

## Captivating Croatia: The Gates of King's Landing 2019

*For over 20 years, George R.R. Martin's Song of Ice and Fire books have transported us to exotic locales without leaving the library. Then the HBO TV series, Game of Thrones, showed us where to find these destinations in our own world. The Red Keep gardens, Meereen, Slaver's Bay, and King's Landing, they're all real locations and they're waiting for you in Croatia!*

### **Day 1 Travel to Zagreb**

Today, we embark on our overnight flight to Zagreb.

*Meals: In-flight*

### **Day 2 Land program start day in Zagreb**

Welcome to Zagreb. The capital city of Croatia has it all: culture, arts, music, architecture and good eats. Explore the city on your own, relax, or join us on an optional walking tour with a local historian. Visit the medieval Upper Town, Zagreb's oldest district. Sitting on top of two hills, Kaptol, the old town's clerical center, clustered around the city's elegant neo-Gothic cathedrals and Gradec, lined with pastel-colored baroque palaces, once home to the city's nobility. Check out Gornji Grad and the Church of St. Mark's, the Art Pavilion and the Meštrović Gallery or the Croatian National Theater. Tonight join the welcome cocktail and cevapcici dinner with our travel companions.

*Meals: Welcome cocktail and dinner*

### **Day 3 Zagreb – Plitvice Lakes National Park - Split**

Depart Zagreb early in the morning for a drive south to Plitvice Lakes National Park, one of Europe's great natural wonders. This is truly one of the most amazing primeval forests, featuring 16 terraced lakes, laced together by waterfalls and miles of wooden walkways and bridges. Take advantage of the park's free boat and train rides to get the most out of your visit and enjoy a picnic lunch at one of the park's al fresco dining areas. Our journey continues to the historic port city of Split, Croatia's second-largest city. This bustling city offers a perfect balance between traditional and modern lifestyles. The jewel in the center of town is the breath-taking Diocletian's Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most impressive Roman monuments in the world. Enjoy a typical Dalmatian dinner, then stroll along the lively harbor by the sparkling Adriatic Sea.

*Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner*

### **Day 4 Split**

On our morning tour of Split with a local historian and 'Game of Thrones' expert, we discover exciting filming locations. The palace was built in the early 4th century as a retirement estate for the Diocletian, who spared no expense, importing marble from Italy and Greece, and columns and sphinxes from Egypt. Diocletian's Palace was used as the setting for several scenes in the city of Meereen. We follow in Daenerys' footsteps as we explore this 1,700-year-old structure, visiting the throne room and the dungeons where she kept her dragons. Today the palace is a living monument, with residences and colorful shops that started to occupy the ruins of the palace around the 7th century. This afternoon, continue your own exploration of Split, sample fresh local seafood, or relax on the beach.

*Meals: Breakfast*

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## Day 5 Split

Spend the day as you wish, or join us on an optional all-day aquatic adventure exploring the Blue & Green Caves, Stiniva Cove, and the popular islands of Biševo, Vis, and Hvar with its lavender fields, lofty peaks, and yacht-filled marinas. Our excursion includes time for swimming, snorkeling, and exploration of the islands.

*Meals: Breakfast*

*Option: Aquatic Adventure from Split*

## Day 6 Split – Klis Fortress – Ston – Trsteno Arboretum - Dubrovnik

This morning we visit Klis Fortress, a small medieval stronghold that provided the backdrop for the City of Meereen. It dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century and has been the seat of many Croatian rulers. We continue our drive along the dramatic coastline, crossing Bosnia Herzegovina, before arriving at Ston, and Mali Ston, both salt-producing towns. The city's defensive walls are world-famous and second largest in the world after the Great Wall of China. After lunch on your own and time to explore the town, our journey continues to Trsteno Arboretum, the oldest arboretum in this part of the world. It was built in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century to house plants and seeds brought back from foreign countries by the Gozze family. The aqueduct used for irrigation purposes is still in use today and the stunning belvedere pavilion overlooking the Dalmatian Coast and the Adriatic Sea were the gardens of the Red Keep. We arrive in Dubrovnik, 'Pearl of the Adriatic' and UNESCO World Heritage Site. Game of Thrones lovers have arrived in King's Landing, the 'jack pot' of filming locations.

*Meals: Breakfast*

## Day 7 Dubrovnik

With our in-the-know guide, enjoy views of the red-roofed, terracotta skyline that is easily recognizable as King's Landing. Visit Fort Lovrijenac, known as the 'Red Keep,' the Stairs to the Great Sept of Baelor, Minčeta Tower as House of the Undying, St. Dominika Street, location of many market scenes and famous for Cersei's Walk of Shame.

Stop at Pile Bay, aka Blackwater Bay, with amazing views of both Bokar and Lovrijenac Fort.

Dubrovnik is not only a feast for Game of Thrones fans, but will enchant all visitors with its marble streets, imposing stone walls rising from steep cliffs, churches, monuments and picturesque coves and beaches. Tonight, join us for our farewell Croatian dinner where we compare notes on filming locations and what sites you enjoyed exploring the most.

*Meals: Breakfast, Farewell dinner*

## Day 8 Travel Home

After breakfast the land program ends and we bid farewell to our new-found friends and make plans for a reunion trip.

*Meals: Breakfast#*

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***The 8-day land package includes:***

- 6 nights in superior tourist class hotels with private bath/shower, twin-share rooms

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- Daily continental breakfasts
- Three specialty dinners and 1 picnic lunch
- Guided tours in Split, Dubrovnik and Trsteno with local historian and Game of Thrones expert
- Admissions:
  - Plitvice Lakes National Park
  - Split Diocletian's Palace and Dungeons
  - Klis Fortress
  - Trsteno Arboretum
  - Dubrovnik city walls and Fortress Lovrijenac

### ***PLUS:***

- Private tour director for the entire duration of the land tour
- All scheduled sightseeing
- All ground transportation by air-conditioned motor coach as per itinerary
- All service charges and local taxes
- Luggage tag and travel guides
- Included tour highlights

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