

Newsletter

10|2011



PHOTO: SOLARIS HOTELI

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■ News

Numerous world celebrities and politicians visit the Adriatic this year



PHOTO: RENCO KOSINOŽIĆ

The beauty of the Adriatic coast has been recognized a long time ago by members of the world elite and international stars from the world of entertainment and politics. Many of them have this year visited the Adriatic again. The world Formula 1 champion Sebastian Vettel got to experience the beauty of Croatia as a guest of the head of Formula 1 Bernie Ecclestone, who visits the Adriatic coast on a regular basis. The head man of Formula 1 invited the Red Bull pilot to his yacht and the latter tried out water boarding during his visit. The German daily newspaper Bild published a photograph taken by an Austrian tourist on which the young German is 'cutting' waves near the central Dalmatian island of Šolta, while being pulled by a speed boat.

One of the biggest Hollywood stars, Angelina Jolie, visited Brijuni islands where she saw a theatre play directed by her friend, the Croatian actor Rade Šerbedžija. She was amazed by the beauty of the islands - on which the former leader of socialist Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito received world leaders - and announced that she will be returning to Croatia with her family.

'Brijuni are wonderful. I shall definitely return with my family and spend some more time here', said the actress. Matt Dillon was another Hollywood star who visited Croatia. First he cruised the Kornati archipelago in the company of the Hollywood producer and Oscar winner Branko Lustig. Later he visited Zadar where he attended the closing of the Forum Film Festival.

The musician Jon Bon Jovi also enjoyed the beauty of Brijuni islands and this year decided to tour at least some of the tourist attractions that Croatia offers. Before visiting Brijuni, the famous singer and his family visited Dubrovnik, the island of Šipan, Cavtat, Korčula, Trogir and the National Park Krka.

Prince Harry, the younger brother of the recently married Prince William, also visited Croatia at top discretion. But he was spotted by reporters in a night club, famous for its crazy night life, in the town of Hvar on the island of Hvar in central Dalmatia. The published photographs show the

Prince having a great time until the early hours of the morning. At one point he jumped into the swimming pool of the Veneranda club, for which the British media claims to be one of the best open-air clubs in the world.

Italian designer Valentino Garavani also could not resist the beauty of the Croatian Adriatic when he sailed into the beautiful Telašćica bay on Dugi otok. The yacht, which some refer to as a floating museum, because the owner is known as a great art lover and has paintings by Picasso and Andy Warhol on the yacht, to name a few, was used last year by Elizabeth Hurley for her Mediterranean cruise.

Apart from stars from the world of fashion and entertainment, the Adriatic was visited by numerous foreign politicians this year. The Slovenian Prime Minister Boris Pahor again this year spent his holiday in his house near Umag. Viktor Orban, the Hungarian Prime Minister, who is a regular guest of the Adriatic coast also spent a few days here and for the second consecutive year the Slovakian President Ivo Gašparovič chose Brijuni for his private holiday. The Slovakian Minister of Economy Juraj Miškov could not resist sailing on his yacht across the Adriatic this year either. The Czech Minister of Agriculture Ivan Fuksa also sailed along the Croatian coast and was particularly impressed by central Adriatic. Croatia was also mentioned as a favourite destination by the Minister of Environment Pavel Drobil and the Minister of Industry and Trade Martin Kocourek. The former Columbian President Andrés Pastrana Arango also sailed across the many Croatian islands this summer. Some foreign politicians also bought properties in Croatia, among them the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs Carl Bildt who spent his holiday in his house on the island of Korčula.

The Croatian Tourist Board

www.croatia.hr

Nin - The Salt Museum opens its doors



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

A Salt Museum and a souvenir shop of the Nin salt-pan were recently opened in the royal town of Nin. As part of the exhibition space, visitors can find out information about the importance of salt for the human body and can see some simple tools and equipment used in the traditional production of salt. They can also buy and taste an indigenous Croatian salt product in the souvenir shop - the Salt flower – the so called ‘caviar of salt’ which is the gourmets’ pet name for it, an unmissable seasoning which is added in the last phase of the preparation of dishes.

The Nin salt-pan stretches over 55 acres in the Nin lagoon and its history dates back to Roman times. It still produces a wide range of products in a traditional way, from industrial to therapeutic salt and has recently become a tourist attraction as a large number of tourists that visit Nin wish to see how salt is produced. The museum offers a complete insight into the extraction of salt, which is exactly the same as in Roman times. The sea water naturally falls through the pools of the salt pan in which it evaporates with the help of sun and wind energy and crystallizes into pure natural sea salt. There are visible remains of the stone gates from ancient times in the park of the salt pan through which the sea water had flown into the pools.

By world standards, salt from Nin is of a very high quality, precisely because of the traditional production, unpolluted surroundings and specific environment conditions, such as the number of sunny hours and the good geographical position.

The goal of the Nin salt pan management is for it to become one of the worlds’ recognized ecological salt pans which will offer indigenous and innovative Croatian salt product on the world market.

The Tourist Board of Zadar County

www.zadar.hr

The Tourist Board of Nin

www.nin.hr

Vrsar - The first commercial naturist camp celebrates its 50th birthday

Koversada, the largest and the oldest naturist park in Croatia and also one of the largest in Europe, which recently celebrated 50 years of existence is located in the vicinity of Vrsar in Istria. From 1961, when it was established as the first naturist camp in Croatia, up until this day, it has recorded more than 20 million overnight stays. The first naturists came to Koversada, then a lonely and uninhabited islet near Vrsar, at the incentive of Rudolf Halbig, a swimming instructor from Munich and the owner of the travel agency „Miramare”, which was the first in the world to offer naturist holidays. Koversada became the world’s first commercial open-type naturist camp, because camping rights were once exclusive only to members of naturist (FKK) clubs. The first guests arrived to the island by boat and in 1977 a bridge was built so it could also be reached on foot. Right after the opening, Koversada got a lot of publicity in domestic and foreign press, which significantly increased interest in guests from Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy and France, which made Vrsar a well known naturist resort for guests from all parts of Europe. Recognition for the development of naturist tourism came in 1972, when the International Naturist Federation (INF/FNI) from Antwerpen organized the 13th international naturist congress in Koversada. It was the first time that such a convention was held in a socialist country, which got a lot of publicity in the whole world, launching Koversada to the top of the European naturist offer.

