



## 2024 Bucket List Culinary and Cultural Escape to Istria + Bonus: Day tour of Croatia's Capital City, Zagreb

TOUR 1 – Women's SPRING: 9 day 8-night tour. May 17 - May 25

TOUR 2 – Open to all AUTUMN: 9 day-8-night tour. Sep 17 – Sept 25

An all-inclusive\* small-group tour (max 12pp) \*apart from 1-2 lunches & dinners and your flights.



Delve into the decadence, surround yourself by beauty, discover local treasures, laugh like you only can when you travel with women or lovers of food, wine, and natural and historic treasures. My premium small-group tours allow you to share a table, magical moments and great conversations with other phenomenal people while enjoying great food, wine, weather, and landscapes.

### Meet your Croatian Culinary and Cultural Expert

#### Wanda Srdoc, Founder Root 44



Prepare to be PAMPERED! I am a Croatian and Canadian citizen who wakes up smiling each day excited to be working in the culinary and travel business. These Croatian premium tours are creatively designed to be well-valued for elevated, and unique experiences of the very best food, wine, places, tours and accommodations in both Istria, Croatia's gastronomic and cultural centre and in its vibrant capital city, Zagreb. My family works and lives in the fine foods industry in Croatia and through them I have a solid network of respected and acclaimed restaurants, tours, artisans, and hotels. I cannot wait to give you VIP treatment throughout your tour. Please join me for an authentic, magical, and unforgettable journey!

**Discover the Istrian way of Life** – From the moment you arrive to Croatia, you will start to enjoy the finest regional and seasonal food & drinks and admire the landscape of a stunning seaside, majestic forests, vineyards, and olive orchards. Feel time travelled as you find yourself surrounded by 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> century landmarks and picturesque medieval hilltop towns and through it all feel the comforts and admire the modern innovations that surround. This will be no ordinary tour, rather a behind-the-scenes showcasing the authentic culinary, historic, scenic, and multicultural treasures of Istria and Zagreb. I have curated a formidable itinerary that should delight all your senses. Stay in two 5-star and award-winning hotels and 1 charming boutique hotel in vibrant cities, picturesque medieval towns, and stunning seaside shores. Sip and savour the finest of Istrian gastronomy with visits and tastings at acclaimed local artisans of wine, cheese, olive oil and of course, truffles. Tour historic & cultural landmarks. Take time to shop, spa, relax, swim, sail, hike, and bike to explore the local terrain.

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## YOUR ITINERARY:



### Day 1 - ZAGREB-Capital City of Croatia

• Arrival to Capital city of Croatia – Zagreb. Meet at our 5 star - infamous and beautiful hotel Esplanade for an early evening welcome drink, dessert, and review of our itinerary. The Zagreb Heart (Licitar) is a traditional symbol of Zagreb and given at celebrations of love such as weddings and Valentine's Day. We will see plenty symbols of love in this city - it's a perfect momento for you and your loved ones. NOTE: Plenty of history and culture in this vibrant city. We will explore the best of Zagreb during our final day in Croatia



### Day 2- - HUM-- PREMIUM GIN- BRANDY TOUR - MOTOVUN REGION

White Glove Gourmet Breakfast in hotel Esplanade, departure by premium transit– Stop 1 -Enjoy a tasty Istrian lunch and walking tour in the world's smallest and charming medieval town - Hum.

Stop 2-Arrival to the production headquarters of Croatia's finest GIN-BRANDY producer for a truly amazing tour and tasting. Stop 3- Check-in to our beautiful Boutique Hotel on the hilltop town overlooking the truffle forest. We will all meet for dinner at the hotel terrace for delicious Istrian dinner which will absolutely include truffles!



### Day 3- Celebration of TRUFFLES - TRUFFLE HUNT - MOTVOUN - TRUFFLE FEAST

After an early breakfast, we head to our exclusive Truffle Hunt and Tasting at my family's award-winning truffle estate. The day will begin with a magical trek through the truffle forest with our very best truffle hunting dogs. All your found truffles will be incorporated into a truffle tasting feast following.

We will then tour and enjoy the beautiful vistas of the well-preserved medieval and truffle historic town of Motovun. Cap off our day with a delicious gourmet dinner at **Anthony Bourdain's favourite** award-winning restaurant - Konoba Mondo. I promise you will have your fill of truffles during this exquisite culinary experience!



