

# WAYPOINTS



## DUBROVNIK, CROATIA

Dubrovnik is a city and port on the Croatian coast of the Adriatic Sea. The most southerly Croatian town, with a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and very dry, sunny summers, it is a destination of choice for history lovers.

In 1979, it joined the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites. The beginnings of Dubrovnik are veiled in legend. The prosperity of the city was historically based on maritime trade; as the capital of the maritime Republic of Ragusa, it achieved a high level of development, particularly during the 15th and 16th centuries, as it became notable for its wealth and skilled diplomacy.

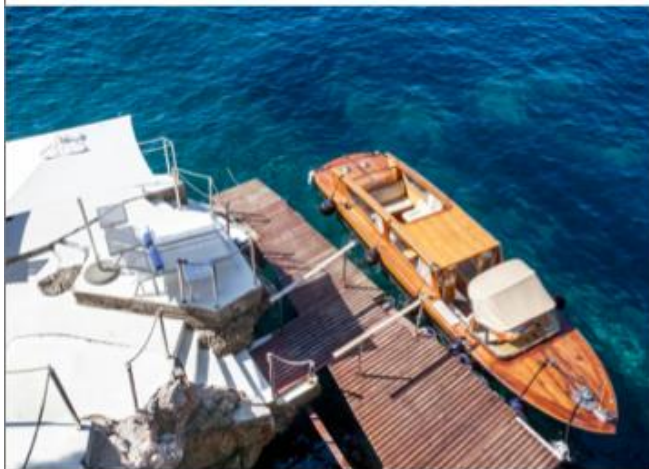
In 1991, after the break-up of Yugoslavia, Dubrovnik was besieged by Serbian and Montenegrin soldiers of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) for seven months and suffered significant damage from shelling. After repair and restoration works in the 1990s and early 2000s, Dubrovnik re-emerged as one of the top tourist destinations in the Mediterranean.

# VILLA DUBROVNIK

Perched above crystal clear waters, with the Old Town and Lokrum Island as a background, Villa Dubrovnik, in Croatia evokes romance forever.

BY SYLVIE PERON





walled-in city: Dubrovnik's Old Town is a filming location for the hit TV series Game of Thrones.



## O

On a quiet and narrow street on the outskirts of Dubrovnik, overlooking the Adriatic stands the pristine contemporary property belonging to the Mytha Hotel Anthology. Built into a cliff, the Hotel counts 56 rooms, including 6 suites and 2 villas, an exclusive in-house pool and a remarkable SPA, as well as three restaurants offering a variety of tasty Mediterranean dishes.

### IMMERSED IN AZURE

Flanked by maritime pines and cypresses, the secluded property disappears in a garden of bougainvillea, oleander and citrus trees. A stand-alone elevator in ultra-contemporary design descends from the street down to the lobby, on the hotel's fourth floor. The glittering reception is positioned to the side

to leave the view of the sea intact. With the Island of Lokrum and the Adriatic framed in the huge bay window, guests are immersed in the azure sea, with the impression of being on a cruise ship at anchor.

Italian interior architect Fabrizia Frezza is responsible for the design of the public places at Villa Dubrovnik. "I wanted to create lightness and elegance," says the architect.

Using her signature mix of craftsmanship, modern art and Mediterranean elements, Frezza made common areas one with the sea. There is a healthy use of stone as well as lots of sparkling white and bright blue sea tints. The sunny and refined mood is present throughout the entire hotel, as "an invitation to unwind as if floating on a cloud."

### ART PUNCTUATION

Art too plays a role. Sophisticated sculptures and paintings by international artists are on display in the hotel thanks to Liquid Art System, a gallery network based in Capri, Positano, London and Istanbul, that pursues a global approach to promoting contemporary art around the world. Adorning each guest room, works by Zagreb-based artist Duško Šibl tell the story of mankind through the sensual curves of the bodies of men and women.

There are eleven different types of rooms, most of them featuring terraces overlooking the sea and Dubrovnik's Old Town, whose historic centre is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The interior décor of the rooms has a nautical theme that relies on white wood, light colours and stone from the island of Brač. Each room is well appointed with all necessary amenities, ultra-comfortable beds, and a private outdoor area. The hotel has earned its reputation as a sanctuary for leisure and relaxation and counts many repeat customers. "Some of them have become friends over the years," confides Mirna Loncar Strazicic. At the helm of the Villa for the past eight years, the warm-hearted General Manager has ▶



► bequeathed her personal touch upon the Villa's staff. Friendly and attentive, clad in white pants and shirts, the young men and women are attentive to answer each guest's innermost desire providing high-end service in a simple, easy manner.