Today, in its apartments, bungalows and campsite, the naturist park Koversada can accommodate more than five thousand guests who have numerous sports, culinary and shopping facilities at their disposal.



PHOTO: BRASLAV KARLIC

The Tourist Board of Istria County

www.istra.com

The Tourist Board of Borough of Vrsar

www.istra-vrsar.com

Maistra

www.maistra.com

The second season of "Game of Thrones" will be filmed in Croatia



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

The unique beauty of Dubrovnik has attracted the producers at HBO, who have decided to film the second season of the serial "Game of Thrones" there. The first season which was filmed after the novel 'Song of Ice and Fire' by George R.R. Martin, was shot in Belfast, Northern Ireland and Malta, while the second season will be filmed in the south of Croatia, more precisely in Dubrovnik, as well as in Ireland. Shooting should go on for four weeks and some of the locations on their list are the Benedictine monastery on the island of Lokrum, parts of the Dubrovnik walls of the towers Bokar and Minčeta, The Prince's Palace, the Sponza Palace and the fort Lovrijenac.

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik-Neretva County

www.visitdubrovnik.hr

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik

www.tzdubrovnik.hr

Valamar hotels receive a certificate for environment protection and energy efficiency



PHOTO: VALAMAR HOTELI I LIJEVVALIŠTA D.O.O.

The camps Lanterna near Poreč and Orsera in Vrsar, as well as the hotels Valamar Bellevue in Rabac and Valamar Dubrovnik President, which are run by the Valamar Hotels&Resort group, have recently received the certificate ISO 14001, which confirms their business orientation to environment protection and energy efficiency. With this, hotels Valamar Bellevue and Valamar Dubrovnik President have fulfilled the list of acknowledgements for high quality conduct of business because they also have the ISSO 9001 and HACCP certificates that have been reaffirmed for them again this year. All the conditions for the ISSO 14001 certificate were confirmed by SGS Systems & Services Certification international certification company in the height of the tourist season in July. These camps and hotels are now also a part of the many Valamar facilities that boast this very significant certificate. At this moment, 15 Valamar facilities, hotels and camps own the certificate ISO 14001, while 11 facilities own the ISO 9001 certificate, which refers to the System of Quality Control. The HACCP certificate, which guarantees the health quality of food and also the high standard of the whole process of acquiring, processing and serving of food, is owned by 13 Valamar facilities.

Valamar

www.valamar.com

Zagreb - Hotel Regent Esplanade hosts the gala ceremony World Luxury Hotel Awards

PHOTO: REGENT ESPLANADE



PHOTO: REGENT ESPLANADE



Zagreb's hotel Regent Esplanade was chosen as this year's host of the World Luxury Hotel Awards ceremony. The gala award ceremony will be held on 16 September in the luxurious Emerald Hall of the hotel, with numerous hoteliers from all parts of the world in attendance.

Hotel Regent Esplanade was nominated last year with numerous votes from members of the industry and guests and was proclaimed the best luxury city hotel in Croatia.

Because of the award received last year and this year's nomination, as well as the high service standards and the impeccable hotel image, the organizers of the World Luxury Hotel Awards have decided to hold the ceremony in this very hotel in Zagreb, which was built in 1925 for the needs of the passengers of the famous Orient Express.

World Luxury Hotel Awards recognizes high standards of quality, top service and attention to detail. The award values the offer of the hotel, the hospitality of staff, dedication to excellence and top service. This is an award for true quality. The gala ceremony of the World Luxury Hotel Awards is one of the most glamorous events in the global hotel business. Last year it was held in Thailand, in the luxury Dusit Thani Hua Hin hotel. Awards were handed out to the world's best hotels, among which was the Hotel Regent Esplanade Zagreb. The World Luxury Hotel Awards, a prestige international award, is considered to be the top accomplishment by luxury hotels across the world. It is proof that a certain hotel has managed to leave a personal mark in the hotel business and stands out from the other high category hotels.

The Tourist Board of Zagreb

www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr

Regent Esplanade

www.regenthotels.com

Luxury Hotel Awards

www.luxuryhotelawards.com

The best of Croatia on your mobile phone screen

Croatia Top 100 is the name of the smartphone application for mobile phones which in the simplest way shows, the best Croatia has to offer in the form of entertainment, restaurants, traditions, dishes and destinations.

The application, which can now be downloaded for free through Google Android Market (market.android.com), gives a short and to the point description, photographs, exact GPS location and how to reach it, internet links and other information for chosen facilities and destinations.

The uniqueness of the Croatia Top 100 application lies in its simplicity but also in the fact that it is at this moment the only tourist application in the world for android, smartphone and tablet phones.

It is available to users in 15 languages: Croatian, English, German, Spanish, French, Italian, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Polish, Czech, Hungarian, Slovenian and Serbian.

For smartphone users it is available through the following manufacturers: Google (Nexus One), HTC, Samsung, Motorola, Sony, LG and others. For tablet users through Asus, Acer, Motorola, HTC, Samsung, Panasonic, Lenovo, LG and others, and the application can also be used on PC and Mac computers (desktop, laptop, netbook) if the Android Emulator is installed, which is free to download from Google.

The famous pearls of Croatia such as Dubrovnik and Plitvice lakes can be found in the Croatia Top 100, but the application also reveals some of the not so famous destinations in Croatia, such as hidden paradise beaches or traditional, indigenous dishes.

The launching of the application has already had good coverage by the world media and United Press International from Washington was among the first to launch this information.

