

Montenegro Guided Walking Holiday

Tour Style: European Centre Based
Destinations: Montenegro & Balkans
Trip code: MGLCL
2 & 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Montenegro is one of the smallest and newest Balkan countries. Walk in its beautiful Lovćen National Park, pass through traditional villages and enjoy a boat ride on Lake Skadar, one of the largest lakes in Europe. It has 40 different kinds of fish and 270 bird species! It has a mountainous interior and a superb Adriatic coastline. The footpaths in the hills are seldom walked and are rich in natural beauty. Kotor Bay is one of the most famous areas of the country, located in the Adriatic Sea. Its landscape and features makes it difficult to define what it is, due to the unusual geographical information surrounding it. Places of interest include the Blue Grotto, St. Tryphon's Cathedral and Mount Orjen, providing a variety of activities and day trips over the course of your holiday. Situated on the beautiful Montenegrin coast, the small resort of Petrovac is a very attractive base from which to explore the local area. The town itself centres on the pretty promenade and picturesque harbour, where you'll find a good selection of souvenir shops, bars and cafés. Immediately behind rise the Pastrovici Mountains, the foothills of which form the basis of some of our walks. Just to the north of Petrovac is the stunning old town of Sveti Stefan built on a tiny island and reached by a spit of land. Inland lie the beautiful waters of Lake Skadar where we will enjoy a cruise after a walk above its shores. The highlight of a fantastic week's walking will be the day spent in Lovćen National Park high above the dramatic Kotor Bay, and a trip to the perfectly preserved old towns on the bay is highly recommended for your free day.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- A full programme of guided walks with 2 options every walking day
- All transport to and from walks
- The services of experienced HF Holidays leaders
- "With flight" holidays include return flights from the UK and hotel transfers
- 7 nights' accommodation in en-suite rooms
- Half board - continental breakfast and evening meal

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Exceptional walking and cultural discovery in Montenegro, the 'Black Pearl' of the Balkans
- Discover stunning Kotor Bay and the Venetian palaces of Kotor's old town
- Enjoy wonderful panoramas of bays, mountains and the Adriatic from the Lovćen National Park
- Stay in Petrovac, a charming seaside town, renowned for its beautiful bay surrounded by dramatic mountains

TRIP SUITABILITY

Balkans Explorer

This is a level 2 graded activity, 5 to 8 miles on good paths with some rocky sections. Up to 1,500 feet of ascent in a day.

Montenegro

This is a level 2 and level 3 graded Activity, Easier walks: 3 to 7 miles (5 to 11km) generally on good paths and stony tracks. Up to 1,300 feet (390m) of ascent in a day. Harder walks: 5 to 10 miles (8 to 16km) on steeper and rougher terrain. Up to 2,300 feet (690m) of ascent in a day.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Welcome to Hotel Palas. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2: Monasteries And The Coastal Traverse

On the slopes of the mountains above the coastal highway are numerous small communities, Orthodox monasteries and small farms with summer grazing called katuns. These introductory walks both use panoramic paths close to Petrovac, visit highly decorated churches, and are a great introduction to the area.

Option 1 - Lučice Beach And Gradište Monastery

Distance: 4 miles (6½km)

Total ascent: 700 feet (210m)

In summary: Walking from the hotel we pass the neighbouring picturesque Lučice beach and ascend to historic Gradište monastery, perched on a rocky outcrop. After a pleasant shaded traverse, we descend to a café at Buljarica beach for lunch before returning along the coast to our hotel.

Highlight: The attractive cove of Lučice.

Option 2 - An Alpine Katun And St Spiridon's Chapel

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 700 feet (210m)

Total descent: 2,300 feet (690m)

In summary: An undulating path through trees and flowers along the top of the coastal mountain range takes us to the tiny chapel at Ogradenica for lunch. A rocky descent follows across the flanks of the mountains to a welcoming café with wonderful coastal views to Sveti Stefan, a perfect end to our first day.

Highlight: Superb views of the coast.

