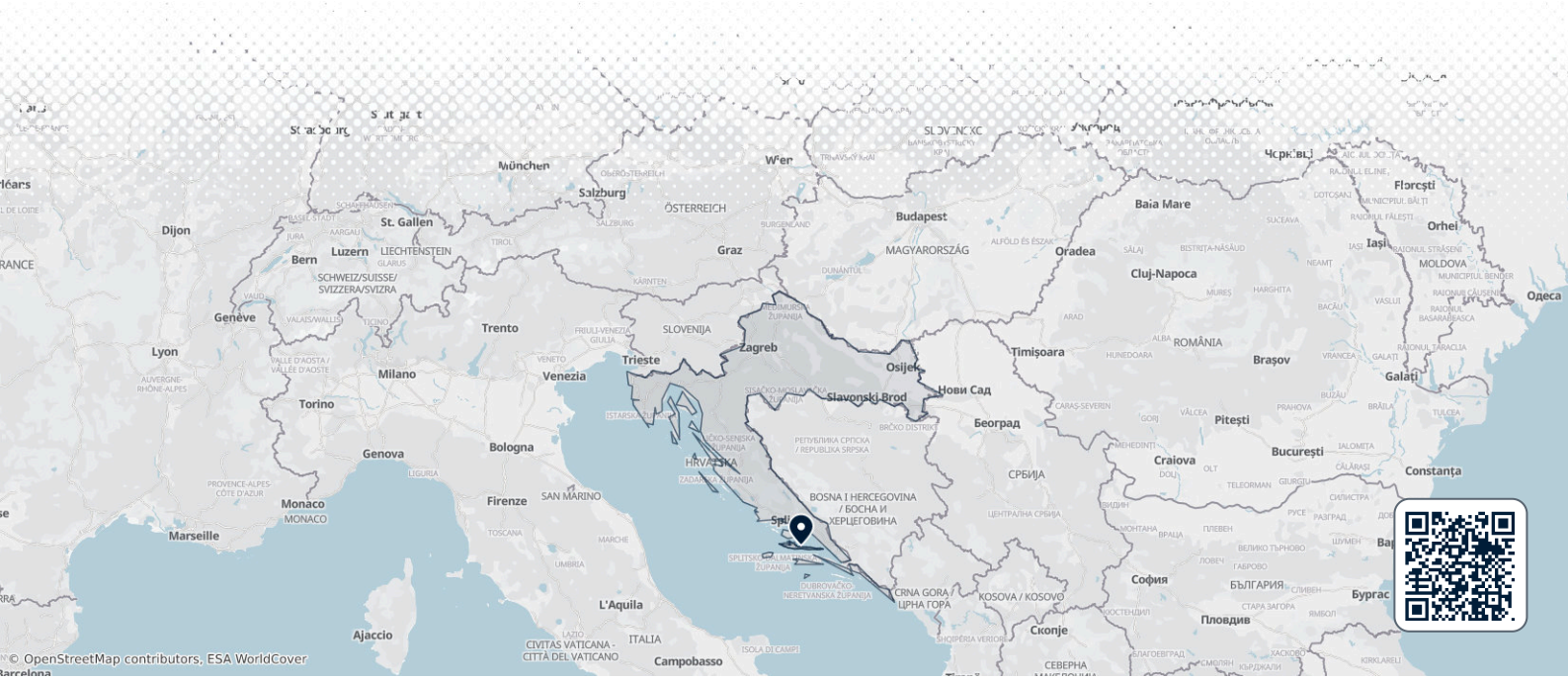


Hvar

Split-Dalmatia County · Croatia

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Hvar is a long, narrow island in the Adriatic, about 68 km from end to end. It is one of the sunniest places in Croatia. The island suits a relaxed stay with swimming, old stone towns and good local wine.

The west end around Hvar town is the busy, glamorous part. Stari Grad and Jelsa in the middle are quieter. The east and the south coast have small villages, pebble coves and few crowds. Lavender fields, olive groves and vineyards cover the hills.

