

THE WHITE EDIT

OUR FULL GUIDE TO GETTING MARRIED IN CROATIA

The only legally binding type of wedding ceremony in Croatia is a civil ceremony. Civil ceremonies can take place in almost any location provided it has been approved by the Registry Office. There are no residency requirements. However, many couples choose to avoid the legalities and paperwork involved and have a low-key civil ceremony at a registry office in the UK to fulfil the legal requirements, followed by a Wedding Blessing/Humanist Ceremony in Croatia at a venue of their choice.

Civil Ceremony

In Croatia, civil ceremonies are conducted by the local Registrar. There are no residency requirements for couples wishing to have a civil ceremony. However, you will need to be resident in the country for a couple of days prior to the wedding in order to meet with the Registrar.

Although same-sex couples cannot legally marry in Croatia they are able to have a civil partnership ceremony.

Religious Ceremony

If you wish to have a religious ceremony in Croatia, you will also need to have a civil ceremony in order for your marriage to be legally binding.

The civil ceremony can take place in Croatia or in your home country.

Wedding Blessing / Humanist Ceremony

The private, non-denominational, non-institutional nature of a Wedding Blessing or Humanist Ceremony gives you the flexibility to marry when, where and how you want. There is no legal requirement for the ceremony to take place in a licensed building. Therefore, you can hold your ceremony wherever you like —at your favourite restaurant, in a private villa, on a secluded beach or in the middle of an olive grove. The choice really is yours. There is no legal requirement for the ceremony to follow a set structure so it can be as formal or informal as you like — you can have a traditional Church Ceremony with the religious parts replaced with readings and vows or you can have a light-hearted ceremony with humorous readings and vows. Once again, the choice is yours. These ceremonies are usually performed by a celebrant who will be able to help you select the style, structure, readings, music and vows that reflect your tastes and feelings as a couple resulting in a highly personalised and unique, non-religious ceremony.

Please note: If you do choose to have a Wedding Blessing or Humanist Ceremony you will also need to have an official civil ceremony in order for your marriage to be legally binding.

Civil Ceremony

The only legally binding type of wedding ceremony in Croatia is a civil ceremony. Civil ceremonies can take place in almost any location provided it has been approved by the Registry Office. There are no residency requirements. However, many couples choose to avoid the legalities and paperwork involved and have a low-key civil ceremony at a registry office in the UK (to fulfil the legal requirements) followed by a Wedding Blessing/Humanist Ceremony in Italy at a venue of their choice.

Although there are no residency requirements for the marriage to take place, you will need to be resident in the country for a couple of days prior to the wedding in order to meet with the Registrar.

*** If you are using the services of a wedding planner, they should arrange this meeting for you. However, if you are planning your own wedding you will need to schedule this pre-wedding meeting yourself. ***

The process:

1. Contact the local Registry Office in the town/city where you wish to get married to find out about local marriage laws, including what documents you and your partner will need. You will probably require the following documentation:
 - A CNI or equivalent from your home country. This document confirms you are not married in your home country and there are no other impediments to the marriage. A CNI is valid for 3 months under Croatian law. Information about UK-issued CNIs can be obtained from <https://www.gov.uk/marriage-abroad/y/croatia> Non-UK citizens can click here for details on how to obtain the relevant certificate from their home country. The local registrar may also need a certificate of custom law, which confirms that the marriage would be valid in your home country. You can get this from your Embassy in Croatia.
 - Birth certificate (long form version).
 - A valid passport (minimum validity 12 months)
 - If you are widowed, you must provide both your previous marriage certificate and the death certificate of your husband/wife.
 - If you are divorced or your marriage was annulled, you must provide the relevant certificates. In Italy, a divorced person cannot marry until at least 300 days have elapsed since the issuing of a Decree Absolute.
 - You will require two witnesses (aged 18+) for the ceremony and will need to provide their names, addresses, occupations and photocopies of their passports.

Please note: Documents issued outside of Croatia must be translated into Croatian by an approved translator and have a Hague Apostille from the relevant issuing office in your country of residence (For UK issued documents go to www.gov.uk/get-document-legalised). If the name on any of your documents doesn't appear exactly as it does on your birth certificate, you will need to provide the Italian marriage authorities with evidence of your name change (Eg. adoption certificate; marriage certificate; deed poll). If you fail to do this, the authorities may refuse to allow the marriage to go ahead.

- 2.** Once you have received your Certificate of No Impediment (CNI) it must then be taken to the Croatian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Zagreb to have the Embassy's signature verified.
- 3.** All the required documents must be submitted to the Registrar no more than 30 days before the ceremony.
- 4.** The ceremony itself can be personalised with your own music, vows and readings. It will be conducted in Croatian and translated into English by an official interpreter if either of you do not speak Croatian.
- 5.** Once the ceremony has taken place, you will be issued with an international wedding certificate.

Civil Partnership Ceremony

Although same-sex couples cannot legally marry in Croatia they can have a civil partnership ceremony. The process and documents required are almost identical to that of the Civil Ceremony (above).

For more information go to https://www.gov.uk/marriage-abroad/y/croatia/same_sex



Religious Ceremony

If you wish to have a religious ceremony in Croatia, you will also need to have a civil ceremony in order for your marriage to be legally binding. The civil ceremony can take place in Croatia or in your home country.

Increasingly, many couples are choosing to have a low-key civil ceremony at a registry office in the UK to fulfil the legal requirements followed by a Wedding Blessing/Humanist Ceremony in Croatia — regarding this as their actual 'Wedding Day' — where they share vows and exchange rings in the presence of their friends and family.

Wedding Blessing / Humanist Ceremony

The private, non-denominational, non-institutional nature of a Wedding Blessing or Humanist Ceremony gives you the flexibility to marry when, where and how you want. There is no legal requirement for the ceremony to take place in a licensed building. Therefore, you can hold your ceremony wherever you like—at your favourite restaurant, in a private villa, on a secluded beach or in the middle of an olive grove. The choice is yours. There is no legal requirement for the ceremony to follow a set structure so it can be as formal or informal as you like — you can have a traditional Church Ceremony with the religious parts replaced with readings and vows or you can have a light-hearted ceremony with humorous readings and vows. Once again, the choice is yours. These ceremonies are usually performed by a celebrant who will be able to help you select the style, structure, readings, music and vows that reflect your tastes and feelings as a couple resulting in a highly personalised and unique, non-religious ceremony.

Please note: If you do choose to have a Wedding Blessing or Humanist Ceremony you will also need to have an official civil ceremony in order for your marriage to be legally binding.

*** Although we have done our best to ensure the information above is correct, please note it is intended only as a guideline and should not be regarded as legal advice. ***