Day 3: The Tivat Peninsula And The Bay Of Kotor

The dramatic Bay of Kotor is flanked to the west by the wooded Tivat Peninsula culminating in Vrmac Hill. Among the trees lie the ruined 12th century Slav settlement of Pasiglav and the bucolic 14th century village of Gornja Lastva. Both walks enjoy a delightful path along the wooded slopes of Vrmac, and truly scenic views of the bay, often referred to as Europe's southernmost fjord, although it is actually a ria. Across the bay, the medieval towns of Perast and Kotor offer a taste of a possible excursion on the free day.

Option 1 - Gornja Lastva To Muo

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 1,300 feet (390m)

Total descent: 2,200 feet (660m)

In summary: From Gornja Lastva we ascend through trees past the ruins of Pasiglav and continue steadily to the Tivat ridge with excellent views of Croatia and Serbia. An extraordinary former military road zigzags steadily down to the shore of Kotor Bay with views of the old town hemmed in by mountains.

Highlight: the incredible view of Kotor Bay laid out below you.

Option 2 - Gornja Lastva To Muo Above The Bay Of Kotor

Distance: 9 miles (14½km)

Total ascent: 2,000 feet (600m)

In summary: We ascend on a steep footpath to the Church of Sveti Vid with views to the Adriatic, Croatia and Serbia, before a long steady ascent brings us to the Tivat ridge summit for lunch with more superb views. We follow the ridge to join the Franz Josef Steig and descend the path taken by the easier group to a bayside café.

Highlight: Look out for fabulous views on this walk.

Day 4: Cetinje And The Lovćen National Park

Towering over the Bay of Kotor and dominating the northwest of Montenegro are the two summits of Lovcen the out-of-bounds Stirovnik at 1,749m and Jezerski Vrh, crowned with the Mausoleum of Petar II at 1,657m – the target for today's harder walk. Both walks finish at Krstac on the boundary of the national park and at the head of one of the most spectacular roads in Europe. Both these walks, at over 4,000ft, may be affected by early season snow.

Option 1 - Cetinje And The Lovćen National Park

Distance: 6 miles (9½km)

Total ascent: 700 feet (210m)

Total descent: 1,800 feet (540m)

In summary: After a brief exploration of the former imperial capital of Cetinje we start our walk at Ivanova Korita in Lovcen National Park. A well made former military road leads us past Alpine communities and descends with stunning views over the Bay of Kotor to a welcoming café at Krstac.

Highlight: The local guide bringing Cetinje to life.

Option 2 - Lovćen And The Njegoš Mausoleum

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 1,600 feet (480m)

Total descent: 2,400 feet (720m)

In summary: High within the Park, we ascend through trees to the summit ridge and viewpoint of Mt Lovćen. Descending steadily on a rough track we rejoin the easier group and descend to Kotor Bay and the hotel.

Highlight: Ascend a mountain summit and visit the mausoleum of Petar II Petrovic Njegos.

Day 5: Free Day

Each week there is a free day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently or visit local places of interest. Some options for your free day may include:

Perast and Kotor: If there is sufficient interest your leaders will organise a coach to the picturesque old town of Perast, nestling at the foot of the mountains standing between the two bays of the inner Boka and opposite the Verige Channel, for an opportunity to explore the town and the nearby island of Our Lady of the Rock. The coach will then drive back along the bay to Kotor, whose old city is surrounded by walls that rise spectacularly to the crest of a rocky hillside. Old Kotor is a densely packed triangle of twisting streets, tiny squares, cafés and churches, and is a delight to just wander through and explore.

Budva: Nestling to the west of the lively holiday resort of Budva and to the north of Petrovac, Budva Stari Grad, or Old Town, has existed since before the 5th century BC. When the Roman Empire was divided, the border between it and Byzantium was drawn through Budva. The town has been meticulously restored after extensive damage by an earthquake in 1979. There are many squares, museums, narrow streets and a busy harbour to explore.

