is famous for its wine tasting celebrations, if time allows, you will take a short tour of Gracisce before heading downhill to reach Runki, a village close to a waterfall, where you can leave the horses in a paddock, before heading for dinner.

Day 6:

Breakfast and a drive to the horses. Depending on the river (water level) we either go to see the Sopot waterfall by foot before saddling up or saddle up and see the waterfall from the horse. Today you'll explore the stunning scenery of the Raša valley where you will follow the Raša river, riding its banks all the way to the sea. There are opportunities to let the horses canter and gallop on the soft flat ground. Reaching the last part of today's adventure, you'll ride past the seashore before entering the woods full of Brsuda, a native oak. The path is steep and narrow but Hrboki village is near. After leaving the horses at the ranch, freshen up and head for dinner.

Day 7

The final riding day consists of a leisurely morning ride to Blaz bay. The path takes you through small meadows and woods, vineyards and olive trees. Descending to the bay gives some great views of the sea. A final picnic lunch is served by the sea. If the weather is nice, you can take a swim with the horses (in the summer months). After a rejuvenating dip head back to the ranch for a BBQ dinner in the garden.

Day 8

Departure after breakfast. If riders have a late afternoon or evening flight, they will be transferred midmorning to Pula where they can leave the luggage in a secure storage (at a minimal cost) and enjoy the city until their flight time. An airport shuttle bus is available from the main bus station.

Price includes

- 6 full days of riding
- Trail riding horse, tack and saddlebags
- Twin/double room
- Breakfasts
- Lunches
- Evening meals
- Tea, coffee and mineral water
- Airport transfers
- Local transfers
- Services of guide
- All arrangements for the duration of holiday

Not included

- Flights
- Drinks
- Tips

Flights & Airport transfers

The closest airport is Pula. Direct flights are available from London Stansted.

Please plan your flight to arrive at Pula between 8am and 7pm on the first day of your holiday. Please plan your flight to depart from Pula between 8am and 7pm on the last day of your holiday.

Airport transfers are included in your holiday for flights arriving and departing between the set times. Airport transfers outside of these times are at additional cost.



What to bring

We recommend wearing your riding boots when travelling and carrying one set of riding clothing and your helmet in your hand luggage, so should your luggage not make it to the destination you'll still be able to ride.

Please use the packing list as a guideline, bearing in mind the time of year you are riding.

- Comfortable riding trousers / jodhpurs
- Your own well-fitted hard hat
- Riding boots/ walking boots with a good grip (riding boots with smooth sole are not recommended as they can be slippery when walking)
- Chaps
- Riding gloves

- Long sleeved shirts to protect against the sun and sand
- Warm fleece / jumper for the cooler nights
- Waterproof jacket
- Comfortable clothes for evening
- Lightweight shoes for evening
- Sun cream & lip balm
- Sunglasses & sunhat
- Swimwear
- Camera
- European 2-point plug
- Copy of passport & insurance details

Climate

The Istrian climate is overall very mild, the peninsula is surrounded by sea to the east, west and south and thus benefits from the warm Adriatic currents. Average daytime temperatures are generally from 20C in April to 30C in August. April showers can be common. There is little humidity as temperatures rise.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip.

Country specific information can also be found at National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to Croatia for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/croatia/entry-requirements>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements.

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

Currency & Tipping

The local currency in Croatia is the Croatian Kuna. Your holiday is fully inclusive so we recommend not bringing too much local currency. We recommend just bringing enough cash to have a bit of pocket money for when stopping at cafes along the way and souvenirs.

Tipping your guide is at your discretion.

Riding declaration

"I am an experienced rider and able to mount & dismount unaided. I have a firm seat and I'm confident and in control at all paces over rough terrain (including rising trot, light seat canters and gallops) and have a good level of current riding fitness. I do not suffer from any illness or disability that could prejudice my safety or that of others."

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms

saddletravel.com

Holidays are confirmed with 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before start date.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50% 30 days or more - 30%

less than 30 days - nil

Book with confidence – Covid Guarantee:

If a ride operator is closed or you are unable to travel – due to lockdown:

1/ The deposit is reissued as a rebooking voucher to rebook anytime.

2/ Any balance payment will be refunded to you in full within 1 week of departure date.

Insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during booking process.

Contact details

+44 1497 888 228 WhatsApp
trails@saddletravel.com

saddletravel.com
The Coach House
Clyro Court
Clyro
Hereford
HR3 5LE
Wales

CN: 05411320

<https://saddletravel.com>



saddletravel.com
trail riding worldwide