

Newsletter

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PHOTO: RENCO KOSINOŽIĆ



PHOTO: NINO MARCUTI

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■ Projects

Zagreb – little Croatia

“Little Croatia” is the name of a recently introduced project, a theme park to be built in New Zagreb within the next two years, between Islandska Street and the Avenue of Većeslav Holjevac. Spread over 12 hectares, each Croatian county will have its own “corner” of 5,000 square meters on which buildings, parks and other facilities symbolizing it will be built, characteristic and authentic for the given region. The development study for the park was carried out by the Institute for physical planning, which drafted a proposal for each location. For instance, in the Split-Dalmatian part of the park, the Split waterfront will be built, and in the Istrian, the typical Istrian stone house, symbolizing the way houses are built in this region of Croatia.

The goal of the project is, as its name reveals, to take a walk through the entire Croatia in one place, which should greatly contribute to the tourist offering of Croatia’s capital. Zagreb’s visitors could, therefore, find in New Zagreb numerous replicas of, for instance, fortress Nehaj, the Ston Walls, Kopački rit, the park-forest Papuk and many other sights of Croatian counties.

City of Zagreb Tourist Board

www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr

City of Zagreb

www.zagreb.hr

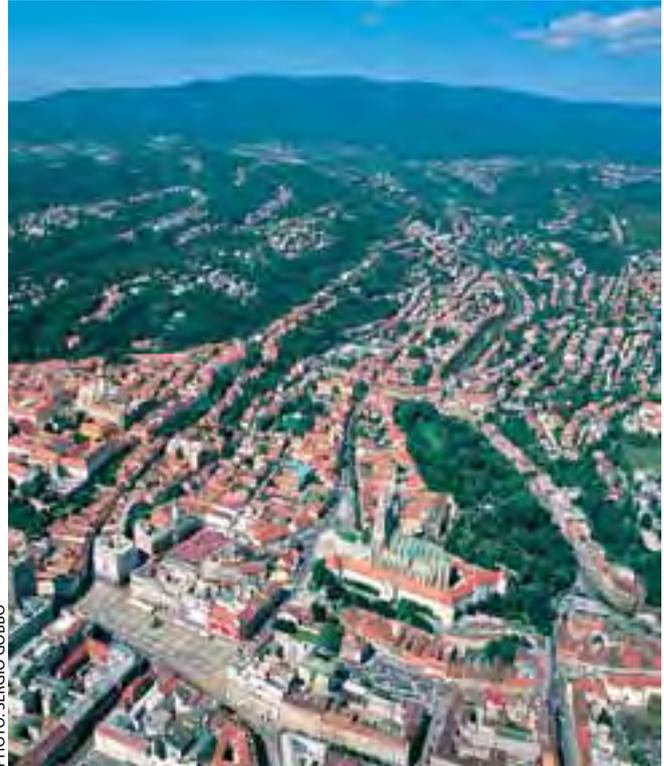


PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

Zagreb – Reconstruction of the “Queen’s well”

The “Medvednica nature park” public institution and the Zagreb Rotary Club have launched a reconstruction and development project of Kraljičin zdenac (“the Queen’s well”), aimed at revamping the source of the well according to the historical matrix, clean and revamp the lakes for trout-breeding, reconstruct the hospitality facility and its immediate surroundings, clean the bed of the brook Kraljevec and reconstruct two dried-out ponds. A reconstruction of the well’s stone wall is also planned, and the erection of a memorial. The entire project will cost around 250,000 HRK, and a part of the funds will be provided by the Tourism Ministry.

Kraljičin zdenac is a great natural monument and one of the favourite excursion destinations for Zagreb locals. It is located 529 meters above sea-level and is one of the strongest sources of the Kraljevec brook (in its lower course it is also known as Medveščak).

The cool well in the thick forest has always attracted hikers seeking a primal nature experience without too much effort. The most popular way to get to the well is a pleasant path which meanders from Šestinski lagvić through the forest shade along the Kraljevec stream. The path was built in the 19th century by Count Miroslav Kulmer for his wife Elvira to take walks, which is why the path was then named after her. Today, the name Miroslavec is more common. Next to the path, educational signs have been put up, explaining the interesting geological structure and history of Medvednica. The well is named after the legendary Black Queen (“Crna kraljica”), most probably Barbara of Celj, King Sigismund’s second wife, who was, according to legends, a vicious and debauched mistress of Medvedgrad. Before WWI, count Kulmer from Šestine erected a forest lodge, and beneath it a lake for trout-breeding.



PHOTO: RENCO KOSINOZIC

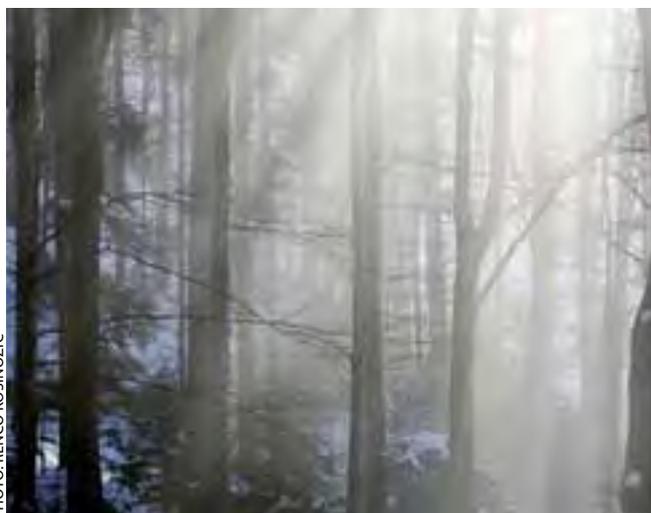


PHOTO: RENCO KOSINOZIC

City of Zagreb Tourist Board

www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr

Medvednica Nature Park

www.pp-medvednica.hr

Šibenik-Knin County – Prvić awakening

Lookout spot development projects and the construction of a cultural centre and the Faust Vrančić memorial centre, in which replicas of almost all significant inventions of this famous Šibenik-native will be exhibited, should greatly contribute to the popularization of the island of Prvić as a sought-after tourist destination. Along these projects, the reconstruction of derelict olive groves, vineyards and land on which aromatic herbs are grown will also play an important role in the promotion of island tourism as well as in the revitalisation of Prvić towns and the return of a better quality life to rural areas, with the preservation and reconstruction of the original surroundings and traditional heritage.

Prvić lookout spots are connected via paths and perfect bike trails along the entire island, and offer an indescribable delight of staying in nature and the view of the near-by archipelago. These lookout-spots will, along with the already well-known Burtiž, a regatta of traditional boats with Latin-rigs, certainly contribute to the tourist offering of the island. The Faust Vrančić memorial centre featuring his inventions will also play an important role in the promotion of Prvić. It is located right next to the parochial church where the grave of the great inventor, who often used to reside in his summer-house on the Island of Prvić, is located. The construction of this representative facility is in its final phases.

