Our Lady of the Rocks (photo by Carol Mills)

According to legend, two sailors returned from dangerous seas to Perast on July 22, 1452. They saw an Icon of the Madonna and Child on a rock in the harbor and believed it was a sign of a miracle for their safe return. The sailors built a small island by piling rocks in the harbor with a chapel to honor the Madonna. In 1630, the island was enlarged by sinking ships and piling more rocks in the harbor. A new, larger Catholic church was built. It is a must-visit site.
Tourist Sites Outside Kotor City

1) Sveti Stefan
2) Old Town Budva “Stari Grad” walking tour
3) Perast
4) Our Lady of the Rocks Church and Museum, 5) Ferry Boat Ride

Tourist Sites Outside the City of Kotor, Montenegro:

You’ll need transportation to visit sites outside of the City of Kotor. We joined a private tour organized by Avril Cude and advertised on Cruise Critic Roll Calls. It was a 7-hour tour to visit four of the most popular tourist sites in Montenegro as described by the tourism bureau, see http://www.visit-montenegro.com/top-5-places/

• “Sveti Stefan is one of the TOP 10 glamorous A-list destinations in the world.” We drove though this exclusive, private resort to view the outstanding facilities and beautiful beaches.

• “Budva is known as the metropolis of tourism.” We spent an hour on a walking tour of Medieval Old Town Budva “Stari Grad”. We walked the winding narrow streets to explore historic churches, the fortress, a museum, and many shops, cafes, restaurants, and hotels.

• We took a ferry boat across the channel and could get out of our van to take photos.

• “Our Lady of the Rocks” is one of the most popular tourist sites in Montenegro. The church is dedicated to the Madonna and Child based on a legend that dates back to 1452. It is a beautiful church and museum with historic paintings, sculpture, icons, tapestry, etc.

• “Perast is one of the most beautiful little places in Boka Bay.” Perast is a wonderful old town, with wonderful old architecture. We had free time for lunch at one of the restaurants along the bay with excellent views of the town, mountains, boats, etc.

• “Kotor is rated #1 as the Best Travel City for 2016.” We only had 30 minutes for a brief walking tour of the area near Old Town. You need several hours to tour Old Town Kotor. Plan another cruise or a vacation in Montenegro to have more time to visit all the tourist sites.

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLAN AHEAD – you’ll need transportation to tourist sites outside the city of Kotor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map of our private tour to Sveti Stefan, Old Town Budva, Our Lady of the Rocks, and Perast</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sveti Stefan Islet</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking route from our bus stop to the entrance to Old Town Budva</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Tour Map of Old Town Budva “Stari Grad”</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites outside the Old Town walls: Ruins of Roman Era Necropolis, the Old Bell, towers, Western Gate entrance</td>
<td>7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to the beach</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Churches: Santa Maria in Punta, St Saba of Jerusalem Church, Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, St John Church</td>
<td>10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citadela Fortress, library, and museum</td>
<td>11-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaeological museum, Marine Gate</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving route to Perast – ferry boat ride at Lepetani</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St George Island and Monastery, Our Lady of the Rocks man-made island, legend of the Madonna and child</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady of the Rocks Church</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady of the Rocks Museum has many paintings, silver votive tablets, and a famous tapestry</td>
<td>17-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perast with free time for lunch</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User Feedback, Copyright Notice, Terms and Conditions for use of Toms Port Guides</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CAVEAT

Information contained herein is believed to be accurate. PLEASE verify the information you use for your travel plans. Opinions expressed are my own. This port guide is protected by copyright law - see the last page of this guide for legal notices.

Tom Sheridan

I would like to thank Carol Mills and Avril Cude for their help on this port guide.
PLAN AHEAD, you’ll need transportation to tourist sites outside the city of Kotor

My preference is a pre-arranged private tour with a small group. We were fortunate to join a tour organized by our good friend Avril Cude and advertised on Cruise Critic Roll Calls. Avril does her homework in selecting a tour company. She “done good” organizing the tour from Kotor.
The tour company was Miro & Sons D.M.C., Stari Grad 420, 85330 Kotor, Montenegro
www.miroandsons.com info@miroandsons.com tel: +382 69 369 994 fax: +382 32 322 062

This was one of the best private tours I’ve had from a cruise port!