When to visit

Late May, June and September are the best months: warm, sunny and less crowded. July and August are hot and busy, with the warmest sea. Many restaurants and boat trips close from November to March, and winter is wet and quiet.

The biggest annual event is **Za križen**, a night procession on Holy Thursday before Easter. Six villages in the middle of the island take part, including Jelsa and Vrboska. It is on the UNESCO intangible heritage list.

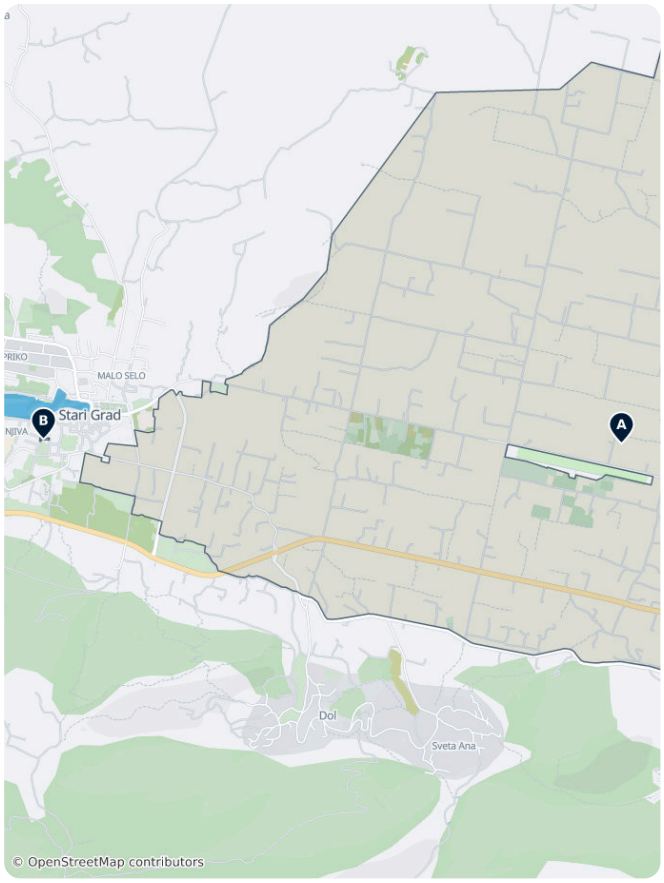
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Fair Fair for cycling	10° / 14° Feels like 6°	6° / 1°	12 rainy days · Dry air
February	Good Good for hiking	11° / 15° Feels like 7°	6° / 0°	Dry air
March	Good Good for hiking	13° / 17° Feels like 9°	8° / 3°	Dry air
April	Great Great for hiking	16° / 20°	12° / 7°	Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	20° / 24°	16° / 12°	Calm winds
June	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 29°	20° / 16°	Humid air · Calm winds
July	Great Great for watersports	27° / 30°	22° / 19°	23 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds
August	Great Great for watersports	27° / 31°	23° / 19°	22 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds
September	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 27°	19° / 14°	Calm winds
October	Great Great for sightseeing	19° / 23°	15° / 10°	Dry air
November	Good Good for cycling	15° / 20° Feels like 12°	12° / 6°	15 rainy days · Dry air
December	Fair Fair for hiking	12° / 15° Feels like 8°	8° / 2°	13 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: May, June, July, August, September, October

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Stari Grad Plain was farmed by Greek settlers about 2,400 years ago. The field walls and the grid of the original plots are still visible, and the land is still used for grapes and olives. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- B Tvrdalj Castle in Stari Grad is the fortified house of the poet *Petar Hektorović*. It has a walled garden and a fishpond inside.
- The Fortica fortress above Hvar town gives the best view of the harbour and the Pakleni Islands. The walk up from the old town is short.
- The Arsenal in Hvar town holds a public theatre that opened in 1612. It is one of the oldest in Europe.
- The main square of Hvar town is the largest in Dalmatia. St. Stephen's Cathedral stands at one end, and the Franciscan monastery has a small museum on the waterfront.
- The Pakleni Islands are a group of pine-covered islets just off Hvar town. They have small beaches and quiet coves.
- Vrboska has a fortified 16th-century church on a narrow inlet. It is a pretty stop between Stari Grad and Jelsa.



