



Novigrad on the Dalmatia Coast – A Piece of Croatia Heaven

Description

Located in Zadar County along the Dalmatia Coast, this medieval village will capture your heart.

Croatia has been glorious-it is so beautiful, and I want to go back as often as I can

Emilia Clarke, actress on Game of Thrones



As we turned right to descend into the town of Novigrad, at first glance, the small fishing village took our breath away. The quaint town and small harbor sit at the base of a sapphire bay as the mountain rises high above it. The Novigrad Castle ruins rest at the top of the hill, seemingly keeping watch over the town's residents. It is easy to comprehend why many consider it one of the most romantic spots on the Adriatic coast. Picture perfect Novigrad, nestled in the heart of Dalmatia, with its narrow, cobblestone streets, lovely Dalmatian houses, medieval churches, and a small fishing port, beckons you to explore its world.

First, some facts on Novigrad



The historic little town on the southern side of the Novigrad Sea is situated in a narrow bay. The sea is abundant in fish and shellfish, which is why Novigrad fishermen have been here since Medieval times.

Novigrad has quite a history for a place so small. It is believed to date back to the Bronze Age. The Romans occupied the area during the fall of their empire in 476. The Ostrogoths then controlled it until it came under the control of the Croats, who realized its strategic significance. Novigrad Castle was built in 1220 and named *Castrum Novum* or Novigrad, which translates to “The New Castle.” Fortification walls were added, and nine defensive towers surrounded the Castle. Sadly, little of that remains today as the walls were removed in the 19th century.

The Castle played a significant role in the 14th century as it was a prison for Hungarian Queen Elisabeth. In 1386, the Hungarian and Croatian sovereign Mary and her mother, Elizabeth of Bosnia, were held prisoner in Novigrad. Elizabeth was strangled by her captors the following year, but Mary was liberated. This led to a fierce civil war between Croatia and Hungary.

The Battles were not over



Novigrad was part of the Republic of Venice in 1409. Venetian rule was briefly lost by Ottoman occupation between 1646 and 1647. This was unique to the many towns and cities on the Dalmatian Coast. Most of these towns were under Turkish rule for many long years. On the other hand, Novigrad was only briefly held by the Turks, which allowed the locals to return. The Venetians reclaimed it and stayed in control until the fall of the Venetian Empire in 1797.

Jump forward to recent times. In the 1990s, Novigrad was bombed during the Croatian War of Independence. Several buildings in the historic district were damaged. Many homes have been repaired, but some remain damaged due to insufficient funds.

Take Note

There are two Novigrads in Croatia, one in Istria and one near Zadar. When googling this Novigrad, it is best to enter Novigrad Zadar. The town resides within Zadar County.

Where is Novigrad?

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The town sits in one of the most indented bays along the Adriatic Coast. During our two-week stay in Croatia, Novigrad was a day trip from Zadar. It is near the A1 Speedway, about 35 minutes from Zadar

and 90 minutes from Split.

Novigrad, Zadar County, Croatia Map

- [Novigrad](#)

If you want more inspiration and to visit other parts of Croatia, check out our [Croatia Travel Guide](#). It will help you plan your dream trip.

