

CULTURE + WALKING

MONTENEGRO

Azure Adriatic & Soaring Mountains



Classic
JOURNEYS



Rugged Beauty in the Balkans

How will you explain Montenegro to your friends who haven't been (and that will be 99.9% of them)? Do you start with its balmy Adriatic coast, where golden stone villages nestle on secluded, palm-lined bays? You can't leave out the wild mountains with their sheer canyons and whisper-quiet lakes. You'll certainly have stories about the hospitable Montenegrins...the olive growers, grappa-makers, shepherds and artists our local guide introduces to you. We think you'll fall in instant love with this compact Balkan land like we did because it's still so undiscovered, unexpected and unforgettable. In one easy-going week, we'll take in UNESCO World Heritage sites, four scenic national parks, chic seaside resorts, and pre-Medieval landmarks. And you'll come home with the satisfying sense of having fully experienced the culture of a country that most travelers can't even find on a map.

“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

— *Travel + Leisure*

DAY 1

PODGORICA / KOLAŠIN

- Explore one of Europe's largest vineyards
- Visit a remote Serbian Orthodox Monastery
- Settle into a 19th-century alpine village

Podgorica, Montenegro's capital, is the convenient starting point for our week together and from here the week's surprises begin immediately with a visit to one of the largest vineyards in Europe. Known as Plantaze, it covers almost 6,000 acres and produces more than 40 different wines and four types of brandy. In an earlier era, huge caves on the property were used to conceal military planes.

A short drive away, is the picturesque canyon where monks built Morača Monastery back in the 13th century. We'll have a chance to wander the grounds and our guide will secure us a glimpse of the 800-year-old frescoes dedicated to the Prophet Elijah.

The day ends on an alpine note, as we settle into Kolašin. The village, nestled in a valley amid some of Europe's last virgin forests, was founded by the Turks in the 17th century and is a resort town popular with the locals. After dinner, you may want to do a bit of exploring and take in the restorative mountain air.

OVERNIGHT: KOLAŠIN

MEALS: D

DAY 2

BJELASICA NATIONAL PARK

- Lunch with a working shepherd family
- Hiking Bjelasica mountain

After breakfast, we'll make time for a stroll with a distinguished biologist, providing us with an in depth experience of the surrounding plant and wildlife.

Today is a literal highpoint of our time in Montenegro – an experience you'll recount again and again. Our friend Darko escorts us via 4WD caravan, up to a cluster of rustic shepherds' huts, tucked into stony alpine meadows.

We'll strike out on a mountaintop walk, surrounded in every direction by peaks and glistening lakes. You'll feel a humbling sense of solitude and grandeur, and you have to spend a moment imagining a life where "normal" is so awesome. Arriving back at the huts, Darko's wife Kača welcomes us to a homemade lunch, and the family lets us in on the pleasures and challenges of their lives as working shepherds.

OVERNIGHT: KOLAŠIN

MEALS: B, L, D

DAY 3

TARA CANYON / BUDVA

- Explore Europe's deepest river canyon
- Walk the mountain-lined shores of Black Lake
- Enjoy your first glimpse of the Adriatic Sea

Today, we're celebrating the majestic interior of Montenegro. After a hearty breakfast, we'll travel through a stretch of the spectacular Tara River Gorge, the deepest river canyon in all of Europe. We'll stop for a walk on the soaring Đurđevića Tara bridge.

"Durmitor" means "sleeping" in ancient dialect, but today, it's the name of an 8,200-foot mountain and the exhilarating national park that is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. One of our paths trace the fringes of mirror-smooth Black Lake. The perfect reflections of pine-covered slopes guarantee you a great photo op. You can also join our local guide on another footpath to Zminje Lake at the foot of looming limestone cliffs, go row-boating, or sip a coffee at the lakeside cafe.

So much fresh air and interesting walking is bound to give you a big appetite—which is a good thing because we'll arrange a generous picnic spread of Montenegrin specialties. Later, a local carpenter welcomes us into his home where we get a look at how he's turned traditional woodworking into high art.

As the afternoon deepens, we "take the plunge" into an incredibly different world in the coastal town of Budva. People first settled here 2,500 years ago, and you'll understand why they never left! Huddled up against the Adriatic, Budva is a picturesque jumble of stone buildings with red tile roofs. Ancient fortified walls jut out into the blue waters.

This evening is as civilized and mellow as your day was wide-open and wind-swept. Amble from our hotel through the gracious palm-lined streets and claim a table for a lovely seafood dinner.