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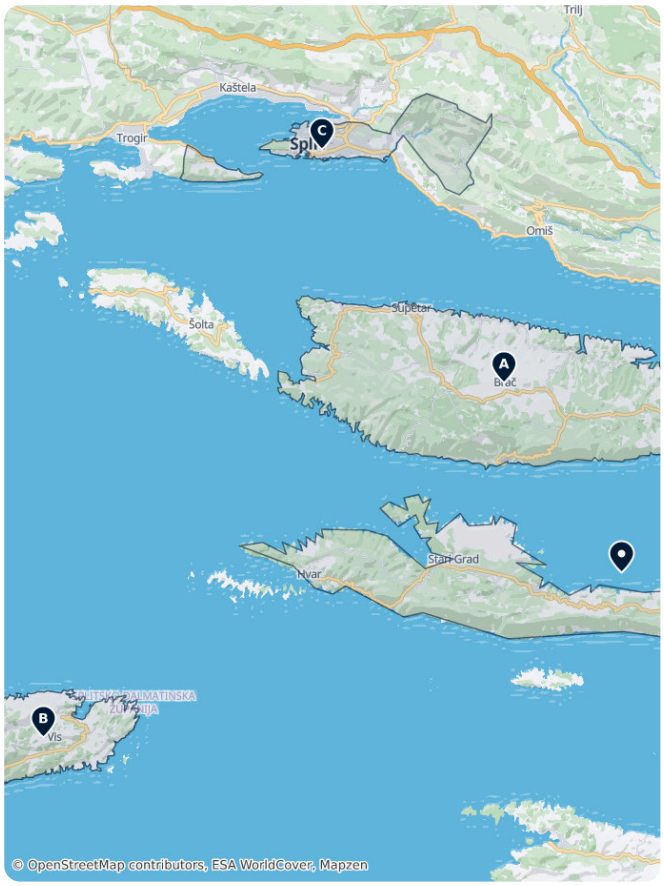
What to experience

- Cycle through the Stari Grad Plain on field tracks between the old stone walls.
- Visit the lavender villages in June and early July, when the fields bloom. Velo Grablje is a well-known one.
- Take a boat to the Pakleni Islands and swim in a quiet cove.
- Hike up Sveti Nikola, the island's highest peak at about 630 m, for views across the islands.
- Swim at the pebble coves on the south coast. Most need a walk or a short boat ride.
- Taste Plavac Mali wine at a family cellar on the south coast.

Day trips

Hvar is already an island trip. These places are reachable for a day from the island or from Hvar town.

- **Pakleni Islands**: a short boat ride from Hvar town. Good for swimming and a long lunch.
- A Brač: the next island north. Bol has the Zlatni Rat beach. Boat links run in season, so check times first.
- B Vis: a more remote island, mostly reached from Split. Plan it as a full day or an overnight stay.
- C Split: about 1 to 2 hours by sea. Diocletian's Palace is the main reason to go.



Where to explore

Stari Grad is the ferry town in the middle of the island. For other islands and the mainland gateway, see day trips.

Getting there

- **By air**: there is no commercial airport on Hvar. Most travelers fly into Split (SPU) and continue by sea. Dubrovnik (DBV) works too, with a summer boat link to Hvar town.
- **By car ferry**: the main link is Split to Stari Grad, about 2 hours. Book a car space ahead in summer. A second car ferry crosses from Drvenik on the mainland to Sućuraj at the east end. Jadrolinija runs both lines.
- **By catamaran**: foot-passenger boats from Split reach Hvar town in about 1 hour. In summer some boats also link Hvar with Dubrovnik and other islands.
- **From Split**: Split is the best base for the sea crossing.