A representative of the Renaissance, a polymath, writer, lexicographer and inventor, Faust Vrančić lived on the turn from the 16th to the 17th century, and one of his most well-known legacies is the invention of the parachute. Originally envisaged by the genius Leonardo da Vinci, the invention of the parachute failed to attract much attention until 1595, when Vrančić made a sketch of a man jumping off a tower. Though his square parachute is somewhat rough in its form, it has all the basic elements of a parachute: the dome, the bearing threads and the connection system. Some writings suggest the jump actually took place, and the event was referred to 30 years later in a book by the English bishop John Wilkins, secretary of the London Royal Society. Vrančić is also the author of the very first printed Croatian dictionary.

The island of Prvić, covered in Mediterranean macchia, vineyards and olive-groves, with picturesque coves is located in the Šibenik archipelago near Vodice. The island is 2.4 square kilometres in size and has only two inhabited towns, Prvić Luka and Šepurine, with over 400 inhabitants. The name Prvić (“the first one”) derives from the fact that it is the closest to the land, from which it is around 1,000 meters away. It was first mentioned in the 11th century. Like on other islands in the Šibenik archipelago, here history has also left a deep trace in the form of cultural and historical monuments. Various baroque altars, early Christian fragments with representations of the crucifix, the Church of St. Mary with a convent built by Glagolitic monks and numerous other monuments are testimony to the rich history of this tiny island, which, with its beaches, clean sea and ancient stone houses attracts visitors as an ideal destination for all those seeking a vacation in a true Mediterranean surrounding.



PHOTO: MILAN BABIĆ

Šibenik-Knin County Tourist Association

www.sibenikregion.com

Town of Vodice Tourist Association

www.vodice.hr

Karlovac – Sustainable development study of the Stari grad Dubovac castle

A sustainable development study of the cultural attraction Stari grad Dubovac (“old town Dubovac”), a reconstructed renaissance castle, has recently been presented to the public. The study demonstrates the great tourist potential of this cultural and historical monument in Karlovac, whose long-year reconstruction was financed by the Ministry of Culture. Stari grad Dubovac is located on a hill overlooking the river Kupa, providing a view of the entire town of Karlovac. In the 15th and 16th century, it was owned by the dukes Frankopan and Zrinski.

Stari grad has undergone a static and constructional reconstruction, and now the interior needs to be revamped. The revitalization of the renaissance castle with some Gothic elements, featuring three round towers and a square defence-tower, is comprehensive and allows for a high level of investment.

The study also provides an answer to the question what and how to plan in the future at this cultural and historical monument.

Apart from the construction of several “accommodation units with hospitality facilities”, it is also possible to create a conference hall for conference and cultural tourism, and a unique playground for children for a “siege of the fortress”. This way, Stari grad Dubovac would become part of the European network of ancient towns and fortresses.

In the Karlovac quarter Dubovac, the tourist workers and public-private investors should, according to the presented study, fix up a brewery museum, walking-paths and theme routes along the Dubovac forest to the near-by river Kupa and the lake Jezerac, foster private investments in the eco-farm Petrovac and elsewhere, and arrange programs along the historical roads Karolina and Luizijana.

An important part in Stari grad Dubovac should be played by cultural and tourism facilities, theatre plays, concerts and festivals.

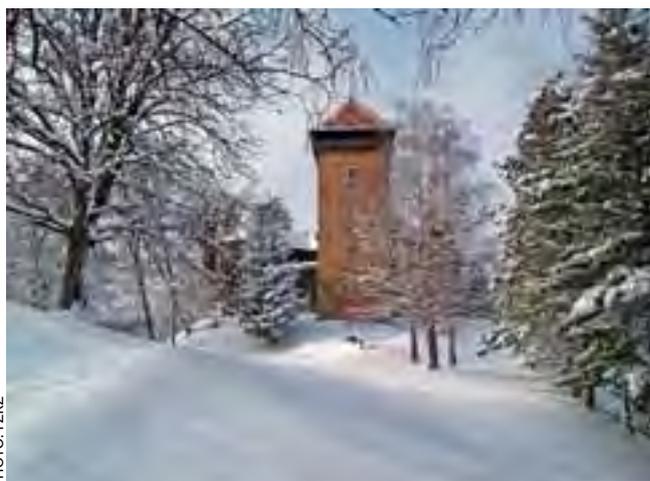


PHOTO: TZKZ



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

Karlovac County Tourist Association

www.tzkz.hr

Town of Karlovac Tourist Association

www.karlovac-touristinfo.hr

Ministry of Tourism

www.mint.hr

Dubrovnik – Golf on Srđ

The world's best known golf-course designer and famous golfer, Australian Greg Norman and the Zagreb company Razvoj golf have recently introduced a golf park project worth 6.5 billion HRK. In the very first public presentation, it was said that two golf courses, with 18 and 6 holes respectively, are envisaged on 310 hectares on the Srđ plateau, of the highest professional standards, as well as a golf academy with a practice court, to be lead by Greg Norman himself. Also envisaged is the construction of numerous sports and recreational facilities such as an equestrian club, a wellness centre, cycling and walking paths, an outside amphitheatre, the reconstruction of the fortress Imperial on Srđ, heavily damaged in the war, and “accompanying accommodation capacities”, villas, hotels, suites and restaurants, spread over 27 hectares. During the drafting of the urban plan, the dilemma was whether to construct 250 or 300 luxury facilities in the area. According to the plans of Razvoj golf, construction could commence in February of 2011, if all conditions necessary for launching such a great project are met.

Along with the already mentioned 6.5 million HRK investment, an additional 640 million needs to be invested in missing infrastructure on the plateau Srđ.

Investors and the local government believe that this project will extend Dubrovnik's tourist season to 10 to 11 months and creates conditions for a shift in the structure of visitors. Greg Norman has stated that Srđ is one of the three most beautiful locations he has ever worked on and pointed out that Dubrovnik, as the “pearl of the Mediterranean”, has a great development future with the Golf park, which could, according to him, host its first professional golf tournament with the greatest world's golfers two years after its construction.

Dubrovnik-Neretva County Tourist Association

www.visitdubrovnik.hr

City of Dubrovnik

www.dubrovnik.hr



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO



PHOTO: TZ ISTR

■ Croatia in the world

CNN: Dubai out, Hrvatska in

Under the headline “Dubai is out, and Croatia is in”, the American broadcaster CNN has recently televised a feature in which Croatia is ranked as number one among the “new” destinations visited by celebrities this year.

With top-notch hotels, year-round sunny weather, great shopping, picturesque beaches and the tallest building in the world, Dubai has quickly become the favourite destination of celebrities, but the current crisis begs the question where to travel in 2010, and one of the possible destinations is Croatia, reports CNN in the entertainment portion of its program “CNNEntertainment”.

It is not only the couples Beckham and Jolie-Pitt who were some of the frequently spotted members of the jet-set in the tourist mecca of the Persian Gulf, but many other celebrities invested in real-estate over there, until the Dubai Government announced it could no longer return its 80 billion USD debt.

Now that Dubai is in trouble, where will the celebrities hide from the simple folk, wonders CNN and offers Croatia as one of the solutions. Moreover, it ranks Croatia as number one among the “new” destinations to which celebrities will travel in 2010. Croatia is also the only European country that CNN predicts will be in among celebrities.