- Our guide was Bruna Dončić. She’s intelligent, well educated, and a charming person with a sense of humor. She knows her country, its history, the people, the sites, and is proud to showcase Montenegro to visitors and answer any questions. Her enthusiasm is contagious. I want to come back to spend more time in Montenegro!
- Our driver was excellent. We toured in a Mercedes van with room for ~ 18 people. It had excellent ride quality. Seats were comfortable, the windows were spotless, and air conditioning worked perfectly.

I have asked Avril to describe how she arranged this tour. See her comments below.

Tom Sheridan

Comments by Avril Cude

When booking a tour in a different country my criteria are as follows.
- What does the tour include?
- How much does it cost per person?
- What is the payment policy? We prefer a tour company that does not require payment prior to the day of the tour. Fortunately, Miro & Sons does not require pre-payment. The potential problem with pre-payment is getting a full refund if the ship is unable to dock. We’ve heard of several situations when the ship could not dock at a port and private tour companies that had required full pre-payment prior to the tour did not return the moneys paid. This is not a problem we are willing to face.
- Is the company well recommended by internet sites with trustworthy reviews by tourists?
- Is the company quickly responsive to questions when planning the tour?
- Is the contact friendly?

With these things in mind I started researching on the internet using Cruise Critic and Trip Advisor looking for a company I would be comfortable hiring. Though I saw several possibilities I decided to contact Miro and Sons. I posted an enquiry to Miro and Sons and within a very few hours they replied to my email with complete answers. Whenever I contacted them, they replied quickly and provided info that I had requested in a friendly manner. I was very impressed by the responses, so I decided to book them.

I then posted on the Cruise Critic Roll Call for our cruise stating I had a tour organized and asked for others to join us. Within 2 days our tour was full.

We booked an 18 seater Mercedes Sprinter van with a driver and English speaking Guide. Both were excellent. The van was very comfortable. The price was excellent and the day was an absolute delight. Since we returned I have been in touch with the company again with a few questions and again within a very short time I have received replies that have answered all my questions. I would definitely use them again for any other visit to this marvelous country.

End of Comments by Avril Cude.

Tour Itinerary ~ 7 hours

8 am     Met our tour guide across the street from the cruise ship dock
9 am     Sveti Stefan
9:30 am  Arrived in Budva for a walking tour of Old Town
10:30 am Left Budva
11:30 am Ferry Boat ride across the channel at Lepetani
12:20 pm Our Lady of the Rocks Church and Museum
1:00 pm  Perast with free time in the village for lunch
2:30 pm  Arrived back in Kotor for walking tour near the ship ~ 30 minutes
3:00 pm  Walked back to our ship
The tour involved a scenic drive through beautiful and colorful countryside, along the coastline, through cities and small villages. During the drive, Bruna called our attention to, and provided information on the beaches, historic sites, buildings, landmarks, cities and other points of interest.

Map of Our Tour Route from Kotor City

This Port Guide describes all the stops on our tour route with maps and photos.

Tour Itinerary
1) Kotor Cruise Ship Dock  
   GPS = 42°25'31.8"N 18°46'06.1"E
2) Sveti Stefan  
   GPS = 42°15′21.6″N 18°53′30.4″E
3) Budva Old Town walking tour  
   GPS = 42°16'42.3"N 18°50'12.0"E
4) Drive past Tivat Airport  
   GPS = 42°24'16.8"N 18°43'22.2"E
5) Ferry Boat Across Channel at Lepetani  
   GPS = 42°28'00.7"N 18°40'47.5"E
6) Our Lady of the Rocks Church (take a boat to the island)  
   GPS = 42°29'12.2"N 18°41'19.7"E
7) Perast with free time for lunch in the village  
   GPS = 42°29'12.2"N 18°41'19.7"E

From Perast, we drove through the countryside along the coast to Kotor for a short walking tour of the city.
Sveti Stefan Islet (photo below)
Sveti Stefan was a small island until it was changed to an islet with a road connecting to it. (Photo Below)
The property is owned by Aman Resorts as a private, exclusive, and very expensive 5-star resort. Access to the facilities is restricted to residents, hotel guests, and visitors with restaurant reservations.
We drove though the area to see the beautiful buildings and landscape.