Beaches: Within easy walking distance south of Petrovac is the quiet cove of Lučice, perfect for swimming. Café facilities are available here. A little further on is the wide expanse of reedbacked Buljarica beach.

There is an excellent pool at the hotel. Details of other seasonal excursions are available from your leaders and the hotel reception desk.

For information on Montenegro please visit www.visitmontenegro.com

Day 6: Loška And Stari Bar

Southeast of Petrovac towards the border with Albania, the Rumija range of mountains separates the Adriatic from Lake Skadar. This is a landscape where mosques sit alongside Orthodox churches and hillside farmers scratch a living. We pass the industrialised sprawl of Bar, the terminal on the Adriatic for the railway from Podgorica, to start our walks near Loška.

Option 1 - Villages Below Loška And Stari Bar

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 1,000 feet (300m)

Total descent: 2,100 feet (630m)

In summary: Our path undulates past prosperous farming communities before a steep track leading to a lovely lunch spot at Loška. Passing flower strewn meadows minor roads bring us back to the coach for transport to the fascinating ruins of Stari Bar.

Highlight: Stari Bar is an historic, partially ruined town.

Option 2 - Loška

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Total ascent: 2,200 feet (660m)

In summary: Starting far inland at the isolated Muslim community of Lunje we walk the first stage of the high level mountain path through myriad flowers to the summit of Loška to enjoy lunch with far reaching views to the Adriatic and Albania. Returning to Lunje we are taken to the old town of Bar for refreshments before continuing to the hotel.

Highlight: Impressive views of the Adriatic and Albania.

Day 7: Rijeka Crnojevića & Lake Skadar

Between Petrovac and the capital to the east, Podgorica, lies the National Park of Lake Skadar, a huge wildlife reserve shared between Montenegro and Albania to the south. Surrounded on three sides by Montenegrin mountains, Skadar is one of the largest lakes in Europe with 40 different kinds of fish and 270 bird species. Both walks will explore this beautiful area and have the opportunity to enjoy a boat ride back to Virpazar before the coach journey to our hotel.

Option 1 - Poseljani And Lake Skadar

Distance: 3 miles (5km)

Total ascent: 400 feet (120m)

In summary: On this walk we explore almost deserted Poseljani down to the lake shore before following the river on a stony path passing waterfalls to rejoin the coach for lunch at the historic old bridge café in Rijeka Crnojevica. We then take our scenic boat ride down the river and across Lake Skadar.

Highlight: The boat trip on Lake Skadar with sightings of numerous birds almost certainly including the rare Dalmatian pelican.

Option 2 - Poseljani, Rijeka Crnojevića & Lake Skadar

Distance: 6 miles (9½km)

Total ascent: 1,400 feet (420m)

In summary: After a brief exploration of Poseljani we ascend steeply on a little walked packhorse route to a high open space for lunch, passing old farmsteads as we descend through trees to rejoin the easier group. Our boat ride takes us to the lakeside community of Virpazar with all facilities prior to our return to the hotel.

Highlight: Taking the boat trip on Lake Skadra, watching out for a variety of fauna.

Day 8: Departure Day

We hope to see you again soon.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Palas - Montenegro

The 4-star Hotel Palas in the resort of Petrovac; a coastal town with sandy beaches and hidden coves, is located on the promenade with attractive terraces and gardens planted with orange and olive trees. It is within easy walking distance of the shops and behind the hotel is the towering Pastrovici Mountains. The hotel owns part of the sandy Lucice beach and their guests enjoy private seating. WiFi is available throughout the hotel.

Accommodation Info

Rooms

There are 173 bedrooms, all ensuite with bath/shower, hairdryer, mini bar, room safe, air conditioning, TV and telephone.

Facilities

There is a wellness centre and spa that has a Finnish sauna, Turkish bath, whirlpool, an outdoor salt water pool and indoor fresh water pool. There is a range of treatments available to book for additional costs.

There are two hotel bars, one near the reception with lovely views to the sea and nearby islands, and one near the pool.