“The war is long gone and the celebrities are now discovering what the tourists knew back in the 1980s. Croatia, in the Adriatic corner of the Mediterranean, is on the same footing with the other European littoral areas, with beaches, sailing and excellent cuisine, which has attracted superstars like Steven Spielberg, Andre Agassi, Gwyneth Paltrow, Robert de Niro, Clint Eastwood and Sharon Stone,” CNN says. Among the other destinations competing with Dubai, CNN points out Morocco, where, among others, Jennifer Anniston, Gwyneth Paltrow, Orlando Bloom, Salma Hayek, Miranda Kerr and Juliette Binoche have gathered at the opening of the hotel La Mamounia in Marrakech.

CNN also mentions the Caribbean islands Turks and Caicos, at whose beaches Donna Karan, Barbra Streisand and Britney Spears have relaxed.

Then there is the South African Republic, the host of the 2010 World football championship, which will attract numerous tourists, and has already been visited by Oprah Winfrey, Beyonce and Kim Kardashian.

Bora Bora, one of 118 islands of French Polynesia, is the favourite destination of Janet Jackson, Pierce Brosnan, Drew Barrymore and Cameron Diaz.

Kenya is also the perfect spot for the jet set to hide out, and is the favourite place to visit for Bill Gates, Naomi Campbell, Serena and Venus Williams and Oprah Winfrey. When it comes to skiing, Whistler in the Canadian province of British Columbia is competition to the world-famous Aspen in Colorado, on whose trails Sandra Bullock and Harrison Ford have been spotted, and in 2010 some of the Winter Olympics’ events will be held.



Croatian National Tourist Board

www.croatia.hr

CNN

www.cnn.com

Zagreb – Hotel Esplanade among the best in Southern Europe

According to the choice of the readers of the eminent tourist magazine “Conde Nast Traveller”, The Zagreb hotel The Regent Esplanade ranks 33rd among the 100 best hotels in Southern Europe. This is the second year in a row that this hotel, the only Croatian one, has been ranked as one of the best tourist facilities in the world, onto the Golden list of the year. The hotels have been ranked on the basis of a series of elements – accommodation, service, location, quality of food and beverages and design, and almost 33 thousand readers participated in the evaluation. Hotel The Regent Esplanade is located in the centre of Zagreb, and was opened in 1925. It was built for the accommodation of wealthier visitors to Zagreb who arrived here with the orient Express. With a tradition longer than 80 years, it has accommodated many distinguished persons from all over the world since then. The long list of famous people that have visited hotel Esplanade includes many people that have marked the 20th century. Josephine Baker, Charles Lindbergh, Orson Wells, Liv Ullman, Louis Armstrong and Woody Allen are only some of the many who have signed the guest-book. The hotel, which has played a vital role in the social life of Zagreb, offers 209 spacious and luxuriously decorated rooms and suites. Tradition and the luxury of the rooms, as well as the luxurious marble bathrooms are complemented by the newest technological advancements like wireless High-Speed Internet, making every room an oasis of relaxation. The hotel offers numerous possibilities for the organisation of conferences, banquets and other events. The reconstructed legendary Emerald room is a unique space in this part of Europe, a great place for organizing festive affairs and conferences at the highest level. The hotel also comprises the restaurant Zinfandel’s named after the Californian grape sort originating from Croatia. It is the zinfandel grape-wine that is the trademark of the hotel’s staff. Out of the many activities and facilities, the legendary Le Bistro should be pointed out, where the famous and widely known štrukle Esplanade (cheese-pastry) can be tasted.



PHOTO: THE REGENT ESPLANADE



PHOTO: THE REGENT ESPLANADE

City of Zagreb Tourist Association

www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr

The Regent Esplanade Zagreb

www.theregentzagreb.com

Conde Nast Traveller

www.cntraveller.com

Gospić – Film about the Lika centre received first prize at Tourfilm festival

The multimedia film of the Gospić Tourist Association received the first prize in the multimedia category at the recently held 42nd annual tourist film festival “Tourfilm” held in the Czech Karlovy Vary, at which 136 countries participated. The goal of the festival is to promote films through multimedia and audiovisual programs and awarding films, which, through their content and artistic quality, contribute to the development of domestic and international tourism. Films compete in four categories, and the film about Gospić, i.e. the digital postcard about the town has received its award in the fourth category – multimedia programs on the Internet and CD-s devoted to tourism and travelling. In the category in which Gospić has received its award 352 projects participated, and the centre of Lika was followed by the American Internet page devoted to the state Idaho, which received the second prize and the Ecuadorian multimedia tourist CD about Galapagos which came in third.

The materials, photographs and texts, and their collection was financed by the town of Gospić and the county tourist association.

Gospić is located in the middle of the Ličko field, one of the largest karst fields in Croatia, at 562 m above sea-level, at the intersection of several roads and the banks of three rivers: Lika, Novčica and Bogdanica. It is assumed that it was named after the Latin word “Hospitium”, meaning lodging or inn, and was mentioned for the first time in 1604. The town is surrounded by an oasis of nature, and as a tourist destination it offers the possibility of active tourism through team-building programs in which visitors can participate in abseiling, trekking, paintball, jeep safari, horseback riding, rural Olympics, archery, riding carriages, walking, adventurous tours of the Velebit mountain, canoe safari, riding boats along the canyon of the river Lika and the lake Kruščica and speleological adventures. Hunting, fishing and mountaineering enthusiasts will certainly enjoy in this area and in its preserved rich flora and fauna as well as in the harmony between man and nature.

Lika-Senj Tourist Association

www.lickosenjska.hr

Town of Gospić Tourist Association

www.tz-gospic.hr

Tourfilm

www.tourfilm.cz



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

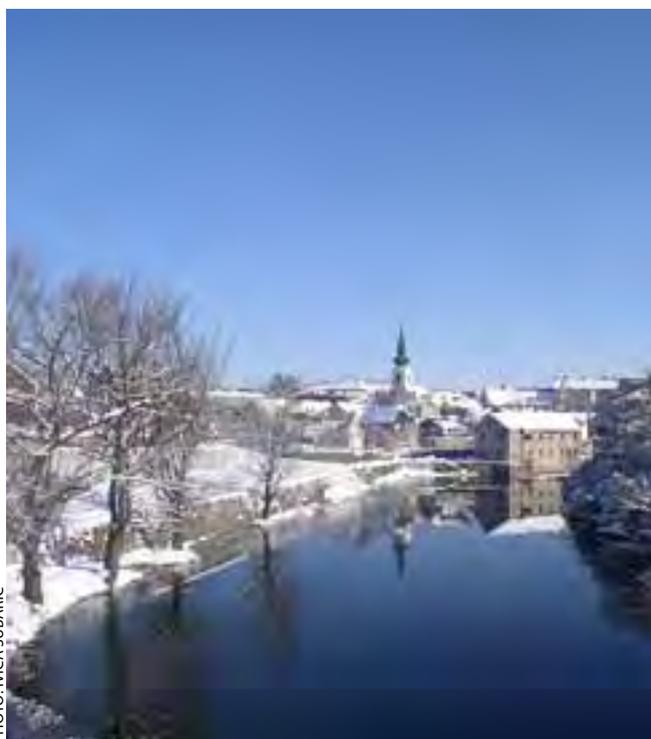


PHOTO: IVICA ŠUBARIĆ

Rest area “Krka” among the best in Europe

The rest area “Krka – west” on the highway A1 Zagreb-Split near the Skradin Bridge is the second best European rest area. Against the competition of 101 such areas, two more Croatian facilities have been ranked among the top 11 – “Modruš – west” and “Lički Osik – east”. The first prize in the quality evaluation project of European rest areas, organized by the European auto-club EuroTest was given to the Austrian rest area “Herzogberg”, and the Italian “Castagnolasca” was ranked as the worst.