CBS Money Watch writes that the «uniqueness of the application» lies in its simplicity, but also in the fact that it is the only Android application in the world that comes in 15 languages. Around 100 different media have already covered this information in the United States, Spain, France, Australia, Austria, Slovenia, from Chicago Daily Herald, Houston Chronicle, Mobile Phone Industry Today, Travel News, Lifestyle Articles, Oklahoma News, to Newsday, Columbus Dispatch and others.



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO



PHOTO: HTZ

The Croatian Tourist Board

www.croatia.hr

TripAdvisor - Recognition for four Dubrovnik hotels

One of the most important tourism websites in the world, TripAdvisor (www.tripadvisor.com), has awarded the «TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence 2011» to Dubrovnik's hotels Kompas, More, Valamar Dubrovnik President and Valamar Lacroma Dubrovnik. In grading the three-star Hotel Kompas, guests gave highest marks on TripAdvisor.com to the kind personell, quality of service, cleanliness of the hotel, great ice-cream and gastronomy offer on the hotel terrace, a favourite destination for guests from England. Kompas has 115 rooms and is a part of the hotel group Adriatic Luxury Hotels.

The hotel More, is an exclusive five-star boutique hotel, located in the Lapad bay, one of the most beautiful locations in the area of Dubrovnik. The hotel offers 34 luxury rooms and three apartments, as well as the recently opened hotel attraction – the «Cave Bar». Namely, a few years ago, at the time of the construction of the hotel, a cave was discovered and has now been converted into a hospitality facility. The cave has been well intergrated into the hotel interior, has three levels and can accommodate around 60 guests sitting and standing. Visitors can get to the cave by the hotel lift and from the outside by a staircase from the bathing grounds, from which the cave can be reached through a tunnel.

Two Valamar hotels which have been awarded have four stars, and Valamar Lacroma Dubrovnik, the largest congress and spa hotel in Dubrovnik which was opened in 2009, has been listed among the best hotels in the world for the second consecutive year.

The website TripAdvisor.com brings together millions of travel lovers who regularly share their impressions of cities, beaches, hotels and restaurants, and gives out awards based on their grades. The website has about 40 million travel reports and traveller opinions. Unbiased opinions and open remarks have made TripAdvisor an opinion maker and its wise comments are read by countless tourists from all over the world. The website has become a first online station in travel planning.



PHOTO: VALAMARHOTELI I LIJEVAJLISTA D.O.O.

Trip Advisor

www.tripadvisor.com

Hotel Kompas

www.hotel-kompas.hr

Hotel More

www.hotel-more.hr

Valamar

www.valamar.com

Ston - Two towers restored on the European «Great wall of China»



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

The Ston Wall Tour has recently become even more interesting because of the two towers which have been restored. The restoration of the towers was led by the Association of Friends of Dubrovnik Antiques which has been in charge of the walls for the past 60 years. Tower Barabanata has been converted into a gallery. Restoration of the tower Arcimun has also been completed and it will now be a venue for hosting various events. The second tower has a video wall and will be a multimedia centre with a souvenir shop where one will be able to buy postcards, books about Ston, DVDs about Ston walls and other products.

The walls of Ston, the longest fortified system in Europe and the second longest in the world (the first is the Great Wall of China) were open to the public two years ago after many years of restoration. Ston walls were built in the 14th century, after the Dubrovnik Republic took over Pelješac peninsula in 1334. This monumental defence system, the great wall, was built for protection and it was the largest fortified urban construction in Europe in those times.

The defence wall from one to the other side of the peninsula was built first. Two towns were constructed as a result of an urbanistic plan, Ston in the south and Mali Ston in the north. Pelješac was separated from land by the Great wall, which measured five and a half kilometres in length. Today, there are only five kilometres left because the rest was destroyed in the earthquakes during the 17th and 20th centuries. The walls were fortified with about 40 towers and 5 forts. According to old Dubrovnik chronicles, the construction of the Great wall took 18 months. It is expected that the walls of Ston, Ston and Mali Ston, and the salt-pan of Ston, will be the candidates for the UNESCO list of world heritage.

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik-Neretva County

www.visitdubrovnik.hr

The Tourist Board of Ston

www.ston.hr

The Association of Friends of Dubrovnik Antiques

www.citywallsdubrovnik.hr

■ Events

Punat - Everything to do with olives

Every October, Punat on the island of Krk, traditionally organizes a recognizable tourist and hospitality event called Days of Olives. During this event olive growing and olive oil production is promoted as an indigenous, original brand. The olive harvest and oil production are an attractive tourist offer and guests of Krk are presented with all the riches of this medicinal fruit. During Days of olives, which will this year be held from 1-9 October, there will be numerous exhibitions, exhibition sales, the «Miss Olives» beauty pageant, a gastronomy procession, workshops for olive producers, organized olive picking and many other activities. There will also be tastings of special olive based dishes and olive oil in Punat hotels, pubs and restaurants. The best chefs from all over Croatia come to Punat during this event and compete in preparation of olive based dishes. Punat is located on the south coast of the island of Krk, and eight kilometres from the town of Krk. The name Punat comes from the Latin word Pons, which means bridge, because it is possible that a bridge existed that connected the narrow passage in the Puntar bay from the south. The name itself was first mentioned in written documents in 1377. Today Punat is well know for olive oil production but most of all for tourism, especially nautical tourism. Located here is one of the largest and best equipped marinas on the east coast of Adriatic. In front of Punat, in the bay, is the forested islet Košljun, which is beautiful for its unique harmony of natural beauty and riches of culture and history.

