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The Food and Wine of Istria

Istria is a feast for the eyes. Its streams flow to the sea through deep valleys and gullies which bring to mind the ancient local myths about giants. As you get to know Istria you will notice more and more enchanting details: church facades and portals, tiny village alleyways with their specific architectural touches, the babble of a stream, the blossoming cherries. Everything is warm-hearted and friendly here: nature, the towns and the people.



Motovun and a Truffle Hunt *Morning:* visit Motovun, an old, acropolis type of settlement built on the top of a 277 meters high hill; its appearance has not changed much since the 12th century. Recent research indicates that Motovun is situated on the crossroad of the Earth energy meridians which emanate positive energy. The town has a rich architectural heritage. Your visit includes: the town gate and fortress, the renaissance town palace, the loggia, St. Stephan's parish church, town cisterns and old houses with coat of arms on their portals.



Afternoon: truffles have been extracted in Istria since ancient times; Roman Emperors and Austrian-Hungarian aristocrats knew about them and consumed them because of the outstanding taste. You will learn a little bit more about truffles and truffle hunters when we take you truffle hunting in the nearby wood accompanied by the trained dogs. Thereafter, you will learn how to prepare a meal with truffles and enjoy the local wine, cheese and truffle flavored honey, pate and other truffle delicacies which you can also purchase at the estate.

It's also possible to organize night hunting which is particularly interesting because the forest is very quiet and dogs are more concentrated on the hunt.

Wine Roads Istria's wine production is concentrated in 4 wine centers - Buje, Porec, Pazin and Rovinj. With the help of local vintners, you can choose one of the international award winners or one the wines made in the traditional manner.

Over the past century, the Istrian malmsey has borne the title of the most famous and ubiquitous wine of the Istrian peninsula. Regular abundant vintages, exuberant growth, resistance to disease and the quality of wine produced from it, have assured its standing. Depending on the chemical processing procedure, nurture and vintage year, its color varies from straw to golden yellow. Its scent primarily reminds of the locust flower scent. The contents of its main components make her an average to full-bodied wine, its volume of alcohol ranging from 11.5 to 13.5 with a delicate bouquet and fresh taste. It complements most superbly the entire variety of the Mediterranean cuisine.



Istria's wine list contains three wine sorts: malvazija (malmsey) and muskat (muscatel) of the white wines and teran of the red wines. The Istrian malvazija of a century-old tradition varies in color from hay-yellow to golden, while its odor is similar to the locust blossom. Due to its refreshing aroma it is best served with sea food. Teran, praised by Casanova, differs from malvazija in color. Ruby-red, of a full, fruity scent and flavor, it is best served with meat stews and venison. A great many connoisseurs of Istrian wines will tend to rank highest the Istrian muscatel or, to be more specific, the muscatel produced in and around Momjan, owing to its gold-like color, intense bouquet of wild clove pink and its exquisite aroma. Dry and sweet. Worthy complement of dessert and many other delicacies.

Olive Oil Visit to an ancient fishing village surrounded by vineyards and olive groves, not far from Pula. There are over 2 hectares of specialized olive groves with 500 trees. The Extra Virgin is a beautiful intense limpid golden yellow color with delicate green hues. Its aroma is complex and definite, with elegant notes of artichoke, chicory, lettuce and rich hints of mint and rosemary. Its taste is rotund and ample, with a spicy flavor of black pepper and sweet almond. Bitterness is powerful and pungency is distinct. Ideal on bruschette with tomatoes, octopus salads, marinated tuna, baked radicchio, porcini mushroom soups, pasta with artichokes, blue fish au gratin, stewed red meat or game, aged cheese.



Istria Prosciutto Istrian ham is a Croatian brand, highly regarded by gourmands worldwide due in large part to our strict adherence to a long tradition of respectful production - from the careful way pigs are raised, to the elaborate treatment of the meat, to its curing with a unique blend of spices that give the ham its distinctive fragrance. Since Istrian ham is produced without nitrites, nitrates or smoke, which also contains noxious chemicals, it is considered one of the most healthful cured meats in all of the Mediterranean.



Methods for removing the skin, using the "kasela" (wooden form), creating a rub with salt, pepper, laurel, rosemary and sometimes garlic, and drying the ham in the bura (cold, north-eastern wind) remain closely guarded secrets unique to each farmer. Normally dried for one year, slices of young Istrian ham are heated in olive oil and finished with a splash of malvasia. At Easter, part of the shoulder-joint or "špaleta" is boiled while the other part is slowly roasted on a rotisserie. In the Istrian tradition, one meal each day typically includes pork.

For a personalized itinerary of Istria, please contact Danijela@arezza.net