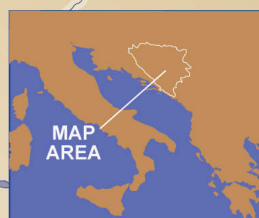




BOSNIA: THREE RIVERS

Itinerary



CROATIA

Banja Luka

Jajce

BOSNIA &
HERZEGOVINA

SERBIA

SARAJEVO

Skakavac

Konjic

Lukomir

Mostar

TARA RIVER

MONTENEGRO

ADRIATIC SEA

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| MEETING PLACE: | Sarajevo Airport - Sarajevo, Bosnia |
| MEETING TIME: | Anytime on Day 1 |
| RETURN TIME: | Anytime Day 9 |
| RIVER RATING: | Class II-IV |
| AGE LIMIT: | Minimum age is 12 |
| TRIP LENGTH: | 9 Days / 8 Nights |
| ACTIVITIES: | Rafting, hiking, touring |

One of Europe's last hidden secrets has to be Bosnia—a country with diverse landscapes including a mass of emerald green mountains intricately divided with never-ending over and underground rivers. Bosnia borders with Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro creating a spectacular mix of cultures which can be seen in the diversity of the architecture (and more). Geographically, the country resembles the shape of a heart reflecting the nature of its people. Expect to be treated like family by the locals who have shown warm hospitality to travelers and strangers throughout history.

AWARD-WINNING NATURE-BASED ADVENTURES SINCE 1969

O.A.R.S. has been in business for over 40 years and that is no accident. Great trips on some of the world's best rivers and coastlines are the recipe for this success. Always focused on our clients and their vacations, it is our genuine belief that river trips and nature-based adventures are extremely valuable life experiences. With that as our foundation, we have committed ourselves over the years to providing the best trips available, always with an eye on improvement

WHITewater

- Some of the best rafting in Europe is in Bosnia! The World Rafting Championships were held here in 2009 with many international teams competing from more than thirty countries. The Neretva River is rated as one of the most beautiful whitewater rivers in the world. The Rakitnica Canyon, a tributary gorge to the Neretva, is the most unexplored in Europe while the Tara River Gorge is the deepest in Europe! Spectacular canyons, lush vegetation, tributary waterfalls of varying volumes, and fun (and exciting) Class II-IV (weather level dependant) whitewater make this an activity and adventure not to be missed while visiting Bosnia.

Sample Itinerary

We pride ourselves in running a relaxed and always flexible schedule to accommodate the groups' interest, serendipitous encounters and localized weather conditions.

Day 1: Arrive in Sarajevo, Bosnia / Welcome Dinner

- Upon arriving in Sarajevo, pass through customs. You will be met by an O.A.R.S. representative and transferred to your hotel. Accommodation will be in Sarajevo for the next four nights. Depending on your arrival time, you will have the rest of the afternoon to relax after your flight before a welcome dinner and trip orientation this evening. This is a great opportunity to meet the trip leader and other members of the group, ask questions, and discuss further details about the upcoming trip. *Hotel Art, or similar (D)*

Day 2: Tour Sarajevo, Hike Waterfall Sakavac (Grasshopper)