It was love at first sight





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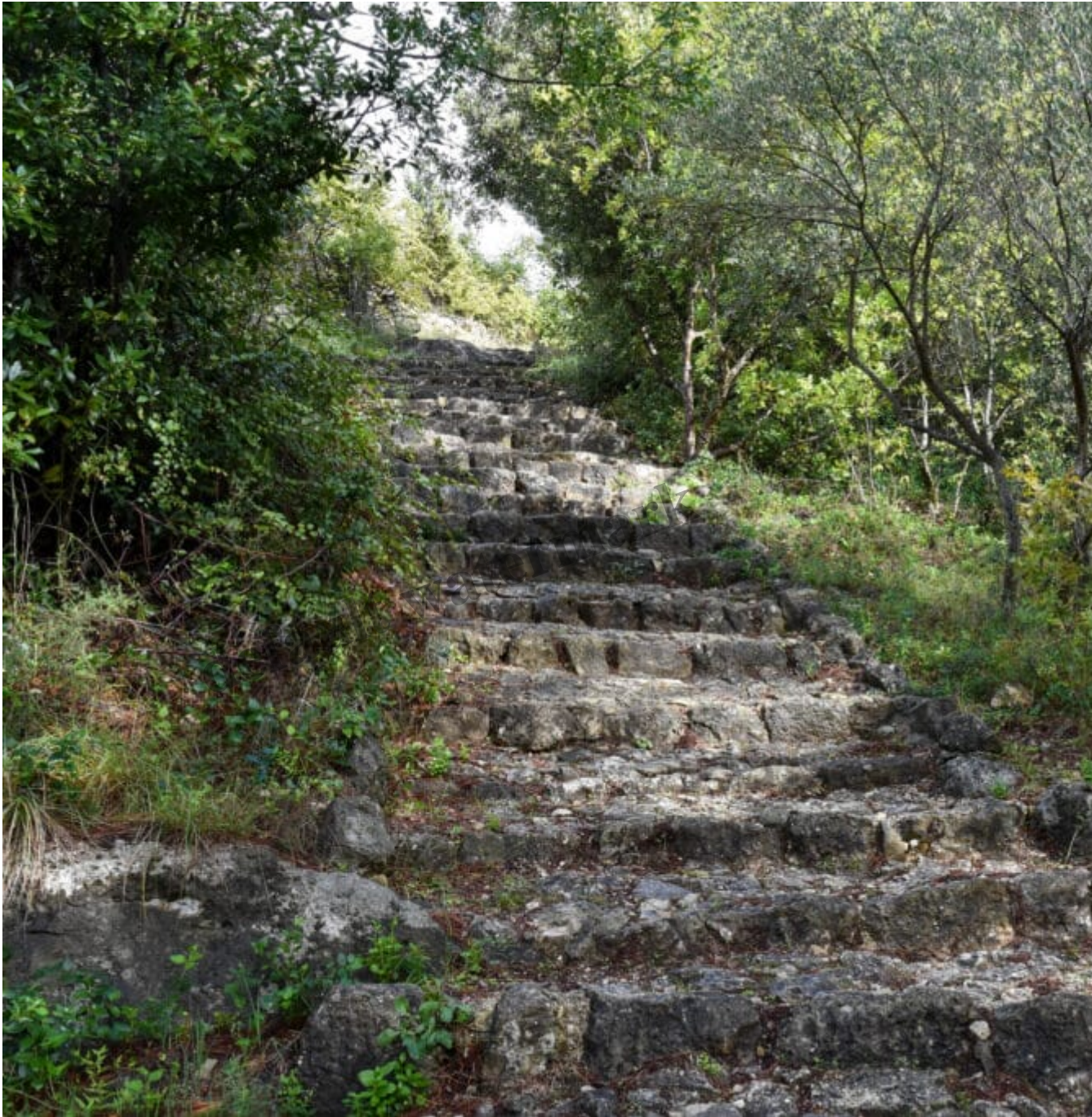
First, it was the view that captured our hearts as we descended into the town. The magic did not end there. One of our first sights in town was an elderly gentleman walking toward the church to ring the church bell on the hour. He pulled on an old rope as the church bell echoed through the town and hills. We wondered if he did this every hour or if the residents took turns. The little white church next to where he rang the bells was delightful.

A short distance from the church, some of the residents were chatting over coffee, a woman was walking home from the market, fishermen were bringing their boats in, and a father and young son were fishing in the harbor. It almost felt too idyllic to be real.

The town's well-preserved medieval core transports you back in time. Wandering these ancient streets was captivating. Only the rare locals were walking about during our visit, so we had the streets to ourselves to photograph Novigrad's unique personality and features.

Visiting Novigrad Castle

The castle ruins sit high above the town. The path to get up there was pretty rough and not maintained. It would be a breeze for seasoned hikers but challenging for some less able-bodied people. As a result, Ryan did the trek on his own with the camera. He had the Castle all to himself, and the views were stunning on this gorgeous day.