### Day 4 -- AWARD-WINNING WINERIES -ARTIST town -Grozgnjan + ISTRIAN DINNER/FEAST

• After breakfast, we journey to 2 treasured wineries that produce award-winning and highly respected wine. We will enjoy a VIP tour and enjoy a beautiful wine paired tastings. We will meet a leading master wine maker, who's knowledge, passion and insight into wine making is extraordinary.

• Following this, we explore the medieval town of Grozgnjan. This picturesque hilltop town is a well-known artists community and famous for its jazz festival. To complete the day, we will feast on the finest traditional regional food at a famous local eatry. Overall an incredible day!!



### Day 5 -AWARD-WINNING OLIVE OIL TOUR- PULA AND ROVINJ

After breakfast, will visit the most famous olive oil producers in Croatia with a tour and a gourmet olive oil tasting. Following, we head to the historic seaside city PULA for a fascinating cultural walking tour. We then check-in to our 5 star hotel overlooking the Adriatic sea in ROVINJ for 2 nights. Once settled, you will have time explore this charming town before your free time to explore the town and enjoy your own dinner at numerous choice of incredible restaurants situated on its majestic seaside. Be sure to take in one of the most beautiful places to enjoy a stunning sunset. I am happy to suggest restaurants and of course where to buy the very best gelato - that only locals know about!



### Day 6- Rovinj and BALE

Rovinj truly warrants its own exploration as much as the hotel we are staying at - with several pools, spa, restaurants and the most beautiful nature preserve minutes away. Spend the morning exploring this Venetian inspired town. Early afternoon, we will connect for a walking tour in its historic centre. Then, in the evening we will indulge in an unforgettable multi-course culinary dinner in the most quintessential Istrian town - Bale at a Michelin noted restaurant. We return to Rovinj for your own personal time around the town, or to simply enjoy the views from our hotel with an evening drink.



### Day 7, 8 & 9 -Rovinj & 2 nights - Zagreb

• There is no doubt that you will fall in love with Rovinj and our hotel. Spend your morning to early afternoon anyway you wish. Perhaps a morning nature walk followed by a swim in the crystal clear waters around our private beach or shopping in the historic centre. At mid-afternoon, we say our goodbyes to Istria with a final Istrian casual but very delicious dinner at my favourite pizzeria. It's a must try because pizza is amazing in Istria. We then return to Zagreb and check-in to Hotel Esplanade. The next morning we discover Zagreb on a walking tour and then have a final group lunch. The remaining day for free time. The next day we all say our final GROUP goodbyes to Croatia before continuing to the next destination or Home. Make sure to pack all your belongs and to safely and securely pack your cases of wine, olive oil, truffles, preserves and other souvenirs :)

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## 2024 Bucket List Experience Tours of Istria + Zagreb

Please select from 2 seasonal offerings

- TOUR 1 – Women’s SPRING: 9 day 8-night tour. May 17 - May 25
- TOUR 2 – Open to all AUTUMN: 9 day-8-night tour -September 17-25

**APPROX. COST** (in CDN\$) - \$5100 (double occupancy) and \$5500 (single occupancy). Price is inclusive of the items listed in “INCLUSIONS.” Due to unforeseeable circumstances, the approx. budget for each seasonal tour is based on current 2024 prices and on a trip group minimum of 8pp – Max 10pp\* may slightly change. \*In the unlikely event the price should change, you would be informed immediately.

### INCLUSIONS

- Welcome Drink and Dessert, all Breakfasts, comfortable and premium transit, 4/5-star hotel accommodation, premium scheduled tours, premium tastings\*, most gourmet lunches and dinners\*\*, exclusive private truffle hunt and tasting.
- \*Tastings in most cases will be account for as lunch

### EXCLUSIONS

- Transit from airport upon arrival to hotel and at departure.
- \*\*1-2 lunches & dinners + alcoholic beverages during most covered meals
- Upgraded rooms/other lodging requests, extra-curricular tours, transit outside of scheduled places.
- Tips/Gratuities – if you wish to provide (in most cases, I can work out a group tip)
- Travel & Medical insurance – Including trip cancellation insurance.

