Map Legend

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List of Trails

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Scale 1:30 000

0 1 km

walking the year

It started in May and ended in September – historically and allegorically – 1536...

With these words of almost five hundred years ago, young Petar Zoranić of Nin ended his novel Planine (*The Mountains*), which was also the first Croatian novel. At the beginning of that bygone May, the unhappy poet set off from his beloved Nin homeland to a dreamy journey into the mountains, trying to ease his love sorrows with the beauties of his homeland. The tree tops were turning green with fresh young leaves, the meadows blooming in the gorgeous colors of wildflowers, and the lagoons echoing with the voices of hundreds of birds nesting and raising their young. A motion of light and shades on the church of the Holy Cross announced the arrival of summer and the wells were overflowing with water, quenching the thirst of people, their cattle, and their fertile fields.
And while the young poet follows his boiling blood on an adventure through the mythical Mount Velebit, we shall remain in his picturesque homeland and embark on our own hiking adventure of walking the year...

1 Queen's Trail

5,3 km | 1,45 h | 9 m | Easy

On Queen's Beach, like rarely elsewhere, the beauty and abundance of nature are intertwined with history and stories of the Nin region. Legend has it that this beach was the favorite place of the queen - wife of the first Croatian king Tomislav - where she spent rare moments of tranquility with her family. Five hundred years later, young poet Petar Zoranić of Nin wandered here tormented by his love woes. Having arrived to Ninske vodice (the Waters of Nin), he met a fairy who advised him to find comfort in the mountains, and another fairy carried him across the sea on a golden apple until he reached the mythical Mount Velebit. Imagine his journey from the Belvedere in Sabunike, and then decide whether to continue with your walk along the sandy beach towards Privlaka and Vir, or go back to the royal town of Nin. The trail continues by the steep slopes where colorful European bee-eaters nest, and towards Nin there is the very heart of the Nin lagoon with medicinal mud – peloid. Peloid has been used for health purposes ever since the Roman times and today its healing properties have been scientifically confirmed for various diseases. The Nin Riviera area is rich in peloid sites and it is not unusual to meet people at the beach, completely covered by fine, black peloid paste.



2 Salt Trail

6,6 km | 1,45 h | 8 m | Easy

The trail starts at Gornji most (the Upper Bridge) that is crossed when going from the old town to the Nin Saltworks, promoter of prosperity of this area since ancient times. Clean sea, plenty of sun and wind from Velebit enable the production of natural salt today, as it was in the ancient times. You can learn more about the salty treasure of Nin in the Museum of Salt inside the facility. The trail leads onwards to another Roman tale: the one of water that brings life. To the east of the Salt Pans follow the stream known as Miljašić Jaruga. It has always had an important role in the life of Nin. The Roman aqueduct led from its source Boljkovac to ancient Aenona, the Roman Nin, and that source still supplies the town with drinking water. The trail partly follows the route of the ancient aqueduct, along a quiet stream by which sheep and horses graze. The ruins of old mills and fertile fields will take you to another time, which knows nothing of the summer hustle and bustle. Once it parts from the stream, the trail leads back towards the town through shrubby land to the new block by the road, and then along a scenic wooden bridge by the outer pools of the Salt Pans. Due to the specific "salt-loving" flora and fauna, the entire landscape of the Salt Pans has been included in the European ecological network Natura 2000. Therefore, you can sometimes see the black-winged stilt on its long red legs, pink flamingos and other rare and protected birds wading around the salty shallows in search of a tasty, well-seasoned snack. To complete your walk with a taste of the sea, continue towards Ždrijac – a picturesque sandbank that embraces the old city of Nin, protecting it from the mighty force of the sea. That famous sandy beach is the favorite of windsurfers and kitesurfers. The fine sand of Ždrijac also hides secrets from the ancient past: from amphoras from the Roman port and the Old Croatian necropolis dating from the 8th century to the small, but fierce old Croatian vessel Condura Croatica from the 11th/12th century. The restored Condura is exhibited in the Museum of Nin Antiquities, and you can see its newest replica anchored next to the Lower Town Bridge.

