

EUROPE · HISTORY · CULTURE · MOUNTAINS · HIKING · ADVENTURE · OFF THE BEATEN PATH



Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ottoman bazaars, Austro-Hungarian boulevards and raw recent history sit side by side in a mountainous country still lightly touched by mass tourism. Mostar's rebuilt Old Bridge and Sarajevo's coppersmiths' lanes draw most visitors, but waterfalls, rafting rivers and Olympic ski slopes lie close by, and costs remain among the lowest in Europe.

 Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Bosnia and Herzegovina and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 13 August 2026.

 CAPITAL Sarajevo	 CURRENCY Convertible mark (BAM) £1 ≈ BAM 2.33	 LANGUAGE Bosnian, Serbian Croatian	 BEST TIME Apr–Jun, Sep–Oct
 DAILY BUDGET £35–£150 ££ Moderate	 PLUGS Type C, F 230V · adapter needed	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 2h 35m direct ~£80–£280 return	 TIME ZONE UTC+1 standard time

Few places in Europe compress so much history into such short distances. On Sarajevo's Ferhadija street a paving marker shows where the Ottoman bazaar gives way to Austro-Hungarian façades, and the city still carries visible scars of the 1992–95 siege. The country divides into mountainous, forested Bosnia in the north and sunbaked limestone Herzegovina in the south. Most first trips pair Sarajevo with Mostar along the Neretva valley, adding day trips to Blagaj, Počitelj and Kravica, then swing west through Travnik and Jajce, or north to Banja Luka, before crossing into Croatia.

Bosnia is unhurried and inexpensive: coffee is a ritual served in a copper džezva, a hearty grilled lunch costs a few pounds and guesthouses are often family-run. Outside Mostar's midday rush of day-trippers from Dubrovnik, crowds are rare. Visitors are often struck by how openly people talk about the war, and by sites such as the Tunnel of Hope and the Srebrenica memorial at Potočari. It suits history lovers, hikers and rafters on the Neretva, Una and Vrbas, while winter visitors can ski Jahorina and Bjelašnica, venues for the 1984 Winter Olympics.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

ARCHITECTURE

Stari Most, Mostar

The single-span Ottoman bridge of 1566, shelled into the river in 1993 and rebuilt with original techniques, arches high above the green Neretva. Watch local divers leap from its crown, and linger at dusk once the day-trippers leave.
- 2

CULTURE

Baščaršija, Sarajevo

Sarajevo's 15th-century bazaar quarter of coppersmiths' workshops, ćevapi grills and the wooden Sebilj fountain, anchored by the 16th-century Gazi Husrev-beg Mosque. Wander on to Ferhadija to see where Ottoman lanes meet Austro-Hungarian avenues.

3

HISTORY

Jajce

A walled hill town where the Pliva river plunges about 20 metres over a waterfall right beside the centre. Above sit a medieval fortress and catacombs, and nearby a row of wooden watermills lines the Pliva lakes.

4

NATURE

Kravica Waterfall

A broad amphitheatre of travertine cascades on the Trebižat river, around 25 metres high and roughly 40 minutes' drive from Mostar. Swimming in the pool below is the reward on hot summer afternoons.

5

NATURE

Sutjeska National Park

Bosnia's oldest national park protects Perućica, one of Europe's last primeval forests, and Maglić, the country's highest peak. The giant concrete memorial at Tjentište marks a pivotal 1943 Partisan battle.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Sarajevo

≈ 395,000 people

Minarets, Habsburg façades and Yugoslav tower blocks share one narrow valley. Give it three days for Baščaršija, the siege museums, the cable car up Trebević and long coffees.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Banja Luka

≈ 140,000 people

The green, low-key main city of Republika Srpska, with a riverside fortress and the rebuilt Ferhadija Mosque; a good base for rafting and canyoning on the Vrbas.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Tuzla

≈ 80,000 people

A salt-mining city whose Pannonian Lakes are artificial saltwater swimming lakes in the centre; mainly useful as a budget-airline gateway rather than a destination.