### NEXT STEPS – RESERVE YOUR SPOT

1. Secure your spot with an initial deposit of \$1250.00. This deposit is refundable minus an admin fee on/before 5 months prior to each trip. Please email me – [wanda@root44.ca](mailto:wanda@root44.ca) Following this deposit, a secondary and final payment will be requested.
2. Fill out a tour waiver – This will be sent to you via email with your second deposit. Please review, sign, save and return to [wanda@root44.ca](mailto:wanda@root44.ca).
3. You will receive regular trip updates via a group email and WhatsApp. However, please reach out any time prior with questions. I am happy to help in any way to make this trip wonderful for you.

NOTE: Due to unforeseeable circumstances caused by this tour which would require trip postponement or cancellation, you will be fully refunded for your on-site tour deposits. Please ensure you have flight bookings insurance to trip cancellation.

### PLEASE NOTE: ACCESSIBILITY is limited.

- Due to the nature of our walking excursions on uneven terrains and inclines, it is advised to be comfortable walking with general good health and proper support (brace/cane) for any leg injuries or ailments. Currently, we do not have any wheelchair accessible accommodation.

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## HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR TRIP

### PRIVATE TRUFFLE HUNT & TASTING



**Truffle Whisperer** – Daniela Puh, Truffle Expert, President of Pietro & Pietro (aka – my sister)

We will visit my family's Truffle Estate to enjoy a truly magical culinary adventure. There will be an opportunity to fully engage in the long-standing history and traditions of the truffle hunt and trade. My great grandfather Pietro and his neighbour Pietro, who is a great grandfather to my cousin and owner of Natura Tartufi, Daniela Puh (see left picture) will be highlighted as part of a Truffle Historical tour. We will also meet the infamous "Truffle Whisperers" – Truffle Puppy Trainers who under the mentorship of my aunt, Anita Zigante has expert handling and care of the truffle dogs that you will have on your exclusive private truffle hunt. I have had the privilege to hunt, and I can personally say that it is an exhilarating experience to walk through this mysterious forest and recover a truffle.

Following your hunt, we will enjoy an unforgettable truffle tasting experience where I will personally see that you are given generous amounts of truffle shavings on one of my favourite dishes - scrambled eggs with truffles.

Following this you are welcome to walk through their truffle shop and purchase some incredible items not available in North America from truffle brandy, cheeses, cured salami and more. This day will be an unforgettable highlight of your trip.

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## ENJOY A TRADITIONAL ISTRIAN DINNER



Tasting the food and drink enjoyed by generations of Istrian villagers will surely be one of your most memorable and delicious highlights during this tour. We will visit a traditional Konoba “Gastro Tavern” in a timeless quintessential Istrian town. The traditional meal will include the absolute best regional cuisine – homemade using the finest seasonal and local artisanal ingredients. With a long history to Northern Italy, Istria is home to incredible culinary dishes and drinks which rival Italian food and wine from the land and the sea. Once such culinary dish is the region’s local pasta, “Fuzi.” This penne-like pasta is usually served with a slathering of fresh shaved truffles or a sauce with a highly prized regional meat - boskarina (which of course, you will experience)! We will complete the evening with pastries or traditional crepes called Palecinke!

## HISTORIC & CULTURAL TOURS OF MOTOVUN, PULA, ROVINJ, ZAGREB



There is so much to cover in each of these great towns and cities. I will leave this to our expert local tour guides and to our own discoveries. Count on walking around the cobblestone streets of four of the most fascinating, vibrant, and beautiful cities of Istria and in Croatia’s capital city - Zagreb. These are all ancient cities with plenty of culture to unpack. Each carries their own unique characteristics and charms. I cannot wait to show you my favourite places – including off-the-beaten paths of the tourist shops. The days will go quickly but through it all, we will enjoy breaks at cafes/artisanal tasting and have personal time to enjoy the Istrian way of life -living in the moment!