Getting around

- **Bus**: island buses link Hvar town, Stari Grad and Jelsa. Service is thinner outside summer.
- **Car or scooter**: the best way to reach villages and quiet beaches. Rentals are available in the main towns.
- **Water taxi**: small boats run from Hvar town to the Pakleni Islands in season.
- **Taxi**: available in the main towns. Fares to far villages are high.
- **On foot or by bike**: the old towns are walkable. The flat Stari Grad Plain is good for cycling. The rest of the island is hilly.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The old towns are compact and walkable. The island is long and hilly, so reaching villages and beaches usually needs a bus, boat or car.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The flat Stari Grad Plain is good for cycling. Roads elsewhere are hilly and winding.

Driving

- **Car**: worth it for exploring beyond Hvar town. Roads are narrow and winding. Many beaches and wine villages have no bus.
- **Parking**: parking in Hvar town is limited and fills early in summer. Park outside the centre and walk in. The old town is for pedestrians.
- **Ferry**: bring the car on the Split to Stari Grad ferry. Reserve a place ahead in summer.

Food & drink

Look for gregada, a fish stew often linked to Hvar, and for peka, meat or octopus baked under embers. Order peka a few hours ahead. Local olive oil, honey and lavender products are good gifts.

The island makes red Plavac Mali wine from steep south-facing vineyards near Ivan Dolac and Sveta Nedjelja. For food, try the harbour fronts of Stari Grad and Jelsa. Small konobas in hill villages such as Velo Grablje and Brusje are more relaxed than the busy waterfront of Hvar town.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Ćevapi · Ćevapčići
Grilled minced-meat sausages, usually served in flatbread with onions and ajvar.

DINNER

Pašticada
Beef slow-braised for hours in a rich wine, vinegar, and prune sauce, traditionally served with gnocchi; a classic Dalmatian celebration dish.

Black Risotto · Crni rižot
Risotto colored and flavored with cuttlefish ink, a Dalmatian coastal staple.

Istrian Truffles · Tartufi
Both white and black truffles are foraged in inland Istria and served shaved over pasta, eggs, or steak.

Peka
Meat, seafood, or octopus slow-roasted with vegetables under a metal dome covered in embers; usually needs ordering in advance.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Burek
Flaky filo pastry filled with minced meat or cheese, a common breakfast or on-the-go food.

Dalmatian Prosciutto · Dalmatinski pršut
Air-dried, lightly smoked ham cured along the Adriatic coast, often served with local cheese and olives.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Fritule
Small fried dough balls, often studded with raisins and citrus zest, especially popular around Christmas and Carnival.

DRINKS

Rakija
A strong fruit brandy (often grape, plum, or herb-infused) commonly offered as a welcome drink.

Pelješac and Istrian Wine · Vino
Plavac Mali reds from the Pelješac peninsula and Malvazija whites from Istria are Croatia's best-known wine styles.

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Safety & health

Hvar is very safe. Petty theft is rare, but keep valuables out of sight on crowded beaches and boats.

- Hvar town is a party destination in summer. Noise is common late at night.
- Walking through town in swimwear or shirtless can bring an on-the-spot fine. Cover up away from the beach.
- Sea urchins live on rocky shores. Wear water shoes on rocks.
- Summers are dry. Follow local rules on fires in pine woods.
- Pharmacies and a health centre are in the main towns. The nearest large hospital is on the mainland.

History

Greek settlers from Paros founded Pharos, today's Stari Grad, in 384 BC. Their field system survives in the Stari Grad Plain.

Venice ruled Hvar from 1420 to 1797. The island became an important naval base, and Hvar town grew behind new walls. The Fortica fortress and the Arsenal come from this period. Turkish raiders damaged the town in 1571, and the Arsenal was rebuilt.