18 auto-clubs from 17 countries participated in the Eurotest program, most of them EU member countries, and the evaluation was conducted by an independent agency commissioned by the auto-clubs. The results are disappointing since as many as 17 areas were ranked as very bad, 22 as bad, 22 as acceptable, 29 as good, and only 11 as very good, among which three are in Croatia.

The program is aimed at assessing the quality of the facilities and service at 101 rest areas in the European Union, including the traffic entry, signalisation, hygiene, toilets, state of the walking paths, presence of horticulture, safety, hospitality service in the open areas of the rest-stop.

At the rest areas tested in Croatia, the neatness of the facilities, toilets, children’s playgrounds, accessibility of facilities to the disabled, number and appearance of picnic tables, lighting and other characteristics were assessed as positive.

The awarded rest area “Krka” is located on the left bank of the river Krka, where the bridge connects the two banks, on cliffs offering a view on the Prokljan lake, the magnificent bridge, river Krka and the town of Skradin. The rest area offer numerous parking spaces, a store, exchange office, a self-serve restaurant, a restaurant a la carte, a cafe bar, playground and many other pleasant details. “Krka” is located in the midst of a horticultural surrounding, where, among immortelle, lavender, rosemary and sage, the most prominent is the centenary olive tree. On the other side of the rest area, the ethno-eco souvenir shop is located, offering visitors exclusively domestic home-made products. In 2007, the rest area “Krka” received recognition for excellence in providing service to motorised tourists.

Šibenik-Knin Tourist Association

www.sibenikregion.com

Croatian auto-club

www.hak.hr

Ministry of Tourism

www.mint.hr



PHOTO: DAMIR FABJANIC



PHOTO: DARIJA PETROVIC

Maistra hotels awarded by British tour-operator Thomson Holidays

The leading British tour-operator Thomson Holidays has recently awarded the hotels Eden, Istra and Park, owned by the Maistra hotel-company, with golden medals for quality and service. The award “4T Best Thomson Summer Accommodation” was awarded to Eden for the 11th time and to Istra for the second time, while hotel Park was awarded with the “3T Best Thomson Summer Accommodation” for the sixth time in a row.

Thomson Holidays is part of the TUI Group, one of the leading tourism companies in the world, and every year it hands out the “Golden Medal” awards based on the results of surveys conducted among its guests. The location, quality of service, neatness of the facility, comfort-level of the rooms, food-quality, offering of activities, price-quality ratio and general satisfaction of the guests are rated, which is crucial for getting the award.

Maistra points out that the awards are all the more significant seeing as British visitors and their share in world destinations represent a sort of indicator of quality of a destination. Last season, British tourists made up 17 % of arrivals in relation to visitors from other countries in the awarded Maistra hotels.

Istria County Tourist Association

www.istra.hr

Maistra

www.maistra.com



PHOTO: NINO MARCCUTI

Valsabbion, Le Mandrač and Gil's receive three chef hats from Austrian Gault Millau

The Pula restaurant Valsabbion, Dubrovnik restaurant Gil's and the restaurant Le Mandrač from Volosko have received three out of possible four, and 17 out of possible 20 points in the Austrian issue of the culinary guide Gault Millau for 2010. They share the first place among the Croatian restaurants in the guide.

The criteria used to assess cuisine by this eminent Austrian culinary guide are freshness and quality of the food, especially seasonal food, the preservation of the taste of the ingredients, creativity and harmony in the preparation, quality of soups and sauces, precision and duration of cooking and imagination in the creation of new compositions. Its culinary inspectors visit the facilities anonymously and several times before making their final decision, which refers exclusively to the cuisine, that is the quality of the ingredients and food, not the equipment or service of the restaurants.

The points range from 12 to 20, they are equivalent to French school grades, and on top of them, restaurants receive chef hats, at least one and four at most. It is almost impossible to receive 20 points, and in the 28 years the guide has been published, the maximum number of points was given out only twice.

According to the scoring system, 19 is the highest grade for the world's best restaurants, and 17 and 18, that is 3 chef hats, is given for the highest level of creativity and originality with the best possible preparation of meals, 15 and 16 is given for a high level in culinary skills with creativity and quality, 13 and 14 is given for very good cuisine offering more than an everyday experience, and 12 and 12.5 for good cuisine as can be expected in good restaurants for a wide clientele. The restaurant Le Mandrač received as many as 19 points last year for its dish "Nova fritaja".

Gault Millau is one of the most influential world gourmet guides. It is published in Vienna with a circulation of around 30,000, and for the past several years it contains a ten-page feature with the list of the best restaurants in Istria, part of Dalmatia, in the continent and some of the islands. The guide's beginnings go back to 1969, when Henry Gault, Christian Millau and André Gayot founded "Le Nouveau Guide", a monthly publication on wine and food, which actually was a reaction to the, as Gayot puts it, the conservative conception and assessment of cuisine. The founders of the magazine termed their philosophy "Nouvelle cuisine", according to which in cuisine, apart from the final result in the preparation of the food, creativity and boldness of the chef is important as well, and his desire to create something new. With time, this philosophy has turned into a movement, supported by the journalists Gault and Millau.



PHOTO: RENCO KOSINOZIC

Hotel Valsabbion
www.valsabbion.hr

Restaurant Le Mandrač
www.lemandrac.com

Restaurant Gil's
www.gilsdubrovnik.com

Gault Millau
www.gaultmillau.at

Brač among ten world islands best for living

The American magazine “Islands” has recently ranked the Croatian island of Brač among the world’s ten most desirable islands to live on. The specialized magazine is printed in a circulation of millions and read all over the world. According to the magazine, apart from Brač, other islands that have found themselves the list of the world’s most desirable islands are: the Florida Big Pine Key, Crete in Greece, Waiheke in New Zealand, Curacao in the Dutch Antilles, Maui in Hawaii, Nevis in the Caribbean, Lomgkawi in Malaysia, Grand Cayman in the Caribbean Sea and Palau in the Pacific. All of them have received the title of dream islands for a pleasurable and high-quality life.

Brač is desirable to live on account of its clean air and sea. It is one of the most beautiful and largest islands in Dalmatia, with numerous olive-trees and amazing clean sandy and stone beaches, writes “Islands”.

Its connectedness to the mainland is excellent, and the rich culinary offering consists of fresh fish, clams, home made lamb and cheese. Also excellent is the red wine sort Plavac. The people are relaxed, and their life does not only consist of work, but, as opposed to the Americans, they can enjoy drinking coffee in cafes by the sea, claim the journalists of the American magazine, concluding that life on Brač is medium-paced, just as it should be. They have noticed that all towns near the sea have a church in the centre of the town, right next to the sea, but that each is different in its own way and interesting.

