

PULA

Geographical Characteristics

Pula, the largest city in Istria, a business and cultural centre, is located on 44° 52' parallel of northern latitude and 13° 51' meridian of eastern longitude on average altitude of approx. 30 m.

The entire city area has a pronounced topographical diversity which in correlation with an exceptionally indented coastline forms a spatial ambient of high ecological and visual-aesthetic value.

The city situated at the south-western tip of the Istria peninsula developed beneath and on seven hills (Kaštel, Zaro, Arena, St. Martin, St. Michael's Abbey, Mondipola and Pra Grande), on the inner part of a wide gulf and a naturally well-protected port (depth up to 38 m) open to the northwest with two entrances: from the sea and through Fažana channel.

Today, the size of the city of Pula amounts to 5.165 hectares, of which 4.159 hectares on land and 1.015 hectares at sea, with 57.765 inhabitants.

Climate in Pula is Mediterranean, with mild winters and warm summers and with an average insolation of 2.316 hours per year or 6.3 hours a day, with an average air temperature of 6.1°C in February to 26.4° C in July and August and sea temperature from 7 to 26° C.

History of the City of Pula

The city of Pula is more than 3,000 years old and it originated on the hill Kaštel where the first *gradine* (hill-top fortification) settlement was founded, the fort Histra. Apart from the circular shape of two main city streets there is nothing left of this pre-historic *gradine*. The real history of the city starts with Romans. The city was named Colonia Pietas Iulia Pola, and had all the functions and structures typical for settlements of Roman colonists.

During the migration period in the VII century, Pula's surrounding areas started to be colonised by Slavs and Croats. After 1331, Pula could no longer escape the claws of the lion of St. Mark. Venetians in Pula did not show any interest in economic development of the city since their priority was the port used as a transit point on the way from Venice along the eastern coast of the Adriatic to the Levant. Frequent epidemics of plague from the XIV century as well as endemic malaria and other diseases drastically reduced the population so that at the end of the XVII century only about 600 people lived in Pula. However, from the period of Humanism and Renaissance, Pula's antique monuments: **Arena**, **Triumphal Arch of the Sergi**, **Temple of Augustus**, became more and more known to the European cultural public, so that many artists and architects of XVI, XVII and XVIII century stayed in Pula, drawing and describing Roman buildings that were considered model architecture from Renaissance to Classicism.



Arena



Triumphal Arch of the Sergi



Temple of Augustus

With Venice's downfall, Istria and Pula came under the Austrian crown. From 1815 until the end of the First World War, Pula was part of the Austrian Littoral (Küstenland). When the Arsenal was opened in 1856 i.e. the main base of the Austrian Navy, it marked the beginning of modern development of the city and the entire southern Istria. After 1876, when it was connected by railway with the line Vienna – Trieste, Pula and nearby Brijuni felt the beginnings of tourism and all the members of the imperial family, led by Franz Joseph, were guests of Pula.

The twentieth century in Pula was the century of multiple government changes, with departures and arrivals of parts of the population, certain social and ethnic groups, particularly after the First and Second World War. Heavily damaged in bombing during the Second World War, Pula in the second half of the XX century blossomed once again and developed into the largest city in Istria, significant because of its two main economic sectors: industry, led by shipbuilding, and tourism.

Tourism

The activity that in the last thirty or so years can in no way be overlooked when Pula is concerned is tourism. The favourable conditions for the development of tourism may be found primarily in the geographical position of the city, mild Mediterranean climate, preserved nature, clean sea, good traffic connections and rich cultural and monumental heritage.

The tourist offer in the city as well as its wider surroundings is diverse and offers a number of possibilities for a quality vacation. The area of Pula is host to a large number of hotels and apartment settlements, camps, children's and holiday resorts, mostly situated along the coast and in the city's centre, as well as several nautical marinas. Just a few kilometres from the city there is one of the most famous national parks in Croatia, the Brijuni islands, and in the city's vicinity there are numerous tourist settlements as well as smaller picturesque towns, for instance Vodnjan, Medulin, Ližnjan, Premantura, Peroj, Fažana...

The testing of sea quality on Pula's beaches is performed on 17 measuring points. The sea water samples are analysed for microbiological indicators (TC, FC, FS) and pH, and it established that the sea water quality is excellent and suitable for bathing in line with regulations.

Traffic System

Considering its geographical position, the function of traffic of the city of Pula holds a significant position in present and future development of the city. The source points of all aspects of traffic are concentrated in the city of Pula and its immediate vicinity, including road, railway, maritime and air traffic. The reasons for such concentration may be ascertained in the geopolitical and economic significance of Istria and Pula in view of its neighbouring destinations within Croatia.

Looking at the wider area, Pula is connected to the west with Slovenia and Italy by road and railway routes whose backbone comprises the state highway ("Istrian Y") and railroad Pula-Buzet (Divača, Slovenia). In view of eastern parts of Croatia, Pula is, via Rijeka, connected to the main road route via the listed state highway. Thanks to its natural attributes and geographical position, as well as the building of breakwaters, the port of Pula ranks as one of the best natural ports in the entire Adriatic.

The port of Pula, as the largest in Istria, is a natural harbour protected from the south and southwest by a peninsula ending with Cape Kumpar and a 1,210 m long breakwater, and forms the north by Cape Proština. Anchorage for vessels is located on the pier Rijeka which is 150 m long and approx. 13 m deep.

Ferry traffic is operational throughout the year (route Venice – Pula – M. Lošinj – Zadar and back). Excursion routes take place in two directions, namely daily trips to Venice in July and August once a week with speedboats and daily excursions with boats and vessels in the tourist season to closer destinations such as the Brijuni islands, Rovinj, Limski kanal, etc.

Air traffic uses the Airport Pula situated 5 km northeast of the city's centre. Its runway is 2,950 m long and 45 m wide, allowing the landing of large aircrafts (B-747).