3 The Trail of the Roman Port

4,7 km | 1,30 h | 30 m | Easy

Southwards from Nin, across the main road to Vir, narrow trails gently descend towards the sea. The trail alternates between spacious grassy meadows with rare pine trees, well-kept fields, and olive groves. It soon reaches the impressive flysch rampart over sandy Bilotinjak Beach. From the rampart you can see the area of the former Roman port of Aenona, whose remains are now under the sea. The Serilia Liburnica vessel from the mid-1st century was found in the archaeological research at this site, and its replica is exhibited in the Nin Museum of Antiquities. Within the Roman port rose the Early Christian church of St. Andrew whose ruined remains contrast the contemporary neighbor – the modern tourist resort and campsite of Zaton. The small church was built in the 6th century, and according to some sources it was active for a thousand years – until it was demolished during the Venetian ravaging. Ancient ruins remind us of bygone times, immersed in the fragrant embrace of Mediterranean herbs. You can return to Nin along a narrow road following the western fence of Zaton Resort or along the winding dirt trails though fields up to the exit on the main road.



4 The Trail of Our Lady of Zečevo

11,5 km | 3 h | 70 m | Easy

Walking along the trail of Our Lady of Zečevo, you will join one of the oldest continuing Nin traditions. The trail follows the old pilgrims' trail from the church of St. Anselm in Nin to the church of Our Lady of Zečevo on the island of the same name – a tradition over 500 years old. The pilgrimage takes place in May and August, and the procession of the 5th of May is a special experience. It is the day that Our Lady appeared to the widow Jelena Grubišić, long ago in 1516. Wildflowers that bloom at that time are traditionally picked during the pilgrimage and blessed at the mass on Zečevo. They are used to make relics that are believed to bring happiness and blessings. However, you can find happiness whenever crossing the trail. The churches of St. Jacob, Our Lady of Jasenovo and Our Lady of Zečevo radiate with peace and tranquility even amid the summer bustle, as if worldly life does not touch them, and the fresh water from the Vrsi well will refresh you at any time of the year. Meadows full of flowers, black locust trees and pine groves, cultivated fields and olive groves will accompany you all the way to Gornja punta where the bora wind from Velebit shapes the landscape into rocky ground and opens views towards picturesque coves - Vrške drage with the mighty Velebit mountain in the background. Various endemic plants grow in the barren rocky land such as Prickly Drypis and tiny Adriatic iris, while aromatic Mediterranean herbs fill the air with enchanting perfumes. The arrival to the island of Zečevo is also a special experience – even though separated from land by a narrow reef that can be crossed in just a few steps even at high tide, the impression of remoteness from the busy "terrestrial" world instantly absorbs you. Therefore, enjoy the magnificent views in all directions, absorb the scents and sounds of this unique little island and walk a few more steps deeper into yourself...

5 From Swamp to Spring

2,2 km | 0,45 h | 8 m | Easy

The walking trail through Zaton on its southern end starts at Pliša, the bottom of the Šepurine Bay, on an islet surrounded by a small swampy labyrinth with salt marsh plants - halophytes, as well as medicinal peloid mud at the very end of the cove. The trail here follows the coast and briefly turns to one of the most important sights in Zaton, the Venetian tower Kaštelina built at the end of the 16th century for the defense of Nin from the Ottomans. The trail again goes back to the coast and passes through popular Zaton beaches that hide sources of fresh water in their shallows, the so-called vrulje. One of these in Dražnik Cove people actually call Vrulja (spring). It was the site where till the end of the 20th century women washed clothes with ashes and homemade soap, as they did throughout the Nin Riviera. Despite the hard work, the women would always sing and chat at Vrulja and thus the locals built it as a place of gathering and a monument to all generations of hard-working women. It is particularly beautiful on Vrulja during summer evenings, when the setting sun paints the sky and the sea with warm fiery colors, and the summer heat gives way to pleasant breeze from the sea. The trail ends appropriately in Dražnik Cove where the Renaissance travel writer Petar Zoranić of Nin ended his allegoric and historic journey of the Croatian mountains and returned to his beloved homeland.



