

# SOUTHERN SEA VENTURES

## CROATIA SAIL AND KAYAK ADVENTURE

### TEN DAY TRIP: EIGHT DAYS KAYAKING

Croatia is home to one of Europe's largest archipelagoes with over 1,200 islands. Curving around Bosnia, the coastline stretches along the Adriatic from Slovenia in the north to Montenegro and Albania in the south.

Our trip along a section of the Dalmatian coast offers a smorgasbord of dramatic scenery and historical and cultural experiences. We'll explore ruins and forts from Illyrian and Roman times, small fishing villages, national parks, nature reserves and a geological park.

Designed for people with some paddling experience, we use our mother-ship, the *Bente Dorte*, to help us explore and paddle from Skradin and Sibenik, through the Kornati Islands National Park and northern islands to Rab. The *Bente Dorte* is ideally suited for loading and unloading our kayaks and enables us to paddle empty kayaks each day. We sleep and dine onboard the *Bente Dorte*, sometimes coming into shore to enjoy meals at select local restaurants. The clear warm waters of the Adriatic combined with the spectacular landscape of Northern Croatia makes this an adventure not to be missed!

This is a voyage of exploration **and may be subject to some deviations in the itinerary depending on the weather and local conditions.**

#### A QUICK ITINERARY

Day 1	Meet at Zadar, transfer to Skradin and the <i>Bente Dorte</i> .	D
Days 2-3	Kayak via Prvich to Kornati National Park.	BLD
Days 4-6	Kayak through Kornati National Park.	BLD
Days 7-8	Explore Cres, Krk, and Plavnick islands.	BLD
Day 9	Finish kayaking in Rab. Overnight hotel.	BL
Day 10	Trip concludes. Transfer to Zadar.	B

#### MEETING PLACE AND TIME

We will meet in Zadar (airport and/or town) at approximately 4pm of Day 1. The drive from Zadar to Skradin takes about one hour.

#### HOW TO GET THERE

Several airlines have flights to Zadar from European cities, including Ryanair from London (Stansted) and Lufthansa from Munich. Croatia Airlines flies from Zagreb to Zadar twice a day. There are several bus companies in Croatia with extensive networks around the country and a very good coastal ferry service. Your travel agent and/or internet research can provide timetables and costs.

#### PADDLING EXPERIENCE

This trip is designed for people with some previous paddling experience. You do not have to be an expert or know how to roll. However, you should have practiced a wet exit and assisted re-entry before the trip. This can easily be practiced in waist deep warm water with a friend's help or under tuition. We are always happy to discuss your experience, and can often suggest how beginner paddlers might gain the necessary experience at home to prepare for the trip. We require all participants to complete and return our "Experience Form" shortly after booking. It is important to recognize that the weather **and wind** will influence what we can and can't do. If it is too windy for paddling, we will hop on board the ship to seek out the most sheltered aspects along the island corridors.



We predominantly use single kayaks on this trip, but some doubles are available. The degree of difficulty of the trip will depend on the weather we encounter. The wind in the Adriatic can vary from gentle puffs to a strong wind so you should be used to paddling in a variety of conditions. We paddle between three to five hours per day. It is important to realise that the group will kayak at the speed of the slowest members. All participants should feel confident in swimming.

The kayaks we use are stable, easy to paddle and control. The biggest advantage of using a mother-ship is that all our food and equipment will be carried on board, meaning we paddle empty kayaks. Our trip leaders are highly experienced sea kayakers and professional guides. On Day 1 you will be given a thorough briefing on your kayak equipment and trip safety with time to adjust your individual boats.

As with most activities, the fitter you are, the more you will enjoy the paddling. We highly recommended participants become involved in regular exercise (paddling, walking, jogging, cycling, aerobics or swimming) some months prior to the trip. We generally limit our group to a maximum of 10 clients, plus the two guides.