OVERNIGHT: BUDVA

MEALS: B, L

DAY 4

LAKE SKADAR / SVETI STEFAN

- Wander a picturesque village of deserted stone mills
- Boat in one of Europe's largest bird preserves

Vesna, our local Montenegrin guide, will tell you that this day is "close to paradise." Of course, we expect our friends to be fiercely proud of their homelands, but in this case, we agree with her completely!

A brief drive along Budva's Riviera, takes us to easy-going trails lined with the works of renowned sculptors and leading to the dreamlike village of Poseljani. Here, ancient stone mills – more than a dozen of them, all long deserted – seem to grow from the verdant streamside. We'll explore a few for a lovely and engrossing look back in time.

Then nature takes over completely as our trail emerges at teeming Lake Skadar. So clear that you can see the bottom in most places, the lake is the heart of natural bird preserve with at least 270 fishing, swimming, diving, singing species. We'll board a small boat to cruise its waters. If you're a bird-watcher, it's heaven. But if you prefer to focus on sipping a fiery thimble of grappa—known around here as loza—and nibbling on a cheesy priganice pastry as the world glides by, you'll be just as happy. Lunch is a leisurely affair at a remote restaurant, overlooking its own secluded bay.

DAILY ITINERARY

MONTENEGRO | AZURE ADRIATIC & SOARING MOUNTAINS | CULTURE + WALKING

One more magical moment punctuates the end of the day. Back at the edge of the Adriatic, we follow a footpath that offers spectacular views of Sveti Stefan (St. Stephen). Perhaps Montenegro's most-photographed landmark, the storybook village rises on a dot of land just offshore. As early as the 15th century it was a fishing village. In the 1970s, Marilyn Monroe, Sophia Loren and Princess Margaret vacationed here. Once again, it's a center of resort life on this coast – a perfect example of the rustic/glamorous stone villages we see everywhere on this tour.

OVERNIGHT: BUDVA
MEALS: B, L, D

DAY 5

CETINJE / LOVČEN N.P.

- Marvel at 360-degree views of the coast
- Lunch with an artist and his family

With breakfast under our belts, we're off for a stroll in Cetinje – built as the capital of the lost principality of Zeta in the 15th century – and long the cultural and spiritual capital of Montenegro. Most importantly, it's the jumping off point for our visit to Lovćen National Park. (Mt. Lovćen is "Black Mountain," the source of the country's name.)

At the summit of one of the park's highest mountains sits the mausoleum of Njegoš, a 19th century ruler. (Think marble columns, Venetian art.) Monumental as it is, we've really come for the views – sweeping, unimpeded vistas in every direction. Lord Byron once declared that Montenegro is "the most beautiful merging of land and sea." And, as if you needed more proof, this is it!

Transitioning from the massive to the minuscule, we'll go for a walk in the forest. Our destination is the simple home of our friend Boris for a homemade lunch. Boris is an accomplished mosaic artist in the classic Roman style, and he'll demonstrate how he upholds that nearly lost tradition.

At day's end, we arrive in Kotor, another UNESCO World Heritage Site. Seen from the slopes it's oversize mosaic of red tile roofs, hugging the blue waters. Romans, Goths, Venetians and Ottomans are only a few of the invaders who've laid claim to this port town. We'll learn about its colorful history on a walking tour before dinner at one of the fine restaurants.

OVERNIGHT: KOTOR
MEALS: B, D

DAY 6

PERAST / LUSTICA

- Visit a tiny manmade Adriatic island
- Taste the olive oil at a family farm

You can't throw open your windows on a sunny Kotor morning without wondering how amazing it would be to start every day this way. Kotor sits on the most deeply indented part of the Adriatic. The steep-sided bay is often called Europe's southernmost fjord, though it's actually a submerged river canyon. Whatever its geologic origins, it's ideal for cruising. So from the nearby Baroque village of Perast, we'll ride a high-speed launch out to Our Lady of the Rocks, the Adriatic's only manmade island; literally made from residents tossing rocks into the sea. From there, we cross to the Lustica peninsula, the country's most famous region for growing olives.

The walks on this day show us olive groves, their silvery leaves shimmering in the region's beautiful light. Our friend Ilya will welcome us to his farmhouse where we'll see how his family grows, harvests and presses olives. Of course, we'll leave plenty of time for a tasting of his oils. If you like, you might go for a dip in the lagoon of Mirište, where we enjoy another of those lazy lunches you've learned to expect.

Back in Kotor, the afternoon is yours to relax, shop or soak up the sun and sights before our farewell dinner.

OVERNIGHT: KOTOR
MEALS: B, L, D

DAY 7

KOTOR

- Shopping in the local market
- Scaling the Venetian fortifications above Kotor

Linger over breakfast as long as you'd like. You can take the whole morning for yourself or join our guide for a visit to the local market just outside the city walls. If you're up for final bit of exercise, we'll lead you up the hillside to views over Kotor. The week ends with your option to part company in Kotor or ride with us to Podgorica.

