

Restaurant recommendations

You can find most of these, together with some more recommendations of places to shop, swim and drink, on our online map: www.bolara60.com/info

You can also check their locations, opening times and phone numbers on [Googlemaps](#).

Calling in advance to reserve a table is strongly recommended.

Some don't take cards. Call in advance to check if you want to pay by card.

Some favourites

*You'll find a lot of 'top 10' lists on the internet, but we regularly find we disagree with these, even the Michelin guide. So here are some of **our** favourites, in no particular order, since it depends entirely on whether you fancy something informal or high-end, traditional or modern, meaty or seafoody. Read more about each in the sections below.*

Agroturizam Tikel, Špinovci, Rakotule. See **Farm Restaurants** below.

Agroturizam Tončić, Zrenj. See **Farm Restaurants** below.

Konoba Rino, Momjan. See **Village Restaurants** below.

Konoba Dolina, Gradinje. See **Village Restaurants** below.

Stari Podrum, Merišće, near Momjan. See **Village Restaurants** below.

Konoba Oprtalj, Oprtalj. See **Village Restaurants** below.

Konoba Malo Selo, Kaldanija. See **Village Restaurants** below.

Astarea, Brtonigla. See **Seafood Restaurants** below.

Marina, Novigrad. See **Seafood / High-end Restaurants** below.

Toklarija, Sovinsko Polje. See **High-end Restaurants** below.

Closest to Bolara (within 30 minutes)

Not necessarily all the best, but the closest! Listed closest first.

Taverna Ponte Porton, (5 mins drive / 30 mins walk). Closest to us and walkable (in daytime), with a good mixed charcuterie board, and also vegan/vegetarian options.

Konoba Krasica, Krasica (10 mins drive). Small village konoba with standard menu. Often does spit-roast pigs at the weekend in season.

A Modo Mio, Grožnjan (10 mins drive).

Grožnjan has three restaurants. You'll quickly find the two which share the main square near the jazz festival stage. We often opt for this pizzeria on a small square just round the corner.

Konoba Dorjana, Livade (10 mins drive). See **Village Restaurants** below.

Konoba Dolina, Gradinje (20 mins drive). See **Village Restaurants** below.

Pizzeria Rondo, Buje (20 mins drive). See **Pizzerias** below.

Agroturizam Montizel, Završje (20 mins drive). See **Farm Restaurants** below.

Konoba Oprtalj, Oprtalj (20 mins drive). See **Village Restaurants** below.

Konoba Malo Selo, Kaldanija (20 mins drive). See **Village Restaurants** below.

Pod Voltom, Motovun (15 mins drive plus 10+ mins walk). The last one in the row of bars/restaurants in front of the inner old town gate in Motovun, and probably the best for food; tables inside under the gate archway or outside by the loggia. Great views from here over the Mirna. Another option is **Fakin** next door, whose owners also make good wine.

Agroturizam Tikel, Špinovci, Rakotule (30 mins drive). See **Farm Restaurants** below.

Village restaurants ("konoba"/"restoran")

Konobas are reasonably priced village restaurants serving traditional standards. Menus usually include cold starters (pršut & other cured meats, cheeses); fritaja (scrambled eggs); soups; pasta; grilled meats; salads; simple desserts; and wine by the litre. Pasta usually comes as fuži (like penne), pljukanci (like trofie) or njoki (gnocchi), with a choice of chicken, game, beef or truffle sauce; meat usually comes as sausage, ombolo (pork loin) or steak. Wild mushrooms, wild asparagus, black and white truffles are often options when in season. You'll find konobas all over the place, but here are some of our favourites in the area. In season call in advance.

Konoba Dorjana, Livade (10 mins drive, +385 52 664 093). Traditional konoba in the old railway station building, much more down-to-earth than the famous (and expensive) Zigante restaurant round the corner. Standard konoba menu but with snails as an unusual speciality.

Konoba Dolina, Gradinje (20 mins drive, +385 52 664 091, +385 91 8932 847). Traditional konoba popular with locals too, in a small village in the Mirna valley by the truffle forest. Nicest to sit on the covered terrace. Excellent truffle pasta and home-made sausages.