Split-Dalmatia County Tourist Association

www.dalmatia.hr

Ministry of Tourism

www.mint.hr

“Islands” Magazine

www.islands.com



PHOTO: IVO PERVAN

■ Introducing

Dubrovnik – No winter break for seven five-star hotels

Seven Dubrovnik top quality five-star hotels will remain open during the entire winter. Visitors to Dubrovnik will, therefore, have hotels Excelsior, Rixos Libertas, Hilton, Imperial, More and three facilities that are part of the Importanne resort, Hotel Ariston, Villa Elita and Importane Suites, at their disposal.

Importanne Resort will also leave the doors of four-star Hotel Neptun open for the entire winter, as will the four-star hotel Park.

Less demanding visitors will also be able to find accommodation in Dubrovnik this winter since a part of the three-star hotels will also remain open, such as hotels Ivka, Petka and Lero.

The three-star hotel Kompas operating under the Jadranski luksuzni hoteli company will also remain open for the majority of the winter period, with the exception of February. Also, the hotel Vrtovi Sunca (“Sun gardens”) is also expected to re-open by mid February. Some hotels will be open for shorter periods, depending on their occupancy or the arranged arrivals of bigger groups.

Vis, Komodor and Adriatic, which are still operating under the group Maestral, will open for Easter.

Hotels from the group Valamar, Hotel Dubrovnik President, Valamar Club Dubrovnik and Argosy will not open until the spring, and hotels Sumratin and Zagreb in the cove Lapad will welcome their first guests at the beginning of April.

The top-notch hotels Bellevue and Dubrovnik Palace will not be open this winter.

Dubrovnik-Neretva County Tourist Association

www.visitdubrovnik.hr

City of Dubrovnik Tourist Association

www.tzdubrovnik.hr



PHOTO: MARIO ROMULIĆ & DRAŽEN STOJČIĆ



PHOTO: MARIO BRZIC

Ozalj – Ozalj-Vivodina wine road opened



Karlovac County has recently enriched its offering with a new tourist product – the 30 km long Ozalj-Vivodina wine-road, a project that has combined 11 of the best known wine manufacturers from this eminent wine-rich area into a unique whole. The wine-road stretches over 30 km from Vivodina to Vrhovac. The project has been envisaged and implemented by the Ozalj winegrowers', winemakers' and fruit-farmers' association, in cooperation with the Karlovac County Tourist association. For the past couple of months, the association has worked at the project, trying to make it one of the most significant landmarks of the Karlovac County. In the Ozalj-Vivodina area, 80 hectares of land is covered by vineyards, and among the best it has to offer are the wine sorts Graševina, Sauvignon, the Rhein Riesling, Red pinot, Frankovka, Zweigelt and the young wine portugizac ("the Portuguese") and the Žuti muškati ("the yellow mace"). The desire of the initiators of the project is that all visitors to their region, on top of a top-notch culinary offering of superb specialties, taste quality wine from 11 family farms, while at the same time enjoying the beautiful landscapes.

Wine-making has a very long and rich tradition in this region, and from available sources, it can be concluded that inhabitants of the village Vivodina were wine-makers as early as the middle ages. Out of the 70 Vivodina documents from 1550 to 1776, kept in the national archive in Zagreb, 32 are purchase contracts of Vivodina locals selling or giving each other vineyards.



Karlovac County Tourist Association

www.tzkz.hr

Town of Ozalj

www.ozalj.hr

Underground tourism – Croatia has attractions underground as well

More than 11,500 caves and sink-holes are known in Croatia, on the mainland, on the islands, underneath the sea, along rivers, in the mountains... There are still many areas on which no systematic speleological research has been carried out. It is rightly assumed that their number is much greater since many of them do not have natural entry points on the surface and are discovered exclusively thanks to construction works. For instance, in the course of the construction of highways, bridges, tunnels and viaducts, more than 1,000 caves and sink-holes have been discovered in Croatia that do not have openings on the surface. When it comes to the number of discovered and researched caverns, Croatia is number one in the world. Croatian speleologists are very important figures in the World Speleological Union (Unio Internationale de Speleologie - UIS).

The specific cave erosion, corrosion and icicle forms (speleothems – stalactites, stalagmites, stalagnates, helictites, botroids, conolites and others.), endemic animal species (the olm – “human fish”), special underground species of underground fresh-water sponge, underground leeches, underground crabs, etc.), significant archaeological and paleontological findings – all of these are postcards of the cave environment, an independent eco-system protected from the sun, which flourishes underground, and is available only to speleologists.

The Croatian karst underground is filled with such cave oases of “centuries-old karst shades”, which can be offered to visitors as a form of vacation underground. Only a relatively small number of caves can accommodate real tourists, as not many have been specifically adjusted for such tours. Paths, guides and lighting for tourists exist in the upper and lower Cerovac caves near Gračaci, cave Veternica near Kotlenice on the northern base of Mountain Mosor, Grgos caves near Samobor, cave Vrlovka near Ozalj, Barač caves near Rakovija, Samograd caves near Perušić, cave Biserujka near Dobrinje on the island of Krk, sink-hole Baredine near Poreč, cave Mramornica near Brtonigla in Istria, cave Feštinsko kraljevstvo near Žminj in Istria, Đurović cave in Čilipi near Dubrovnik. Especially attractive is the Modra špilja (“blue cave”) on the island of Biševo that can only be visited via boat.

Some caves, apart from their beauty, have additional interesting tourist attractions. For instance in cave Veternica, one can find traces and remains of the died-out bear, and in others one can see fossils, bats, etc; in the Đurović cave beneath the Dubrovnik airport, indigenous wine sorts are exhibited, and the Modra cave on the island of Biševo is rich in natural lighting effects (reflexive blue lights in the sea-water). In cave Baredine, the only cave accommodated for tourists in Croatia, the “human fish” (olm) is exhibited in its natural environment...