Writers and poets lived on the island in the 16th century. Among them was *Petar Hektorović*, who built the Tvrdalj Castle in Stari Grad. The Benedictine nuns of Hvar town still make lace from agave threads.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Croatia at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Croatian

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Hvar's Absolute Essentials

Hvar’s landscape is defined by the UNESCO-protected Stari Grad Plain, where ancient Greek land divisions remain visible today. The island’s history is anchored by the 16th-century Fortica fortress and the Arsenal, which houses one of Europe’s oldest public theaters. Natural highlights include the pebble shores of Dubovica beach and Sveti Nikola, the island's highest peak. The town harbor and Franciscan Monastery offer insights into maritime heritage and Renaissance art, while Stari Grad serves as the primary gateway for ferry travel.



A Fortress Španjola / Fortica

16th-century fortress built during Spanish rule to protect the town from Ottoman attacks. It houses a collection of ancient amphorae and offers panoramic views of the Pakleni Islands.

Fortica, 21450, Croatia (43.17473, 16.44203)



B Stari Grad Plain

The Stari Grad Plain, near the town of Stari Grad on the island of Hvar, Croatia, is an agricultural landscape that was set up by the...

21460, Croatia (43.18273, 16.63617)

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C Sidrište Luka Hvar

Central docking area for yachts and local boats in Hvar town. It serves as the primary departure point for excursions to the nearby Pakleni archipelago.

Croatia (43.17146, 16.44009)

D Dubovica

A secluded pebble beach situated in a southern bay. It is characterized by its 17th-century noble summer house and clear waters, accessible via a steep walking trail.

10 Ulica uvala Dubovica, 21450, Croatia (43.14598, 16.53460)

E Sveti Nikola

The highest point on Hvar island at 628 meters. The summit features a 15th-century stone chapel and provides views across the Adriatic to the islands of Brač and Vis.

21460, Croatia (43.14451, 16.59761)



F Franciscan Monastery

15th-century complex featuring a Renaissance cloister and a museum. It contains a significant collection of old master paintings, including a large-scale work of the Last Supper.

15 Šetalište Put križa, Hvar 21450, Croatia (43.16824, 16.44309)

G Stari Grad

The main maritime terminal on the island, facilitating car and passenger transport between Split and Hvar. It is located approximately two kilometers from the historic center of Stari Grad.

(43.18136, 16.57612)



H Arsenal

A 16th-century building originally used for ship maintenance. Its upper floor contains the Hvar Public Theatre, which opened in 1612 as one of Europe's first communal theaters.

