

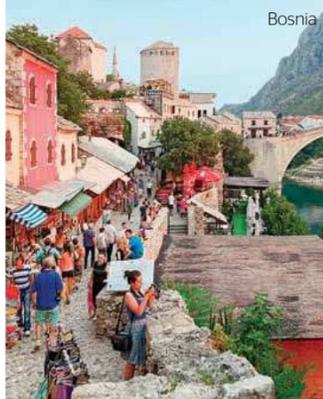
HOT NEW EXPEDITIONS

→ For 2015, **Abercrombie & Kent** has expanded its "Treasures of Croatia" small-group journey, now an eight-day expedition along the Dalmatian coastline commencing in Split and terminating in Dubrovnik. Spend two nights in Hvar and three in Dubrovnik, giving you ample time to soak in the local flavor while remaining busily immersed in local experiences such as silk weaving with local artisans and oyster shucking in the fishing village of Ston. From \$5,495 per person. 800-554-7016; abercrombiekent.com



Dubrovnik

→ To celebrate its 10th anniversary, Croatian-American luxury outfitter **Adriatic Luxury Journeys** has added several new programs to its roster. For example, a sporty 12-day "Croatia & Slovenia Adventure" traverses the wilds of Bosnia, Croatia, and Slovenia by bike, sea kayak, canoe, foot, and zip line. A pioneering seven-day sojourn through Albania entails hikes in the Albanian Alps, cooking classes at local farms, and dinners at local upscale restaurants, and can be customized to include paragliding over the Albanian Riviera and day sails through the country's unspoiled southern islands. From \$5,695 per person (Adventure); from \$2,995 per person (Albania). 800-908-7108; adriaticluxury.com



Bosnia

→ **Blue Parallel** made its regional debut this year with an "Adriatic Coast Journey," visiting familiar locales in Croatia and Montenegro, such as Split, Hvar, and Dubrovnik, but offering insider access into these destinations. In Split, tour the exalted art museum Ivan Mestrovic Gallery with the museum curator. In Dubrovnik, anticipate afternoons of kayaking and a visit to a private vineyard and estate on the Peljesac Peninsula for a Croatian wine-tasting and fresh oyster sampling. From \$11,500 per person. 800-256-5307; blueparallel.com

→ This summer, outfitter **Insight Vacations** enriches its 15-day "Country Roads of Croatia" tour to include more insider experiences, such as hands-on lessons in the centuries-old tradition of stone-cutting at the Stonemasons' school in Pucisca and trekking through the caves of Postojna in Slovenia. From \$3,539 per person. 888-680-1241; insightvacations.com

→ **MIR Corporation** has announced a one-time, 16-day tour through the Balkan Peninsula, titled "The Balkan Odyssey: A Seven Nation Journey through History," for September. It begins in Belgrade, continues on to Sarajevo and then the Adriatic coastline from Dubrovnik to Montenegro and down to Albania, ultimately rounding out the trip in sister Balkan countries Macedonia and Kosovo. From \$7,795 per person. 800-424-7289; mircorp.com



A Balkan lantern

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**BACK
IN TIME:**
The ancient
village of
Monemvasia.
Right, Cape
Tainaron on the
Peloponnese
Peninsula.



Greece's Best-Kept Secret

Unspoiled Mani, rich in beauty and ancient history, takes its first steps into the luxury arena. Discover this gem before the word gets out.

BY ANDREW SESSA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOS DRAZOS

PICKING THROUGH SCRUBBY ground cover and avoiding limestone rocks cropping up like petrified coral or bleached lava, I know I should keep my eyes on the narrow cliff-side path marked only by the footprints of those who have come before me. But I can't help sneaking peeks at the view: A long arm of land thrusts forward, sheering down to deep-blue waters on either side. Above, skies just lighter than the sea blur the horizon, and behind me, pale-green hills cut by a winding road disappear in the distance.

I'm making my way to the 19th-century lighthouse crowning the Peloponnese Peninsula's Cape Tainaron — the southernmost point in mainland Greece — in the largely unknown region of Mani. The ruins of an early Christian church, reputedly built atop a temple to Poseidon, rise beside the trailhead, and nearby I spy fragments of Roman mosaics. Carved into the cliffs below, I've been told, lies a sea cave the ancients believed was an entrance to Hades. For long stretches of the windy, two-hour walk, not a sign of civilization, ancient or modern, scars the cinematic scenery.

Mention Mani to even the most well-traveled of Mediterranean-lovers, and they'll likely have little idea what you're talking about. But those who do

JO ANNE SPERRY (CROATIA), JOANNA MILLICK (ANTERN)

