

# COUNTRY & TOWN HOUSE



JUNE 2013 £3.60

## LITERARY LOVE-IN

Meeting the  
über-talented  
Taiye Selasi

## Summer arts season

*What artists are most  
looking forward to*

88 PAGES  
OF PRIME  
PROPERTY

# SOPHIE DAHL

The model mother and Brit brand Brora



Port Montenegro is a spanking new five-star marina filled with megayachts and luxury boutiques (this picture, below right and bottom)

# An old new world

*Montenegro is predicted to have one of the fastest growing tourist industries in the world so visit now before the crowds converge, says **Laura Iwill***

**T**he Adriatic coast, all Medieval villages and sweeping bays, has been undergoing a renaissance for a decade or so. Prior to the Balkans war of the early 1990s, the coastline had been a hotspot for European holiday-makers as well A-list stars, such as Sophia Loren, Elizabeth Taylor and Princess Margaret, who especially loved the luxury islet of Sveti Stefan (now an Aman Resort). But as the old Yugoslavia fell apart and new countries were drawn up around old territories, it was Croatia that found its feet most quickly. Yachties were drawn back to its myriad deserted islands, fresh fish and glugable wines, and cruise ships re-established their historical tours.

Croatia's neighbour, Montenegro, is mostly a wild, mountainous country in its interior, but along the coast almost 300km of quiet roads wind their way up and down the shoreline, giving views out to sea over picturesque towns and villages. It was only in 2006 that Montenegro gained independence from Serbia, and now international investment sees the country as a relatively safe haven and money is pouring into the coastal area. The World Travel and Tourism Council has predicted that Montenegro will have the fastest growing tourism industry in the world, with 10 per cent year-on-year growth. Tom Cruise, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie are regular visitors.

With plenty of flights into Dubrovnik, it is easy to hire a car and take off along the Adriatic coast. Make a week of it, exploring both country and town.



**COUNTRY**

## PORTO MONTENEGRO

**THE EXPERIENCE** Porto Montenegro is a new five-star marina village in the glittering Bay of Kotor, a Unesco World Heritage Site, where mountains soar skyward over the sheltered waters of the Adriatic. Luxury megayachts cruising the Med find berths here big enough to make it their home port, but it's anything but snooty. These gazillionaires are shunning the oppressive 'on-show' glitz of St Tropez for the relaxing vibe of this new international home-from-home. Spacious private residences sit among landscaped gardens, which you can rent for your stay. Terraces have wide views over the unspoiled bay, palm trees, green hills and soaring mountains. Bliss.





**WE LOVE** Purobeach is the marina's glamorous beachclub for lovers of Mediterranean modernism. Nat Rothschild, the financier, had his 40th birthday here. It might be hard to picture quite how vast the 64-metre infinity pool is, but it's way bigger than Michael Phelps is used to. All the more room to luxuriate in its glistening jet-black and neon-blue depths with 180-degree views over the tranquil Bay of Kotor, as chilled DJ beats take you from day to night. Purobeach is surrounded on three sides by the sea, and is thankfully sand-free, so you won't get grit in your sun-cream but you will get poolside waiter service bringing you cocktails and plates to share. Loungers from €30 per day.

**DISCOVERIES** Millionaires like to shop. A curated village high street is taking shape, with the likes of Heidi Klein beachwear, and jewellery by Carolina Bucci and Mawi, making sure that your holiday wardrobe stays bang up to date. The only other place in the world you will find Charles Finch's Chucs next to Wolf & Badger is on Mayfair's Dover Street. As for dining, Purobeach occupies a private peninsula in the bay, renowned for its slow sunsets, where you can eat on roof terraces as the music transforms the scene from beach club by day to night lounge. The village deli supplies you with breakfast and lunch – local cheeses and fresh juice – or tuck into excellent Japanese at Mitso.



Radisson Blue Dubrovnik Sun Gardens feels fresh and spacious (this picture, below and bottom)



that anchor here and the hoards of tourists can be overwhelming – just look at how the marble flagstones of the main pedestrian thoroughfare have been worn to a smooth patina. However, they come to appreciate that the fortress walls are the finest in the world. At 25 metres tall and a two-km circular walk, viewing the whole city from on-high is your ideal starting point. Strongly recommended is an hour's

walking tour of the old town to give you an instant feel for the history and culture (try [dubrovnikwalks.com](http://dubrovnikwalks.com)).

**WE LOVE** Arriving at the fortress by boat, from the sea the city walls tower above the cliffs, and the Adriatic sparkles in the heat of the day. As you near the port, don't be surprised to see children cooling off by jumping into the water or lines of kayakers exploring the coastline by paddle. Fishermen still bring their catch ashore here and tiddlers swarm by the jetties. Pile Gate in front of you was built in 1537 and you still need to cross the drawbridge to reach the inner gate (1460). Return shuttle boat rides from the Radisson Blu hotel to the port take half an hour.

**DISCOVERIES** You are on the coast, so visit the neighbouring islands, all accessible from the port. A regular ferry sails to Lokrum Island, just ten minutes offshore – it's a nature reserve with the sound of peacocks everywhere, covered in holm oaks, black ash, pine and olive trees, and the botanical garden includes giant cacti. Take your swimming things as the beaches, though rocky, are clean and uncrowded. Or if you fancy a day of sunbathing, take a boat to the Elafiti Islands and relax on the beach, eating seafood and drinking good local wine.

For all the facilities a resort has to offer, the Radisson Blu overlooks the sea, 12km or so from the city. The Croatian government has taken a dim view of over-developing the coastline, so the contemporary Radisson is on an old site, and feels fresh and spacious. Balconies feel private for breakfast or a drink before dinner, and the beach and all the pools are well served for bites throughout the day.



TOWN

## DUBROVNIK

**THE EXPERIENCE** A compact walled coastal city, Dubrovnik's 17th-century Baroque old town lies preserved within the ramparts. As you walk through 16th-century Pile Gate from the port, a breathtaking city is revealed. Despite receiving heavy shelling for a year (1991-2), Dubrovnik proudly defended itself and survived the siege. The subsequent \$10m restoration was rapid, using local materials and traditional techniques.

By the end of the 12th century the city was an important trading port. Today it's mostly cruise ships

## GET ME THERE

### PORTO MONTENEGRO

A three-bedroom apartment sleeping six, in Porto Montenegro costs around €2,000 per week in high summer. For more information on other residences for rent, contact [rentals@portomontenegro.com](mailto:rentals@portomontenegro.com) or visit [portomontenegro.com](http://portomontenegro.com). The Regent boutique hotel opens in the village next year.

### DUBROVNIK

Kuoni offers four nights with breakfast at the five-star Radisson Blu Resort at Dubrovnik Sun Gardens, Croatia, in a deluxe room, including flights with British Airways from Gatwick with private transfers. Prices in May from £730pp, based on two sharing. To book quote KE1070. 01306 747008. [kuoni.co.uk](http://kuoni.co.uk)