The Tourist Board of Primorje-Gorje County

www.kvarner.hr

The Tourist Board of Punat

www.tzpunat.hr



PHOTO: CIMAS

Lovran - Discover the world of chestnuts

The chestnuts in Lovran stand for one of the highest quality breed of chestnuts in the world. It is a sort which is endemic for the Kvarner area having evolved by crossing the chestnuts from the Far East, brought to Lovran by sailors with the domestic indigenous sorts. The people of Lovran are very proud of their chestnuts and have dedicated three weekends in October for holding the event called Marunada. The first weekend the event is held in Lovran itself, while the next two weekends it is held in the nearby villages Liganj and Dobreć.

Various chestnut products are offered on Marunada, from traditional roasted chestnuts to different dishes made from chestnuts as a main ingredient. In the coffee and cake shops cakes, sweets and tarts are on offer, while in pubs and restaurants original domestic chestnut dishes can also be tried. Along with chestnut delicacies, visitors can enjoy domestic honey based snaps and domestic young wine.

The main event in Lovran has an all day long folklore programme, performances by a brass band and popular music. The sports part of Marunada is made up from popular sports from Nature Park Učka and its sporting possibilities – the trekking race Učka Mountain Trek, the hike to Učka and the mountain bike tour from Lovran to Lovranska Draga, Liganj and Dobreć. In Lovran there is also a bowling tournament and a meeting of oldtimer vehicles.

This year's 38th Marunada will be held from 14-30 October. Lovran is a town of long and rich history with a one hundred year old tradition in tourism and along with Opatija it is the most important place on the famous Riviera. It was named after laurel (*laurus nobilis*), which grows in abundance in the evergreen parks in the town and its surroundings. Lovran has kept its medieval urban concept of its historical town core.



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

The Tourist Board of Primorje-Gorje County

www.kvarner.hr

The Tourist Board of Lovran Borough

www.tz-lovran.hr

■ Investments

Smokovljani - A new tourist offer on the coast of Dubrovnik



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

The tourism offer on the coast of Dubrovnik has recently become richer for a new type of service – The agricultural family estate Katičić from Smokovljani. After twenty years in the hospitality business, in the elite Villa Dubrovnik, the owner of the estate decided to go back to his roots and his native land, far from the city bustle and created an oasis of peace for tourists who get to truly enjoy the Dubrovnik coastal area.

He restored his estate in a traditional style and on the first ecological family estate with an agro-tourism offer in the area of Dubrovnik, he welcomes guests in a traditional costume and offers healthy products, traditional dishes and appropriate folklore.

He has decided to certify his agricultural products and is now in the phase of acquiring the «eco» sign for his olives, figs, herbs and vegetables that can be found on the menu.

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik-Neretva County

www.visitdubrovnik.hr

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik coastal area

www.dubrovackoprimorje.hr

Garešnica - Hotel Garić restored



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

The restored three-star hotel Garić in Garešnica has recently opened its doors to its first guests. Two million euros have been invested in the restoration of 26 rooms, one apartment, a bar and a restaurant with around 200 seating places. Renovation of the wellness centre and a small pool is also planned. The hotel is orientated towards hunting and fishing enthusiasts who can find attractive locations there for their hobbies.

The Tourist Board of Bjelovar-Bilogora County

www.tzbbz.hr

The Tourist Board of North Moslavina

www.tzsm.hr

Lastovo - A country tourist estate on a paradise island

The Podanje Estate, in the ownership of the Simić family is the first agricultural family estate on the island of Lastovo, which represents the start of agricultural tourism in Croatia's youngest nature park. Around Lastovo, which many refer to as paradise on Earth, there are 46 islets and on the island itself there are 46 small churches and 46 fields. Podanje, which can accommodate 46 guests, is located on one of those fields, the Prgovo field.

The household is located in a stone house, between an olive grove and a one hundred year old češvina (a type of evergreen oak tree) which creates a lovely breeze during the summer heat. Adding to the whole atmosphere are the smells and flavours of dishes prepared from exclusively domestic ingredients grown in the fields of Lastovo. Proving how good the climate is on the estate there are the octopuss who come out in the nearby bay looking for some shade during the summer heat.

Lastovo Archipelago, with Lastovo as the largest island is located south of Korčula and is one of the ten paradise gardens on the Mediterranean, according to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Lastovo was named by Greek seamen and merchants who sailed to the land of the Ilyrians from southern colonies. The name Ladesta, Ladeston or Ladoston, was given to it because of its similarity to the island of Lado in the Ionian Sea. The Romans gave the island its Latin name – Augusta Insula – Emperor's island.

Through its turbulent history there were many rulers on Lastovo. After the Greeks and the Roman Empire it was under Byzantine rule, then under the Croatian Empire and then the Venetian Republic. In the 13th century it voluntarily became a part of the Dubrovnik Republic.

At the beginning of the 17th century it was briefly under the rule of Venice and then it went back to the Dubrovnik Republic, which was abolished by the French at the beginning of the 19th century. Lastovo was then briefly taken over by the British, and in 1815 became a part of the Habsburg Monarchy. From the end of World War I until the capitulation of fascist Italy in 1943, it was under Italian occupation.

There are a few villages on the island but Lastovo is the largest. It is an old medieval town with an amphitheatrical shape and a long and interesting history. There one can find beautiful family houses from the 15th and 16th century, which are richly decorated with "fumari" (chimneys). This is a unique architectural expression from the 17th and 18th centuries. The people of Lastovo have always competed amongst each other as to who will have a more original chimney.



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

The island of Lastovo is full of beautiful bays, Zaklopatica and Pasadur on the north coast, Skrivena Luka and Ubli on the south coast and Lučica at the foot of Lastovo is the most famous among tourists.

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik-Neretva County

www.visitdubrovnik.hr

The Tourist Board of Lastovo

www.lastovo.hr

Podanje

www.podanje.com

■ Projects

Brijuni Riviera - a tourism megaproject on the Istrian coast

According to many, Istria is a region that is, along with Dubrovnik, the most developed tourism area in Croatia. It will soon flourish even more because recently a 350 million euro Brijuni Riviera project has been launched. The project includes construction of luxury hotels, sports centres and cultural contents, on 23 km of the western coast of Istria, just opposite the world famous Brijuni islands.

