

Dubrovnik – The Birthplace of Quarantine

Dubrovnik is one of the cities that you immediately fall in love with. This charming medieval city is world famous for its city stone walls, beautiful beaches and crystal clear water. However, Dubrovnik is much more than that and there is a lot that we can learn from its history. Find out how Dubrovnik managed to prosper in times of world greatest pandemics!



View of the Lazarettos that were once used as quarantine station

How Dubrovnik became one of the wealthiest states in Europe

Even though Republic of Dubrovnik was very small, it was still one of the most powerful states of its time. The Republic gained remarkable significance due to trading all over the Mediterranean. Seafaring and trade brought economic and cultural prosperity, but they also put the city at the high risk of diseases. With so many merchants and sailors coming to the city port, the risk increased even more. The government of Dubrovnik had to react quickly to find a solution to this situation.

During epidemics life in Dubrovnik didn't stop

During history there were many great world pandemics that roamed and devastated Europe and the plague was the deadliest of them all. While the rest of Europe tried to survive pandemics of plague and malaria, the Republic of Dubrovnik came up with ingenious way to deal with spread of pandemics. In 1377 they started to build the world's first quarantine. The Lazarettos of Dubrovnik, cluster of small stone houses, served as isolation zone and today it is one of the main tourist attractions of the city.



Plague or Black Death

Here, all people arriving in Dubrovnik were set in 40 days of quarantine which proved to be very successful method of dealing with the deadly pandemics. While in Milan plague victims were bricked up alive in their houses, Dubrovnik insured that all infected persons were treated humanely inside the quarantine area. In those difficult times, not only did Dubrovnik manage to prosper, but it became one of the wealthiest republics in Europe.

Noble families found retreat in their countryside villas

During deadly pandemics noble and rich families from Dubrovnik retreated themselves in their countryside villas. Surrounded by high stone walls, villas provided privacy and isolation to their owners. Here they could spend quality time within the circle of family and closest friends. These villas with enchanting

gardens were used for relaxation and rest and were usually located outside the city walls or on picturesque islands of Dubrovnik's archipelago.



Sorkočević villa in Lapad dating from 1521