1 Obala Riva, Hvar 21450, Croatia (43.17211, 16.44178)



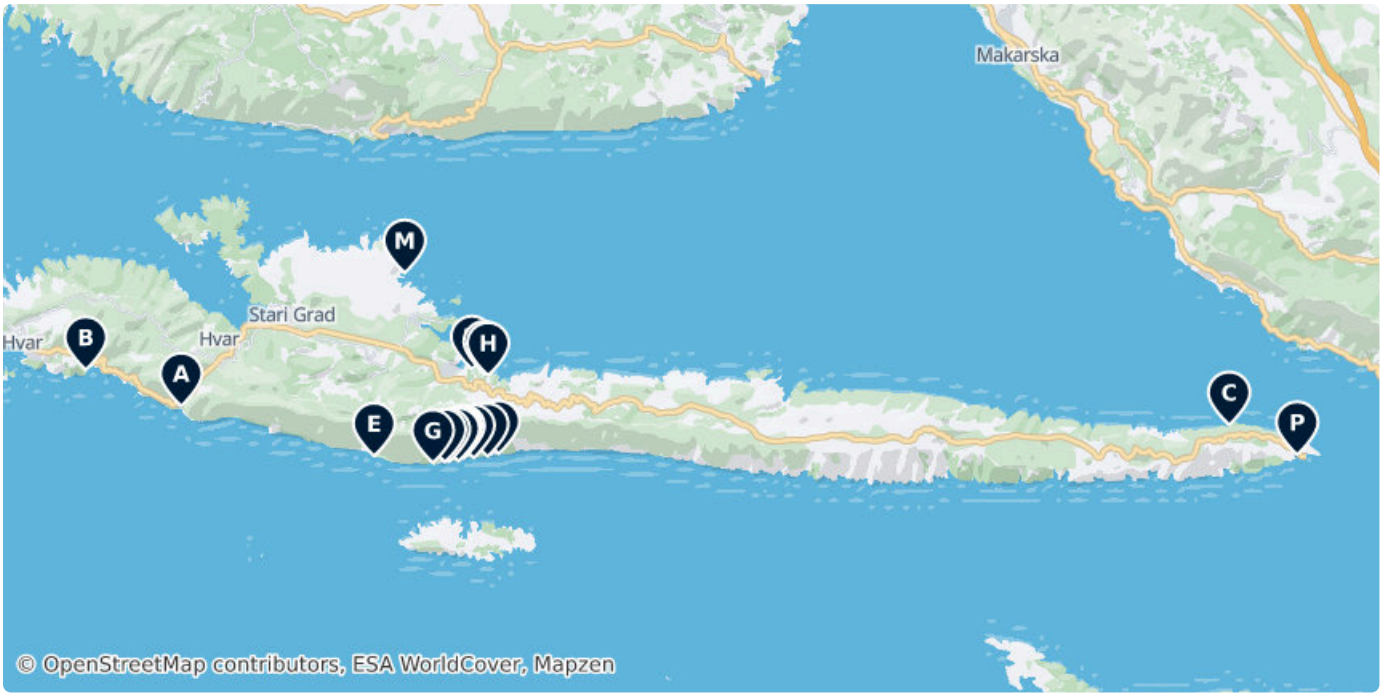
I Palača Paladini

A 15th-century late Gothic palace featuring elaborate stone-carved windows and Venetian-style architecture. It represents the residential design typical of the island's historical nobility.

Trg svetog Stjepana, 21450 Hvar town, Croatia (43.17252, 16.44237)

Hvar's Best Beaches

Hvar’s coastline features a mix of geological formations, from the rare sandy shores of Mlaska and Mina to the iconic white pebbles of Dubovica. Many beaches, particularly those around Zavala and Jelsa, are characterized by crystal-clear waters and proximity to pine forests. This selection includes secluded coves like Mala Pogorila, family-friendly shallows at Grebišće, and established clothing-optional areas, reflecting the island’s long-standing tradition of naturist tourism.



A Dubovica

Pebble beach set in a deep bay, featuring a historic 17th-century manor house. Accessible via a downhill trail from the main road.

10 Ulica uvala Dubovica, 21450, Croatia (43.14598, 16.53460)

B Mala Borča

Large pebble beach within walking distance of Hvar town, offering views of the 19th-century Pokonji Dol lighthouse.

21450, Croatia (43.16130, 16.47922)

C Mlaska Beach

Sandy beach located near Sućuraj within a campsite. Features shallow waters and a sandy seabed.

Sućuraj, 21469, Croatia (43.13792, 17.14304)

D Mina Beach

Sandy beach in Jelsa with a shallow bottom extending far into the sea, surrounded by pine trees.

(43.16159, 16.70337)

E FKK

Clothing-optional beach located near Vrboska on the Glavice peninsula, featuring rocky plateaus and pebble sections.

21465, Croatia (43.12482, 16.64658)

F Nudist Beach Zavala - FKK

Nudist beach in Zavala on the southern coast, offering secluded rocky spots and clear Adriatic waters.

(43.12383, 16.69866)

G Petarčica

Small, sheltered pebble beach in Zavala, bordered by pine trees and Mediterranean vegetation.

193 Zavala, 21465, Croatia (43.12190, 16.68076)

H Velo Grebišće

Sandy beach near Jelsa known for its exceptionally shallow water and pine forest shade.

Jelsa, 21465, Croatia (43.15881, 16.71277)

I Malo Grebišće

Shallow sandy beach area near Jelsa, frequently used for the local water game picigin.