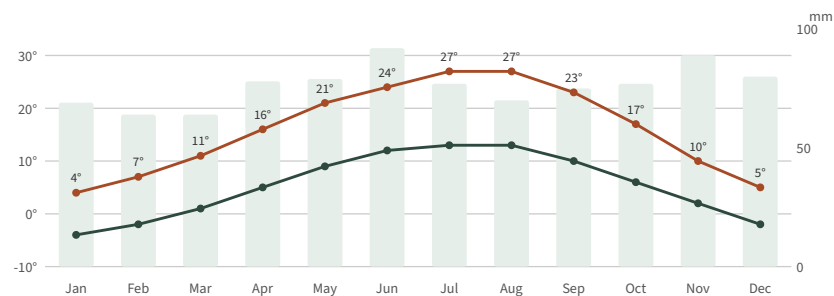
Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Bosnia and Herzegovina

Best time: **Apr–Jun, Sep–Oct.**

**Average climate in Sarajevo**

— High °C — Low °C — Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Jul	Mostar Old Bridge diving competition The traditional summer contest sees local divers plunge more than 20 metres from Stari Most into the cold Neretva before packed riverbanks, usually in late July.
Jul	Bašcaršija Nights A month-long summer programme of concerts, theatre and folk performances in and around Sarajevo's old bazaar, much of it free to attend.
Aug	Sarajevo Film Festival Founded in 1995 during the siege and now the region's biggest film festival, filling Sarajevo's cinemas, open-air screens and bars for a week every August.

How much does Bosnia and Herzegovina cost?

SHOESTRING £35 per person / day ≈ BAM 81.48 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £70 per person / day ≈ BAM 163 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £150 per person / day ≈ BAM 349 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Ćevapi Small grilled fingers of minced beef stuffed into fluffy somun flatbread with raw onion and kajmak, a rich clotted-cream-like dairy spread.	Burek Spiralled filo pastry; in Bosnia 'burek' means a meat filling only, while cheese, spinach and potato versions are sirnica, zeljanica and krompiruša.	Bosanski lonac Bosnian pot: layers of meat, cabbage, potatoes and other vegetables slow-cooked for hours in a deep clay or metal pot.
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Getting around

Buses connect almost everywhere and are cheap, though slow on mountain roads; expect a small charge for stowed luggage. The Sarajevo–Mostar railway through the Neretva canyon takes around two hours and is the most scenic option, though departures are few. Hiring a car helps for waterfalls, monasteries and villages. In Sarajevo, walk, ride the trams or use metered taxis.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  C F 230V — bring a UK-to-C/F adapter	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Ambulance: 124 Fire: 123 Police: 122 Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +387	TIME ZONE UTC+1 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Generally safe to drink

DRIVING

On the right

TIPPING

Round up in cafés and taxis; in restaurants around 10% is generous and appreciated. Cash in convertible marks is preferred for tips.

ETIQUETTE

Treat coffee as a slow ritual, not a takeaway. Dress modestly in mosques and churches, remove shoes in homes, and let locals raise the war rather than asking people about their ethnicity.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Sarajevo International Airport (SJJ), Sarajevo; Tuzla International Airport (TZL), Tuzla; Banja Luka International Airport (BNX), Banja Luka

Visas & entry for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can travel without a visa to Bosnia and Herzegovina for up to 90 days within a 6-month period. This applies if you travel: as a tourist; to visit family or friends; to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events; for short-term studies or training.

For all other types of travel, check the conditions for temporary residence or contact the Bosnia and Herzegovina Embassy in the UK.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Hepatitis B

Measles

Rabies

Tick-borne encephalitis

Typhoid

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Bosnia and Herzegovina

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Fri 25 Dec 2026	Catholic Christmas Day
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Sat 2 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Thu 7 Jan 2027	Orthodox Christmas Day
Tue 9 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Mon 29 Mar 2027	Catholic Easter Monday
Fri 30 Apr 2027	Orthodox Good Friday
Sat 1 May 2027	International Labour Day
Sun 2 May 2027	International Labour Day
Sun 16 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Bosnian

ENGLISH	BOSNIAN	SAY IT
Hello	Zdravo	<i>ZDRAH-voh</i>
Thank you	Hvala	<i>HVAH-lah</i>
Please	Molim	<i>MOH-leem</i>
Excuse me	Izvinite	<i>eez-VEE-nee-teh</i>
How much is this?	Koliko ovo košta?	<i>KOH-lee-koh OH-voh KOSH-tah</i>

Know before you go

The convertible mark is pegged to the euro at roughly 1.96 KM to €1. Euros are often accepted, but change usually comes back in marks, so carry some local cash.

Mine clearance from the 1990s war is not finished in some rural areas: stick to paved roads and marked trails, and check the FCDO travel advice before hiking.

Stay overnight in Mostar. Coach tours from Dubrovnik and Split pack the old town from late morning to late afternoon, leaving evenings and early mornings calm.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.