### **PROPOSED ITINERARY**

**The following itinerary should be seen as an approximate guide only.** Our aim is to have a genuine Croatian adventure rather than being governed by a rigid schedule. Our program may change over the nine days to take advantage of any opportunities that may arise, local weather conditions and preferences of the group. **Please note that weather conditions, transport breakdowns and other factors can cause alterations and delays to our itinerary.**

Day 1 – Afternoon pick up from Zadar. Transfer to our mother-ship, the *Bente Dorte*, near Skradin. We overnight near Skradin. A welcome dinner will be served on board.  
D...Overnight aboard *Bente Dorte*.

Day 2 – After breakfast we'll paddle downriver to Sibenik and visit the entrance fort. We depart through the Sibenik canal, before re-boarding the *Bente* and sailing on to Prvic Island and our evening anchorage.  
BLD... Overnight aboard *Bente Dorte*.

Day 3 – We edge westward, sailing through the islands to Lavsa and Kornati National Park before commencing our paddle to Piskera. Piskera is an historical island that was a fishing community in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with approximately 40 houses. After a swimming stop we carry on to the magical island of Mana and view its historical fort. Mana is also noted for its cliffs that crown the island at 1350 metres. We will re-join our ship and sail to the island of Levrnaka and the vast maze of islands of Kornati National Park.  
BLD... Overnight aboard *Bente Dorte*.

Day 4 – We'll head for the sandy beach of Telascica Nature Park before paddling under the towering cliffs of Dugi Otok. We'll pass by the lighthouse of Punta Bjanka, the highest lighthouse on the Adriatic at 42 metres, lighting the way for sailors for more than 150 years. The cliffs tower 186 metres above us with a myriad of caves, lending to exciting paddling. We finish the day at the sandy Pantera Bay on Dugi Otok.  
BLD... Overnight aboard *Bente Dorte*.

Day 5 – We sail to Ist and Molat Islands for our morning paddle outing, have lunch on board and cruise to the island of Olib for our afternoon excursion, exploring its beautiful turquoise bays. We finish the day on the Punta Kriza.  
BLD... Overnight aboard *Bente Dorte*.

Day 6 – We paddle along the east coast of Cres Island and its numerous beaches and then sail to Plavnik. Kayaking along the west side of the island of Plavnik we will observe vultures in their nests and soaring overhead. We anchor off Plavnik Island.  
BLD... Overnight aboard *Bente Dorte*.

Day 7 – We'll sail towards the island of Krk to paddle along its numerous bays and beaches before reaching the bay of Baška and our overnight anchorage.  
BLD... Overnight aboard *Bente Dorte*.

Day 8 – In the morning we paddle to the island of Prvich, Croatia's largest unsettled island and home to magnificent Griffon vultures. We finish the day at St Gregory Island.  
BLD... Restaurant dinner. Overnight aboard *Bente Dorte*.

Day 9 – We head across to the island of Rab and explore the east side of Rab, (recently proclaimed a Geological Park), noted for its high cliffs, caves and striking rock formations. We'll load our kayaks on board and sail to the walled town of Rab. We say our goodbyes to captain and crew as we overnight in a hotel. We'll have time to explore Rab and enjoy an end-of-trip celebration dinner.  
BL... Restaurant Dinner (cost not included- we will discuss options and make a group booking).  
Overnight Rab hotel.

Day 10 – Transfer from Rab to Zadar airport. Trip concludes.  
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## **CLIMATE**

Summers in Croatia are hot and dry, especially in July and August. The months of May, June, September and October are a little cooler – generally still shorts and T-shirt weather at most times during the day, evenings a little cooler and with the possibility of occasional showers. The weather is generally settled but wind can be a factor.

## **ACCOMMODATION AND CAMPING**

*Bente Dorte*: A traditional 18 metre sailing ketch with double and single berths. Duvets and covers are provided. All your baggage should be soft, that is, no hard suitcases or frame backpacks.

Rab: Istra Hotel - simple twin-share bed and breakfast hotel accommodation.