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## TASTINGS - OLIVE OIL - WINE - LOCAL SPIRITS



A culinary tour of Istria begins the moment you arrive on this heart-shaped peninsula. We will taste local cuisine and enjoy exquisite wine and traditional spirits tastings at some of the most respected and award-winning wineries, brandy, olive oil and food producers. All great sources of sustenance will be explored but a highlight will be the olive oil production with an educational tour and tasting at a top producer, known as the “bible of olive oil”. A wine tour is another significant and important experience for all. The art of winemaking spans generations with production using old techniques and care using modern technology. You will see a balance of history in production with modern methods – your taste buds will not regret it. Trust me, after each tasting experience, you will want to bring brandy, oil, and wine home. Make sure you have extra storage in your luggage.

## HELPFUL INSIGHTS

**FLIGHT INFO:** How long is the flight from Toronto to Zagreb, Croatia?  
Average direct flight time is 8 hours 35 minutes.  
There are short 1.5/2hr layovers with most airlines.

Reminder to arrive at the airport early to accommodate for international travel requirements. The international Zagreb airport (ZAG) is modern, easy to maneuver, and English is widely and comfortably used. There are many options for transport from the airport to our destination – from local transit, Uber, taxis to limo services. Once you check in to the hotel, you are welcome to relax and discover Zagreb until our early evening meet-up.

## SPRING & AUTUMN WEATHER CONDITIONS

Generally, warm sunny days (high teens -20s) with slight chances of cool and rainy days with cooler evenings (10-14 degrees). Please bring sunblock and clothes to layer. We will provide a weather report a few days prior to our trip.

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## PACKING TIPS

Many of you are well-traveled and astute packers for all seasons and regions. However, these are helpful tips for first timers to Europe and more specifically, Croatia.

- 1.** Comfortable shoes - walking shoes for daytime tours and strolls around cobblestone streets, pair of dressy shoes for evening outings, waterproof sandals (for pools/beaches) and athletic shoes for Exercise.
- 2.** Clothing - Croatia and Europe in general, lean to the dresser-casual side of fashion. Apart from your usual essentials, I would suggest a few wrinkle-free casual outfits for daytime tastings and 1-2 dresser-casual items for evening dinners. Always pack something for cooler temperatures - sometimes the weather is cool-breezy due to the bordering north-west alps. Helpful to have a sun hat for protection. If you are planning to swim, do yoga, run, cycle, or any other athletics, bring your bathing suit and workout clothes. Umbrella/Rain Jacket (in case it rains).
- 3.** Adaptable Charger - Croatia like much of Europe uses different plugs and sockets than in Canada - they use Plug & Outlet C and F type - Make sure to bring an adapter for your electronics with C&F adaption.
- 4.** WIFI is strong and available most everywhere in public spaces for free. There are many options to use a service/buy data for your own iPhone. Your CDN/US phone will require the capacity for an ESIM which you can get from your phone provider. For example, it will cost \$10-\$15 from Rogers. This must be done in person at the Canadian phone provider store. Many travelers to Europe use AIRALO to purchase very affordable data for their phones. Learn more about AIRALO - [www.airalo.com](http://www.airalo.com) and specifically for Croatia - [www.airalo.com/croatia-esim](http://www.airalo.com/croatia-esim)
- 5.** Currency & Tipping - The official currency is the EURO - Croatia is an EU country. Major credit cards are accepted everywhere. However, it is advisable to have a Euros on hand for quick/marketplace purchases and tipping at restaurants as they don't have a way to include tips by credit. You may want to tip our tour guides following each tour and our dedicated driver at the end of our trip. Please consider setting aside approx. 5 euros per tour guide and 20 euros per driver. There may be places/restaurants where you may want to tip. General rule of thumb - round up your receipt for smaller purchases (for example, if you are billed = \$13.50 - you can round up to \$15.00. For great service around 10% of the bill. It is advised to have euros in your pocket for cases like this.
- 6.** Toiletries and Medicine - Croatia has a great health care system and pharmacies but bringing your own -especially medicine will prevent having to book time away from all the fun things you will be doing.
- 7.** Extra foldable bag - I always recommend an extra bag to have in case of irresistible local purchases like truffle products, wines, olive oils, art etc. Trust me on this one!
- 8.** Day bag/purse - which I highly recommend with a strap to wear cross body to keep your important valuables nearby.
- 9.** Reusable water bottle - Croatia has some of the cleanest tap water in the world. Many Croatians practice sustainable living and encourage the use of reusing water bottles or buying plastic.

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