

Istria

TRAVEL GUIDE



Oliver's Travels

WHY DO ORDINARY?

This heart-shaped peninsula was the birthplace of modern Croatian tourism. Its history has bestowed it with Italian sophistication, seen in pastel-painted coastal towns like romantic Rovinj. But, tear yourself away from the Istrian coast, through the vineyards, olive groves, and dense forests, and you will discover brilliantly preserved medieval towns and villages, where cobbled streets reveal quaint galleries, sweet squares and sea-views. These small rural communities supply the coast's fancy restaurants with some of the world's finest ingredients. From the wild asparagus and rich white truffles which adorn their menus, to the unmistakable smell of roasting chestnuts which waft around the region in winter. It's Istria's heady mix of world-class gastronomy, rich history and superb scenery which make it one of our favourite destinations.

ISTRIA 101

CURRENCY:	KUNA	TIME ZONE:	GMT +2
ELECTRICAL:	TWO PIN ROUND	HIGHEST TEMP:	25°
LANGUAGE:	CROATIAN	LOWEST TEMP:	7°
EMERGENCY:	112	PEAK SEASON:	MAY - SEPTEMBER





TRANSPORT TALK



BY WHEELS

Hiring a car is a great option if you want to explore as much of Istria as possible. The region has great highways and is well connected by local roads so you don't have to miss out on any villages or scenic drives.



BY BIKE

Cycle tourism is increasing each year in Istria. With over 1000 kilometers of bike trails, and plenty of rental and repair shops, it's a spectacular way to have an active sightseeing holiday.



BY TAXI

If you don't feel like driving yourself around, there are plenty of taxi services in the regions main towns to take you anywhere you'd like to go. We recommend booking in advance if you're in a more rural area.



BY WATER

If you are travelling to Istria via and Italian airport, taking a ferry the rest of the way is a great option. Boats leave from Venice and Trieste multiple times a day and dock in several ports in the region.



BY AIR

In summer, British Airways, easyJet and Ryanair (plus a handful of other airlines) run regular flights between the UK and Pula Airport. Trieste and Venice are also relatively close, and make good alternative airports out of season.



BY BUS OR TRAIN

While there are very limited train services in Istria, busses are a great way to get around. They connect pretty much all major towns, but if you're looking to reach some smaller villages you're better off with a car.



BEST BEACHES

Cape Kamenjak



Stretching out from Istria's southernmost point, this verdant cape, carpeted in mature pine trees, shrubs and orchids, is the ultimate beach spot for nature-lovers. We think it's most beautiful in spring.



Bijeca



Stretching over 1km, Bijeca has gently sloping shallows, which are ideal for paddling. It's also well-serviced with local cafes, bars and restaurants, sun loungers and parasols available to hire.



Girandella



One of the best beaches in Istria, Girandella is famed for its clear waters, and the pebble and rock coves here are brilliant for snorkeling. Make sure to get there early, especially at weekends.



Zlatni Rt



Also known as Golden Cape, this nature-rich peninsula offers countless beaches, from swanky private hotel setups and manned shores to empty coves. The rocky terrain is also great for snorkeling.



Brulo Beach



Brulo Beach's plentiful natural shade and good facilities for paddling make it popular with families. With a mix of concrete sunbathing zones, grassy areas and classic shingle, it has a spot for everyone.



Katoro Beach



Katoro Beach has everything from swimming pools and sandpits to giant chess and table tennis. This beach is big, and appeals to families that appreciate lots of facilities and activities.





CROWD PLEASERS: BEST ACTIVITIES

Baredine Cave



The Baredine Cave is a network of underground lakes and chambers, covered in stalagmites and stalactites. All tours are guided and last about 40-minutes with two per hour each day.



Parenzana Trail



This disused narrow-gauge railway, which meanders through the Istrian countryside, is a 38-mile stretch offering hikers and cyclists a winding journey through dense pine forests and rolling hills.



Brijuni National Park



Hop on one of the regular ferries from Fažana to this unspoilt archipelago. Kids can enjoy the miniature train which drives you round the sights. Alternatively, hire bicycles or a golf buggy.



Sunset Dolphin Crusie



Victoria Tours run sunset dolphin-spotting excursions, which leave from Poreč and trace the coast south to Rovinj, taking in the Lim Fjord en route. Transfers to Poreč can be provided as well.



Go Paragliding



Get a bird's eye view of magnificent forests and hilltop towns with a paragliding session. *Paragliding Tandem Istra* offers different flying experiences, from 15-minute flights to week-long courses.



Aquapark Istralandia



Istralandia is one of our favourite Croatian waterparks. With six different swimming pools, 1.6km of water slides and countless food and drink outlets, it can easily entertain the whole family all day.





BEST FOODIE DELIGHTS

Enoteca Istriana



Enoteca Istriana is conveniently located near the Temple of Augustus - an ideal pit stop for day-trippers in Pula. It has a good selection of premium Istrian wines and a great atmosphere.



Truffles



Istria's forests are famous for their truffles, particularly the prestigious white truffle, and the area's restaurants use them in abundance. Truffle pasta is an Istrian classic, but locals are great at incorporating it into everything!

Kabola



Kabola is one of the best wineries Istria has... and probably the most scenic. Dating back to 1891, the family-run winery offers four different wine tasting experiences in their stone farmhouse.



Olive Oil

Istria has a long tradition of making olive oil at small local farms and the quality is unparalleled. To really get to grips with the region's liquid gold, explore the 'olive oil routes' and see for yourself where the magic happens.

Konoba Buščina



Head to family-run Konoba Buščina and get a taste for the once endangered Istrian *Boškarin* ox. Chefs need special training to prepare and cook it, so you will only find it in certain restaurants.



Oysters



The Limski Kanal's is famous for its oysters as the mixed sea water and river water create the perfect growing conditions. Enjoy them like a local, grab some from one of the area's many street vendors (with a dash of lemon for good measure.)



We'd like to think we know travel pretty well. Since we first hatched [Oliver's Travels](#) in 2003 it's been essentially all we've talked about. You could call us obsessed.

Our extensive [travel blog](#) has got tons of information and inspiration on locations across Europe, the Caribbean and beyond. It's a one-stop shop for family-friendly holiday fun, the best group activities, foodie finds and a good dose of adventure. If you found this travel guide useful (we hope you did!), you can find a whole host more on the blog, too!

At Oliver's Travels we don't do ordinary. From [family villas in France](#) and [luxury cottages in the UK](#), to [villas with pools in Mallorca](#) and [Caribbean beach villas](#), we have something for everyone, everywhere.



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