Brijuni Riviera is the name of the company that was founded by the state and the Istrian county. Its job is to give out concessions on the coastal area opposite Brijuni, which encircles three locations. These are the island Sveta Katarina – Monumenti, Hidrobaza in the area of Pula and Pineta in Fažana. For each of the three areas there will be a tender by which contractors will be chosen for the construction of hotels, apartments and two nautical marinas.

They will have concession rights for 66 years. Investments are expected to be around 350 million euros.

Pineta is located eight kilometres from Pula. Numerous four and five star hotels, with 650 beds all together as well as sports and recreation facilities, are expected to be built there. Hidrobaza is located in the far northwest part of Pula. By one concept, there should be five or six four star hotels built there, with 1000 beds and by another concept it should be a tourist resort with a hotel and three and four star villas.

The island Sveta Katarina and Monumenti is located on the north side of Pula harbour.

Two nautical harbours are expected to be built there, with a total capacity of 600 berths in the sea and a dry marina with 1000 berths with according facilities, a four or five star hotel with a capacity of 200 beds and various public use facilities as well as a gastronomy centre.

With the Brijuni Riviera project Istria is to become the most prestigious destination of the Mediterranean. Brijuni will not be offered on the tender, but plans are made for the upgrading of their tourist offer from concession charges funds. The plan does not include the construction of new tourism facilities on Brjuni but the plan is to raise the existing facilities to the highest category level. The existing hotels on the island are the hotel Neptun, Istra and Karmen. There are also three villas; Lovorka, Primorka and Dubravka which are a part of the Brijuni National Park. Villa Lovorka was renovated last year. By the end of this year the plan is to renovate all the 30 rooms in Hotel Istra, which is a part of Hotel Neptun, as well as the construction of a wellness centre, after which the hotel would receive its fourth star. The three year plan includes the renovation of all the other hotels and villas.



PHOTO: RENCO KOSINOŽIĆ

The Tourist Board of Istria County

www.istra.hr

Brijuni rivijera

www.brijunirivijera.hr

National park Brijuni

www.brijuni.hr

The islands of Croatia soon to be reachable by hydroplanes



PHOTO: IVO PERVAN

The first hydroplanes of the German company European Coastal Airlines (ECA) should start connecting Split, Dubrovnik, Šibenik, Zadar, Rijeka and Pula with all the larger Croatian islands from next summer.

This is an Adriatic coastal air traffic project which will enable the islands with the warmest seas in Europe to be connected with a network of air, land and sea corridors of the old continent. In the first phase, which envisages the construction of water airports, purchasing of the aircrafts and the creating of a reliable air carrier, investors from Germany and Switzerland plan to invest at least 31 million euros.

In the first phase the ECA plans to connect Split and Dubrovnik with Korčula and Hvar, Vis, Lastovo and other surrounding islands, and to the north Šibenik, Zadar, Rijeka and Pula with Mali Lošinj, Rab and other Dalmatian islands, with six 19 seater aircrafts.

30 sea harbours would be used for landing and take off. In the second phase the islands will be connected with Italian cities of Brindisi, Bari, Foggia, Ancona, Rimini, Ravenna, Bologna, Padova, Trieste and Venice. The flight from Ancona to Mali Lošinj would only take 32 minutes and from Pescara to Vis only 42 minutes.

European Coastal Airlines

www.ec-air.eu

«Princeza Jadrana» - A chain of island nautical centres



PHOTO: LIUBO GAMULIN

The Zagreb company «Princeza Jadrana» plans to build a chain of 12 nautical centres on Croatian islands from Lošinj, across Brijuni to Vis and Lastovo by 2018. The value of the investment is estimated at 350 million euros. The first four marinas on Lastovo, Kaprij, Mljet and Lošinj should be finished by 2013. The second phase would include marinas in Korčula, Vrgada and Dugi Otok, while Olib, Šipan, Vis, Brijuni and Stari Grad in Hvar would get their turn in 2017. Investors are collaborating with the company Geofoto, which has a fleet of airplanes. With the purchase of new hydroplanes, the nautical centres on the islands would be connected to airports in Dubrovnik, Split and Zadar and therefore be at the disposal of, for example sailors from Germany, who would be able to reach their vessel in Lastovo in three hours.

Princeza Jadrana

www.princeza-jadrana.hr

■ Croatia in the world

Vis - A island that promises a fairytale holiday

The perfect choice for anyone who wishes to escape the city bustle and the fast way of life today are the beautiful and hidden Mediterranean islands without crowds and tourists, which offer a beautiful holiday in natural surroundings. Recently, the Financial Times included the Croatian island of Vis among the five island pearls of the Mediterranean. The Dalmatian island of Vis is less visited and almost escapes the crowds of the tourist season, leaving guests of this beautiful place to enjoy its natural beauty. Even though Vis has more than enough to offer and abounds in numerous wonders, it does not have luxury hotels, marinas and restaurants, although it is very popular among sailing enthusiasts and yachtmen. Although it does not include many contents of a social character, Vis offers restaurants with exclusive fresh fish and local specialities, some of the best Croatian wines and the beauty of the Mediterranean that has almost disappeared in other places. Instead of grand buildings and tourist crowds, says the author Tom Robins, you can find landscapes that are abundant with aromas of rosemary, lavender, figs, olives and grapevine on the island. The island has many abandoned beaches and bays which can be easily reached by a rented scooter. Vis probably does not have so many tourists primarily because of how far it is - a two hour ferry ride from Split. Also, there is the fact that Vis was once a marine base with traces of that time still visible, especially in the harbour and the fort on top of the hill.

From Vis, one can also go on a trip and visit Modra špilja (the blue cave) on the island of Biševo. There, around noon, during calm seas, the sun rays break through the underwater opening of the cave, reflecting from the white bottom and light up the cave with a blue light, giving the objects in the water a silvery look and leaving visitors breathless.