PHOTO: ZORAN MARINOVIC

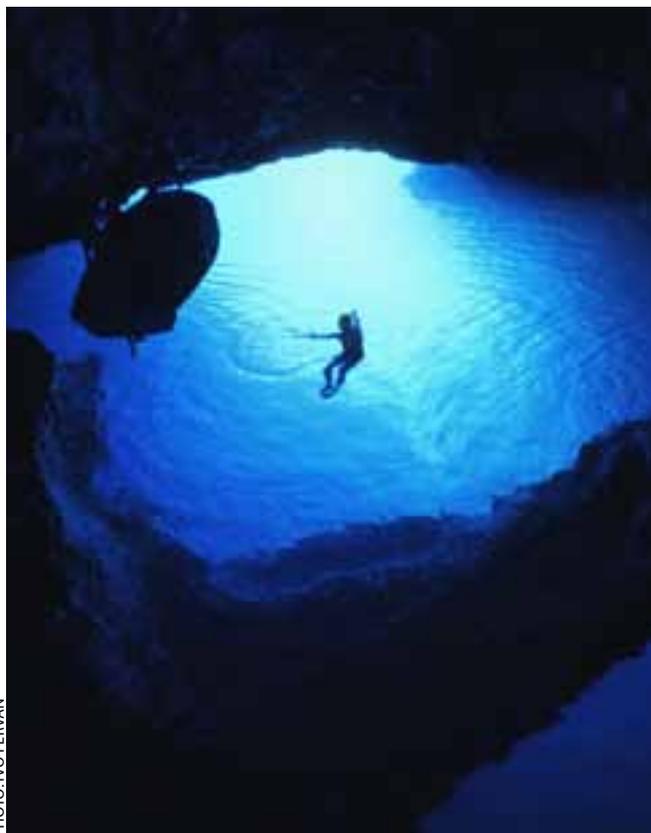


PHOTO: IVO PERVAN

Croatian National Tourist Board

www.croatia.hr

www.speleo.hr

www.speleologija.hr

Paklenica – 60th anniversary of the national park

Paklenica national park has recently celebrated its 60th anniversary of being declared a protected area. The park is spread over 95 square kilometres, and is located at a littoral slope of the southern part of Velebit, just above the town Marasovići, bordering with the zone of the highest peaks – Vaganski vrh, Babin vrh and Sveto brdo.

The park contains the area of torrential currents of Mala and Velika Paklenica, their recognizable canyons, cut vertically into the southern slopes of Velebit and the wider surrounding area. In a relatively small area, one can find an extreme richness in geo-morphological forms and phenomena, a variety of flora and fauna, attractive landscapes and untouched nature.

Certainly the most attractive part of southern Velebit are the canyons of Mala and Velika Paklenica.

The canyon of Velika Paklenica is 14 km long, and 500 to 800 meters wide. In its narrowest parts, the canyon is only 50 m wide. On both sides of the canyon, there are vertical rocks, of which some are taller than 700 meters. This canyon is visited by more than 110,000 visitors annually.

The canyon of Mala Paklenica is of more humble dimensions and the torrent flowing through it is significantly weaker. It is 12 km long, from 400 to 500 meters wide, and in its narrowest part it is only 10 meters wide, while the surrounding rocks are up to 650 meters tall.

Representative for the central part of the park is the relief complex of Borovnik and Crni vrh, and the valley expanses of Mala and Velika Močila.

The eastern part of the park is geo-morphologically extremely differentiated, inaccessible and wild. Further to the east, this wilderness turns into an area of more mild forms in the region of the Mali and Veliki Libinj, which form karst plateaus with numerous karst sinkholes, whose bottoms were mostly used for agriculture.

The tip of the Paklenica national park is made up by the narrow ridge of Mountain Velebit, one to three km wide. This is where Velebit's highest peak is located – Vaganski vrh (1757 m).

Walking is the only true way to get to know the park. It has between 150 and 200 km of paths, from tourist ones, which lead from the canyon of Velika Paklenica to the Manita peć cave, the forest lodge “Lugarnica” and the mountaineers' refuge hut, to mountaineers' paths leading to Velebit's highest peaks. All paths in the park are marked with signs and tables.

The park features the mountaineers' refuge hut “Paklenica” with 50 beds in rooms with several beds. The walk from the canyon to the hut takes around two hours. It is open every day from June to September, and only during the weekends for the rest of the year. The Paklenica national park is the most significant climbing centre in Croatia, well known outside the country. It is particularly attractive on account of its proximity to the coast, which makes the Paklenica Riviera an ideal destination for combining climbing and water-sports

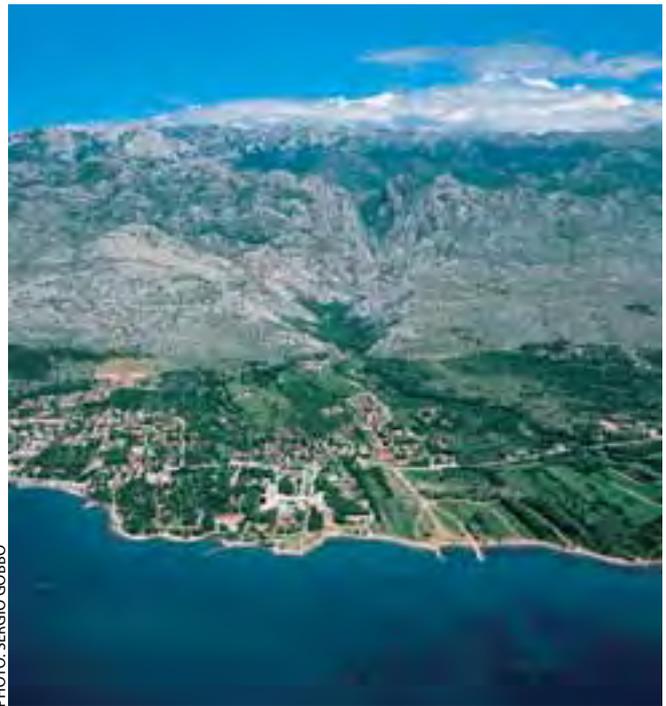


PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

The history of mountain climbing in Paklenica begins in the distant 1938.

Nowadays, in the Paklenica climbing destinations there are more than 360 directions of varying difficulty and lengths so every climber can find something for himself. The main climbing season in Paklenica begins in the spring and lasts until late in the autumn.

There are also three educational paths in the park and one bike trail.

The name of the park originates from the resin of the black pine tree, the so-called “paklina”, used by the local population in folk-medicine for healing wounds, as sliver for lighting and to coat wooden boats.

Lika-Senj County Tourist Association

www.lickosenjska.com

Paklenica National Park

www.paklenica.hr

Charter companies found “4 Stars Charter Quality Pool” association

“4 Stars Charter Quality Pool” is the name of the association recently founded by 24 domestic charter companies and 24 charter agencies from German-speaking countries. The companies that have established the association have around 700 ships at their disposal.

The goal of the association is furthering the quality of service and the relationship with the clients and partners, attracting high-quality clients and balancing the mutual relations between the agencies and companies. The initiators are Yacht-Pool International from Austria, Yacht-pool Croatia from Poreč and Agema from Koprivnica.

The members of the newly-founded association have adopted their code of conduct which prescribes how to treat clients and how the members are to conduct themselves in their mutual business dealings. The code, among other things, prescribes the minimum standard for the accommodation of visitors, equipment and additional equipment.

The members also plan to establish a common computer base enabling visitors to view the entire offering of vessels of the Four stars fleet and common campaigns on markets for the members.

The Four Stars Loyalty Card program is also under way, a card that will allow clients who choose a vessel from the 4 Stars fleet additional safety and numerous benefits for clients who frequently sail on yachts from this fleet.

“4 Stars Charter Quality Pool”

www.4stars-charter.com



PHOTO: MARIO BRZIC



PHOTO: BRASLAV KARLIĆ

Konavle – Croatia's southern most tip

Konavle is located at the southern-most tip of Croatia, on the South-eastern part of today's Dubrovnik Riviera. With the purchase of this area in the 15th century, the Dubrovnik Republic completed its territory.