A pre-trip arrival is recommended in Zadar as we meet early.

Our office can book pre and post trip nights at the Hotel Mediteran in Zadar if required.

See [www.hotelmediteran-zd.hr](http://www.hotelmediteran-zd.hr) for hotel details.

## **FOOD**

Meals will be a combination of eating on board our yacht and the occasional dinner at local beach restaurants.

The boat carries a small selection of beers, wines and spirits for purchase on board.

**We are happy to cater for vegetarians and other special dietary needs, please let us know at the time of booking of any dietary requirements or food allergies.**

## **EXPEDITION STAFF**

There will be up to two experienced kayak guides. Should you have any questions during the trip, feel free to ask your guides.

## **CONSERVATION**

It has always been our motto that "we take only photographs and leave only footprints". We are keenly aware of the ecology of the areas we visit and try to limit our impact on them. We ask that each person take out everything they bring in including sweet wrappers, batteries, etc.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

We are paddling mainly in a salt-water environment and the delicate electronics in digital or film cameras can be damaged. You might consider a waterproof camera or a small plastic waterproof case or dry-bag with a supply of Silicon Packs. Ensure you have sufficient memory storage and batteries for a digital camera, as there is little opportunity to purchase batteries or access electricity during our kayak trip. If you are using a film camera it is wise to keep lenses to a minimum. One variable lens will reduce your load and the amount of your equipment that can be damaged. We recommend all film be purchased and processed in your home country. If you are buying a new camera, consider a waterproof one and get it well before departure so you can practice with it. It is inconvenient to find fault with the camera during a trip.

## MONEY MATTERS

### Your tour cost includes:

- Bed and breakfast hotel accommodation in Rab on a twin share basis for the last night of the trip.
- Full charter of *Bente Dorte* sailing boat.
- Expedition kayaks, paddles, life jackets and safety equipment.
- Small dry-bags for your personal gear while kayaking.
- Professional guides.
- All meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 10, excluding restaurant dinner in Rab on Day 9.
- Entrance fees to National Parks.

### Your tour cost does not include:

- Any flights.
- Entry fees into historic sites.
- Items of a personal nature such as postage and laundry.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Some bottled water throughout the trip.
- Airport taxes.
- Travel insurance.
- Tips.

## MONEY TO BRING WITH YOU

There are ATM machines in the main centres and this is the most efficient way to obtain Croatian kuna. The kuna is tied to the euro but is not much value outside Croatia so it is better to exchange small amounts at a time. Credit cards are accepted in larger stores or hotels. Traveller's cheques and cash can be changed at banks in the larger towns and cities but the process can be time consuming. US dollars and euros are far easier to exchange than Australian dollars within Croatia, but if you are traveling to Europe before or after it is better to have euros.

During the trip you will need money for alcohol, bottled water and soft drinks, entry fees to a few historical sites and any shopping you intend to do.

## TIPPING

We recommend you put aside a little money for general tips, i.e. crew, restaurants, porters.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is necessary to take out a personal insurance policy to cover yourself against sickness, accident, loss of baggage, trip cancellation due to inclement weather or other reasons and in the unlikely event that you need emergency evacuation by plane or helicopter due to illness or accident.

Ensure you have read the policy thoroughly and are familiar with the claim process in case it becomes necessary to make an emergency claim.

We strongly recommend you take out insurance at the time of booking. Please supply us with the policy details (insurance company name and contact details and policy number) before the trip.

### **MEDICAL MATTERS**

All participants are required to provide us with a medical questionnaire filled out completely and accurately. Please check with your doctor or medical centre whether you require any vaccinations or boosters. An expedition first aid kit is carried on the trip. We strongly recommend that you bring with you any required medicines and a small first aid kit for your own personal use. Due to the remoteness of the trip it is advisable to have a dental checkup before departure.