It’s a 21 minute, 10.6 km (6.6 mi) ride along the scenic coast from Sveti Stefan Islet to Old Town Budva. (Map Below)
Old Town Budva “Stari Grad”
From the tour bus stop, it’s a 6 minute walk to Old Town. (Map below left)

Walk to the Avala Resort & Villas  (map above, and photo above right)  GPS = 42°16'43.3"N 18°50'09.9"E
Walk down the stairs and across the street to Old Town Budva.

The photo below right is the building at the tour bus stop. GPS = 42°16'55.3"N 18°50'08.8"E.
Sites Outside of Old Town Walls
As you approach Old Town, be sure to look at the huge and very impressive Avala Resort & Villas. See https://www.facebook.com/avalaresort/

The Ruins of Roman Era Necropolis are in front of the Casino entrance to Avala Resort.

To see a Google street-level photo of the ruins, type these GPS coordinates of 42 16 43.3 N 18 50 09.9 E into the search box for Google Maps. Press enter. Drag the little yellow man icon to the tip of the down-pointing red arrow as shown in the map at right.

Place the mouse cursor on the 360° photo and rotate to see this view of the ruins below.

Place your mouse cursor on this photo in Google Maps and rotate the view to see the Toilette sign as shown below. The public toilets near this square cost 0.50 euros.
Google Maps are an awesome tool to study a tourist area BEFORE you visit it. Google has a gazillion 360° street-level photos. If you are unaware of the awesome power and utility of Google Maps and GPS coordinates, I suggest you visit my web-pages on user guides for maps and GPS devices (tablets and phones), see: 

http://www.tomsportguides.com/map-user-guide.html and

There is an Old Bell (photo left) and an Anchor outside the City Walls next to the Marina at GPS = 42°16'45.0″N 18°50'15.0″E

NOTE:
Throughout this guide, I make extensive use of photographs by Carol Mills. My wife and I met Carol in 2010. We became good friends. At that time, Carol and I were both amateur photographers. Carol took training courses, joined a photography club, and improved her skill dramatically. Today, my photos are still amateur level. Carol’s are professional!!! Carol has given me permission to use her copyrighted photos in this guide.

Points of Interest in Old Town Budva as shown on the map on page 6 of this guide

A) Corner Tower  
GPS = 42°16'43.8″N 18°50'11.8″E

B) Western Gate to Old Town  
GPS = 42°16'42.3″N 18°50'12.0″E

This is a Google street-level photo below of the entrance to Old Town next to the Mozart Restaurant. Note the attractive, well maintained stone work for the city walls, buildings, and streets.
C) Gate Tower  
GPS  =  42°16'41.9"N 18°50'10.9"E

D) Access to the beach  
GPS  =  42°16'40.6"N 18°50'14.6"E

Walk through the arch to visit the cafe on the beach and to take photos of Old Town.

Photos below by Carol Mills.

Walk west on the beach toward Avala Resorts for photos of the Medieval Old Town (photo below)
E) Santa Maria in Punta and St. Sabas of Jerusalem Churches

There are two small churches in the photo below. The one with the bell tower is the 9th Century Santa Maria in Punta Church. The church with the round apside in the left side of the photo below is the 12th Century St Saba of Jerusalem Church (also called Sveti Sava Osveceni). The square next to the churches has seating stands for various events and entertainment venues.

F) Holy Trinity Orthodox Church (1804)
G) St John (St Ivan) Catholic Church

The church is located in the largest square in Old Town. It’s a must visit site.

The church has several names:
1) St John’s Church,
2) St John Cathedral,
3) St Ivan Church, and
4) Church of Sveti Ivan.