The name Konavle derives from the Latin word “canale”, “canalis”, referring to the water-supply system, which in the Roman era supplied Epidaurus, today's Cavtat, with water. Konavle is an area of special natural beauties and contrasts: hills and valleys, mountains and karst, blue and green, or as the Konavle locals would term it: Gornja and Donja banda (Upper and lower banda). Surrounded by hills to the north, the Adriatic Sea to the south, Konavle reach to the gulf of Boka Kotorska and peninsula Prevlaka to the east, and to the mild coves of Cavtat and Obod to the west. The central part is the fruitful Konavle field.

The preserved nature, unique and highly valuable rural architecture, numerous monuments of the thousand-year history of the region, ancient traditions preserved through folklore, the unique Konavle national costumes and embroidery, the harmony between man and nature—all of this makes Konavle unique and recognisable.

The centre of the municipality Konavle is the medieval town Cavtat, located 19 km south of Dubrovnik. The Ancient Epidaurum was an important Roman colony, which fell with the arrival of the Slaves and Avars. Its inhabitants fled to the neighbouring Laus Rave Ragusa, today's Dubrovnik. The proximity of Dubrovnik, the rich historical and cultural heritage and the various tourist offering make Cavtat one of the most attractive destinations on the Adriatic. Of the monuments that need to be seen, the following should be pointed out: the birthplace of Vlaho Bukovac, museum, studio and gallery of one of the most important and well-known Croatian painters, the mausoleum of the family Račić at the St Rok cemetery, a masterpiece of the sculptor Ivan Meštrović, the painting collection of the parochial church of St Nicolas harbouring a valuable sacral treasure and the Bogišić collection with valuable graphics, coins, rare books, paintings and furniture. Numerous palaces can be seen in the town centre and monuments from the Roman era, such as the remains of the theatre Villa Rustica and the city walls.

Cavtat offers accommodation in nine hotels, of which one is a five-star hotel (Croatia), two four-star hotels, while the others have three stars. In the small fishing and tourism town of Molunt, 20 km south of Cavtat it is possible to camp in four auto-camps and enjoy a vacation in direct contact with untouched nature.

The offshore of Cavtat and Molunt is extremely attractive for diving. In close proximity, near the Cavtat islands of Mrkan, Bobara and Supetar, there are a few Ancient localities, the largest and most attractive in the Adriatic, and one of the bigger ones in the Mediterranean. Extremely valuable are the finding sites of over 1,800 amphoras and pythos from the 1st century B.C. and the first and 2nd century. The Cavtat offshore is also rich in beautiful underwater walls reaching up to 100 meters in depth, underwater caves and sunk ships, from the Ancient times to the recent past.

For Čilipi it could be said they are the cultural centre of Konavle, known for their folklore events at which



PHOTO: NO PERVAN

tourists can get to know the Konavle tradition and national costumes with the characteristic silk embroidery.

The Konavle costume and embroidery are well-known characteristics of this region, not only in Croatia, but in the entire

world. The costume used to be an indicator of the social status of Konavle locals, especially with women. The Konavle embroidery is the fundamental decorative element of the women's costume, which was embroidered on the vest and sleeves. Originally it was embroidered in silk obtained from the silkworm that was reared at home and the silk coloured with natural colours.

In Čilipi, the Native home is located, a museum harbouring a rich ethnographic collection of the area. For nature-enthusiasts, a walking path and bike trail are located between Čilipi and Cavtat, along which endemic plant species and protected animal species can be found.

In the village Pridvorje, beneath the slopes of the highest peak of Konavle Snježnica (1,234 km), the duke's palace was constructed in the 15th century.

The palace is a protected area with the source and upper flow of the river Ljuta, along which numerous mills from the era of the Dubrovnik republic are located. After 1550, the system of the “lower mills” was constructed, preserved until today as a protected cultural monument.

On the hill road towards Bosnia the fortress Sokol or Soko Grad is located, also from the time of the Dubrovnik Republic. The fortress has been reconstructed and offers visitors an amazing view of the entire Konavle.

Peninsula Prevlaka, which closes the entry into the gulf of Boka Kotorska, is under special protection on account of its natural values and microclimate. The fort on cape Oštro was constructed in the mid 19th century and is one of the more important Austro-Hungarian forts on the Croatian coast. To tourists desiring active vacation, the Konavle area offers three bicycle trails, altogether 60 km long, and adventure-enthusiasts will also find something for their enjoyment. Namely, a free rock-climbing rock is located above the Konavle villages Mihanići and Pridvorje, and visitors can also enjoy the excursions Konavle Jeep Safari, ATV Safari and a recreational horseback riding program in Popovići.

Dubrovnik-Neretva County Tourist Association

www.tzdubrovnik.hr

Municipality of Konavle Tourist association

www.tzcavtat-konavle.hr

Municipality of Konavle

www.opcinakonavle.hr

Cultural Art Society Čilipi

www.cilipifolklor.hr

■ Events

Zagreb – world ski elite once again on Sljeme

At the beginning of January, Croatia's capital will, for the sixth time in a row, host the best female slalom kiers, and, for the third time in a row, the best male slalom skiers of the world. This year, the female slalom will be held on January 3rd, when the race of the ski-legends will be held as well, while the male slalom will be held three days later during night. Both events at the Audi FIS World Cup "VIP Snow Queen Trophy 2010" will be held on Sljeme, the tallest peak of the Medvednica mountain overlooking Zagreb.

Since the first year of the World Cup visiting Zagreb, the Sljeme race has provided an excellent trail and superior organisation and has been one of the most generous when it comes to the awards, but it is best known for the unique atmosphere, created before during and after the events, by the great number of the audience, ski-enthusiasts from Zagreb and other parts of Croatia, cheering for all skiers with the same enthusiasm.

The Sljeme races are also special as they are held in close proximity to a city. Zagreb is the only European metropolis hosting the "world ski circus" in its back yard.

It should be pointed out that that the Zagreb race had the highest TV viewership out of all the FIS world cup races. This was in Germany, with 4.72 million viewers of the women's race on the ZDF TV broadcaster and 4.67 million viewers of the men's race on the ARD TV broadcaster.

Brother and sister Ivica and Janica Kostelić, the world-famous skiers, have made their first ski steps on Sljeme. In her career, Janica has won a total of 30 FIS World Cup races, three Crystal globes and three small globes as the slalom winner. She is a five-time world-champion, and is one of the rare athletes who have won as many as four Olympic gold medals at the Olympics in Salt Lake City in 2002 and Torino in 2006.

Her brother Ivica is still successfully participating in the World Cup, in which he has won one of the medals nine times. He has also won the small crystal globe as the overall slalom winner, but his biggest success is the title of the slalom world champion in St Moritz in 2003 and winning the silver medal at the Winter Olympics in Torino in 2006. Medvednica is a nature park, that is, with its highest peak Sljeme (1,033 m), the favourite excursion destination of Zagreb locals, who use it to run away to nature, relaxation and recreation. In the winter, Medvednica offers its visitors opportunities to ski, sledge and enjoy the fresh air and winter idyll. In the summer, it attracts many visitors on account of its much more pleasant climate, with temperatures several degrees lower than in the city.