PHOTO: BORIS KRAGIC

The island of Vis has many culturally-historical monuments and buildings. The largest are the remains of ancient Issa and on the Pirovo peninsula there are remains of an ancient theatre and public bathing grounds. Around the island there are many sunken battle and merchant ships, making a visit to Vis quite adventurous.

“The legacy is a very real sense of tranquillity – what Croats call ‘fjaka’, which translates approximately as ‘lazy mood’ – and a pace of life that cannot fail to slow you down.” says the article in the Financial Times.

The Tourist Board of Split-Dalmatia County

www.dalmatia.hr

The Tourist Board of Vis

www.tz-vis.hr

The BBC invites tourists to Croatia



PHOTO: MATIO BRZIC

On the cover of one of the world's leading media, the BBC, a long article recently appeared in which it is announced that the Croatian coast will be „ready for harvesting“ from 2013 and invites the whole world to „buy Croatian“. The author of the article praises Croatia and practically invites everyone who has not already visited to come to this part of the Mediterranean and if they are smart, buy some land and live there forever.

Since the war ended in the 90s, Croatia has become a leading tourism destination for western tourists. Miles of beautiful Adriatic coast and forests and lakes in the inland have attracted travellers and second home buyers from all over the world. In a unique way, Croatia combines the Slavic heart with the Mediterranean soul, says the author and states that Croatia is a country with a thousand islands, a 1778 kilometre long coastline and over 300 sunny days a year. The emerald sea is crystal clear and the seafood is incredibly tasty.

Even though the inland is abundant with karst mountains, beautiful lakes and waterfalls and Zagreb has a rich culture and fantastic night life, the main tourist attraction and the centre of everything is along the coast. Visitors literally rush to the pebbled beaches of the Istrian peninsula, the beautiful islands on the turquoise sea, are amazed by the history, culture and beauty of Split and Dubrovnik and attend the fancy parties on the island of Hvar – the author describes Croatian tourist offer and adds that the top quality olive oil and wines are proof of its Mediterranean roots.

She goes on to state that the Istrian peninsula with kilometres of beautiful coastline is close to Austria and Italy and is very popular among buyers from the north of Europe and Italy. The fertile hills in the inland of Istria have for many become the new Tuscany, with attractive old houses that are definitely worth renovating and villages which offer numerous delicacies, such as for instance, white truffles.

The town Opatija is a pearl of the former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, where the architecture reflects its European past. It is a sophisticated and fancy place which attracts buyers with high spending power, states the article and stresses how the Croatian islands are altogether a special story.

Dubrovnik was, of course, also mentioned. This beautiful pearl of the Adriatic is one of the most popular destinations. The author points out how Croatia is successfully fighting against too much concrete and huge buildings along the coast because it wants to keep the special quality with which it has attracted so many visitors.

In the article, the BBC stresses that there are good ferry connections all along the Adriatic coast, a presence of almost all the European air carriers in the Dubrovnik and Split airports and that Zagreb is connected by rail lines with almost the whole of Europe.

BBC

www.bbc.com

The Guardian praises the Croatian islands

British daily newspaper The Guardian has recently published an article in its travel section full of praise for five Croatian islands. British author and reporter James Hopkin, had nothing but praise for Vis, Hvar, Mali Lošinj, Korčula and Pag, pointing out how they are the best islands for a holiday. He thinks it is best to visit Croatia after the tourist crowds have cleared to enjoy the warm sea, the old towns and excellent food.

Hopkin starts his list of beautiful Croatian islands with Vis, for which he thinks is ideal for couples wishing to escape the city bustle. Hidden bays, beautiful vineyards, palm trees, olives, oleanders, around three hundred aromatic herb species, small fishing boat rides, dolphin spotting, emerald waters near Stiniva, discovering the military history of the island and the local seafood and good wine are ideal for a romantic dream holiday, says the author.

For lovers of culture and history he recommends Korčula, which 'combines a part of Dubrovnik's chic with an abundance of natural beauty'. Compared to Dubrovnik, he gives an advantage to Korčula because it has more contents and there is the possibility of one day trips to the nearby islands as a bonus. From Greek and Roman artefacts, through to the speculation whether Marco Polo was really born on this island, all the way to the well documented local tradition of shipbuilding, lovers of history and cultural events will find everything they are looking for on Korčula. For those who wish to relax, on the other hand, the best place to do this is on the 'most relaxed' island – Mali Lošinj. The colour of the sea here is surprisingly green, as are the many forested areas on the island, for which the island of Mali Lošinj is known as an island of vitality. Close by is Veli Lošinj, 'an old fishing area with a combination of Venetian and Greek urban details and beautiful small bays ideal for therapeutic swimming', states the article.

As far as food is concerned, the author liked Pag most of all, which he says is famous for moonlike landscapes, cheese, lamb and salt. Apart from the traditional production of cheese, the author was obviously fascinated by the phenomenon of salty grass due to the winds coming from the sea, which gives the lamb from Pag a special taste.



PHOTO: JURAJ KOPAC

For those looking for a good time, he recommends the 'most glamorous' island of Hvar and the town of Hvar, which is at the height of the season 'full of Italians, party posers and snobby English yachtsmen and sailors'. In the article he mentions that the town was founded the same year that Aristotle was born in, and that King Edward VIII and his lover Wallis Simpson would often lose themselves among its beautiful stone paved streets.

Hopkin's trilogy of short stories about Dalmatia will be aired on BBC's Radio 4 in March of 2012.

Guardian

www.guardian.co.uk

Dubrovnik - JustLuxe praises the pearl of the Adriatic

A holiday in Croatia offers enjoyment on one of the most beautiful coasts with historical towns in Europe and a visit to Dubrovnik is an ideal destination for all those who are looking for that little bit extra, states the British website JustLuxe.