6 Sunset Trail

8,7 km | 3 h | 52 m | Easy

The paved promenade along the sea connects the communities of Zukve and Vrsi-Mulo with a branched network of trails and paths of the Jasenovo peninsula. You can walk the trail throughout the year, but try to catch the spectacular colors of sunset that decorate the entire Nin Riviera. The faithful mistral wind refreshes the trail in hot summer afternoons, calming down just before sunset. A special landmark of this trail is the medieval church of St. Jacob in Zukve, built in the 11th/12th century right next to the sea. It is one of the stops of the ancient pilgrimage trail of Our Lady of Zečevo. By the church there is a recently renovated well and a little wooden stage that sometimes in summer evenings hosts concerts of classical music or a Sunday mass. Easily reached on foot, bicycle or by car, the Jasenovo peninsula, Punta Velebit or simply called Punta by the locals, is a lovely green pinewood oasis which even in the peak of summer season provides some privacy and a pleasant, shady shelter from the sun. This charming little forest is a favorite destination for dog walkers, so there is also a small dog park on Dobra punta. Although crisscrossed with macadam forest roads, Punta hides many secluded trails and paths. Some of them climb to the ridge of the peninsula with lovely views towards the island of Pag and Velebit. From the ridge you can quickly descend to the beautiful sandy beach of Ričina and then either turn back to Mulo or continue further north towards Vrsi.

7 Bora Trail

5/7,3 km | 1,5/2,5 h | 72 m | Easy/Moderate

The trail begins at the main well of Vrsi, affectionately called Bunarić by the locals, and wonders off to an unexpected green oasis of peace and quiet. The lower part of the trail goes through a scattered grove of reeds and black locust, coming across small fields, vineyards, and olive groves with a pleasant atmosphere. On the eastern side of the trail rises the village of Vrsi, and on the western side the small church of Our Lady of Jasenovo, one of the stops on the pilgrimage trail to Our Lady of Zečevo. The part of the trail that passes through the ridge will remind you that you are still in a karst area, and the leaning pine trees point out to the real mistress of the ridge - the Velebit bora. You can descend from the ridge along a hiking trail leading to the sea. Walking along that trail above the bays of Vrsi can be technically demanding, but in return it offers a unique experience of bora-shaped, harsh beauty. This part of the trail connects three lovely bays: Mala Rasovača, Grmovača and Kukinica. The crystal-clear sea reflects all colors from turquoise to azure blue, and the views of the island of Pag and the Velebit mountain are simply breathtaking. In the off-season, here you will only meet playful terns and loud seagulls, as well as fascinating plants that seem to grow directly from stone. The entire coastline of the Nin Riviera is a real geological paradise – if you watch closely, you can easily find numerous fossils trapped in the surrounding rocks.



8 The Trail of the Sandmen

7,4 km | 2 h | 40 m | Easy

A long stroll along the sea starts from the Privlaka port at the coast named the Coast of the Sabunjari, the Sandmen of Privlaka. The sandmen were hard-working men who extracted sand for construction industry from the shallow seas and loaded it on their wooden boats called leut, bracera, trabakul and štilac. Many towns on Dalmatian coast were built with their sand and the last big feat of the sandmen was the reconstruction of Zadar after the Second World War. During the 1980s, sea sand was completely banned from construction industry and thus the sandmen from Privlaka changed their profession and found other ways of earning a living. Some of them started fishing with ludar – they would enclose the fish with nets and manually drag them towards the shore where the nets were loaded on boats. The fishermen and seamen from Privlaka still worship their patron St. Nicholas whose chapel you will pass at the northern cape. The trail continues by the sea to Cape Artić, the westernmost point of the Dalmatian mainland, and then through modern Privlaka settlements, passing by lovely beaches and diverse landscapes to reach the sandy beach of Bilotinjak. This is another trail of the Nin Riviera which at the end of the day explodes in the magnificent colors of sunset.

