

Why go?

At just 14 miles long by seven miles wide, this island in Croatia's Kvarner region packs a lot into a little package.

There's a stunning old town, hiking and biking trails and dozens of beaches, including 22 sandy ones, all surrounded by the cleanest, clearest waters we've ever seen.

Info www.tzg-rab.hr; www.kvarner.hr.

ADRIATIC JEWEL

Want to try somewhere different? Then take a trip to the gorgeous Croatian island of Rab

Relax

Enjoy some of Rab's lovely beaches. Many are shingly or pebbly but there are lots of sandy ones, too – among the best is Paradise Beach in Lopar.

Want to escape the crowds? Then pack a picnic and take a private water taxi to your own cove. This can cost about £35 for a boat to take you and pick you up at the end of the day.



Island hop

You can go on a boat tour to neighbouring islands such as Pag, Krk and Losinj if you fancy a change of scene.

Prices From £21 for a day trip with Imperial Tours; children go half price. Info www.imperial.hr.



Take home

Rabska torte (Rab cake) is made with almonds, maraschino cherries and orange and lemon zest, then sprinkled with icing sugar.

But a word of warning – it's extremely more-ish. As is the medica (honey) brandy. Yum!



Dance in the street

The Rabska Fjera Medieval Festival takes place from 25-27 July every year in Rab town. Locals and tourists unite to watch parades and see demonstrations of everything from fire juggling to crossbow firing. There are also open-air workshops, demonstrations of ancient crafts such as pottery and basket weaving, and displays by florists, herbalists and honey makers.

It's a buzzy time to visit and there's an

incredible fireworks display at the end. And if you're staying at the Hotel Padova (see 'Stay'), the best views of this are from the balcony of your room.



Explore

Rab's Old Town dates back more than 2000 years and its winding streets are crammed with sights – monasteries, pretty squares, palaces, a cathedral and more churches than seems possible for such a small island.

Why not take a break from sightseeing with an ice cream? There are dozens of places selling a staggering variety of flavours. Afterwards, climb to the top of one of the town's four bell towers. The reward – aside from having worked off some of those calories – is views over the whole island.



Eat out

Rab town has the best choice of places to eat – konobas are small, family-run restaurants where you can try out the local specialities.

We also liked the Tapas Bar Kampanel, where you can dine outside in a pretty candle-lit courtyard garden in the shadow of a bell tower. Little plates of octopus salad, grilled shrimps, cuttlefish risotto and Dalmatian smoked ham start from around £3.

Croatian wines are the perfect accompaniment to an al fresco meal. Try the Malvasia and Gravesina whites, or the red Plavac Mali.



Stay

The three-star Padova hotel has picture postcard views over Rab town – you can walk there in about 10 minutes or a free water taxi can whisk you across the bay. There are a few small beaches nearby or, again, you can hop on a boat (or hire a bike) to visit others that are further afield.

The four-star Hotel Carolina is set in a beautiful secluded pine wooded area with little pebbly beaches dotted around.

Prices From £418 per person per week with Essentially Prestige, including breakfast, return flights and transfers at Hotel Padova; from £445 per person per week half board, based on two sharing, including return flights and transfers at Hotel Carolina. Info www.prestigeholidays.co.uk/croatia.