The town of Dubrovnik attracts more and more tourists every year and if we look carefully we can easily see why - the beauty of the surroundings in combination with the Old Town is irresistible and rarely leaves anyone indifferent, writes Emyr Thomas. Surrounded by ancient walls, Dubrovnik is decorated with Renaissance and Baroque buildings and many bars and restaurants which proudly offer fresh sea food. The author shares his experience with readers through his stay at two hotels, the Bellevue and the Excelsior as well as a tour of the town and enjoying his dinner.

Dubrovnik's hotel Bellevue is located about thirty metres above the picturesque Miramare Bay with a view onto the crystal blue Adriatic Sea. In the hotel, he was welcomed by smiles and enjoyed his coffee on a large terrace with a panoramic view of the sea, writes JustLuxe.

The hotel ensures an alternative, faster way to the beach by a private elevator. On the beach there are informal restaurants and local bays perfect for sunbathing and swimming. The Bellevue has 91 spacious and well equipped rooms and elegantly furnished apartments which offer a wonderful view of the sea. The presidential suite has a large dining room, a separate living room, two highly equipped bathrooms and a balcony with a view of the sea.

The luxurious hotel Excelsior has been the host for guests of Dubrovnik since 1913. With a view of the island of Lokrum and the Old Town, it boasts a beautiful terrace which is ideal for dining, enjoying cocktails or simply having a cup of coffee. The hotel Excelsior has 141 standard rooms and 17 luxury apartments. It also has the renovated Villa Agava, with three bedrooms, surrounded by five terraces that offer an unbelievable view. In its offer the hotel also has a spa centre and inside pools in a relaxing and intimate atmosphere.

The restaurant Vapor in the Bellevue offers a wonderful view onto the bay and the possibility of enjoying a relaxed atmosphere and top quality cuisine. The author recommends oysters for starters followed by risotto.

The Excelsior actually has four exquisite restaurants that offer authentic national and international dishes. One of the most famous city restaurants, Nautika, is located near the walls of Dubrovnik, and offers domestic recipes and dishes that are simple but elegant. Good food combined with a picturesque view onto the city walls offers an unforgettable experience.



PHOTO: DAMIR FABJANIC

A tour of the town with a specialized guide will satisfy everyone's curiosity and climbing the steep stairs of the city walls will give more information about the city and the damage done to it during the war, as well as the restoration of the same. The mountain above the town can be reached by a taxi and from it one can experience the panoramic view while enjoying a cup of coffee or a glass of wine, concludes the author Emyr Thomas.

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik-Neretva County

www.visitdubrovnik.hr

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik

www.tzdubrovnik.hr

JustLuxe

www.justluxe.com

Hotel Bellevue

www.valamar.com

Hotel Excelsior

www.hotel-excelsior.hr

«The Wine Gang» presents 45 Croatian wines in London

British wine critics, better known as «The Wine Gang», have recently visited Croatia and tried 280 samples from 9 wineries all over Croatia. They then chose 45 of the best wines which they will present to the media, members of the hospitality industry and wine sellers in London. The group, made up from five of the best British wine critics, gave the title of the best winery to the Winery Kozlović. Malvazija Santa Lucia '08, with 95 points is the highest graded dry Croatian wine ever. The Britts were especially amazed with Croatian white wines and from the red wines, they singled out Plavac Mali.

Among «The Wine Gang» members is Joanna Simon, the author of the «Sunday Times Book of Wine» and the long time columnist of The Sunday Times, she is also the current editor of House and Garden and the president of one of the most respected panels in the worlds – IWC from London. Also here is Anthony Rose, a columnist and critic for the Independent and Decanter and the president of the Decanter panel at the Decanter World Wine Awards as well as Tom Cannavan, the author of the internet website Wine-pages and collaborator of Decanter Magazine, The World of Fine Wine and The Wine Report. Other members of the «gang» are David Williams, a correspondent of the Observer and deputy editor of The World of Fine Wine as well as Jane Parkinson, an experienced wine judge and reporter, whose articles have been awarded by the prestige Louis Roederer trophy.



PHOTO: MARIO ROMULIĆ & DRAŽEN STOJČIĆ

The Wine Gang

www.thewinegang.com

■ Introducing

Lopud - Villa Vilina on the list of best island hotels in the world

Villa Vilina is a family hotel which was restored and opened in the summer of 2002. The hotel has fourteen rooms and three apartments and is located near a sandy beach bay on the island of Lopud, part of the Elafiti Islands northwest of Dubrovnik.

Two years ago it was welcomed into the prestigious hotel club «Exclusive Island Hotels and Resorts» as the only such hotel from Croatia. With this, Villa Vilina and the island of Lopud joined the list of the best world hotels located on an island, among which as many as 10 hotels are from the Aman Resorts group. Also on the list are Bulgari hotel from Bali, Necker Island as a private island owned by Sir Richard Branson, owner of the Virgin group, a few hotels from the luxury group Taj and around 50 more hotels from all over the world.

These are all smaller boutique hotels which have been separated into six groups and Villa Vilina was entered under The Charming Collection.

In the printed directory for 2009, on the first page, there is a photograph that shows the sea and the church of the Holy Trinity from the Island of Lopud, while in the additional brochure, stretching across the whole back page there is a photograph of the terrace in Villa Vilina and its ART Restaurant & Gallery.

Lopud is considered by many to be among the most beautiful Elafiti Islands. The village of the same name is located on the northwest side of the island with a view onto the island of Šipan. Two hills are connected by a beautiful valley with a path that leads to Šunj bay on the other side of the island. The bay is almost round, with a straight white sand path that leads to it. The beach in Šunj Bay last year found itself on the most beautiful European beaches list in certain tourism magazines.

Even though the island has more than 2584 hours of sunshine a year, the natural sources ensure the greenery is in full bloom with various trees, bushes, plants and many palm trees. The local park is known as a former garden from the XIX century, in which there is a collection of plants from all over the world. The island has been inhabited for thousands of years and on it there are many ancient Greek, Roman and Slavic buildings and ruins.



