

EDITOR PICKS

## From Dubrovnik To Hvar: Why Croatia Makes For The Perfect Honeymoon Destination

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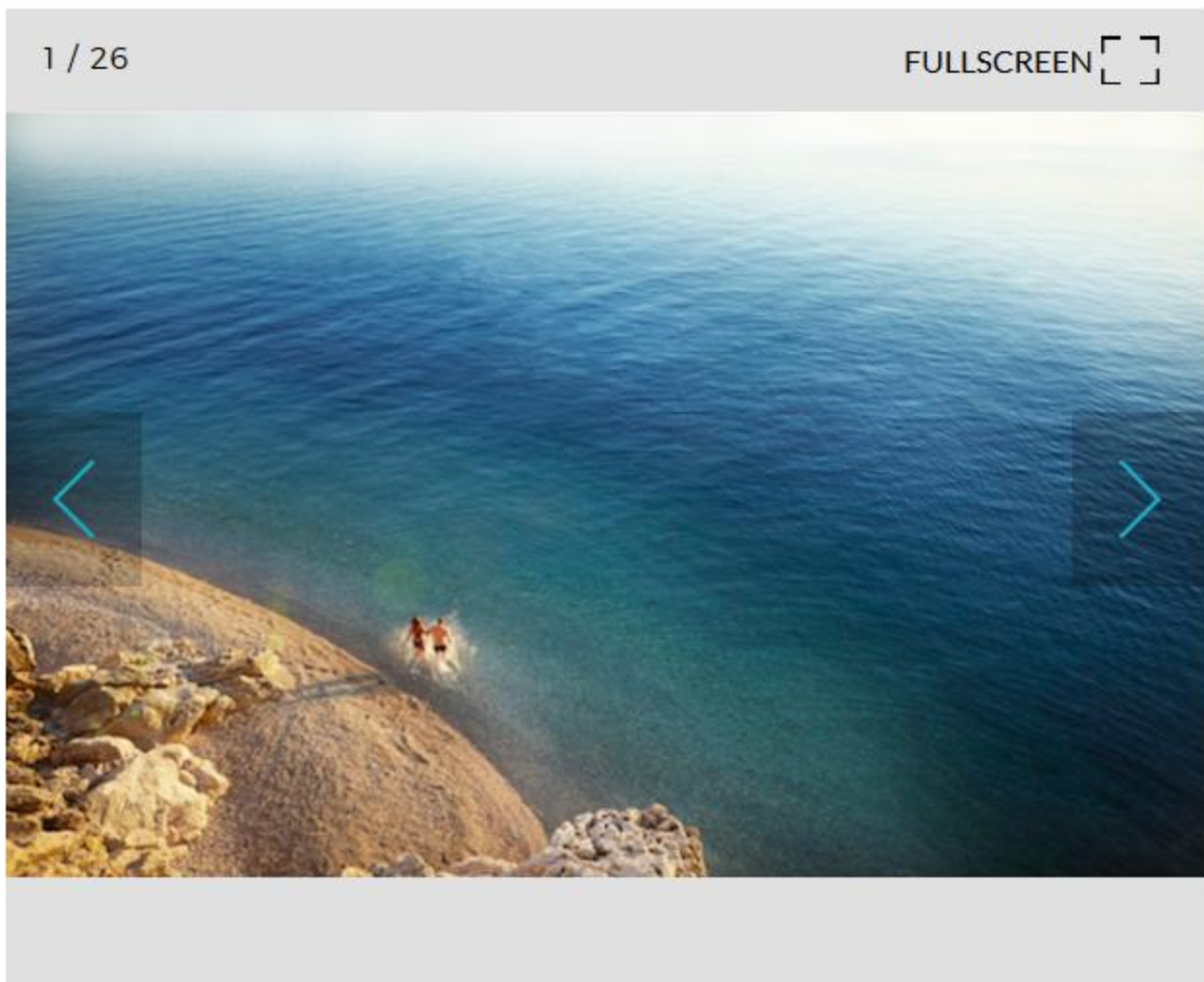
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As you flit between the lush, green islands along the Dalmatian Coast, sipping on Mai Tais with toes dipped in turquoise waters, it's hard to remember a time when Croatia was not only a destination we'd never have considered, but one that was utterly war-torn. These days, little evidence of the early 90s civil war remains to be seen, unless you've got a keen historical eye and a well-informed guide in tow. In today's calmer times, whether you're a culture vulture or a sun worshipper, a sailing enthusiast or the most eager of foodies, Croatia has become the European traveller's most beloved gem. From the people, who are warm and friendly, to the most delectable of seafood dishes, the staggeringly beautiful scenery and the hypnotically blue sea, there's simply not enough time in the world to list the reasons why you should skip France, Spain or Italy in favour of this country. Getting around is blissfully stress-free and as for what to do? Well, how much time do you have?

Without exaggerating, you could take the three-hour flight from Dublin to Dubrovnik once a year for twenty years, and still manage to have an entirely different holiday each time you travel. One year, you could start off at the beloved old town and travel your way up toward the more affordable Split and Zadar, or you could base yourself in Dubrovnik and spend your days lolling about on the Elaphiti Islands. Party goers will find their rhythm on the island of Hvar while those after the ultimate chill out will adore Mljet, Korcula and Brac. Having sampled a little bit of everything, below you'll find some highlights that will have a particular appeal to Irish newlyweds.

### Sun Gardens, Dubrovnik

Testament to the reputation of the Radisson worldwide, the Sun Gardens Dubrovnik complex is heaven's answer to a hotel. With several pool options, bars and restaurants and a private beach, not to mention their state of the art spa facilities, you'll be hard pushed to find a property to rival this one. Despite its size, it still boasts an intimate, never crowded atmosphere. For those who want for nothing more than to fly and flop, the Sun Gardens, about a half hour outside of Dubrovnik, is just the ticket. Of course if you're after a little more activity, you'll be well catered to here. There are numerous water sporting activities, daily excursions and a private shuttle boat that takes you right into the old town of Dubrovnik. Ideally, you'll top and tail your trip to Croatia with two to three nights here for the ultimate wind-down. If Carlsberg did hotels... seriously.



The pool at sunset, Radisson Blu Sun Gardens, Dubrovnik

**Eat** at The Market for fish platters fit for a King.

**Do** rise early for the best outdoor seats at breakfast. Do split your time between the beach and the pool for the best of both worlds.

**Don't** bother packing beach towels; the hotel provides these for you. Don't make too many plans to leave the complex, you just won't want to once you're there. Don't sweat it if the clouds descend, you'll happily spend a day at the spa without missing the absence of the sun.