- After breakfast we will take a tour of Sarajevo, a city famous for its traditional religious diversity, with adherents of Islam, Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Judaism coexisting there for centuries. Due to this long and rich history and coexistence, Sarajevo has often been called the "Jerusalem of Europe."
- Sarajevo is the true crossroads where east meets west. A cosmopolitan city that effortlessly incorporates its Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian and Slavic roots, Sarajevo is a cultural and architectural feast for visitors, and is certainly one of Europe's loveliest and most interesting cities. *Lonely Planet*, in December 2009 listed Sarajevo as one of the top ten cities to visit in 2010.
- Sarajevo is also the political and cultural capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It's a city vibrant with cafes, music, art and world-class cultural events. Sarajevo has seen a remarkable renaissance since the end of the Bosnian War in 1995. Most of the city has been repaired and rebuilt in resplendence beyond its history, though some signs of the war still remain.
- Lunch today is at "Inat Kuca", also known as 'Spite House.' Prior to 1914, the Austro-Hungarians who ruled Sarajevo wanted land in the old town district to build a hall and library. The land had a home on it and, despite offering the owner money, he refused and continued to refuse even when told that he had to move. When the officials threatened him, he moved the house and rebuilt it, piece by piece, on the other side of the Miljacka River, as a way of spiting on the officials.
- After lunch we'll take a short drive by public bus to the village of Nahorevo, named after a German (Nahor) who was a shepherd hundreds of years ago in this neatly tucked valley. From the foothills below Seven Sources, we'll begin a moderate hike along a mountain road to the top of the Skakavac waterfall (Grasshopper). Skakavac is the largest continual flowing waterfall in Bosnia and Herzegovina at 98 meters. A soothing break and some tea or coffee awaits us here before we head down through thick beech forests to the base of the waterfall where there is a fantastic view of water, mist and forest. We

wind our way back through the forest to the village, and perhaps down to the hunting lodge for an ice-cold drink. This hike offers great cool walking during the hot summer months through pine and beech forests. The area is Sarajevo's backyard of beautiful waterfalls, outstanding views, medieval gravestones and wildlife—A truly amazing place in nature so close to Sarajevo.

- The evening is free to enjoy the city and find a delicious meal to end a great day. Our local guides have many wonderful places to recommend where you can sample the fine local cuisine. *Hotel Art, or similar* (B, L)

Day 3: Tara River Rafting

- After breakfast we will drive to the launch point for our rafting adventure on the Tara River.
- In Southeastern Bosnia, the Tara River winds its way along the border of Montenegro where we will explore the “Grand Canyon” of the Balkans, on an unforgettable adventure. This 1,300-meter canyon has created some of the best rafting and kayaking in Europe and is an oasis of protected area that has a long tradition of water sports and family outings and can accommodate a wide range of outdoor enthusiasts. Boasting Class III-V rapids at various water levels (expect Class III during August), the Tara offers some of the most adrenaline-packed rafting in Europe, stunning wilderness and unforgettable landscapes.
- After a wonderful day on the river and surrounding countryside, we will return to our hotel in Sarajevo. *Hotel Art, or similar* (B, L)

Day 4: Lukomir-Umoljani Hiking (Bjelasnica Mountain)

- Discover one of Europe's last medieval highland cultures tucked deep in the heart of the Dinaric Alps and visit Bosnia's highest and most isolated mountain village at over 1,400 meters above sea level. The medieval traditional lifestyles of the Dinaric highlanders are still practiced here, providing a unique window into Europe's ancient past. Traditional dress, the occasional turban and fez are still worn and go hand in hand with the more contemporary bliss' of everyday life, electricity and running water. On the edge of the village you will be treated with a rare view of Rakitnica Canyon which drops 800 meters below and of neighboring Obalj and Visočica Mountains. We will introduce you to the villagers and their fascinating lifestyles. It is a truly unique opportunity to find out firsthand from the villagers how they live in this beautiful but difficult environment. After a short walk through the village, we hike to the village of Umoljani (3.5- to 4-hour hike, easy to moderately strenuous). The hike will depend on local weather conditions.
- If you prefer not to hike, you may choose to travel by van between Lukomir and Umoljani, or alternatively you may like to spend more time in Sarajevo and visit the excellent museums. *Hotel Art, or similar* (B, L)

Day 5: Vrbas River Rafting (daytime & nighttime rafting) / Banja Luka

- Today we depart Sarajevo and drive to Banja Luka, the second largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Situated on the Vrbas River, one of the most beautiful mountain rivers, Banja Luka is well-known as the city of greenery, because of its tree-lined avenues, boulevards, gardens and parks.
- En route we raft the Vrbas River, a fast mountain river, with several whitewater sections and pool drops. Just 11 kilometers from Banja Luka, the Vrbas was home to the 2005 European Whitewater Rafting Championships and the 2009 World Rafting Championships. The Vrbas crosses two canyons: Canyon

Tijesno (5 km) and Canyon Podmilacje (8 km). Depending on the water level, the river runs Class is III-IV. As well as the rafting experience, there is excellent hiking and walking trails which provide breathtaking views of the river below.