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Resort feel without the stuffiness

There is more to this area than its medieval roots. Novigrad offers a resort-type feel with its pebble-covered beaches and isolated coves. Around the corner from the main town is Karinsko More, a beautiful lake with lovely sand beaches and shallow water ideal for families with young children. This is the perfect spot to enjoy the gentle breeze, the warmth of the sun on your skin, and the soothing sound of waves, where you can escape the chaos of life and relax.

Activities can be as simple as sunbathing on the beach, beachcombing, or playing in the gentle surf. We can honestly say that to this day, we have never seen more transparent waters than in Croatia.

With Novigrad Harbor right there, you can charter a boat or go fishing. You can also visit one of the nearby islands.

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The stunning landscape is perfect for visiting nearby nature parks or peaceful walks.

Looking for more exciting adventures, the area has lots of outdoor activities in this region, such as cycling, rock climbing, caving, water sports, kite surfing, and diving. Super brave? There is even bungee jumping off the Maslenica Bridge.



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Other places to visit near Novigrad

Zadar will be one of the most memorable visits of a lifetime. There are so many things to do in Zadar. This great city has a unique and fascinating story. This 3,000-year-old settlement's rich and turbulent history earned it recognition as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2017. It is known as the oldest continuously inhabited city in Croatia. It also became the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, also known as the Byzantine Empire. Zadar maintained its capital status in this region of Croatia until the end of World War I. We enjoyed our visit so much that we wrote an article on Zadar. [Check it out here.](#)



Šibenik is a historic city with two UNESCO monuments, lovely beaches, stunning scenery, impressive castles, cultural events, and attractions. It is well-known to Game of Thrones fans. The city is in the central part of the Croatian Adriatic Coast, in the picturesque and indented bay where the Krka River, one of Croatia's most beautiful karst rivers, enters the sea. Šibenik and Knin County has 242 islands, islets, and above-sea reefs. The most numerous group of islands is the Kornati, known for their

remarkable beauty.



Split is best experienced walking this ancient city. It is like traveling through time, with so many historical sights that will amaze you. But there is also the modern and vibrant Split. You will enjoy outstanding architecture, museums, bustling nightlife, festivals, and exhibitions. The parks are exceptional, such as the green space of Marjan Forest Park with its stunning views. Need more choices? Split had lovely beaches, hiking, boating, and lots more.



Exploring the Croatia Coastline from the Water

One of the most popular ways to explore the stunning Croatian coastline is by embarking on a sailing cruise. Seeing Croatia from the water can offer you an immersive journey while soaking in the breathtaking natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and fascinating historical sights of the Dalmatian coast. As you sail from one idyllic island to another, you'll discover charming coastal towns, enjoy crystal-clear waters, and savor delectable local cuisine. There are some fantastic [all-inclusive cruises around Croatia](#) that make for an unforgettable maritime adventure in this enchanting region.

Where to stay in Novigrad



Many travelers come to Novigrad for its beauty and laid-back ambiance. Our visit was a short day trip, but there are many choices for accommodations, such as private apartments, villas, holiday homes, rooms for rent, and the rare hotel. It would make for a relaxing vacation amongst stunning scenery. You will feel welcomed into this intimate and precious world, where life seems simpler. The two links below will help start your search. It is essential always to check recent reviews.

It is important to price out accommodations on various sites. [Expedia](#) is a US-based company, whereas [Booking.com](#) is Europe-based. Not all properties appear on both, so it is ideal to check both out. Our personal first choice is [Booking.com](#). If the establishment has a website, check the price there as well. Click the link below to check out hotels and vacation homes in the area. It may be just the motivation you need to start planning that next grand adventure.

[BOOK NOW](#)

Key Takeaways



Croatia is one of our favorite countries in the world, and gems like Novigrad have repeatedly won us over. To learn more about Croatia, check out our blog post, [Croatia: The Enchanting Gem of the Mediterranean](#).

On our way out, we stopped several times to take pictures of the town. We were no less taken back on our way out. Novigrad was breathtaking and perfect. We hope to return here one day and stay the night to experience this hidden wonder on the Croatian Dalmatia Coast.

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Date Created

March 28, 2024

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