Jelsa, 21465, Croatia (43.15942, 16.71076)

J Žutica

Secluded coastal spot near Zavala, featuring a mix of pebbles and natural stone plateaus.

219 Zavala, 21465, Croatia (43.12457, 16.71245)

K Hobotnica

Small pebble beach located along the coastal promenade in Zavala.

21465, Croatia (43.12577, 16.71898)

L Rarog

Rocky and pebble beach area situated on the southern shore near Zavala.

21465, Croatia (43.12407, 16.70447)

M Dubinica

Secluded cove on the northern coast near Stari Grad, accessible by boat or hiking trail.

(43.20226, 16.66438)

N Zavala

Natural pebble beach in the village of Zavala, known for its clean water and southern exposure.

134 Zavala, 21465, Croatia (43.12349, 16.69638)

O Zavala

Pebble beach section in Zavala, typical of the southern island's rugged coastline.

156 Zavala, 21465, Croatia (43.12378, 16.69712)

P Česminica Beach

Main beach in Sućuraj featuring a pebble shore, sandy seabed, and concrete sunbathing platforms.

(43.12535, 17.18251)

Q Skalinada

Pebble beach in Zavala offering clear views across the water to the island of Šćedro.

21465, Croatia (43.12222, 16.68774)

R Zavala Port

Small beach area located next to the local harbor in Zavala.

123 Zavala, 21465, Croatia (43.12263, 16.69562)

Molva

Pebble beach on the southern coast in Zavala, characterized by crystalline water.

117 Zavala, 21465, Croatia (43.12232, 16.69017)

Hvar's Ancient Ruins and Fortifications

This collection spans over two millennia of Hvar's history, from the 4th-century BC Greek land division of the UNESCO-listed Stari Grad Plain to the 16th-century Venetian fortifications of Tvrđava Fortica. Explore Roman villa rustica sites at Kupinovik, medieval castle ruins like Grad Galešnik, and the unique 15th-century cave monastery at Sveta Nedjelja. These sites highlight the island's strategic maritime importance and its enduring agricultural heritage through ancient watchtowers, rural stone ruins, and coastal defensive batteries.





A Stari Grad Plain

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21460, Croatia (43.18273, 16.63617)

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B Fortress Španjola / Fortica

16th-century Venetian fortress built on the site of a medieval castle. It features bastions, a chapel, and former prison cells, offering views over Hvar town.

Fortica, 21450, Croatia (43.17473, 16.44203)

C Kaštilac

Ruins of a 16th-century fortified tower built by the local Matijević family for defense against Ottoman raids.

21465, Croatia (43.18668, 16.67678)



D Likorova kuća

Ruins of a rural agricultural building located on the northern slopes of the Purkin kuk ridge.

(43.17157, 16.60713)

E Baterija

Remains of a coastal battery used for maritime defense.

(Unnamed Road), 21450, Croatia (43.16467, 16.44350)

F Grad Galešnik

Medieval fortress ruins situated on a strategic hill overlooking Jelsa and the Hvar channel.

(43.14841, 16.70300)

G Maslinovik

Archaeological remains of a Greek watchtower from the 4th century BC, used to monitor the agricultural landscape of the Stari Grad Plain.

21460, Croatia (43.19468, 16.63462)

H Sveta Nedjelja (Sveta Marija) u špilji

15th-century cave monastery and church ruins located inside a large cavern above the village of Sveta Nedjelja.

21465, Croatia (43.14475, 16.58749)

I St. Theodore

Historic monument and site of a former chapel.

(43.16315, 16.48696)

J Villa Solitudo

Historic villa monument located along the coast near Hvar town.

23 Milna, 21450, Croatia (43.16279, 16.48625)

K Kupinovik

Archaeological site of a Roman villa rustica, containing remains of an ancient olive press and stone basins.

(43.17716, 16.61445)

L Carevac

Site of a Greek watchtower within the Stari Grad Plain agricultural system.

(43.18056, 16.64292)

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