- We continue to Banja Luka after the rafting adventure and check in to our hotel. Later this evening after dinner, you'll have the opportunity for night rafting! For the first time in the history of the Rafting World Championships, night racing was held on the Vrbas River in 2009. You will be amazed at how beautiful and different the rapids look under the spotlights. *Hotel Vidovic, Banja Luka or similar* (B, L)

Day 6: Banja Luka / Mostar

- There is free time this morning to tour around Banja Luka before we drive south to Mostar. Banja Luka is a delightful, charming and peaceful city with no sign of the 1990's conflict, or of the 1969 earthquake which demolished almost 80% of the city although the main clock in the centre's square still shows the time when the earthquake struck.
- En route to Mostar, we'll stop at Jajce which represents the multi-layered historical mosaic stemming back from pre-Roman times to Tito's Yugoslavia. This fortified hilltop town offers a fun-filled mélange of cultural and natural heritage, and is also the former residence of Bosnian kings. Time permitting, we'll visit an underground church and catacombs and the Church of Saint Mary (Fethija Mosque) with its bell tower of Saint Luke.
- After lunch we continue on to Mostar. Perhaps most famous for its 16th-century old bridge (Stari Most), Mostar is the cultural and political capital of Herzegovina. The heart of the old town, highlighted by the Stari Most and the turquoise Neretva River that flows below it, has been a magnet for tourists for many decades. This quaint Ottoman old quarter is a living tribute to the ingenuity and beauty of Ottoman architecture. *Hotel Bristol, Mostar or similar* (B, L)

Day 7: Neretva River Rafting

- Today we'll raft the Neretva River. The river's unique emerald green color earned it the name of "emerald of Herzegovina." This mountain river is quite a marvel and is known as the 'Nile of Herzegovina' and the 'spring of life' in this area. At 220 kilometers long, it is the longest river in the eastern Adriatic Basin and flows through Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.
- The source of the Neretva is located beneath Zelengora Mountain in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina. It begins with a narrow and fast water flow, forming breathtaking canyons, cliffs, and hollows and provides a wild and pristine ambiance. The upper canyon is also one of the most exciting rafting areas in Europe. You can expect deep canyon walls, endemic flora and fauna, and a wild and pristine ambiance that only the Neretva can provide.
- Return to Mostar after our rafting adventure. *Hotel Bristol, Mostar or similar* (B, L)

Day 8: Tour Mostar / Return to Sarajevo / Farewell Dinner

- After breakfast we will enjoy a tour of Mostar. This is a fascinating town and one we'll all wish we had more time to explore. Return to Sarajevo after lunch for overnight lodging and a farewell dinner as we prepare to leave this wonderful country. *Hotel Art, or similar* (B, L, D)

Day 9: Depart for home

- After breakfast, and our check-out of the hotel, we will have a final coffee before our departure from Sarajevo airport. (B)

What's Included?

- Skilled professional tour leader with specialist local guides in Sarajevo, Mostar, Jayce and Banja Luka
- 8 nights lodging (based on double occupancy)
- All meals as indicated in the itinerary (B-breakfast, L-lunch, D-dinner)
- All activities and related equipment as outlined in the itinerary
- Airport transfers on arrival and departure dates and ground transportation

What's Not Included?