Konoba Oprtalj, Oprtalj (25 mins drive, +385 92 299 0516). Traditional konoba in pretty hilltop town with great views; sit outside in the square or inside by the fire. Standard konoba menu, all good quality.

Stari Podrum, Merišće, near Momjan (25 mins drive, +385 52 779 152). In a very pretty valley near the Kozlović winery. Good standards, very good grilled meat from the fireplace.

Rino, Momjan (25 mins drive, +385 52 779 170). Generally excellent quality across the menu. Particularly good pasta, steak and house wine. Not to be confused with Marino nearby.

Konoba Malo Selo, Kaldanija (20 mins drive, www.konobamaloselo.hr, +385 52 777 332). Good quality and service all round. In autumn and winter ask to sit by the big fireplace.

Konoba Vela Vrata, Beram, near Pazin (35 mins drive, +385 52 622 801). Nice views from the terrace tables. Good place to come if you're visiting Beram to see the excellent medieval church frescoes. Good chocolate cake for dessert.

Konoba Danijeli, Danijeli, near Kringa (40 mins drive, +385 91 686 6588). One of the few konobas that serves boškarin meat from the traditional Istrian Ox. Huge portions of pasta that serve at least two people. Really good starters including skuta (fresh curd cheese).

Konoba Puli Pineta, Orbanići, near Žminj (45 mins drive, +385 98 991 1795). Small restaurant outside town. The menu's small, interesting and reliably good. Excellent steak tagliata and škorup, a pasta sauce made with caramelised clotted cream.

Farm restaurants (“agroturizam”)

These are restaurants on farms, which by law have to serve mostly their own and small local producers’ produce. So don’t expect seafood, beer or Coke, or a wide range of dishes; but do expect lots of good value hearty local food. Menus similar to konobas (see above), but with home-made cured meats, pasta and wine. Here are some of our favourites in northern Istria.

Agroturizam Tikel, Špinovci, Rakotule (30 mins drive, www.agroturizam-tikel.hr, +385 52 683 404). Really friendly family farm in a stunning setting with amazing views over the valley to Motovun, and close to the Parenzana. Good food and wine all round; excellent home-made ham and truffle pljukanci. (You can buy bottles of their olive oil and wine too.) Lots of space for kids to run around. This is where people go for their wedding/christening party dinners, and if you coincide with one of those you’ll get live music, singing and dancing too. This is a place to take your time, so don’t go if you’re in a hurry. Say hello from Matt and Anna!

Agroturizam Tončić, Zrenj (40 mins drive, www.agroturizam-toncic.com, +385 52 644 146 +385 91 206 0512). Really excellent food using meat from their own animals, their own vegetables, home-made pasta and stunning location. Open Friday-Sunday and you should definitely book in advance as this place is rightly popular; may be shut in July. Say hi from us!

Agroturizam Montizel, Završje (20 mins drive, www.pincin-monticello.hr, +385 385 52 776 212). Farm restaurant in a beautiful setting on a hill overlooking pretty medieval hilltop village of Završje (apparently they’ve filmed a new Robin Hood film here, and you can see why); tables on terraces outside. Good home-made pršut (cured ham), salami and cheeses; usually some home-made cordials e.g. elderflower.

Agroturizam Jadruhi, near Vižinada (20 mins drive, www.jadruhi.com, +385 52 446 184). Farm restaurant known for their own excellent pršut, salami and other cured meats (Vižinada is on a high windy ridge that’s good for meat curing). Good food, large menu, popular with groups in summer.

High end restaurants

These restaurants are more expensive and often have more international menus and modern-style presentation (although with some exceptions, see below). Book well in advance.

Marina, Novigrad. See **Seafood Restaurants** below.

Damir i Ornella, Novigrad. See **Seafood Restaurants** below.

Toklarija, Sovinsko Polje (30 mins drive, +385 91 926 6769). One of the few inland top-end restaurants; menu varies but is a very high-quality re-working of traditional inland foods, usually involving many courses with local (often natural) wine pairings. Small, family-run and only opens when booked, so it's essential to book ahead. No written menu and usually a set menu depending on what's available. Unique; very good quality; very expensive, and takes time.

