

Here's why Montenegro is the gateway to yachting paradise

The Adriatic Sea has remained a place firmly planted in history for trade, transportation and recreation with coastlines ruled by the Ostrogoths, Lombards, and the Byzantine Empire.

Right in the heart of the Adriatic, offering easy access to Croatia and Venice in the North or Albania and Greece to the South, is Montenegro. If you know this small jewel of a country, it will come as no surprise to learn that Condé Nast Traveler named it as one of [2017's emerging destinations](#). The yacht set in particular, has quickly recognised the importance of Montenegro and its relaxed, welcoming approach to yachting (certainly compared to its neighbours that still exercise strict charter regulations and licenses).

This is no better exemplified than Montenegro's only superyacht marina, [Porto Montenegro](#), which is also the only marina in the world awarded Platinum status by The Yacht Harbour Association – and for good reason.

If you're planning on visiting the Adriatic, Montenegro should be a key feature of your itinerary – for guests and crew alike. Breathtakingly beautiful and full of charm, Montenegro is the ideal getaway if you're seeking a yacht charter itinerary that offers diverse scenery, interesting culture, amazing cuisine and unique experiences with Adriatic authenticity. Here, we outline some of the important and perhaps lesser known qualities when planning your visit.

Refined luxury at Porto Montenegro

Porto Montenegro is the crowning glory of the Adriatic charter destinations and deserves to be on all Balkan charter

itineraries, with easy accessibility via Tivat Airport that is on the doorstep and Podgorica and Dubrovnik also within driving distance.

Crucially, foreign vessels have the ability to remain in Montenegrin waters with no limit on time, meaning Porto Montenegro is a dynamic gateway to many activities and experiences that offer seclusion and the serenity you need to escape the daily grind.



There are many designer shops in Porto Montenegro | Image credit: godubrovnik.com

Porto Montenegro has redefined the term 'destination marina'; as well as excellent restaurants, lively bars, day spa and beach club you'll find a maritime museum and superb shopping with premium global brands such as Dior, Cartier and Gucci. Charter sightseeing options nearby are vast from hiking up the fortification walls at Kotor, strolling around Perast to kayaking in the clear water at Dobra Luka.

Start ticking off all the boxes as the benefits for visiting this full-service marina are impressive – spectacular Bay of Kotor views, 0% VAT on charters, tax and duty-free fuel, tax-free wine and spirits, 7% VAT on marine related services plus

economically attractive investment opportunities for crew, guests and owners.



Our Lady of the Rocks in the Bay of Kotor | Image credit: wanderingtrader.com

Porto Montenegro's yacht-friendly legislation and cost saving for yachts means a long-term lease is instantly appealing. The deal is made even sweeter with an exceptional offer* that includes 2 nights accommodation at the 5-star Regent Porto Montenegro Hotel, VIP transfers from select airports nearby, a guided tour of the marina facilities, wine tasting and more (*conditions apply) so you can experience the heart of Montenegrin hospitality from the outset, find out more [here](#).

Continuing on your Montenegrin yacht charter, don't miss sampling the nightlife at Budva, admiring the picturesque setting at Sveti Stefan or exploring the historic sites in Bar. Ulcinj, the southernmost town near Albania is worth visiting for its beaches, diving and interestingly, flamingos. In cooler months, Montenegro is a hive of activity with snowmobiling, skiing and heli-sightseeing all possible.

Adriatic beach life

Far from the hedonist beach clubs of Ibiza or monotony of St Tropez, the beaches of Albania sprawl out from where the Adriatic and Ionian Seas collide and are true hidden gems.



Gjipe Beach in Albania

Just 150 nautical miles south from Montenegro, you can be surrounded by clear turquoise water and some of the most picturesque beaches that you'll think you're in the Caribbean – without the price tag to match. For Instagram-worthy beaches, cruise to Gjipe Beach, Bunec or Kakome Beach. If you're looking for a mix of beach life and culture, Ksamil near Saranda has fantastic beaches and is part of the Butrint National Park which has important ancient ruins and a biodiverse lake.

A slice of heaven in Corfu

Easily included in an Adriatic yacht charter starting or finishing in Montenegro, Corfu is the original matriarch of Greek islands. Head ashore for a wander around Corfu Old Town that is UNESCO World Heritage-listed and step back in time

seeing the ancient fortifications with Sicilian and Venetian influence. Achingly pretty, the old town rivals Portofino for colourful waterside buildings.



Old Town Corfu | Image credit: telegraph.co.uk

Further inland, there are some magnificent Byzantine archaeological sites or simply anchor near one of the many fantastic beaches such as Mirtiotissa for a relaxed snapshot of Greek life.

Discovering coastal charm

The western Adriatic doesn't hold all the appeal of this region; beautiful towns across the Strait of Otranto line the coast of Puglia and are a wonderful stopover on the way to or from Montenegro. The best time to explore is in the off-season when day trippers have long left their summer boltholes.



Ostuni in Puglia

Ostuni sits atop a hill overlooking the sea with white-washed houses and is a quaint town to explore with narrow medieval alleyways. Further south, Otranto has ancient fortifications, a pleasant beach and is popular for the Capo d'Otranto lighthouse. There are also great seafood restaurants and because Puglia is famous for its olive oil production don't miss going ashore for a meal of fresh fish, Italian bread and warm olive oil.

When you visit [Porto Montenegro](#), you'll understand why the Adriatic has more to discover than meets the eye.