The Royal Suite boasts a 118-sqm teak terrace and a 180-degree view of the Adriatic from Dubrovnik's Old Town to Lokrum Island. The outdoor Jacuzzi allows immersing oneself with a glass of chilled Pošip wine as the sun goes down. The Duke Suite has a stunning view of the blue sea and is a cliff diver's dream since it is literally suspended over the water – the suite is connected to two other guest rooms. Finally, there is also an outdoor Jacuzzi on the 54-sqm teak terrace.

**VILLA SPA**

Managed by Sodashi, the holistic skincare brand created by New Zealander Megan Larsen that is 100 percent natural and restores tautness and shine to the skin, the Villa Spa proposes a wealth of massages. Combining the healing power of Asian effects with European techniques, using medium to strong movements to encourage and increase lymphatic circulation and balance the energy flow, the Signature body massage is a must. In Sanskrit Sodashi means completeness, splendour and purity.

**RAGUSA**

Croatia with its 4.4 million inhabitants counts among some of the world's oldest civilizations. Its indented coastline and Elaphiti Islands just off the

“For me, it’s important that guests feel, first and foremost welcome. The architect’s ego should not get in the way”

ARCHITECT FABRIZIA FREZZA.

Dalmatian coast have long been attractive to the yachting community. During the summer season sailing and motor yachts cruise the crystal clear waters, following a long tradition of maritime trade in the region. At the peak of its power, in the 15c and 16c century, the Republic of Dubrovnik was one of the most developed nations in the world. Its wealth was built on maritime transport and trade with the Ottoman Empire, Spain and Genoa. The Venetian Republic was its main rival.

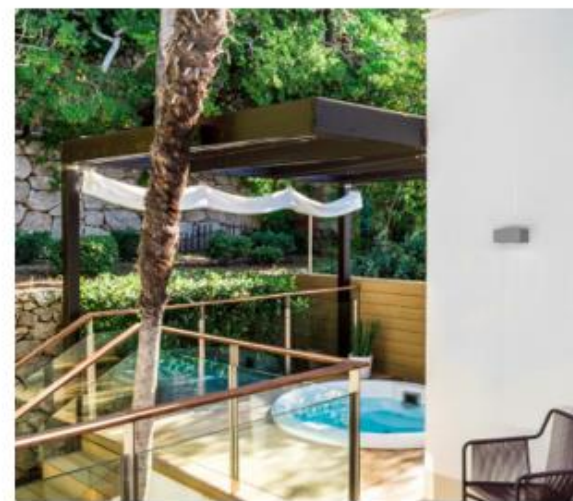
**OPEN-AIR MUSEUM**

Hopping aboard Villa Dubrovnik's own wooden Venetian vaporetto for the ten-minute ferry ride to the Old Town is the best way to take in the view of the coastal villas nestled in bougainvillea, rocky beaches and steep hills covered with Mediterranean 'maquis'. The hotel provides private tours of the historic town, once known as Ragusa and famed for its beauty, glorious history and majestic ramparts, which Croatians refer to as the 'Pearl of the Adriatic'. This open-air museum, with its churches and palaces that mix Baroque, Renaissance and Gothic styles delivers a natural set for many films and television series, including 'Game of Thrones'.

**CALM AND VOLUPTUOUS LUXURY**

Back at Villa Dubrovnik, the peace and quiet is all the more appreciated. In the shade of Parasol Pine trees, Al Fresco Bar Giardino is ideal to taste handmade spaghetti with lobster or a salad of Sicilian shrimp, cherry tomatoes & ginger prepared by Vietnamese Chef Hong.

Breakfast and diner are served on the terrace at Pjerin, with views across the bay to the Old Town of Dubrovnik. In the afternoon, while soaking up the sun on a beach lounge to the sound of waves washing gently on the rocks, drinks and food can be ordered. One can also retreat to the Library Lounge with a cup of tea or a detox smoothie. For aperitif, guests meet up at the Prosciutto & Wine Bar, on the hotel's rooftop with stunning views of Lokrum Island and Dubrovnik. As the city becomes more beautiful with every progressive nuance of darkness, romance sets in forever. ☾



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**Mytha Anthology:** Every moment is a feast to be shared and tasted with others, a ceremony that engages the mind and senses in the generous embrace of nature.