The original building dates back to the 7th Century. It was rebuilt and modified several times including repair after the 1667 earthquake. Also, the edifice of the bishop’s castle was built on the south side of the church.

It’s an important historic church with mosaics, murals and Icons.

An important Icon is the “Holy Mother of God with Christ”, also called:
1) Great Panagia (“the Saint of all that is Holy”) 
2) “Holy Mother of God of Budva”, and
3) “The Madonna in Punta”.

According to legend, this Icon was by Sveti-Luka (St Luke). The church also contains icons of Greek origin and paintings of Sveti Petar and Pavle (St. Peter and Paul). The church was a cathedral until the diocese was changed and it could not longer be classified as a “cathedral”.

H) Citadela Fortress

A property development and renovation company called “Imobilia” renovated Citadela Fortress. Then they published an extremely well written and illustrated tourist brochure on the history of the site and renovations with photos and descriptions of the Library, Maritime Museum, Barracks, Restaurants, the Terrace, the Towers, etc. Download it from http://www.imobilia.net/js/download.php?f=Imobilia_Citadela.pdf

I highly recommend you download this 22-page pdf file and read it BEFORE you visit Old Town Budva.

There is a 2.50 euro entrance fee to visit the library and museum.

See this video on the climb to the top of the fortress for the best views of the Old Town Budva.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fdavvYfcVCw

“This medieval castle of Budva is one of the most exclusive places for banquets, fashion nights, gala dinners, team building activities, open-air conferences, and different types of entertainment. Fortress Citadela is the best place for all gala events. It can be setup as a professional banquet or a standing buffet. In the summer months, it is transformed into a stage for the annual City Theatre Festival.”

See https://www.talas-montenegro.com/fortress-citadela-venue-budva
The aerial photo below is from the 22-page brochure. I have marked it up to show locations for the walking tour.

Old Town Budva

D - Access to beach
E - Santa Maria in Punta
F - Holy Trinity Church
G - St John Church
H - Citadella Fortress
I - Archaeological Museum
J - Marine Gate

**GPS** = 42°16'41.2"N 18°50'19.0"E

**Open hours:** 8am-8pm Tuesday-Friday, 10am-5pm Saturday-Sunday, closed Monday. Adult admission = 2 euros.

Archaeological collections include gold jewelry, weapons, glass, tools, clay objects, etc. representative of Greek, Roman, and Slavic cultures. Many Roman ruins and artifacts were found during excavation for the Avala Resorts.

Ethnographic collections include furniture, household objects, clothing, etc.

**Photo at Right** by Carol Mills.

J) Marine Gate

**GPS** = 42°16'42.9"N 18°50'19.5"E

Google street-level **photo below**

During your walking tour, take time to explore the squares, shops, cafes, hotels, and restaurants. You’ll discover interesting places as shown in these photos by Carol Mills.
We spent about an hour at Budva; then boarded our van to visit other sites.

See the map on page 3 of this guide for our driving route:

**Drive past Tivat Airport**

GPS = 42°24'16.8"N 18°43'22.2"E

The drive from Budva to Tivat Airport is 22 minutes and 19.3 km (12 miles). We did not stop at the airport.

There are two international airports in Montenegro; namely, **Podgorica Airport** (TGD) and **Tivat Airport** (TIV). Annual passenger volume at the airports is ~ 670,000 at Podgorica and ~ 1,000,000 at Tivat. Approximately 80% of the passengers are tourists.

**Ferry Boat Across the Channel at Lepetani**

GPS = 42°28'00.7"N 18°40'47.5"E

From the Tivat Airport, it’s a 37 minute and 8.8 km (5.5 mile) ride to the Ferry Boats. They are continuously crossing so it’s a short wait. When your car, bus, or van is secure on the boat, you can get out and walk around.

Photo by Carol Mills at right.

From the ferry boat crossing, it’s a 23 minute, 14.9 Km (9.2 mile) drive through a gorgeous area on winding roads along the bay to Perast.

