

Sibenik

Sibenik's population lies at just over 50,000 people, and is unique amongst the many Adriatic towns and cities in that its history lies in neither Roman or Greek origins. Sibenik is somewhat overlooked as a tourist destination and, although small, still has some fantastic sights which exist from Venetian times. Top sight is The Cathedral of St James which is a UNESCO World Heritage site.



Cathedral of St James

Getting to Sibenik

To get to Sibenik, you could actually fly to either Split Airport or Zadar Airport. The journey from either is roughly similar, time-wise, although Split is probably marginally closer. There are also more flights to Split from the UK and Europe, so you might find it easier to fly to here!

From Split Airport, take a bus from outside the terminal building which takes you to the main bus station in Split. Buses are scheduled to depart shortly after flight arrivals. Then, from Split Bus Station, take one of the numerous buses to Sibenik; journey time is about 1 hour 40 minutes.

From Zadar Airport, take a bus to the main bus station in Zadar. Buses coincide with flight arrivals.

From Zadar bus station, take another bus to Sibenik - journey time is about 2 hours.

History of Sibenik

Sibenik is one of the few places along the Croatian Adriatic coast not to emerge from either a Roman or Greek settlement. It is therefore the oldest Slavic town on the Croatian coast, possibly dating from the 11th century, although the Croats had reached the surrounding area a few centuries earlier. The town intermittently switched between Croatian and Venetian rule over the following few centuries, with the longest period being under the Venetians from 1412 - 1797. During this time, the town grew in importance and for a while during the 16th century, it became the largest town in Dalmatia. After the fall of Venice, Sibenik briefly became French for eight years, before becoming part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until its break up after World War I. At this point, Sibenik became part of the newly-formed Yugoslavia. During the war in Croatia in the early 1990s, Sibenik was shelled and a number of buildings were damaged, including some historic ones, although all were subsequently repaired.

Sightseeing in Sibenik

One of the most important sights in Sibenik is the **Cathedral of St. James** (Katedrala sv Jakova), which is on the UNESCO World Heritage list. The cathedral was built between 1431 and 1536 from limestone and marble. The early stages of the cathedral were designed and built by Italian masters, but between 1444 and 1447 the work was under the direction of the famous sculptor Juraj Dalmatinac.

In the same square as the cathedral is a **Memorial to Juraj Dalmatinac**, created by the greatest Croatian sculptor of the 20th century, Ivan Mestrovic.

Just to the north of the Cathedral is the **Loggia**, built in typical Italian style between 1533 and 1542. Part of it now houses a restaurant.

Several other churches are worth visiting, such as the **Church of St Barbara** (Crkva sv Barbare) and the **Church of St Nicholas**.