PHOTO: IVO PERVAN

The Tourist Board of Dubrovnik-Neretva County

www.visitdubrovnik.hr

Villa Vilina

www.villa-vilina.hr

Funtana - Dinosaurs return to Istria

Dinopark is located in Funtana, a former small fishing village and today a famous tourist destination in Istria. It is a fun theme park in which visitors can see life size replicas of dinosaurs. Many fossils, bones and other dinosaur remains were found not far from Dinopark, which is proof that these magnificent creatures roamed the area of Istria more than 120 million years ago.

In the time of the Mesozoic, Istria was the luxury home to many species of dinosaurs, covered with rich vegetation that these large animals fed on. Because of this history, the idea came about for opening a fun dinosaur themed park. Dinopark was thus created.

Some of the exhibits in this interesting park were designed by companies which participated in the making of dinosaurs for films and documentaries. A stroll along the wooden walking paths through the beautiful karst forest, with an interesting rocky landscape and in the company of these magnificent giants from the past, is unforgettable.

Visitors can see hand made replicas of dinosaurs that have come from all over the world. The dinosaurs will be able to move their limbs, head and tail and make such realistic dinosaur sounds which call for respect which they commanded when they walked the face of the Earth.

There is also a circus and a magic show in the arena with around 800 seats. At their disposal visitors also have an internet café, a self service restaurant, a dino cinema, a children`s playroom and a museum with dinosaur remains. In the outer part of the park there is a children`s train, a trampoline, bouncy castles and the “Flying Devils” group show, in which they ride a motorcycle on a wire, 25 metres above ground level.



PHOTO: HTZ

The Tourist Board of Istria County

www.istra.com

The Tourist Board of Borough of Funtana

www.istra-funtana.com

Dinopark

www.dinopark.hr

Nature Park Telašćica

Telašćica is one of the largest and best protected natural harbours of the Adriatic and the total length of its developed coastline is 68 km. Telašćica Bay, after which the whole park was named, is located on the central part of the east coast of the Adriatic Sea, on the southeast part of Dugi Otok. Thanks to its exquisite beauty, riches and meaning, this bay was pronounced a nature park in 1988. The bay is surrounded with 13 islands and islets, and on the inner side of the bay there are six beautiful islands, one cliff and 25 small beaches. Thanks to its location, the Park is protected from strong winds from the inland and the sea. It has more than 2500 hours of sunshine a year.

There are three phenomena which represent the basic characteristics of this area. First there is the unique Telašćica Bay, as the safest and the most beautiful and largest natural harbour in the Adriatic Sea. Then there are the so called 'cliffs', that stretch up to 160 meters above sea level and descend up to 90 meters into the sea, and finally the salty lake Mir, with its medicinal traits.

The underwater world of Telašćica counts over 300 plant and 300 animal species. This kind of diversity is conditioned by the location and the micro-climate of the sea bed, which is almost fully covered in meadows of sea flowers and breeding habitats for many types of fish. In the surrounding area there are lovely meadows and on the hills there is rich Mediterranean vegetation with 500 different species of plants.

An interesting fact is that a meat eating sponge of the *Asbestopluma hypogea* species (Bakran-Petricioli and Petricioli) was discovered in 2000, at the bottom of a half cave in the park, 24 metres below the sea level. It is only the second such discovery in the world.

One of the frequent guests of the nature park is the 'good dolphin', and the park has become a type of shelter for the abandoned donkeys of Dugi Otok.

The area of Telašćica has been densely populated since the ancient times and witness to that are the remains of Roman buildings in Mala Proversa, as are the numerous pre Romanic churches, among which the church of St. John in Stivanje Polje stands out the most. There is a written document about fishing from the end of the 10th century which is proof that it was on these coasts that fishing first started among Croats.

The Nature Park offers diving possibilities on a few attractive locations near the cliffs, walks along interesting places and a beautiful view that stretches from Grpašćak which should not be missed.



PHOTO: IVO PERVAN

In the area of the park there are a few catering facilities, where visitors can enjoy traditional fish and meat dishes. These restaurants are located on the island of Katina and the bays Mala Proversa, Mir, and Magrovica. The park also offers Robinson tourism in rented houses as well as scooter, boat and bicycle renting. Camping, however, is forbidden.

The Tourist Board of Zadar County

www.zadar.hr

Nature Park Telašćica

www.telascica.hr

Gorski kotar - Mountain fruits road

Following the example of the wine roads that Istria, Hrvatsko Zagorje and some other areas of Croatia are famous for, Gorski Kotar has its own 'Mountain Fruits Road' which connects the local indigenous product producers. A network of ten destinations with an attractive offer of local produce for tourists has been created with this project.

The road offers each visitor, whether on their own or as part of a group, the possibility to get to meet the local producers that breed or produce some of the fruits of the mountain. A visit also means the possibility to taste or buy some of these products.

In Brod on Kupa travelers on the Mountain Fruit Road can enjoy apple products and see the decorated ceramic objects. In Čabar they can find pear and apple products as well as domestic cheeses. In the area of Fužine they can find fruits of the forest products as well as mountain lavender and medicinal herbs. In Lokve they can taste original herbal drinks and in Ravna Gora, where the main information desk is located, they can find domestic liquors.

All the producers present their mountain products on an event held from May until the middle of October, through which visitors can learn more about the medicinal traits of certain fruits. Educational walks are also organized and so is the introduction to every specific destination and family estate that deals in production of mountain fruits.

Every destination of the Mountain Fruit Road has their own exhibition and selling point and most of them plan to introduce different agro-tourism contents with tasting areas and accommodation facilities built in harmony with traditional values of the mountain area.



PHOTO: HTZ

The Tourist Board of Primorje-Gorje County

www.kvarner.hr

Mountain fruits

www.plodovi-gorja.hr

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