MEALS: B



DAILY ITINERARY

MONTENEGRO | AZURE ADRIATIC & SOARING MOUNTAINS | CULTURE + WALKING

Tour Hotels



Bianca Resort & Spa

High up in the Montenegrin mountains, the setting for this resort is a thick pine forest with views of mountain ranges and panoramic valleys. The classic chalet style carries over to the timber-vaulted indoor swimming pool.

OVERNIGHT: KOLASIN | NIGHTS: 2



Hotel Majestic Budva

Located in the centre of Budva, 200 meters away from the Old Town and 50 meters away from the sea, Hotel Majestic will provide you with a unique experience of style, elegance and comfort.

OVERNIGHT: BUDVA | NIGHTS: 2



Regent Porto Montenegro

Set in a super-yacht marina, this property is a glimpse into the Adriatic Coast at its most luxurious. The design was inspired by Venetian palazzos. Each room, decorated in modern Mediterranean style, boasts a view of Boka Bay or the lush mountains.

OVERNIGHT: TIVAT | NIGHTS: 2

Tour Dates & Prices

Tour Dates	Price per Person	Price per Person
	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy
May 3-9, 2020	\$4,795	\$5,490
June 7-13, 2020	\$4,895	\$5,590
July 5-11, 2020	\$4,895	\$5,590
September 6-12, 2020	\$4,895	\$5,590
October 4-10, 2020	\$4,895	\$5,590
May 2-8, 2021	\$4,895	\$5,590
June 6-12, 2021	\$4,995	\$5,690
July 4-10, 2021	\$4,995	\$5,690
September 5-11, 2021	\$4,995	\$5,690
October 3-9, 2021	\$4,895	\$5,590

Want a different date? Or your own date? Visit CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE to learn more about private journeys.

Trip Essentials

TRIP LENGTH: 7 Days, 6 Nights

START: 10:00 AM Lobby of Hotel Podgorica, Podgorica, Montenegro

END: 1:00 PM Kotor city center, Kotor or Podgorica, Montenegro Guests can depart from Kotor or ride back with the guide to Podgorica at the end of the tour.

TERRAIN: Easy to moderate on good trails and coastal paths. An average of 2 to 3 hours of walking per day, with a mini-van usually in support.

What's Included

- Memorable accommodations for 6 nights
- All breakfasts, 4 lunches and 5 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

- **Invisible Check-In**
- **Privileged Access Events**
- **Wine on Us**

READY TO BOOK?
CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION

Or give us a call

1-833-387-1210

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

moreinfo@classicjourneys.com

Travel for Free

Your trip is free when you organize a Classic Journeys trip with 10 or more travelers (including you)! Or you can share your savings with other group members.

TRAVEL WORRY-FREE!

It's easy with insurance from Travel Guard. Your policy can cover trip cancellation, travel delays, lost luggage, medical emergencies, and more. If you are traveling with kids, add them to your policy at no extra cost. [Click here](#) or call 800-826-4919 for details.

AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to a [whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

**Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

THE Classic Journeys Difference

HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.



At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

President & Founder



You can expect the highest standards:



Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Montenegro...

- Four wheeling to rustic shepherd's huts in alpine meadows
- Taking a boat ride in the crystal clear waters of Lake Skadar in the heart of a natural bird preserve
- Visiting the largest state owned plantation in Europe
- Walking the mountain-lined shores of Black Lake, formed by receding glaciers
- Exploring with Vesna, your guide, whose love for Montenegro is wonderfully infectious

"Vesna was unbelievable. Extremely knowledgeable, upbeat, and adjusted itinerary to accommodate weather conditions and peoples' interests."

—Linda M., Branford, CT

Let's Go!

TO RESERVE: 833.493.5038 | CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/RESERVATIONS

You might also enjoy...



Croatia

Dubrovnik & Dalmatian Coast

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Strolling atop massive medieval walls at sunset
- Enjoying lunchtime camaraderie at a local winery
- Skirting the coast on shepherds' paths with jaw-dropping views

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/croatia/>.



Puglia

Matera to Lecce

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Rambling green hills and seaside landscapes
- Treading gently on mosaic masterpieces
- Relishing lunch on a 17th century farm

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/puglia/>.



Slovenia & Croatia

Ljubljana to the Istrian Peninsula

Culture + Walking

PICTURE YOURSELF...

- Strolling vineyard trails to stunning hilltowns
- Cruising emerald islands to a national park
- Rambling Roman footpaths and ancient ruins

For more information, visit <https://www.classicjourneys.com/istria-slovenia-walking-tour/>.