Monte, Rovinj (50 mins drive, www.monte.hr, +385 52 830 203). The only restaurant in Istria with a Michelin star. Lovely setting on top of the hill in the old town, especially if you're lucky enough to get one of the balcony tables. Expect very creative dishes and a lengthy multi-course dinner. Particularly strong on service and wine list; expensive.

Batelina, Banjole. See **Seafood Restaurants** below.

San Rocco, Brtonigla (20 mins drive, www.san-rocco.hr, +385 52 725 000). High-end boutique hotel restaurant. Expensive.

Stara Škola, Krasica (10 mins drive, www.staraskola.hr, +385 52 770 870). High-end restaurant with impressive bar. Expensive.

Hotel Kaštel, Motovun (20 mins drive plus 10 mins walk, www.hotel-kastel-motovun.hr, +385 385 52 681 607). International restaurant in the castle hotel at the top of Motovun. Slightly post-socialist institutional feel inside, but food is good (and there's a pretty terrace outside too). Moderate prices.

Seafood

You can find seafood in pretty much any restaurant on or near the coast, but the quality can be variable. Here's a selection which we find reliably good. Like elsewhere, seafood is expensive here, especially when fresh and locally caught. So go prepared for a higher bill!

Astarea, Brtonigla (20 mins drive, www.konoba-astarea-brtonigla.com, +385 52 774 384).

A drive away from the coast, but you can see the sea from the balcony. Garden tables for summer; tables by the huge fireplace in winter. Fish and meat grilled on the fire, as is the bread you'll get with your olive oil to start. The scallops are fantastic. Very popular with locals and tourists, and does consistently good food and business every day of the year.

Viking, Limski Kanal (40 mins drive, +385 52 448 119). Near Rovinj but set by the water at the end of the Limski Kanal fjord (and named after the fact that it looks so authentically fjord-like that they've filmed Viking films here). Nice big terrace, well known to locals as well as tourists. Good quality.

Marina, Novigrad (20 mins drive, +385 98 969 0492). Swish restaurant on the edge of town elegantly run by husband-and-wife team, serving innovative tasting menus using local fish and seafood. Great quality and exceptional service. Book far in advance in high season.

Konoba Čok, Novigrad (20 mins drive, +385 52 757 643). Slightly upmarket konoba just round the corner from the fishing harbour; more reliable option than the row of restaurants right on the harbourside.

Damir i Ornella, Novigrad (20 mins drive, www.damir-ornella.com, +385 52 758 134). Specializes in seafood, including theatrically prepared raw fresh fish with local olive oil, but with lots of other options. Very good food and local wine list; expensive; eccentric restaurateur...

Batelina, Banjole (1 hour drive, +385 52 573 767). South of Pula, between Pula and the Kamenjak peninsula with its beaches and natural park. Made famous when Anthony Bourdain visited and featured it on TV, and home to Istria's own celebrity chef, David Skoko. Unpretentious konoba style with outdoor tables, very good seafood featuring some unusual fish and shellfish.

Puntulina, Rovinj (1 hour drive, www.puntulina.eu, +385 52 813 186). Extremely popular due to its stunning waterfront location, terraces cascading down to the sea, and good fish and seafood. Great for lunch and at sunset. Book well in advance.

Pizzerias

Of course you can find pizza all over the place, especially on the coast, of variable quality; but here's a few places inland which do quite good ones.

Pizzeria Rondo, Buje (20 mins drive). Good all-round menu (quite Italian-leaning, but then this is Buje), and good pizzas (including possibility of gluten-free base). By the roundabout in the centre, which is a nicer setting than it sounds; has a small covered terrace in front.

Pizzeria Alto, Karojba (20 mins drive). Popular with locals especially parents of kids playing on the football field in the garden.

Montona Gallery, Motovun (20 mins drive plus 10 mins walk). The first one in the row of bars/restaurants in front of the inner old town gate in Motovun. Great view.

A Modo Mio, Grožnjan (10 mins drive up the white road, +385 52 776 370). Sit in the pretty little courtyard and enjoy the atmosphere of Grožnjan on a summer's night.