9 The Trail of the Privlaka Wells

5,3 km | 1,45 h | 20 m | Easy

At only a few steps from Privlaka port and the tourist bustle, there is an area of green fields and meadows, old vineyards and olive groves where time seems to have stopped. It is best to start the walk from one of the Privlaka wells – the source of life of the whole region. About twenty wells have been preserved in this area and they have played an irreplaceable role in the life of people and the whole community. In the past, the wells were the center of social life, their water was used in household, for livestock and watering the fields. Our trail starts at the Novak well in the hamlet of Skoblari and continues onwards to Sokolar - the most famous of the Privlaka wells next to the small church of St. Vitus. The legends on the origin of the wells inspired the poet Petar Zoranić of Nin, who wove some of them into his novel Planine (The Mountains). According to those legends, Novak and Sokolar were two brothers, sons of the fairy Prislavka and the god of the sea. Due to their tragic loves, the young men cried so much that they turned into water, and the wells from which that water springs still bear their names today. The memory of their unfortunate mother Prislavka was preserved in the name of the village - Privlaka. Due to all these water sources, the entire area is very fertile which you can see further along the trail. When you return to the hamlet of Kršlovići and pass by the well, the trail will take you to cultivated fields and olive groves, gardens and vineyards and will show you the true wealth of Privlaka – the fruits of the land and hard-working hands.



10 Bandira – the Watchtower of Vir

6,24 km | 2,30 h | 135 m | Easy

With the altitude of 112 m, Bandira is the highest point on the island of Vir and one of its oldest archeological sites. During the Iron Age there was a Liburnian fortification on the site, and at the turning of the 12th to the 13th century the small church of St. George was built there, after which the entire hill acquired its name. Legend has it that in ancient times people would make a pilgrimage once a year from the parish church of St. George in Vir, across the Jadro Beach to the church of St. George on this hill, but that custom has long since died out. Nowadays people climb to Bandira in search of recreation and wide views. To the north and east, the view stops at the mighty mountain wall of Velebit, and to the south and west are the islands of Ist, Molat and Dugi otok, over which, in clear, bora wind weather, the view reaches all the way to Italy. We do not recommend to go off the trail along the ridge for the terrain is rocky and rugged, and the sun-drenched grass limestone cracks are the ideal sunbathing spot for the horned viper, the faithful guardian of Vir nature. We, therefore, recommend you to go down and back to the circular macadam trail around the ridge where on its southern side many branches descend into hidden coves on the southwest coast of Vir. In one of them there is an old stone lighthouse simply called Lanterna. Once part of the well-organized Austro-Hungarian navigation system, today it has been transformed in a luxurious vacation villa. If you prefer to remain on the heights, simply circle to the north side of the ridge and return to the starting point.