This Google Map shows the route for the scenic drive from the Ferry Boat to Perast.
There are TWO Islands Close to Perast

St George Island and Monastery
The monastery is closed. There is a large cemetery on the island. The island is not open to the public.

Our Lady of the Rocks (photo below)
It’s a man-made island created by piling rocks in the shape of a boat.

According to legend, two sailors returned from dangerous, heavy seas to the safely of the harbor on July 22, 1452. As they approached Perast, they saw an Icon of the Madonna and Child resting on a rock in the harbor and believed it was a sign of a miracle for their safe return. The sailors promised to honor the Madonna. The water is shallow so it was possible to build an island by dropping rocks into the harbor. A small chapel was built on the rocks. It became a tradition for sailors to drop stones around the small island to strengthen the
foundation and to ask Mary to bring them home safely from sea. In 1630 the island was enlarged by sinking ships and bringing more rocks. A large Catholic church was built to replace the old, small chapel.

For centuries, there has been a custom called “fašinada”. Every 22nd of July at sunset, citizens of Perast sail their boats with rocks to the island and drop the rocks around the island to strengthen its foundation.

Today there are two buildings on the island; namely, the church building that contains a museum, and a small separate building that sells souvenirs, ice cream, and has public toilets.

There is a 1 euro/person admission fee which includes a guided tour. After the tour, you can go back into the church and museum to spend more time and take more photos.

**Our Lady of the Rocks Church**  
GPS = 42°29'12.2"N 18°41'19.7"E

Our tour van parked in Perast. We walked a short distance to a small boat. It was a comfortable, scenic boat ride to the island to visit Our Lady of the Rocks Church. The boat ride is a great opportunity to take photos of this area. The boat ride costs 5 euro/person round trip. Group pricing is available.

The church has been modified over the years. The most recent renovations were in 1722. There is a 15th century Icon of the Virgin Mary above the altar by Lovro Dobričević. The marble altar was sculpted by Antonio Capelano. (Photos below by Carol Mills)

The church has many paintings, silver votive tablets, and a famous votive tapestry. The museum has a wide variety of artifacts.
Photos of the museum by Carol Mills
This needlepoint is one of the most valuable collections
This tapestry is the work of Jacinta Kunic-Mijovic while she waited 25 years for her husband to return from sea. The tapestry contains gold and silver thread. She used her own hair for the angels in the tapestry. Her hair was brown when she started the tapestry, but it changed to gray during the 25 years she worked on the tapestry. She worked on this tapestry until her eyesight failed and she could no longer see. (Photo by Carol Mills.)
The museum contains a variety of works of art and artifacts.

There are also photo opportunities outside the church and museum.
Our Lady of the Rocks is a must-visit site.

Perast with free time for lunch in the village

Our last stop was at Perast. We had time to explore the town and have lunch. There are many restaurants along the bay and in the adjacent hotels. The service was good, food was excellent, and views of the town, boats, mountains, and the bay were fantastic. It’s a great place to visit.

We left Perast and took the scenic road along the bay to Kotor. Our guide took us on a brief walking tour of the city near the cruise ship dock. We enjoyed the tour very much and would highly recommend it.
User Feedback Is Welcome

Goal
My guides are designed to help you plan a great cruise vacation by providing information such as where the ship docks, location of tourist sites, public transit, walking tour maps, things to see and do, travel issues unique to the port, etc. Knowledge of ports is important when planning shore excursions because you have to make many decisions and commitments long before your ship docks. I believe the information in this guide is accurate, however you are responsible to verify accuracy of the information that you use to plan your vacation.

Information on cruise ports frequently changes such as bus routes, admission fees to sites, rental car locations, etc. Cruise Critic is the best source for up-to-date, detailed information on travel details for shore excursions, reviews of cruise ships, etc. There are many knowledgeable people on Cruise Critic who are willing to share their expertise and travel experience. I highly recommend www.CruiseCritic.com; it's free to join.

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Fortunately, a friend of mine on that ship complained to the purser and the ship stopped violating my copyright.

If there is any question about use of my guides, contact me at TomsPortGuides@Gmail.com

Tom Sheridan