- Flights to and from Sarajevo, Bosnia
- Airport departure taxes
- Meals not covered in the itinerary
- Sodas and alcoholic drinks (one glass of soda or an alcoholic beverage is included at lunch)
- Single supplement US \$465
- Insurance of any kind, including mandatory medical and evacuation coverage
- Items of personal nature (an equipment list will be provided)
- Gratuities

SOMETHING VOLUNTARY

- In reviewing your statement, you'll note a \$1/person/day donation to Waterkeeper Alliance, a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to fishable, swimmable and drinkable waterways worldwide. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly to worldwide watershed protection and your contribution is tax-deductible. This donation is voluntary and may be removed from your invoice if you choose not to participate. Please notify our office if you would prefer to delete the donation from your balance.
- The O.A.R.S. Foundation is a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 organization with the express goal of providing opportunities for young people to experience the magic of a river trip. Visit www.oarsfoundation.org to learn more about how your tax deductible donation can change young lives for the better.

Terms & Conditions

Reservations & Deposit

- A \$500/person deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 90 days prior to departure.

Cancellations & Refunds

- If you find it necessary to cancel your trip, please notify us as soon as possible. All payments are nonrefundable and we regret that we cannot make exceptions for personal emergencies. For this reason, **we strongly urge you to investigate trip insurance** (see Insurance).

Medical

- Under most circumstances, if you are of an adventurous spirit and in reasonably good health, you should have no problem enjoying a Travel Outdoors trip. People with medical conditions, including pregnancy, should have a physician's approval before taking an adventure travel trip.

Insurance

- Although every effort is made to insure a safe trip for all, **we require that you purchase medical evacuation insurance to participate in this expedition.** Call Travel Insurance Services at 800-937-1387 or visit their website at www.travelinsure.com/what/imedhigh.htm?32635 for inexpensive options that cover this requirement. We also strongly recommend that you protect yourself, your belongings, and your vacation through the purchase of a short-term traveler's policy. A trip cancellation policy covers your non-refundable payments in most cases, should you have to cancel your trip at the last minute due to illness or injury, as well as including the coverage required above. Trip participants should realize that in the event of illness or injury on a river trip, evacuation could be prolonged, difficult, and expensive. Personal belongings and cameras are carried entirely at the owner's risk, and we accept no responsibility for lost, damaged, delayed, or stolen property.

Liability Waiver

- Everyone is required to sign a standard release form before the trip, acknowledging awareness that some risks are associated with the trip. Safety is of the utmost concern on our trips. However, due to the nature of the activities, a condition of your participation is that you will sign this form and return it to our office before the trip begins. Anyone who refuses to sign the form will not be allowed to participate, and consistent with Travel Outdoors cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

Responsibility—An Important Notice

- Travel Outdoors, Inc., Exploring Bosnia Herzegovina and cooperating agencies act only in the capacity of agent for the participants in all matters relating to transportation and/or all other related travel services, and assume no responsibility however caused for injury, loss or damage to person or property in connection with any service, including but not limited to that resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, detention, annoyance, delays and expenses arising from quarantine, strikes, theft, pilferage, force majeure, failure of any means of conveyance to arrive or depart as scheduled, civil disturbances, government restrictions or regulations, and discrepancies or change in transit over which it has no control. Reasonable changes in itinerary may be made where deemed advisable for the comfort and well being of the participants, including cancellation due to water fluctuation, insufficient bookings (we require a minimum of 4 guests) and other factors. There is risk in whitewater rafting, particularly during high-water conditions. Rafts, dories and kayaks do capsize. You could be swept overboard. Your guide will make every attempt to assist, but you must be strong and agile enough to “self-help” and “float-it-out” without further endangering yourself or others. We reserve the right not to accept passengers weighing more than 260 pounds or with a waist/chest size exceeding 56 inches. We may decide, at any time, to exclude any person or group for any reason we feel is related to the safety of our trips. We are experienced at accommodating people with various disabilities. Please give us an opportunity to make you feel welcome. We need to discuss any special requirements ahead of time. On advancement of deposit the depositor agrees to be bound by the above recited terms and conditions. Prices subject to change without notice.

Exploring Bosnia Herzegovina:

- Exploring Bosnia Herzegovina, a travel partner of Travel Outdoors, Inc., is the operator of this trip. Upon arrival in Sarajevo, Exploring Bosnia Herzegovina staff will meet you and escort you throughout the program. These staff members are the very best and will strive to ensure your complete satisfaction.

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