Food & Drink

Our holidays at Hotel Palas are on a Half Board basis and include breakfast and evening meal.

Breakfast

The hotel has a buffet style breakfast from 7am.

Lunch (Payable Locally)

Ingredients for a picnic lunch can be bought from local shops.

Evening Meal

The hotel has a comprehensive buffet from 7.30pm. Vegetarians and those with special diets should discuss their requirements with the hotel staff on their arrival.

Drinks

The hotel has well-stocked bars serving beer, wine and spirits.

Your Evenings

Each evening your leaders will tell you about the next day's activities and answer any questions you may have.

During the evening you may like to join in an optional organised activity, such as a quiz. On one evening, we have arranged for a local speaker to come and speak to our guest groups and enlighten you on this regions colourful history.

Alternatively, you may wish to relax in the bar with your fellow guests or go for a walk along the beach on warmer evenings.

TRAVEL DETAILS

THE HASSLE FREE OPTION

Book your holiday 'with flight' and choose between Gatwick and Manchester flights to Dubrovnik airport. For flight times and prices please see the Dates & Prices tab.

If you choose this option we automatically include return transfers between the airport and the hotel. The coach transfer takes approx 3 hours to the Hotel Palas.

Passports will be collected on the coach as you will have two boarder crossings on your journey, one leaving Croatia and one entering Montenegro.

There will also be a brief 10 min ferry crossing where guests can leave the coach to enjoy views east to the

town of Perast nestling below the Orjen Massif, and the island church of Our Lady of the Rock.

THE FLEXIBLE TRAVEL OPTION

Alternatively, tailor your journey to suit you by booking your holiday 'without flight' allowing you the freedom to book your own flights from your local airport.

If you choose this option, transfers are not included in the price. However, below are some suggestions to help you reach your destination:

- We can book you a seat on the **HF Holidays' transfer coach** from Dubrovnik airport. This is timed to meet the HF Holidays' flights* (provisional flight times can be found on the dates and prices tab or you can call us on 020 8732 1220 for more information). Cost per single journey is £45
- Why not let us book you a **private taxi transfer**: £165 per single taxi journey?

Transfers must be pre-booked. Please call 020 8732 1220 for more details

* Please note that HF Holidays is not responsible for your onward travel if you fail to meet the transfer coach

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

What To Bring

Essential Equipment

To enjoy walking/hiking comfortably and safely, footwear, clothing and equipment needs to be suitable for the conditions. Safety and comfort are our priorities, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities.

- Footwear with a good grip on the sole (e.g. Vibram sole) is the key to avoiding accidents.
- Walking/hiking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended (ideally worn in), and specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed, are better than a single layer (include spares).
- Fabrics (lightweight and fast drying) designed for the outdoors are recommended.
- Waterproof jacket and waterproof over trousers.
- Warm hat and gloves.
- Denim jeans and capes are not suitable on any walks.
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner.
- Thermos flask for hot drink.
- Water bottle (at least 2 litre).
- Spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar.
- Small torch.
- First aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed).
- Sun hat and sunglasses
- Sun cream.

Optional Equipment

- Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents.
- Insect repellent.
- Camera.
- Gaiters.

Useful Information

Language: Montenegrin

Currency: Euro

Money: There are several ATM machines in Petrovac where you can obtain money.

Electricity: 220 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

Tap water: Is considered safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled mineral water can be purchased from the hotel or local supermarkets.

Telephone code: If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.

To dial a UK number 0044

To dial a Montenegrin number 00382

The local language is Montenegrin.

Tap water is considered safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled mineral water can be purchased from the hotel or local supermarkets.

If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.

To dial a UK number 0044

To dial a Montenegrin number 00382

To dial a Serbian number 00381

To dial a Bosnian number 00387

Local Currency

The local currency for Montenegro is the Euro.

Electricity

220 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

ATM Availability

There are several ATM machines where you can obtain money.

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday & Sunday: 9am – 1pm Bank Holiday Monday: 9am – 1pm

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £10 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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