### **PASSPORT**

Make sure that you have a signed passport and that its validity will extend to six months after the date of your return. If you are not an Australian citizen and are returning to Australia after your trip, make certain that you have the necessary re-entry permit from the Department of Immigration.

### **VISAS**

For most visitors visas are not required for stays in Croatia of less than 90 days. Your passport may be checked at hotels as all tourists are registered.

### **WATER**

Bottled water is readily available in towns and preferable to tap water that, although chlorinated, is not as safe. Water for the kayaking will be provided throughout the trip but you will have opportunities to buy extra if you wish. We recommend about three litres per day per person and will be able to restock with water.

### **LUGGAGE**

For onboard boat storage it is important to pack in soft collapsible bags like a duffle.

### **SECURITY**

Before leaving home, photocopy your passport, airline/e ticket and make a note of your credit card and ATM card numbers in case you lose or misplace them. You should carry your passport on the kayak trip. Theft is a consideration in Croatia (like at home) so it is always a good idea not to carry large amounts of cash with you and always be aware of what you are carrying, especially personal valuables like cameras, jewellery and watches. Do not display valuable items or leave them lying around in such a way that might tempt a thief. It is a good idea to use a money belt or neck wallet.

### **CLOTHING & EQUIPMENT**

Carefully check through all essential items. The dress code overall in Croatia is modest, but it is more relaxed on the Adriatic coast.

#### Essential Items

The following checklist is a guideline for your trip. Contact us if you have any questions.

- Lightweight waterproof rain jacket.
- Two pairs of shorts and swimming gear.
- One pair of sturdy sand shoes or running shoes or preferably a lightweight hiking boot.
- Lightweight socks.
- One pair of sport sandals (e.g. Teva or similar) or paddle booties.
- One pair of lightweight, quick drying, full length trousers.
- Lightweight long-sleeved shirt is recommended for protection from insects.
- Woolen jumper or fleece jacket.

- One long sleeved thermal or polyester top is recommended while paddling for sun protection or warmth in rainy conditions. Lycra rash vest is also suitable.
- Wide-brimmed hat for protection from the sun is essential. Sun visors are inadequate. A hat with a stiff brim that will hold rigidity in a breeze, and a chinstrap to keep on in the wind. A scarf made from a light material such as silk, to protect your neck, is useful for sun protection.
- Small towel (a chamois towel is ideal).
- Minimal personal toiletries (biodegradable salt water soap may be handy).
- Good waterproof sun cream and lip balm, Insect repellent (recommend RID).
- Sunglasses with a cord or string for attaching them to prevent loss.
- Small torch and batteries.
- A small daypack, bum bag or dry bag is good for holding things like sunscreen, glasses, etc. both for paddling and day walks.
- A small drybag is also useful for keeping a camera and valuables handy while paddling.
- A wetsuit vest is useful for snorkeling.
- 1 or 2, one litre water bottles (the type used by cyclists are good and inexpensive).
- Lightweight cycling gloves can ease blistering if you have not paddled recently.
- Snorkeling gear (mask and snorkel only to save space or just swimming goggles).

#### Optional Items

- Power points require a plug with two round pins.
- Cards/games and books.
- Lightweight clothesline.
- Binoculars.
- Camera –bring sufficient film, batteries, and storage cards for digital cameras.

#### **END OF THE TRIP**

The trip finishes in Rab after breakfast on Day 10. We can offer a group transfer to Zadar town or Zadar airport. Please allow enough time on this day if you are booking onward flights, a transfer from Rab to Zadar airport takes approximately two hours.

#### **PRE OR POST TRIP ADVENTURE OPTIONS**

We can organise a day trip to paddle the beautiful Zrmanja River using sit on top kayaks or an option to explore the Modrich Caves. Please contact our office for more details and costs.

#### **DELAYS OR PROBLEMS**

In case of last minute delays or problems, contact Southern Sea Ventures in Australia on +61 2 8901 3287. Your guide's contact number will be noted on your final itinerary.

#### **SOUTHERN SEA VENTURES**

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