“Enthusiasm is Contagious”

AS TRAVEL + LEISURE NAMES CLASSIC JOURNEYS THE WORLD'S BEST TOUR OPERATOR FOR 2019, FOUNDER EDWARD PIEGZA REVEALS HOW IT FEELS. ENTHUSIASTICALLY.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Just before publication of this issue, Travel + Leisure magazine announced that its readers have voted Classic Journeys the World's Best Tour Operator for 2019. It's the second time Classic Journeys has won that recognition and the 14th consecutive year the company has been in the Top 10.

Congratulations! How did you get the news?

I received a top-secret email and phone call from the editor of *Travel + Leisure* a few weeks ago with orders not to tell ANYONE. Friends and neighbors must have wondered why my smile has been so extra big lately. Now they know.

And how does it feel to be the World's Best Tour Operator again?

Awesome. Humbling. So, so satisfying. Deeply gratifying to learn that we have achieved what we set out to do which is to handcraft trips of a lifetime for every guest who travels with us. I'm known as long-winded, so I could probably come up with 10 or 15 more ways to describe it if you want me to keep going.

Why do you think *Travel + Leisure* gave you this recognition?

Actually, it isn't the *T+L* editors who make the decision. That's the best part. Their readers cast the votes. So the people who do the traveling, the guests who explore the world with us and our competitors — they are the ones who raised their hands to tell *T+L* that Classic Journeys is the World's Best Tour Operator based on their own experiences. Let me say it right here: "To all of you who voted for us, you are the World's Best Guests!"

What do you think makes your guests the World's Best Guests?

That's easy. They are curious. They care about connecting with people of different cultures and immersing themselves in the world. They treasure experiences more than things. Like the old ad slogan went, they go for the gusto and crave the chance to have one-of-a-kind moments. They are incredibly interesting and interested people, and all of us at Classic Journeys count it as a real privilege to share in their passion for travel. And we feel that way on the

other 364 days of the year when we're not celebrating recognition like this.

I guess this is what you meant when you told me that "Enthusiasm is contagious."

Absolutely. That's not our official motto, but it could be. We love what we do. We enjoy helping guests figure out how to invest their precious time and budget. I can honestly say that all of us feel that way — the Guest Services folks who interact with you while you're planning your trip, the Tour Operations team members who plan all of the logistics, the local guides who lead each one of our trips full time. There's just a huge amount of positive energy in what we do, and I think it truly is hard to resist. We'd climb into every one of our guest's suitcases and go along with them if we could. Because we can't, we call each guest while they're on tour just to be sure they are having a trip of a lifetime.

Has anyone ever called Classic Journeys obsessive?

I hope so, because we are. Everything is in the details. For instance, we've created a special tour for the total eclipse of the sun which is going to pass over parts of South America in 2020. We've already analyzed likely traffic patterns in the most remote areas and figured out how to structure our itinerary so that our guests will be in place in the path of totality while the people who don't plan ahead will be stuck in jams on remote dirt roads. We enjoy obsessing about details like that so that our guests never have to.



How can you top this?

Oh, we never let ourselves think of it that way. We just continue to approach every single guest on each and every departure like the most important guest we've ever had. It seems to be working! Of course, we keep looking for new ways to win more converts. For 2019, we've launched a new series of Classic Journeys that are based from

"I voted for you!"

We've heard that expression so many times lately from guests who registered their votes with *Travel + Leisure*. Given the results, we know it's true ... and you know that your votes really count!

STAFF AND GUIDES

"I always feel like I'm traveling with a best friend. I prefer your local guides to the ones that other companies fly in."

ITINERARIES AND DESTINATIONS

"If it's on my bucket list, you always seem to go there. Of course, with so many options you always seem to make my list longer and longer!"

ACTIVITIES

"On your trips, I've cooked with Michelin chefs, sung songs with Quechua schoolchildren, and walked on glaciers with the descendants of Vikings. Fun doesn't begin to describe it."

ACCOMMODATIONS

"How you manage so many 5-star properties on these trips shocks me. But please, please, please keep it up!"

FOOD

"I have never eaten so well so often so happily. When you people claim that you are foodies, you aren't kidding."

OVERALL VALUE

"We have never had a better vacation at any price."

river cruise boats. On a different note, seeing how many travelers can't always find as much vacation time as they really want, we have developed a series of 6-day or shorter quick trips that go as far afield as Iceland, the Galápagos and Morocco.

Final thoughts?

It's always an honor to win recognition. But, for all of us at Classic Journeys, the biggest privilege is to share the dreams of our guests and make those dreams come true. That connection is the best feeling of all.