11 Kaštelina – the Stone Guardian of Vir

6,85 km | 2 h | 27 m | Easy

A walk along the southern shores of the island of Vir starts at the village wells that have meant life to the islanders from time immemorial. The water from the wells was until recently the only drinking water on the island, also used for livestock and watering the gardens. Many locals use it even today, remembering bygone times when the wells represented the center of social life on the entire Nin Riviera. The trail descends from the wells to the shore and continues through the forest all the way to the Kaštelina fortress. It was built by the Venetians at the beginning of the 16th century to defend the people from the Ottomans. Located on the small cape called Kozjak and surrounded by the sea from three sides, it offered protection to the locals in case of attack. The Kaštelina of Vir was in a very bad shape at the end of the 20th century, and the southern tower had almost fallen apart. Luckily, at the beginning of the new millennium, the fortress was restored and now it greets curious visitors as a monument of the turbulent times. Continue onwards towards Sapavac Beach, and then along the promenade by the sea all the way to the end of Vir. On your way you will cross the Japnenica Cove where lime used to be burned, which testifies to the existence of dense holm oak forests on the island in the past. At the beginning of the 20th century, a large part of the forest disappeared due to sheep grazing but later green vegetation returned to Vir once more and now it covers most of the island. At the very end, the trail passes through one of those green oases and reaches the Vir Bridge – the very lifeline of the island. Although Vir lost some of its island features by being connected to the mainland, the bridge brought prosperity to the biggest island of the Nin Riviera.

12 Red Cliffs Trail

8,06 km | 2,30 h | 60 m | Easy

In contrast to the mostly paved southern promenade of Kaštelina, this eight-kilometer-long coastal trail reveals the enchanting wilderness of Vir. Although the trail occasionally passes through settlements, for the most part it follows the coastline that provides dramatically beautiful views of Vir nature. This part of the coastline is shaped by the north winds, namely by the strong bora, that forms distinctive ragged cliffs, dry valleys, and beautiful coves. The one in the Smatrine Bay hides one of the prettiest beaches of Vir. A wide green plateau in the shade of tall trees is carved by the bed of the Potok stream which opens into a beautiful sandy beach before reaching the sea. The bay is also one of the most important archaeological sites of Vir, with the remains of a double church - an Early Christian one from the 6th century and its annex from the 11th/12th century. The earlier church was dedicated to St. Martin and it gave the name to the whole bay - Smratina. The most enchanting part of the trail is the area of the Red Cliffs in Duboka draga, with steep coastal cliffs of red flysch sandstone. Colorful bee-eaters nest there in spring, and at the end of May the red cliffs put on a fragrant yellow dress of flowering Spanish broom. This part of the island is a favorite to nature lovers, as well as those who want to get away from the summer hustle and bustle of Vir. The view from the top of the Red Cliffs reaches far into the open sea, where you can sometimes spot dolphins – the playful and charming creatures of the sea. Leaving Duboka dragà, the steep flysch coast descends gradually towards the sea. The trail ends in Rastovac Cove, just before Cape Vrulje, the northwestern peak of the island of Vir.



Three Thousand Steps into the Past

The old town of Nin, the historical and cultural center of the entire Riviera, was founded on an islet in the shallow sandy lagoon. The bridges that connect it to the mainland, link present Nin with a history that is more than three thousand years old. That many steps will suffice to stroll along the stone streets of Nin, following the steps of the Liburnian seafarers, Roman nobles and merchants, medieval citizens, Croatian bishops, and national sovereigns. Today a favorite destination for lovers of sandy beaches and romantic sunsets, Nin had its historical golden age in the early Middle Ages, as the first political, religious and cultural center of Croatia. The most important preserved witness of those times is the Early Christian church of the Holy Cross dating from the 9th century, called the smallest cathedral in the world. Another medieval church played an important role in the royal history of Nin, in which, according to folk legends, seven Croatian kings were crowned. Immediately after the crowning, the king would ride on horseback to the nearby church of St. Nicholas and introduce himself to the people by swinging his sword on all four sides of the world. With its distinctive appearance, this little fortress-church on a picturesque hill in the field of Prahulje has become the trademark of Nin and the entire Riviera.



Instructions for using the trail network

Find out about the difficulty of the trails, their length and duration

Choose a trail that fits your physical and psychological abilities and available time

Bring enough water

Be well equipped - adapt your footwear and clothes to the trail and weather conditions

Use mosquito repellent and sunscreen

Leave no trace - do not throw or leave any trash; protect the environment

In case of emergency call 112

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NIN RIVIERA Walking trails

Zadar Trail Magic





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