48 HOURS IN DUBROVNIK

Yvonne Gordon falls for Medieval city walls and dreamy Adriatic views.

Don’t miss ...

FORTRESS The City Walls of Dubrovnik date back to Medieval times and on the two-kilometre stroll around them, you’ll see the old city gates, forts and towers, and enjoy views over the blue Adriatic Sea, the city’s tiny streets and the red rooftops. A few minutes away, climb the steps of Fort Lovrijenac for another perspective over the city walls.

PANORAMIC VIEWS Take the Dubrovnik Cable Car to the top of Mount Srd, where there’s a restaurant and panoramic terrace. For the best views down over the Old Town, walk a little away from the viewing terraces to the mountain top, from where you can watch the sun set over the Elaphiti Islands. There’s also a fort and a small museum about the Croatian War of Independence.

Drink at ...

COCKTAILS There are lots of little bars hidden in the backstreets but for some of the best cocktails, head to The Bar by Azur where they’ll mix you up a “spicy” with tequila, coriander, lime, pineapple, rhubarb juice, agave and ginger or a ‘woody’ with whiskey, tawny port, Prosek and chocolate bitters. (Kunićeva 5, +385 20 454 477; azurvision.com)

SUNSET It’s all about the views when you go for a sundowner cocktail in Dubrovnik and it’s hard to beat Abakus on the terrace of Hotel Excelsior, where you can sip cocktails, chat and listen to live piano music over dreamy vistas of the blue sea and the ancient city. (Franje Supilda 12, +385 20 353 000; adriaticluxuryhotels.com)

TAPAS Drop in to Poco Loco Dubrovnik Fusion & Cocktail Bar any time of day or evening for tasty tapas, burgers, craft beers and refreshing cocktails, while watching the world go by from a shaded outdoor table right in the heart of the Old Town at Gundulić Square. (Bunićeva Poljana 5, +385 95 191 1985)

NATURE To escape the buzz of the city, take the 15-minute ferry ride over to Lokrum Island, where you can enjoy walks in the gardens (and perhaps spot a few of the resident peacocks), explore old Benedictine Monastery ruins, have a picnic, sunbathe on the rocks or swim in the freshwater lake. There’s also a small Game of Thrones museum.

SMART FLIERS

- AER LINGUS flies from Dublin to DUBROVNIK daily.
**Sleep at ...**

**LUXURY** Completely refurbished last year, the landmark Hotel Excelsior Dubrovnik has been a favourite of celebrities and royals since it opened in 1913. Boasting some of the best views of Dubrovnik Old Town and the Adriatic, there are quiet gardens and a private seaside stone terrace and swimming spot. Rooms from €137. (Frana Supila 12, +385 20 333 000; adriaticluxuryhotels.com)

**BOUTIQUE** Just ten minutes’ walk from the city centre and set at the top of a cliff, Hotel Bellevue lives up to its name with its superb views. All rooms have floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the sea and there’s a large terrace plus a private beach for guests. Rooms from €108. (Pera Ćingrije 7, +385 20 330 000; adriaticluxuryhotels.com)

**Eat at ...**

**MODERN** Fresh seafood from the Adriatic such as sea bream or turbot, rich meat dishes and homemade bread and pasta are on the menu at Pantarul, which serves up Dalmatian and Italian-inspired cuisine in a buzzy setting – there’s a five-course tasting menu and the restaurant has a cookbook if you want to recreate some of its dishes at home. (Kralja Tomislava 1, +385 20 333 486; pantarul.com)

**QUAYSIDE** For a break from the madding crowds, take a lunchtime trip out to Restaurant Orsan for a relaxing waterside setting with daily fresh fish specials – tuck into octopus salad, oysters from Ston or sea bass carpaccio, along with a selection of local olive oils, cheeses, meats and organic vegetables. (Ulica Ivana Žajca 4, +385 20 436 822; restaurant-orsan-dubrovnik.com)

**ASIAN FUSION** You’ll find a selection of local Croatian produce cooked Oriental style with lots of spice at Azur, hidden in a back lane in the Old Town. There’s indoor and outdoor seating and sample dishes include CroAsian-style seafood laksa, spicy tuna donburi and meatballs with curry coconut sauce. (Pobijana 10, +385 20 334 806; azuvision.com)