



Istria

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Male Madlene (p115)
- ➔ Marina (p122)
- ➔ Toklarija (p129)
- ➔ Barba Danilo (p116)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Villa Meneghetti (p111)
- ➔ Hotel Mauro (p120)
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- ➔ Pula Art Hostel (p103)

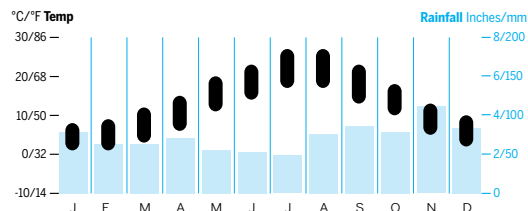
Why Go?

Continental Croatia meets the Adriatic in Istria (Istra to Croats), the heart-shaped, 3600-sq-km peninsula just south of Trieste in Italy. The bucolic interior of rolling hills and fertile plains attracts artsy visitors to Istria's hilltop villages, rural hotels and farmhouse restaurants, while the verdant indented coastline is enormously popular with the sun-and-sea set. While vast hotel complexes line much of the coast and the rocky beaches are not Croatia's best, facilities are wide-ranging, the sea is clean and secluded spots are still plentiful.

Istria's madly popular coast gets flooded with Central European tourists in summer, but you can still feel alone and undisturbed in the peninsula's interior, even in mid-August. Add acclaimed gastronomy (starring fresh seafood, prime white truffles, wild asparagus, top-rated olive oils and award-winning wines), sprinkle it with historical charm and you have a little slice of heaven.

When to Go

Pula



Apr Celebrate spring by heading out to the fields to pick wild asparagus.

Jul–Aug A festival roster of classical music, jazz, films and art sets Istrian towns alight.

Sep The white-truffle season kicks off with the Festival of Subotina in Buzet.



Istria Highlights

- 1 Euphrasia Basilica** (p118) Admiring the mosaics of Poreč's top temple.
- 2 Truffle hunting** (p129) Searching for the elusive truffle in the forests around Buzet.
- 3 Rovinj** (p111) Getting the perfect holiday snap of this west-coast gem's old town.
- 4 Roman Amphitheatre**

- (p102) Scrambling around northern Croatia's most famous Roman ruin in Pula.
- 5 Batana House** (p113) Taking in Rovinj's fishing history at this fascinating museum celebrating this local industry.
 - 6 Pazin Chasm** (p131) Walking the pretty trails of this legendary cave.

- 7 Motovun** (p127) Catching alfresco screenings during Motovun's summer film festival.
- 8 Brijuni** (p109) Soaking up the communist chic at Tito's island playground.
- 9 Cape Kamenjak** (p108) Exploring the wild landscapes near Pula.