Medvednica offers 11 mountaineers' lodge huts, two hotels and 8 hospitality facilities, 15 bicycle trails with a total of 110 km in length and four educational paths. Here is also the cave Veternica which was proclaimed a protected geomorphological monument of nature in 1979. The entry into the cave is located at 320 m above sea-level. The overall



PHOTO: RENCO KOSINOVIC

length of the until-now explored canals is 7,218 m. The first 380 meters have been adapted for visitors.

Visitors can get to know the mysterious underground of Medvednica through a tour of the mine Zrinski. Mining on Medvednica, in the area of the "Rudarski vrt" ("the mining garden") dates back to 1463 when king Matija Korvin granted the royal mining benefits to count Petar Zrinski. These benefits allowed Zrinski and his heirs to open gold, silver and other mines on their estates. This benefit enabled the Zrinski to mine on Medvednica.

City of Zagreb Tourist Association

www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr

Medvednica Nature Park

www.pp-medvednica.hr

VIP Snow Queen Trophy

www.zlatnimedved.hr

VIP Snow Queen Trophy

www.snowqueentrophy.com

Official site of Janica Kostelić

www.janica.croski.hr

Official site of Ivica Kostelić

www.ivica.kostelic.hr

Rijeka – International carnival

At the end of January, until mid February, the centre of Kvarner will host one of the biggest international carnivals. This year, “the Rijeka carnival madness” will commence on January 22nd when the queen of the carnival will be chosen, and the Mayor will hand the keys of the city to the master of the carnival, who will “rule over the city” for a month. During this period, in Rijeka and the entire Kvarner numerous events, concerts, exhibitions, theatre performances and celebrations will be held, attracting an increasing number of visitors. On January 30th, the Carnival Snowboard Session will be held in the centre of Rijeka, at which around 20 top snowboarders from around 10 countries will participate. This European snow event is unique for its snow trail only 200 meters from the sea. For this event, 70 cubic meters of snow is transported into Rijeka.

The carnival is continued on February 6th, when the Rijeka Korzo (“boulevard”) will host the children’s carnival procession, held for the first time in 1997. The climax of the carnival is on February 14th when the international carnival procession will be held at the same location, precisely at noon. The competition in creativity, wittiness and originality, the fireworks of colours and shapes will result in a parade of hundreds of allegorical floats, thousands of masks and a great audience. According to some estimates, the streets of Rijeka gather more than 150,000 participants from the country and all over the world during this event.

Six centuries of carnival tradition in this area and the influence of the Venetian and Austrian bourgeois carnivals are the basis on which the renewed Rijeka carnival started to create its unique identity in 1982. Starting with only three domestic carnival groups and 100 participants, it has grown into an international event, numbering today over ten thousand participants from over ten world countries. The number of participants and spectators has ensured the Rijeka carnival membership in the European Association of carnival Cities (FECC), placing it among the most significant in Europe.

The Rijeka Carnival has imposed itself with its uniqueness as the fifth season of the year – the season of going crazy and relaxation, and with its rich entertainment, sports and cultural program it will satisfy all ages and tastes.



PHOTO: VALTER STOJISIC



PHOTO: SERGIO GOBBO

Primorje-Gorski kotar County Tourist Association

www.kvarner.hr

City of Rijeka Tourist Association

www.tz-rijeka.hr

Rijeka International Carnival

www.ri-karneval.hr

Zagreb – Tennis elite at the ATP tournament

At the end of January, Zagreb will host the tennis ATP tournament PBZ Zagreb Indoors. It is an individual and couples tournament played indoors on a hard surface. This year, the tournament is part of the ATP 250 World Tour series, whose winner will get 250 points. The first Zagreb Indoors was held in 1996, when the Croatian tennis player Goran Ivanišević won. The tournament was held the following year, after which a nine-year break ensued. For the third time, the event was, therefore, held in 2006. Last year, the prize fund amounted to 450,000 EUR, and in the Croatian finale, Marin Čilić beat Mario Ančić.



City of Zagreb Tourist Association

www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr

PBZ Zagreb Indoors

www.zagrebindoors.com



Zagreb – Contemporary Art Museum Opened

The Museum of Contemporary Art (MSU), the biggest and most contemporary museum institution in Croatia and the largest cultural institution since the independence of Croatia has recently been opened in New Zagreb.

The new grandiose building of architect Igor Franić, the first larger cultural institution on the other side of the River Sava will enable the appropriate conservation and exhibition of the collected art, and the conditions necessary for various programs, educational work-shops, film-projections and theatre performances aimed at the wider public and will make this part of the city the new cultural centre of Zagreb as well as a place of family outings, entertainment and new knowledge.

The overall size of the museum is 14,500 square meters, 3,500 of which is intended for the permanent exhibition, 1,500 for temporary exhibitions and 700 for exhibitions on the roof. The museum features a multimedia hall, library, pedagogical hall, museum store with book-store, cafe, restaurant, suites for visiting artists and curators and a 725 square meter lobby. After more than 50 years of careful collection, treatment and presentation of only a part of the collection, the first exhibition with which the museum introduced itself to the public was its permanent exhibition “collection in movement”.

The other great exhibition is “Acquisitions 2004-2009, and the visitors were also welcomed by the exhibition “Museum before the Museum”, a photography collection by Jasenko Rasol who followed the construction of the museum with his camera.

The art of Croatian and foreign artists that are part of the collection are testimony to the different styles and movements, such as abstract expressionism, geometrical and lyrical abstraction, minimalism, proto-conceptualism, analytical and primary painting, Fluxus, conceptual art, optical art, transavangard... reflecting the role of the Museum in following the newest artistic movements.

MSU contains several collections – paintings, sculptures, drawings, graphics, posters, photography, film and video and the media art collection. The museum is also in charge of the Richter collection, numbering 182 works of art, the Josip Seissl collection, numbering 1,258, the Benko Horvat collection with 611, the Toše Dabac archive numbering 200,000 items and the Ivan Kožarić collection with 6,000 items.

Several installations enrich the museum, “the slide” by world-renowned artist Carsten Höller, “Eyes of purification” by Polish artist Mirosław Balke, on the roof terrace the “Artist at work” by Dalibor Martinis is installed, and in front of the museum “Frames” by Ivana Franke, Lee Pelivan and Tomo Plejčić. On the roof, the installation “War field” is located, by Ivan Božičević, and in the museum store the “Alchemy polyptich” by Silvije Vujičić.



PHOTO: JASENKO RASOL

The 2010 museum program also features the following exhibitions: A pair of nice shoes – Reality Check in Eastern Europe, independent exhibition of Danica Dakić, independent exhibition of Aleksandar Srnc, project Gilbert & George, works from the FRAC collections, exhibition of Zlatko Kopljara, and the Murtić donation.

The Zagreb MSU was founded in December of 1954 and has instantaneously become the reference point on the cultural map of the city, and soon of Europe. The desire to extend the museum existed in the 1960s, primarily because of the significance of the collections that were kept in unsuitable conditions and were not available to the public.

At the international tender in 1999, the project of architect Igor Franić won. Construction began in 2003, and was jointly funded by the City of Zagreb and the Ministry of Culture.

City of Zagreb Tourist Association

www.zagreb-touristinfo.hr

Museum of Contemporary Art

www.msu.hr

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